



A BOOK REVIEW BY RACHEL YAU

APPRENTICED TO JESUS:

LEARNING FROM HIM, LIVING LIKE HIM

ROBERT M SOLOMON

— Let's start!

WHAT IS THE BOOK ABOUT?



The book covers important themes in the Christian faith over 9 different parts,

with each part further broken down into short chapters. The author uses familiar bible stories, and gives readers greater insights by weaving them with contemporary application of God's Word. The bite-sized chapters end with three discussion questions, which help readers to process and reflect on what they have read. The following are snippets and reflections of two chapters in the book.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT THE BOOK? WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM IT?

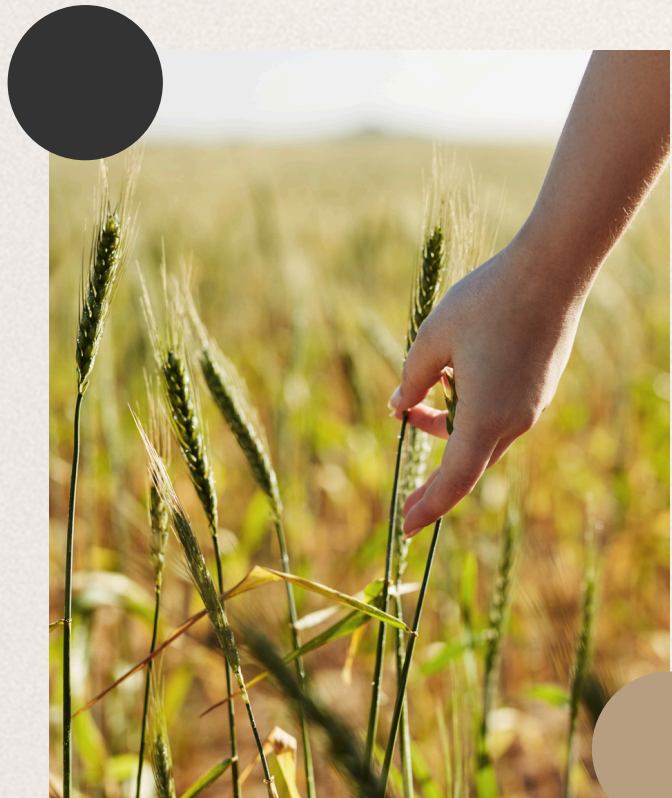
CHAPTER 2: A TALE OF TWO HISTORIES

I learnt about the notion of 'recapitulation' which is explained in this chapter. Second-century church father Irenaeus used it to refer to Jesus. He wrote, "When He became incarnate and was made man, He recapitulated in Himself the long history of man, summing up and giving us salvation in order that we might receive again in Christ Jesus what we had lost in Adam, that is, the image and likeness of God."

Today, we use the abbreviated word 'recap' to indicate a summing up of the main points. According to Irenaeus, the doctrine of recapitulation has to do with what Christ has done in human history and beyond – **Jesus sums up a new history for humankind.**

Paul also echoes the same idea in his writings. In Romans 5:18-19, he wrote:

"Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."



Paul was referring to the first Adam and described how sin and death came to this world through him. Jesus, on the other hand, was sent by God to reverse that story.

The old history of Adam can be summarised as:

tree → temptation → sin → death → destruction

The new history of Jesus renews and reverses that history:

tree → temptation → righteousness → death → new eternal life

The cross of Jesus reverses the effects of the fall in the Garden. One tree changed the history of the other.

For this to effectively happen, God had to come in the Person of Jesus to go through all the stages of human life, to retrace the steps of Adam in order to reverse the story.

Christmas is the story of how through Jesus' sinless life, sacrificial death, and victorious Resurrection, **Jesus pioneered a new story for us and invites us to be with Him and His story through faith and obedience. He has changed our history and destiny.**

We can be a part of the new history if we are united with Jesus by believing in Him as our Saviour, submitting our lives to Him as our Lord.



CHAPTER 5: JESUS AND JACOB



Bishop Solomon compares the nature of Jacob and Jesus. Jacob was plagued by anxiety and was deceptive. At birth, it was recorded that “his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau’s heel; so he was named Jacob” (Genesis 25:26). Later, Jacob also deceives his father Isaac into giving him the blessing of the firstborn that was meant for Esau.

Jesus, on the other hand, had a completely different nature from Jacob. In Philippians 2:5-7, the bible says “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” While Jacob was born grasping, Jesus was born not grasping. Jesus instead emptied and gave Himself to His Father’s will and purpose.

Jesus’ giving hands were eventually nailed to the cross. Jesus, the perfect Israelite, gave away everything out of sacrificial love. While Jacob stole his brother’s blessings, Jesus came to take away the curse of sin over all humans, and to give all the blessing of eternal life.

When Isaac blessed Jacob, he said, “May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you.” (Gen 27:29)

Bishop Solomon insightfully highlights that similar thoughts are expressed in a hymn about Jesus in Philippians 2: 9-11. “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every other name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

The contrast between Jacob and Jesus is evident: Jacob is reduced into insignificance by the immensity of who Jesus is. While Jacob would be a respected leader of men, Jesus is the Lord who is worshipped by all mankind. Jesus is not simply superior to Jacob; He is Jacob’s God.

HOW DOES THIS BOOK HELP ME GROW AS DISCIPLES@TPMC TO



LOVE GOD



LOVE ONE ANOTHER



LOVE ONE MORE



LOVE OUR CHURCH

Prior to reading this book, I never thought about comparing Jacob to Jesus. Bishop Solomon's knowledgeable insights have given me a refreshed perspective on familiar bible characters. He also includes stories of different missionaries and also of John Wesley's life. From these stories, Bishop Solomon leads readers into thought-provoking discussion questions. Some of these questions are more straight-forward than others. Reading this book and reflecting on the discussion questions at the end of each chapter has helped me to go deeper into God's Word. I strongly recommend Bishop Solomon's book to anyone seeking a refreshed perspective on God. This is a practical, easy-to-read manual for all who want to be apprenticed to Jesus.

Rachel has been a member of TPMC since 2020 and is part of ABC Connect Group (All About Christ). She serves in Children's Ministry (Kindies) and enjoys working out at spin and pilates classes during her free time.