
Commentary on Romans 8:1–13

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23 March 2019

1 So now there is no condemnation for those in the Anointed Yeshua,

Those who are in Yeshua the Anointed are those who are faithful to him, and the Law which he created for his people to follow. The major false teaching today is that it is necessary merely to believe or “have faith” to be in Messiah and to be “saved”.

2 because the Law of the Spirit of life in the Anointed Yeshua has freed you from the norm of sin and death.

We are freed from rebellion (sin) against God’s Law, Torah, so that now we no longer rebel against it, but keep it, and find in it life through the Spirit. Note that it is a matter of rebellion versus faithfulness to God and his Law, and not a matter of imperfectly keeping Torah versus complete licentiousness.

Modern false doctrine is essentially that God has condoned our rebellion against his Law, and is now allowing us to disregard it by following the, “Holy Spirit in our heart.” It should be needless to say that it is not the Holy Spirit who leads people to disobey the Law of the Almighty.

3 Because the inability of the Law is in that it had been weakened through the flesh.

The Law is spiritual (Romans 7:14), and keeping it is only possible in the Spirit. The sinful nature of the flesh, however, results in the inability, that is, the lack of desire, to keep the Law. The only way to keep the Law is in the Spirit. The Spirit certainly does not lead to not keeping the Law!

But the Almighty, having sent his own Son, in the form of sinful flesh, even as a sin offering,

“Sin offering.” Greek: “καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας” (even for a sin offering. Lit.: even for sin). Yeshua was sent as a sin offering to condemn sin in the flesh which is disobedience to Yahweh’s Torah instructions (1 John 3:4). The major false doctrine today is that the Almighty’s sin offering of his Son results in us now being given licence to sin by disregarding his Law. That doctrine, of course, makes no sense in any way.

has judged against sin in the flesh, 4 so that the correction of the Law

“Correction of the Law.” Greek: “τὸ δικάσιμα τοῦ νόμου”. In archaic English, you could explain the meaning of ‘δικαίωμα’ as ‘justicing’; i.e., as having justice served or executed.

might be fulfilled in us,

The correction of the Law is “fulfilled in us” through the sin offering of Yeshua; i.e., so that we ourselves do not have to pay the just penalty for our sins, but through the loving kindness of the Almighty, we are able to have that required penalty paid for us in order *that we might live in faithfulness to Yeshua*, who paid the penalty in our stead. The living in faithfulness is what Paul meant when he used the word ‘fulfilled’ here.

who do not walk according to the sin nature but according to the Spirit.

We who are saved by Yeshua’s sacrifice walk in the Spirit of obedience to Torah, because the Torah is spiritual (Romans 7:14). We have repented from the fleshly sin nature of disobedience to Torah under the tutelage or guidance of the Holy Spirit within us.

5 Because those who are according to the sin nature set their minds on the things of the sin nature,

The fleshly sin nature is the natural state of human beings. Only repentance in Messiah Yeshua can result in this nature being overcome over a period of time so that we may follow ever more closely the precepts he has set down for living.

but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 Because the fleshly thinking leads to death,

Unrepentant human beings who continue to follow the fleshly sin nature, will die (the second death). Sin is disobeying, disregarding, or rejecting Torah (1 John 3:4). A common way of rejecting Torah is by saying, in effect, “It doesn’t apply to me.”

but the thinking set on the Spirit leads to life and peace, 7 because the sinful thinking is hostile toward the Almighty,

The sinful nature is hostile to God and his Law, to which it cannot submit.

because it is not subjected to the Law of the Almighty, nor indeed is able to be.

Without repentance and without the concomitant faithfulness to Yeshua through the Spirit, it is absolutely impossible for sinful human nature to submit itself to the Law of the Almighty. The evidence for this is seen all around us today.

8 So those who are controlled by the sinful nature cannot please the Almighty.

Sinners do not please God. While it is true that God loved us even while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8) enough to send his own Son to die, it is not true that God will not execute and punish those who continue to sin and fail to repent. God also does not listen to sinners (John 9:31), and his back is to them, because God hates sin (Exodus 20:5, 34:7; Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 5:9; Psalms 97:10, 104:35; Proverbs 8:13; Isaiah 61:8; Amos 5:15; Zechariah 8:17), which is disobedience to his Torah instructions (1 John 3:4).

9 However, you are not controlled by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of the Almighty dwells in you.

We are guided or controlled (not in the sense of “forced”) by the Holy Spirit, and the evidence of this is the keeping of that which is Spiritual, Torah (Romans 7:14). Failure to keep Torah (which is to say, failure to sincerely attempt to keep it—because the false doctrine here is perfectionism) is the sign that a person is not guided by the Holy Spirit. By their fruits ye shall know them. Of course, the Spirit does lead by degrees, so that for example, a person may be on their way to keeping (attempting to keep) the whole of God’s Law (for example, by keeping the Sabbath day each week), but may not have been led yet into the full truth of God’s Law. This is why it is not up to us to judge the hearts of others, as the Almighty will draw those whom he will.

But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he does not belong to him. 10
When the Anointed is in you, though the body is under a death sentence because of sin, yet the spirit is given life through righteousness.

“Righteousness.” The converse of justice. There is no righteousness except in relation to God’s Law.

11 But when the Spirit of him who raised Yeshua from the dead dwells in you, he who raised the Anointed Yeshua from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies

“To your mortal bodies.” Resurrection of the body. The false doctrine is disembodied, “spiritual” resurrection to an eternity in “heaven”.

through his Spirit who dwells in you. 12 So then, brothers, we are under obligation, not to the sinful nature, to live according to the sinful nature, 13 because if you are living according to the sinful nature, you must die, but if, by the Spirit, you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

The second death does not have any power over those who repent towards Messiah in the Spirit, by being faithful towards Him and His Law. This is not a counsel of perfectionism. (Which is a false teaching that the Law must be kept perfectly or not at all—you only have to say it out loud to see how ridiculous that teaching is! Imagine a child saying this to his parents.)

Repenting from sin means turning from disobedience towards obedience. Torah and the rest of Scripture contains the instructions towards which we owe our obedience. We do not search our deceitful heart and follow whatever we find there, dressing it up as, “being led by the Spirit.”