

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to explore the relation between Paul and his cultural social context. The main focus will be on pointing out that the most frequent ways of using materials of the Second Temple period have their limitations. Parallel (which merely list out the texts of this period that seems to be parallel with Paul's) or borrowing terms (which suggests that Paul borrows the terms or concepts from the documents of this period), for instance, is a purely historical method which has little to offer for understanding Paul; or contextual dichotomy, which interprets Paul from one particular context (like Jewish or Greek) often confining our understanding of what Paul really wants to express. Realizing that the intersection of several cultures in this period is a very complicated issue, this article proposes a new understanding of contextual intersection (encounter) as a better way to understand Paul. Ben Sira is a good example in giving us a glimpse. He tries to identify the Law and wisdom in the context that is similar to Paul's, by placing both on a higher level: the order of God's creation, and as a result he is able to underscore the Law without degrading other wisdom traditions. Paul's use of τὰ στοιχεῖα in Galatians 4:3, 9 shows a similar pattern. Before they came to Christ, the Jews were under the Law and the Gentiles under pagan customs, but Paul identifies both as under τὰ στοιχεῖα, especially now that he sees the Galatians' intention to receive the Law as going back again to τὰ στοιχεῖα. Paul is able to make such an identification due to a higher perspective from the cross.

Keywords: Paul, contextual intersection/encounter, Ben Sira, Galatians, *ta stoicheia*

摘要

本文的目的是探討保羅與其社會文化背景的關係。主要所關注的是在使用第二聖殿時期的文獻上常見的一些做法有其不足之處，如平行用法（即只列出這時期看似與保羅的經文平行的經文）或借詞用法（即認為保羅借用了這些文獻的詞語或觀念）。這類純歷史研究法，事實上對理解保羅的經文幫助不大；或如處境二分法從某單一處境（如猶太或希臘）來主導經文的含義，往往侷限了我們對保羅所要表達之含義的理解。這時期不同文化的交會是錯綜複雜的。本文提出對保羅「處境交會」新的理解，是詮釋保羅較為合適的切入點。這可從《便西拉》的做法看到一些端倪：其在與保羅相同的文化處境裡嘗試結合、將律法等同智慧，並將兩者歸於神的創造這更高的層次，以致在不需要貶低其它智慧的情況下凸顯出律法。保羅在加 4:3, 9 的 τὰ στοιχεῖα 也有類似的做法，他認為猶太人過去在律法之下和外邦信徒過去在異教風俗之下都是屬於 τὰ στοιχεῖα，尤其是現在加拉太外邦信徒想要接受律法，等於是重回 τὰ στοιχεῖα。保羅之所以能夠做如此等同，主要是從更高的層次十字架來看猶太人和外邦人的過去。

關鍵詞：保羅、處境交會、便西拉、加拉太書、世俗小學