



PASSION FOR TRUTH

WHERE NEW LIFE BEGINS

DECODING ROMANS – CHAPTER 7 THE CURSE OF THE LAW

By Jim Staley

THE MISINTERPRETATION OF ROMANS CHAPTER SEVEN: UNVEILING PAUL'S TRUE MESSAGE

For centuries, Christian theology has largely misunderstood Paul's message in Romans chapter seven. The famous passage, where Paul expresses his internal struggle between doing what he does not wish to do and failing to do what he desires, has been misinterpreted in ways that diverge from its original intent. To uncover Paul's true meaning, we must journey back to ancient Judaism and examine his words through a first-century Jewish lens.



A FRESH LOOK AT ROMANS CHAPTER SEVEN

Jim Staley of Passion for Truth Ministries provides an in-depth, verse-by-verse analysis of Romans, particularly chapter seven, which he calls the "holy grail" of the book. Paul, a Pharisee of Pharisees and a disciple of the great rabbi

Gamaliel, was well-versed in the Torah. Understanding his background is crucial to interpreting his message correctly.

Paul begins this chapter with an important premise:

***"Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law),
that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?"
(Romans 7:1)***

This statement is foundational because it establishes that Paul is addressing those familiar with the Torah. He asserts that the law has authority over a person only while they are alive, an obvious yet critical principle. Just as the laws of a nation govern only its living citizens, the Torah's jurisdiction applies to those who are alive in the flesh. But Paul is not advocating for the abolishment of the law—instead, he is addressing the law's authority and its role in salvation.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE LAW

Traditional Christian interpretation often portrays this passage as evidence that the law is obsolete for believers in Christ. However, a closer reading reveals a different message. Paul does not claim that the law itself has died; rather, it is the believer who dies to the law through the body of Christ (Romans 7:4). This is a legal and covenantal shift rather than a negation of God's commandments.



The analogy Paul uses is marriage: *a woman is bound to her husband while he lives, but if he dies, she is released from the law governing marriage* (Romans 7:2-3). Similarly, believers, through Christ, die to the authority of the law that condemns them—specifically, the law of sin and death. This does not mean they are now lawless but that they are no longer under its condemnation.

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

Paul's argument throughout Romans is that the Torah defines sin and establishes righteousness, but it does not provide salvation. Instead, the Torah functions as a tutor leading us to Christ (Galatians 3:24). Once faith in Christ is established, believers are no longer under the Torah's condemnation. However, this does not negate the Torah's validity as a guide for righteous living.

Paul clarifies this point in Romans 8:2:

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death."

Here, he differentiates between the Torah and the law of sin and death. The problem is not with God's law but with sin's consequences. Christ redeems believers from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13), not from the law itself.

RESTORING PAUL'S MESSAGE

By understanding Romans chapter seven within its Jewish context, we recognize that Paul is not teaching that the law is abolished but that believers are freed from its condemnation through Christ. The Torah remains a standard for holy living, but salvation comes solely through faith in Yeshua (Jesus). This revelation realigns modern Christian theology with the true gospel message that Paul sought to convey.

Thus, the gap between Paul's intent and traditional Christian interpretation is vast—but by returning to the roots of first-century Judaism, we can bridge that divide and uncover the transformative power of Paul's words as they were originally meant to be understood.

The enemy's strategy is clear—if he cannot keep us from salvation, he will at least strive to rob us of the fullness of our inheritance in Christ. He wants believers to remain ignorant of the blessings that come from obedience, tricking them into thinking that God's commandments are burdensome, outdated, or even abolished. But what does the Word say?

Paul is not against the law; he is against the *misuse* of the law. He opposes those who attempt to



earn salvation through **works**, rather than recognizing that salvation is a **free gift** through faith in Christ. But once saved, we are not to live lawlessly. Instead, we are to uphold God's commandments, walking in the Spirit, which enables us to live righteously.

Jesus Himself affirmed this in Matthew 5:17-19, where He clearly stated that He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it. The word "fulfill" does not mean to cancel—it means to bring to its full meaning, to

demonstrate its true purpose. Christ lived in perfect obedience, showing us that the law is not a burden but a blessing, a reflection of God's holy character.

So, where do we stand? Are we those who call His law a burden, even though Scripture calls it "holy, just, and good"? Or are we those who, like Paul, delight in God's law, even while wrestling with our flesh? The battle is real, but victory is already won through Christ.

The question is not whether we should keep God's commandments—it is whether we will submit to His Spirit so that we can keep them the way He intended: in faith, in love, and in the power of His grace.

Watch full teaching here:

<https://youtu.be/SfVmnzLxloA?si=Oz7n-CbNmaEuGSCf>



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