



Flusser, David

| Rudin, A. James

David Flusser

Professor David Flusser, a practicing Orthodox Jew and a well-known figure among Jewish and Christian scholars, passed away September 2000 in Jerusalem, at the age of 83. The following is from an appreciation written by Rabbi A. James Rudin, Senior Interreligious Adviser of the American-Jewish Committee, as published and disseminated by the Religion News Service:

David Flusser, Professor of Comparative Religion at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, was revered and respected in both the Jewish and the Christian communities. Born in Vienna and raised in Prague, Flusser immigrated to Israel on the eve of World War II when he was 20.

Because he lived in Israel, Flusser was able to devote his life to the intensive study of the Jewish roots of Christianity, especially the Jewishness of Jesus. Flusser's classic work, *Jesus*, was translated into 11 languages.

Flusser asserted that Jesus lived and died as a faithful Jew. Executed by the Roman occupiers of ancient Israel, Jesus never meant to establish a new religion nor even a new sect within existing Judaism, whose fundamentals he never questioned. A master of the traditional Jewish texts in Hebrew and Aramaic, and thoroughly at home with Latin, Greek and Arabic as well, Flusser was able to separate the historically verifiable material about Jesus from the later Gospel writings and works by early Christians.

Many Christians, including Marvin R. Wilson, Professor of Biblical Studies at Gordon College, welcomed Flusser's research on Jesus: "I was privileged to know Professor Flusser. His impact, as a Jew, upon New Testament studies was for many Christians quite revolutionary. He leaves a deep hole in Biblical scholarship."

David Flusser was, indeed, one of Israel's intellectual crown jewels a giant of the human spirit.

Rabbi A. James Rudin

Flusser's wide-reaching academic influence on the re-reading of the New Testament and his great ability to gather friends around the world are honored in the Festschrift "The New Testament and Christian-Jewish Dialogue," Immanuel 24/25 (1990), edited by Malcolm F. Lowe. Included is the only existing comprehensive bibliography of his prolific work.

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