

Neil Martin

Regression in Galatians

Paul and the Gentile Response to Jewish Law

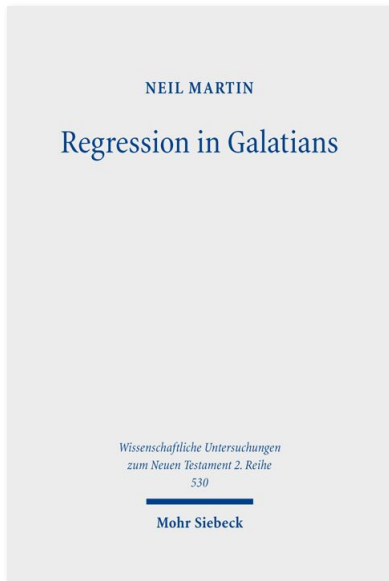
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In the first scholarly treatment of the topic, Neil Martin argues that the regression language in Galatians holds the key to understanding Paul's perception of the underlying crisis. Repeated references to going backwards describe the reanimation of expectations intimately associated with the basic religious practices (*stoicheia*) of his readers' pagan past. As the Galatians embraced the superficially-similar observances of Jewish Christianity, familiar practices were triggering the resumption of familiar modes of thought. With striking consequences for historic and contemporary debates about faith and works, the author finds a pagan misappropriation of Judaism, not Judaism itself, in the crosshairs of Paul's supposed anti-law polemic, uniting his warnings and commands in an integrated response to a pastoral emergency caused by the failure of the strong to accommodate the weakness of the weak.

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