

# Romans 7:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

## Analysis

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**For I was alive without the law once**—Ezōn (ἐζῶν, "I was living") likely refers to Paul's pre-Bar Mitzvah childhood before taking personal responsibility for Torah observance, or more broadly to humanity's pre-Sinai existence. The sense of being "alive" was illusory self-righteousness, unaware of sin's death-sentence.

**But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.**—Anezēsen (ἀνέζησεν, "sprang to life/revived") depicts sin awakening like a dormant beast. Apethanon (ἀπέθανον, "I died") describes experiential awareness of spiritual death—the collision between God's righteous standard and human inability. The commandment intended to produce life instead revealed death (v. 10), not due to law's defect but humanity's corruption. This mirrors Genesis 3's pattern: God's command highlighted rebellion, bringing death.

## Historical Context

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Whether Paul references his personal experience at Bar Mitzvah age (13, when Jewish boys assume Torah responsibility) or uses Adam-language for humanity's pre-law existence, the point remains: law's arrival brought death-consciousness, not life-production. This wasn't law's fault but humanity's fallen condition exposed by law's holy light.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. Can you identify a time when God's commands revealed spiritual death rather than producing spiritual life in your experience?
2. How does this verse explain why religious people often feel condemned rather than liberated by increasing biblical knowledge?
3. What's the difference between law revealing your need for Christ versus law becoming your functional savior?

## Interlinear Text

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ἐγὼ	δὲ	ἔζων	χωρὶς	νόμου	ποτέ·	ἐλθούσης	δὲ	τῆς
<b>I</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>was alive</b>	<b>without</b>	<b>the law</b>	<b>once</b>	<b>came</b>	<b>For</b>	G3588
G1473	G1161	G2198	G5565	G3551	G4218	G2064	G1161	
ἐντολῆς			ἡ	ἁμαρτία	ἀνέζησεν	ἐγὼ	δὲ	
<b>when the commandment</b>			G3588	<b>sin</b>	<b>revived</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>For</b>	
G1785				G266	G326	G1473	G1161	
ἀπέθανον								
<b>died</b>								
G599								

## Additional Cross-References

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**Galatians 3:10** (Word): For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

**Romans 8:7** (Word): Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

**Romans 10:5** (Word): For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

**Romans 7:6** (Word): But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

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

**Romans 7:4** (Word): Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

**Galatians 2:19** (Word): For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.