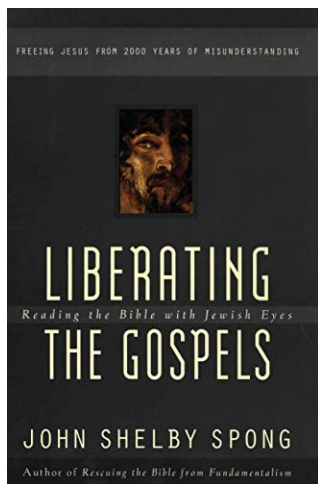


[PDF] Liberating The Gospels: Reading The Bible With Jewish Eyes

John Shelby Spong - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: Liberating the Gospels: Reading the Bible with Jewish Eyes
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Building upon his earlier conclusions that Jesus' Jewishness is the key to understanding Jesus' life and work (This Hebrew Lord), Spong contends that the failure to read the Gospels as fundamentally Jewish impoverishes many traditional Christian readings. Tracing the history of New Testament interpretation, Spong demonstrates the tendencies among Christian interpreters to read the Gospels as documents addressing primarily an audience of Greek Gentile Christians rather than as narratives connected to the broader history of Judaism. Spong relies on a wide range of New Testament scholarship to argue that the form and content of the Gospels reflects not Greek influence or concerns but a peculiarly Jewish outlook on matters of religion and culture. Thus, for Spong, the Gospels are neither objective accounts of historical events nor biographies of Jesus but midrashim, or interpretive narratives, connecting the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth to the history, literature and religion of Judaism. For example, he isolates the symbolic roles that certain characters from the Hebrew Bible, like Elijah and Joseph, play in transmitting the story of Jesus to a

Jewish audience. While Spong's conclusions about the value of reading the Gospels through Jewish lenses are neither new nor exciting, his forceful readings of the Gospels and his imaginative speculations about biblical figures are sure to provoke heated discussion among Christian interpreters.

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From Library Journal Spong, the Episcopal bishop of Newark, New Jersey, and a leader in the movement for liberal Christianity, is the author of a number of controversial books, including *Resurrection: Myth or Reality? A Bishop Rethinks the Origins of Christianity* (LJ 3/1/94). He has now added another volume that is sure to provoke argument. Spong tries to place Jesus and the New Testament in a Jewish context inasmuch as the early Christians sprang from a Jewish background that stressed the midrashic (or teaching) tale. He argues that many stories of the New Testament were not originally understood to be based on fact and that getting away from the literalism of many New Testament passages bolsters rather than hinders Christian belief. After considering the contemporary religious scene today, Spong gives background on the early Christian world. He then discusses the major books of the New Testament and the pivotal issues raised by each book. Many readers will find much to disagree with, but it will have a wide readership nevertheless. Paul Kaplan, Lake Villa District Lib., Ill.

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