

Supplemental Resource: Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 46

Supplemental Resource: Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 47

Supplemental Resource: Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 48.

VERSE 8 - GREEN

In these verses, Paul addresses Jewish believers on how to fulfill the law, despite declaring the Body of Christ to be free from it. This may seem contradictory, but it can be resolved if we consider Paul's Jewish audience. Romans 12:1-15:14 is about "Jewish Life Beyond the Temple," and Paul is giving such instruction. Verse 8 is color-coded green in our system, indicating that it has some value but should not be used as doctrine since it is not directly related to us.

The Jewish audience would naturally wonder how they should live if they are free from the law. Paul addresses this issue of moral behavior in verses 8-10.

Paul begins by saying that a debt of love is all they should owe to one another. I doubt that this verse can or should be used as a prohibition against debt, and I doubt that personal debt as we have in modern society was even a matter of concern in the ancient world. To use this verse as a prohibition against debt would go beyond its scope. However, it is a good way to live to be able to say, "I don't owe you anything other than to love you." This attitude would free us from the personal burden of people-pleasing and mistreatment of others.

Paul then summarizes his conclusion, stating that "**he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.**" Such a statement could not have been made under the Torah. The Law-era passages that are similar (Matthew 22:39 and James 2:8) speak of love as the pinnacle of the Law, but Paul says that this love actually fulfills the law. This is a significant difference. Under the Torah, one had to obey the letter of the law and then add "icing on the cake" with love to fulfill it. But now that the Law is complete, the only thing left is to love.

In a sense, this is what the Jewish method of fulfilling the law is in post-Temple days. They have works of righteousness called MITZVOT that substitute for things like sacrifices that cannot be done without the temple. In essence, Paul declares that, without the law, the ultimate MITZVAH is to love one another.

VERSE 9 - GREEN

Referring back to the days of the law, Paul asserts that the last five commandments, which he cites, are "**briefly comprehended**" by the principle of Leviticus 19:18, "**Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**" However, the words of verse 18 continue into verse 19, which state, "**I am the LORD. Ye shall keep my statutes.**" Thus, the Law was not "fully completed" but "**briefly comprehended**" in the greatest of commandments.

According to Paul, love is the prevailing principle of the Law. With the abolition of the law, love becomes the guiding principle.

VERSE 10 - GREEN

In summary, Paul explains why this principle works: because love does not harm others. The relationship-oriented laws of the Torah were about protecting the rights of the individual, and love for others will achieve the same result.

Verses 8-10 convey an important message for the Body of Christ, although they were not directly written to that body. The age of grace is not an age of law (which should be obvious). However, the absence of law does not equate to a lawless and sinful lifestyle. In the absence of law, the principle of love can guide moral decisions. By simply asking, "Is this loving?", the believer can determine whether an action concerning interpersonal relations is right or wrong.

ROMANS 13:11-14 | KINGDOM SALVATION

Supplemental Resource: Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 48.

VERSE 11 - GREEN

Paul speaks of "**our salvation**," using the pronoun that is indicative of the apostolic cohort throughout the epistle, and thus of Israel. I believe he is talking about the Kingdom salvation of the Jewish nation. Such salvation is "**nearer than when we believed**." Because of this, Israel should **wake up** lest she find herself without a Temple, without a Kingdom, without a homeland, and with spiritual sight.

VERSE 12 - BLACK AND GREEN

I have color-coded the phrase "The night is far spent, the day is at hand" in black, as it pertains solely to Israel. While this phrase could be taken metaphorically, it appears to me that references to "the day" always refer to the coming day of the Lord, which is Israel's day of vindication. Israel has been in "the night" since at least the beginning of the Jewish diaspora, which occurred with the fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and arguably since the division of the Kingdom in the days after Solomon's death. For over 500 years, Israel had not had a Davidic monarchy, and for most of that time, they had not even had sovereignty. At the time of Paul's writing, Judah was under the rule of Rome. While this afforded them great freedoms, it did so only if they complied with Caesar's overall demands, which included ultimate allegiance to Rome. This was anathema to a faithful Jew. They were indeed in "the night," and "the day" would bring both judgment and vindication. It was, therefore, time to cast off "the works of darkness" and put on "the armor of light."

Note that Paul uses the pronoun "us" to refer to both the Apostolic leadership and the Jewish nation as followers. This is not an application of "you" or "them," but rather an application of "us," the nation.

Although there is a general truth that can be applied to the Body of Christ, I do not think that the dispensation of the grace of God can properly be termed "the night." Similarly, the rapture should not be referred to as "the day." While it is beneficial for anyone to "cast off the works of darkness," this message is most pertinent to the Jewish nation, which will be judged by such works. The body of Christ is saved by grace, through faith, and not of yourselves (Eph. 2:8).

VERSE 13 - GREEN

Paul continues to use the pronoun "us," urging them to live "as in the day." This means living as if they were in a time of tribulation and forthcoming judgment. He then provides a list of bad behaviors, which I believe is intended more for illustrative purposes than to be exhaustive. This view is supported by the poetic nature of the words, using poetic parallelism in both the Greek and KJV translation.

👉 An example of "poetic parallelism" can be seen in Lincoln's Gettysburg address when he said, "we can not dedicate -- we can not consecrate -- we can not hallow -- this ground." Though this is not poetry in the sense of rhyme, it is in the sense of cadence and parallelism.

VERSE 14 - GREEN

Paul instructs the Roman Jews to "put on" Jesus Christ, using a metaphor of clothing oneself. He contrasts this with making "provision for the flesh," or giving in to lustful desires. This call to righteous living is intended to guide the Roman Jews away from sinful behavior, which they may be tempted to engage in after abandoning Judaism's laws.