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# A Study of the Use of the Word "Law" in Paul's Epistle to the Romans

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A STUDY OF THE USE OF THE WORD "LAW" IN  
PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

by

Donald D. Clark

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Presented to  
The Faculty of the  
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Bachelor of Divinity

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

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### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Statement of the Problem

There are Orthodox Jews today, as in their early history, who still place their hope of righteousness in various laws, rituals, and ceremonies. This became quite evident as the writer took his basic training during the winter of 1959 at the U. S. Army's basic school for Chaplains.

The problem was further intensified by the fact that the writer has found this problem to be a part of many individuals' experiences. There are many of his associates of the Protestant faith who place their hope of righteousness in particular aspects of the law. Some feel that works merit salvation. The Orthodox Jew at Chaplain's school could not eat with the other men. He had his own private kitchen and every Sunday night he brought in from town supplies for the week. His frantic rushing every Friday night to reach his weekend destination before sundown seemed almost maddening.

The problem, a study of Paul's use of the word "law" in Romans, is divided into two parts. The first part is to try to discover as accurately as possible what Paul was talking about when he used the word "law." The second part is to try to indicate what Paul taught about law.

## B. Justification for the Study

Although the historical situation of today is not the same as in Paul's day, yet the legalistic conception of religion is by no means obsolete. There is still a need to have a proper perspective of law. In this day as in Paul's, it besets the minds of many Christian people, and often gives a distorted view of the Christian religion to the general public. Paul's trenchant dealing with law, and his persuasive exposition of Christianity as a free life of the spirit, are still worth being considered.

This problem has far more than a merely historical interest. It deserves to be considered and estimated as a serious contribution to a philosophy of life tenable by modern men. Such a study will help to understand the problem of those who still put their hopes in law and works. It will also assist in discussing the problem in a more intelligent manner.

## C. Limitations

It is necessary to point out some limitations in relationship to this study of Romans. In consideration of the word "law," only one of Paul's letters has been considered and he speaks to this problem in other letters. Then too, the studying of other writings in the Bible could probably add to what Paul had to say. Therefore, it is impossible to make this study an entire Biblical view.

Added to this is the fact that, in the main the study has



been centered around the word "law" as it is specifically stated. Also, the Greek study of this word does not represent all there is to be learned. The Greek study has been made in an attempt to clarify meanings and to show the relation and importance of the Greek article in relationship to "law" in Romans. Consequently, it must be kept in mind that passages of scripture found in this study are not personal translations. Unless specifically stated, all Scripture references will be taken from the American Standard Version of 1901.

Overall, this is an effort to present a thorough and adequate study without becoming entangled with materials which have no real bearing on the subject.

#### D. Method of Procedure

One factor that would greatly enhance a solution to the problem of division in Christendom today is a closer study of the Scripture. It would also help to produce better theologians. It seems quite apparent that in many cases the procedure for formulating doctrine has been somewhat backward. The belief is found and then the Scriptures are consulted for support. In this study an effort has been made to determine exactly what the Scriptures say, without bias or unwarranted conclusions.

In making this study, several things were taken into consideration before the study of the actual passages. This was not done for the purpose of building preconceived opinions but to prepare for a greater understanding and appreciation of the Scriptures.



Paul's writings are best understood as Paul is understood. Chapter two includes a brief account of his conversion and calling, his labor, and a very little concerning his writings. Along with this, some insight is given into the Church in Rome. The following elements have been considered: to whom written, the Church in Rome, occasion and purpose of the writing, and its value.

Following this brief survey, attention was given to a word study. Many authorities were consulted. This study led to an investigation of the Greek article as it relates to the word "law" in Romans. Many scholars feel that there has been a great misunderstanding in the use of the article. A better understanding of the article would improve scriptural understanding. (These scholars were referred to often in the study on the article.) With this view in mind a presentation of the passages to be studied has been given. A thorough study of the Greek text has been made (Nestle's New Testament Greek) to insure accuracy, in pointing out exactly where the article is used in relation to law and where it is not used. As was before stated, except for the Greek, the Scripture references were taken from the American Standard Version of 1901. Every effort has been made to consult reputable scholars only.

Following this study, there is a summary and conclusions with some suggestions for further study.

Following the Bibliography, there are two Appendixes. Appendix A contains a list of the passages investigated in this study and a chapter and verse list of the use of the word "law" in Romans. It also contains a categorical listing of the ways Paul used "law."

This list is taken from the American Standard Version of 1901.

Appendix B is a chapter and verse listing of the Greek text with and without the article. This list was taken from Nestle's Greek New Testament.

## CHAPTER II

### THE AUTHOR OF ROMANS AND THE BOOK

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#### A. Paul

There is much speculation and tradition to be found as to Paul's physical appearance. Whether or not this information is valid is another issue in itself. There is this statement from Paul, himself, as to what his Corinthian enemies said about him. "For, His letters, they say, are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account" (II Corinthians 10:10). It seems fair to draw from this that Paul was not very nice looking and he had a problem with his speaking. However, this is not the most important thing to discover or consider about him. The main issue is what he felt, what he thought, what he did.

As far as the Bible is concerned, the first that is heard of Paul is in Jerusalem. The account is found in Acts 7. The close of this chapter tells of the stoning of Stephen. "The witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul . . . And Saul was consenting unto his (Stephen) death."

Paul had been rescued by Roman soldiers, from his own countrymen and in Acts 21:39 he is found explaining who he is. "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city." On another occasion Paul identifies himself as "a Roman Citizen." In Acts



22:24-29 he was talking to a Roman Centurion and a Roman Tribune. (The "Centurion" was a captain over one hundred men in the Roman Army.<sup>1</sup> Since the Tribune had given orders to scourge Paul, it is safe to say he was superior in rank to the Centurion.) Paul protested to this scourging by asking the Centurion, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman Citizen and uncondemned." When the officials began to enquire as to how Paul gained his Roman citizenship, he explained "I was born a citizen." This same account pointed out that there were other ways of gaining citizenship. The Tribune said he "bought" his "for a large sum." Dr. Harold Phillips says, "Often citizenship was granted for some service of unusual distinction to the Roman Empire, or through the freeing of an individual who had been a slave."<sup>2</sup> Paul had a great yearning to visit Rome. To the Romans he wrote that he had "often been hindered from coming" (Romans 15:22) and in Acts he is quoted as saying "I must also see Rome" (19:21). He did go to Rome, but as a prisoner and his citizenship made it possible.

Paul, besides being a citizen of Tarsus and the Roman Empire, was a Hebrew. He pointed out to the Christians at Philippi that he was "of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law a Pharisee" (Philippians 3:5). To the Romans, he said, "I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin" (Romans 11:1). Of the many sects of Judaism,

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<sup>1</sup>Merrill F. Unger, Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup>Harold L. Phillips, A Man of Tarsus, p. 19.

the Pharisees were the most strict. This was the group that became prominent during the Maccabean period of Jewish history as resisters to the new beliefs and ways of life imposed upon them by their conquerors. Paul was not only a Pharisee, but he was the "son of Pharisees" (Acts 23:6). His religious training found its roots in loyalty to the minute regulations of the Law as interpreted by the Jewish Rabbis. As a boy he studied at the feet of Gamaliel and was instructed according to the strict manner of the law of his fathers. He was very zealous for God (Acts 22:3). Thus, Paul well knew the mind of the Jew and was especially acquainted with their legal system.

#### B. His Conversion and Calling

Nothing has been said, previously, concerning the date of Paul's birth because it has not been recorded in history. Jewish custom would have him beginning his studies under Gamaliel at about age thirteen. The record says he was "a young man" at the stoning of Stephen. It is not certain as to further studies except that Paul speaking of his training said "I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the tradition of my fathers" (Galatians 1:14).

Concerning his life before conversion, he told the Corinthians "I am the least of the apostles, because I persecuted the church of God" (I Corinthians 15:9). He pointed this out to the Philippians (3:6) and to the Galatians (1:13). Later he pointed out to Timothy that he had before been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but he obtained mercy, because he did it ignorantly in unbelief



(I Timothy 1:13). In this same chapter he remarked that he was the chief of sinners (vs. 15).

The writer of Acts also talked about him. "Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison" (vs. 8:3). Paul, himself, witnessed to this by saying in 22:4 "I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women." "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (26:9). In Chapter 26 of Acts he told Agrippa that he punished them often times in all the synagogues, and strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, he persecuted them even unto foreign cities (vs. 11). Paul had given himself to destroying this new religion that threatened his own way of life.

And

Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and asked of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1-2).

It was on the road to Damascus that Paul saw the "light from Heaven." He was changed. He was on his way to challenge the Christians at Damascus but instead he was challenged by the living, resurrected Lord. Paul heard "a voice" ask "Saul, Why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: But rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:3-6). Paul obeyed and as a result this testimony is given.

What things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ. Yea, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus my Lord: . . . and be found in Him not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is of faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith" (Philippians 3:7-9).

So, on the road to Damascus, Paul became a new man. When he arrived at Damascus he met a man named Ananias who told him "The Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:17). The following verses tell of these things happening.

Acts 9:20 shows him as he begins to preach Jesus as "the Son of God."

Concerning Paul's leave of Damascus, he later wrote to the Galatians about the Damascus road experience. After he met the Son of God, he said "I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem . . . but I went away into Arabia" (vss. 16-17). There is much speculation about what happened there and Paul left no details. He only said that after his stay in Arabia he "returned unto Damascus" (vs. 17).

In Damascus Paul met with much opposition from his own kinsmen (Acts 9:23). Paul told the Corinthian church "I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped" (II Corinthians 11:33). He wrote to the Galatians saying he went from Damascus to Jerusalem (1:18). His presence in Jerusalem caused trouble both to him and the church. He went on to explain that he "came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia" (Galatians 1:21).

Paul had found a real friend in Barnabas. Barnabas, knowing



that the brethren sent Paul to Tarsus, went up to find him. They went together to Antioch and "for a whole year taught much people and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). From here "they sailed to Cyprus" but not before the church "had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them" (Acts 13:3). After Cyprus they made a longer sea voyage, this time across to Perga on the mainland of Asia Minor. Paul went from Perga to Antioch of Pisidia "almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God" (vs. 14). There were great blessings and many rejections. At Lystra he was stoned and left for dead (Acts 14:19) but he survived and went on to Derbe. This completes what is usually called the first missionary journey. Paul revisited many of these places strengthening, encouraging, and leaving leaders in charge. The report on their return was that God "had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles" (vs. 27). In Antioch of Pisidia Paul had "turned to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46) after the Jews had rejected the message. And this idea of receiving Gentiles did not go well with the Jewish converts in Judea.

It seems that these Gentile converts were not being taught to conform to certain Jewish regulations. As a result "certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, saying, except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). So, began the problem of the relationship of Gentile and Jewish Christians. An account of a conference at Jerusalem on this problem is found in Acts 15. Paul and Barnabas attended this conference and Paul was a main speaker. He stated his conviction and

won his point. The conclusion of what was decided comes from the mouth of James "Wherefore my judgment is, that we trouble not them that from among the Gentiles turn to God" (Acts 15:19). To be sure, the church at Antioch rejoiced over the news.

Paul later in writing to the Galatians told them concerning the conference

. . . when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles (2:9).

Thus, a man had found a mission.

### C. His Travels and Labors

Acts 15:35 shows Paul and Barnabas, after the Jerusalem conference, remaining "in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also."

By his conversion, Paul transferred his basic allegiance from Pharisaism to salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. This caused many conflicts. One arose directly out of the problem at the Jerusalem conference. Here, the Gentiles were freed from the obligation of Jewish ceremonialism in becoming Christians. However, the matter of eating together had not been settled. Paul gives, in Galatians, an account of what transpired. After the Jerusalem conference, Peter made a trip to Antioch and took a stand with Paul for freedom for Jewish converts in the matter of food regulation. He even set an example by eating with the Gentiles (Galatians 2:12). Later on the strict members of the "circumcision party" came down to Antioch.



Then Peter "drew back and separated himself" (vs. 12) and "even Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation." Paul, speaking of Peter, said "I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned" (vs. 11). During Paul's travels he constantly met with those who opposed his taking the gospel to the Gentiles without the Jewish ceremonialism.

Derbe was the last place Paul visited on his first missionary journey. After revisiting Derbe, Paul went on to Lystra. Here he found "A certain disciple named Timothy" (Acts 16:1). Apparently Paul became very fond of this young man. In I Timothy 1:2 Paul addressed Timothy as "my true child" and in the second epistle (1:2) as "my beloved child." In the same epistle Paul said to Timothy "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you" (1:5). When Paul visited Lystra, he wanted Timothy to accompany him (Acts 16:3). This verse also says Paul took Timothy and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts. This, possibly, seems strange in the light of the problem with Peter. Many things could be conjectured but one thing is certain; Paul performed this act because of the Jews. "He knew both how to fight for a principle and how to yield for expediency's sake when no principle was at stake."<sup>1</sup>

Philippi is described as "the leading city of the district of Macedonia, and a Roman colony" (Acts 16:12). Here, marked Paul's

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<sup>1</sup>Phillips, op. cit., p. 51.

initial endeavors in Europe. The stay was short and there were many converts but he suffered many hardships. There were beatings, controversies, oppositions and even imprisonment. The remaining part of Acts 16 relates some of his experiences there. From Philippi Paul went to Thessalonica and on to Berea. Leaving Berea, he stopped in Athens and on to Corinth (Acts 17 and 18). This is where he met Aquila and Priscilla. "Because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought, for by their trade they were tentmakers" (Acts 18:3). The stay in Corinth lasted "a year and six months" (vs. 11). When he left Corinth, Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him to Ephesus. The stay here was very short but he promised to return "if God wills." He then sailed to Caesarea and on to Antioch (Acts 18:18-22). Verse 23 says that "having spent sometime there, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, in order, establishing all the disciples."

Paul had promised to return to Ephesus if it was the will of God. Acts 19 gives an account of his experience as he kept his promise. Following his usual custom, he began in the synagogue and continued for about "three months" (vs. 8). Here, he received opposition and turned to the "hall of Tyrannus" (vs. 9). Paul labored here for two years and during this time "all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks" (vs. 10). These were, no doubt, strenuous days for Paul as it is commonly understood that most of the time he not only preached but had to earn a living. Once he wrote to the church at Thessalonica "ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: working night and day, that we might not



burden any of you" (I Thessalonians 2:9). He also said in Acts 20:20, concerning these labors, that he not only taught in public but "from house to house" In this city, many miracles were performed "And not a few of them that practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver"<sup>1</sup>(Acts 19:19). During this time, there was an outbreak of violence led by Demetrius the silversmith (vss. 28-41). Paul's ministry was a hindrance to the idol makers. As a result of the peril involved, Paul "took leave of them, and departed to go into Macedonia" (Acts 20:1). It was near the end of this ministry in Ephesus that the correspondence with Corinth began. He wrote

I will come unto you, when I shall have passed through Macedonia; for I pass through Macedonia; but with you it may be that I shall abide, or even winter, that ye may set me forward on my journey whithersoever I go. For I do not wish to see you now by the way; for I hope to tarry awhile with you, if the Lord permit (I Corinthians 16:5-7).

Paul did go to Corinth and while there, again, expressed his desire to see Rome. In writing to the Roman Christians he said "I long to see you" and "often times I purposed to come unto you" (Romans 1:11, 13). Later on in the letter, he said "whensoever I go unto Spain I hope to see you in my journey" (Romans 15:24). Acts 20-21 records the journey back to Jerusalem.

Paul was warned about returning to Jerusalem, but he said he

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<sup>1</sup>Unger, op. cit., p. 724-725. (A piece of silver was equal to a denarius; a denarius equal to a penny and a penny was a piece of silver worth about fifteen cents. Fifty thousand pieces would amount to about seven thousand five hundred dollars).

was "ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). So Paul and his company returned to Jerusalem and the brethren received them gladly (vs. 17).

#### D. His Writings

For the most part they were

. . . written with the expectation of public reading in the congregations to whom they were addressed, . . . Romans comes the closest to being a formal literary epistle; Philemon comes the closest to being a strictly informal personal letter.<sup>1</sup>

In the expression of his personal interest in people, he wrote to the Corinthian church. He said,

Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh (II Corinthians 3:2-3).

The Corinthians said "His letters are weighty and strong" (II Corinthians 10:10).

Paul's letters were written for existing situations and it is obvious as the letters are read that they were pointed to these needs. He felt that what he wrote was authoritative and should be read publicly and shared with others. He once told the Colossian Church "When this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans: and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea" (4:16).

Thirteen letters of the New Testament are definitely considered to be written by Paul. They are commonly arranged in the following

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<sup>1</sup>Phillips, op. cit., pp. 64-65.



order: First and Second Thessalonians, Galatians, First and Second Corinthians, Romans, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians, First Timothy, Titus and Second Timothy. It is evident that in reading these letters that Paul has given great consideration to the purpose of the law and its relationship to Christ.

#### E. Introduction to the Epistle to the Romans

##### 1. To Whom Written

Paul addresses the letter "to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints" (1:7). The Greek text simply states it "called saints" (*κλητοὶς ἁγίοις*) or "holy ones;" which means he is writing to a people with a divine calling from God. G. Campbell Morgan says "The called apostle wrote to the called saints."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it can at least be concluded that these people were Christians and were expected to accept the letter as a guide for understanding and living out God's purpose for their lives.

Romans 1:13, also gives some hint as to who the recipients were. Paul has expressed his great desire to visit them and one reason he gave was that he might have some fruit in them also, even as in the rest of the Gentiles. So there must have been a substantial number of Gentiles in this Church. This fact was further substantiated later on by Paul as he spoke to them that were Gentiles. He pointed out to them that he was an apostle to the Gentiles. In

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<sup>1</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, p. 5.

Romans 15:16 he pointed out that God's grace was given him that he "should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable."

In Romans 16:3-15 it is indicated that Paul knew a great number of people in Rome. There are no fewer than twenty-four mentioned plus the church in the house of Priscilla and Aquila, the households of Aristabulos and Narcissus, the brethren of another group and "probably others not listed."<sup>1</sup> Theissen also pointed out that over one-half of these names mentioned were either Latin or Greek. He also suggested, very definitely the predominance of Gentiles over the Jews in the Church of Rome.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The Church in Rome

Actually, most scholars admit that the specific origin of the Church in Rome can not be discovered. Yet, there are many suggestions to be made. The Roman Catholic church says that the church was founded by Peter and he personally served as its bishop for the first twenty-five years. Some say that Paul founded the church and others say Peter and Paul together started it. None of these three is generally accepted today; except that the first is a dogma of the Roman Church. Theissen says it is certain that "Paul did not establish

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Clarence Theissen, Introduction to the New Testament, p. 223.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

the Church in Rome."<sup>1</sup>

There is some evidence that the gospel reached Rome at a very early date. Acts 2:10 pointed out that there were people from Rome in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Also, according to passages previously cited in Romans 16:5, 14-15, there were meeting places for Christians at the time Paul wrote. Yet, this does not "affirm absolutely that there was a fully organized church."<sup>2</sup>

This group of people seems to have been a collection of converts from many places and it seems that their witness and work was the primary cause of the Christian Church in Rome. It is the prevailing view of most students of the New Testament that the church was predominantly Gentile, but there was a minority of Jewish Christians. Kerr says "The Roman Church appeared to be at once Jewish and Gentile-Jewish in feeling, Gentile in origin."<sup>3</sup> Among these people were possibly even some of Paul's own converts.

### 3. Occasion and Purpose for Writing

There is not a definite statement in the text that would give the exact occasion and purpose for writing this epistle. Some references are made in the Scriptures from which many inferences are drawn. For example, Acts 19:21, and Romans 1:13, 15:22-29 show the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>2</sup>John H. Kerr, An Introduction to the Study of the Books of the New Testament, p. 150.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 151.



great burden Paul had to visit Rome and in Romans 16:1-2 he seems to be taking advantage of Phoebe's trip to send a letter.

Many scholars have set forth their opinions on this matter. Theissen sees the Church as lacking authoritative leadership and as needing to be grounded in the fundamental doctrines of the faith. There was also the fear of Judaizing influence. Taking his position from the contents of the book, he offers suggestions as to Paul's purpose in writing.<sup>1</sup>

1. To teach the fundamental doctrines of salvation and to fortify against areas of Judaizers (Chapters 1-8)
2. To explain the unbelief of Israel and indicate the extent and duration (9-11)
3. To urge entrance experimentally into full Christian life (12)
4. To be subject to higher powers and have love one to another (13)
5. Forbearance toward the weak (14:1-15:13)
6. To reveal purpose and plan (15:14-33)
7. To commend Phoebe to Church at Rome (16:1-4)
8. To send greetings to friends and former associates (16:5-27).

Burwash sets up Paul's purpose as three fold:<sup>2</sup>

1. To set himself right with friends by setting his beliefs before them.
2. To give the Church at Rome his ideas before visiting them.
3. To anticipate and prevent any false teaching as he had elsewhere experienced.

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<sup>1</sup>Theissen, op. cit., pp. 226-227.

<sup>2</sup>Burwash, A Handbook of the Epistle to the Romans, p. 10.



Both Dodd and Kerr<sup>1</sup> pointed out that there was no internal condition of heresy in this Church. Dodd added to this that Paul, not having before visited Rome, was not certain of his welcome. So, he thought to lay before them the fundamental principles of Christianity as he saw them. It also served as the principle and method of his Gentile mission. The Romans could then better understand him and his position.<sup>2</sup>

Paul's purpose, as I understand it, (Says Beet) is to assert and logically develop the new doctrines; to show that they harmonize with God's declarations and conduct as recorded in the Old Testament; and to apply them to matters of secular and of Church life.<sup>3</sup>

#### 4. Value of the Epistle

Even though, as pointed out before, the situation of this epistle is far removed from present day thought; it is of universal value. Principles are established which direct themselves to all ages and to all people. The world has been blest to have received at such an early date a clear statement of the Christian message. What is to follow in this study is only a small portion of this great message to mankind.

#### 5. Summary

The following is a summary of the study of Paul and the

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<sup>1</sup>Kerr, op. cit., p. 154.

<sup>2</sup>C. H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, p. xxxi.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph Agar Beet, A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, p. 23.

## Introduction to Romans.

1. Paul was a Roman Citizen and had a great desire to visit the saints in Rome. The fact of his Jewish heritage also points to the fact that he would be well acquainted with any possible problems between the Jews and Gentiles in Rome.

2. In Paul's conversion he is seen changing over from Judaism to Christianity. This means he was familiar with the problem of the converted Jew. This would be of great assistance in being able to speak to this problem.

3. The picture of a small portion of Paul's travels and opposition has pointed to the fact that this problem of the Jews and Gentiles was not confined to a local situation. He had faced the situation many times and was used to voicing his beliefs.

4. Paul, having met with Jesus, came into a new understanding of what God desired to accomplish through the Jewish people and the law he had given them.

5. The circumcising of Timothy proved that Paul was not just trying to present an argument. He was attempting to establish principles. He fought for principle and yielded when there was no principle at stake.

6. Paul's viewpoints carried much weight among his readers. He sounded as an authority even among those who opposed him. It is concluded then, that in Romans, Paul felt he had given a proper interpretation to law as he used the word.

7. Paul believed that "Jesus is Lord" and that through Him only did release come from the bondage of the law.

8. It is evident that Paul did not establish the church in Rome. Yet, he knew many of the people there and probably realized the possibility of a problem in a mixed group of Jews and Gentiles.

9. Paul, in addition to introducing his anticipated visit, attempted to place in the minds of both Jews and Gentiles, a right view of law and works in relationship to the gospel message.



## CHAPTER III

### WORD STUDY

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#### A. Law

The word "law" appears in the Greek New Testament approximately one-hundred and ninety-five (195) times. Paul, in his writings uses the word "law" about one-hundred and twenty-two (122) times. In Romans alone the word is used at least seventy-five (75) times. The following is a list of the number of times per chapter "law" is used in Romans:

Chapter - Times Used		Chapter - Times Used	
2	21	7	23
3	11	8	5
4	5	9	3
5	3	10	2
6	2	13	2

It is quite obvious to see, from this analysis, that to Paul this was an important issue and especially as he spoke to the "beloved of God, called to be saints, in Rome."

In Romans, except for pronouns and synonyms, there is only one word used for law. The Greek word is νόμος.

Twice in Romans 2:12 the word ἀνόμως is used meaning with-

out law. The alpha "a" as it is used here is the sign of the negative.

In Romans 9:4 the word νόμος is used and the meaning of this word is the "giving of the law."<sup>1</sup>

Approximately thirty-three (33) times the definite article is used with the word "law." In some measure it is an aid in drawing out Paul's meaning as he uses the term. However, it is not a safe, overall guide to determine whether or not he is speaking definitely or indefinitely.

There are two areas of definition to be found for law in Webster's Dictionary.

(1) The binding custom or practice of a community; rules of conduct enforced by a controlling authority; also, any single rule of conduct, so enforced. (2) A divine commandment or a revelation of the will of God; collectively, the whole body of God's commandments.<sup>2</sup>

For general Biblical definitions, the following contributions are offered from various scholars: J. B. Smith simply gives the meaning of "νόμος" as "law."<sup>3</sup> Added to this is the statement from the International Critical Commentary that the law is "a legal system."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>J. B. Smith, Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup>Merriam Webster, Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 476.

<sup>3</sup>Smith, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup>William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, XXXII, 58.



The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, speaking of Paul and Romans said "In the main he is speaking of moral law" and "He first speaks of the law as a standard."<sup>1</sup> Closely related to this is Vincent's statement that the law is "a principle that is laid down."<sup>2</sup>

Two Greek-English Lexicons were consulted. Thayer pointed out that anything established, received by usage, custom, or that which serves as a standard or requirement is law.<sup>3</sup> Liddell and Scott added to this that a law is "a received opinion."<sup>4</sup>

It seems fair to conclude from these aids that law is a legal system used as a standard of conduct. These standards gain their power as they are generally received and used. Therefore, law would not refer to any list of statements or desires but rather to what has generally been accepted by the majority as a rule of conduct.

#### B. Study of the Use of the Greek Article

The Greek language has no indefinite article. The proper translation of the word νόμος should be either "law" or "a law"

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<sup>1</sup>James Orr, Gen. ed., The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, p. 1848.

<sup>2</sup>Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 428.

<sup>4</sup>Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, p. 982.

and not "the law."

Greek has, however, a definite article, and where the Greek article does not appear, the definite article should not be inserted in the English translation; thus ἀδελφός does not mean the brother. In the plural, English, like Greek, has no indefinite article. ἄνθρωποι, therefore, means simply men. But it does not mean the men.<sup>1</sup>

Chamberlain, like Machen, said the indefinite article was never developed in the Greek and that the "definite article, ὁ, ἡ, τό, was originally a demonstrative pronoun."<sup>2</sup>

Not even has the modern Greek taken up the indefinite article like that developed in Romance and Teutonic languages. The best that the Greek can do is to use εἷς or τις in a weakened sense like εἷς γραμματεὺς in Matt. 8:19 a scribe or νομικὸς τις (Luke 10:25) a lawyer where "certain" is too emphatic.<sup>3</sup>

### C. Function of the Article in General

The primary role of the article is to emphasize individual identity. It gives distinction to an object of thought. The article focuses attention on a particular person or thing. When the article is used, the object is unquestionably definite; when it is not used, the object may or may not be definite.<sup>4</sup>

So because there is no article in the Greek does not always mean that the noun is indefinite. There are many ways of making a thing definite.

Certain words, like scripture, sun, moon, sea, earth, heaven,

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<sup>1</sup>J. Gresham Machen, New Testament Greek for Beginners, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>William Douglas Chamberlain, An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup>A. T. Robertson and W. Hersey Davis, A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament, p. 384.

<sup>4</sup>Boyce W. Blackwelder, Light From the Greek New Testament, p. 141.



are so distinctive that they may be definite without the article. Proper names, because they already denote a definite individual, do not require the article. Terms like Lord, God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, are definite, although these expressions for Deity may also have the article. Anarthrous nouns (nouns without the article) may be made definite by the use of possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, the genitive case, and by the use of prepositions.<sup>1</sup>

Added to this is the further explanation given by A. T. Robertson. "The Greek article is a pointer. The Greek article does not tell why an object is pointed at nor does it point it out as near or far like the demonstrative."<sup>2</sup>

#### Some Specific Uses of the Article (Blackwelder,

##### Light From the Greek New Testament)

1. The article may denote previous reference. This is called the anaphoric use, and refers to the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses. An awareness of the anaphoric use of the article is a great help to the interpreter.
2. The article may be used in the generic sense to denote a representative of a class. By this means one class is distinguished from all others and identified by certain characteristics.
3. The article is used with abstract nouns to make them definite and specific. Abstract nouns are usually general in character and application, and therefore indefinite; but when it is desired to apply the sense of an abstract noun in some special and distinct way the article is placed with it. For example, in the New Testament, grace (without the article) denotes favor as an abstract attitude or the gracious character of God in general. But when Paul says, "Indeed by the grace (articulate) you are in a state of having been saved (perfect tense) through faith" (Ephesians 2:8), the article specifies the grace of God in its particular application for believers in the atonement of Christ.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>A. T. Robertson, op. cit., p. 275.



4. The article distinguishes the subject of a sentence from the predicate. It is a general rule that the term with the article is the subject, whatever the word order may be. Thus we have, "The Word of God" (John 1:1); "The Word became flesh" (vs. 14); "God (Articular) is spirit" (4:24); "God (articular) is love" (I John 4:8); "God (articular) is my witness" (Romans 1:9); "The last shall be first, and the first last" (Matthew 20:16).
5. When the article occurs with both the subject and the predicate, they are identical and interchangeable. Illustrations are plentiful. "The field is the world" (Matthew 13:38); "the life was the light" (John 1:4); "the sting of death is the sin, and the power of the sin is the law" (I Corinthians 15:56).<sup>1</sup>

#### D. Absence of the Article

So, in general, the use of the article denotes identity.

The non-use emphasizes character or quality. Sometimes with a noun which the context proves to be definite the article is not used. This places stress upon the qualitative aspect of the noun rather than its mere identity. For example, "righteousness of God" (Romans 1:17) means the God-kind of righteousness. Taking it as the ablative case, it indicates the righteousness which has its source or origin in God. As the genitive case it describes the righteousness as inherent in God's character.<sup>2</sup>

A. T. Robertson, in his discussion of the absence of the article, pointed out many of the things already cited by Blackwelder under the discussion of the general function of the article. Robertson, along with Machen, pointed out that there is no obligation to use the Greek article unless it is felt that the article is needed to make something more definite than it is without it. If the word is indefinite the article is not used but because there is no article

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<sup>1</sup>Boyce W. Blackwelder, op. cit., pp. 142-145.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

does not mean the word is indefinite. There are other ways of making a thing definite. Here, the only difference between the discussion of Robertson and Blackwelder is a different set of illustrations. Robertson says "proper names" need no article, unless too many have the same name. The "genitive" often is enough as "Πύλαι ᾧδου " (Matthew 16:18) "gates of Hades;" but this is not always the case. "θεοῦ υἱός" (Matthew 27:54) can be either "a son of God" or "the Son of God."<sup>1</sup>

Robertson says "Most translations treat the Greek article in a careless fashion."<sup>2</sup>

Taking into consideration that, both, Machen and Robertson feel it is unnecessary to place in English the article when it is not used in the Greek, the following passages of scripture are presented. This will serve two purposes. Firstly, it will give some idea as to how the text would read. Secondly, it will inform the reader in advance of the particular passages, on law, to be considered in this study.

#### E. Presentation of the Passages Wherein

##### the Word "Law" is Found

For as many as have sinned *ἀνόμως* shall also perish *ἀνόμως* and as many as have sinned under *νόμῳ* shall be judged by *νόμου*; for not the hearers *νόμου* are just before God, but the doers *νόμου* shall be justified; (for when Gentiles that have not *νόμον* do by nature the things *τοῦ νόμου*,

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<sup>1</sup>Robertson, op. cit., pp. 282-283.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 283.

these, not having νόμον are νόμος unto themselves; in that they show the work τοῦ νόμου written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them; In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ. But if thou bearest the name of a Jew, and retest upon νόμῳ, and gloriest in God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are excellent, being instructed out τοῦ νόμου, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them that are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having in τῷ νόμῳ the form of knowledge and of the truth; thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples? Thou who gloriest in νόμῳ, through thy transgression τοῦ νόμου dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you, even as it is written. For circumcision indeed profiteth, if thou practicest νόμον: but if thou be a transgressor νόμου thy circumcision is become uncircumcision. If therefore the uncircumcision keep the ordinances του νόμου shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And shall not the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill τὸν νόμον judge thee, who with the letter and circumcision art a transgressor νόμον? (Romans 2:12-27).

Now we know that what things soever ὁ νόμος saith, it speaks to them that are under τῷ νόμῳ; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God: Because by the works νόμου, shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for through νόμου cometh the knowledge of sin.

But now apart from νόμου a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by τοῦ νόμου and the prophets (3:19-21).

Where then is glorying? It is excluded. By what manner νόμου? of works? Nay: but by νόμου of faith. We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works νόμου (3:27-28).

"Do we then make νόμον of none effect through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish νόμον" (3:31).

For not through νόμου was the promise to Abraham or to his seed that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they that are νόμου are heirs,



faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect: for **ὁ νόμος** worketh wrath; but where there is no **νόμος**, neither is there transgression. For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is **τοῦ νόμου** but to that also which is of the faith of abraham, who is the father of us all (4:13-16).

"For until **νόμου** sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no **νόμου** " (5:13).

"And **νόμος** came in besides, that the transgress might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly:" (5:20).

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under **νόμου**, but under grace" (6:14).

"What then? shall we sin, because we are not under **νόμου**, but under grace" (6:15)?

Or are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men who know **νόμου**), that **ὁ νόμος** hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth? For the woman that hath a husband is bound by **νόμῳ** to that husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from **τοῦ νόμου** of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress, but if the husband die, she is free from **τοῦ νόμου**, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were dead **τῷ νόμῳ** through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through **τοῦ νόμου**, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from **τῷ νόμῳ**, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter (7:1-6).

What shall we say then? Is **ὁ νόμος** sin? God forbid, Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through **νόμου**: for I had not known coveting, except **ὁ νόμος** had said, Thou shalt not covet: but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting: for apart from **νόμου** sin is dead. And I was alive apart from **νόμου** once: but when the

commandment came, sin revived, and I died; and the commandment, which was unto life, this I found to be unto death: for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me. So that **ὁ νόμος** is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good. Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good; that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful. For we know that **ὁ νόμος** is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practice; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto **τῷ νόμῳ** that it is good. So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practice. But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. I find **τὸν νόμον**, that, to me who would do good, evil is present. For I delight in **τῷ νόμῳ** of God after the inward man: but I see a different **νόμον** in my members, warring against **τῷ νόμῳ** of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under **τῷ νόμῳ** of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? So then I of myself with the mind, indeed, serve **νόμῳ** of God; but with the flesh **νόμῳ** of sin (7:7-25).

For **ὁ νόμος** of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from **τοῦ νόμου** of sin and of death. For what **τοῦ νόμου** could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance **τοῦ νόμου** might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh mind things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace: because the life of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject **τῷ νόμῳ** of God, neither indeed can it be (8:2-7):

"Who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and **ἡ νομοθεσία**, and the service of God, and the promises" (9:4);

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who follow not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith: but Israel, following after **νόμον** of righteousness, did not arrive at **νόμον**. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by

works. They stumbled at the stone of stumbling (9:30-32);

"For Christ is the end ~~νόμον~~ unto righteousness to everyone that believeth. For Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is ~~νόμον~~ shall live thereby" (10:4-5).

Owe no man any, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled ~~νόμον~~. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment ~~νόμον~~ (13:8-10).

This study reveals some facts which aid in a greater understanding of what is to follow.

1. The obvious number of times Paul mentioned law points to the fact that discussing law was an important issue in much of his writing to the Romans.

2. The Greek definite article offers great assistance in identifying, partially, Paul's use of law. The study of this article has helped in many cases to give definite identification. Its purpose is identity or classification. However, the non-use of the article does not necessarily mean the noun associated with it is indefinite.

3. The passages from Romans are best understood as it is understood that the non-use of the article does not always denote indefiniteness. The general purpose is to show character or quality.

4. In the following study, many references are made to the use and non-use of the article. These references are made to aid in identifying the types of law Paul was referring to in Romans. This study serves as a guide for understanding these references. An



overall picture of the passages shows how numerous Paul used the word "law." The showing of the Greek words portrays more vividly the use and non-use of the article.

## CHAPTER IV

### PAUL'S USE OF THE MOSAIC LAW IN ROMANS

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#### A. Evidence of Its Use

As it has been pointed out in this study, many scholars have expressed their belief that Paul's basic use of "law" in Romans was that of the "Mosaic Law." All through the epistle he had the specific plan of showing those of the church in Rome the proper place of the Mosaic Law. There is evidence that Paul spoke of other laws but usually in relationship to the law of Moses. Therefore, these laws are mentioned in this chapter by way of relationship and contrast. However, they are discussed more fully in the following chapter.

#### B. The Meaning of the Mosaic Law

There have been many scholars who have helped to support the idea that Paul referred to the Mosaic Law in Romans. While they have mentioned Mosaic Law on numerous occasions, none have felt responsible to make a definite and complete statement as to what was specifically meant by the Mosaic Law. There are several terms used in this study that suggest partially what the Mosaic Law was. The following is a list of these terms: ceremonial, moral, that taught in the synagogue, scriptures, circumcision, covenant, Pentateuch, written law, writings



of Moses, and passages from the Old Testament. All of these terms can be seen as chapter four is read. They were used as Paul discussed the Mosaic Law in Romans. The study of the Greek article pointed out that he spoke of the Mosaic Law both as a legalistic system and as to its character or quality.

### C. The Study of the Mosaic Law

#### 1. Romans: Chapters 2:12-3:20

Paul's first use of the term "law" begins in Romans, Chapter 2, verse 12. In verse 12 the apostle grouped all classes of people under two headings; those who sinned without law and those who sinned under the law. Both Robertson and Nicoll concluded that Paul was definitely referring to the Mosaic Law. Robertson said the heathen were ignorant of the Mosaic Law and they were lost because they did not keep the law they had.<sup>1</sup> Nicoll pointed out that

In point of fact, no doubt, was only one law given by God, the Mosaic. Paul was arguing with those who felt privileged over those to whom the law was not given. But he expressed himself with a generality which would meet the case of more such revelations from God to man. The Mosaic Law is the only one to be dealt with however.<sup>2</sup>

Paul pointed out in verse 13 that there was no actual virtue to listening to the law as it was read in the synagogue. The value of the Mosaic Law was not in being familiar with it but in fulfilling

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<sup>1</sup>Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, IV, 336.

<sup>2</sup>James Denney, "St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans," The Expositor's Greek Testament, ed. by W. Robertson Nicoll, II, 597.

its requirements. Using the Gentiles as an illustration in verse 14, Paul pointed out that the Gentiles did not have the Mosaic Law. Yet, they "do by nature the things of the law." The Gentiles became a law unto themselves by doing what the law required without a formal statement as Israel had. They proved they had some knowledge of the will of God. Alford had said that there was only "One law of God, partly written in men's conscience, plainly manifested in the law of Moses, and fully revealed in Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> Paul said in 2:15 the Gentile showed the work of the law written on his heart. The law written on the heart became equal to the law written on stone because the Gentiles performed the works which the law prescribed.<sup>2</sup>

In the previous chapter Paul had been dealing with the Gentile. In the immediately preceding verses he had been talking about the Jew and Gentile. He is now turning to the Jew exclusively. It was quite obvious, as verse 17 of chapter was studied that the law mentioned was that which the Jews had received.

Paul began his address to the Jew (vss. 17-18) by saying they were resting on the law and received their instructions out of the law. Robertson, quoting Shedd, said "The Jew's ethical discernment was the fruit of catechetical and synagogical instruction in the Old Testament."<sup>3</sup> The Jew was proud of the fact that he had the Mosaic Law. He relied on it and it gave him great confidence. Paul was

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, p. 332.

<sup>2</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 598.

<sup>3</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 338.



dealing with the problem of a people resting in their position from birth and not in that which the Lord demanded and gave. Paul described these people as those who knew the will of God, being instructed each sabbath in the Synagogue. They were attempting to guide the ones walking in darkness. Yet, they themselves had only a form or pattern of knowledge. Nicoll said Paul actually accused the Jews of transgression in verse 23 and he was not merely asking a question. The statement should go like this: "Thou who makest it thy boast that thou possessest a law, by the transgressing of that law dishonourest God."<sup>1</sup> Robertson gave several meanings for this word transgression. It was the old word for stepping across the line, violation, missing the mark, falling short, and disobedience.<sup>2</sup> Paul said they made their boast in the law, but through the transgression of the law the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles.

The concluding section of this argument is from verses 25-29, in which Paul dealt with the use of circumcision and its two-fold operation, according to the conflicting conduct of the Jews.

*Περὶ τοῦ* is the Greek word for circumcision and means a cutting around.

The ceremony of circumcision consisted in cutting away the foreskin, the hood or fold of skin covering the head of the male organ. This is generally done by means of a sharp knife, but in more primitive times sharp stones were used (Exodus 4: 25; Joshua 5:2, "Knife of flint"). As a rule this act was performed by the father (Genesis 17:23), although it might be done by an Israelite, and if necessary, women as well (Exodus

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 599.

<sup>2</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 339.



4:25), but never by Gentiles.<sup>1</sup>

It was a rite enjoined by God upon Abraham and his male descendants as a sign of the covenant made with him (Genesis 17).

Paul said in verse 25 that a transgressing Jew was no better than the uncircumcised or Gentile. Circumcision was simply a seal of the covenant and when the Jew transgressed the Law he was no more privileged. Nicoll said the non-use of the article in this verse denotes the Law of Moses in its "Character as law."<sup>2</sup> In verse 26 and 27, Paul spoke of the Gentile who "Keeps the ordinances of the law." He has done what the Jew agreed to do by being circumcised. As Nicoll put it, "he will be treated as if in the Jew's position: his uncircumcision will be reckoned as circumcision and thus the uncircumcision shall judge thee."<sup>3</sup> A. T. Robertson has felt that it is important to note that in verses 25-27 Paul was using suppositions and not assertions. He has not actually said this is the thing that has happened.<sup>4</sup>

Paul's conclusion on the matter of circumcision is found in verses 28 and 29 of chapter 2.

The inward or inside Jew who lives up to his covenant relationship with God is the high standard Paul puts before the merely professional Jew described above.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Merrill F. Unger, Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 601.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 340.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

Circumcision, which counts, is not outward and visible but inward and spiritual. So, it is apparent that Paul taught that a disobedient Jew was no better before God than a Gentile, and that it was possible in God's sight for an obedient Gentile to become a true Jew.

In Romans 3:19 and 20, Paul pointed to a definite conclusion concerning what he had said already about the Mosaic Law. Robertson said Paul seems to be speaking directly to the Jews, the hardest to convince. With the previous proof on that point Paul had covered the whole for the case had already been made against the Gentiles in 1:18-32. Now "all the world was answerable to God. Everyone is liable to God in God's court."<sup>1</sup> This "law" said Alford was the "whole Old Testament, law, prophets, and psalms."<sup>2</sup> Thus Paul has shown the universal prevalence of sin and the Jews had their share in it.<sup>3</sup> Verse 20 points out more fully what Paul was teaching.

The Law has no such office, in the present state of human nature manifested both in history and Scripture, as to render righteous: its office is altogether different, to detect and bring to light the sinfulness of man.<sup>4</sup>

Thus Paul had said that the Mosaic Law or any other law can not be used as a source of becoming right with God. By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. Nicoll said the flesh here meant

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 346.

<sup>2</sup>Alford, op. cit., pp. 340-341.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 341.

"human nature in its frailty. It had no strength to accomplish the righteousness of God."<sup>1</sup> The law did its job when it convinced men of their utter sinfulness. It was not meant to lift them up.

## 2. Romans: Chapters 3:21 - 4:25

In this section Paul started his use of the Mosaic Law in 3:21 by saying that without the help of the law a righteousness of God has been manifested. Yet, this righteousness of God has been witnessed by the law and the prophets. What Paul said here was that "legal obedience contributes nothing to evangelistic righteousness. The gospel is not alien to the religion of Israel, but really finds attestation there."<sup>2</sup> The law and the prophets "remain on record as the revelation of God's will."<sup>3</sup> In 3:27 and 28 Paul concluded that since the righteousness of God has come apart from the law, there was no room left for glorying on man's part. Why? Because "a man is justified by faith, apart from the works of the law." This part of verse 28 is a restatement of what was already pointed out in verse 21. When Paul said "I reckoned," he was really saying "This is my fixed opinion."<sup>4</sup> Paul said in verse 31 that he had not made the law of none effect by showing that righteousness is by faith. What he had actually done was to establish the law. "The law is set up on

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 608.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 609.

<sup>3</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 342.

<sup>4</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 349.



a sure footing; for the first time it gets its rights."<sup>1</sup> Alford substantiates the fact that the law in this verse was the law of God and meant both the one given by Moses and the law written on the heart. The law contained the doctrine of faith, founded in the promise to Abraham. It was consistent with, explaining, and explained by the gospel.<sup>2</sup> Matthew Henry offered a helpful comment on the matter.

Though we do say the law will not justify us, yet we do not, therefore, say that it was given in vain, or is of no use to us, no, we establish the right use, and secure its standing, by fixing it on the right basis. The law is still of use to convince us of what is past, and to direct us for the future; though we cannot be saved by it as a covenant, yet we own it, and submit to it as a rule in the hand of the mediator, subordinate to the law of grace; and so far from overthrowing it, we establish the law.<sup>3</sup>

In 4:13-17 "Paul employs the key words of his gospel (faith, promise, grace) and arrays them against the current Jewish theology (law, works, merit)."<sup>4</sup> Paul pointed to the fact that Abraham was not under the law when the promise was given to him. If those who were counting on the works of the law were heirs to the Messianic promise given to Abraham, then faith is made void. Verse 15 said the result of the law was "wrath."

The operation of the law is to reveal sin and represent it as transgression as well in the conscience as in the life itself. Therefore it produces wrath, which, according to the

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., pp. 614-615.

<sup>2</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 346.

<sup>3</sup>Matthew Henry, The Comprehensive Commentary on the Holy Bible, V, 189.

<sup>4</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 351.

Divine sentence and government, bursts forth from the internal and external life as the severe judgment of dissolution and of death.<sup>1</sup>

Nicoll said wrath was "the whole and sole result of the law and hence cannot be the means through which God administers His grace."<sup>2</sup>

The conclusion then for this section is found in verse 16.

For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace; to the end that the promise may be to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

The Mosaic Law was not meant to bring righteousness. Its function was to reveal sin. Its result was wrath. Because of this, the promise of righteousness by faith came through Abraham. It included both those who had the written law of Moses and those who did not.

### 3. Romans: Chapter Five

Paul used law in this section only in verses 13 and 20. It was Alford's feeling that verse 13 was an explanation of 4:15. Putting these two verses together will help to see what he meant.<sup>3</sup> "For the law worketh wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there transgression" (4:15). Verse 5:13 says "for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law." Was Paul saying there was a time when men were without law? No. Robertson said there was sin before the Mosaic Law. "The Jews were like the

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<sup>1</sup>John Peter Lange, A Commentary on the Holy Scripture, Romans, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 619.

<sup>3</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 361.



Gentiles who had the law of reason and conscience (2:12-16), the coming of the Law increased their responsibility and their guilt" (2:9).<sup>1</sup>

Paul, then in verse 20, again pointed out his conclusion concerning the function of the Mosaic Law. It came in between Adam and Christ that the transgress might abound. The great design of the law, in reference to justification, was to produce the knowledge and conviction of sin. "This was the actual effect of the Mosaic Law for the Jews."<sup>2</sup> The law "furthered the end contemplated in the work of Christ,"<sup>3</sup> even as this verse has said "where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly."

#### 4. Romans: Chapters 6:14 - 10:5

Paul continued his references to the Mosaic Law in 6:14 by saying "sin shall not have dominion over you for you are not under law but under grace." Alford has translated this verse "sin shall not be able to assert and maintain its rule in those who are not under law but under grace." The Christian is not placed in a covenant of legal obedience.<sup>4</sup> To the Jews, Paul was saying that what Moses received on Mount Sinai was not the thing that liberated them. They had been freed by the sacrifice on Mount Calvary. He then proposed two questions in verse 15. "Are we to sin because our

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<sup>1</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 358.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 360.

<sup>3</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 631.

<sup>4</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 371.

life is not ruled by statutes, but inspired by the sense of what we owe to that free pardoning mercy of God? Are we to sin because God justifies the ungodly at the cross?"<sup>1</sup> He then supplied his own answer. God forbid. Being under grace and not under law is no encouragement to sin.

Romans chapter seven has been the seat of much controversy both in the field of theology and Biblical exegesis. Nicoll felt that neither Roman nor Mosaic Law was specifically referred to in this first verse. The argument rests on law in general. He further pointed out that *ὁ νόμος* did not refer exclusively to the Mosaic Law even though Paul would think of it first.<sup>2</sup> Alford linked verses 7:1-6 to Paul's previous references to law in Chapter 6. He said these verses serve as "explanation and proof of 6:14 and as an answer to 15."<sup>3</sup> Alford suggested the following steps as Paul's procedure for presenting his case:

1. The law binds a man only so long as he lives.
2. This is illustrated by the fact that a married woman is only bound to her husband as long as he lives.
3. So; also, the Christian being dead with Christ and alive to Him is freed from the law (Mosaic).
  - (a) Death has dissolved the legal obligation between the man and wife; therefore the wife is at liberty to be married to another.
  - (b) Death has dissolved the legal obligation between the law and man; therefore, man is at liberty to be married to another.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 635.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 637.

<sup>3</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 374.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 375.



In this illustration the law was the first husband and Christ was the second. The Mosaic Law was not dead but the man was. So, in verse 4, Paul used the illustration to point out to his readers that they have been put to death to the law and that they should be joined to another. They should be joined to Him (Christ) who was raised from the dead.

Paul again, in verse 5, continued to show the effects of the law. It was always the same. It was the occasion of agitation and conflict. Through the law sin was known for what it really was. He was not saying that the flesh was inherently sinful, but is subject to sin. "It is what Paul means by being 'under the law.'"<sup>1</sup> But now, as verse 6 says, "we have been discharged from the law."

It is by our own vicarious death in Christ, our having died with Him whose death is a satisfaction to the law, that we are thus delivered. This is in accordance with verse 4, where it is said we died to the law. The law held us under its authority, and, as it were, in bondage, from which bondage we have been redeemed by death.<sup>2</sup>

Paul taught here that there was now freedom from the law. The result of this annulment to law was that "we serve in the newness of the spirit and not in the oldness of the letter."

Alford expressed his opinion that in verses 7-25 Paul used himself as an example to show the part the law had in bringing out sin.<sup>3</sup> Nicoll agreed to this and added that verses 7-13

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<sup>1</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 367.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Hodge, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 219.

<sup>3</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 376.

. . . show a very close connection between law and sin. The connection being that "I had not known sin except through the law." The absence of the Greek article shows it refers to the legal not character of the Mosaic Law.<sup>1</sup>

Verse 7 said that the law was not in itself sinful but the law produces a positive awareness of sin. For without the law sin was dead. Sanday explained that the Greek word used for occasion or opportunity may mean "base of operation" as in a military sense. "Sin exists, but apart from law it has nothing to work upon, no means of producing guilt. Law gives it just the opportunity it wants."<sup>2</sup> Robertson said "the law is not itself sin nor the cause of sin. Men with their sinful nature turn law into an occasion for sinful acts."<sup>3</sup> For apart from the law (verse 8) sin was committed but not recognized. "Apart from the law we have no experiences of either its character or of its vitality."<sup>4</sup> Paul went on to say in verse 9 that without a true knowledge of the law he considered himself alive and righteous, but when the commandment was known, sin became alive or known and he died or became unrighteous. Alford put it in this manner: Paul felt he was all right until the law began its work in him; before the deeper energies of his moral nature were aroused. When the facts were brought home to him sin came to life and began to flourish.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 639.

<sup>2</sup>William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, XXXII, 179.

<sup>3</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 367.

<sup>4</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 640.

<sup>5</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 380.



The question had already been asked in verse 7 "Is the law sin?" Paul answered that question in verse 12 by saying the law is holy and its requirements are holy, and righteous and good. "The law belongs to God and has a character corresponding to God."<sup>1</sup> Paul wanted to point out that the law was not evil, in itself. The law is holy but sin is the true source of all evil. What Paul was doing here was

. . . removing from the law all suspicion of blame. Nothing shall invalidate the character of holiness belonging to the law. The law here denotes the Mosaic system in its entirety, and commandment each article of the code in particular. The term holy, is the word which in Scripture denotes the perfect love of good.<sup>2</sup>

In Verse 14 Paul gave another character of the law. He said

the law is spiritual. Again this corresponds to God, whose nature is spiritual. In verse 16 he offered proof of the character of the law. He said "My wanting to do the opposite of what I do proves my acceptance of God's law as good."<sup>3</sup>

Nicoll said "*καλός* suggest the moral beauty or nobility of the law, not like *ἀγαθόν* (verse 12) its beneficial purpose."<sup>4</sup>

Paul summarized his argument of chapter 7 in verses 21-25.<sup>5</sup>

He started out by saying "I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present." This law, Alford said, corresponds to the

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 640.

<sup>2</sup>F. Godet, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 369.

<sup>4</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 641.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 642.

law in verse 23 and will presently be defined as "the law of sin in my members."<sup>1</sup> Paul continued his statement in verses 22 and 23.

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members.

By way of identification, it has already been pointed out earlier that the law of God did not refer to any one particular giving of a law. It referred to the will of God given to all men. To some it was written and to others it was unwritten. The law of the mind was Paul's consenting to the value of the law of God. In this section Paul revealed that he had found another law, which was of a different kind and had different aims. This was the source of his captivity. Further explanation is given by Nicoll.

The incongruity between inclination and action has its roots in a division within man's nature. The law of God legislates for him, and in the inner man he delights in it. It is called inward because it is not seen. What is seen is described in verse 23. I see that a power to legislate, of a different kind asserts itself in my members, making war on the law of my mind. Paul sees two authorities saying to him, do this, and the higher succumbing to the lower. The end therefore is that man, as a creature of flesh, living under law, does what sin enjoins. It is the law of sin to which he gives obedience.<sup>2</sup>

So, Paul looking back, saw "his whole self in his unregenerate state giving a divided service as he has already shown before"<sup>3</sup> (verse 25).

Paul, in chapter 8, gave the answer to the cry for deliverance in 7:24.

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<sup>1</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 383.

<sup>2</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 643.

<sup>3</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 371.



The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinances of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"(2-4).

Paul has said here that Christ did what the law could not do. The law was weak through the flesh, or human nature. So "God sent His Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and on account of sin condemned sin in the flesh."<sup>1</sup> The law could only condemn sin. It could not free men from the guilt or power of sin. This insufficiency of the law was not due to any imperfection of the law itself. Man was already under sin; its guilt and power. Two things are shown here concerning the coming of Christ: (1) the way in which he came; (2) and the reason for His coming. Concerning the first, He did not come in sinful flesh for that would imply that His human nature was defiled, but it was in the likeness of sinful flesh but without sin in itself. The reason for God sending His Son in this manner was expressed by the apostle as being "for sin." He came that He might condemn sin. By way of definition, Vincent gave the following meaning for condemn. "Condemn. Deposed from its dominion, a thing impossible to the law, which could pronounce judgment and inflict penalty, but not dethrone."<sup>2</sup>

Christ made it possible that the requirements of the law or "the aim of God in giving the law"<sup>3</sup> might be accomplished in us.

Christ refused to submit to sin, and died in our stead, which

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<sup>1</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 387.

<sup>2</sup>Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, III, 86.

<sup>3</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 388.

is a victory over sin countersigned by His resurrection. The result was to secure the fulfillment of the law's requirements (in so far as the command is holy, just, and for our good) in our lives, as we live and move not by the flesh, but by the spirit.<sup>1</sup>

So, it was not through the mind of the flesh but through the mind of the Spirit that life came. The mind of the flesh was not subject to the law of God. It could not be (verse 7). Chapter 7 proves this.

In 9:4, according to Nicoll, Paul expressed a great distress and burden for the salvation of his own countrymen. What made the situation so intense was the fact that they had held a unique position and now all privileges had been annulled by their unbelief. This "giving of the law" referred to the great Sinaitic legislation.<sup>2</sup> "The Mosaic Law (verse 31) in its characteristic qualities remained out of their reach. Legal religion proved a failure."<sup>3</sup> The Jews followed after the law of righteousness but went about it the wrong way.

Helping to sum up this teaching concerning the law of Moses, Paul spoke again in verses 4 and 5 of chapter 10. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes. This implies that if the Jews had used the law of Moses properly they would have been prepared for the coming of Christ. "Paul's main idea is that Christ ended the law as a method of salvation. Christ wrote finis on law as a means of grace."<sup>4</sup> It was for "everyone that believeth."

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<sup>1</sup>C. H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 657.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 667.

<sup>4</sup>Robertson, op. cit., pp. 387-388.



The Messiah brought a free righteousness offered to faith. Christ's coming put an end to man's attempt to establish his own righteousness on the observance of the law. The Jews, however, misunderstood this and thought of it only as an annexation to Israel. It is easy to understand the error and the irritation which took possession of the Jews when Jesus announced plainly that he came not to repair the old Jewish garment, but to substitute for that now antiquated regime, a garment completely new.<sup>1</sup>

Following in this portion

Paul proceeds to exhibit the difference between these positions of men under the law and under the gospel, by passages from the Old Testament, and from the writings of Moses. Paul points out that the Jews had not understood the writings of Moses, inasmuch as they fancied that they were adhering to them when they opposed themselves to faith. Paul refers to Leviticus 18:5, that doing is the character of the law, and to Deuteronomy 30:12-13 that believing is that of the Gospel.<sup>2</sup>

To all who will believe, Christ is the means by which they are to receive righteousness and all who will not come by the way of Christ are doomed to failure. Christ by His death and resurrection has shown that he is the end of the law. For all who would be righteous do not seek it through the law but through Christ. The Jewish people were then in error. The law was not designed to afford justification, but to show them their sinfulness.

Christ is the end of the law and the subject of its predictions, and it is to Him that men are urged to flee. The Jews did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God for "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to everyone that believeth." If a man were to seek to be justified by the law he must keep the law in its entire-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 376.

<sup>2</sup>Olshousen, op. cit., p. 105.



ty, which no man is able to do (verse 5). Moreover, if he seeks justification by the keeping of the law then "Christ profits him nothing."

#### 5. Romans: Chapter 13:8 and 10

These two verses were the last places Paul mentioned the word "law" in Romans. It was the opinion of Nicoll<sup>1</sup> and Alford<sup>2</sup> that Paul was speaking in these verses of the Mosaic Law. These verses represent Paul's practical conclusions and exhortations concerning the law of Moses in Romans. "Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law." Looking backward, Paul has made two definite points. Firstly, love is the fulfillment of the law. Secondly, he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. Robertson said "This debt can never be paid off, but we should keep the interest paid up." Quoting Sanday and Headlam, he said "Just as in the relation of man and God faith has been substituted for law, so between man and man love takes the place of a definite legal relation."<sup>3</sup>

Paul has said the following things concerning the law of Moses.

1. The Jews were given the written law. The Gentiles, by their conduct, prove they have this same law written on their hearts.

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., pp. 696-697.

<sup>2</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 447.

<sup>3</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 409.

Both have transgressed the law and thereby stand condemned. The Gentile was condemned because he did not glorify God in his knowledge. The Jew was condemned because he trusted in his position as a Jew and his knowledge of the law for righteousness.

2. The law of Moses and the Prophets witnessed to a righteousness of God apart from any law. Therefore, the man who boasts in works has nothing to boast about. The pattern for salvation is by faith and not works.

3. The character of the law was holy, spiritual, just, and good.

4. The function of law was to bring the knowledge of sin. The law brought sin back to life again. Sinful passions became actualized through the law. Had it been used properly it would have prepared the Jew for the coming of Christ.

5. Christ did what the law could not do. He condemned sin in the flesh that man would be able to meet the requirements of the law. The law was leading up to what Christ was to do.

6. "He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law."

## CHAPTER V

PAUL'S USE OF THE TERM "LAW" IN A GENERAL SENSE



## CHAPTER V

### PAUL'S USE OF THE TERM "LAW" IN A GENERAL SENSE

In chapter IV there were many indications that Paul referred to other laws besides that of the Mosaic Law. As was shown in this study Paul mentioned other laws that were more general. In this case it was not a written law but a principle he was speaking of. Paul spoke of "a law of faith" (3:27), "the law" (7:21), "law in my members" (7:23), "law of my mind" (7:23), "law of sin" (7:23;7:25; 8:2), and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus " (8:2).

#### A. Law of Faith (3:27)

Robertson said that what was meant by "a law of faith" was "the principle of faith in harmony with God's love and grace."<sup>1</sup> Paul had just pointed out that, in doing the works of the law, there was no cause for boasting. The promise of righteousness came by a law of faith. Referring back to Alford again, Paul has made a contrast between the law of works and the law of faith. The principle was this, that whether a man was under the Mosaic Law or any other law, if he expected to attain to righteousness it must

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<sup>1</sup>Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, p. 348.

be through faith.<sup>1</sup> Paul used two illustrations in chapter 4 to bring out his point. Abraham received the promise through faith and not through the law. The promise was that "he should be heir of the world, through the righteousness of faith" (4:13). God did it this way so that it could "be according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of law, but to that which is also of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all" (4:16). In 4:9 Paul said Abraham's faith was reckoned for righteousness. The other illustration was that of David. He pronounced "blessing upon the man, unto whom God reckoned righteousness apart from works" (4:6). These illustrations show that God planned a way whereby all men could be righteous. Even as Abraham believed God, faith in God and not works is the way to righteousness.

B. Law in the Members and the Law of  
sin (7:21, 23, 25; 8:2)

There has been some difficulty in determining just what law Paul was referring to in 7:21. He said "I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present." Nicoll said Paul was referring to the Mosaic Law.<sup>2</sup> Alford's view seems to fit more closely into what Paul has said.

I find then (as appears from what has been detailed) the (this) law (presently to be defined as the law of sin in my members) to me (for myself) wishing to do good, that (consisting in this,

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, p. 345.

<sup>2</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositor's Greek Testament, p. 642.

that) evil is present with me.<sup>1</sup>

It was further stated by Alford that to interpret this as the Law of Moses would have to be forced into the passage. This forcing would do violence to the context.<sup>2</sup> In these verses Paul has shown a very close connection between the law in his members and the law of sin. In verse 23 he said the law in his members was working in two capacities. This law was warring against the law in his mind and it was bringing him into captivity under the law of sin which was in his members. Following Alford's translation, this law in the members would mean the standard or rule set up which is in harmony with the law of sin but is not the law of sin itself.<sup>3</sup> What it did was to assist the law of sin in accomplishing its purpose. It brought Paul into captivity under the law of sin. The law of sin, then, would be the principal resistance against the law of God. As was pointed out in chapter 4 of this thesis (page 59) this was the sin that was awakened and went into action in 7:9. Paul closed chapter 7 by saying with the flesh (in my actual outward life<sup>4</sup>) he served the law of sin. The results of this service were made clear in 7:24 and 8:2. When Paul mentioned the body of death in 7:24 he meant "the body whose subjection to the law of sin brings about this state of misery. From this body, as the instrument whereby he is led captive to the law of sin and

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<sup>1</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 383.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 384.

<sup>4</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 643.



death, he cries out for deliverance."<sup>1</sup> This death as is mentioned in 8:2 denotes a more serious situation than in chapter 7. Alford said it referred to both temporal misery and eternal ruin.<sup>2</sup>

C. The Law of the Mind (7:23) and the Law of the  
Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus (8:2)

In 7:23 Paul showed another law in his members warring against the law of his mind. He had further said in chapter 7 that while he was doing wrong there was not the desire to do it. He consented that the law (Mosaic) was good. He delighted in the law of God after the inward man. This was the law in his mind. Dodd pictured Paul speaking in this fashion: "I want to do right, but the wrong is all I can manage; I cordially agree with God's law, so far as my inner self is concerned."<sup>3</sup> So, this law of the mind was a general consent to the law of God. It was "the standard or rule set up in harmony with the law of God."

Paul said in chapter 7 "I want to do God's will." In 8:2 he has found the deliverance he needed to do God's will. He said "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death." This was the reason why Paul said there was no condemnation. "The principle of authority exercised by the Holy Spirit which bestows life and rests 'in Christ Jesus' made me free."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Alford, op. cit., p. 384.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 386.

<sup>3</sup>C. H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, p. 114.

<sup>4</sup>Robertson, op. cit., p. 372.

Nicoll had the following comment to make:

There is no condemnation, for all ground for it has been removed. It is subjection to the law of sin and death which involves condemnation; emancipation from it leaves no place for condemnation. The spirit which brings to the believer the life which is in Christ Jesus brings with it also the Divine law for the believer's life; but it is now, as Paul says in Galatians 3:21, not an impotent law written on tables of stone, and hence righteousness comes by it.<sup>1</sup>

In Romans, besides Paul's lengthy discussion of the Mosaic Law, he has referred to five other laws. These he referred to in general sense or as general principles.

1. Concerning the law of faith, Paul said it was a principle in harmony with the law of God. The promise of righteousness came by faith and any one who attained to it, whether under the Mosaic law or any other, must receive it by faith.

2. The law in Paul's members, was the principle set up as an assistance to the law of sin. It waged war with the law of the mind and brought Paul into captivity to the law of sin.

3. The law of sin was the principle of resistance against the law of God. It held Paul captive and brought him misery and death.

4. To Paul, the law of the mind was his consent to the value of God's law and his desire to conform to God's will. It was the standard or rule set up in harmony with the law of God.

5. Through Jesus Christ, came another authority. This authority brought deliverance from the authority held over Paul by the law of sin. It freed Paul from death and condemnation.

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<sup>1</sup>Nicoll, op. cit., p. 644.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION



## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### A. Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine how Paul used the word "law" and what he taught about "law" in the book of Romans.

The brief study of certain features of Paul's life and a look into the introduction to Romans aided in determining Paul's ability to speak to the subject. He was, himself, a Jew and had been converted to Christianity. He had traveled extensively and had met the problem of the law, in relation to the Jew and Gentile, in many places. He had spoken and written to the point. It is many times evident that Paul knew at least a portion of the people in Rome and probably realized the possibility of a problem in a mixed group of Jews and Gentiles. These facts all point to Paul's ability and authority as he discussed "law" in Romans.

The word study has shown that "law" was a matter of much importance as Paul wrote to the Romans. The study of the Greek article has been of great assistance in determining Paul's use of the word "law." The article has pointed to some definite law. The non-use of the article in general, denotes character. This has not meant that all the understanding of his use of the word "law" came from the study of the use and non-use of the article. It can be

seen from the passages that Paul used the word "law" extensively with and without the article.

The following is a summary of Paul's use of the word "law" in Romans:

Paul used the word "law" under two general headings. He spoke of the "law of Moses" and he spoke of "law" in a general sense. These "laws" pointed out certain principles. Paul said, whether a man had the written "Law of God" or the unwritten "law," he would be judged for his sin. The Gentiles were guilty because they failed to glorify God in what knowledge they had of Him. The Jews were guilty because they transgressed the written "Law of God." Furthermore, the works of "law" are not the means of obtaining righteousness. The function of the "law" was to uncover sin. God provided a righteousness that was apart from "the law." Paul said that this provision applied to all men. Faith was the means. There was sin in the world even before the "law of Moses." Paul said death reigned from Adam to Moses. When the "law" came it showed sin for what it really was. Those who accepted the righteousness of God by faith, are no longer under the dominion of sin and have no further obligation to sin.

Christ has made possible, through His death, the chance for all men to die to the "law." This does not mean that the "law" was sin or sinful. Paul said he received his knowledge of sin through the "law." The "law" was holy and spiritual and Paul, by his desire to obey, consented to the fact that it was good. This consent or desire to do God's will, Paul called the "law of his mind." Paul said that there was a "law in his members" that warred against his wishes

to obey God. This "law" also brought him into captivity to the "law of sin." The "law of sin" was the general principle of opposition to the "law of God." The "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" gave freedom from the "law of sin and death." Israel aimed after the righteousness of God but missed the mark. They sought it not by faith but by works. Had the Jews sought righteousness by faith, they would have been prepared for what the "law" was leading to. Christ was the end of the "law."

Paul concluded his use of the word "law" with a very practical exhortation. "Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor has fulfilled the law. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law."

#### B. Conclusions

The conclusions as a result of this study are as follows:

1. Paul's main use of "law" in Romans was the Mosaic Law. He did speak of other laws as general principles.
2. Paul taught that both Jews and Gentiles had a knowledge of the will of God. The Jews had it written on tablets of stone and the Gentiles showed the works of the law written on their hearts.
3. Paul taught that righteousness comes not by the possession of the law or performing the works thereof. There is a general rule which applies to all. Righteousness comes by faith in Jesus Christ.
4. Paul said that there was value in a proper perspective of the law. The law makes one aware of his transgressions and points him to Christ as the means of righteousness.



5. To the Jew or any other who feels that he has need of some evidence of his salvation, Paul has left a very practical answer. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law.

### C. Suggestions for further Study

This study has not claimed to be exhaustive. Therefore, some suggestions are offered for further study:

1. Romans is only one of the many letters Paul wrote. Therefore, it is highly probable that a study of "law" in his other letters would bring to light and focus even more clearly what he had to say.

2. Paul has spoken very extensively of "law" in relationship to grace. This suggests the need for a larger study to include the relationship between law and grace.

3. Paul used many words in connection with "law" that warrant some further study. Some of these words are faith, flesh, members, carnal, righteousness, and sin.

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## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX A

## I. A List of the Passages Studied in Romans.

Chapter

2:12-16, 17-29.

3:19-20, 21, 27-28, 31.

4:13-16

5:13, 20.

6:14, 15.

7:1-6, 7-25.

8:2-7.

9:4, 30-32.

10:4-5.

15:8-10.

II. A Chapter and Verse Listing of the Use of the Word "Law" in  
Romans (Parenthesis represents the number of times used)Chapter

2:12(4), 13(2), 14(4), 15, 17, 18, 20, 23(2), 25(2), 26, 27(2).

3:19(2), 20(2), 21(2), 27(2), 28, 31(2).

4:13, 14, 15(2), 16.

5:13(2), 20.

6:14, 15.

7:1(2), 2(2), 3, 4, 5, 6, 7(3), 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 21, 22,  
23(3), 25(2).

8:2(2), 3, 4, 7.

9:4, 31(2).

10:4, 5.

13:8, 10.

### III. A Categorical Listing of the Ways Paul Used "Law"

#### Mosaic Law

2:12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 26, 27; 3:19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 31; 4:13, 14, 15, 16; 5:13, 20; 6:14, 15; 7:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 22, 25; 8:3, 4, 7; 9:4, 31; 10:4, 5; 13:8, 10.

#### Law of Faith

3:27.

#### Law in the Members

7:21, 23.

#### Law of the Mind

7:23.

#### Law of Sin

7:23, 25; 8:2.

#### Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus

8:2.

## APPENDIX B

A Chapter and Verse Listing of the Use and Non-use of the  
Greek Article

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Without the Article</u>	<u>With the Article</u>
	2:12a, b, c, d, 13a, b 14a, c, d, 17, 23a, 25, 27b.	14b, 15, 18, 20, 23b 26, 27a.
	3:19, 21a, 27, 38, 31.	20, 21b.
	4:13, 14, 15b.	15a, 16.
	5:13, 20.	
	6:14, 15.	
	7:1a, 2a, 7b, 8, 9, 23a, 25.	1b, 2b, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7a, c 12, 14, 16, 21, 22, 23b, c.
	8:	2, 3, 4, 7.
	9:31.	4.
	10:4, 5.	
	13:4, 5.	