

## Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 98 – Romans 6:15-7:25

### Day 486: Romans 6:15-23

#### Verses 15-23

The focus moves from freedom (vv. 1-14) to slavery. Once 'slaves to sin' (vv. 17,20), Christians are now 'slaves to righteousness' (v. 18), 'slaves to God' (v.22).

#### Verse 15

τί οὖν; ἁμαρτήσωμεν ὅτι οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν; μὴ γένοιτο.

"The questions that open the two main sections in Romans 6 reveal the common theme Paul pursues: 'Shall we go on sinning that grace may increase?' (v.1); 'Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?' (v.15). As the former question is sparked by what Paul said in 5:20 about the power of grace, so the question in 6:15 is stimulated by what he has just said at the end of verse 14. Proclaiming that believers have been transferred from the regime of the Mosaic law to the regime of grace may lead some Christians to think that sin does not matter. Indeed, the danger that believers will 'presume on grace' and not pursue a life of obedience to the Lord is an ever present danger in the Christian church." Moo.

Wright adds, "This question, like that of 6:1, is not confined to committing actual acts of sin. As the parallel with Gal 2:17 demonstrates, part of the point is that to come out from the sphere of Torah, for a Jew, meant that one was joining the 'sinners,' the ἁμαρτωλοί (*hamartoloi*), the lesser breeds without the law."

τι οὖν what then?

ἁμαρτανω sin, commit sin

γένοιτο see 6:2

#### Verse 16

οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ᾧ παριστάνετε ἑαυτοὺς δούλους εἰς ὑπακοήν, δοῦλοί ἐστε ᾧ ὑπακούετε, ἥτοι ἁμαρτίας εἰς θάνατον ἢ ὑπακοῆς εἰς δικαιοσύνην;

παριστημι and παριστανω see v.13

δουλος, ου m slave, servant

ὑπακοη, ης f obedience

ὑπακουω obey, be subject to

ἥτοι or; ἥτοι ... ἢ either ... or

θανατος see v.3

εἰς θάνατον is omitted by a few MSS – it would seem an accidental omission.

δικαιοσυνη see v.14

δικαιοσύνην would appear here not to have a forensic sense but "in keeping with Old Testament and Jewish usage, ... a moral sense: conduct pleasing to God." Moo.

Paul highlights the illogicality of the idea that the Christian's freedom from sin and death relieves him/her from obligation to God.

#### Verse 17

χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἦτε δούλοι τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὑπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδασχῆς,

χαρις, ιτος f grace, thanks

παρεδόθητε Verb, aor pass indic, 2 pl

παραδιδωμι hand over, pass on

τυπος, ου m pattern, example, type

διδασχη, ης f teaching, what is taught

Paul is "contrasting the Christian pattern of teaching with the Jewish pattern (see 2:20)." Moo. There is the suggestion here that the early Christian kerygma included a body of ethical instruction.

#### Verse 18

ἐλευθερωθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐδουλωθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ·

ἐλευθερωθέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl ἐλευθερωω free, set free

ἐδουλωθητε Verb, aor pass indic, 2 pl

δουλωω enslave, make (someone) a slave

"We have been made 'slaves' of that moral conduct God expects of his people." Moo. Yet *this* slavery is true freedom.

Wright considers 'righteousness' here a periphrasis for 'God'.

#### Verse 19

ἀνθρωπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν. ὡσπερ γὰρ παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δούλα τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν, οὕτως νῦν παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δούλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἀγιασμόν.

ἀνθρωπιнос, η, ον human, characteristic of mankind

Murray thinks that Paul uses this phrase to soften his reference to the Christian life as 'slavery'. So also Moo, "What he suggests, therefore, is that the limitations of our human understanding make it necessary for him to use imprecise, but still appropriate analogies."

ἀσθενεια, ας f weakness  
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature  
ὡπερ as, just as  
παριστημι and παριστανω see v.13  
μέλη Noun, nom/acc pl μελος see v.13  
ἀκαθαρσια, ας f impurity, immorality  
ἀνομια, ας f wickedness, lawlessness,  
sin

καὶ τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν perhaps  
'from one degree of lawlessness to another.'

οὕτως thus, in this way

"One thinks of the single-minded pursuit with which some people seek fame, money, or power. Our pursuit of righteousness and holiness should be just as dedicated." Moo. Under the heading "What God gives versus what we do", Moo provides an excellent discussion of the relationship between indicative and imperative and the need for a balanced appreciation of both for an adequate understanding of the nature of the Christian life.

ἀγιασμος, ου m sanctification, holiness

Either the *state* of holiness or the *process* of sanctification. Murray thinks the former. The condition necessary for a person to approach the presence of God, cf. v.11, 'alive unto God.'

### Verse 20

ὅτε γὰρ δοῦλοι ἦτε τῆς ἁμαρτίας,  
ἐλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ.

ὅτε conj when, at which time  
ἐλευθερος, α, ον free, free person

"Non-Christians often pride themselves on being free, in contrast to Christians, who in their estimation have lost their human autonomy by bowing the knee to Christ. Paul notes that non-Christians do, indeed, have a freedom – the freedom not to be able to live righteous lives. Genuine autonomy is not an option. If one is not serving God, then, whether knowingly or not, one is serving sin." Moo.

### Verse 21

τίνα οὖν καρπὸν εἶχετε τότε ἐφ' οἷς νῦν  
ἐπαισχύνεσθε; τὸ γὰρ τέλος ἐκείνων  
θάνατος.

καρπος, ου m fruit, harvest, outcome  
εἶχετε Verb, imperf act indic, 2 pl ἔχω

τοτε then, at that time  
ἐπαισχυνομαι be ashamed

"The thought is the mirror of that in 5:5a: hope does not make us ashamed, because it truly leads to life; sin produces shame, because it leads to death. Here 'shame' is not simply associated with the feelings of disgrace or humiliation that belong to the deeds of sin themselves, but with the fact that conduct of that type leads to the human disintegration of death (cf. 1:32)." Wright.

τελος, ους n end, conclusion,  
ἐκεινος, η, ο that, those

The punctuation of this verse is a matter of controversy. Most older versions have no punctuation after τοτε and a question mark after ἐπαισχυνεσθε. This is reflected in AV and NIV and is supported by Murray. An alternative favoured by Nestle and incorporated in several modern editions of the Greek text, is to place the question mark after τοτε and a minor punctuation after ἐπαισχυνεσθε. This is reflected in NEB and NJB. Moo comments, "The NIV suggests that Paul asks a rhetorical question implying the answer 'none.' But it is preferable to follow here the punctuation adopted in, for instance, the NJB: 'What did you gain from living like that? Experiences of which you are now ashamed, for that sort of behaviour ends in death.' The verse then matches the structure of verse 22 almost exactly:

#### Before we were Christians (v. 21):

*Status* – slaves of sin, free from righteousness

*Result* – fruit bringing shame

*Outcome* – death.

#### Now that we are Christians (v. 22):

*Status* – free from sin, slaves to God

*Result* – fruit bringing sanctification

*Outcome* – life."

### Verse 22

νυνὶ δέ, ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας  
δουλωθέντες δὲ τῷ θεῷ, ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν  
ὑμῶν εἰς ἀγιασμόν, τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωῆν  
αἰώνιον.

νυνὶ (originally an emphatic form of νυν)

now

ἐλευθερωθέντες see v.18

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

δουλωθέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl

δουλω see v.18

ἀγιασμος see v.19

ζωη, ης f life

αἰωνιος, ον eternal, everlasting

**Verse 23**

τὰ γὰρ ὀψωνία τῆς ἀμαρτίας θάνατος, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.

ὀψωνιον, ου n pay, wages,  
compensation

χάρισμα, τος n gift (from God)

"Remuneration is the principle by which we become heirs of death; unmerited favour is that by which we receive eternal life." Murray.

**Chapter 6 – Postscript**

It is helpful here to quote at some length from Wright's reflections on Romans 6:

"Being a Christian means living from within a particular story. It is the subversive story of God and the world, focused on Israel and thence on the Messiah, and reaching its climax in the Messiah's death and resurrection. No Christian can ever tell this story to frequently, or know it too well, because it is the story that shaped him or her in baptism and must continue to shape thought, life, and prayer thereafter. Otherwise one will be living a lie, allowing sin to continue exercising a sovereignty to which it has no more right...

"This chapter shines a bright spotlight on the dangerous half-truth, currently fashionable, that 'God accepts us as we are.' Indeed, the question of 6:1 could be read as raising exactly this question: Will 'God's acceptance' do as a complete grounding of Christian ethics? Emphatically not. Grace reaches where humans are, and accepts them as they are, because anything else would result in nobody's being saved. Justification is by grace alone, through faith alone. But grace is always *transformative*. God accepts us where we are, but God does not intend to leave us where we are. That would be precisely to 'continue in sin, that grace may abound.' Unless we are simply to write Romans 6 out of the canon, the radical inclusivity of the gospel must be matched by the radical exclusivity of Christian holiness. There is no such thing as continuing to let sin reign in one's mortal body, and it will require serious moral effort to combat this tendency. The idea that Christian holiness is to be attained by every person simply doing what comes naturally would actually be funny were it not so prevalent. True freedom is not simply the random, directionless life, but the genuine humanness that reflects the image of God. This is found under the lordship of Christ. And this lordship makes demands that are as testing and difficult as they are actually liberating.

"The pattern, the motive and the moral power to live in true freedom (in other words, in 'slavery' to God) are found in that weaving of our life story together with the death and resurrection of the Messiah that happens in baptism. We are all too aware that thousands, perhaps millions, of the baptised seem to have abandoned the practice of the Christian faith and life; but we are nevertheless called to allow the dying and rising of Christ in which we have shared to have its force and way in our own lives. If Jesus and his dying and rising are simply a great example, we remain without hope; who seriously thinks that they can live up to that ideal in their own strength? But if the fact of the messianic events has become part of our own story through the event of baptism, and the prayer and faith that accompany it, and above all the gift of the Holy Spirit of which Paul will shortly say more – then we will indeed be able to make our own the victory of grace, to present our members, and our whole selves, as instruments of God's ongoing purposes."

**Day 487: Romans 7:1-6****Romans 7:1-8:11**

"The main theme on the surface of Romans 7 – and of the first paragraph of Romans 8, which belongs closely with it – is the Jewish Law, the Torah. The conclusion is unwelcome to some, not least because it appears to make the passage irrelevant for those who have never lived 'under' the Torah. But Paul is here telling the story of Israel under one particular guise; this is the story that climaxes with the story of Jesus (8:3-4), and the way in which it does so is vital for understanding the basis of Christianity...

"The argument of the passage falls into clear paragraphs. The introduction (7:1-6) leads to the question of whether the law and sin are identical (7:7-12). This produces the second-order question, whether the good law, despite being exonerated from the first charge, is nevertheless the cause of death (7:13-20). This in turn leads to Paul's paradoxical conclusion about the law (7:21-25). Paul can then expound the divine answer (8:1-11), which also, naturally, serves as the foundation of the further exposition of life in the Spirit (8:12-30)." Wright.

**Romans 7:1-4**

Paul provides us with an illustration of the relationship between law, death and freedom. Death annuls the demands of the law on the person now deceased; for example, the law which binds a man to his wife is annulled with the death of the husband. The annulment of this law gives freedom to the wife. In this example the dead and the living cannot be one and the same, but in respect to the spiritual truth they illustrate they can be: the same person who has died with Christ to the demands of the law is freed to live with and for the risen Christ. However, the illustration should not be turned into an allegory.

**Verse 1**

Ἡ ἀγνοεῖτε, ἀδελφοί, γινώσκουσιν γὰρ νόμον λαλῶ, ὅτι ὁ νόμος κυριεύει τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ζῆ;

ἢ οἴ

Provides a link back to 6:14-15, "You are not under the law ... or do you not know that the law only rules over someone during their lifetime?"

ἀγνοεω not know, be ignorant, fail to understand

λαλεω speak, talk

"*nomos* refers to the Mosaic law throughout this context. This does not mean, however, that Paul addresses only Jewish Christians. Many of the Gentile Christians in Rome had probably been 'God-fearers,' that is, Gentiles sympathetic to Judaism but without becoming converts. They would have known the Mosaic law as well as Jewish Christians." Moo.

κυριεω see 6:9

ὅσος, η, ον as much as, how far; ἐφ' ὅσον while

χρονος, ου m time, period of time

ζῆ Verb, pres act indic, 3s ζαω live, be alive

This is a general statement, of which the law regarding marriage is simply an example.

**Verse 2**

ἢ γὰρ ὑπανδρος γυνὴ τῷ ζῶντι ἀνδρὶ δέδεται νόμῳ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ ἀνὴρ, κατήργηται ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ἀνδρός.

ὑπανδρος, ον married (of a woman)

γυνη, αικος f woman, wife

ἀνηρ, ἀνδρος m man, husband

δέδεται Verb, perf pass indic, 3s δεω bind, tie

ἐὰν if

ἀποθνησκω die, face death, be mortal

κατήργηται Verb, perf pass indic, 3s

καταργεω cancel; pass be released from

τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ἀνδρός Barrett considers the two genitives to be in apposition – 'she is done with the law as she is done with her husband.'

**Verse 3**

ἄρα οὖν ζῶντος τοῦ ἀνδρός μοιχαλὶς χρηματίσει ἐὰν γένηται ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ ἀνὴρ, ἐλευθέρῃ ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου, τοῦ μὴ εἶναι αὐτὴν μοιχαλίδα γενομένην ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ.

μοιχαλὶς, ἰδος f adulteress, unfaithful

χρηματιζω be called

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3s γινομαι

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

ἐλευθερος, α, ον free, free person

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

του μη εἶναι – του + infinitive expresses consequence – "with the result that she is not ..."

**Verse 4**

ὥστε, ἀδελφοί μου, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς ἑτέρῳ, τῷ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγερθέντι, ἵνα καρποφορήσωμεν τῷ θεῷ.

ὥστε so that, with the result that

ἐθανατώθητε Verb, aor pass indic, 2 pl θανατω kill, put to death

Cf. Gal 2:19. By death, you came out from under the law's domain.

σωμα, τος n body

"The era of the law has come to an end with the redemptive work of Christ. To be 'under the law,' then, means to be in that old era and to effectively deny that Christ, 'the end of the law,' has come." Moo.

Wright, addressing the question of who is the 'you' who has died, writes, "The whole clause appears to be a shorthand way of saying three things simultaneously: (a) the bodily death of Jesus the Messiah is the representative event through which the Messiah's people 'die with him' (6:4-11); (b) you are in the Messiah by baptism, and therefore share that death [so chapter 6]; (c) your solidarity with the Messiah can be expressed in terms of your membership in his 'body.'"

νεκρος, α, ον dead

ἐγερθέντι Verb, aor pass ptc, m & n dat s

ἐγειρω raise

καρποφορεω bear fruit, be productive

To have died to the law does not mean to be free to live as one pleases. The only way of dying to the law is by dying with Christ and to die with him is also to be raised with him. That union with him that brings forgiveness is also a union designed to bear fruit (cf. 6:21-22).

### Verses 5-6

"Paul now explains v. 4 with a two-sided description of the old life and the new. This, as is widely recognised, functions as the double heading over the two sections, 7:7-25 and 8:1-11." Wright.

### Verse 5

ὅτε γὰρ ἡμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκί, τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν τὰ διὰ τοῦ νόμου ἐνηργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ·

ὅτε conj when, at which time  
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature

"'The flesh' denotes physicality seen on the one hand as corruptible and on the other as rebellious; it is another way of saying 'in Adam,' of demarkating that humanity that is characterised by sin and consequently by death. To be 'in the flesh' for Paul is to be determined by 'flesh' in this sense, i.e., to live under the dominion of sin and death, and thus to be in the condition marked by the first half of the various antitheses both of 5:12-21 and of 6:16-23." Wright.

παθημα, τος n passion, desire  
ἀμαρτια, ας f sin  
ἐνεργεω work, be at work (in)

The law had no power to prevent sinful passions but rather stimulated them, cf. vv 7-12.

μελος, ους n member, bodily part  
θανατος, ου m death

### Verse 6

νυνὶ δὲ κατηγορήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου, ἀποθανόντες ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα, ὥστε δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος.

νυνυ (originally an emphatic form of νυν)  
now  
κατηγορήθημεν Verb, aor pass indic, 1 pl  
καταργεω see v.2

The AV rendering seems to imply ἀποθανοντος (so Elzevir text of 1624) for which there is no manuscript authority, but which seems to be derived from a conjecture of Beza, who, following Erasmus, misunderstood a comment of Chrysostom (so Tischendorf).

κατεχω hold fast, restrain  
ὥστε so that, with the result that  
καινοτης, ητος f newness

'Newness of Spirit' is a reference to the Holy Spirit who is the author of new life. Paul here anticipates 8:1-11.

παλαιοτης, ητος f age, oldness  
γραμμα, τος n letter (of alphabet), letter

Cf. 2 Cor 3:6f.; also Rom 2:29. "The point of all this for Romans 7 is to confirm that here Paul is dealing with 'the Jew,' living under the 'letter' of the Mosaic law, and contrasting this with the Spirit-given new life in Christ; and to show that throughout 7:1-8:11 we should keep in mind the discussion in chap. 2, which, demonstrating the inadequacy of the Torah to create and sustain ethnic Israel as God's people, pointed forward to the creation of a new people in whom God's will would be done, described somewhat oxymoronically as 'the uncircumcision that keeps the law' (2:26-27)... A new mode of service, then, has been opened up, a mode to which Torah pointed but which it could not bring to pass." Wright.

### Day 488: Romans 7:7-12

### Verses 7-12

The verses that follow have caused much controversy: do they speak of the unregenerate state or is Paul describing his experience as a Christian? They do not seem to describe what we know of Paul's history before his conversion. Murray argues that verses 7-12 are a description of pre-regenerate conviction, a work of the Spirit. Barrett thinks that this section does not reflect Paul's experience but follows the pattern of the story of the Fall in Gen 2 & 3. Wright argues strongly that it depicts the history of Israel as God's covenant people, a history with which Paul identifies, for it was his history. In answer to the question of whether the law is sin, Paul tells "the story of the law's arrival on Sinai and Israel's recapitulation of the sin of Adam."

**Verse 7**

Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; ὁ νόμος ἁμαρτία; μὴ γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔγνω ἢ διὰ νόμου, τὴν τε γὰρ ἐπιθυμίαν οὐκ ἦδεν εἰ μὴ ὁ νόμος ἔλεγεν, Οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις.

ἐροῦμεν Verb, fut act indic, 1 pl λέγω  
γένοιτο Verb, aor opt, 3s γινομαι  
ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

Paul's negative evaluation of the law in vv 1-6 leads him to anticipate a conclusion that may wrongly be drawn by his Roman readers – that the law and sin are more or less equivalent. Note the use of the adversative ἀλλά 'No, the law is not sin, although it is indeed true that the the law and sin are related...' NIV translation of ἀλλά as 'indeed' is misleading.

ἔγνω Verb, aor act indic, 1 s γινωσκω

The meaning here is more than 'come to understand' sin as a concept, it is knowing what sin meant in practice – knowing its reality and power (see 8a). Cf. 3:20.

τε and; τε γαρ for also  
ἐπιθυμία, ας f desire, longing, lust  
ἦδεν Verb, pluperf act indic, 1 s οἶδα  
ἐπιθυμew long for, desire, covet

Wright comments, "This is not about Paul himself; it is about the moment in Israel's history, and indeed (5:13-14) in the history of humankind, when the arrival of the law meant that, as at the beginning, humans were faced with a specific command, so that the miscellaneous sin that had existed 'from Adam to Moses' (5:14) would again become 'trespass,' breaking a known law. "That explains, as will become clear in the next three verses, the fact that Paul seems here to be referring also to the 'fall' of Genesis 3 (particularly with v.11: sin 'deceived me ... and killed me,' alluding to Gen 3:13; cf. 2 Cor 11:3). We should not attempt to decide between these two (Sinai and Eden): Paul's point is precisely that what happened on Sinai recapitulated what had happened in Eden."

**Verse 8**

ἀφορμὴν δὲ λαβοῦσα ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς κατειργάσατο ἐν ἐμοὶ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν· χωρὶς γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά.

ἀφορμη, ης f occasion, opportunity  
λαβοῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s  
λαμβάνω  
ἐντολη, ης f command  
κατειργάσατο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s  
κατεργάζομαι accomplish, bring about

ἐμοὶ Pronoun, dat s ἐγω

Sin is at war against man, and the law gives it opportunity for attack. Barrett points out the analogy with the way in which the serpent used the command of God given to Adam and Eve in order to lead them into sin. Moo says that Paul "Probably has in mind the power of a definite prohibition to stimulate in sinful people a rebellious reaction."

χωρὶς without, apart from  
νεκρος, α, ον dead

**Verse 9**

ἐγὼ δὲ ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου ποτέ· ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία ἀνέζησεν,

ζωα live, be alive  
ποτε once, formerly, at one time  
ἐλθούσης Verb, aor act ptc, f gen s ἐρχομαι  
ἀναζωα come to life

The law gives sin a new lease of life. To what time does this refer? Many commentators see this as a reference to Paul's childhood before he became a 'son of the commandment' and assumed responsibility before the law. But Paul has made it quite clear that he had never been 'alive' in a spiritual sense without the law because he was born a sinner, condemned because of Adam's sin (5:12-21). Murray and others see the reference not to a particular time in Paul's development but to the psychology of the fallen man and the manner of sin's working. Barrett thinks that the language reflects the story of Adam and Eve and that Paul is here identifying himself with this history. Moo also thinks that Paul is speaking here not of personal experience but of corporate experience. He says, "The best explanation ... finds Paul in these verses to be describing the experience that he and all Jews have gone through as part of the people of Israel. Jews in Paul's day had a lively sense of their involvement with the great acts in the history of Israel... It would be natural for Paul to merge his own experience relative to sin and the law with the experience of his people Israel. As he has made clear throughout Romans, the coming of the commandment (= the giving of the law of Moses) meant for Israel not 'life' but 'death.' Their sin was exposed and magnified, and greater wrath came on them (4:15; 5:20)."

**Verse 10**

ἔγω δὲ ἀπέθανον, καὶ εὐρέθη μοι ἡ ἐντολὴ  
ἢ εἰς ζωὴν αὐτὴ εἰς θάνατον·

ἀπέθανον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl

ἀποθνήσκω die, face death

εὐρέθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s εὐρισκω

ζωή, ἡς f life

Cf. Lev 18:5. "The purpose of the law in man's original estate was not to give occasion to sin but to direct and regulate man's life in the path of righteousness and therefore to guard and promote life." Murray.

θάνατος, ου m death

Wright comments, "This is, for Paul, the real irony of Torah, and it points forward to the paradoxical fulfilling of Torah's intention by the Spirit in 8:1-11."

**Verse 11**

ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα διὰ τῆς  
ἐντολῆς ἐξηπάτησέν με καὶ διὰ αὐτῆς  
ἀπέκτεινεν.

ἀφορμή see v.8

Sin used the law as a bridgehead for its invasion.

λαβοῦσα see v.8

ἐξαπαταω deceive, lead astray

There are echoes of the story of the serpent in the Garden.

ἀποκτείνω and ἀποκτεννω, -ννω kill,  
put to death

Wright comments, "The preliminary picture is complete: (a) sin and the law are quite distinct; (b) sin has taken over the law, the law that promised life; (c) using it as a base of operations, sin has produced the opposite of that which the law promised. This is of course why 'no human being will be justified' in God's sight on the basis of Torah (3:20); it is why the Torah became 'a dispensation of death' (2 Cor 3:7-11); it is why, despite the glory of the first exodus and the first covenant, a new exodus and a renewed covenant were necessary."

**Verse 12**

ὥστε ὁ μὲν νόμος ἅγιος, καὶ ἡ ἐντολὴ  
ἁγία καὶ δικαία καὶ ἀγαθή.

ὥστε so that, with the result that

ἅγιος, α, ον holy

δικαίος, α, ον righteous, just

ἀγαθος, η, ον good

The law reflects the character of the lawgiver. Paul will now build on this positive affirmation to describe the positive role of the law in *exposing* sin.

**Day 489: Romans 7:13-19****Verse 13**

Τὸ οὖν ἀγαθὸν ἐμοὶ ἐγένετο θάνατος; μὴ  
γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἵνα φανῇ  
ἁμαρτία, διὰ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ μοι  
κατεργαζομένη θάνατον· ἵνα γένηται καθ·  
ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς  
ἐντολῆς.

ἐμοὶ Pronoun, dat s ἐγώ

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

γίνομαι

γένοιτο see v.7

ἀλλὰ ἡ ἁμαρτία the culprit is sin, not the law.

φανῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s φαίνομαι

midd. and pass. appear, be seen, be  
revealed

κατεργάζομαι accomplish, bring about

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γίνομαι

ὑπερβολή, ἡς f surpassing, beyond  
measure, to an extreme

ἁμαρτωλός, ον sinful, sinner

ἐντολή, ἡς f command, order, instruction

Sin was in the world before the law, but the commandment was given that sin might be displayed in its true colours (cf. 5:20; Gal 3:14).

**Verses 14-21**

There are several basic views of verses 14-21:

- i) Paul is speaking here of his experience as an unregenerate man. Against this view, Barrett says, "In passages where Paul certainly describes his life before conversion there is no trace of spiritual conflict, or of a 'divided self'. Gal 1:13f and Phil 3:4ff depict the Jew practicing his religion more successfully than any of his contemporaries, blameless in his observance of the law, and entirely satisfied with his own righteousness."
- ii) Paul describes his experience as a Christian. This view is defended by Murray and also by Dunn. Dunn argues that Paul is describing the eschatological tension in which the believer is caught – the tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet.' Moo responds by drawing attention to the fact that here in Paul's description the battle ends in utter defeat. This does not fit with his description of the character of the Christian life.

- iii) A modified form of the previous view suggests that Paul is describing the *immature* Christian. Such a view is common among the school that distinguishes between the 'carnal Christian' and 'spiritual Christian' or advocates some form of 'higher life,' or 'second blessing'. In moderate form this view is defended by Lloyd Jones.
- iv) Paul is not speaking specifically of the regenerate or unregenerate but of the contrast between seeking to live by law and living by grace. Griffith Thomas writes, "The one point of the passage is that it describes a man who is trying to be good and holy by his own efforts and is beaten back by the power of indwelling sin. This is the experience of any man who tries the experiment, whether regenerate or unregenerate." Longenecker also supports this interpretation.
- v) The context is Paul's discussion of the role of the *Mosaic* law. Moo writes, "If we are to have any hope of accurately understanding these verses, we must start where Paul does: with the Mosaic law. His main concern is not anthropology, the Christian life, or theories of sanctification. These come in along the way, but the apostle's purpose here is to explain why the Mosaic law has brought death to Israel. The way sin has used the law to bring death to God's Old Testament people was the burden of 7:7-12. But one large question remains unanswered. How could sin do this? The answer comes in 7:14: 'I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.' Sin, after all, is no independent entity. It exists only as human beings miss the mark of God's holiness, and people are bound to sin because they are 'sold as slaves' to it. We agree with God's law with our minds, but we cannot obey it (7:15-20).  
"Paul summarises the struggle in 7:21-25: The good law of God is at war with the 'law of sin.' Because people are held captive under that law of sin, they can never escape the penalty for disobedience and death – at least, not on their own. But Christ does rescue us from 'this body of death' (vv 24-25). What Paul explains in these verses is that the law comes to people already held captive under sin; thus, of course, they are incapable of obeying it. It is human incapacity that explains the failure of the law. As Paul summarises the point in 8:3: The law was 'powerless ... in that it was weakened by the sinful nature.'"

Paul identifies himself with this description insofar as he once sought to live by the law, but the description is moulded by his new understanding of the law in the light of Christ. Christ came to deliver the Jew from the burden of the Mosaic law which, though righteous and good, could only bring frustration and death. This last view is developed in a more thoroughgoing way by Wright who believes that Paul is reflecting on the history and experience of Israel, past and present.

#### Verse 14

οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ὁ νόμος πνευματικός ἐστίν· ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι, πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν.

πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual, pertaining to the spirit

Refers to the divine origin of the law, cf. v.12; 1 Cor 2:18.

σάρκινος, η, ον fleshly, material, belonging to this world

Just as sin still dwells in him, so does the flesh. The problem is not with the law but with the human condition.

πεπραμένος Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom s  
πιπρασκω sell, sell as a slave

Difficult to see how this could be used of the Christian. 'Under sin' is used to describe those without Christ (3:9), a state from which the Christian has been freed (6:18,22; cf. 6:2,6,14). Wright argues that "The point he is making is that the 'I,' the Jew, Israel 'according to the flesh' (cf. 9:5; 11:14; 1 Cor 10:18), belongs within the Adam solidarity, still held as a slave within the 'Egypt' of sin and death; and that the law, in its promise of life, is ontologically as well as morally mismatched with Adamic humanity, Israel included. The problem is not the Torah, but the sort of person 'I am.'"

#### Verse 15

ὃ γὰρ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω· οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω, ἀλλ' ὃ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιῶ.

οὐ γινώσκω 'I do not recognise and approve', i.e. the opposite of 'hate' in the second half of the verse.

θελω wish, will  
πρασσω practice, do  
μισεω hate, despise, be indifferent to

Describes the powerlessness of the law, made powerless through sin – or perhaps rather, the powerlessness of the person living under law.

### Verse 16

εἰ δὲ ὁ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποιῶ, σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.

συμφημι agree with  
καλός, η, ον good, right, proper

In other words, referring back to v.13, the *law* is not at fault.

### Verse 17

νυνὶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία.

νυνὶ now  
οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more  
οἰκεῶ live, dwell

"Sin is personified as an evil power which takes up its residence within human nature, and thus controls men's actions." Barrett.

"Paul is not disclaiming responsibility for his actions. Rather, he is trying to explain his actions by revealing the force within himself that leads him to act as he does. That force is 'sin,' a power he has been describing throughout Romans 5-7." Moo.

Wright comments, "Paul, having moved the problem off Torah on to the 'I,' now moves it one stage further, on to sin itself... The 'indwelling' of sin is a new idea, introduced for the first and only time in Paul's writings, perhaps formed on the analogy of the indwelling of the Spirit, which Paul will contrast with this condition in 8:9,11."

### Verse 18

οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν· τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειται μοι, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐ·

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature  
παρκεῖμαι be present, be at hand

The concluding οὐ is supported by κ A B C *et al.* Other MSS, D G K P Ψ 33 *et al* read οὐχ εὕρισκω. Metzger suggests the longer reading is an attempt to ameliorate the otherwise abrupt termination.

"Without something 'good' 'dwelling in me,' the 'I' cannot bring the good will into reality; again, Paul is preparing the way for the contrast with the Spirit's indwelling, doing what the law could not, in the following chapter." Wright.

### Verse 19

οὐ γὰρ ὁ θέλω ποιῶ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ ὁ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω.

κακός, η, ον evil, bad, wrong

### Day 490: Romans 7:20-25

### Verse 20

εἰ δὲ ὁ οὐ θέλω [ἐγὼ] τοῦτο ποιῶ, οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία.

See v.17.

θέλω see v.15

οὐκέτι see v.17

κατεργάζομαι see v.13

οἰκεῶ see v.17

From the previous verses, Wright draws the following conclusion: "At the heart of Paul's exposition of the effects and meaning of Torah ... we find a key part of Paul's root-and-branch rejection of what would later become Marcionism. Israel itself, the 'I' that continues to live under Torah, and continues to discover that it points to sin within Israel and so condemns it to death, is God-given; Israel's delight in Torah (think of Psalm 119!) is a good, not a bad, thing; the problem is simply that that which is wrong with the rest of the human race – namely indwelling sin – is wrong with Israel too, and Torah can do nothing about it. Here in the middle of Romans 7, we find a short passage that picks up the theme of the vindication of Israel from early in chap. 3 and anticipates the full-dress statement, as the spiral of argument gradually unwinds, in chap. 11."

### Verse 21

Εὕρισκω ἄρα τὸν νόμον τῷ θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλὸν ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται·

Many argue that 'law' is used here in the sense of pattern of things, 'principle' or 'rule' (cf. vv. 23,25 and Rom 8:2). Wright, however, translates, "This, then, is what I discover about *the law*." He comments, "We are in a chapter that began with a complex argument about Torah, which grew directly out of 5:20 and 6:14 where there is no question that *nomos* meant Torah; and we are now at the point where, with the argument nearly complete, the writer is summing up, drawing the threads together. Are we really to say that at precisely this point he will start twisting and turning and saying 'this then is my conclusion – that I find *a law*'?"

καλος, η, ον good, right,  
κακος, η, ον see v.19  
παρακειμαι see v.18

Wright sees an echo of Cain. See also his  
*Climax of the Covenant*, Ch 12.

### Verse 22

συνήδομαι γὰρ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ  
τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον,

συνηδομαι delight in  
ἔσω inside, inner being

On 'inner man' cf. 2 Cor 4:16; Eph 3:16. It is used elsewhere of that part of the regenerate nature that belongs to the age to come. However, Moo thinks that Paul is speaking of the 'two sides' of man, willing versus doing – not necessarily the Christian.

### Verse 23

βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου  
ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοῦς μου  
καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με ἐν τῷ νόμῳ  
τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου.

βλεπω see  
ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different

"Just as God in his law makes a claim on our lives, so sin, acting through our members, exerts its own claim on us. These two claims battle for our allegiance.

μελος, ος n member, bodily part  
ἀντιστρατευομαι war against  
νοος, νοος, νοι, νουν m mind, thought  
αἰχμαλωτιζω make captive, take prisoner

The upshot, Paul says, is that we are 'prisoners of the law of sin.' God's law simply does not have the power to deliver us from the power of sin." Moo. This 'other law' is the same Torah but now used against its proper purpose as an instrument of sin and death. "Paul, still exploring the depths of 5:20, is again describing the captivity, the enslavement, the 'Egypt' of sin and death, exacerbated by Torah, from which Christ and only Christ can deliver. This, seen with Christian hindsight, is the plight of the 'I' of Israel, including the pre-Christian Paul himself, under Torah." Wright.

### Verse 24

ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος· τίς με  
ῥύσεται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου  
τούτου;

ταλαιπωρος, ον miserable, wretched  
ῥυομαι save, rescue  
σωμα, τος n body  
θανατος, ου m death

"Paul is speaking here of a condition of death that has already set in. For by 'body' he means not merely the material organisation of the body, but man in his present mode of existence, that which he elsewhere calls the 'body of sin' Rom 6:6, or 'of the flesh' Col 2:16." Ridderbos.

"The rescue he hopes for is probably deliverance from the sin-dominated body, spiritually dead because of sin." Moo.

### Verse 25

χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν. ἄρα οὖν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τῷ μὲν νοῖ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ, τῇ δὲ σαρκὶ νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας.

χαρις, ιτος f grace; thanks

Most understand the opening statement as 'thanks be to God', or 'thank God.' Some MSS actually read εὐχαριστω τῷ θεῷ (κ\* A K P *et al*). However Gervais Angel understands the phrase to mean 'there is grace with God,' introducing 8:1.

Wright comments, "This verse looks back to 5:21, where 'grace' is obviously a periphrasis for 'God' (cf. too 6:23), and on to 8:3, where ὁ θεός (*ho theos*, 'God') is the emphatic subject of one of the most important sentences in the entire letter. The triple statement of Jesus' identity – Jesus, Messiah, our Lord – serves as the weighty christological summary at the end of this stage of the argument, matching those in 4:24-25; 5:11, 21; and 6:23, and pointing to the christology and consequent soteriology of 8:1-11, 17, 29-30 and supremely 31-39."

νοῖ Noun, dat s νοος see v.23  
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature

The final phrase seems to look back to and sums up the conflict expounded in the previous verses. The mind, while delighting in God's law, remains powerless to put it into practice.