

Kathleen Lino  
Dr. Notley  
BIB201  
11/15/2020

### **Paul the Jewish Theologian**

Paul the Jewish Theologian was written by Brad H. Young. This book cost about nine dollars and ninety-nine cents. This insightful book written by Mr. Young contains a total of one hundred and ninety-two pages. Brad H. Young is an establishing person from the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research, was an educator of New Testament studies in the Graduate School of Theology at Oral Roberts University. Young earned a master's degree and Ph.D. in Judaism and Early Christianity at the Hebrew University, in Jerusalem, Israel, where he studied for a long time. His doctoral exposition, composed under the supervision of Professor David Flusser, was published by Paulist Press as Jesus and his Jewish Parables: Rediscovering the Roots of Jesus' Teachings. Young has also written, The Jewish Background to the Lord's Prayer, The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation, Jesus the Jewish Theologian, and Paul the Jewish Theologian. Brad H. Young is a very well known and well-established man throughout our world today. Many people have spoken highly of Brad H. Young and his research and teachings that he has done.

The opening chapter of Paul the Jewish Theologian is called "Introduction." Paul throughout the introduction is described as a Pharisee who comes to find faith and confidence in Jesus who is known as the messiah. Jesus our savior is intensely proclaiming the gospel as the power of the God of Israel. Paul wanted to show the adoration for Jesus in a way that many people didn't concur with. All through our class discussions, we perceive that Paul was not constantly enjoyed by many people. Paul is a Pharisee, who had been ridiculed by the synagogue

and misconstrued by the congregation. The synagogue couldn't acknowledge the profile of Paul's style of pharisaism. A great deal of hostility to Semitism was brought towards Paul, throughout these times. Many of the Pharisees could not understand why many weren't confused by Paul's teachings. Once the Pharisees were able to fight back, they stood up to many. "We find nothing wrong in this man" (Acts 23:9). The Pharisees stood up for Paul in the Bible in which he had a strong love for. Although the Pharisees stuck up for Paul and his teachings, there is one thing that any are unsure of and in a way is a mystery of Paul. This riddle includes the general population of Israel and non-Jewish individuals. Paul does not keep on expounding on his secret. We shall never know what happens in the mystery but it was found very interesting in the novel. Who knew that Paul could keep a secret! Paul who had a Hebrew heritage often hid this heritage from others around him. This caused many to be unsure if they were able to call Paul a Jewish theologian. Paul is seen as a theologian and should be recognized as one.

The next chapter is called "Paul the Jewish Theologian." Chapter two begins with an excerpt from Martin Hengel. This chapter asks a question that will be answered in the pages to come: "But is it possible to describe Paul as a Jewish theologian" (270).

This chapter is full of questions that are formulated as subheaders for the chapter. It should be noted, the reader can see the illumination of Paul's bravery and courageousness in this chapter. He emphasized Paul leaving his Jewish environment to spread the Gospel.

"Pentecost, the Nations of the World, and the Apostle Paul" is the title of the third chapter. This one starts with another excerpt, this time by Herman Ridderbos. In chapter three, Mr. Young highlights the importance of the festival of Pentecost. "Paul went out of Jerusalem to the world, but Pentecost brought the world to Jerusalem" (819). Also, there is an emphasis placed on

diverse perspectives on the Torah. Lastly, the chapter ends with a bit of a foreshadowing of what's to come for Paul.

Chapter four is named "Judaism and Christianity: Diverse Perspectives on the Torah." "The significance of Torah for both Jesus and Paul emanates from Judaism" (969). "Judaism and Christianity: Diverse Perspectives on Torah" goes on to highlight issues with interpreting the Torah in an attempt at comprehension.

Lastly, Young makes it clear to the reader that Jesus and Paul did not negate the Torah (like Marcion suggested).

"The Torah: Roots of Grace and Faith in Paul's Message" chapter 5. Once again, this chapter contains an excerpt which is from E.P. Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism. Brad H. Young tells the reader to not disregard the Torah. I believe that the Old Testament is a solid foundation for the new one since it has the laws and teaching of the Jewish people. It would be impossible for the New Testament to exist or make sense without the law or even prophecies of the old testament.

Chapter seven is named "The Transcendence of Torah in Paul's Teachings". Brad H. Young says Paul and Marcion have a different perspective on the Torah. The teachings of Paul emphasize that the Torah has a transcendence that no man would understand. Because of the many things that the Torah contains, "Its radiance is best seen in the actions of those who gain wisdom from studying its words" (1488).

Chapter eight is called "Love as the foundation of Christian Ministry: The Model of 1 Corinthians 13." "Indeed, frequently it has been removed from its historical setting and given new applications" (1501). I believe that a lot of people do so, especially Paul's writings.

There is some debate as to if Paul wrote this letter. Regardless, this theme of love is crucial to Christians. Love is what binds the faith together and is the simple message of the Gospel.

Chapter nine is titled “The Essence of Paul’s Jewish Faith.” This chapter begins with an excerpt from George Eldon Ladd.

Concurrently, Paul’s faith was rooted in obedience to God. “We wrongly assume that the essence of Paul’s day taught that the essence of Judaism in Paul’s day taught that a person must earn his or her salvation by complete obedience to the law” (1601). This chapter focuses on God. “As a Jewish theologian, a Pharisee among Jews, Christians, and pagans, the Apostle Paul called people to pursue earnestly the rule of God and his righteousness in the power of the Holy Spirit” (1863).

Finally, chapter ten is titled “Seven Pillars of Paul’s Jewish Theology.” Like the last nine chapters, the first page contains an excerpt. I enjoy how the author took his time to input these sources at the beginning of each chapter to help readers understand where he is coming from. This chapter talks about the seven pillars of Paul’s theology. It is heartbreaking and alleviating to see how the Jewish people turning down their own messiah/king has made it possible for the Gentiles to receive the message of Jesus.

This novel is one that I would highly recommend to someone who is studying the New Testament and would love to learn more about Paul. It gave me a better understanding of who Paul was as a Christian and as a Jew. Going over Paul in our class time gave me a better understanding of Paul before I read the novel. After reading the novel and knowing more about Paul, I learned how in-depth of an Apostle he was. Being a Christian, Paul is someone who I look up to and want to be like. He defied the odds of many people not liking him and became a well known and well-established person. He is someone that many other Christians should look

up to living in our world today. This book reminded me of David Flusser's *The Sage from Galilee* because both books picked the people they were writing about apart and put them back together so the audience would have a better understanding.

## **Works cited**

<http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/author/brad-young/>

Paul the Jewish Theologian written by Brad H. Young