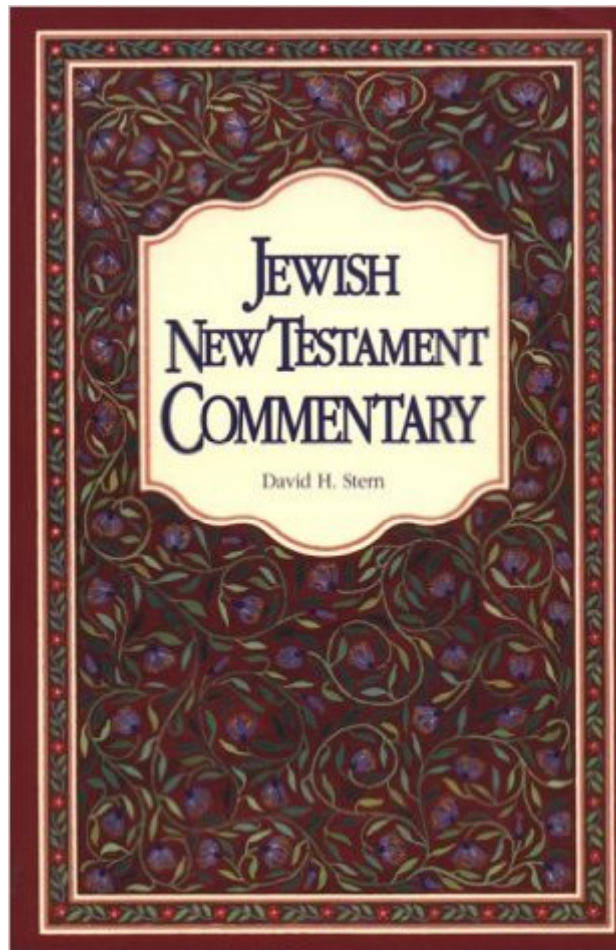


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Jewish New Testament Commentary: A Companion Volume To The Jewish New Testament



Synopsis

- The Torah (Law of Moses)--is it in full force today? Yeshua (Jesus) said, "Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah... I have come not to abolish, but to complete." What did he mean? - Sha'ul (Paul) wrote, "All Israel will be saved." Was he speaking of all Jews? Messianic Jews (Jews who believe Yeshua is the Messiah)? The Church? Who is Israel? - Why did Yeshua juxtapose the saying, "Do not store up for yourselves wealth here on earth" and "The eye is the light of the body"? Dr. David Stern, a Messianic Jew living in Jerusalem, speaks to these and other issues in the Jewish New Testament Commentary. In this companion volume to his widely read and highly acclaimed "Jewish New Testament," he offers an exciting and original way of understanding the New Testament from a Jewish point of view.

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Customer Reviews

I write this review for two reasons: (1) to attempt to be helpful to those interested in buying the book, and (2) in an unashamed attempt to persuade those interested in buying the book that they should buy it. The absolute worst thing about this commentary is that it is not enough. It is ample as far as most commentaries are concerned, boasting almost a thousand pages of commentary on the New Testament. But the commentary is so good that it invariably leaves the reader wanting even more. First, while this commentary would be a great commentary on its own, and would still elicit five stars from me (more if I could), this commentary is by far best experienced in tandem with Stern's Jewish New Testament or the Complete Jewish Bible (My advice--purchase the Complete Jewish

Bible--see my review there). In this commentary, one of the things Stern does is explain in detail why he has chosen to render certain passages in the way he has chosen. The purchase of one of those books is highly--I repeat: HIGHLY--recommended. But wait...there's more! Obviously, this commentary is more than an apologetic work by Stern to defend his Jewish New Testament. While the above paragraph is true, the commentary is primarily a fully competent, well researched, well supported, well written commentary on the New Testament (or B'rit Hadashah). Stern's goal (my words, not his) in writing this commentary is to show the inherent Jewish backdrop to the New Testament, and how that backdrop forms the stage for all of the things we read on those pages. His premise is that to understand the New Testament, you must understand the context within which it was written. Stern does a masterful job of accomplishing his goal. The commentary itself is easily manageable, well written, and very easy to understand--and mildly informal at times. Since this commentary is the work of one man, it has some drawbacks and benefits. For one, the author is able to insert the informal element which makes the work so appealing. Of course the obvious drawback is that it is only one man's work--one man is only able to perform one man's research. That said, I feel confident in saying that you'll hardly notice the drawback just mentioned. Stern's scholarship in this piece is truly great. Furthermore, many of you will appreciate (as I do) that Stern is willing to admit his ignorance where appropriate. The commentary is, in short, fantastic. After reading this commentary in your study of the New Testament you will understand passages which you never understood before--even passages from the Old Testament where those themes cross over to the New (which is frequent). This commentary will paint a picture of the New Testament to which many of us have never been exposed. My hope is that this review has been helpful--my greater hope is that I have persuaded you to buy this book--I am unable to laud it enough! You will do yourself a great disservice if you pass this one up!

The reviews of this Commentary that criticize it for being a deceptive conversion tool are surprising to me. A careful but brief review of the back cover and the summary write-up on this page should make it clear what this is: first, one man's version of a New Testament commentary, nothing more or less; and, second, a commentary written with an explicit Jewish perspective on the New Testament, intended to highlight for any reader (but probably more intended for Western Gentiles) the "Jewishness" of Christ and the First Century setting of the New Testament. Ironically, while some have criticized this work for being a deceptive piece intended to convert Jews, I think that the author's desire is to "convert" Christians to a more Jewish perspective. Stern clearly and persuasively (and repeatedly) condemns historical Christian persecution of Jews, and makes great efforts to remind

readers of the "connection" between Christians and their undeniable Jewish roots. Anyway, the bottom line for me is that this is another useful tool for anyone's library if you desire a unique and helpful perspective for New Testament studies. If that's what you want, then this should be on your shelf. If you are expecting an indictment of the New Testament, this isn't one and you'll be surprised by this book as others have been.

David Stern has done a remarkable job interpreting the New Testament from a Messianic Jewish perspective. His expertise in Jewish culture, tradition, and belief bring fresh insights to the student of the New Testament. He sometimes quotes from the Talmud or other ancient sources that help amplify New Testament comments. His understanding of Jesus, Paul, and the Apostles as Jewish help us discern what was in the author's mind, one of the goals of good interpretation. Though the commentary is not thorough or greatly detailed, many of its insights are not just the same old recirculated ones found in most commentaries. Stern's work is not just a large research paper, but offers material that is unique. As a pastor of over 20 years and a serious student of the Word, I consider this work invaluable and would not want to be without it.

I love browsing in this book, and when people ask me questions about how Jewish people have felt about the issue of Messiah, I reach for this volume! I love how David presents the many sides of each issue, letting the reader come to his own conclusions. The book is well-written, concise, thoughtful, and well-balanced. :) It's one of the books in my library I refer to over and over-- whether I am speaking with believers or not. :)

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