

Do you keep and obey all or part of the Mosaic Law?

1. Study Romans 7:1-13 and Mark 7:1-12. What does the term “Law” mean? What does the Law encompass?

The term “Law” had two potential meanings within the New Testament. The Mosaic Law that the apostle Paul refers to in Romans 7:1-13 is an extensive set of regulations that came directly from God, which is the unique feature of this law. Through Moses, God taught what sin was and how to atone for it to satisfy His judicial process for sin, because the Israelites were to be a holy people set apart from pagan idolatry and immorality. The 613 commands can be viewed as having three sections: a) commandments that refer to moral laws, b) judgments that refer to social laws, and c) ordinances that refer to the Tabernacle and worship laws.

Jewish law, as described in Mark 7:1-12, was the Law of Moses plus additional stipulations made by Jewish religious authorities over time. By the first century, at least 1500 stipulations and rules were added that Jewish society had to abide by to be considered righteous. These additions were intended to prevent one from sinning or in Mark 7, avoid an aspect of the Mosaic Law. It is this “law” that Jesus Christ was condemning, because Jewish religious authorities were demanding obedience to human traditions instead of obedience to God’s word.

2. In Romans 7:1-13, list the verses / phrases associated with the “Law.” How do you reconcile the contradictions? How should Christians view the Law?

(v.1) ..., that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?

(v.4) ..., you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead,...

(v.5) For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

(v.6) But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound,...

(v.7) ...Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law:

(v.12) So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

The Mosaic Law was not sin, instead the Law taught man what sin was, human desires and behavior that was innately unbecoming for holiness. When Christ died to atone for man's sins, the sacrifice met God's judicial price for sin. With past, present, and future sins atoned for, Believers were no longer obligated to live by the Mosaic Law's prescribed method to atone for their sins.

3. What is the purpose of the Law? Was it meant for salvation? How is this reconciled with Matt 5:17-18?

Do not presume that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished! (Matt 5:17-18)

Before the Mosaic Covenant was made with the people of Jacob (Israel) after they were freed from Egyptian slavery, the Israelites were given a choice, “if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation“ (Ex 19:5).

Do you keep and obey all or part of the Mosaic Law? (page 2)

The people agreed so the Law of Moses was introduced and it had two purposes:

1) the Law taught holiness by identifying sin which by its standard, deterred and condemned. The Law was, in essence, God's code of conduct, and if one had a genuine faith in God and abided His word, they would be His people (Ex 19:4-6).

2) The Law provided the means by which one may acceptably atone their sins. This ultimately revealed that man's sinful nature could never, on his own effort, comply with God's standard. Each sin had to be atoned for over and over with each occurrence. With Christ, God provided the means for a single everlasting atonement for the complete forgiveness of sin. Jesus Christ brought a new perspective, in lieu of life by the Law, a new life by the Spirit.

TIP: When reading the Epistles, study one paragraph at a time!

The key to the proper interpretation of the Epistles, within context, is to identify the church problems(s) that Paul is responding to. However, Paul's letter to the Christian church at Rome is one of the few that is not written in response to a problem in the church. Romans is a special letter; of all the Epistles, it is most like a theological paper with elaborate and systematic discussion on Christian doctrine. It is worth noting that Paul's audience is the congregation of Gentile Christians who did not wholeheartedly accept their minority Jewish Christian members. His letter, with apostolic authority, presents the basic system of salvation and explains the relationship of Jews and Gentiles in God's plan. Romans, of the literary genre **logic**, is well known for its doctrinal clarity on sin, salvation, grace, faith, righteousness, justification, sanctification, redemption, death, and resurrection. If you are interested in Christian doctrine, this is the one book to study!

"It is the first business of an interpreter to let his author say what he does say, instead of attributing to him what we think he ought to say" John Calvin (1509-1564)

Do you keep and obey all or part of the Mosaic Law?

1. Study Romans 7:1-13 and Mark 7:1-12. What does the term "Law" mean? What does the Law encompass?

2. In Romans 7:1-13, list the verses / phrases associated with the "Law." How do you reconcile the contradictions? How should Christians view the Law?

3. What is the purpose of the Law? Was it meant for salvation? How is this reconciled with Matt 5:17-18?

Do not presume that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished! (Matt 5:17-18)