

# BIBLE & BAGEL

## Romans – Our Common Faith

9 January 2016

Isaiah 40:8 says “The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.” NKJV The Word that Isaiah refers to here is the Torah and it says that the Torah stands forever. Many people interpret Romans 7 to say that the “Law” or Torah is dead because Apostle Paul uses the analogy of marriage and a woman whose husband dies. Is the Torah really dead? If not how do we understand this scripture? Read on...

### ***Romans 7:1-6***

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

Apostle Paul addresses a specific group of people here; those who know the law meaning they were either Jews or Gentiles who had knowledge of Torah, there were also many Gentile converts to Judaism in the early church<sup>1</sup>. To explain the idea of justification by faith and not by trying to keep the legal requirements of the Torah, he uses the analogy of marriage and says that a woman is bound by the Torah to one man while she is married to him. Once their husband dies the woman is no longer bound to him and is free to remarry. If she had a relationship with another man while her husband was alive she would have been considered an adulteress but once her husband was dead she was free. Likewise we have been freed from the law when we died with Christ but now we are free to serve the Lord with our new life, not by keeping the requirements of the Torah.

This does not mean that Torah is dead as some would interpret it, it cannot be because it would conflict with Isaiah 40:8 and Matthew 5:17 – 18 and Matthew 24:35. When Yeshua said His words would last forever he was not referring to the New Testament, His audience would not have understood since there was no New Testament yet, he was referring to the Torah. So what the Apostle was talking about here is that we have been free from condemnation by the Torah since Yeshua took our condemnation for us. When we “die” with Messiah as Apostle Paul mentioned in the previous chapter and die to our own selfish desires we are no longer under the condemnation of the Torah. We therefore can serve God with the new life in Messiah. Without Messiah we were hopelessly trying to justify ourselves to God and were never able to serve Him fully because we were all under condemnation but by His death Yeshua made it possible for us to have a new life and we can please God because our sins have been forgiven.



**Romans 7:7-12**

***7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."\* 8 But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. 9 I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. 11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. 12 Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. NKJV***

Once more we see this form of teaching that Apostle Paul uses of asking a question and answering it immediately. He asks if the Torah is sinful or causes one to sin and his answer is a definite no! Torah shows us what sin is and he uses the example of covetousness, one would not have known what it is unless the Torah had defined it. Our sinful nature however desires for us to sin. Without the Torah he felt that he was alive, ignorant of sin, but with the Torah he died because he knew the condemnation he was under by breaking Torah. The sinful nature is deceitful and leads us to death. His conclusion is that the Torah is Holy, just and good.

Our sinful nature always draws us to that which is against the will of God because it is self-serving and God's commands always calls for us to die to our selves. The Torah has been given to help us know what God's will is and guide us in our lives but trying to keep these in our strength will fail and only by faith in Messiah who died for us and met the requirement of the law i.e. paying the price for sin which is death can we truly be free not from the Torah but from the condemnation that those who have not placed their faith in Messiah face. Praise God that we no longer have to strive to keep the Torah.

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<sup>i</sup> Acts 13:43

