

Book of Romans



Chapter 7

*Theme: Shackles of a saved soul;
struggle of a saved soul*

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Romans Chapter 7

Disclaimer: It should be noted that some of the commentators used seem to have opposing views on some doctrinal issues. Well they do, I feel it is important to see the different views to realize that not all scholars agree on issues or doctrine. Students should be able to understand these differences and be able to compare the different views to scripture to form their own opinion. These commentators I have used for yeas and I find to have a lot of great commentary; however, I may not agree with all their views and beliefs on all issues.

Missler: Romans 7: Law School

The Myths of Our Time

It is a shock to realize how much of our modern culture is built on myths that are contrary to known truth. Dave Breese's book, *Seven Men Who Rule the World From Their Graves*, highlights the continuing impact of men like Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, et al. The Theory of Evolution goes far beyond biology and anthropology: it permeates our psychological concepts, our social concepts, and political philosophies.

The paradigm of the "Ascent of Man" is built on the erroneous view of man as improving himself through education and technology, et al. It assumes that man develops in response to his environment. It assumes that with the proper environment and education that one can change the fundamental nature of Man.

[Even in our courts of law, we excuse responsibility for crimes as the result of environmentally introduced factors....]

This contradicts what the Scripture teaches us:
"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

"desperately" = *anash*, to be weak, sick, frail; desperate, incurable; desperately wicked; to be incurable. The "Depravity of Man" is one of the most reluctantly accepted doctrines of a serious Bible student.

Nowhere in Scripture is the heart of man cured. The miracle of regeneration is that we are given a new heart. The old one is incurable. This is what Romans 7 clarifies for us.¹

¹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

This chapter, if it had a title, should probably be: True Liberty is Freedom from the Condemnation of the Law.

I spent quite a bit of time at the beginning of our lesson today explaining that the key to understanding the New Testament, and especially Paul, is to spot his Jewish idioms and expressions. The opening verses of Romans 7 afford us just such an opportunity.

We're going to walk our way very thoughtfully through Romans chapter 7, which many theologians consider as perhaps the most important chapter in the entire New Testament as pertains to Christian doctrine.²

McGee: THEME: Shackles of a saved soul; struggle of a saved soul

The theme of sanctification began in the latter part of chapter 5 where it was "potential sanctification." Then in chapter 6 we saw "positional sanctification"; that is, identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. We are to reckon on that, present ourselves to Him, and trust him to live the Christian life through us.

Now in the chapter before us there are two subjects: the shackles of a saved soul and the struggle of a saved soul. The Law cannot produce sanctification in the life of the believer; it merely shackles it. Neither can the believer produce sanctification in his life by depending on the desire of the new nature. Just to say you want to live for Christ won't get you anywhere. You need to present yourself to Him, recognizing that you are joined to the living Christ.

The importance of this chapter cannot be overemphasized. Let me give you a quotation from Dr. Griffith Thomas: "Dr. Alexander Whyte once said that whenever a new book on Romans comes out and is sent to him by its publisher for consideration, he at once turns to the comments on chapter VII, and according to the view taken of that important section he decides on the value of the entire work." Then Dr. Frederic Godet makes this bold statement: "But it is a hundred to one when a reader does not find the Apostle Paul logical, that he is not understanding his thought." Paul is certainly logical all through this chapter.

When I was a young man, a very wonderful itinerant Bible teacher, who was a great blessing to multitudes of folk, was a great help to me. He was never a pastor, and he taught that we are to detour around the seventh chapter of Romans; we are not to live there. We are to get into the eighth chapter of Romans. For several years I taught that philosophy also. But I have now been a pastor for a long time, and I have come to the conclusion that we are not to miss the seventh chapter of Romans. I am sure that many a pastor wishes his church members would get into the seventh of Romans, because the man who gets into the seventh of Romans will get into the eighth of Romans. I am of the opinion that the way into the eighth chapter is through the seventh chapter -- at least that is the route most of us take. Well, you are not to detour around it, because if you do, you are not on the direct route. It reminds me of a jingle:

To dwell above With the saints in love -- Oh, that will be glory! But to
stay below With the saints I know -- That's another story!

In this "struggle of a saved soul" a believer reaches out and grabs a straw. Sometimes that straw is the Mosaic Law. And he finds that he has gotten hold, not of a straw, nor even of a life preserver, but actually of a sack of cement, and it is pulling him under. He can't live that way. As a result, multitudes of the saints accept defeat as normal Christian living. There are many saints

² <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

who are satisfied to continue on the low level of a sad, shoddy, sloppy life. God doesn't want us to come that route.

The "powerless sanctification" of this chapter shows us the way we are not to live. Many years ago, a cartoon appeared in a daily paper -- when it was popular to make things and repair things yourself -- showing a mild-mannered man in a "Do-It-Yourself Shop." His hands were bandaged, and one arm was in a sling. He was asking the clerk behind the counter, "Do you have any undo-it-yourself kits?" Today we as believers need to know that we cannot live the Christian life; we need to learn that we cannot do it ourselves. In fact, we need an undo-it-yourself kit; that is, we need to turn our lives over to the Spirit of God, yield to Him, and let Him do for us what we cannot do ourselves.

The Mosaic Law is where many Christians go to try to find Christian living. Now Paul is going to show that the Mosaic Law has no claim on the believer. Actually, the Law condemned man to die; it was a ministration of condemnation (see 2Cor. 3:9). You don't contact the judge who sentenced you to die and ask him how you are going to live!³

¹Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

Missler: Authority of the Law

Verses 1-6 relate to 6:14, the intervening verses (6:15-23) being a digression raised by the question in 6:15.

The statement that a believer identified with Jesus Christ in His death is no longer "under Law" (6:14) should not have surprised Paul's readers because they were men who know the Law.

This statement should not be restricted to Jewish believers in the church at Rome because Gentiles also knew the principle that the Law has authority (*kyrieuei*, "rules as lord"; cf. 6:9; 14) over a man only as long as he lives. This is a self-evident truth, which Paul then illustrated by marriage, an allegorical example.⁴

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Paul offers this "odd" opening to chapter 7 saying that his "brothers" ought to already know most of what he's telling them. Paul's brothers are the Jewish Believers of Rome because he says that he is speaking in regard to those who know and understand Torah (at least that's what the CJB says). Most English versions will not use the word Torah but will say either "law" or "the Law". So, in those versions, Paul is speaking of those who already ought to know law. We discussed in earlier lessons that by adding the definite article "the" before the word "law", we turn it into "The Law". "The Law" in Jewish thought means the Law of Moses. The problem is that in this verse the definite article is not actually there. Bible translators have added the word "the" in order to make it appear that Paul is speaking of the Law of Moses. But the Greek NT manuscripts don't have it that way.⁵

³ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

⁴ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁵ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

Guzik: 1-3 The law has dominion: In Romans 6:14, Paul told us that you are not under law but under grace. After the discussion in Romans 6:15-23 regarding practical implications of this, he now explains more completely how it is that we are no longer under the dominion of the law.

That the law has dominion over a man: The ancient Greek wording here has no word “the” before law. This means Paul speaks of a principle broader than the Mosaic Law. The law that has dominion over man includes the Law of Moses, but there is a broader principle of law communicated by creation and by conscience, and these also have dominion over a man.

The law has dominion over a man as long as he lives: Paul makes the point that death ends all obligations and contracts. A wife is no longer bound to her husband if he dies because death ends that contract. If her husband dies, she is free from that law.⁶

²For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband.

Missler: A married woman (lit., “the under-a-man woman”) is bound (perf. tense, “has been bound and stands bound”) to her husband as long as he is alive.

But if her husband dies (in Gr., a third-class condition indicating a real possibility) she is released (perf. tense, “has been and stands discharged”) from the law of marriage (lit., “from the law of the man”).

She is bound to him by marriage as her husband while he lives, and obviously his death frees her from that marriage.⁷

McGee: “Know ye not” is an expression that occurs again and again in the writings of Paul. Putting it into the positive, it is, “Are you so ignorant?” When Paul says, “Know ye not,” you may be sure that the brethren did not know.

“I speak to them that know the law.” The Mosaic Law had had over a millennium’s trial with God’s chosen people in a land that was favorable and adaptable to the keeping of the Law -- the Law was not only given to a people but to a land. Yet Israel did not keep the Law. Remember that Stephen in his defense said that they had “...received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it” (Acts 7:53). Peter calls it a yoke “which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear” (Acts 15:10).

Now Paul will give an illustration that I think is a great one. Unfortunately folk try to draw from it rules for marriage and divorce. But Paul is not talking about marriage and divorce here. Rather, he is illustrating by a well-established and stated law that a wife is bound to a living husband and that death frees her from the status of wife.⁸

⁶ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-7.cfm?a=1053001

⁷ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁸ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

³So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

Missler: Paul continues the illustration, pointing out that if a wife marries (lit., “if she comes to”) another man while her husband is still alive she is called (future tense, “shall be publicly known as”) an adulteress. Conversely, on the death of her husband she is free from that marriage (cf. 7:2). So she is not an adulteress if she marries (lit., “even though she comes to”) another man. A widow who marries again is not guilty of adultery.

[Note: The Mosaic Law had no provision for a married woman to get a divorce. Thus, she is a “type” of the believer. Marriages were arranged; the woman had no choice. Loveless obligation...] This leads to a most provocative metaphorical application:⁹

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

I've already explained that the Greek word for law is *nomos*, and that Paul uses the term *nomos* to refer to several different kinds of law and not only The Law of Moses. So, our challenge is to identify which kind of law he is speaking about at any given time since in Romans the term "law" is used constantly. The general consensus of Bible translators is that Paul is indeed speaking about the Law of Moses in verses 1 – 3, when he uses the analogy of a woman being married to her husband, but then the husband dies so according to law she is free to be remarried to another man. And this freedom is because since the husband died he is no longer under law, and so the widow is set free. Virtually every Bible commentary I could find agreed that what Paul was quoting was a commandment from the Torah (the Law of Moses) about the circumstances under which a widow could remarry. And, these Bible commentators are wrong.

How do I know they are wrong? Because there is no Torah law that deals with a widow being able to remarry; in fact, it is forbidden. The closest thing there is in the Law of Moses to a widow legitimately remarrying after her husband's death is the law of Levirate marriage, whereby a man dies but his wife has produced him no sons. The man's brother is required to marry the widow and produce a male child with her. The reason is so the deceased husband's bloodlines will continue, because the son produced by the widow and the brother are considered as belonging to the deceased husband. Clearly this is not at all what Paul has in mind and the Law of Moses has no other laws in this regard to a widow remarrying. Rather, in verses 1 -3 Paul is citing a general law of Jewish society that when a Jewish woman is widowed, she may remarry, and it is not adultery. The important issue for us, however, is where this law comes from because it clearly does NOT come from the Law of Moses. Rather, it is a Tradition. Jewish Law. Paul is not referring to Scripture; he is referring to Halakhah.

In the Mishnah we read this: A woman is acquired in marriage in three ways and acquires her freedom in two. She acquires her freedom by divorce or by her husband's death. As for divorce, it is well, since it is written "then he shall write her a bill of divorcement"; but whence do we know that she is freed by her husband's death? It is logic; he (the husband) bound her; hence he frees her....thus death is compared to divorce: just as divorce completely frees her, so does death completely free her.

The Torah carries the death penalty for a woman who remarries because it is viewed as adultery; so, a ruling of Halakhah (a Tradition) was created within Judaism that says a widow who remarries is not guilty of adultery. Therefore, we know that in Romans 7:1 – 3 we have an

⁹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

example of when Paul uses the term *nomos* to mean law in the sense of Halakhah, Jewish Law. And clearly Paul gives much authority to this ruling of the Rabbis and accepts it as legitimate. However, I don't think Paul has a clear, conscious line of demarcation between the Law of Moses and Jewish Law; most of the time he sees Jewish Law as but an expanded interpretation of the Law of Moses, so it is nearly one in the same. This is because that is exactly how Jewish society viewed it. When he speaks of The Law of Moses from a historical, technical sense that is one thing. But when he speaks about law from a Jewish social/cultural sense, The Law of Moses and Jewish Law are so closely inter-related that most times he sees them as unified.

So, when in verse 1 he says that his brothers already understand "law", he means they understand Jewish Law; Halakhah: the Jewish law code of Jewish culture. It doesn't mean that they have been formally trained in the Law of Moses as the priests were. We must remember that in the Jewish Diaspora especially, the only real contact that Jews had with their religious authorities took place at the Synagogue where the Pharisees ruled. And the Pharisees were the authors and enforcers NOT of the Law of Moses but of Halakhah. It was Halakhah that ruled Judaism and the Synagogue; not the Law of Moses.

I hope this is beginning to hit home with you as I realize that you have been learning almost an entire new vocabulary and I'm sure it has been quite a challenge.

First: the opening 3 verses of chapter 7 appear to be Paul paraphrasing a Levitical law (one of the Laws of Moses from the Biblical Torah) about why it is acceptable to God for a widow to remarry. He will use this paraphrase as a loose illustration to make a point about what he means when he says that Believers have "died to the law". But upon closer examination we discover that there exists no such law regarding widows within the Torah (the Law of Moses). There is no specific, direct commandment that allows a widow to remarry other than in the case of widow who has not given birth to a son. In that case then the laws of Levirate marriage apply. This law reflects the family requirement that when a man dies without his wife having produced a son as an heir for him, the brother of the deceased man is to marry the widow for the primary purpose of him producing a son with her. However, that son would be seen, spiritually and legally, as actually belonging to the deceased man. The son then allows the deceased man's bloodline to continue, along with his living essence. Of course, Paul's example in no way contemplates the Levirate marriage circumstance. And in fact, the Torah makes it an act of adultery should a widow remarry and thus in principle it prohibits such a thing. The penalty for adultery is death by stoning.

So what source is Paul referring to as the law about widows being able to remarry? It is Jewish law; Tradition; Halakhah. It is something that most Pharisees would have supported (Paul was a self professed Pharisee) but the Sadducees (the Priests) likely would not have supported it. Not only is this an important distinction but it also reveals Paul's attitude towards Halakhah. While he would not have supported all Halakah (lock, stock and barrel), he obviously supported Jewish law in general, provided to his way of thinking it did not directly refute the Torah or Christ or Paul's messianic theology. But it also signals that we have to be cautious when reading Paul not to assume that because he purports something to be "law" that he always means the Law of Moses. Further, English translations tend to obscure one of the grammatical indicators that tells us which of the 4 different kinds of law Paul is referring to because often Bible translators will insert the word "the" before the word "law" thus producing the term "The Law". "The Law" is a standard Jewish abbreviation for The Law of Moses. However, in the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, the definite article "the" is not there. So, in this instance of verses 1 -3 of

chapter 7, the reference is NOT to "The Law" but simply to "law". And as we learned, in this case the term "law" means Jewish law; Halakhah.

The second important point is this: we have to examine the term "died to the law" quite carefully. Indeed, in this case the definite article "the" IS present in the Greek manuscripts, so the term "The Law" (the Law of Moses) certainly seems to be Paul's meaning. Thus: "died to the Law of Moses" is the intended sense of it. This is usually taken to mean that Christians are no longer beholden to the Torah and so it just goes to prove that The Law is dead. However, when we back away for a moment we notice something important: who or what died in this passage? Did Paul say The Law died to the Believer? NO! It is the Believer who died. And since the penalty for violating a Law of Moses (sinning) is God's wrath and the sinner's death, then Paul is explaining that through the death of Christ on the cross, worshippers who trust in Yeshua and identify in baptism with Him have died along with Him. Thus, it is the Believer who has had a change of status, and not The Law. By symbolically dying we have paid the penalty that the Law requires for our sins, so Paul can say that we have already died to The Law. Since all humans are destined to die only once, we owe no further penalty for our sins.

It has become quite muddled in Christianity to even define what a sin is. Most often it is this: sin is doing anything God doesn't want me to do. However, that thought is usually tempered with the belief that what is sin for me is not necessarily sin for you and vice versa. Sin is now individualistic and customized, Believer by Believer, and that customized definition is delivered to us by the Holy Spirit. Thus, unless God specifically tells you that such and such is a sin (as He did with Adam regarding eating the forbidden fruit), then for you nothing is sin. Sin no longer has any universal standard. And since you can't possibly know what God told me I'm not to do (or even to do), then you can't judge me when I do something that to you is wrong because God may not have told me that. I'll say it straightaway: that is the worst sort of manmade doctrine. It defies the Bible including the New Testament. One authoritative person who defines sin the clearest is the Apostle John. I'll quote him using the KJV since it is not only well accepted but it also eliminates the dynamic translation that the CJB prefers to use : KJV 1 John 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. Sin is the transgression of The Law....the Law of Moses. That is the direct Biblical, New Testament definition of sin as pronounced by the Apostle John. Sin is not whatever we choose to make it. Neither the Church nor a single Believer can unilaterally decide that there is no longer a universal standard for sin or that every individual carries his or her own truth, and thus is required to obey ONLY their own private set of divine rules. Those who adhere to this erroneous doctrine then accuse those who obey any written Biblical law of committing something called Legalism. But John says that when you or I violate one of the commandments of the Law of Moses, that is precisely what sin is. True; Christ has paid the price for our sin. But just as Paul has already covered a couple of times, does that mean we just go right on sinning....right on breaking The Law.... because there's plenty of grace available so that we don't pay the consequences for our sinning? Heaven forbid!

Wake up Believers! Our ambivalence and our long slumber are over. Just as before you first believed, the moment you heard the Gospel of Christ any excuse you may have had before God to plead ignorance and thus obtain mercy because of it, evaporated. You have now been taught, and have been shown it in Holy Scripture, that even the direct words of the Savior Himself in Matthew 5 say that The Law is anything but dead and gone and He fully expects all of His followers to obey it. There is no more excuse. Sin has a standard and the standard is the Law of Moses; it is not our personal standards that God uses, and it is not the standard that any particular

denomination decides upon. And just as Christ pointed out, while it is not obedience to The Law, but rather our trust in His faithfulness that brings us acquittal before the Father, even so our level of obedience to the Law of Moses will be the determining factor for the status we will hold for an eternity in the Kingdom of Heaven. If you want to live an eternity as the least before God, so be it. But if you want to be more than that, then obey Him. If you keep on denying the ongoing validity of The Law, and keep on sinning as a result, it is deliberate; you know better. You have made the decision in your free will to be disobedient; it is conscious, it is intentional. You have decided to follow your comfortable ways and not God's ways because you like your ways more than God's ways and see them as far easier or even superior. The Bible labels that sort of attitude; it is called rebellion. And men, when you lead your family that way, you take on further responsibility.¹⁰

McGee: Some folk insist that divorce and remarriage is not permitted under any circumstances according to this verse. We need to thoroughly understand the background. What would happen under the Mosaic Law if a man or woman were unfaithful in marriage? Suppose a woman is married to a man who is a philanderer, and he is unfaithful to her. What happens? He is stoned to death. When the old boy is lying under a pile of stones, she is free to marry another, of course. In our day we cannot apply the Mosaic Law -- we can't stone to death the unfaithful. And Paul is not giving us instructions on divorce and remarriage here; he will do that elsewhere. The point Paul is making here is that when a woman's husband dies, she is no longer a wife, she is a single woman again. This is, I think, a universal principle among civilized people. There are heathen people who put the wife to death when the husband dies, but civilized folk have never followed that practice.

Paul goes on to amplify the law of husband and wife. He brings into sharp focus her status in the case that her husband is alive and again in the case that the husband is dead.¹¹

⁴Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Missler: Dead to the Law

Key to the whole Book of Romans. Paul applies his illustration of marriage to the believer and the Law, an allegorical example:

The first husband is Adamic nature, the fallen nature; The second husband is Christ. [The hero of the piece...]

He said, You also died (lit., "you were put to death," as was true of Jesus) to the Law. Just as a believer "died to sin" (6:2) and so is "set free from sin" (6:18, 22), so he also died to the Law and is separated and set free from it (6:14; cf. Gal. 2:19). As a wife is no longer married to her husband when he dies, so a Christian is no longer under the Law.

This separation was through the body of Christ, that is, because of Christ's death on the cross. As a result, Christians belong to another, to Him who was raised from the dead (cf. Rom. 6:4, 9). Believers are, indeed, united to Him as His bride (Eph. 5:25).

¹⁰ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

¹¹ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

God's purpose in all this is "that we might bear fruit to God" (cf. Rom. 6:22; Gal. 5:22-23; Phil. 1:11). Only a person who is spiritually alive can bear spiritual fruit, that is, holy living (cf. John 15:4-5).

A person who is married to Christ should also bear spiritual progeny. Paul moved from the second person plural ("you") to the first-person plural ("we"), including himself along with his readers.¹²

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

It starts to get more complex with verse 4. Paul, using the illustration and analogy of verses 1-3 about the widow remarrying, says that Believers in Yeshua have been made dead to the Torah (The Law). But here Paul switches and he means the Law of Moses and not Jewish Law. How do I know that? Because the definite article "the" is indeed present in the Greek. So, Paul is indeed saying "The Law", which indicates The Law of Moses. Remember: he's not trying to apply the ruling of Halakah of verses 1-3 to verse 4; he's only using it as an illustration of how to think about a Believer dying to The Law. In the case of the widow, it was her husband that died. Using that illustration, in the case of verse 4 it is the Believer in Yeshua that died to The Law of Moses.

Here's the thing; regardless of what this means, precisely, the important point is that it is the Believer who died; The Law didn't die. However, because Christians have had it drilled into our heads for 19 centuries that The Law has died, we unconsciously read that meaning into the passage. Please look carefully at this verse and notice: who or what died? The person or the Law? Is there any implication that The Law has died? None.

So, what can it mean for a Believer to die to the Law? What in the world is Paul getting at? We can take his assertion to mean one of two things: 1) Believers no longer have any obligation to follow The Law of Moses, and therefore for us any violation of The Law of Moses is not sin for us. Or 2), Believers no longer are affected by some particular aspect of The Law of Moses. The Institutional Church says that option 1 is correct: we have no obligation to follow God's laws as found in The Law of Moses and if we do something that the Law of Moses prohibits, it is not sin for us as Believers. The problem is, not only does Christ in Matthew 5 say the opposite, so does the Apostle John. CJB 1 John 3:4 Everyone who keeps sinning is violating Torah- indeed, sin is violation of Torah.

Option 2 is the correct one. In fact, it is the fairly obvious choice. There is some aspect of the Torah Law that Believers are no longer under and Paul has been speaking of that aspect throughout Romans. The focus of his letter has been God's wrath for sinners and how we can avoid it. The issue has been the condemnation (death penalty) that comes with sinning. And Paul has said that the Torah, The Law of Moses, details God's law so that what is sin and what is not sin becomes crystal clear. But it also details the penalty for sin. The next chapter of Romans, Romans 8, begins this way: CJB Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is no longer any condemnation awaiting those who are in union with the Messiah Yeshua. There it is; just as Paul summed things up at the end of chapter 6 with: For what one earns from sin is death; but eternal life is what one receives as a free gift from God, in union with the Messiah Yeshua, our Lord. (Rom 6:23 CJB), now he sums up chapter 7 of Romans with the first verse of chapter 8: Therefore, there is no longer any condemnation awaiting those who are in union with the Messiah Yeshua.

The aspect of the Torah that Believers are dead to is the condemnation that comes from disobeying its many laws; we're not dead to The Law itself. Salvation has not freed us from

¹² Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

obedience to The Law; rather, Salvation has freed us from the death penalty that The Law requires for disobedience to The Law. Where have we heard this before?

Matthew 5:17-19 CJB 17 "Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete. 18 Yes indeed! I tell you that until heaven and earth pass away, not so much as a *yud* or a stroke will pass from the Torah- not until everything that must happen has happened. 19 So whoever disobeys the least of these mitzvot and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

So according to Christ and according to Paul The Law of Moses remains in effect for Believers, but through God's grace we are saved from the condemnation of what happens when we break any of those laws (we sin). So, since that is the case then what happens to Believers who refuse to obey the Law of Moses? Christ says that whether we obey or don't, we are still members of the Kingdom of Heaven; that is, we remain saved (although in other passages Paul makes it clear that this is true only to a point). However, the Kingdom of Heaven is a real Kingdom; it will have a real King (Yeshua), it will have real rules and laws, and it will have real citizens whose status will be arranged in a real hierarchy (the Church often refers to this Heavenly hierarchy as jewels placed in our crowns). Yeshua says that those Believers who strive to obey The Law of Moses will be given the greatest status in the Kingdom of Heaven. But those Believers who say they see no need to obey the Law of Moses will be given the least status in the Kingdom of Heaven.

So, if your goal is to make it into God's Kingdom by the skin of your teeth (not a very wise goal), then simply determine that The Law is not for you. But if your goal is to please God on this earth, and to obey His Law to the fullest extent of your ability and circumstances (a good goal), then a far greater experience and status in the Kingdom awaits you. I have utterly no idea of the tangible differences between the two statuses. But I did once hear a person describe it this way: if when you go to Heaven and you get into the line where they're handing out transportation, which you would rather have: a Mercedes or a skate board?¹³

FCSBN: Died to the law. It's not easy to follow Paul's arguments in chapter seven. The Greek word *nomos* ("law") does not distinguish between various nuances in meaning, and Paul appears to have switched from talking about the Mosaic Law to talking about the law generally. Paul was not writing to those who were ever under the Law of Moses, so he probably had in mind in this verse the law of sin and death under Adam. In other words, the Gentile believers were no longer bound to the law of Adam (sin) since they had died in Christ. Death in Christ had set them free, just as the death of a spouse set a Torah-observant Jew free from the marriage covenant (see vv. 1-3).¹⁴

¹³ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

¹⁴ First-Century Study Bible Notes

⁵For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

Missler: Purpose of the Law

The apostle continues, “Were in the flesh” imperfect, constantly; “while we were; “in” under the domination of self; sarx, i.e., the sin nature; (cf. Rom. 7:18, 25); the sinful passions aroused by the Law were at work in our bodies.

This describes a believer before he was saved (cf. 6:19). The Law by its prohibitions aroused sinful passions, as will be explained in 7:7-13.

Sin, Paul repeatedly affirmed, leads to death (5:15, 17, 21; 6:16, 21, 23; 7:10-11, 13; 8:2, 6, 10, 13).

The law energized our rebellion... The law cannot bring us into a righteous life. It can only demonstrate our sinful nature.

If you understand this passage you will understand what most of the people that have ever lived have not been able to grasp: What is the purpose of the law of God?¹⁵

⁶But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

Missler: “Delivered” = released from; unshackled; “held”= constantly bound by. But now, being identified with Christ, believers are dead to the Law. Like the widow released from marital obligations, so believers are released from the Law and its arousal to sin.

“So that we serve:” present tense, constantly serve. The purpose of this release “from the Law” is so that we may serve (or better, “be slaves”; cf. “slave[s]” in 6:6, 16 [thrice], 17-18, 20, 22) in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.¹⁶

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verse 6 makes the case that a very important prophecy has been fulfilled. Does your Bible say that? No, of course it doesn't; but indeed, that is what Paul is alluding to. He says we have been released or delivered from The Law, and thus we are no longer held captive because we have died to it. Therefore, we are now able to serve God in Spirit and not only in the letter of the Law. Again, notice who or what died. Did The Law die? No. Did we die? Yes. Thus, our death has released us.

Released us from what? From the need to be obedient to God's commandments? Paul has said time and again to this misunderstanding: Heaven forbid! Rather we have been released from the aspect of The Law that the Old Testament sometimes calls the curse of The Law. The curse of The Law is not an adjective that characterizes the Law, and it is not the Law itself. Rather the Law consists of two fundamental parts: Blessings (for obedience) and curses (for disobedience). The curse of The Law is death. So, are we released from the blessings of The Law? Of course not. Rather we are released from the curses of The Law, which is death. Or as Paul says to begin Romans chapter 8: "Therefore there is no longer any condemnation awaiting those who are in union with the Messiah Yeshua." Curses, condemnation, death; these are all Biblical equivalents for the divine consequence of our sins.

¹⁵ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹⁶ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

Back to verse 6. Perhaps the most important part of this verse is the words that say that now we are able to operate in the Spirit instead of the letter of The Law. This is prophecy fulfilled.

Jeremiah 31:30-32 CJB 30 "Here, the days are coming," says ADONAI, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah. 31 It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says ADONAI. 32 "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says ADONAI: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people.

The New Testament holds the Spirit and the Letter in antithesis to one another. That is, one is the opposite of the other. The Spirit of The Law means what the Law intends for us to understand as the God-principle it demonstrates and from that understanding we are to act rightly. The letter of The Law means to act upon the Law mechanically, rigidly, technically, by looking only at its instructions but disregarding the underlying God-principles behind those words. But it also means that when The Law is applied without the Holy Spirit directing our thoughts and actions, it can be wrongly applied. However, it is important to remember that acting in the Spirit of The Law doesn't do away with the written Law of Moses any more than Jeremiah's prophecy of putting The Law on our hearts means that the Holy Spirit created and put an entirely new and different (even opposite) divine instruction within us. It is not meant that God replaced an old and failed Law with something new and better.

Yeshua, in His Sermon on the Mount, spoke extensively about the Spirit of the Law as opposed to the Letter. And frankly, the Spirit of the Law is far more demanding than the Letter. For example; as He says in Matthew 5, the letter of The Law says not to murder. But the Spirit of The Law says that the divine intent of the law prohibiting murder means to not even be angry with your brother. And just as Yeshua felt the need to pause in His famous sermon and make it clear that nothing He was saying should be taken as Him suggesting that He has abolished or changed The Law of Moses, so now in Romans 7 Paul pauses and feels the need to say in verse 7: CJB Romans 7:7 Therefore, what are we to say? That the Torah is sinful? Heaven forbid! Rather, the function of the Torah was that without it, I would not have known what sin is. For example, I would not have become conscious of what greed is if the Torah had not said, "Thou shalt not covet."

Here's the thing: does not much of modern day Christianity advocate (or at least heavily imply) that for Believers The Law of Moses has become sin for us? That for us to "go back to The Law" (as it is often slanderously put) is somehow an affront to God because of what Yeshua has done for us? As an aside: many of you have no doubt been asked by well-meaning Believers: "Why would I want to go back to The Law"? And my response to that is: please tell me what it was like when you were living under The Law. I usually get blank stares. Their inference is that non-Believers, or perhaps new Believers, had been living their lives under the Law of Moses. Right. The vast majority of non-Believers and new Believers have no idea what the Law of Moses is (if they had ever even heard of it). As I mentioned many times when I taught the Torah, the Law of Moses was only ever for the redeemed. First Israel was redeemed from Egypt, AND THEN a few weeks later they received The Law. The Law is ONLY for the redeemed; Believers. And we usually have no knowledge of it, or any awareness of its importance to us, until AFTER we are redeemed.

So, are we to think that what God described as goodness, life and protection for Israel (The Torah) was actually in practice a defective covenant and ultimately a failure that merely led to

sin; so it had to be replaced with a better one with more bells and whistles? Listen to what the Lord told Moses and Israel about the Torah in Deuteronomy chapter 30.

Deuteronomy 30:10-20 CJB 10 "However, all this will happen only if you pay attention to what ADONAI your God says, so that you obey his mitzvot and regulations which are written in this book of the Torah, if you turn to ADONAI your God with all your heart and all your being. 11 For this mitzvah which I am giving you today is not too hard for you, it is not beyond your reach. 12 It isn't in the sky, so that you need to ask, 'Who will go up into the sky for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?' 13 Likewise, it isn't beyond the sea, so that you need to ask, 'Who will cross the sea for us, bring it to us and make us hear it, so that we can obey it?' 14 On the contrary, the word is very close to you- in your mouth, even in your heart; therefore, you can do it! 15 "Look! I am presenting you today with, on the one hand, life and good; and on the other, death and evil-16 in that I am ordering you today to love ADONAI your God, to follow his ways, and to obey his mitzvot, regulations and rulings; for if you do, you will live and increase your numbers; and ADONAI your God will bless you in the land you are entering in order to take possession of it. 17 But if your heart turns away, if you refuse to listen, if you are drawn away to prostrate yourselves before other gods and serve them; 18 I am announcing to you today that you will certainly perish; you will not live long in the land you are crossing the Yarden to enter and possess. 19 "I call on heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have presented you with life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore, choose life, so that you will live, you and your descendants, 20 loving ADONAI your God, paying attention to what he says and clinging to him- for that is the purpose of your life! On this depends the length of time you will live in the land ADONAI swore he would give to your ancestors Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov."

Did the Lord actually pull the most cosmically monumental bait and switch operation in history upon mankind by first giving Israel The Law of Moses, saying that this covenant meant blessing and life, demanding that it is obeyed, but then later retracting it all as defective and a bad idea? Was this entire thing perhaps a deception and a ruse? Because as I have said before in all seriousness, if God would do that then why would I believe in the long-term efficacy of ANY covenant He would make? Why wouldn't He offer us all this forgiveness and mercy through Christ, but then one day simply decide that it wasn't working out all that well and abolish it and create something else entirely? Or even more; tell us that to continue to trust in Yeshua is actually foolishness if not sin because He has come up with an even newer and even better covenant? This is what we are asked to accept about the Covenants of Moses and Abraham, and I deny it and condemn it in the strongest possible way. But I'm also ashamed to admit that I believed it until perhaps 20 years ago.

But even more: do we find anything in this statement in Deuteronomy (or anywhere else in the Torah) that its entire purpose was to merely show us what sin is? Of course not. Thus, when Paul says at the end of verse 7 that without The Law he wouldn't have known what sin is he is only doing what Paul regularly does as his teaching and writing style: he will highlight a certain aspect of a larger theological matter in order to make a point. He is in no way indicating that the several other aspects of the pertinent theological principle don't exist or matter. So, for Believers to ever imagine that Paul is saying that the single and only purpose for the Torah, The Law, to exist was for God to show humans what sin is, completely defies what the Torah tells us about itself.¹⁷

¹⁷ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁷What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

Missler: “May it never be!” That which reveals sin cannot be sin.

“Sin” = singular: sin nature.

“Known sin” = *ginosko*, to get a knowledge of;

“Known lust” = *eido* or *oida*, perceive, observe, understand; pluperfect: past, with results that go on

“Covet” = *epithumia*, desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden, lust.

The Law arouses sin (7:5) but that does not mean the Law itself is sin. In fact, Paul said later, the Law is holy (v. 12) and spiritual (v. 14). Paul went on to explain that the Law made sin known (cf. 3:19-20).

Exodus 20:

- (1) v.3 No other gods before me
- (2) v.4 No graven image
- (3) v.7 Taking name in vain
- (4) v.8 Sabbath
- (5) v.12 Honor father and mother...
- (6) v.13 Do not murder
- (7) v.14 Adultery
- (8) v.15 Steal
- (9) v.16 False witness
- (10)v.17 Not desire the unavailable;

Different; unique character: intent; internal. This one that the Holy Spirit used to get Paul. (Cf. Paul’s performance under the law: Phil 3:4ff)

Then to be specific, he mentioned coveting. The Law’s prohibition, “Do not covet” (Ex. 20:17; Deut. 5:21), makes people want to covet all the more. Paul knew sin as a principle and specifically, covetousness as an expression of it, and that knowledge came through the Law. [Paul picked the 10th: a commandment of intent; thus, the law is spiritual...]¹⁸

Guzik: I would not have known sin except through the law: The law is like an x-ray machine; it reveals what is there but hidden. You can’t blame an x-ray for what it exposes.

For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.” The law sets the “speed limit” so we know exactly if we are going too fast. We might never know that we are sinning in many areas (such as covetousness) if the law didn’t show us specifically.¹⁹

¹⁸ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

¹⁹ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-7.cfm?a=1053001

⁸But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

Missler: Apart From the Law, Sin is Dead

Paul described how it worked. The indwelling principle of sin, seizing the opportunity (lit., “taking occasion (a start point)”) “Occasion” = *aphorme*:

- 1) a place from which a movement or attack is made, a base of operations
- 2) metaph. that by which endeavor is excited and from which it goes forth:
- 2a) that which gives occasion and supplies matter for an undertaking, the incentive ;
- 2b) the resources we avail ourselves of in attempting or performing anything.

Afforded by the commandment (cf. Rom. 7:11), produced in me every kind of covetous desire.

“In me” : [autobiographical... and as believer! It is significant that, beginning with verse 7 and continuing through this chapter, the Apostle Paul turned to the first person singular, presenting his personal experience. Up to this point he had used the third person, the second person, and even the first person plural. But now he described his own experience, allowing the Holy Spirit to apply the truth to his readers.]

“Concupiscence”: desiring of every kind. The Law is not the cause of the act of sin; the principle or nature of sin within an individual is. But the Law’s specific commandments stimulate the sin principle into acts that violate the commandments and give those acts the character of transgression (4:15; cf. 3:20; 5:13b, 20a).

As Paul concluded, Apart from Law, sin is dead. This does not mean that sin has no existence without the Law (cf. 5:13), but that without the Law sin is less active, for the Law arouses “sinful passions” (7:5).²⁰

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

In verse 8 Paul says that apart from The Law, sin is dead. This goes along with his declaration in verse 7 that the Torah tells us what sin is. The point of the next 3 verses is to say that while on the one hand The Law certainly is not sin; on the other hand, it can't be denied that The Law has been exploited by sin for its own wicked purposes. Then he goes on to explain something he also said earlier: that when God makes a law, our mere knowledge of that law causes our evil inclinations to kick into overdrive. So, what are we to think that Paul is saying about the relationship between laws and sin? Is it truly an issue of direct cause and effect? Much of Christianity says that Paul's solution to the problem, then, is to simply have no laws! You can't get a speeding ticket if there are no speed limits. You can't go to jail for robbing a bank if there is no law against robbing banks. So, if we apply this mindset to civil society, we find that God's solution to the crime problem would be to get rid of all laws and let people do whatever they want to. No laws, no crimes; no criminals. Easy! Frankly, what is usually proposed as Paul's solution is absurd; just get rid of all of God's divine laws and sinning becomes impossible.²¹

²⁰ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

²¹ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

McGee: Let me try to bring out the meaning a little more clearly: What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? Away with the thought! On the contrary, I should not have been conscious of sin, except through law; for I had not known illicit desire (coveting). But sin, getting a start through the commandment, produced in me all manner of illicit desire. For apart from the Law sin is dead.

Paul, you recall, began his argument way back in the sixth chapter of Romans with this expression, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin?" Now again he says, "What shall we say then? Is the Law sin?" In the first part of this chapter Paul seems to be saying that law and sin are on a par. If release from sin means release from law, then are they not the same? Paul clarifies this. He says, "Perish the thought!" Paul will now show that the Law is good; it reveals God's will. The difficulty is not with the Law; the difficulty is with us. The flesh is at fault. Paul becomes very personal in the remainder of this chapter. Notice that he uses the first person pronouns: I, me and myself; they are used forty-seven times in this section. The experience is the struggle Paul had within himself. He tried to live for God in the power of his new nature. He found it was impossible. The Law revealed to Paul the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The Law was an X-ray of his heart. That is what the Law will do for you if you put it down on your life. The Word of God is called a mirror; it reveals what we are. If you have a spot on your face, the mirror will show it to you, but it can't remove the spot. However, God has a place to remove it:

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The Law reveals the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The Law is not at fault, but the old Adamic nature is the culprit. The admonition of prohibition contained in the Law makes clear the weakness of the flesh. It shows we are sinners.

Here in California a test was made some time ago. A mirror was put in a very prominent public place, and the test was to see if men or women looked at themselves more. I felt it was an unnecessary test; I could have told them that women looked at themselves more. But unfortunately, the test proved otherwise. We all like to see ourselves. We all like to look in a mirror -- except one: the Word of God. We don't like to look in that one because it reveals us as sinners, horrible, lost sinners.²²

⁹For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

Missler: Paul was speaking of his personal experience as he reached the age of accountability; "Alive once" as a youth prior to his awareness and understanding of the full impact of God's commandments.

The clause, "but when the commandment came," does not speak of the giving of the Mosaic Law, but the dawning of the significance of the commandment ("Do not covet") on Paul's mind and heart before his conversion. The result was that the principle of sin within made its presence and power known (it sprang to life) in his violations of the commandment. As a result, Paul died spiritually (cf. 6:23a) under the sentence of judgment by the Law he had broken.

The law unveils the sin nature; and implies accountability.

²² Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

Died: metaphorically: separated from fellowship
[This verse is also viewed as a basis for children being saved prior to the age of accountability.
See also 2 Sam 12: 15-23.]²³

Guzik: I was alive once without the law: Children can be innocent before they know or understand what law requires. This is what Paul refers to when he says I was alive once without the law.²⁴

¹⁰And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

¹¹For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

Missler: Sin Deceived Him

Apart from the Law, the principle of sin was dormant and inactive; but using the commandments of the Law, it demonstrated its controlling force over one's actions. So, this sin "deceived" him ["led him astray"; cf. 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:14] and put him to death (lit., "killed" him), not physically but spiritually. How did it deceive him? By luring him to attempt to live for God by his own effort...²⁵

McGee: Sin is personified again here and is a tempter. Sin tempts every man outside the Garden of Eden relative to himself and God. In the Garden of Eden Satan made man believe that God could not be trusted and that man was able to become god, apart from God. Sin, like a Pied Piper, leads the children of men into believing that they can keep the Law and that God is not needed. This is the false trail that he has been talking about, which leads to death. It was ordained to life, Paul says, and he found it led him to death. Sin at last will kill, for the Law did bring the knowledge of sin, and man is without excuse. Again, the difficulty is not with the Law, but within man.²⁶

Guzik: And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death: Sin does this by deception. Sin deceives us:

- Because sin falsely promises satisfaction
- Because sin falsely claims an adequate excuse
- Because sin falsely promises an escape from punishment

For sin... deceived me: It isn't the law that deceives us, but it is sin that uses the law as an occasion for rebellion. This is why Jesus said, you shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free (John 8:32). The truth makes us free from the deceptions of sin.

And by it killed me: Sin, when followed, leads to death – not life. One of Satan's greatest deceptions is to get us to think of sin as something good that an unpleasant God wants to deprive us of. When God warns us away from sin, He warns us away from something that will kill us.²⁷

²³ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

²⁴ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-7.cfm?a=1053001

²⁵ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

²⁶ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

²⁷ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-7.cfm?a=1053001

¹²Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

Missler: The law is designed to show my helplessness. Paul continues to explore the paradox:

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Paul then explores the reality that the same Torah that God meant to bring life also brings death. This fits exactly with what we read in Deuteronomy chapter 30. God means for the Torah to bring life and security to His worshippers. Blessings. However, that only happens when one is obedient to God's laws. Disobedience to The Law brings death and chaos with it. Curses. So, because people still allow their evil inclinations to remain as their Masters, The Law of Moses causes curses upon them in the sense that there is a deadly consequence for breaking God's laws. Yet, as he says in verse 12, that doesn't mean that the Torah is defective. Rather, says Paul, "So the Torah is holy; that is, the commandment is holy, just, and good." Let me paraphrase that: the Law itself (as a Covenant and a justice system) is just and it is good. So, the problem that the death of Christ remedies is not to repair or repeal the Torah (The Law), which is already holy and just. The problem that is solved by Christ's death is that a divine pardon is made available for the many that disobey the holy commandments of the Torah and thus deserves God's wrath, which amounts to curses and death.²⁸

¹³Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

Missler: It is the sin nature—revealed by our inability to keep the law— that is our enemy within.

“That by the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.” That is, undeniable.

Myth: Man is a result of his environment. Versus unreformable:

“incurably wicked...” Even the Believer can't keep the law.

Trying to keep codes stimulates the old nature, and rebellion...²⁹

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

After all of this is explored, Paul, in rabbinic fashion, has his straw man issue a ruling, which Paul will strongly disagree with. The straw man says: "then I guess from all you have said The Law that was good somehow, over time, became instead a source of corruption and death". To which Rabbi Paul responds: Heaven forbid! Rather the Torah remains good and pure; it is only that because my disobedience to what is good clearly exposed that my behaviors were wrong and my nature was bad well beyond what I ever imagined they might be. So, I finally realized that part of me (as a Believer and possessor of the Holy Spirit) was STILL bound to my slave Master; my evil inclination. And folks this is one of those theological principles that is so very hard for us to hear and at the same time we inherently know that it is true. It is this: as Believers we are currently hanging, as if suspended, somewhere between Christ's death and His resurrection. That is, we have a certain unity in Christ in regards to His death and burial (Paul has spent much time on this aspect of our identity in Christ). But the reality is that we do not yet share or identify in

²⁸ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

²⁹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

the same way with His resurrection. That is, Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection; He arose and then after some time on earth ascended to Heaven in a glorified body completely free from whatever part of Him represented His old nature and vulnerable flesh. We have not yet followed suit; we have not yet been resurrected into glorified bodies. We still have these same corrupt, frail bodies and so remnants of our former nature complete with evil inclinations, remain in us. We are living ironies. We are changed, but not entirely. We are holy before God, but not every aspect of us is actually holy. We live with God's Spirit in us, yet our evil inclinations still operate and bedevil us as well. We know what sin is, and how destructive it is to our relationship with God and at times to our fellow humans, but sometimes we do it anyway. So as Paul puts it in verse 17, the real me (that part of me that is the new nature that the Holy Spirit has given to me) resides side by side with the old sin nature still housed inside of me. So there is a constant tug-of-war going on; sometimes the new me wins, sometimes the old me prevails.³⁰

¹⁴For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Missler: “I am”: present tense, 1st person! Autobiographical.

Understanding the conflict in personal sanctification involves seeing the relationship between a believer and his indwelling sin.

In verse 14 Paul made a transition from the previous subject (vv. 7-13) to the next one.

The statement, “The Law is spiritual” (cf. v. 12), is not only the conclusion of Paul’s previous argument but also an accepted fact among people. The Law comes from God who is Spirit (John 4:24) and expresses God’s will for human living.

Paul, using himself as the example, said the problem is that “I am carnal” (*sarkinos*, “fleshy, made of flesh”), unspiritual. Present tense: continual.

In addition, he was sold as a slave (perf. tense, “had been sold and remained in that state”) under sin; (cf. “under sin” in Rom. 3:9).

In relating his personal experience in 7:14-25 Paul consistently will use the present tense whereas he had previously used the imperfect and aorist tenses: he is describing his present conflict as a Christian with indwelling sin and its continuing efforts to control his daily life.

The clause, “sold under sin” describes an unregenerate person; but sin also resides in a believer, who is still subject to sin’s penalty of physical death. As a result, indwelling sin continues to seek to claim what it considers its property even after one has become a Christian.

Paul now, as we often have, as a small child, in candor and honesty, admits he doesn’t understand his own behavior.³¹

Guzik: But I am carnal: The word carnal simply means “of the flesh.” Paul recognizes that a spiritual law cannot help a carnal man.

Carnal uses the ancient Greek word *sarkikos*, which means, “characterized by the flesh.” In this context it speaks of the person who can and should do differently but does not. Paul sees this carnality in himself, and knows that the law, though it is spiritual, has no answer for his carnal nature.³²

³⁰ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

³¹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

³² https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-7.cfm?a=1053001

15For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

Missler: 1st (of 3) Dirges (15-17)? (Present tense: continuous action!)

“Do” = *katergazomai*, to work to the outside from the result that is already on the inside.
“For I am constantly not practicing what I would like to do, but I keep on doing that which I hate.”

[Yet, this is the guy that God selected to write 14 epistles; who, in one lifetime brought the Gospel to the outer limits of the Roman Empire; etc. Talk about dedication and commitment... And yet in utter despair... and yet out of this comes these letters of victory...]³³

McGee: Here we have the conflict of two natures, the old nature and the new nature. There are definitely two "I's" in this section. The first "I" is the old nature as he asserts his rights. "For what I would" is what the new nature wants to do. "That do I not" -- the old nature rebels and won't do it. "But what I hate" -- the new nature hates it -- "that do I"; the old nature goes right ahead and does it.

Do you have the experience of this struggle in your Christian life? Do you do something, then hate yourself because you have done it? And you cry out, "God, oh, how I've failed You!" I think every child of God has this experience. Paul is speaking of his own experience in this section. Apparently, there were three periods in his life. First, he was a proud Pharisee under the Mosaic system, kidding himself by bringing the sacrifices and doing other things which he thought would make him right with God. But the Law was condemning him all the while. Then the second period began when he met Christ on the Damascus Road. This proud young Pharisee turned to Christ as his Savior, but he still felt he could live the Christian life. His new nature said, "I am now going to live for God!" But he failed and was in the arena of struggle and failure for a time. I do not know how long it lasted -- probably it was not long. There came a day when there was victory, but Paul did not win it; Christ did. Paul learned that it was a matter of yielding, presenting himself and letting the Spirit of God live the Christian life through him.³⁴

Guzik: For what I am doing, I do not understand: Paul's problem isn't a lack of desire – he wants to do what is right (what I will to do, that I do not practice). His problem isn't knowledge – he knows what the right thing is. His problem is a lack of power: how to perform what is good I do not find. He lacks power because the law gives no power.

The law says: “Here are the rules and you had better keep them.” But it gives us no power for keeping the law.³⁵

16If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good.

Missler: Key insight, contrary to all human nature: despite this paradox, “I agree with the law that it is good and right.” Here the Greek word for “good” is *kalos*, “beautiful, noble, excellent,” whereas in verse 12 it is *agathos*, “useful, upright.”³⁶

³³ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

³⁴ Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

³⁵ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-7.cfm?a=1053001

³⁶ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

While this probably isn't good news for us to hear, at least it explains why we at times behave the way we do and have the kinds of thoughts we're glad no one else knows about. We can also be comforted by knowing that the Apostle Paul openly admits that he, too, is plagued by this uncomfortable duality in his own life; so we probably shouldn't feel too bad about it for ourselves. I call this condition Spiritual Schizophrenia. It indeed is partially the result of our being suspended between our own death in Yeshua that has already happened, and our resurrection into new and glorified bodies (which has not yet happened).

Although the English masks it, we find the Greek word *nomos* appear in these last few verses a number of times, and the uses can denote various things. Remember that the word *nomos* is typically rendered in English as law. Usually Bible translators want us to accept that all uses of the word *nomos* (law) refer to the Old Testament Law. But that is not the case and verse 21 gives us yet another use of the word. It makes "law" mean a kind a general, non-specific law that Paul is using more as metaphor than real. It would be like a Dad who has had it with the kids today, and says, "I'm laying down the law in this house". He doesn't mean any specific civil law or formal Biblical law; probably not even a quotable house rule. He just means that he's going to require his kids to do what he says and if they don't there will be consequences. So Paul's informal "law" is that whenever he tries to do what is good (in the Jewish context this means to let the Master of his good inclination rule), the influence of his evil inclination is right there to cause trouble.³⁷

¹⁷Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Missler: [This does not mean Paul was avoiding personal responsibility for his actions; he was speaking of the conflict between his desires and the sin within him. Cf. Flip Wilson theology: "The devil made me do it."]

First of ray of hope: This is not the new nature, the problem is the old nature. Key insight.³⁸

Guzik: It is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me: Is Paul denying his responsibility as a sinner? No. He recognizes that as he sins, he acts against his nature as a new man in Jesus Christ. A Christian must own up to his sin, yet realize that the impulse to sin does not come from who we really are in Jesus Christ.

"To be saved from sin, a man must at the same time own it and disown it; it is this practical paradox which is reflected in this verse. A true saint may say it in a moment of passion, but a sinner had better not make it a principle." (Wuest)³⁹

³⁷ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

³⁸ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

³⁹ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-7.cfm?a=1053001

¹⁸For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

Missler: The Spirit is Willing, the Flesh is Weak 2nd Dirge (18-20):

Note the qualifying phrase: in my flesh (old self). “The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” Matthew 26:41.⁴⁰

¹⁹For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Missler: All present tense verbs: constant action. A restatement of v.15.

²⁰Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Missler: A restatement of v.17, but with a further insight.

The source of sin is the old nature. Rom 6: God has already judged it and has no more right to rule over me: it is put to death. Paul recognized that even as a believer he had an indwelling principle of sin that once owned him as a slave and that still expressed itself through him to do things he did not want to do and not to do things he desired to do. This is a problem common to all believers.

If Freud could only have known this. We could empty the psychiatric clinics... Psychology can only deal with symptoms: guilt. Rather than its cause: sin.⁴¹

²¹I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

Missler: Here (and also in 8:2, “law” (*nomos*) means principle. This law or principle is the reality of ever-present evil in an individual whenever he wants to do good.⁴²

Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. It’s possible that Paul was influenced by the rabbinic notion of the good inclination and the evil inclination (*yetzer hara*, *yetzer tov*). The rabbis taught that a person is born with an inclination to do evil but also an inclination to do good, which a person becomes responsible for about the age of 12 or 13 (see note on Ge 3:1–7). Paul described a longing to be set free from the law of sin, which wages war against the mind’s desire to follow God’s law (see Ro 7:22–25).⁴³

⁴⁰ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁴¹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁴² Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁴³ First-Century Study Bible Notes

²²For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

Missler: 3rd Dirge:

(The "inward man" is used in the Gr. NT also in 2 Cor. 4:16 and Eph. 3:16.) Delight in God's Law was the psalmist's response, stated repeatedly in Psalm 119 (e.g., vv. 16, 24, 47; cf. Ps. 1:2). Because of regeneration, a believer has a new nature or capacity for loving spiritual truths. The real You...⁴⁴

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

In verses 22 and 23 Paul speaks of his inner self versus his "other parts". His inner self is his regenerated mind; it is that "spiritual" part of him that is therefore directly affected by God's Holy Spirit dwelling with him. And this part of him naturally loves the Torah and completely agrees with God's Torah. Let's pause for a second. Do you love God's Law or do you hate God's Law? Do you agree with God's Torah or do you disagree with it? Do you seek to know and do God's Law, or do you seek to avoid it and keep it separate from your life? Paul uses the inner self that loves and agrees with God's Torah over and against other parts of his body that operate based on sin's laws. He is once again paraphrasing the standard doctrine of Judaism of the 1st century A.D. that is called the Doctrine of Two Masters. God's Laws is one Master, and sin's laws is another and opposing Master. But always with Paul it is The Law of Moses that is equated to God's Laws, and also with the good inclination. Paul continues to make the case that the hallmark of a true Believer is that God's Laws are what he or she goes by and strives to be obedient to. When we fail, we are in reality being obedient to sin's laws.

I realize that so much of what we have talked about in the Book of Romans is The Law of Moses. That is because Paul constantly brings it up, weaving it into his letter as a central feature. But it is also for the same reason that most of my time for Seed of Abraham Torah Class has been spent creating and teaching Bible lessons on the Old Testament. It is because the Old Testament and the Law of Moses, so vital for Christian spiritual health and as a guide for Christian living, have been neglected if not thrown into the dust bin as irrelevant mostly due to manmade doctrines beginning with the earliest gentile-controlled Church that were openly anti-Jewish. The Old Testament and The Law is something quite unfamiliar and thus foreign sounding and materially misunderstood by the Church in general. So a great deal of time is needed to explain what it is and what it isn't; where it fits, how to apply its principles, and to make clear a proposition that most Christians have been told that we must avoid: that obedience to the Covenant of Moses, and our direct connection to the Covenant of Abraham (as spiritual seeds of Abraham), is the missing link to our faith. It is the Rosetta Stone that helps us to properly understand Yeshua and the New Testament, that leads us to rekindle our brotherhood with Israel and the Jewish people, and it enables us to know God as He truly is (at least as much as a human is capable of knowing).⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁴⁵ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

23But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Missler: Yet, recognizing the facts of experience, Paul said he saw another law or principle at work within him. This is the principle of sin. Paul called it “sin living in me” (Rom. 7:17, 20), “evil is present with me” (v. 21), and “the sinful nature” (vv. 5, 18, 25).

The indwelling principle of sin is constantly mounting a military campaign against the new nature, trying to gain victory and control (cf. “slave” in vv. 14, 25 and “slaves” in 6:17, 19-20), of a believer and his actions.

The new nature is called “the law” of the “mind” (noos; cf. 7:25) because it has the capacity for perceiving and making moral judgments. Further, despite a believer’s identification with Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection and his efforts to have Christ honoring attitudes and actions, he cannot in his own power resist his indwelling sin nature. In and of himself he repeatedly experiences defeat and frustration.

[This will be dealt with in Romans 12, and is practically developed in our book, *Be Ye Transformed...*]⁴⁶

24O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Missler: Deliver Me From This Body of Death

Significantly Paul’s description of himself is part of John’s picture of the church of Laodicea: “wretched” (Rev. 3:17).

Paul recognized that as long as he was in his mortal body he would face the conflict with the indwelling sin principle and would have defeat in his own strength. Here he wrote of the “body of death”; in Romans 6:6 he wrote of the “body of sin.”

These mean that sin works through one’s human body (cf. 6:6, 12-13, 19; 7:5, 23), bringing death (6:16, 21, 23; 7:10-11, 13; 8:10).⁴⁷

Torah Class, Seed of Abraham; Tom Bradford:

Verse 24 is almost a primal scream. It comes from a righteous man, Paul, who realizes his predicament. Some of his predicament has already been solved by Messiah (he has been granted righteousness and eternal life with God). But the rest of his predicament is a work in progress, as it is for us all, and there are no easy solutions. Part of him pays attention to his evil Master; part of him to his good Master. This leads him to cry out: "What a miserable creature I am!" Many Bible commentators, ancient and modern, are deeply troubled by what they read here. Some go so far as to allege that this must be an addition by a person who cannot possibly be a Believer. After all; how can a Christian be miserable and have these internal conflicts? How can a Christian so readily admit that even after being saved there are parts of him that are still controlled by sin? Surely this cannot be a man regenerated by the work of Messiah Yeshua. But to think this way I believe betrays an allegation that I have made numerous times; too often Bible commentators begin with settled doctrine and then work backwards from it to make Scripture fit it. If only they would begin by reading and studying the Old Testament. If only they would see the struggles (and failures) of faith in some of our greatest Bible heroes. And yet, how much God

⁴⁶ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

⁴⁷ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

loved them and held them up as righteous. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Judah, son of Jacob. King David.

If these great Patriarchs can fail and can have never ending internal battles between good and evil, then so can we. And the ones I mentioned didn't have the benefit of Yeshua HaMashiach and the Holy Spirit indwelling them, as do we. I'm not sure that outside of Yeshua Himself there is a stronger, bolder figure than Paul. And yet he is honest enough to admit that while we like to speak of Jesus' finished work on the cross, in fact His work is not finished and even the effects of the marvelous things He has already done have not fully taken hold.

This is why I have urged you to listen and take to heart Paul's words in Romans when he doesn't demand that we must somehow muster up more faith from the pit of our souls no matter our circumstance. A greater or larger faith in us is not the issue. Rather we must have and maintain an unshakeable trust in the perfect faithfulness of Yeshua. We must determine to remain obedient to God, even knowing ahead of time that we won't always be. This is why Paul ends chapter 7 by asking the rhetorical question: "Who will rescue me from this body bound for death?" And with great relief and thanksgiving he answers his own question; God will rescue him through Yeshua our Lord. This is not the cry of a Seeker or a man who is walking the line between belief and unbelief. This is the cry of a man who knows God, and who well understands where the human race currently stands. This is a cry we should all utter when we stumble and we wonder how God could still love us after everything He has done for us.

Paul sums up his present line of thought in verse 25 with a truth that represents the condition of every Believer no matter how together, how pious, or how nearly perfect some may appear. It is that in his mind (his inner self), because he knows what he knows to be true, he has given himself over as a slave to his new Master, God's Law. Yet in his sin nature that is still there, still not fully conquered, other parts of him will follow sin's law and so this righteous man will stumble as will we all.⁴⁸

²⁵I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Missler: Paul's answer to this question was triumphant and immediate!

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Just as believers are identified with Him in His death and resurrection by faith here and now, so they will join their resurrected and exalted Lord for all eternity in new bodies, free forever from the presence of sin (8:23; Phil. 3:20-21).

Meanwhile, in this life, Paul concluded, "with the mind (noi; cf. noos in Rom. 7:23) I myself serve (lit., "am serving as a slave") the law of God"; but with the flesh (sarki, "flesh"; cf. vv. 5, 18, where sarki, from sarx, is also translated "sinful nature") a slave to the law of sin (cf. "slave to sin," v. 14).

While awaiting freedom from the presence of sin, believers still face conflicts between their regenerated minds (or new natures or capacities) and their sin natures or capacities.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <http://www.torahclass.com/teacher/author/tom-bradford/new-testament-studies/new-testament-romans>

⁴⁹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Romans, khouse.org

Guzik: I thank God; through Jesus Christ our Lord! Finally, Paul looks outside of himself and unto Jesus. As soon as he looks to Jesus, he has something to thank God for – and he thanks God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through means that Paul sees Jesus standing between himself and God, bridging the gap and providing the way to God. Lord means Paul has put Jesus in the right place – as Lord and master of his life.

So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin: He acknowledges the state of struggle, but thanks God for the victory in Jesus. Paul doesn't pretend that looking to Jesus takes away the struggle – Jesus works through us, not instead of us in the battle against sin.

The glorious truth remains: there is victory in Jesus! Jesus didn't come and die just to give us more or better rules, but to live out His victory through those who believe. The message of the gospel is that there is victory over sin, hate, death, and all evil as we surrender our lives to Jesus and let Him live out victory through us.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord: Paul shows that even though the law is glorious and good, it can't save us – and we need a Savior. Paul never found any peace, any praising God until he looked outside of himself and beyond the law to his Savior, Jesus Christ.

You thought the problem was that you didn't know what to do to save yourself – but the law came as a teacher, taught you what to do and you still couldn't do it. You don't need a teacher, you need a Savior.

You thought the problem was that you weren't motivated enough, but the law came in like a coach to encourage you on to do what you need to do and you still didn't do it. You don't need a coach or a motivational speaker, you need a Savior.

You thought the problem was that you didn't know yourself well enough. But the law came in like a doctor and perfectly diagnosed your sin problem, but the law couldn't heal you. You don't need a doctor, you need a Savior.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Rom/Rom-7.cfm?a=1053001