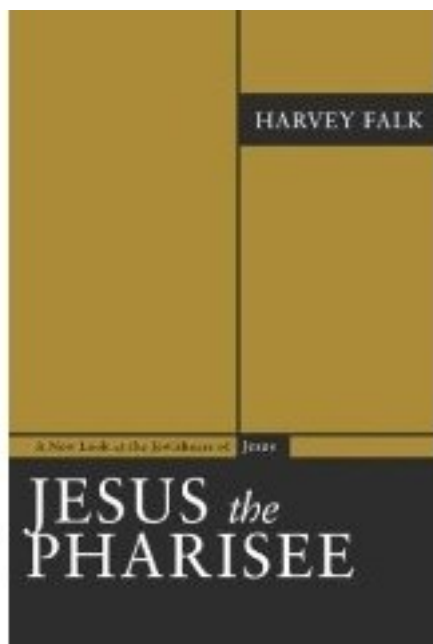


Jesus the Pharisee: A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus



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Harvey Falk, a rabbinic writer believes that Jesus can only be understood as an observant Jew who upheld most of the doctrine of the School of Hillel against the School of Shammai (although he broke with Hillel on the subject of divorce.) He sees Jesus as on a mission to encourage the gentiles to follow the Noahide laws (the seven commandments given to Noah which all righteous gentiles must follow according to Judaism in order to achieve salvation.) He sees many condemnations of the Pharisees in the Christian Gospels as reflecting the often quite contentious disputes between the two schools.

Falk's style of writing is more likely to be familiar to Jews who have learned Talmudic defenses of halacha than to Christians. Falk goes both forward and back in rabbinic history to justify actions of Jesus. The book is extensively footnoted with reference to rabbinic texts.

Although I believe that Falk stretches things at times to indicate that Jesus and his followers always followed Jewish law (picking grain from the field on the Sabbath probably was not to forestall starvation,) he makes an excellent case that Jesus was primarily observant. (Although Christians often believe that healing the sick by prayer on the Sabbath was forbidden (Matthew 12:9-14), it was not explicitly forbidden by Jewish law and the text probably refers to a dispute between the schools of Hillel and Shammai on how high the "wall" should be around the laws of keeping the Sabbath.)

The book presents a vivid picture of the first century and its theological disputes. Falk looks at scriptures of Judaism, Christianity and the Dead Sea Scrolls to convey the contemporary controversies of that time.

I highly recommend this book both to Christians who want to understand the Jewish roots of Christianity and elucidate heretofore obscure sections of the Gospels, as well as to Jews who want to understand a first century rabbi whose teachings have largely been excluded from Jewish studies. Note that Falk is NOT a messianic Jew and believes in a dual covenant theory of salvation. His book was done primarily to foster understanding and dialogue between the two religions.

作者介绍:

目录:

[Jesus the Pharisee: A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus_ 下载链接1](#)

标签

宗教

评论

[Jesus the Pharisee: A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus_ 下载链接1](#)

书评

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