

Paul the Jew  
W. R. Stegner

*In Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*

1. Introduction and Paul's Autobiographical Statements

What major shift has taken place in Pauline scholarship in recent years according to Stegner?

Summarize the major points of Stegner's discussion of Philippians 3:4—6. Why does he think it is significant that Paul claims to be a Benjaminite? What is significant about his use of the phrase "a Hebrew of Hebrews"? Why is it significant that he says he is "*as to the Law* a Pharisee," rather than simply "a Pharisee"?

What language does Stegner think Paul spoke at home? (Notice that he gives a different answer than Roetzel.)

2. Paul's Formal Education

Stegner thinks Paul received a formal education in Judaism beyond the basic level that all Jewish boys would have received. What *evidence* from Paul's own letters does he present to suggest this?

3. Paul's Apocalyptic Worldview

Rather than provide a definition of "apocalyptic" and show how Paul's thought conforms to that definition, Stegner discusses several aspects of Paul's thought (resurrection, belief in two ages, revelation, mystery) and claims that these are "clearly apocalyptic." How does Stegner see Paul's use these ideas as different from the way other apocalyptic thinkers used them?

Briefly describe Paul's understanding of the "mystery" of God's plan. How do the Jews fit into this plan according to Paul?

4. Paul's Self-Understanding

What Pauline passage does Stegner think enables us to see Paul's self-understanding as a Jew better than any other?

How, according to Stegner, did Paul view himself as a Jew?

How did he view the relationship between traditional Jewish faith and faith in Jesus?

### 5. Paul's Mysticism

Briefly define the term "mysticism." What makes a particular view or practice a *mystical* view or practice?

What passage from Paul's letters best describes Paul's own mystical experiences?

What does the Hebrew term *merkaba* mean, and how might it be related to Paul's thought?

What aspects of Paul's comments in 2 Corinthians 12:1—4 suggest a connection with Merkabah mysticism?

### 6. Paul and Torah

Briefly describe the opposing views of R. Bultmann and E.P. Sanders regarding Paul's view of Torah. What, according to Sanders, was Bultmann's key mistake?

Briefly summarize the "new perspective on Paul and the Law." How has J.D.G. Dunn advanced the "new perspective"?

Why is the issue of "table fellowship" relevant to Paul's view of the Law?

How, according to the new perspective, can Paul say no to some provisions of the Law while saying yes to others? What makes this possible?

Stegner points out that while the new perspective has solved some longstanding problems in the interpretation of Paul, other problems are left unanswered. What are those other problems?