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New Testament - Book Review
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Book Review

The Sage from Galilee

The book „**The Sage from Galilee: Reediscovering Jesus Genius**“, written by David Flusser and translated by R. Stephen Notley, was originally published in Hebrew in 1988 and finally translated into English in 2007 and published by the Eerdmans Publishing Company For the price of only $22 you can look forward to 280 pages of a brilliant paperback!

David Flusser was born in Austria in 1917 and emigrated to Palestine in 1938, where he was considered a renowned scholar of the religions of Judaism and Christianity and played an important role with the Dead Sea Scrolls. Finally, Flusser was a professor of comparative religion at a Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he died in 2000.

The book "The Sage from Galilee" is divided into a total of ten chapters, with each chapter telling a further aspect of Jesus teachings and also explaining the cultural and historical context explicitly.

Flusser begins with an overview of Jesus life and teachings and focusing on his message of the kingdom of God and his unique status as a Jewish sage. Flusser argues that Jesus teachings can only be properly understood in the context of first century Judaism.

In Chapter 2 Flusser explores Jesus teachings about the kingdom of God, arguing that Jesus saw himself as inaugurating a new era in which the kingdom of God would be fully realized. He examines the various parables and sayings in which Jesus speaks about the kingdom of God, and shows how they reflect the Jewish apocalyptic expectations of the time.

In Chapter three he examines the Beatitudes, arguing that they reflect Jesus radical message of social justice and non violence. He also explores the Lords Prayer, showing how it reflects Jesus understanding of God as a loving father who provides for his children.

In Chapter four he argues that Jesus saw himself as a reformer of Jewish law, rather than a destroyer of it. He examines various sayings and teachings of Jesus that reflect his

unique approach to the law such as his emphasis on the spirit of the law rather than the letter.

In Chapter five he examines the parables of Jesus, arguing that they reflect his unique message of the kingdom of God. He shows how the parables use vivid imagery and everyday situations to convey spiritual truths.

In Chapter six he argues that Jesus frequently used paradoxical statements to challenge his listeners and provoke deeper reflection. He examines various examples of paradoxical statements in the Gospels.

In Chapter seven he explores Jesus self understanding, arguing that he saw himself as a prophet and a sage rather than a divine being. He examines various sayings and teachings of Jesus that reflect his self understanding, such as his claim to be the Son of Man.

In Chapter eight he examines the miracles of Jesus, arguing that they reflect his unique message of the kingdom of God. He shows how the miracles were not mere displays of power, but were meant to convey spiritual truths about Gods love and compassion.

In Chapter nine he examines the crucifixion of Jesus, arguing that it was a tragedy that resulted from the clash between Jesus message of the kingdom of God and the political and religious authorities of his time.

In Chapter ten he concludes the book by exploring the resurrection of Jesus, arguing that it was a historical event that had profound theological implications. He shows how the resurrection confirmed Jesu message of the kingdom of God and provided hope for his followers.

David Flusser is a very admirable author who has dealt with the topic in detail, but there are also other authors who have created books/works that are basically connected to the same topic and explain it. Geza Vermes is the author of the book "**Jesus the Jew**" which is also about examining the Jewish context of Jesus' teachings and thereby understanding the Jewish perspective more closely than the Christian. However, both books differ a bit, because while Vermes tries to focus on the Jewish side of Jesus, Flusser tries to examine the cultural and historical context, as I mentioned earlier in the book review.

Finally, I have to say in summary that I can recommend Flusser's book to anyone who wants to take a closer look at the Christian and Jewish faith and who wants to understand the historical and cultural context of Jesus' teachings. With this work, Flusser proves his comprehensive knowledge of this topic and gives the reader a good insight into this event and can best pass on his knowledge to the readers. The only negative point I can point out here is

that the book is not suitable for people who are looking for an easy read, which you can read casually and understand immediately without really thinking about it. For me, however, this is also a positive aspect, because I like it when a reading is written a little more difficult and you can gain new knowledge through scientific aspects and still have to think about it for hours after reading it. All in all, this is a very successful work!