

LECTURE ON ROMANS CHAPTER 7

Will the Real Man of Roman's 7 Please Stand Up!

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Paul Deeply Concerned For Converts and Jews	2
His ardent affection for his converts is expressed in Philippians 4:1:	2
Romans Reflects His Efforts For the Jews.....	2
Romans Chapter Seven Has Been Analyzed Ever Since It was Written	3
So who is this person, this man? Who is the "I" of Romans 7?.....	3
Will the Real Man of Romans 7 Please Stand Up!.....	3
Two Main Views.....	3
1—Unregenerate, Unconverted Man	3
2—Regenerated, Converted Man.....	4
First View, Unregenerate, Unconverted Man, Poses Problems.....	4
Second View, Regenerated, Converted Man, Poses Problems.....	4
There is a third view.....	6
What do you think it is? This is exciting!!!!!!	6
The Third Option Stands Up to Scrutiny	6
Paul's World View—All Humans in One of Three Groups	6
Without the Law.....	6
Under the Law	7
Under the Law to Christ (Grace).....	7
There is One Question Though—The Relationship of 7:24 to 7:25.....	7
Is 7:24 Proof That Paul is Writing of His Own Christian Experience?	7
Or Is 7:24 Parenthetical Praise Which Interrupts His Train of Thought to Which He Returns	7
Immediately? And Can we Know Which is Correct?.....	7
Examination of Verse 25—I myself, Ego Autos.....	9
READ-- Let us begin with the subject of the sentence, the two words <i>I myself</i>	9
Romans 7:25 Interlinear Eberhard Nestle 1904 Greek text	9
Romans 7:25 Interlinear Greek Scriveners Textus Receptus 1894 (Basis of KJV / AV translation).9	9
Examination of Verse 25—So Then, Ara Oun	11
Romans 7:25 interlinear Eberhard Nestle 1904 Greek Text.....	12
Romans 7:25 Interlinear Greek Scriveners Textus Receptus 1894 (Basis of KJV / AV translation)12	12
A faithful translation of this last part of verse 25 would look like this:.....	14
Moffatt's translation of NT indicates the sense of ego autos, and Ara oun like this.....	14
Other Bible Uses of 'Oun'	16
Conclusion	17
How Did Ellen White Use Romans 7	17
Arminius Response to Question About Romans 7.....	18
Ellen White's View Similar To Arminius.....	18
More Ellen White Statements :	18
Conclusion	19
Footnotes.....	21

Bibliography	21
Appendix A.....	22
Assorted Influential Commentaries That Support the Traditional SDA Position.....	22
Westcott-Hort Interlinear Greek of Romans 7:24 and 25.....	22
Pulpit Commentary Romans 7:25.....	22
Clarke’s Commentary	23
Professor J. A. Beet on Romans 7:7-25	25
Here is an interesting commentary from the Expositor’s Greek Testament-Nicoll.....	27
Barnes Notes on the Bible -- Romans 7:25.....	27
Seventh-day Adventist Commentary on Romans 7:25.....	28
GREEK TEXT-Scrivener’s Textus Receptus 1894 (Basis of KJV / AV translation)	29

SLIDE 2

Introduction

READ--We have seen that one of the favorite texts used by Ellen White and her contemporaries in their discussion of the nature of Christ and the closely related saving work of Christ was

SLIDE 2A Romans 8:3:“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*.”

READ--They understood “in the likeness of sinful flesh" to mean that Christ came to this earth in the nature of fallen man. They understood "condemned sin in the flesh" to mean that Christ met the enemy and overcame him in his own stronghold, the sinful flesh of man. By this means He made clear to all that man in sinful flesh can live without sinning, through the power of God.

They therefore understood Romans 7 in the light of these two great realities. Since Calvinists and many Adventist authors and theologians offer an altogether different interpretation of Romans 7, I pray that the following lecture will help us determine the real man of Romans Chapter 7.

SLIDE 3

Paul Deeply Concerned For Converts and Jews

READ--The apostle Paul was involved. He was concerned. He cared so deeply about the people for whom he labored, and identified himself so completely with their interests, that he could write:

SLIDE 3A

“If meat maketh my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth.” 1 Corinthians 8:13

SLIDE 3B

His ardent affection for his converts is expressed in Philippians 4:1:

“Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.”

READ--His sensitive nature was hurt to its depths by a temporary estrangement from the Corinthians, whom he had brought to Christ, and when the misunderstandings between them were cleared away, his joy knew no bounds. (See II Corinthians 7).

SLIDE 3C

Romans Reflects His Efforts For the Jews

READ--But his heaviest heart burden was for the Jews, Israel, the chosen people, the tree of God's own planting. As often as he went forth to preach to the Gentiles, so often he returned to the Jews, hoping, praying, yearning for their salvation.

From Slide 3C--“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.” Romans 9:1-3

READ--The book of Romans, in which these emotional words were written, reflects Paul's earnest efforts on the Jews' behalf. In its seventh chapter we find a classic example of the sympathy, the empathy, the devotion to the good of the Jewish people that is expressed in I Corinthians 9:20, 22:

From slide 3C--“Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law . . . I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” 1 Corinthians 9:20,22

SLIDE 4 HAVE SOMEONE READ VERSES 7-25

Romans Chapter Seven Has Been Analyzed Ever Since It was Written

READ--This seventh chapter of Romans has often been analyzed and analyzed and analyzed by Christian writers since it was first written by Paul. In it we see a graphic picture of a man in difficulty, a man in distress, a man who seems to be doomed to failure and defeat in his spiritual life. He appears to be caught up in a tension between his own sinful tendencies and desires, and the just requirements of God's holy law. The chapter speaks in moving terms of temptations resisted but not overcome, of goals not reached, of purposes unfulfilled, of ideals held but not attained, of a victory that is longed for but not gained, of a conflict that is sore and that uniformly ends in defeat.

SLIDE 5

**So who is this person, this man? Who is the "I" of Romans 7?
Will the Real Man of Romans 7 Please Stand Up!**

READ—Why am I doing this? Because profound theological implications are involved in our conclusion. Our view of the very nature of salvation itself can depend on our answer to this question. Our church is in trouble and has taken a view of these texts that I believe have been disastrous to our high calling. This is the only way that I know how to do something about it, to influence those within my sphere of influence, because how we believe about these texts will in large part determine our preparedness for what is right upon us now.

The chapter is clearly a case study, set before us in such specific detail that we sense that it is intended to be definitive — but of what? Who is this man of Romans 7 who continually yearns for what he cannot achieve, and lives in an unbroken cycle of frustration and defeat?

SLIDE 5A

Two Main Views

READ--Two main suggestions have been offered by Christian writers through the centuries:

SLIDE 5B

1—Unregenerate, Unconverted Man

READ--The man of Romans 7 is the unregenerate, unconverted man, whose heart is naturally in rebellion against God and His holy law. Since we have no reason to believe that Paul was ever in this

rebellious condition, it is proposed that Paul was simply identifying himself with the rebellious, unregenerate man for purposes of communication, just as preachers often do now. (or)

SLIDE 5C

2—Regenerated, Converted Man

READ--The man of Romans 7 is Paul himself in his regenerate, converted experience, after he has come to know Christ. It therefore proves that victory over temptation and sin are not available to Christians in this life. If Paul could not stop sinning, even through the power of Christ, it is certain that no one else can stop sinning. This is the dominant view in Adventism today. [(Talked years ago with ex-conference president and he said many conservative scholars believe it refers to converted Christian. I asked if those conservative theologians believed in the Sabbath, the state of the dead as we do, the sanctuary message, etc. Of course they don't but I could not defend what I thought Romans 7 was referring to so I checked it out and this lecture is the result.]

Read--The problem that we encounter as we consider these two alternatives is that neither is easy to defend. Neither bears up very well under investigation.

SLIDE 6

First View, Unregenerate, Unconverted Man, Poses Problems

Read--If we prefer the first option, that the man of Romans 7 is the unregenerate, unconverted, rebellious sinner, we have difficulty answering questions like these:

SLIDE 6A

Do unregenerate sinners confess that God's law is holy, just, and good (verse 12)?

Do such men acknowledge that the law is spiritual, but "I am carnal" (verse 14)?

Do unregenerate men plead that it is not by themselves that the evil is done (verse 17)?

Do unregenerate men will to do good (verse 18)?

Do unregenerate men say, "The good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do" (verse 19)?

Do unregenerate men say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (verse 22)?

END SLIDE 6

READ: It would be difficult to answer yes to any of these questions.

In our human experience we do not hear unregenerate men praising God's holy law. They are more likely to curse it.

Neither do they admit that God's law is spiritual but they are carnal. They tend to be defensive about their condition.

They do not hate the evil that they do; they rather love it.

They do not will to do good; they will to do evil.

And they certainly do not "delight in the law of God after the inward man." They hate the law, they feel condemned by it, and they fear it.

READ--Those of us who have lived in an unregenerate condition realize that Paul's word picture would not correctly describe our experience.

SLIDE 7

Second View, Regenerated, Converted Man, Poses Problems

READ--So, finding it difficult to defend the first option, that the man of Romans 7 is the unconverted, unregenerate man who lives in rebellion against God, we turn to consider the second that the man of Romans 7 is the converted, regenerate Christian man who finds that although he is in Christ he still cannot stop sinning.

We quickly encounter problems. How shall we answer questions like these?

SLIDE 7A

Why would Paul say, "I am carnal" (verse 14) and in the same discussion say, "the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Romans 8:7)? There were no chapter divisions in this letter.

Why would Paul say, "I am sold under sin" (verse 14) and in the same discussion say, "being then made free from sin" (Romans 6:18)?

Why would Paul say that he found it impossible to stop doing the evil that he hated (verses 15-23) and in the same discussion write:

"that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Romans 8:4)?

END SLIDE 7A

READ--Why would Paul describe himself as being "in captivity to the law of sin" (verse 23) and in the same discussion write:

"but now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness" (Romans 6:22)? Why?? Why is this view so widely accepted in the church today? Our famous authors and theologians all espouse this view. And so do the evangelicals. I think they base their theology on their own experience rather than the Bible and SOP.

READ--And translating the matter from abstract discussion to real life, are we to believe that Paul wanted to quit swearing, but couldn't;

that he wanted to quit stealing, but couldn't;

that he wanted to quit committing adultery, but couldn't?

Or even that he wanted to quit imagining himself doing these things, but couldn't?

How then could he write in II Corinthians 10:5:

"Casting down imaginations . . . and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ?"

READ--If we widen the context to include all of Paul's writings, we are impressed by the absence of defeatism and we note the victory over sin that pervades them.

READ--Space limitations preclude the listing here of all of Paul's victory texts, but here is a representative sampling:

END READ

SLIDE 8

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Philippians 4:15"

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Corinthians 5:17

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me". . . . Galatians 2:20

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us". Ephesians 3:20

“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Ephesians 4:23, 24

END SLIDE 8

(See also I Corinthians 10:13; II Corinthians 10:4, 5; Galatians 5:16, 20-25; Ephesians 2:1-6; Ephesians 5:25, 27; Ephesians 6:10-17; Philippians 2:13, etc.)

READ--So we find that the second view, that the man of Romans 7 is the converted, regenerate Christian, i.e., Paul himself, is also difficult to defend. But Is there nothing else?

READ--Fortunately, there is. We are not limited to just these two choices. There is a third choice and it has been subscribed to by such reformation theologians as Arminius and Wesley, and by such earlier witnesses as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Theodoret, Cyril of Alexandria, Macarius, John of Damascus, Theophylact, Ambrose, Jerome, Clement of Alexandria, Vigilius, Procopius of Gaza, Bernard of Clairveaux, Leo the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, and the early Augustine before he came up with a theory to match his life experience.¹

END READ

SLIDE 9

There is a third view.

What do you think it is? This is exciting!!!!!!

This third view is strongly supported by Paul's own words in the original Greek.

Can you tell I am trying to build this up to a big climax!!

SLIDE 9A

What is the third view? That the man of Romans 7 is neither the unregenerate rebel against God, nor yet the converted, regenerate Christian, but is the man "under law," the Jew who wants to do God's will but does not accept Christ;

Just such a man as Paul was before his experience on the Damascus road. Paul can write about this man as "I" with precise accuracy, because he is describing such an experience as he himself had before he knew Christ.

READ--*Although it does not describe his present experience*, he understands and identifies himself with this man and his predicament because he had experienced it and also:

I Corinthians 9:20:

“And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under law, that I might gain them that are under the law.”

SLIDE 10

The Third Option Stands Up to Scrutiny

READ--We find this third position can be defended and is much less vulnerable than the other two. We have no trouble with either the characterization or the description. Any man, we judge, who would try to do God's will without a relationship with Christ would be likely to have such an experience as Paul sets forth. We do not find ourselves struggling to harmonize apparent discrepancies or contradictions in either the immediate context of Romans or the larger context of Paul's other writings.

SLIDE 11

Paul's World View—All Humans in One of Three Groups

SLIDE 11A

Without the Law

Under the Law

Under the Law to Christ (Grace)

END SLIDE 11A

READ--In Paul's world view all human beings were divided into three groups: those *without law*, those *under law*, and those *under grace*, (also described as *under the law to Christ*.) (Compare I Corinthians 9:20, 21 with Romans 6:15, Galatians 4:4, 5, and Galatians 5:18, etc.)

Those *without law* were whom? the pagan, unregenerate rebels against God; those *under law* were whom? the Jews who professed to be doing God's will while rejecting Christ; and those *under grace* were whom? those from either pagan or Jewish backgrounds who had accepted Christ. END READ

SLIDE 12

There is One Question Though—The Relationship of 7:24 to 7:25

READ —Would someone please read Romans 7:24-25. We do have one question, but it can be readily answered by an examination of Paul's words in the original language. ~~The question is this:~~

Paul's long and graphic description of the man who wants to do God's will but finds it impossible to succeed reaches its climax in Romans 7:24:

SLIDE 12A

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

In the first part of verse 25 there is a response, in answer to the question:

“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Then the last part of verse 25 presents a thought that calls for reflection:

“So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”

This is an easy and natural conclusion to the entire line of thought that has been presented. But our question is about its relation to the words just preceding:

“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

END SLIDE 12A

SLIDE 13

Is 7:24 Proof That Paul is Writing of His Own Christian Experience?

READ--Those who believe that the man of Romans 7 is the regenerate Christian see these words as their strongest evidence. They feel that proof is here provided that Paul is writing about his own experience as a Christian, able to serve God's law with his mind only and unable to stop sinning in his real life experience.

SLIDE 13A

Or Is 7:24 Parenthetical Praise Which Interrupts His Train of Thought to Which He Returns Immediately? And Can we Know Which is Correct?

Page 7 of 29 Romans 7

READ—What does parenthetical mean?? describes writing that uses or contains additional comments or notes added as parentheses. Something that acts as a pause or break in something and then the subject begins again.

Those who believe [And I am one of those] that the man of Romans 7 is the man who tries to do God's will while rejecting Christ see the words:

“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord”

as *parenthetical*, a spontaneous outburst of praise which interrupts Paul's line of thought, to which he returns immediately.

Is it possible to know which of these two understandings is correct? I repeated myself because it is important.

Yes. An examination of a few words in the Greek will answer our question beyond a shadow of doubt.

END READ

SLIDE 14

Examination of Verse 25—I myself, Ego Autos

This is the passage under consideration, the last part of verse 25:

SLIDE 14A

“So then with the mind **I myself** serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” KJV

READ-- Let us begin with the subject of the sentence, the two words *I myself*.

SLIDE 14B

Romans 7:25 Interlinear Eberhard Nestle 1904 Greek text

◀ Romans 7:25 ▶

Romans 7 Interlinear

5485 [e]	1161 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1223 [e]	2424 [e]	5547 [e]	3588 [e]	2962 [e]	1473 [e]	686 [e]	3767 [e]	846 [e]	1473 [e]
charis	de	tō	Theō	dia	Iēsou	Christou	tou	Kyriou	hēmōn	ara	oun	autos	egō
25 χάρις	[δὲ]	τῷ	Θεῷ	, διὰ	Ἰησοῦ	Χριστοῦ	τοῦ	Κυρίου	ἡμῶν	ἄρα	οὖν	, αὐτὸς	ἐγὼ ,
Thanks [be]	moreover	to	God	through	Jesus	Christ	the	Lord	of us	then	So	myself	I
N-NFS	Conj	Art-DMS	N-DMS	Prep	N-GMS	N-GMS	Art-GMS	N-GMS	PPro-G1P	Conj	Conj	PPro-NM3S	PPro-N1S

3588 [e]	3303 [e]	3563 [e]	1398 [e]	3551 [e]	2316 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	4561 [e]	3551 [e]	266 [e]
tō	men	noi	douleuō	nomō	Theou	tē	de	sarki	nomō	hamartias
τῷ	μὲν	νοῖ	δουλεύω	νόμῳ	Θεοῦ	; τῇ	δὲ	σαρκί	, νόμῳ	ἁμαρτίας .
with the	indeed	mind	serve	law	God's	-	but [with]	[the] flesh	[the] law	of sin
Art-DMS	Conj	N-DMS	V-PIA-1S	N-DMS	N-GMS	Art-DFS	Conj	N-DFS	N-DMS	N-GFS

SLIDE 14C TO EXPAND EGO AUTOS

SLIDE 14D

Romans 7:25 Interlinear Greek Scriveners Textus Receptus 1894 (Basis of KJV / AV translation)

7:24	ΤΑΛΑΙΠΩΡΟΣ talaiporos G5005 a_Nom Sg m WEIGHT-CALLOUSed wretched	ΕΓΩ egō G1473 pp 1 Nom Sg I	ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ anthrōpos G444 n_Nom Sg m human	ΤΙς tis G5101 pi Nom Sg m ANY who?	ΜΕ me G3165 pp 1 Acc Sg ME	ΡΥΣΕΤΑΙ rusetai G4506 vi Fut midD 3 Sg SHALL-BE-resculNG	ΕΚ ek G1537 Prep OUT	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 L_Gen Sg n OF-THE	24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?
ΣΩΜΑΤΟΣ sōmatos G4983 n_Gen Sg n BODY	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 L_Gen Sg m OF-THE	ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ thanatos G2288 n_Gen Sg m DEATH	ΤΟΥΤΟΥ toutou G5127 pd Gen Sg m this						

7:25	ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΩ eucharistō G2168 vi Pres Act 1 Sg I-AM-thanking	Τῷ tō G3588 L_Dat Sg m to-THE	ΘΕῷ theō G2316 n_Dat Sg m God	ΔΙΑ dia G1223 Prep THRU through	ΙΗΣΟΥ Iēsou G2424 n_Gen Sg m JESUS	ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ christou G5547 n_Gen Sg m ANointed Christ	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 L_Gen Sg m THE	ΚΥΡΙΟΥ kuriou G2962 n_Gen Sg m Master Lord	ἩΜῶν hēmōn G2257 pp 1 Gen Pl OF-US	25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.
Ἄρα ara G686 Part CONSEQUENTLY	οὖν oun G3787 Conj THEN	αὐτὸς autos G686 pp Nom Sg m SAME myself	ἐγὼ egō G1473 pp 1 Nom Sg I	τῷ tō G3588 L_Dat Sg m to-THE	ΜΕΝ men G3303 Part INDEED	ΝΟΙ noi G3563 n_Dat Sg m MIND	ΔΟΥΛΕΥΩ douleuō G1398 vi Pres Act 1 Sg AM-SLAVING	ΝΟΜΩ nomō G266 n_Dat Sg m to-LAW		
ΘΕΟΥ theou G2316 n_Gen Sg m OF-God	τῇ tē G3588 L_Dat Sg f to-THE	ΔΕ de G1161 Conj YET	σαρκί sarki G4561 n_Dat Sg f FLESH	νόμῳ nomō G3551 n_Dat Sg m to-LAW	ἁμαρτίας hamartias G266 n_Gen Sg f OF-missing of-sin					

SLIDE 14E GROWS 'I MYSELF'

READ --These two words fall a bit short of expressing the full meaning of the words from which they are translated. The two Greek words are *ego autos*. The first word, *ego*, means simply I. But what about *autos*? It has considerably more meaning than the English *self*. **Let us observe the definitions given in several Greek-English lexicons:**

SLIDE 15

Self: intensive, setting the word it modifies off from everything else, emphasizing and contrasting. — Gingrich.

Self, as used to distinguish a person or thing from or contrast it with another. — Thayer.

Of oneself, by oneself, alone. — Lidell and Scott.
[2. of oneself, of one's own accord 3. by oneself or itself, alone,]

Of oneself, of one's own motion, alone. — Greenfield.

END SLIDE 15

READ --*Ego autos*, then, would never be used to describe a joint effort or action, or a cooperative relationship between two persons. It means, emphatically, *I alone*. Can you see that????

SLIDE 16

In the context of Romans 7 it means *I without Christ*. Paul is saying:

"I alone, without Christ, with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

READ--*This harmonizes perfectly with the view that in the entire chapter he is describing the experience of the man who is not a rebel against God, but is trying to do God's will while rejecting Christ.*

SLIDE 16A

Arndt and Gingrich, in a definition that uses Romans 7:25 for an example, give as the true meaning in this context, of *ego autos*:

"Thrown on my own resources, I can only serve the law of God as a slave, with my mind.
“(Emphasis mine)

SLIDE 17

Autos is a word that has been carried over into the English language in a number of ways that reflect its true meaning:

SLIDE 17A

Automobile	-----	a self propelled vehicle.
Automatic	-----	a self acting device.
Auto-suggestion	-----	self hypnosis.
Autonomy	-----	self government.
Autograph	-----	a self writing.
Autobiography	-----	a self written life history.
Autopsy	-----	a seeing for oneself.

END SLIDE 17A

SLIDE 18

So the words *ego autos, I alone*, **would never be used** to describe the experience that is pictured in such passages as:

Galatians 2:20: Christ liveth in Me;

Philippians 4:13: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me;

Ephesians 4:23: The power that worketh in us;

Romans 8:10: His spirit that dwelleth in you.

END SLIDE 18

READ--These experiential Pauline expressions are all the precise opposites of *ego autos* in that they speak of the resources of Christ which are made available to the believer. They speak of togetherness, the united life and effort of the Christian with Christ. Whereas *ego autos* means *thrown on my own resources, I alone*. *ego autos* speaks of individual, solitary life and effort.

SLIDE 19 IS HIDDEN

~~The intensive reflexive meaning of *autos: the subject and no other*, is indicated in several scriptures where it is translated into the weaker English *self*.~~

~~David himself said. Mark 12:36~~

~~Jesus Himself drew near. Luke 24:15~~

~~Jesus Himself stood in the midst. Luke 24:36~~

~~The Father Himself loveth you. John 16:27~~

~~They themselves also allow. Acts 24:15~~

~~Judge in yourselves. I Corinthians 11:13~~

SLIDE 20

The action is always individual, as distinct from the actions or assistance of others; so when Paul says *ego autos* in Romans 7:25, his meaning is:

“*I, on my own resources, I without Christ, I alone*, with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”

READ--This is emphatically not the experience of the regenerate man, the Christian who does all things in the spiritual realm in and with and through the power of Christ.

I know I am taking a lot of time on this word analysis, but like in a court of law it is necessary if you are to make a correct judgment on the subject.

SLIDE 21

Examination of Verse 25—So Then, Ara Oun

“*So then* with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”

READ--We now turn to another expression in verse 25, the two words *so then*.

The first two words of the sentence in Greek are *ara oun*. **Again we establish quickly the meaning of the first word, *ara*, which is simply *therefore*, or *so then*. But what of the word *oun*?**

Unfortunately, the King James translators did not bother to translate it into English. This may be because the first major usage of this word is identical with that of *ara: therefore, or so then*. Apparently the translators felt that there was no need to write in English, *therefore therefore, or so then, so then, or even therefore so then*. One such word is enough. Makes sense, doesn't it???

[Have my interlinear to show]

SLIDE 22

But what of the Greek? Paul did use *both words*, as we may ascertain by looking at the verse in any Greek New Testament. I will show you one in a moment. Paul did not just say *ara*, he said *ara oun*.

Are we to suppose that Paul just forgot that he had already used *ara*, so added *oun* by mistake? Or that he actually meant to say *therefore therefore*, or *so then so then*? Neither of these suppositions seems likely. **What is the answer? The answer is exciting!**

SLIDE 23

Romans 7:25 interlinear Eberhard Nestle 1904 Greek Text

◀ Romans 7:25 ▶

Romans 7 Interlinear

5485 [e]	1161 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1223 [e]	2424 [e]	5547 [e]	3588 [e]	2962 [e]	1473 [e]	686 [e]	3767 [e]	846 [e]	1473 [e]
charis	de	tō	Theō	dia	Iēsou	Christou	tou	Kyriou	hēmōn	ara	oun	autos	egō
25 χάρις	[δὲ]	τῷ	Θεῷ ,	διὰ	Ἰησοῦ	Χριστοῦ	τοῦ	Κυρίου	ἡμῶν !	ἄρα	οὖν ,	αὐτὸς	ἐγὼ ,
Thanks [be]	moreover	to	God	through	Jesus	Christ	the	Lord	of us	then	So	myself	I
N-NFS	Conj	Art-DMS	N-DMS	Prep	N-GMS	N-GMS	Art-GMS	N-GMS	PPro-G1P	Conj	Conj	PPro-NM3S	PPro-N1S

3588 [e]	3303 [e]	3563 [e]	1398 [e]	3551 [e]	2316 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	4561 [e]	3551 [e]	266 [e]
tō	men	noi	douleuō	nomō	Theou	tē	de	sarki	nomō	hamartias
τῷ	μὲν	νοῖ	δουλεύω	νόμῳ	Θεοῦ ;	τῇ	δὲ	σαρκὶ ,	νόμῳ	ἁμαρτίας .
with the	indeed	mind	serve	law	God's	-	but [with]	[the] flesh	[the] law	of sin
Art-DMS	Conj	N-DMS	V-PIA-1S	N-DMS	N-GMS	Art-DFS	Conj	N-DFS	N-DMS	N-GFS

SLIDE 23A EXPANDS ARA OUN

SLIDE 23B

Romans 7:25 Interlinear Greek Scriveners Textus Receptus 1894 (Basis of KJV / AV translation)

7:24	ΤΑΛΑΙΠΡΟΣ talaiPros G5005 a_Nom Sg m WEIGHT-CALLOUSed wretched	ΕΓΩ ego G1473 pp 1 Nom Sg I	ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ anthrOpos G444 n_Nom Sg m human	ΤΙς tis G5101 pi Nom Sg m ANY who ?	ΜΕ me G3165 pp 1 Acc Sg ME	ΡΥΣΕΤΑΙ rusetai G4506 vi Fut midD 3 Sg SHALL-BE-rescuing	ΕΚ ek G1537 Prep OUT	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 t_Gen Sg n OF-THE	24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?	
	ΣΩΜΑΤΟΣ sOmatos G4983 n_Gen Sg n BODY	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 t_Gen Sg m OF-THE	ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ thanatou G2288 n_Gen Sg m DEATH	ΤΟΥΤΟΥ toutou G5127 pd Gen Sg m this						
7:25	ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΩ eucharistO G2168 vi Pres Act 1 Sg I-AM-thanking	ΤΩ tO G3588 t_Dat Sg m to-THE	ΘΕΩ theO G2316 n_Dat Sg m God	ΔΙΑ dia G1223 Prep THRU	ΙΗΣΟΥ iEsou G2424 n_Gen Sg m JESUS	ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ christou G5547 n_Gen Sg m ANointed Christ	ΤΟΥ tou G3588 t_Gen Sg m THE	ΚΥΡΙΟΥ kuriou G2962 n_Gen Sg m Master Lord	ΗΜΩΝ hEmOn G2257 pp 1 Gen Pl OF-US	25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.
	ΑΡΑ ara G686 Part CONSEQUENTLY	ΟΥΝ oun G3767 Conj THEN	ΑΥΤΟΣ autos G846 pp Nom Sg m SAME myself	ΕΓΩ ego G1473 pp 1 Nom Sg I	ΤΩ tO G3588 t_Dat Sg m to-THE	ΜΕΝ men G3303 Part INDEED	ΝΟΙ noi G3563 n_Dat Sg m MIND	ΔΟΥΛΕΥΩ douleuO G1398 vi Pres Act 1 Sg AM-SLAVING	ΝΟΜΩ nomO G3551 n_Dat Sg m to-LAW	
	ΘΕΟΥ theou G2316 n_Gen Sg m OF-God	ΤΗ tE G3588 t_Dat Sg f to-THE	ΔΕ de G1161 Conj YET	ΣΑΡΚΙ sarki G4561 n_Dat Sg f FLESH	ΝΟΜΩ nomO G3551 n_Dat Sg m to-LAW	ΑΜΑΡΤΙΑΣ hamartias G266 n_Gen Sg f OF-missing of-sin				

SLIDE 23C Expand Ara Oun

SLIDE 24

Returning to our lexicons, we note that they give a second major usage of the word *oun*, and they agree as to its meaning. They say that *oun* is used:

To connect a discourse after a digression. — Donnegan

To resume an interrupted subject. — Follet

When a speech has been interrupted by parenthetical clauses *oun* serves to take it up again. — Lidell and Scott

To resume a subject once more after an interruption. — Arndt and Gingrich

READ--Remember what we said about parenthetical earlier???

END SLIDE 24

SLIDE 25

To resume a thought or a subject interrupted in intervening matter. — Thayer

(*Oun* is used) where a sentence has been interrupted by a parenthesis or intervening clauses, and is taken up again. — Robinson

To mark the resumption of a discourse after an interruption by parentheses. — Moulton

END SLIDE 25

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SLIDE 26

So we see that our understanding of Romans 7 would have been greatly enhanced if the good translators of the King James version had not left *oun* out of their translation.

READ--Paul is developing a line of thought that begins in Romans 7, verse 7. In this lengthy passage he describes with accuracy and eloquence the frustrations and failures of the man who is "under law:" He is the man who is neither a rebel against God nor yet a born-again Christian, but who is trying to do God's will while refusing the help that can only come from Christ. This is just such a man as Paul himself once had been.

SKIP

And in harmony with the zealous missionary spirit that led him to say,

“And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law,”

READ--Paul identifies himself with this unfortunate man, as if it were his own predicament, as indeed it once had been. His description continues and builds through verses 22 and 23:

“For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”

READ--At this point the intensity of his feelings, combined with his actual personal knowledge of the frustration of the poor man, cause him to burst out in a question and answer which interrupt the line of thought and are parenthetical:

“O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Then, realizing that his line of thought has been interrupted, he advises the reader of this fact, as well as of his intention to return to his line of thought, by using the word *oun*. *Oun* is used to return to a line of thought that has been interrupted. Having taken this precaution, he uses the words that should be unmistakably clear to indicate that he is still talking about the same person who is trying unsuccessfully to do God's will *apart from Christ*: the two words *ego autos*, *I alone, thrown on my own resources*.

RETURN FROM SKIP

SLIDE 27

A faithful translation of this last part of verse 25 would look like this:

“So then (to return to my line of thought, which was interrupted), *I alone* with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”

SLIDE 28

Moffatt's translation of NT indicates the sense of **ego autos, and Ara oun** like this:

“Thus, *left to myself*, I serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.”

SLIDE 29

To help us fully understand the meaning of *oun*, I have inserted a copy of the page to show that Moffatt places the above verse 25 before the interruption, VERSE 24, instead of after it.²

SLIDE 29A AND SLIDE 29B EXPAND THE AREA FOR VIEWING

ROMANS VIII

pulse to sin, sin beguiled me and
 used the command to kill me.
 12 So the Law at any rate is holy,
 the command is holy, just, and for
 13 our good. Then did what was
 meant for my good prove fatal to
 me? Never! It was sin; sin
 resulted in death for me by mak-
 ing use of this good thing. This
 was how sin was to be revealed
 in its true nature; it was to use
 the command to become sinful
 14 in the extreme. The Law is
 spiritual; we know that. But
 then I am a creature of the flesh,
 15 in the thralldom of sin. I cannot
 understand my own actions; I do
 not act as I want to act; on the
 16 contrary, I do what I detest. Now,
 when I act against my wishes, that
 means I agree that the Law is
 17 right. That being so, it is not I
 who do the deed but sin that
 18 dwells within me. For in me
 (that is, in my flesh) no good dwells,
 I know; the wish is there, but not
 the power of doing what is right.
 19 I cannot be good as I want to be,
 and I do wrong against my wishes.
 20 Well, if I act against my wishes,
 it is not I who do the deed but
 21 sin that dwells within me. So this
 is my experience of the Law: I
 want to do what is right, but wrong
 22 is all I can manage; I cordially
 agree with God's law, so far as my
 23 inner self is concerned, but then I
 find quite another law in my
 members which conflicts with the
 law of my mind and makes me a
 prisoner to sin's law that resides
 25 in my members. (Thus, left to
 myself, I serve the law of God
 with my mind, but with my flesh I
 24 serve the law of sin.) * Miserable

* Restoring the second part of ver. 25
 to what seems its original and logical
 position before the climax of ver. 24.

wretch that I am! Who will
 rescue me from this body of
 death? God will! Thanks be 25
 to him through Jesus Christ our
 Lord!

CHAP.

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Thus there is no doom now for
 those who are in Christ Jesus; the
 law of the Spirit brings the life
 which is in Christ Jesus, and that
 law has set me free from the law of
 sin and death. For God has done
 what the Law, weakened here by
 the flesh, could not do; by sending
 his own Son in the guise of sinful
 flesh, to deal with sin, he con-
 demned sin in the flesh, in order
 to secure the fulfilment of the Law's
 requirements in our lives, as we
 live and move not by the flesh but
 by the Spirit.

5
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 11

For those who follow the flesh
 have their interests in the
 flesh,
 and those who follow the
 Spirit have their interests in
 the Spirit.
 The interests of the flesh mean
 death,
 the interests of the Spirit mean
 life and peace.
 For the interests of the flesh are
 hostile to God; they do not yield
 to the law of God (indeed they
 cannot). Those who are in the
 flesh cannot satisfy God. But you
 are not in the flesh, you are in the
 Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells
 within you. Anyone who does not
 possess the Spirit of Christ does not
 belong to Him. On the other hand,
 if Christ is within you, though the
 body is a dead thing owing to Adam's
 sin, the spirit is living as the result
 of righteousness. And if the Spirit
 of Him who raised Jesus from the
 dead dwells within you, then He

SLIDE 30

Other Bible Uses of ‘Oun’

READ--Here are some other Bible examples of the use of *oun* to resume a line of thought after it has been interrupted, such as the following:

(The parentheses are supplied; the identification of the word that is translated from *oun* is supplied.)

“Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.”

(Now Jacob's well was there.)

“Jesus *therefore (oun)*, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.” John 4:5, 6

+++++

SLIDE 31

“The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone;

(Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after the Lord had given thanks:)

When the people *therefore (oun)* saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.” John 6:22-24

+++++

SLIDE 32

“And he (John) came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins:

(As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias, the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough shall be made smooth;

And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.)

Then (oun) said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who bath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” Luke 3:3-7

+++++

SLIDE 33

“And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.”

(And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear.)

“He said *therefore (oun)*, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.” Luke 19:9-12

+++++

SLIDE 34

“Now as touching things offered unto idols we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to

know.”

(But if any man love God, the same is known of him.)

“As concerning *therefore (oun)* the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.” I Corinthians 8:1-4

+++++

SLIDE 35

“For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it.

(For there must be also heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.)

When ye come together *therefore (oun)* into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.” I Corinthians 11:18-20

SLIDE 35A

Using Romans 7:23-25 USE THIS FOR ENDING OF EXAMPLES-----

²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

(²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.)

So then(ara oun) with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

+++++

SLIDE 36

Conclusion

From these examples we can see that the united opinion of the Greek language experts who prepared the lexicons, that *oun is* used to resume a line of thought after an interruption, is well sustained by the Biblical evidence.

We have seen that this third understanding of Romans 7, that the unfortunate man identified by the first personal pronoun is the man who tries to do God's will while refusing to accept Christ, even as Paul had once done, was held by many early Christian writers and by the Reformation leaders, Arminius and Wesley.

END SLIDE 36

SLIDE 37

How Did Ellen White Use Romans 7

READ--This view was also held by Ellen White. Here is a typical example of her use of verses from Romans 7:

SLIDE 37A

Sin did not kill the law, but it did kill the carnal mind *in Paul*. "Now we are delivered from the law," he declares, "that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." (Romans 7:6). "Was that then which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Romans 7:12).

SLIDE 37B

Paul calls the attention of his hearers to the broken law, and shows them wherein they are guilty. He instructs them as a schoolmaster instructs his scholars, and shows them the way back to their loyalty to God.

There is no safety nor repose nor justification in transgression of the law. Man cannot hope to stand innocent before God, and at peace with Him through the merits of Christ, while he continues in sin. He must cease to transgress, and become loyal and true. ³ (Emphasis mine.) 2SM 212

SLIDE 38

Arminius Response to Question About Romans 7

When Arminius was defending his understanding of justification and sanctification in the light of Romans 7, he was asked, "If it is not necessary for Christians to sin, why is it that they do sin?" His carefully considered answer was that Christians sin because they do not make use of the power that God has made available to them.⁴

Therefore their sin can never be chargeable to God as a failure to supply them with adequate grace and strength.

SLIDE 39

Ellen White's View Similar To Arminius

"Our heavenly Father measures and weighs every trial before He permits it to come upon the believer. He considers the circumstances and the strength of the one who is to stand under the proving and test of God, and **He never permits the temptations to be greater than the capacity of resistance.**

SLIDE 39A

If the soul is overborne, the person overpowered, this can never be charged to God, as failing to give strength in grace, but the tempted one was not vigilant and prayerful and did not appropriate by faith the provisions God had abundantly in store for him. Christ never failed a believer in his hour of combat. The believer must claim the promise and meet the foe in the name of the Lord, and he will not know anything like failure." ⁵ 2 MCP 473

More Ellen White Statements :

"In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then 'the righteousness of the law' will 'be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' Rom. 8:4." GC 468

DA 203.2; 4SP 297-298

Through the same faith we may receive spiritual healing. By sin we have been severed from the life of God. Our souls are palsied. Of ourselves we are no more capable of living a holy life than was the impotent man capable of walking. There are many who realize their helplessness, and who long for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; they are vainly striving to obtain it. In despair they cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Romans 7:24, margin.

Let these desponding, struggling ones look up. The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He bids you arise in health and

peace. Do not wait to feel that you are made whole. Believe His word, and it will be fulfilled. Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength. **Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is "dead in trespasses." Ephesians 2:1. He will set free the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the chains of sin.** {DA 203.2}

Paul the apostle . . . longed for the purity, the righteousness, to which in himself he was powerless to attain, and he cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Romans 7:24, margin. Such is the cry that has gone up from burdened hearts in all lands and in all ages. To all, there is but one answer, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. {FLB 96.6}

The apostle Paul, in relating his experience, presents an important truth concerning the work to be wrought in conversion. He says, "I was alive without the law once,"--he felt no condemnation; "but when the commandment came," when the law of God was urged upon his conscience, "sin revived, and I died." [Romans 7:9.] Then he saw himself a sinner, condemned by the divine law. Mark, it was Paul, and not the law, that died. He says, further, "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." [Romans 7:7.] "The commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." [Romans 7:10.] The law which promised life to the obedient, pronounced death upon the transgressor. "Wherefore," he says, "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." [Romans 7:12.] {4SP 297.1}

How wide the contrast between these words of Paul and those that come from many of the pulpits of today. The people are taught that obedience to God's law is not necessary to salvation; that they have only to believe in Jesus, and they are safe. Without the law, men have no conviction of sin, and feel no need of repentance. Not seeing their lost condition as violators of God's law, they do not feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ as their only hope of salvation. {4SP 297.2}

The law of God is an agent in every genuine conversion. There can be no true repentance without conviction of sin. The Scriptures declare that "sin is the transgression of the law," [1 John 3:4.] and that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." [Romans 3:20.] In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God's great standard of righteousness. To discover his defects, he must look into the mirror of the divine statutes. But while the law reveals his sins, it provides no remedy. The gospel of Christ alone can offer pardon. In order to stand forgiven, the sinner must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed, and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice. Without true repentance, there can be no true conversion. Many are deceived here, and too often their entire experience proves to be a deception. This is why so many who are joined to the church have never been joined to Christ. {4SP 297.3}

"The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." [Romans 8:7.] **In the new birth, the heart is renewed by divine grace, and brought into harmony with God as it is brought into subjection to his law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then will "the righteousness of the law" "be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."** [Romans 8:4.] {4SP 298.1}

SLIDE 40

Conclusion

Ego autos, I alone, is definitely not the secret of success. That which is done through power supplied by God could not be described by the words *ego autos*. **The believer who fails to recognize his need of the forgiving and enabling grace of Christ** is doomed to frustration and defeat in the Christian life. This is the message of Romans 7. **This is the Real Man of Romans 7.**

It is a warning message, sounding its clarion call across the centuries, telling us that we must never be found in the attitude of *ego autos; I alone*.

SLIDE 41

The Real Man of Romans 7 Has Now Stood Up! Do You Now Know Who it is and Who it isn't?

Footnotes

- ¹Bangs, Carl. *Arminius. A Study in the Dutch Reformation*, pp. 191-2. See also *The Writings of James Arminius*, translated by James Nichols and W. R. Bagnall, Volume II, pp. 553-574.
- ²Moffat, James, *The New Testament, A New Translation*, p. 387.
- ³White, Ellen, *Selected Messages*, Volume II, pp. 212-213.
- ⁴*The Writings of James Arminius*, Volume III, pp. 312-320.
- ⁵White, Ellen, *Mind, Character, and Personality* Volume II, p. 473.

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Appendix A

Assorted Influential Commentaries That Support the Traditional SDA Position

I have added below the Westcott-Hort Interlinear Greek of Romans 7:24 and 25 so you can see for yourself that 'ara oun' and 'autos ego(egw)', are really in the Greek.

Westcott-Hort Interlinear Greek of Romans 7:24 and 25

Romans 7:24
talaipwros egw anthrwpos tis me rhusetai ek
CALLOUS BEARING I MAN; WHO ME WILL DRAW FOR SELF OUT OF
5005 1473 0444 5101 1473_6 4506 1537
tou swmatos tou thanatou toutou
THE BODY OF THE DEATH THIS?
3588 4983 3588 2288 3778_4

Romans 7:25
charis de tw thew dia ieesou christou tou kuriou
THANKS BUT TO THE GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST THE LORD
5485 1161 3588 2316 1223 2424 5547 3588 2962
heemwn ara oun autos egw tw men noi
OF US. REALLY THEREFORE VERY I TO THE INDEED MIND
1473_8 0686 3767 0846 1473 3588 3303 3563
douleuw nomw theou tee de sarki nomw
I AM SLAVING TO LAW OF GOD, TO THE BUT FLESH TO LAW
1398 3551 2316 3588 1161 4561 3551
hamartias
OF SIN.
0266

Pulpit Commentary Romans 7:25

(6) Difficulty has been found in the concluding clause of ver. 25, ἄρα οὖν, etc. It follows the expression of thanksgiving, "Thanks be to God," etc., which certainly introduced the thought of deliverance from the state that had been described; and hence it is supposed by some that this clause must be a continuance of that thought, and so to be taken as an introduction to ch. 8. rather than a summing up of the preceding argument. It is said also, in support of this view, that more entire association of the ἐγὼ with the Law of God than was before intimated is here expressed; αὐτὸς ἐγὼ being written instead of simply ἐγὼ, and δουλεύω being a stronger word than συνήδομαι (ver. 22). Thus the meaning would be, "Though in my flesh I still serve the law of sin (the φρόνημα σάρκος still remains in me, notwithstanding my regeneration), yet now **in my very real self** I not only **approve**, but **am in subjection to**, the Law of God." It is, however, at least a question whether these slight differences of expression come to much; and both the introductory ἄρα οὖν and the form of the clause suggest rather its being the summarized result of ch. 7. The additional emphasis added to ἐγὼ (which had, indeed, already been emphatic), and the substitution of δοελεύω for συνήδομαι, may serve only to bring out all the more strongly in the end what it had been the purpose of the whole passage to lead up to, viz. that man's real self, when conscience is fully aroused, yearns for and is ready for redemption. There is no difficulty in so understanding the clause (as we should surely understand it naturally but for the preceding thanksgiving), if we regard the thanksgiving as a parenthetical exclamation, anticipating for a moment the purport of ch. 8. Such an exclamation is characteristic of St. Paul, and it adds life to the passage.

[I supplied the underline for emphasis]

Clarke's Commentary

Romans 7:25

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

I thank God through Jesus Christ - Instead of εὐχαριστῶ τῷ Θεῷ, I thank God, several excellent MSS., with the Vulgate, some copies of the Itala, and several of the fathers, read ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ, or τοῦ Κυρίου, the grace of God, or the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; this is an answer to the almost despairing question in the preceding verse. The whole, therefore, may be read thus: O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Answer - The grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus we find that a case of the kind described by the apostle in the preceding verses, whether it were his own, before he was brought to the knowledge of Christ, particularly during the three days that he was at Damascus, without being able to eat or drink, in deep penitential sorrow; or whether he personates a pharisaic yet conscientious Jew, deeply concerned for his salvation: I say, we find that such a case can be relieved by the Gospel of Christ only; or, in other words, that no scheme of redemption can be effectual to the salvation of any soul, whether Jew or Gentile, but that laid down in the Gospel of Christ.

Let any or all means be used which human wisdom can devise, guilt will still continue uncanceled; and inbred sin will laugh them all to scorn, prevail over them, and finally triumph. And this is the very conclusion to which the apostle brings his argument in the following clause; which, like the rest of the chapter, has been most awfully abused, to favor anti-evangelical purposes.

So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God - That this clause contains the inference from the preceding train of argumentation appears evident, from the ἀρα οὖν, therefore, with which the apostle introduces it. As if he had said: "To conclude, the sum of what I have advanced, concerning the power of sin in the carnal man, and the utter insufficiency of all human means and legal observances to pardon sin and expel the corruption of the heart, is this: that the very same person, the αὐτός ἐγώ, the same I, while without the Gospel, under the killing power of the law, will find in himself two opposite principles, the one subscribing to and approving the law of God; and the other, notwithstanding, bringing him into captivity to sin: his inward man - his rational powers and conscience, will assent to the justice and propriety of the requisitions of the law; and yet, notwithstanding this, his fleshly appetites - the law in his members, will war against the law of his mind, and continue, till he receives the Gospel of Christ, to keep him in the galling captivity of sin and death."

1. The strong expressions in this clause have led many to conclude that the apostle himself, in his regenerated state, is indisputably the person intended. That all that is said in this chapter of the carnal man, sold under sin, did apply to Saul of Tarsus, no man can doubt: that what is here said can ever be with propriety applied to Paul the Apostle, who can believe? Of the former, all is natural; of the latter, all here said would be monstrous and absurd, if not blasphemous.

2. But it is supposed that the words must be understood as implying a regenerate man, because the apostle says, [Romans 7:22](#), I delight in the law of God; and in this verse, I myself with the mind serve the law of God. These things, say the objectors, cannot be spoken of a wicked Jew, but of a regenerate man such as the apostle then was. But when we find that the former verse speaks of a man who is brought into captivity to the law of sin and death, surely there is no part of the regenerate state of the apostle to which the words can possibly apply. Had he been in captivity to the law of sin and death, after his conversion to Christianity, what did he gain by that conversion? Nothing for his personal holiness. He had found no salvation under an inefficient law; and he was left in thralldom under an equally inefficient Gospel. The very genius of Christianity demonstrates that nothing like this can, with any propriety, be spoken of a genuine Christian.

3. But it is farther supposed that these things cannot be spoken of a proud or wicked Jew; yet we learn the contrary from the infallible testimony of the word of God. Of this people in their fallen and iniquitous state,

God says, by his prophet, They Seek me Daily, and Delight to know my ways, as a nation that did Righteousness, and Forsook not the Ordinances of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of Justice, and Take Delight in approaching to God, [Isaiah 58:2](#). Can any thing be stronger than this? And yet, at that time, they were most dreadfully carnal, and sold under sin, as the rest of that chapter proves. It is a most notorious fact, that how little soever the life of a Jew was conformed to the law of his God, he notwithstanding professed the highest esteem for it, and gloried in it: and the apostle says nothing stronger of them in this chapter than their conduct and profession verify to the present day. They are still delighting in the law of God, after the inward man; with their mind serving the law of God; asking for the ordinances of justice, seeking God daily, and taking delight in approaching to God; they even glory, and greatly exult and glory, in the Divine original and excellency of their Law; and all this while they are most abominably carnal, sold under sin, and brought into the most degrading captivity to the law of sin and death. If then all that the apostle states of the person in question be true of the Jews, through the whole period of their history, even to the present time; if they do in all their professions and their religious services, which they zealously maintain, confess, and conscientiously too, that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good; and yet, with their flesh, serve the law of sin; the same certainly may be said with equal propriety of a Jewish penitent, deeply convinced of his lost estate, and the total insufficiency of his legal observances to deliver him from his body of sin and death. And consequently, all this may be said of Paul the Jew, while going about to establish his own righteousness - his own plan of justification; he had not as yet submitted to the righteousness of God - the Divine plan of redemption by Jesus Christ.

4. It must be allowed that, whatever was the experience of so eminent a man, Christian, and apostle, as St. Paul, it must be a very proper standard of Christianity. And if we are to take what is here said as his experience as a Christian, it would be presumption in us to expect to go higher; for he certainly had pushed the principles of his religion to their utmost consequences. But his whole life, and the account which he immediately gives of himself in the succeeding chapter, prove that he, as a Christian and an apostle, had a widely different experience; an experience which amply justifies that superiority which he attributes to the Christian religion over the Jewish; and demonstrates that it not only is well calculated to perfect all preceding dispensations, but that it affords salvation to the uttermost to all those who flee for refuge to the hope that it sets before them. Besides, there is nothing spoken here of the state of a conscientious Jew, or of St. Paul in his Jewish state, that is not true of every genuine penitent; even before, and it may be, long before, he has believed in Christ to the saving of his soul. The assertion that "every Christian, howsoever advanced in the Divine life, will and must feel all this inward conflict," etc., is as untrue as it is dangerous. That many, called Christians, and probably sincere, do feel all this, may be readily granted; and such we must consider to be in the same state with Saul of Tarsus, previously to his conversion; but that they must continue thus is no where intimated in the Gospel of Christ. We must take heed how we make our experience, which is the result of our unbelief and unfaithfulness, the standard for the people of God, and lower down Christianity to our most reprehensible and dwarfish state: at the same time, we should not be discouraged at what we thus feel, but apply to God, through Christ, as Paul did; and then we shall soon be able, with him, to declare, to the eternal glory of God's grace, that the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, has made us free from the law of sin and death. This is the inheritance of God's children; and their salvation is of me, saith the Lord.

[Emphasis supplied by me]

Professor J. A. Beet on Romans 7:7-25

Romans 7:7-25

To whom does the passage refer

Prof. J. A. Beet.

(1) **To the unregenerate.** It has been much discussed whether this section describes a justified man, or a man still unforgiven. The latter view was held by and the Greek fathers generally. The former was adopted by and the Latin fathers generally. It was received in the West during the Middle Ages; and by the Reformers. It is now held, I believe, by most Calvinists. Among Arminians the view of the Greek fathers prevails. It is worthy of remark that this is the older opinion, and was theirs who spoke the language in which this Epistle was written. That this section describes Paul's own experience before justification, I hold for the following reasons.

1. In the last section we saw a great change take place in Paul, a change from life to death. This change brought him into the state described in ver. 5. But in ver. 6, Paul says, and he never wearies to repeat it, that another change, as glorious as this was sad, had been wrought in him by the power of God. The completeness of this change has been frequently set before us ([Romans 5:10](#); [Romans 6:11, 22](#); [Romans 7:6](#)). Paul is dead to sin, set free from its service, dead to the law which formerly bound him to a cruel master. This second change must be located between ver. 13, which gives the purpose of the first change, and [Romans 8:1](#), which describes the state of those who enjoy the second. And since vers. 14-25 deal with one subject, we must put the second change either between vers. 13 and 14, or between chaps. 7 and 8. Now we have no hint whatever between vers. 13 and 14 of a change. But in [Romans 8:1](#), the change is written in characters which no one can misunderstand. The words "made me free from the law of sin" proclaim in the clearest language that the bondage of vers. 23, 25 has passed away.

2. Again, this section contradicts all that Paul says about himself and the Christian life. He here calls himself a slave of sin, and groans beneath its bondage. He is a calamity-stricken man. But in the last chapter he describes his readers as dead to sin, and set free from its service. In what sense could a Roman Christian dare to reckon himself dead to sin, if this section were a picture of the liberty from sin enjoyed by an apostle? Paul here says that sin dwelling in his flesh is the true author of his actions. But in the next chapter he says that they who live after the flesh will die. He here declares that he works out that which is bad. But in [Romans 2:9](#), he teaches that upon all who do so the anger of God will fall. If these words refer to a justified person, they stand absolutely alone in the New Testament.

3. It has been objected that the language of this section is inapplicable to men not yet justified. But we find similar language in the lips of pagans. "What is it that draws us in one direction while striving to go in another; and impels us towards that which we wish to avoid?" (Seneca). "We understand and know the good things, but we do not work them out" (Euripides). "I have evidently two souls for if I had only one it would not be at the same time good and bad; nor would it desire at the same time both honourable and dishonourable works, nor would it at the same time both wish and not wish to do the same things. But it is evident that there are two souls; and that when the good one is in power, the honourable things are practised; but when the bad, the dishonourable things are attempted" (Xenophon). "I know what sort of bad things I am going to do: but passion is stronger than my purposes. And this is to mortals a cause of very great evils" (Euripides). "I desire one thing: the mind persuades another. I see and approve better things: I follow worse things" (Ovid). These passages prove that in many cases men are carried along against their better judgment to do bad things, and that even in pagans there is an inward man which approves what God's law approves.

4. What Paul says elsewhere about his religious state before justification confirms the description of himself here given. He was a man of blameless morality ([Philippians 3:6](#)); it was in ignorance that he persecuted the Church ([1 Timothy 1:13](#)); he was zealous for God ([Acts 22:3](#)); a Pharisee of the strictest sect ([Acts 26:5](#)); no doubt he sought to set up a righteousness of his own ([Romans 10:3](#)). Of such a man's inner life we have a picture in this section. His conscience approves the law: he makes every effort to keep it: his efforts

only prove his moral powerlessness, and reveal the presence of an enemy in whose firm grasp he lies: he seeks to conquer inward failure by strict outward observance, and perhaps by bloody loyalty to what he considers to be the cause of God. In the conscientious Pharisee we have a man who desires to do right, but actually does wrong. And the more earnestly a man strives to obtain the favour of God by doing right, the more painfully conscious will he be of his failure.

5. It has been objected to the view here advocated that all this is the experience of many justified persons. But this only proves that the change in us is not yet complete, and Paul makes this a matter of reproach (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). On the other hand, there are thousands who with deep gratitude acknowledge that, while this section describes their past, it by no means describes their present state. Day by day they are more than conquerors through Him that loved them.

6. Then why did Paul puzzle plain people by using the present tense instead of the past? Let the man who asks this question write out the section in the past tense. "I was a man of flesh: I saw another law fighting against me, and leading me captive: I cried, 'Calamity-stricken man,'" etc. The life and reality of the section are gone. To realise past calamity, we must leave out of sight our deliverance from it. The language of the last section made it easy to do this. Paul's description of his murder by the hand of sin was so sad and so real that he forgot the life which followed. Hence when he came to speak of the state in which that murder placed him, it was easy to use the present tense. Of this change of the point of view we have already had other examples. In [Romans 3:7](#), Paul throws himself into the position of one guilty of falsehood, and sets up for himself an excuse. In [Romans 4:24](#), he stands by the writer of Genesis, and looks upon the justification of himself and his readers as still future. In [Romans 5:1](#), he urges them to claim peace with God through justification. In [Romans 5:14](#), after contemplating the reign of death from Adam to Moses, he looks forward to the future incarnation of Christ. In [Romans 6:5](#), he speaks in the same way of the resurrection life in Christ. We shall also find him, in [Romans 8:30](#), throwing himself into the far future, and looking back upon the nearer future as if already past. This mode of speech is common in all languages. But it is a conspicuous feature of the language in which this Epistle was written.

7. I cannot agree with those who say that Paul refers in this section to the state of babes in Christ ([1 Corinthians 3:1](#)); and in the next, to full salvation. The next chapter certainly describes Paul's own experience, which was that of full salvation. And the language of this section is frequently used by those who are only in part saved from sin. But the least babe in Christ has experienced a resurrection from the dead ([Colossians 2:13](#)), and a deliverance purchased with the blood of Christ. Of such resurrection and deliverance there is no hint in this section, till the last verse of it proclaims the dawn of a brighter day.

8. If the above interpretation be correct, we have in this section the fullest description in the Bible of the natural state of man. Even in the immoral there is an inner man which approves the good and hates the bad. But this inner man is powerless against the enemy who is master of his body, and who thus dictates his conduct. In spite of his better self the man is carried along the path of sin. This is not contradicted, nor its force lessened, by Paul's admission in [Romans 2:26](#), that even pagans do sometimes what the law commands. Their obedience is only occasional and imperfect, whereas the law requires constant and complete obedience. A man who breaks the laws of his country is not saved from punishment by the occasional performance of noble and praiseworthy acts. Although men unforgiven sometimes perform that which deserves approbation, they are utterly powerless to rescue themselves from the power of sin, and to obtain by good works the favour of God.

(Prof. J. A. Beet.)

These well known commentaries show that it is not a 'cultic' position to say that the man of [Romans 7](#) does not describe the converted, born-again Christian but a convicted person who is trying to gain victory in his own strength and not in cooperation with Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Here is an interesting commentary from the Expositor's Greek Testament-Nicoll

[Romans 7:24](#)

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

[Romans 7:24](#). *ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος· τίς με ῥύσεται*; “a wail of anguish and a cry for help”. The words are not those of the Apostle’s heart as he writes; they are the words which he knows are wrung from the heart of the man who realises that he is himself in the state just described. Paul has reproduced this vividly from his own experience, but *ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος* is not the cry of the Christian Paul, but of the man whom sin and law have brought to despair. *ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου*: “*This* death” is the death of which man is acutely conscious in the condition described: it is the same as the death of [Romans 7:9](#), but intensely realised through the experience of captivity to sin. “The body of this death” is therefore the same as “the body of sin” in chap. [Romans 6:6](#) : it is the body which, as the instrument if not the seat of sin, is involved in its doom. Salvation must include deliverance from the body so far as the body has this character and destiny.

[Romans 7:25](#)

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

[Romans 7:25](#). The exclamation of thanksgiving shows that the longed-for deliverance has actually been achieved. The regenerate man’s ideal contemplation of his pre-Christian state rises with sudden joy into a declaration of his actual emancipation as a Christian. *διὰ Ἰ. Χ. τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν* Christ is regarded as the mediator through whom the thanksgiving ascends to God, not as the author of the deliverance for which thanks are given. With *ἄρα οὖν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ* the Apostle introduces the conclusion of this whole discussion. “So then I myself—that is, I, leaving Jesus Christ our Lord out of the question—can get no further than this: with the mind, or in the inner man, I serve a law of God (a Divine law), but with the flesh, or in my actual outward life, a law of sin.” We might say *the* law of God, or of sin; but the absence of the definite article emphasises the character of law. *αὐτὸς ἐγὼ*: see [2 Corinthians 10:1](#); [2 Corinthians 12:13](#).

The Expositor's Greek Testament - Nicoll

[Underline by me for emphasis]

Barnes Notes on the Bible -- Romans 7:25

I thank God - That is, I thank God for effecting a deliverance to which I am myself incompetent. There is a way of rescue, and I trace it altogether to his mercy in the Lord Jesus Christ. What conscience could not do, what the Law could not do, what unaided human strength could not do, has been accomplished by the plan of the gospel; and complete deliverance can be expected there, and there alone. This is the point to which all his reasoning had tended; and having thus shown that the Law was insufficient to effect this deliverance, he is now prepared to utter the language of Christian thankfulness that it can be effected by the gospel. The superiority of the gospel to the Law in overcoming all the evils under which man labors, is thus triumphantly established; compare [1 Corinthians 15:57](#).

So then - As the result of the whole inquiry we have come to this conclusion.

With the mind - With the understanding, the conscience, the purposes, or intentions of the soul. This is a characteristic of the renewed nature. Of no impenitent sinner could it be ever affirmed that with his mind he served the Law of God.

I myself - It is still the same person, though acting in this apparently contradictory manner.

Serve the law of God - Do honor to it as a just and holy law [Romans 7:12](#), [Romans 7:16](#), and am inclined to obey it, [Romans 7:22](#), [Romans 7:24](#).

But with the flesh - The corrupt propensities and lusts, [Romans 7:18](#),

The law of sin - That is, in the members. The flesh throughout, in all its native propensities and passions, leads to sin; it has no tendency to holiness; and its corruptions can be overcome only by the grace of God. We have thus,

(1) A view of the sad and painful conflict between sin and God. They are opposed in all things.

(2) we see the raging, withering effect of sin on the soul. In all circumstances it tends to death and woe.

(3) we see the feebleness of the Law and of conscience to overcome this. The tendency of both is to produce conflict and woe. And,

(4) We see that the gospel only can overcome sin. To us it should be a subject of ever increasing thankfulness, that what could not be accomplished by the Law, can be thus effected by the gospel; and that God has devised a plan that thus effects complete deliverance, and which gives to the captive in sin an everlasting triumph.

[Underlining by me for emphasis]

Seventh-day Adventist Commentary on Romans 7:25

25. I thank God. Textual evidence is divided (cf. 10) between this and the reading, "Thanks be to God." Paul does not give a direct answer to his question, "Who shall deliver me?" Nor does he state for what he is thanking God. But this is plainly indicated by the context. What the law cannot do, what the conscience cannot do, what unaided human strength cannot do, can be accomplished by the plan of the gospel. Complete deliverance is available through Jesus Christ, and through Him alone. Compare "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

This is the climax toward which Paul's reasoning in this chapter has been pointing. It is not enough to be convinced of the excellence of the law or to acknowledge the wisdom and justice of its obligations. It is not enough to consent unto it as good or even to delight in its precepts. No amount of earnest striving after obedience will avail against the law of sin in the members, until the struggling sinner surrenders in faith to Christ. Then surrender to a person takes the place of legalistic obedience to a law. And since it is surrender to a person dearly loved, it is felt as perfect freedom (see SC 19; MH 131; DA 466).

I myself serve. Some have wondered why, after reaching the glorious climax in the expression "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord," Paul should refer once more to the struggles of the soul from what he apparently had been delivered. Some understand the expression of thanksgiving as a parenthetical exclamation. They believe that such an exclamation follows naturally the cry, "Who shall deliver?" They hold that before proceeding with an extended discussion of the glorious deliverance (ch.8) Paul summarizes what he has said in the preceding verses and confesses once again to the conflict against the forces of sin.

Others suggest that by "I myself" Paul means, "left to myself, leaving Christ out of the picture." They believe that Paul is here stating a general truth that is valid at any point in the Christian experience. Hence they consider Paul's exclamation to be not parenthetical, but in good logical sequence. Anytime a man tries to find victory over sin, of himself, apart from the power of Christ, he is doomed to failure.

[I find it interesting that the author does not say what Seventh-day Adventist's have traditionally believed to be the correct interpretation above as they have in other instances of controversial passages. I believe it's because the change had already started to take place in the 50's toward an Agustinian/Calvinistic interpretation of these verses in SDA theological circles, which brought about the 'New Theology' crisis that we are now experiencing. Why didn't they say which one is accepted as the correct interpretation. Very interesting and telling.]

GREEK TEXT-Scrivener's Textus Receptus 1894 (Basis of KJV / AV translation)

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