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Book Review : Paul the Jewish Theologian: A Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles

Paul The Jewish Theologian, was written by Brad H. Young, the president and founding member of the Gospel Research Foundation, Inc. Dr. Brad H. Young, who currently resides in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is an honorary academic on the faculty of the Graduate School of Theology at Oral Roberts University (ORU), where he spent 31 years teaching Bible and theology as a tenured professor of judaic-Christian studies. He holds a Ph.D. from Hebrew University and an M.A. from ORU. He is a native of Sapulpa, Oklahoma. Dr. Young is a known expert in the study of rabbinic and gospel parables in comparison to one another.

Young's work is titled Paul The Jewish Theologian. Throughout the 164 pages, Young encourages a thorough examination of the life, theology, and influence of the Apostle Paul on Christianity. By examining Paul's childhood, schooling, and the impact of Jewish culture on his mind and writing, he reexamines Paul's teachings from a Jewish viewpoint. The book can be found around the price of 18 dollars.

Paul's teachings have traditionally been interpreted in a variety of ways, but Young contends that many of his ideas have been misunderstood because of linguistic and

cultural barriers. The book also explores the discussions and disagreements around Paul's beliefs about the law, grace, and salvation.

The author addresses the book's subject—the Jewishness of St. Paul—in Chapter 1, "Introduction." Although Paul is typically thought of as a Christian theologian, the author contends that he was also a significant Jewish theologian who had a significant impact on the growth of Christianity. The author describes how he plans to investigate Paul's Jewishness by looking at how Paul uses Jewish sources and customs.

Young gives a biographical account of Paul's Jewish heritage in chapter 2, "Paul's Jewish Background." Paul was a well-educated Jew who was knowledgeable about Jewish Scriptures and traditions, the author contends. Paul's Pharisaic upbringing and his role in the persecution of the first Christian groups are also highlighted by the author.

Paul's theology is firmly based in the Hebrew Scriptures in chapter 3, "Paul's Theology and Scripture." With an emphasis on the covenant, election, and redemption themes, the author investigates Paul's use of the Hebrew Scriptures. The author also looks at how Paul used Jewish customs like the Shema and the Psalms.

In chapter 4, "Paul's Jewish Mysticism", Young investigates Paul's Jewish theology's mystical elements. According to the author, Paul's theology is a reflection of the Jewish mystical practice known as Merkabah, which entails the soul's climb to God's throne. Paul's use of mystical language and imagery is investigated by the author, notably in his writings to the Corinthians.

Chapter 5, "Paul's Jewish Messiah", Paul's interpretation of the Messiah in Jewish tradition is examined. The author contends that the idea of the Jewish Messiah as a Davidic king who would free the Jewish people from captivity is profoundly ingrained in

Paul's Christology. Paul's perception of Jesus as the divine Son of God and his role in atoning for humanity is also explored by the author.

Paul's attitude toward Jewish law is examined by the author in chapter 6, "Paul's Jewish Law." The author contends that the conflict between the Jewish law and the gospel message is reflected in Paul's theology. The author examines Paul's teachings on Sabbath observance, food restrictions, and circumcision in order to support his claim that Paul saw the Gospel as the accomplishment of Jewish law.

Going into chapter 7, "Paul's Jewish Ethics", Paul's grasp of Jewish ethics is examined by the author. The author contends that the Jewish tradition of the "Two Ways," which offers a framework for moral judgment, is profoundly ingrained in Paul's ethical teachings. Paul's Jewish heritage is said to have influenced his ethical teachings, according to the author, who looks at Paul's teachings on love, forgiveness, and sexual ethics.

In the last chapter, "Conclusion", the author makes the case that Paul should be seen as a Jewish theologian. The author emphasizes how crucial it is to acknowledge Paul's Jewishness in order to better understand his teachings and their connection to Jewish heritage. In order to today's Jews and Christians, the author also stresses the significance of knowing the Jewish origins of Christianity.

Overall, "Paul the Jewish Theologian" offers readers insights into Paul's life and teachings that are sometimes neglected or misinterpreted. It is a thought-provoking and thorough examination of one of Christianity's most significant individuals. This book offers a fine examination of Paul's theology and how his upbringing as a Pharisee who studied under the revered Jewish rabbi Gamaliel influenced and developed it. It will

demonstrate how he was shaped by his Jewish background and education, which, together with his experience with Christ on the Road to Damascus, had the greatest impact on his theology.

Another book that has a great insight within this topic is "Judaism and the Origins of Christianity" by David Flusser. The book is challenging to read. It is a collection of Dr. Flusser's and other scholars' most important publications, such as Brad Young. However, if it's a topic you're interested in diving deeper into, it's worth the challenge.

In Conclusion, Brad Young shows his ability to contextualize New Testament texts within their rabbinic settings in this book. Paul has been viewed by many academics as the precise tipping moment with regard to Judaism. Young, however, proves that Paul was a devout Jew who recognized Jesus (also known as Yeshua) as the Jewish Messiah. I would recommend this book for anyone who is interested in Christian Theology from the viewpoint of Apostle Paul, since it's a very easy to follow book that is also very concise.

Work Cited

*Home [HTTPS:].* (n.d.). Retrieved April 10, 2023, from <https://www.bradyoung.org/>

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