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Religion and Spirituality (http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/religion_and_spirituality.aspx)

Paul the Jew

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The [apostle Paul](http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/religion-and-spirituality-why-saul-changed-name-paul/2866.aspx) (<http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/religion-and-spirituality-why-saul-changed-name-paul/2866.aspx>) and his writings have been increasingly prominent at the annual November conference of the Society of Biblical Literature. Abstracts of papers to be presented this year are currently being made available. One such, which is of great interest, was posted by Torrey Seland on his "[Philo of Alexandria](http://philoblogger.blogspot.com/2007_06_01_archive.html#419227093626051201)" (http://philoblogger.blogspot.com/2007_06_01_archive.html#419227093626051201)" blog on June 27, 2007.

"The interpretation of the "Tora"—and all that was included in this very complex expression—was the central topic in early Judaism and was handled in a wide range of different theological concepts. The diversity of these concepts can be highlighted by the differing theology in the scriptures of Qumran, Jewish pseudepigrapha and the writings of Philo and Josephus. According to these results it can be shown, that the theology of the apostle Paul has to be understood as an inner-Jewish dialogue about the right fulfillment and interpretation of scripture—but not as an "abrogation of the Tora", as often suggested by some exegetes. Paul was Jew—and he remained Jew also in his Christian times. As a Christian he did not abrogate the Tora, but adopted the position of a liberal Tora-interpretation that was already present in early Judaism" (Markus Tiwald, University of Vienna, Paul: Apostle of Christ and Jew).

This is a valuable topic, as Paul is so often seen and read outside of the Jewish milieu from which he came.

