

Romans 7:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

Analysis

But sin, taking occasion by the commandment—Aphormē (ἀφορμή, "occasion/opportunity") is a military term for a base of operations. Sin used the commandment as a launching point for assault. **Wrought in me all manner of concupiscence**—Kateirgasato (κατειργάσατο, "produced/accomplished") shows sin's active work. Pasan epithymian (πάσαν ἐπιθυμίαν, "every/all desire") describes the multiplication of sinful cravings provoked by prohibition.

For without the law sin was dead.—Nekra (νεκρά, "dead") means dormant or inactive, not non-existent. Sin existed before Sinai (Romans 5:13) but lacked the consciousness-arousing, passion-stimulating power that commandments provide. This explains the perverse human tendency to desire what's forbidden—prohibition awakens and intensifies rebellious desires.

Historical Context

Paul draws on the Genesis 3 pattern where prohibition ("you shall not eat") aroused Eve's desire for the forbidden fruit. The entrance of law at Sinai brought heightened consciousness of sin and increased accountability. Paul isn't condemning law but explaining how sin nature exploits even God's good commands to produce rebellion.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Where do you see the 'forbidden fruit' dynamic—prohibition arousing desire—operating in your struggle with sin?
2. How does recognizing that sin uses God's good commands as a base of operations change how you approach temptation?
3. What does this teach about the limitations of external rules (even God's) to produce heart-level transformation?

Interlinear Text

ἀφορμὴν	δὲ	λαβοῦσα	ἡ	ἁμαρτία	διὰ	τῆς	ἐντολῆς
occasion	But	taking	G3588	sin	by	G3588	the commandment
G874	G1161	G2983		G266	G1223		G1785
κατειργάσατο	ἐν	ἐμοὶ	πᾶσαν	ἐπιθυμίαν·	χωρὶς	γὰρ	
wrought	in	me	all manner of	concupiscence	without	For	
G2716	G1722	G1698	G3956	G1939	G5565	G1063	
νόμου	ἁμαρτία	νεκρά					
the law	sin	was dead					
G3551	G266	G3498					

Additional Cross-References

Romans 7:11 (Kingdom): For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

1 Corinthians 15:56 (Word): The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

Romans 4:15 (Word): Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

Romans 7:13 (Kingdom): Was then that 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.

John 15:22 (Sin): If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

Romans 7:17 (Sin): Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Romans 5:20 (Word): Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

John 15:24 (Sin): If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.