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978-0-521-03669-6 - Paul, Judaism, and Judgment according to Deeds

Kent L. Yinger

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Why does “judgment according to deeds” produce no discernible theological tension for Paul, the apostle of justification by faith? For students of his writings, *paradox*, *incoherence*, or *eschatological tension* come more readily to mind.

Paul felt no such theological tension because there was none – neither within his own soteriology, nor in that of the Judaism from which he learned to speak of “judgment according to deeds.” For both, salvation is wholly by God’s grace *and* the saved will be repaid (i.e., saved or condemned) in accordance with what they have done. Thus, Paul can promise eternal life to those who “do good,” while threatening wrath upon the disobedient (Rom. 2:6–11), and without undermining justification by faith.

This thorough examination of second temple and Pauline texts interacts with recent discussions of “covenantal nomism,” justification, and the “new perspective” on Paul to explore the Jewishness of the apostle’s theology.

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Fuller Theological Seminary



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To Jack and Wanda Yinger

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PREFACE

“Justified by grace through faith” ... “Judged according to works.” While this study focuses only upon the second part of what is often perceived as a Pauline paradox, it ultimately hopes to suggest why these two thoughts produced no apparent theological tension in the writings of Paul. That, of course, does not mean that they produced no existential tension. As the reader will see, divine judgment according to deeds has regularly conveyed both challenge and consolation. Precisely how it does this is a major part of this book.

Thanks are in order first of all to Professor Andrew T. Lincoln, without whose encouragement and guidance as adviser during my doctoral studies this investigation would probably never have been undertaken. His suggestions and challenges along the way made the dissertation upon which this book is based a much better product than it would have otherwise been. Dr. R. Barry Matlock and Dr. John A. Ziesler gave much needed encouragement to proceed with the publication of this material. The entire period of research and writing would have been impossible without the understanding and flexibility shown by my wife Debi. Dr. Rodney K. Duke reviewed an early draft of chapter 1 and offered critique that led to several significant changes. I wish also to record my thanks to my former employer during a major period of writing, OC International, Inc., and in particular to its president, Dr. Larry Keyes, for generously allowing a flexible work load and occasional leaves of absence from my duties while living in Germany and in the US.

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series, and to the fine editorial staff of the Cambridge University Press.

Much of the work done on this topic remains in untranslated German works. To aid the reader, I have given my own English translations in most cases.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Most abbreviations of primary and secondary sources correspond to standard usage and will not be reproduced here. The reader should consult the *Society of Biblical Literature Membership Directory and Handbook* (Decatur, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1994), 223–242, the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (revised each October), or the instructions website of the *Journal of Biblical Literature* (<http://shemesh.scholar.emory.edu/scripts/SBL/Archive/INSTR.HTM>).

Additional abbreviations are as follows:

<i>CTM</i>	<i>Concordia Theological Monthly</i>
EB	Expositor's Bible
EETH	Einführung in die evangelische Theologie
ET	English translation
MeyerK	H. A. W. Meyer (ed.), <i>Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar</i>
<i>NIDNTT</i>	C. Brown (ed.), <i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i>
NumenSup	Supplements to <i>Numen</i>
<i>PLJP</i>	E. P. Sanders, <i>Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People</i>
<i>PPJ</i>	E. P. Sanders, <i>Paul and Palestinian Judaism</i>
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TPINT	Trinity Press International New Testament