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New Testament Literature
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This is a book summary of the book "**Paul the Jewish Theologian a Pharisee Among Christians, Jews and Gentiles**" by Brad H. Young. Young is a professor of Biblical Literature in Judeo Christian Studies at the Graduate Department of Oral Roberts University (ORU). He studied under the late David Flusser and is the author of *Jesus The Jewish Theologian*, *Jesus and His Jewish Parables*, and *The Jewish Background to the Lord's Prayer*. The 164-page book that was published by Baker Academic in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1997 is available on Amazon with 4.7 star rating and is available for \$17.99 USD new and as low as \$13.76 USD in acceptable used condition.

Chapter one the "Introduction" describes "Paul (as) a Pharisee who (had) been rejected by the synagogue and (was) misunderstood by the church" (Young, pg.1). This was because they did not accept Paul's messianism vision as he traveled to Damascus. Paul was rejected by the church because Paul still identified as a Pharisee even though he parted from his Judicial heritage to become a Christian. Paul still lived his life as a Pharisaic in accordance to his family's customs but his faith in the living Messiah made his beliefs and convictions so much stronger and real for him.

Chapter two called Paul the Jewish Theologian goes deeper into Paul's background and past. The chapter goes on to explain that in order to understand Paul's letters and teachings we must look at his upbringing and faith. That only after looking at those two things then we will be able to understand and answer some of the questions that come up while reading his letters. Young goes on to say that Paul is a conceptual theologian. "Paul's theology begins with an unshakable faith in the one God of Israel. Paul Possesses a great love, derived from his rich Hebrew heritage, for all humanity" (Young). This made the Torah and its passages have a deeper meaning for Paul because he understood Jesus to be the Messiah. The living God.

Chapter three called Pentecost, the Nations of the World, and the Apostle Paul we talk about the Holy Spirit, where the Spirit comes from, how the Spirit operates, and it's work through us. "They witnessed the tongues of fire resting on the heads of those filled with the spirit" Acts 2 says. "Visitors from all parts of the world who had made pilgrimage to Jerusalem heard the early Christians speaking about the wonderful works of God in the different languages of the nations" (Young, pg. 57- 58) This just chapter just shows God's love for us and the different ways that the early church would do to celebrate God 's love through the different holidays and how it would renew the believer's strength in God.

Chapter four called Judaism and Christianity: Diverse Perspectives on Torah is a deeper dive of the Torah. This chapter asks the question of was the Torah quest fulfilled and if it was is it still even relevant for today? The short answer is yes. The Torah was the building blocks on which Judaism and Christianity were built upon. "Jesus taught "think not that I have come to abolish the law and prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill" (Young, pg. 62). To me this mean that we are not free from the law as some might think but rather a freedom of choice. The laws are still there to protect us and to guide us but we ultimately have the right to accept it of dismiss it.

Chapter five named The Torah: Roots of Grace and Faith in Paul's Message starts the chapter by reminding us that the God of the Old Testament is still the God of the New Testament and he is full of mercy and grace and that only through this grace we're are granted salvation because salvation can not be earned. "God is ready to receive repentant sinners and even gives them a position of preference" (Young, pg. 73). In return God asks for faithfulness and righteousness. He wants our lives to be fully transformed.

In Chapter 6 called Torah: The Dead letter or the Living Word? Paul goes on describe a marriage of if the spouse is still living then the law of the marriage remains but if the spouse dies

then the other spouse is release from the law of the marriage. The Torah is still a living word and we as Christians are still bound to it. Young goes on to say that “As Christians we should take the study of the Torah and Jewish approaches to the Bible very seriously” (Young, pg. 87). For Christ is the end of the law...” (Young pg.87).

In Chapter 7 called The Transcendence of Torah in Paul’s Teachings the Torah is being compare to light from within and as believers we carry that light with us. The chapter then goes on to explain that that light that is in the Torah and within us is the divine light of God shining through us and that others (non-believer’s) can see that light and may wonder what it is and be attracted to it as well.

In Chapter 8 called Love as the Foundation of Christian Ministry: The Model of 1 Corinthians 13 this is known for being Paul’s love chapter and is often used in weddings. However, you can see that Paul is dealing with a number of complex problems while writing. You can see some of these problems in chapter 12 and in chapter 14 but in chapter 13 it as though Paul takes a break from these issues and instead decides to talk about his faith and love for Christ and his love for the church and how this love needs to be our foundation.

The only reading that I could compare this book to is History of Christianity: An Enthralling Overview of the Most Important Events that Shaped the Christian Church by Billy Wellman. This book that was recently released in February of 2023 and goes over the highlight in the history of Christianity from the life and ministry Jesus, the early church, through the middle ages and up to the modern ages. Although the content of both of these books aren’t the same that are both written very similarly with the way the authors explain themselves and what the early church and Paul’s view points were.

In Conclusion I really did enjoy reading this book. I would say it had quite a few gold nuggets that really made me think if I agreed with the author's view points or not. I thought that the author explained himself very well and back himself up with the word of God and other note worthy authors who have dedicated their lives not only to Christ but to studying his word in order to learn more about him and to grow closer to him in their daily walk.