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Book Review

New Testament

4/25/2023

Book Review: The Sage from Galilee Rediscovering Jesus' Genius

The *Sage from Galilee Rediscovering Jesus' Genius* is a book written by David Flusser with R. Steven Notley. David Flusser, (1917-2000), was a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He was a professor of early Christianity and Second Temple Judaism. He was also a member of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, and he was a recipient of the national Israel prize in 1980 due to his academic achievements. R. Steven Notley is known to be a professor of biblical studies at Nyack College in New York City. He is also known to be both a member and past director of the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research. The content of this book is filled with information regarding the biographical perspectives of Jesus, offering insight of the Jewish faith and life during his time.

In chapter 1 titled *Sources*, it covers the importance of the book, mentioning on (p.1), "The only important Christian sources concerning Jesus are the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The rest of the New Testament tells us almost nothing about his life." The book directs us in where to find the accounts of Jesus' life, which are the four gospels listed above. Chapter 1 also helps us understand the importance of having access to Jewish material of the same time period Jesus lived, connected to Judaism, which will aid in the process of understanding scriptural context.

Chapter 2 focuses on the ancestry of Jesus. It introduces the readers to the name of Jesus, known to be a common Greek form of the name Joshua. This chapter also informs of Jesus' father and brothers, which were James, Joses, Judah, and Simon (Mark 6). There is also information regarding the genealogies of Jesus and the gospels to find such information. This book also informs of the ethnicity of Jesus, along with estimated time of his baptism (p.9). The chapter sheds light on the Jewish culture regarding the age in which one is considered to be an adult, which is twelve years old. This information that the book brings helps us understand how people may have regarded Jesus, and how he interacted with others during His time period. This chapter ends with explanations of why Jesus did not return to His hometown, Nazareth, where people were familiar with him, but rather, He went on to Capernaum after His baptism, aiding in our understanding of Jesus' movements.

In chapter 5, some noteworthy points are found on (p.60) stating, “ In Hebrew the phrase can also mean, “as though he were yourself.” The commandment then reads, ‘Love your neighbor for he is like yourself .’ The Sirach knew of this interpretation when he demanded that one forgive one’s neighbor his trespasses, for it is a sin to withhold mercy from ‘a man like himself’ (Sir. 28:3-5)”. This is important information to grasp and take note of. This book provides different sources, surrounding the famous sayings of Jesus, which help us analyze and contextualize His teachings according to that specific time period.

Chapter 12, the final chapter, is the Epilogue , speaking of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus, along with introducing to us the second revolution regarding the birthing of the Gentle church, along with an image titled “The Remains of the Roman road to Emmaus” (p.163). The book contains strengths, bringing to light the historical context surrounding the time period of Jesus, through images and different correlating sources outside of the Bible.

This book concludes with acknowledgement of Jesus' teachings, and its relevance today, despite the internal revisions to the material. The overall book is a great read for anyone who is willing to do a deeper search into the context of the scriptures found in the New Testament. The book sheds light on the scriptures of Jesus, and helps bring understanding in regards to the historical and cultural context. The layout of this book provides an easy-to-read layout of information that can be analyzed and studied. The provision of diverse sources of information is a great guide into understanding the context of scripture in a deeper, insightful way.