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Book Review: The Sage from Galilee: Rediscovering Jesus' Genius

David Flusser with R. Steven Notley, *The Sage from Galilee: Rediscovering Jesus' Genius* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007). 221 pp. Pbk. US\$20.00. ISBN:978-0-8028-2587-2.

In the new revised book "The Sage from Galilee: Rediscovering Jesus' Genius" by Steven Notley, that was also a student and colleague of David Flusser at the time before his passing. David Flusser wrote this book in 1968, but then he allowed Notley to revise it because he was able to translate it in the correct matter in, from the right way that the words are supposed to go to the right grammar. You can say that this vise was a better version because Notley's part "effect creating an entirely new work" (p. viii). This book explains the Life of Jesus and what he had to overcome time after time from his beliefs and how people were looking at him in his travels throughout the time Jesus was still alive and from his death. From these Chapters, several of them spoke about the type of person Jesus was on his journey and what he wanted to gain from his followers to the non-believers.

The main purpose of this book as Flusser and Notley (translates) explain talks about the journey of Jesus and the obstacles he endures while traveling throughout the places like Galilee, Nazareth, and many more other places he went to. Each twelve chapters from "The sage from Galilee: Rediscovering Jesus' Genius" by Flusser has a part to which Jesus had to take part of. The ones that part of the path Jesus took that lead me to think that they are important are Chapters three (p. 29), five (p. 61), and eleven (p. 144). These chapters take part to what lead to Jesus being the person he is and the person he was to those around him.

In the chapter, "Baptism", places Jesus' meeting John the Baptist and how John was used by God to lead Jesus to his path and journey to become the Messiah with his help. On the chapter (p.18) it explains that "John's powerful influence over the people led to his execution by Herod Antipas son of the King Herod the Great." People listened to John and believed in what he was doing. John was place on this Earth to open the doors for Jesus and to allow Jesus to do his work that God had planned for him. John's work to baptize the sinners to be clean from their sins was an act of God, but when Jesus arrived to Jordan where John was located at, it has been said (p. 21) "The gift of the Holy Spirit assumed significance for Jesus was different that for others who were baptized by John..." When John baptize Jesus it was different and many other people that witness this saw that it wasn't like the others because Jesus heard the voice of his father (Matt 3:17, NIV): "And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'" You can say that God was proud of Jesus for taking this step closer to his

father's love. Jesus preaches how John the Baptist is used. I believe that both Jesus and John were similar because even though John wasn't the Messiah, he was still being used to show the gospel of God, but you can say that Jesus was a better version of John but better. Jesus allowed his teaching to influence people so that can see the healing that God wanted for them so they could receive the love that he had for them.

In the next chapter, "Love" Flusser explains the teaching and how he went about to those around him. Flusser shows three things in the chapter "love" on (p. 55) "Revolution broke through at three points: the radical interpretation of the commandment of mutual love, the call for a new morality and the idea of the kingdom of heaven". These show the path that Jesus was taking for him to become the Messiah. He allowed himself to be the example of a human living on this planet and showing that he was being used by his father (God) to show believers and non-believers what God wanted from them. (Matt.5:48) "You must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Showing that Jesus teaching were to reach out to you as if it was God reaching out to you himself, because it was him using his son to get close to you with the love of Jesus. He reaches out to those in need of love and healing so they can feel the presents of God in their hearts and feel some joy that they were missing. (p. 61) "Jesus mentioned the biblical commandment.... "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.... (Deut.6:5). This chapter was showing Flusser that love was being used to bring in the people to God because love has a big impact towards people all over. To have love be brought to you and feel what God want you to receive allows people to gain this strength that they didn't have before. Jesus showed people that he was the son of God but still be equal to people around him because that what his father wanted him to show

Lastly in the chapter, "Death" speaks of the situation happening before Jesus was killed. This chapter explains (p. 138) "WE have noted earlier that in the first three Gospels, the Pharisees are not mentioned in connection with the trial of Jesus." He was going through so much because many non-believers thought that Jesus wanted power and Kings saw what they believed he wanted was that. Jesus was there to share the Gospel of his Father's Love for mankind even if they didn't see that for their own eyes. Jesus treated like an animal from the guard to kicking him until hid final moment on the cross where he died. To know your finals day to come wasn't easy for Jesus to know but no matter what he was determine to get God's word across so that many people could hear it and receive the healing of love from God even if it led to Jesus dying on the cross, he did want need to be done. (p. 144) "How could Jesus speak in this manner? He must have known that he had come to the end of his life... Elijah and Enoch never died, but were taken up into heaven" (Mark 8:28 and par.). At the end Jesus was a prophet that traveled all over Israel to preach and teach the Gospel of God for those that needed it. Never imaging that he would be killed for doing what God wanted him to do. (p.139) "Joseph of Arimathea begged Pilate to let him have the corpse (Jesus' body). He took it down, wrapped it with linen, and laid it in a tomb..." After the death of Jesus several realizing that Jesus was resurrected from the tomb allowed many to become believers of God. Jesus endures

so much pain and hurt but never gave up on his belief of God. He told God and cried out "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (p.158) he still forgive those around him that wanted him to suffer and enjoyed his pain. To be able to say that and still love was such a powerful move on Jesus because now and days that isn't the case people don't forgive, they create this hate on others allowing themselves to never grow.

From the Chapters I chose, they showed the journey of Jesus leading him to meet John allowing him to Baptize him, to showing the type of love that he was giving out to those that needed it, from the last moment of his life when it was taken from him. All of this happening was timing of God wanting to happen. He influenced people so that they became followers of God and believers of what Jesus was trying to do. Each chapter was unique in its own way. Allowing the reader(s) to get into the life of Jesus and the path that he took and the conditions he had to endure to become Messiah. This book shows us that even after death Jesus is still talked about because his believers or followers the ones that he had the opportunity to change their lives had allowed themselves to tell his life story and pass it on to the next generation and so on. Jesus had a chance to be what he wanted to be and he allowed to follow what plans God had for him and that created the love and joy we all share of Jesus.