

## **Romans: Verse-by-Verse**

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### **Romans 7:1-6** (Introduction)

Student Notes:

#### **Released From the Law, Bound to Christ**

Romans 7: This chapter has probably been used more times than many with respect to the argument of Jewish Law versus Christian Freedom – and exactly what that means.

- **Preliminary Questions:**

1. Who is the “wretched man” or the “miserable creature” in Romans 7:24?
2. Since Romans 7 has been used by different church groups to promote legalism, antinomianism, and denial of the moral law -- what should we do?
3. What is Romans 7 really about?
4. Does Romans 7 demand we try to keep both Testaments at the same time? Or is it about jettisoning the Mosaic Law and living without rules?

- **The Dominant Theme: The Mosaic Law**

A starting point: Paul's preoccupation is more historical than personal. It's an explanation of what the place of the Old Testament Law is in our New Testament walks with God.

The Mosaic Law in this chapter: “Law”, “Commandment”, or “Written Code” are mentioned in every one of the chapter's first fourteen verses. Paul refers to them 35 times in Romans 7:1 to Romans 8:4.

The recurring question: “Now that Christ has brought salvation by grace, what is the current place of the Mosaic Law in the Christian era?”

What Paul has said so far about the Mosaic Law:

- The Law cannot be the way to salvation: 3:19, 20
- The Law defines sin as a transgression: 4:15
- The Law brings wrath:
- The Law increases sin: 5:20
- God's righteousness has been revealed in the gospel completely apart from the Law: 3:21
- Justification has come through faith in Christ, apart from the Law: 3:27
- Abraham was declared righteous without keeping the Law: 4:13
- Christian believers are not under law, but under grace' (6:14)

- **The Glory Of The Mosaic Law:**

For Jewish Christians, these statements must have been almost shocking. Paul insists the Mosaic Law reveals sin, brings wrath, and enslaves its practitioners.

What could be more negative than this? Yet ... the Jewish-Christians held a clear reverence for the Mosaic Law! Example: Psalm 119:41-48

May your unfailing love come to me,  
 O LORD, your salvation according to your promise;  
 then I will answer the one who taunts me,  
 for I trust in your word.

Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth,  
 for I have put my hope in your laws.

I will always obey your law, for ever and ever.  
 I will walk about in freedom,  
 for I have sought out your precepts.

I will speak of your statutes before kings  
 and will not be put to shame,  
 for I delight in your commands  
 because I love them.

I lift up my hands to your commands, which I love,  
and I meditate on your decrees.

The Old Testament psalmist finds the Law to be the anchor of his life. He rejoices in the Law. He sees the Law as God's very revelation for his life.

Other verses we can consider: Exodus 18:16; Deuteronomy 27:26;  
Deuteronomy 6:1

The last commandment of the Old Testament: "Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel." -- Malachi 4:4

### **Questions About Paul And The Law:**

- Is Paul -- who was known as a "Pharisee among Pharisees", a "Lawkeeper among Lawkeepers", a "Strict interpreter among Strict interpreters" -- dismissing the Mosaic Law?
- Is Paul saying the Mosaic Law was useless, worthless, or meaningless?
- What does Paul mean by freedom from the Mosaic Law?
- Is Paul saying the moral law of the Old Testament has been set aside -- that the only thing that matters now is loving and accepting anyone regardless of anything else?