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Book Review: New Creation in Paul's Letters

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Besides these essays, there are one or two other illuminating pieces (e.g., de Villiers' essay entitled "Reflections on Creation and Humankind in Psalm 8, the Septuagint and Hebrews") and a few less illuminating pieces. As such, this expensive book is best borrowed, not purchased.

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T. Ryan Jackson. *New Creation in Paul's Letters: A Study of the Historical and Social Setting of a Pauline Concept*. WUNT 2.272. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010. xvi + 232 pp. £59.00/\$117.50.

This monograph is a slightly revised version of the author's PhD thesis completed at the University of Cambridge. Jackson's chief aim is to investigate the content and function of Paul's new creation thought within Galatians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans. His central thesis is that new creation explicates Paul's "eschatologically infused soteriology which involves the individual, the community and the cosmos and which is inaugurated in the death and resurrection of Christ" (p. 6).

In chapter one, Jackson sets the stage for his argument by providing a brief overview of scholarly literature related to the meaning of new creation in Paul. Jackson rightly notes that scholars have interpreted this Pauline notion primarily in three distinct ways (anthropologically, cosmologically, and communally) and have generally speaking kept these three interpretations at arms' length apart. A fundamental aim of Jackson's book is to demonstrate the strong continuity between these three categories both within the Jewish background from which Paul derives his understanding of new creation and within Paul's own depiction of the new creation. Jackson also observes the scant attention paid to the relationship between Paul's conception of new creation and Roman Imperial ideology.

Jackson's second chapter focuses on the nature of new creation in the Jewish Scriptures. Here Jackson argues that the prophecy of Isaiah is the bedrock upon which Paul constructs his portrait of new creation. His analysis of Isaiah appeals primarily to the close association between humanity and the cosmos in Isaiah's discussion of the former things/new things and the restored Zion (cf. Isa 1:7; 24:20; 35:1–2; 43:20; 65:18). Jackson also closely analyzes the discussion of the "new heavens and new earth" in Isa 65:17 and concludes that while this passage envisions a new world order (not new cosmos), it nonetheless continues the tight linking between humanity and cosmos depicted in earlier portions of Isaiah.

Chapter three focuses on the depiction of new creation in Second Temple Judaism. Jackson begins his analysis by discussing the nature of Jewish apocalyptic literature, specifically with regard to the historical dilemma (Hellenism) these varied compositions were written to address. He then engages in a close analysis of Jubilees and once again concludes that anthropology and cosmology are intricately linked in this work. Jackson reaches similar conclusions in his analysis of new creation in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

In chapter four, Jackson investigates the nature of Roman Imperial ideology. Jackson appropriately distinguishes between viewing Paul's writings as *intentional* polemic against the Roman Empire and



seeking simply to understand how Paul's statements might have been read/heard within a society inundated with a worldview that made starkly similar claims. Within this chapter, Jackson observes that Roman Imperial ideology (1) closely linked cosmos and state; (2) portrayed the Roman Empire as ushering in the dawn of a new age; and (3) depicted the Roman Empire as inaugurating a new world.

Chapter five explores the depiction of new creation in Gal 6:11–16. Jackson argues against a one-sided conception of new creation in this passage on the basis of: (1) the parallelism between κόσμος and καινή κτίσις in v. 14 and v. 15; (2) the importance of Paul's modification of the Jewish apocalyptic "two ages" framework for understanding Galatians; (3) the eschatological significance of Christ's death and resurrection within Galatians; and (4) the close relation between Paul's reference to new creation in v. 15 and his designation of the church as the "Israel of God" in v. 16.

Jackson next considers Paul's portrait of new creation in 2 Cor 5:11–21. Within this chapter, Jackson seeks to demonstrate that Paul is advancing an epistemology in v. 11–21 that would have been completely at odds with the ideology offered by Rome. Jackson begins by addressing the influence of Isaianic traditions within 2 Cor 5. He next explores the eschatological significance of Christ's resurrection for understanding the epistemology Paul proffers in v. 14–16. Building upon this analysis, Jackson then carefully considers the "in Christ" language in v. 17 and concludes this must be understood in close relation to v. 14–16 so that to be in Christ "means to have transferred from the life of the old age to the life of the new through participation in Christ's own death and resurrection" (p. 143). Jackson also helpfully argues that the discussion of reconciliation in vv. 18–21 need not require a strictly anthropological understanding of new creation because of the complex portrait of restoration in the OT and Second Temple Judaism.

The final major chapter concentrates on new creation in Rom 8:18–25. Jackson devotes a great deal of attention to the meaning of κόσμος and κτίσις in Rom 1–8 and argues within this segment of Romans that (1) there is a movement from creation to new creation and (2) this movement assumes a close relationship between humanity's sin and the cosmos that ultimately derives from Jewish traditions in the OT and Second Temple Judaism. Also central to Jackson's thesis is his argument that κτίσις in Rom 8:19–23 refers to the physical creation.

Jackson's overall treatment of this significant aspect of Pauline theology is quite convincing. One of the distinct challenges of interpreting καινή κτίσις in 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15 is its slogan-like nature. Jackson does a commendable job of appreciating the manner in which new creation summarizes and draws upon prior statements in each of these two letters. This is true especially of his discussion of the noun κόσμος in Galatians. He is also to be applauded for avoiding the tendency to sharply separate Paul's eschatology from his soteriology (a problem that has plagued much of prior literature devoted to new creation in Paul, especially the contributions of M. Hubbard and U. Mell). Finally, Jackson rightly gives primacy to Isaianic traditions in assessing the background of new creation and provocatively shows how Paul's statements would have been read within the context of Roman Imperialism.

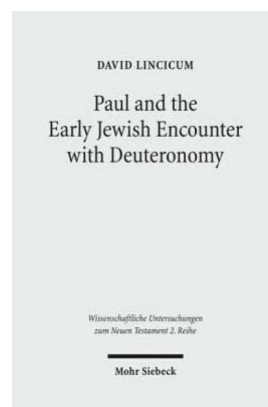
Jackson's analysis of Isaiah, nonetheless, presents a significant problem. Specifically, Jackson does not provide sufficient warrant for appealing to the breadth of Isaianic material he engages within his investigation. Further discussion of the nature of Paul's allusion to Isaianic tradition in 2 Cor 5:17 is necessary at this point. This concern aside, Jackson presents a well-reasoned argument and his analysis

of the Pauline material appreciates the complexity of Paul's thought. This book is highly recommended for scholars and students wishing to study this important aspect of Paul's theology.

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David Lincicum. *Paul and the Early Jewish Encounter with Deuteronomy*. WUNT 2.284. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010. xiv + 290 pp. \$127.50.

In this dissertation under the supervision of Markus Bockmuehl, David Lincicum seeks “to delineate the range of approaches to the ‘last book of Moses’ in Jewish literature spanning from approximately the third century BCE to the third century CE, with a special focus on the relief into which such delineation casts the apostle Paul” (p. 3). To accomplish this goal, Lincicum seeks to go beyond the narrow confines of intertextuality (which has the tendency to present Paul as “engaged in a virginal act of interpretation apart from the pesky prejudices of corporeality and temporality as a first-century Jew” p. 10) to the more holistic tool of “effective history” (*Wirkungsgeschichte*). In other words, the study seeks to place Paul within a long line of Jewish authors who engaged Deuteronomy, attempting to “note the aspects ... that are significant for each author” (p. 11).



From there Lincicum proceeds in two uneven parts. Part 1 (which consists of ch. 2) explores how Jews encountered Deuteronomy. His discussion moves from the physical realities of its bilingual existence (Greek and Hebrew) and manuscripts to the liturgical context of that encounter through synagogue readings, *tefillin* (small leather capsules containing Scripture passages worn on the forehead and left arm), *mezuzot* (small, rolled up Scripture scroll attached to the doorpost of one's house), and daily recitation of the *Shema*. These insights are then applied to Paul's educational background to propose a historically plausible reconstruction of Paul's sustained encounter with Deuteronomy from his earliest childhood through his experiences in the Greek-speaking synagogue.

Part 2 surveys the various ways Deuteronomy was appropriated, with each chapter devoted to a specific body of literature arranged in roughly chronological order. In the Qumran documents (ch. 3), Deuteronomy served to regulate the covenant and establish a framework for understanding the intersection of Israel's history with that of the sect. As such it serves to explain both their present and their future. Within the large number of documents in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha (ch. 4), Lincicum briefly surveys Jubilees, Second Maccabees, Pseudo-Philo, Tobit, Baruch, and *Testament of Moses*. What unites these quite disparate documents is the use of Deuteronomy to explain Israel's present difficulties and provide a blueprint for her future. Especially prominent is the phenomenon of “rewriting” Deuteronomy “in an act of imaginative appropriation, viewing history from the proleptic standpoint of Moses and his horizon of vision beyond the Jordan” (p. 98).

Philo (ch. 5) draws on Deuteronomy as both a theological and ethical authority, with an emphasis on the necessity of obedience to the laws. Josephus (ch. 7) presents his survey of Jewish history within a Deuteronomistic framework, which in his case means emphasizing God's faithfulness to reward