

— Romans 7.1-6 —  
Romans Series 39  
**Understanding the Law 1**

Romans 7.1 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? 2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. 4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. 5 For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. 6 But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

\* **One** of the most confusing topics of Scripture is also one of the major features of Scripture, and that is \_\_\_\_\_.

\* **One** of the biggest areas of confusion has to do, not so much with the meaning of the law, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law.

Mat. 5:22 "But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment ... 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Mat. 22:37 ... "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." ... 39 And ... "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

\* **There** are verses that seem to say the law is bad:

Rom 6.14 Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Rom 7:9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

\* **There** are verses that seem to say the law is good:

Rom 7.12 ... the law is ... holy, righteous, and good ... 14 ... we know that the law is spiritual ...

Mat. 22.37-40 (previous)

Rom 8.3 ... God ... by sending His own Son on account of sin ... condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

\* **Is** there anything that will bring all these verses together so that they line up and make sense?

\* **Who** is the woman in Paul's story? (vs 2-4)

\* **If** we're Gentile believers, and neither we nor our relatives received the law at Sinai, why is Paul talking as though we are the "woman" and bound by the law like Israel?

Eph. 2.11 ... you, once Gentiles in the flesh ... 12 ... were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel ... 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He ... has made both one ... 15 ... to create in Himself one new man from the two ... 16 ... that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross ...

1Cor. 10:1 ... all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank ... of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ ... 6 Now these things became our examples ...

Gal. 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Gal. 3:16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

Gal. 3:8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." (quoting Gen. 12:3)

Rom. 4.13 For The promise that he would be heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

\* **Why** did God fragment mankind at the tower of Babel, then call one man, Abraham, form a nation, Israel, out of that one man, and begin dealing with that one nation?

\* **By** dealing with Israel, God is really dealing with the whole \_\_\_\_\_, bringing salvation, while also showing the need for salvation and the true nature and power of \_\_\_\_\_.

\* **The** law was given as part of a \_\_\_\_\_ ceremony between God and Israel, all of it as a picture of the spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ that the human race was created for with God.

*Jer. 2:2 "I remember the love of your betrothal, when you followed Me in the wilderness."*

*Jer. 3.14 "Return, O backsliding children ... for I am married to you"*

*Jer. 31.32 ... "I was a husband to them"*

\* **In** OT Israel:

– 1) Betrothal was a formal ceremony in front of witnesses, during which the couple took marriage \_\_\_\_\_ to one another.

– 2) Only \_\_\_\_\_ or divorce on biblical grounds, such as sexual unfaithfulness, could break a betrothal.

– 3) If a betrothal was broken for infidelity, the proper procedure was \_\_\_\_\_.

– 4) A betrothed couple was husband and wife for all intents and purposes, except for the finality of coming together and consummating the marriage, which would occur at the wedding \_\_\_\_\_, usually about a year after betrothal.

(See e.g. Mat. 1.18-19, 24).

\* **When** God betrothed Israel to himself at Sinai, it was specifically God the \_\_\_\_\_ who did so. In other words, it was the preincarnate \_\_\_\_\_.

*Heb. 12:18 For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched ... 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, ... 23 to the ... church of the firstborn, ... 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant ... 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth ...*

\* **Why** does Paul bring adultery into the story? (vs 3)

*Exo. 32.1 [T]he people ... said ..., "Come, make us gods that shall go before us ..." 7 And the LORD said to Moses, ... 8 ... "They have*

*made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it ..."*

*Eze. 16:20 "[Y]ou took your sons and your daughters ... and these you sacrificed ... 21 ... and offered them up ... causing them to pass through the fire"*

*Jer. 3.20 "Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, so have you dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel"*

*Hosea 3.1 ... "Go ..., love a woman who is ... an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods"*

\* **In** betrothal between God the Son and Israel, the law is the wedding \_\_\_\_\_ of the bride. So is the law good or bad?

\* **As** the "woman" in the story, we need three things which we are helpless to provide for ourselves:

1) To be freed from our wedding vow which \_\_\_\_\_ us.

2) To have the death sentence hanging over us \_\_\_\_\_.

3) To have our hearts \_\_\_\_\_.

\* **To** fulfill these, our divine husband is incarnated as a man, Jesus, so he can \_\_\_\_\_ on the cross to free us from our wedding vow which we broke, to pay the penalty for our spiritual infidelity, and to unite us in his \_\_\_\_\_ so that we would not have to die actually. Jesus then rises from the dead in new glorified life so he can \_\_\_\_\_ us again and give us his \_\_\_\_\_.

*Jer 31:31 "Behold ... I will make a new covenant with ... Israel ... 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers ... which they broke, though I was a husband to them. 33 But ... I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts ... 34 ... I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

\* **Have** you ever seen love like this?

\* **The** whole Christian life is just us \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.