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The Reason for the Inner Conflict

7: 18-21

The reason for the inner conflict DIG: What two things did Paul learn? Where does our old [sin nature] come from? Why does God choose not to get rid of it now? What is Paul's remedy for this battle with the old [sin nature]? When did we get to choose between good and evil? How does the Adversary and his demons use our sin [sin nature] against us?

REFLECT: Have you learned that "good itself does not dwell in" you? How can you keep from merely being a busy bee? If you have the desire to do good, why can't you carry it out? How long will this inner conflict last? Is it enough to say, "The devil made me do it?" Why not? How are you doing at taking responsibility for your sin? How can you help someone this week?

As a believer grows in his spiritual life, he will inevitably have both an increased hatred of sin and an increased love for righteousness.



Paul learned two things in this struggle, and they are something that many of us believers need to learn: **For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my [sinful nature] (7:18a)**. Have you learned that? Have you found that **good itself does not dwell** in you? Oh, how many of us believers feel that we can do something **in the flesh** that will please **God**! Many believers who never find out otherwise become as busy as termites and have about the same effect where they

worship. They are busy as bees, but they aren't making any honey! They get on committees, they are chairmen of boards, they try to run the place, and they think they are pleasing **God**. Although they are busy, they have no vital connection with **the Person of Messiah**. **His** life is not being lived through them. They are attempting to do it in their own strength and **flesh**.¹⁸⁹

Paul found out something else that is very important for us to learn: **For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing (7:18b-19)**. Again, it is important to understand that this great inner conflict with **sin** is not experienced by the underdeveloped and childish believer, but by the mature person of **God**. **David** was **a man after God's own heart (First Samuel 13:14)** and was honored by having **the Messiah** named **the Son** (or descendant) **of David**. Yet no one in the TaNaKh seems to be a worse **sinner**, or was more conscious of **his** own **sin** than **David**.

In search for forgiveness **David** opened **his sinful** heart (see the commentary on **the Life of David, to see link click [Df - O God, A Broken and Contrite Heart You Will Not Despise](#)**). **For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me**. There is a cleansing when we take responsibility for our own **sin**. We have a tendency to blame everyone and everything but ourselves. But **Nathan's** words brought **David** back to reality: **Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight so that You are proved right when you speak and justified when You judge**. This is the road to recovery. When we take our **sin** to **ADONAI**, there is absolute justice and absolute mercy for **God** delights in forgiving the repentant **sinner**.¹⁹⁰ **Surely, I was born in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me**. We are all born, yes, even conceived, with the disease of **sin** because of **Adam's** fall: **By one man's disobedience many were made sinners (Romans 5:19)**. As a result, we are totally corrupt and unable to save ourselves from our **sinful** condition. **Surely You desire truth in the innermost place (Psalm 51:3-6)**. Only when we believe that **the Truth became flesh (John 1:14)** and died for our **sins** can this be achieved. The godly surrender, cry out to **God**, confess their **sins**, and receive the assurance of **Messiah's** forgiveness.

Paul repeats what **he** said in **7:17-17**, with only a slight variation. **Now if I do what I do not want to do, he** argues with simple logic, then it follows that **it is no longer I who do it, but it is the [sin nature] living in me that does it (7:20)**. The **[sin nature]** goes to battle against the divine nature. As **Paul** said in **his** letter to the believers in Galatia: **For the old [sin nature] wants what is**

contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit wants what is contrary to the old [sin nature]. These oppose each other, so that you find yourselves unable to carry out your good intentions (Galatians 5:17).

The believer has an **old [sin nature]** that wants to keep him in bondage. “I will get free from these old **sins**,” the believer says to himself. “I determine here and now that I will not do this any longer!” What happens? He tries as hard as he can with all his willpower and energy, and for a time succeeds, but then, when he least expects it, he falls again. Why? Because he tried to overcome his **old [sin nature]** under the power of his own will.¹⁹¹ But **Paul’s** remedy is to **walk by the Ruach** (see the commentary on **Galatians Bv - Walk by the Ruach, and Not the Desires of the Flesh**).

So, I find this “law” or “principle” at work: The word **Torah**, literally, means *teaching*. It can be used for the five books of **Moshe**, or the whole **TaNaKh (John 10:34)**. Uncapitalized, **Torah** can be understood generally as a **law** or **principle (Romans 7:21-8:2)**.

So, I find this law or principle at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me (7:21). The continuing presence of **evil** in a believer’s life is so universal that **Paul** refers to it not as an uncommon thing, but as such a common reality as to be called a continually operating **law at work**. Our **old [sin nature]** does battle with every good thing a believer desires to do . . . every good thought, every good intention, every good motive, every good word, and every good deed. **ADONAI** warned **Cain** when **he** became angry that **Abel’s** sacrifice was accepted but **his** own was not: **Sin is crouching at the door - it wants you, but you can rule over it (Genesis 4:7b)**. **Sin** continues to **crouch at the door**, even for believers, in order to lead us into disobedience.¹⁹²

*Dear Loving Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for our cleansing us when we get saved and become **Your child (John 1:12)**. Praise **You** for **Your** forgiveness when we **sin** after becoming your **child**. Though **Your children** would **love** to be perfect the moment we become **Your children**, perfection will only be obtained when we get to heaven and wear **Yeshua’s** robe of **righteousness**. **He made the One who knew no sin to become a sin offering on our behalf, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (Second Corinthians 5:21)**. Thank **You** that when **Your child sins**, you do not punish in wrath; but you lovingly discipline him so the peaceful fruit of **righteousness** is produced. **“My son, do not take lightly the discipline of Adonai or lose heart when you are***

corrected by Him, because ADONAI disciplines the one He loves and punishes every son He accepts.”. . . Now all discipline seems painful at the moment - not joyful. But later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it (Hebrews 12:5b-6, 11).

When we confess our sin, You have promised to forgive us and to purify us. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (First John 1:9). I want to follow You in all I do, think and say and I do not want to ever sin; but when I stumble and sin, I will run to You in confession and ask You to forgive and to purify me. I love You. In Yeshua’s holy name and power of resurrection. Amen