

David Flusser with R. Steven Notely, *The Sage from Galilee: Rediscovering Jesus' Genius*, 2007. 4th Edition. P#. 165. ISBN: 978-0-8028-2587-2.

The new edition of David Flusser's study of Jesus' history and will be accepted everywhere by scholars of early Judaism and Christianity, by professors and students. With Flusser's experience with modern archeological discoveries and ancient literary studies, *The Sage from Galilee* serves a new modern twist on the telling of Jesus life while keeping in context of Jewish faith and life in His time. *The Sage from Galilee* is a result of almost six decades of study by some of the world's most reputable Jewish influencers on the New Testament and early Christianity. As a Christian, I found out new and challenging concepts in these pages.

On page one, Chapter one opens up with its blunt statement that the main reason this book was originally made, was to show that it is possible to write the Jesus' life story. It goes on to explain the many different sources were we can learn more about the life of Jesus and get a better understanding of the type of person He was while on earth. After stating the books purpose it goes on to explain how the main sources to write about Jesus life is found in the New Testament and those are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The author addresses the issue that accounts of Jesus will be hard to find in any non-Christian documentation. He then goes on to explain how this is absolute across all different beliefs. Using Moses, Buddha, and Mohammed and goes on to explain how usually you can only find such information from 'believers'. Flusser addresses this issue and it sets the tone from the whole book excellently.

Chapter 2, page six, begins by explaining where Jesus got his name from and what it actually means and its literal translation. This chapter really goes over the ancestry of Jesus. It explains how his bloodline links with King David and ho God promised King David that Jesus or 'the messiah' would be born

through his bloodline. We see how God kept that promise to David through Jesus' life. The chapter ends with a question about Mary, the mother of Jesus questioning whether or not her faith and hope was restored when her son resurrected from death. This was a tasteful way to close the chapter since it left the reader thinking, and kept the reader active and interested while reading.

On page eight-teen Chapter Three begins speaking on John the Baptist and his ministry and purpose for Jesus on the earth. In Chapter three we see on page twenty, twenty-four, twenty-seven, we see illustrational pictures used as references in the text so that the reader can better understand the context of the actual text. This was a great way to better explain what the author was trying to portray by showing his audience exactly what he was talking about through pictures. In the concluding paragraph of chapter three we see a quote from Jesus himself comparing himself to John the Baptist. In His quote we see how he is expressing how it is difficult to please people. This shows Jesus frustration and his human nature, this allows the reader to better understand what exactly the point Jesus was trying to make. This allows the reader to have a better revelation of this part of scripture.

In Chapter four it speaks about Paul, and how after his encounter with Jesus, on the road to Damascus, he changes his life. Not only that but how He (Jesus) put the burden on his heart to reach out to the Jewish peoples. In order to do this Paul had to continue to follow the Jewish laws. He states that Jesus did not come to abolish the law but to follow it. This went against what many believed at the time. Most Pharisees and Sadducees felt that Jesus had come to start a revolt and take over the Roman Empire and to break the laws. But instead Jesus came to do the opposite. And that was a fresh and new idea at the time. This made it easier for the gospel to be spread to the Jewish peoples, because they were more willing to receive the message knowing that they do

not need to break any laws in order to be saved. This chapter eloquently describes these points in an easy way for the reader to understand. It quotes scripture to back up its points and makes sure to cite its sources so that the reader can know where they got their information. It also has many pictures that illustrate the text for the reader.

Chapter five speaks about the deep and all-consuming love that Jesus had for the world in general. Flusser used three points to convince his audience that revolution breaks out through love. On page fifty-five we see the three points listed in the first paragraph. The author thoroughly explains each point while using scripture to back up his points and in the end ties it all together with how Jesus portrayed these three points in his ministry and that is how he was able to spark revolution. And it all started with love.

Chapter six is about ethics. Flusser goes on to explain what ethics is and how it applies to the Bible and Jesus' life. This chapter was slightly more of a complex concept that was more difficult to grasp. At the end of the chapter it also ends with a thought-provoking question. This helps the reader to think more about what the chapter has just went over and keeps the reader engaged.

On page seventy-six, chapter seven speaks on the Kingdom of Heaven. It starts off by sharing the story of when people sent spies in to scout out Jesus and they asked him if they should pay taxes, and basically, Jesus cleverly says yes while still giving the glory to God. It goes on to explain how many people believed that Jesus was trying to start a revolt against the Roman Empire and how they felt that Jesus was to lead this revolution. But what they could not understand was that Jesus was there to liberate them from sin and death and not from the Romans.

Chapters eight and nine are kind of tied together. They both speak on how Jesus was the Son of God and the Son of Man in one. This concept suggests

that Jesus was one hundred percent human while being one hundred percent man. This shows to the human side of Jesus and the supernatural side of Jesus that we can never truly relate to. But the basic fact that Jesus was human like us causes us to relate to Jesus in a way that makes it easy to believe that he understands us, whenever we go through hardships. In both of these chapters there is a lot of quotation of scriptures and quotes from Jesus himself. This allows the reader to clearly see how Jesus was really a full man and God in one body.

In Chapter ten Flusser speaks on Jerusalem and how Jesus knew beforehand that this was the place where he was to be crucified. It shows his willingness to die in our place for our sins. In the chapter we see pictures as illustrations for the text, and it helps us the readers to better picture in our minds what Jerusalem looks like and the type of setting Jesus was in.

Chapter eleven spoke on the death of Jesus Christ. It explains how there is some confusion with the book of Mark on the exact time certain events took place. But in the end the message in the Bible is clear, that Jesus died and resurrected.

In the closing chapter, Chapter twelve the author refers to himself, which can be preserved as unprofessional in some instances, but Flusser basically states that he feels that he has accomplished his goal for the book, and that he has proven that you can write a book on the story of Jesus' life.

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