



The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation

Brad Young

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Fully one-third of Jesus words in the Synoptic Gospels occur in parables. It could be said that knowing the parables is essential for understanding the person of Christ. In his newest work on the parables, Brad Young displays his unique perspective as a scholar steeped in both Jewish and Christian studies. While parables have timeless messages, reinterpretations in new contexts throughout the centuries have distorted the original meanings and undermined the essence of what Jesus intended for his initial listeners. Young examines the parables that best illustrate the parallels between the rabbinic and Gospel parables. Young challenges readers to remember that first-century Judaism was not merely the backdrop for Jesus teachings but the very stage from which Jesus delivered the message of the kingdom. Jesus ethics and theology can be properly understood only in the light of first-century Jewish teachings. Young focuses on the historical development and theological significance of parables in both traditions, then he examines five theological subjects that are dealt with in parables: prayer, grace, reconciliation, calling, and sovereignty. "This great new book by Brad H. Young is a decisive step in the right direction. Like his previous books, this innovative work on the parables shows that Jesus is both a foundation of the Christian faith and at the same time an integral part of Second Temple period Judaism. Jewish thought is not " as is often claimed" merely a background for Jesus but is in reality the original context and natural framework of his message. Few people have recognized this basic fact, not only because of inveterate Christian inhibitions but also because it is a very rarecase that a New Testament scholar can break the language barrier and move freely in the Hebrew and Aramaic sources of early Judaism proficiently, as Young is able to do. Similarly, Jewish scholars often do not use their advantage in this area of research and sometimes cannot move freely in the Christian material because even they are not always free from their own inherited inhibitions. All who are involved in the study of Judaism, however, as well as everyone seeking a better understanding of Jesus, will be challenged by Young's creative and solid research." (From the foreword)" David Flusser, Professor Emeritus of Second Temple Period Judaism and Early Christianity, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

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James Murray:

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