

**The Bible (Unmuted) Transcript**  
**Episode 28**  
**Romans Part 11 (Rom 6)**  
**August 15, 2023**

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**Episode Summary:**

In many ways, the meaning of Romans 6 is straightforward: If you're a Christian, baptized into the Messiah, then don't go back to the old ways of sinful living. Paul is adamant that, for those who have been united to Christ, the sinful lifestyle must be a thing of the past. This much is clear from the text.

But is there more going on beneath the text? Arguably, there is. In this episode, Matt shows how Romans 6 harkens back to the Exodus story. By alluding to this important Jewish story, Paul effectively frames Christian baptism as a new Exodus event and the Christian family as a new Exodus people. This, in turn, reveals how Jesus' death and resurrection culminates the story of God's plan to set free those who have been enslaved by sin's dominion and lead them home to the Promised Land. Simply put: Romans 6 is all about leaving Egypt.

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**Transcript:**

0:00 Hey friends welcome to another episode of The Bible Unmuted! My name is Matt Halsted and it is my pleasure to be your tour guide once again through the book of Romans. And today we find ourselves in Romans chapter 6, a fascinating passage, just like all the other passages before it and all the other passages that are after it.

Today is really special because we are going to talk about some things that I think deserve a little bit more attention than perhaps we've given it. And I'm talking about the word baptism and the idea of being freed from our sin. We all know what those things mean, but have we given it thought with respect to the story of Israel? And I think that's going to be an important question to ask. If you hang around me too much, you'll know that I advocate for what N.T. Wright calls a storied approach to the study of scripture. That's what the New Testament authors like Paul and others, and Matthew (in Matthew's gospel we looked at this before), and each of these writers of the New Testament have read the Old Testament as a story. They read the Jesus story in light of the Old Testament story and the Old Testament story in light of the Jesus story. So, when we come to these texts and concepts in the book of Romans and chapter 6 specifically, we need to ask ourselves: how does this fit into the story of Israel? And when we look at today's text, its going to be huge and so important to do. I think as we will see in this episode and in the following episodes of 7 and 8, that there are key concepts and technical words and phrases used which will harken us back, if we knew our Old Testament well enough, to stories and concepts that were near and dear to the heart of faithful Jews just like Paul. I'm just not convinced that we should read this text as merely 21<sup>st</sup>-century interpreters. We need to read this text as 1<sup>st</sup>-century Jews who understood the Jewish story, grew up with it, and had it running through their veins. And that would have been

Paul – and since Paul wrote this text, so we should assume the right pre-judgements, the right assumptions, or the right pre-suppositions. And for Paul, those pre-suppositions are key to understanding this text. If I could be so bold to say, I'm hoping that as we read this text, our previous readings will have been enhanced in a 3D sort of way. So, say, going from black and white TV to 4K HD television. I think that's what my goal is today is to take us into some layers in the text. To get behind the text and see what's going on there.

3:15 Let's set that aside for just a moment. I want to share a little bit about what's going on in my life and all the fun things happening there. The busy things. It's the middle of August and this will come out on August 15<sup>th</sup> and I am in the middle of prepping for the fall semester at my school, Eternity Bible College. I just love when the semester starts. I have always been too school for cool so whenever the semester comes around, I am just giddy. I know all of my students are just as giddy – ready to take tests, ready to take exams, read a bunch of stuff. It's like catnip for me, it's just so much fun. And it's also really busy and so if you need to add something to your to do list, then add me to your prayer list. I have a lot to do, my in-box stacks up. It's a fun but busy time of the year. If you have emailed me or sent me messages, or comments, please forgive me if I have been a little bit tardy in responding. I will get back to you, but it's just been busy. For us the semester starts August 27, so it's going to be busy until then and then a week after that it will start tapering off as we get settled in.

Let me share this. I want to give a plug for my school Eternity Bible College. I just love my school. I am passionate about our vision and about our commitment to bring high quality, accredited education at the undergraduate level to people all over the world. We literally have students from all over the world. From Omaha, Nebraska to the UAE, from Scotland to Nepal. Literally all over the world and we are committed to the global kingdom of Christ.

One thing we love about our vision is that we do our best to keep costs down. Let's face it, a college education is unrighteously expensive. And I pick my words there very carefully because I think it's true. The cost of education is just crazy. So, we do our best to keep it accessible. And accessible in a couple of ways. Accessible financially, we don't have fancy buildings or things like that which cost a lot of overhead and become major expenses for us. When colleges have those expenses, they just get passed on to the student. And the student already enough going on their life, working on their studies and they don't need to have the burden of paying for expensive buildings. We don't want to pass on the expenses on to them, we don't want to pass it on to our donors. We just want the money that we make to go straight to the educational process. We are committed to financial accessibility.

We are also committed to geographical accessibility. It's important to us because we want to take this education to people all over the world wherever they are. We think it's slightly silly to ask people to give up their current ministries in Omaha, Nebraska or in Nepal to come live in Southern California, move their family across the world or across the country and give up everything so that they can come and study. What we like to do is partner more closely with the local churches. We like to equip people where they are in their context, in their place. That is our passion and we want to do everything we can to make that possible for them.

All of that takes a lot of work. Most of us do more than two or three different roles within the college because we are trying to keep costs down. All to say, please pray for our school. And if you want to know more about us you can go to [eternity.edu](http://eternity.edu) and you can read all about us. Please feel free to share what you learn with your friends, family and churches. We are also always excited to explore options of partnering with mission agencies and churches, etc. and if you have a good idea and want to partner with us and help educate workers in the kingdom, let us know. Shoot us an email. And please pray for all of us as we get back into the swing of things.

As a result of jumping into the fall semester, I am often not as good at making polished podcasts. Hopefully you have not been able to tell that. If I seem a little foggy brained, you know why. So please forgive me for that.

Let me share a little bit about Patreon. I've set up a Patreon for those who are able and interested in supporting the podcast, you can become a Patreon member. You can go to <https://www.patreon.com/TheBibleUnmuted> and you can look at the different tier options depending on the different levels of support that you feel led to give. So check that out. I so appreciate everyone who supports the podcast, it means so much to me. And don't feel pressured to support the podcast by no means. But maybe you could pray. Maybe that's the way God is calling you to support this. I covet your prayers. If you feel led to contribute financially, that is super cool too. I am so thankful for that. It helps me do what I do. It helps supplement my income. Going back to Eternity Bible College – one way we keep our tuition as low as possible and one way we keep our budget as lean as possible so that we don't pass on the burden of that to our students is that we keep our salaries as minimal as possible. So this is a way to supplement my own income and to continue the ministry that I feel God has called me to do. All this to say, supporting the podcast is such a huge encouragement to me and it helps me do what I do. I feel so called to teach people Scripture and to dive into the text with you on this journey of God's word together.

And the most important thing, and I don't say this to sound spiritual (because I hate spiritual cliches, they are just so boring and I am just not into "churchese" language), but your prayers mean so much to me, more than anything at all. I am a firm believer in prayer. My wife and I were just recently talking about how looking back, God has provided in so many ways. He has never failed us. Never. When we have prayed and sought him in prayer, seeking God a few years ago so intensely on so many things and he came through. So many cool stories I could share with respect to that. And it might be kind of cool if I brought my wife on and we shared some of those stories. All to say, prayer is important. And I want to return the blessing. If you have prayer requests, please email me and share your prayer requests and I will pray for you. You can always reach out to me at [www.matthewhalsted.com](http://www.matthewhalsted.com). At the top there is a contact form, a contact link that takes you to the form. And those messages go straight to my email inbox. If you have prayer requests, I am happy to pray for you, it's a privilege. You are my brother and sister in Christ. We are in this crazy world together so we should partner with each other

13:15 It's time to get into Romans chapter 6. If you want to pull out your bibles, or if you're driving I don't recommend doing that – just listen along and maybe you can pull out your bible later. I want to dive into Romans chapter 6. It's going to be a lot of fun. There is a lot here. It's like a gold mine and we are going to dig deep and look behind the layers of the text. So, let's dive in. Romans chapter 6.

13:40 Let's begin reading at verse 1 and I'm going to read all the way down to verse 11. I'll be reading from the New Revised Standard Version – alright here we go.

*1 What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*

*5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved*

*to sin. 7 For whoever has died is freed from sin. 8 But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

15:04 So there are a few things I want to bring our attention to. The first thing is that Paul is pushing back against antinomianism. What is that? Is that like a disease or something? Well, its sort of a disease. Not a physical or medical disease, but antinomianism means literally “against law”. Anti meaning against in this context. Nomos is the Greek word for law. So *antinomos* or antinomianism is the idea that the Christian life can be lived in a way that is licentious. That you can do whatever you want to because after all you are free in Christ and you are saved by grace alone, which means it doesn’t really matter what you do. You can sin a million times, willfully, freely, and it does nothing to you. It has nothing to do with your relationship with God, ultimately because you are saved by grace. Well... so the early Christians did not believe that.

The early Christians believed that, yes, we are saved totally, 100% by grace alone. And if you have followed along in my teachings in the past episodes you know that I believe in grace alone 150% - there is no work that you bring to Christ. There is no merit that bring to Christ. Zero. Zilch. Nada. You do not have any boot straps by which you can pull yourself up. Its all grace. And yet, the early Christians, while they believed that, they also believed that the grace you’ve been given has been given in a sense of stewardship. That it’s going to bring about some sort of decisive change in your life. It doesn’t mean that its going to bring perfection in this life, but it does mean that its going to bring change in this life.

Paul is pushing back against the idea that since grace is in abundance, we should just continue in sin. *Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it?* And that is the key here. Paul is pushing back against the idea that we can just live in sin. And I think there is an important contrast that we need to make as believers.

17:30 The difference between a believer in Jesus, and a non-believer, or the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian is not that a Christian doesn’t sin anymore. No. Christians sin. The difference is the struggle. Christians and non-Christians both sin. But only the Christians struggles with their sin. The non-Christian lives in their sin.

And I think that is what Paul is pushing back here against. He’s saying, *how can we who died to sin go on living in it?* Just living as if it’s just part of our lives. And have we come to peace with the fact that we are just okay with sinning? Paul doesn’t leave room for that in our Christian life. When we sin, we should fight it. We should have this sense of struggle with it. We should have angst about the reality of sin. Not to the point of course that we get depressed or feel condemned. No, no, no. *There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* That is something that Paul will say later on in Romans chapter 8. What he’s saying here though, is he is pushing back against those professing Christians who just say... Well, let’s just face it. There are people out there who are just numb to sin. It might leave you wondering how they can live in that and not feel bad. And sometimes people might say, “well, I’ve accepted Jesus Christ as my savior and I’ve got my fire insurance, yadda, yadda, yadda...” Paul is going to push back against that. He is not an antinomian. He does not believe that you can just live however you want to. Salvation by grace is not a license for sin. Salvation by grace is an opportunity to struggle against your sin. To live a new sort of life. This is that context that he’s entering into. And its an important one. People back then are like people today in that we tend to forget what the Christian life is all about. We tend to when Jesus is your savior, you’ve got to have him as your Lord, too. Of course, we are all learning how to put away our sin. And that is actually the point here. It’s learning how to put away our sin.

And the way Paul does that here is in the second thing I want to bring up. Namely, union with Christ. When we read starting with around verse 3, he says, *do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.* So, notice the word united. This is that second point that I want to point out. For Paul, a big important theme is union with Christ. The reason that we cannot go about living in licentiousness is because we are united to Christ. We are united of course through baptism. Our baptism is an act, my tradition would call it a sacrament where union with Christ takes place. So, if you think about baptism, it's a passing through the waters. Dying and then rising to new life. I think that's an important point here for Paul. And this might sound slightly controversial but its pretty clear from this text if we read it afresh and let the text take us where ever it wants to take us. And the conclusion that we are going to get is that baptism is more than just a picture. Baptism is more than that. It is an act of grace where we participate with Christ. And I think that's an important point to make. Paul says the word – it's union with Christ and being united with him in a death like his, and this is through baptism. So, I think the point here that Paul wants to make is to say, "Hey Christians, all of you. The ones in Rome, the ones in America, the ones in Europe. Everyone. Everybody. Every Christian – take your baptism seriously. That was an act of union with Christ and you should live in light of it. You should live like you have died to sin. You should live like you have been resurrected into new life. That's a union with Christ you should take seriously."

22:22 So what I like to tell people and what we should tell ourselves is, take your baptism seriously. I grew up in a tradition, I guess you could say, that was tradition-less. It was a tradition of no tradition. And there wasn't really a huge emphasis on baptism that much. You did it, and you should do it, but some people got baptized multiple times (which I don't think is a good thing to do). Baptism is a union with Christ. Christ died once. The key – if you ever feel like you need to get re-baptized, the one thing I would say...and this is Pastor Matt coming out. I was a pastor for a number of years and so the pastor hat comes out. So, what I would say to people if they wanted to get re-baptized is that your first baptism was valid. Maybe instead of getting re-baptized, maybe you should align your life prayerfully with Christ and look back on the grace that he has given you in baptism and in let it be confirmed in this repentant life that you want to live now. It's a beautiful picture for folks who might have strayed from the faith, or backslidden (as we used to say, or maybe still say), to look back on their baptism and say, "Even though I was go through a season on rebellion, or backslidings, God has always been with me. He gave me grace way back then, and that grace has been following me and pursuing me even as I have been running from him. And I need to get my life consistent with the baptism that God gifted to me years ago." And that is what I tell people, that you don't need to get re-baptized any more than Christ needs to die again. He died once and for all. There is one faith, one baptism and I think we should look back and reflect upon our baptism prayerfully, contemplatively, meditatively, and think about how we can align ourselves with that act that God has performed on us. And that's another thing I want to point out. Baptism for the Christian, for the one who is baptized, it's a passive activity. You don't baptize yourself. It is an act that is done to you and for you as a gift to you. And I think that's another thing to look back upon in our baptism is to say "praise God that is something he did for me." You are just receiving a gift. Again, its grace alone. We are beggars and we are in need of bread. And in our baptism, we are united with the Bread of Life. And that's a beautiful thing.

25:27 So I think Paul is just simply saying take that seriously. We need to encourage each other. I need you to encourage me and you need me to encourage you. Our churches, we should encourage each other to live consistently with the baptismal confession that we made. As people, as Christians, we are called to imitate Christ. We are called to live like Christ. That is what baptism is about. It is an act of union with Jesus. And as we live out our Christian lives, we need to grow into that holiness, into that sanctification. Our goal is to be imitators of Jesus, the Messiah in every

way. To live cruciform lives, to live resurrected lives. And that's why it's so important to hold each other accountable and to lovingly remind each other to live consistently with the act of union that you made with Christ at your baptism. We need to be soaked into the life of Jesus. We need to be one with Christ. And that is such a beautiful picture that is given to us at the act of our baptism. But again, it is more than a picture, it is an act of union with Christ our Lord. It's an act of union. I don't know how else to say it. Look again at the words that Paul gives. *For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.* And of course, this is baptism. Lots more to say about this, but it's a very important point that we need to make.

27:15 The next thing I want to talk about here is the focus that we want to make and that Paul is making in chapter 6. It's the idea of story. It's the idea of being immersed into the story of Jesus and being immersed into the story of Israel as a result of our union with Christ. So, what I want to do in this section is to read verses 12 through the end of the chapter in verse 23. Before I get to that though, I want to give us some cues. As we read through that part of the text there are going to be words and concepts and phrases that are going to pop up that I think are so important. They are like little data points that we need to account for in the text. And once we find these data points, we are going to weave a thread through them, a story through them. And I think these data points that we are going to encounter are such that Paul is drawing our attention back to the story of Israel.

For example, in the next passage, verses 12-23, you are going to notice some motifs. You are going to notice the motif of slavery. There is going to be slavery language. You are going to notice lordship or dominion language. And you are going to notice language of being set free. So, slavery, lordship, dominion and being set free. Now these data points, these three separate data points need that story to be weaved through them so that we can make sense of the data points themselves. And what I'm going to suggest to you and what others have suggested in their writing is what story is alluding and the story that he is weaving is the exodus story. Because its in the exodus where you have a people in slavery, who are under a bad lord, under bad dominion and they need to be set free. And they are set free through the exodus of the Red Sea, through the passing of the waters. And so, some folks have argued, and I am on board with this thesis, is that what Paul is really doing with this baptism language is talking about the exodus. He is referring us back to the Old Testament story of the exodus and he is offering Christians an interesting perspective on their own baptism.

29:40 To see what I mean, lets read verses 12-23.

**12** *Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. 13 No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*

**15** *What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, 18 and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented*

*your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.*

**20** *When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. 22 But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

31:25 In that text you saw those three motifs that I was talking about a few moments ago. You have the slavery motif, you have the lordship or dominion motif, and then you have the being set free from sin motif. Being set free from your bondage, your slavery. And again, all of that is in the context of baptism. So, some scholars have argued that this is an exodus motif. This is an exodus story that Paul is telling. He's saying, "hey guys, your baptism is an exodus. Your baptism is an exodus event." And this way of telling the story contextualizes the Christian faith within the story of Israel.

Let's go back a couple of episodes ago when I was talking about the gospel of Matthew and how he depicts Jesus as re-enacting the story of Israel. If you don't remember that go back and check that out. If you don't want to listen to the episodes you can go on the website and look at the transcripts that Linda has been so gracious to work so very hard on and get to us. A plug to Linda. So thankful for Linda because you can go back and look at those transcripts and do a quick ctrl-find search or whatever and what we're looking for. So, I did a podcast on Matthew, or I touched on Matthew's gospel how he depicted Jesus as the new Israel and how he re-enacted the story of Israel. And we went into why Jesus had to do that and all of that. Anyway, here you see the same thing. It is not merely Jesus who is re-enacting the story of Israel, is the Jesus people who are replaying the Jesus story.

As Christians we are baptized people, and through the baptism we have become one with Christ. We have been set free from sin. We are entering into a new promised land. We are leaving behind our old lords. And we are setting aside the dominion that sin had over us. This is the exodus story. So what Paul is doing here is that he is contextualizing the Christian story in light of the Jewish story, or the story of Israel. So, scholars have looked this and have noticed these themes and noticed these words like dominion, and slavery, water, baptism, and all these sorts of things coming into play. And they look at these texts and they see these data points that I was talking about. And they notice that you can weave the exodus thread through each of those data points and see a picture.

To capture this idea, you can take a 30,000-foot view of this. Its not just Romans 6. Its also Romans 7 and 8. When you get to Romans 7, its all about the Torah. And we will get into all of that discussion, but Torah is a very important piece here in this puzzle. And then after that we have Romans 8 where the Spirit is literally described as leading you out into resurrection and new life. And so here in Romans 6 you have slavery, bondage and rescue from slavery through baptism, through passing through the waters. In Romans 7 you have Torah, then being resurrected to a new home, into a new created order. That's exactly the story of Israel. Right? Think of it. They were in bondage to Pharaoh, they were let out through the waters and freed from that dominion, and they receive Torah at Sinai. Then they leave Sinai and enter into the Promised Land, being led by the Spirit through the wilderness. This is Romans 6, 7, and 8.

35:16 Now, I think there is a lot of merit to this. And as we get into chapters 6, 7, and 8 hopefully you will see some of that come through. In my perspective, this is not surprising to me that Paul would appeal to the exodus story. Why not? Well, because just as we've seen in Romans 5 and Romans 4, Paul has already taken stories, like the Abraham story and the Adam story and he has

christologized those stories. So, it is no surprise to me that by the time we get to Romans 6 he is once again christologizing the Jewish story of the exodus. So, I think that's the big picture here and I don't want us to lose sight of the forest when we get into the little trees.

There's a great quote that I mention in my book on page 142. If you have my book, I give a quote from N.T. Wright, and this comes from his *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, it's a large two volume tome. It comes from page 1070, if that gives you any idea how big of a book that is. There is a quote that I want to read to you from N.T. Wright. Here is what Wright says, "*In Romans 6, those who are in the Messiah are brought from slavery to freedom. In Romans 7, the story takes us to Mount Sinai. And in Romans 8, with echoes of the Galatians passage, the Messiah's people are led, not by the cloud and fire but by the Spirit, and assured of that Sonship, which in itself is an Exodus blessing. They're on the way to the inheritance.*" And so N.T. Wright picks up this new exodus motif in Romans 6, 7 and 8. He is well known for popularizing that view. And I pick up on that view in my book and I incorporate it into my own project.

Now, there are some scholars, of course, who disagree with this. And I'm thinking specifically of Doug Moo who has written a great commentary on Romans. I have his Romans commentaries. He had an older one that he recently revised and came out with a newer edition. I have got both of those and I use them all the time. I like Doug Moo. He's a great scholar. I disagree with him on this though, because he doesn't think there is an exodus narrative here. I remember at an ETS conference (an Evangelical Theological Society conference), this must have been maybe eight years ago, it was at a southwest regional conference. He was a plenary speaker and he gave a paper on this and he took exception with N.T. Wright's view here. He just didn't think it made sense of the text. He didn't think it was in the text. He thought it was, as I recall, reading too much into the text. He's a great scholar. My hats off to him because he is such a giant in his field, but I just happen to disagree with him. But I wanted to bring him up because I definitely think that we should read every position and every view because it makes us into more well-rounded interpreters. So, check out Doug Moo stuff. I don't buy it though (laughing).

38:27 We are going to set that aside because I want to move along here. But its worth asking though, of course, is it correct? Is this exodus view correct? How did Paul think about the exodus event? I think that's a good question. How did Paul think about the exodus event? Before we answer that question directly, lets just talk about the exodus event itself. For early Jews the exodus event was their salvation event. Today if you were to ask a Christian "when did you get saved?", they would say, "May 14, 1982." They would give you a day, maybe an hour, location, whatever. It's a very individualistic answer to the question, "when did you get saved?" I suspect that if you were to ask any Jew from the Second Temple Period or before the Second Temple Period, "when did you get saved?", they would say, "we got saved at the exodus." For the early Jew the exodus event was their salvation event. It was where they got saved. And I think that, quite honestly, if you are a Christian in any of the western traditions, we could stand to use a more communal aspect to our salvation story. And I think we could get that from Scripture really easily. So, that is how Jews understood the exodus story, exodus event.

Now the question is how did Paul think about the exodus event? To answer that question, I think its best to turn to 1 Corinthians 10. So, we will look at 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 because he talks quite a lot about that event.

*1 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 and all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.*

**6** Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. **7** Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” **8** We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. **9** We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. **10** And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **11** These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. **12** So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. **13** No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

41:45 I want to make a few observations about that passage. Clearly, its an exodus passage. It’s the exodus story and it talks about going through sea, and he’s talking about some of the wilderness stuff. Its all part of the exodus story. He uses the word baptism when he says, “*being baptized into Moses*”, and he even brings Christ into the story. So, let’s make some observations here that I think are important for our understanding of Romans 6. First, Paul conceptualizes the exodus story in terms of baptism. Did you get that? He doesn’t just mention baptism. No, he conceptualizes the whole exodus event in terms of baptism. And I talk about this in my book. I have a whole section on this passage. I talk about how this is an example of how Paul’s dialogical hermeneutics or his interpretive approach is dialogical. Its all about a back-and-forth dialog between him and the text. So, in other words, what Paul is really doing is that he is taking the Christ story, the Jesus people story, and he is contextualizing it in the Old Testament story of the exodus. But in doing so, he is also doing the opposite. He is also taking the exodus story and he is conceptualizing it in terms of the Jesus story. So, its back and forth. Text, exodus event, Christ christology. Its like a dance between Paul’s christology and Paul’s reading of the exodus story. On thing that I say in my book, and this comes from page 144, is “*Paul christologizes the exodus story and he exodusizes the Christ story.*” In other words, he is interpreting the two in light of each other. He even mentions Christ here. He says, that rock was Christ. That rock from which they drank water – that was Christ. So, he puts Christ in the middle of that story. And in doing so, he’s understanding the exodus story in terms of the Christ story. I think that’s a very important piece here. So, what does Paul think about the exodus? He thinks it’s a christology story, it’s a story about Jesus. It’s a story about salvation in Christ.

Another thing I want to mention is, notice how Paul connects not just Christ with the exodus story but also in doing that he also connects Christ’s people with the exodus story. That makes sense. And let me just pause for a moment. Here he is connecting, clearly, the Christ people with the exodus story. Now we have to recall something from Romans 6. We talked about how in Romans 6 and baptism that it was all about union with Christ. How people are unified, united to Christ. So, you have to understand that when you are united to Christ, what is true of Christ becomes true of you. Because there is union there. And you are covered in his righteousness by virtue of your union with Jesus.

45:12 Now this idea here, this union with Christ motif is grounded all in this 1 Corinthians 10 passage. For example, whenever you read on down to verses 14 through 22, you see this idea of being united or participating in the body of Christ through the eucharist or through the Lord’s supper, or communion. Whatever your tradition calls that. And this is going to be the key here for how the Jesus people are participating in the exodus story itself. I hope that makes sense. Let me read for just an example, 1 Corinthians 10:16-17. It says, *the cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one*

*bread*. He is talking about here, *koinonia*. That's the word sharing. It's an intimate communion or unity with Christ by participating in the eucharist. So here that same idea of union with Christ, is present. The word union isn't appearing here. He is not talking about united with Christ in those words, but he is talking about *koinonia*. He is talking about participating in the body of Christ in a very real way.

For Paul this exodus story becomes a typology, or an example even for the Christian people. I think that's a very, very important point. He even seems to think that the exodus story was intended for the Jesus people. So, he says in chapter 10, verse 11, *these things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come*. He is talking about the Christians here. He is talking about the Christ people. Because Paul believes that literally that Jesus is the end of history. He believes that he is the alpha and the omega. He is the beginning and the end. So, all of time is encompassed in the person of Jesus Christ. And if you are united with Christ then you are a part of that people upon whom all the ends of the ages have come. Which means that all the story of Israel are culminated in the Jesus story, which means they are culminated in the Christ people.

47:40 Now all of this brings us back to Romans chapter 6. It was there, that you have this idea of baptism and union with Christ. Those are the big themes of Romans 6. So, I think what we are looking at here are parallel passages in 1 Corinthians 10 and Romans 6 are largely parallel. That's why I don't think it's a stretch to say that Romans 6 is also an exodus passage because you have these common ideas of baptism and union with Christ. And in the 1 Corinthians 10 passage you have a clear reference to Exodus. So, it's not a stretch to imagine that Paul has that same idea lurking in the background as he is writing Romans chapter 6. I think that's an important piece.

There are other connections that I think we can make to the exodus story when we pay very close attention to little things in Romans chapter 6. Let's revisit some of these passages as we wrap up here. I think it will really drive home that exodus motif that is appearing in this chapter. So, thinking of Romans chapter 6 as a whole, especially at the beginning we he says, *should we go on sinning when grace abounds. Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace*. And of course, he says, *by no means!* So what Paul is really doing here is that he is telling the Christians, the baptized community of people, don't go back to slavery. That is what he is essentially saying here. Don't go back to the old ways. You are new. You should walk in newness of life. Now, interestingly, that is a very similar theme in the story of Israel. Don't look back. Don't go backwards. For example, take Exodus 16:1-3. It says, *the whole congregation of the Israelites set out from Elim; and Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. 2 The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3 The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."*

So, you get this idea that the Israelites are looking back on their past life in Egypt saying, *those were the good ole days*. And of course, Moses and the Lord, they are encouraging the people saying, *"don't look back. Don't go back there. You are on your way to freedom. Don't you dare look back."* And yet the story of freedom of course is that they continue to look back. You see this again in Numbers 11:4-5. It says, *the rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, "If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at."* So here you see this looking back at Egypt and saying, I want to go back. And God is saying, no that is the place of your slavery. I am leading you to the Promised Land and to new life. Do not look back.

And lo and behold, this is the story of Romans 6, is it not? Shall we who have been baptized and united with Christ dwell in any longer in our sin. Don't go backwards, go forward in your relationship with Christ. For Israel, their baptism or their crossing through the waters of the Red Sea, that marked a turning point in their relationship with God. That was their salvation event. Leaving Pharaoh behind, leaving their old lord, and their old master and their previous life under his dominion. Leaving all of that behind to accept the true Lord, YHWH, and his blessings and his land flowing with milk and honey, and his glory and all of that. That is what they were encouraged to do.

Now when we go back to Romans chapter 6, let's look a little deeper at some of these same things that mirror the exodus story. So, if you go to Romans 6:6. He says, *we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.* So, you have this slave motif here. He doesn't want you to be enslaved to sin. He doesn't want you to go back to that lifestyle. And then in verses 12 and 14, Paul talks about sin reigning and functioning as almost a brutal lord over the people.

52:45 Now that doesn't come across in the NRSV, the version that I'm reading from. But that is what's going on here. So let me look at chapter 6:12. It says, *Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.* Do not let sin exercise dominion. This word, exercise dominion is **basileuetō (βασιλευέτω)**, and it literally means to rule or reign. Do not let sin reign in your bodies. This is that idea of something reigning over you. This is clearly consistent with and a correlate to the exodus story of Israel leaving behind the one who reigned over them

If you look at verse 14 it says, for sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. That word dominion is, **kurieuō (κυριεύω)**. the word **kýrios (Κυρίου)**, means lord. So literally here it says sin will have no lordship over you since you are not under the law but under grace. So this idea that sin is a brutal lord having dominion, or lording itself, its power over you. We are not supposed to go back to that anymore. Why? Because we have been baptized. We have walked through the Red Sea and we are on our way to the Promised Land. So do not look back. Do not cherish what you perceive to be the blessings of the good food of Egypt. No, you press on. You keep going through. You eat the manna. You eat the bread of Christ. You eat Christ to get you home to the Promised Land.

This is the eucharist, right? Every Sunday at church we take communion, we eat the eucharist. When the eucharist is presented, the priest says...and I think I've mentioned this before. I am Anglican and we take communion weekly. The priest presents the body of Christ and says, "May the body of Christ preserve you into everlasting life." And that's the idea of...it's the story of Israel every Sunday. God has given you the manna which Jesus says is the bread of heaven. He is the bread of heaven. John chapter 6 says all that. He is the bread that gets us through our journey until we arrive home.

55:28 And all of this is connected. Remember what I mentioned at the beginning of the episode that you have these data points. These words, phrases and concepts, and our goal as interpreters is to find a common thread that can be weaved through those data points so that we can present a story that is capable of being understood. Because when we understand a text or passage of Scripture, we don't understand the little words in isolation. To understand a passage is to understand how the words relate to one another. That is why we read a verse in light of its paragraph. We must also read paragraphs in light of the stories told before them. The book of Exodus, the book of Numbers, say. We have to connect those, too. We are not just New Testament readers. We are Old Testament readers. We love the Old Testament and we want the Old Testament to be seen alive through the pages of the New Testament and through the story of Jesus. And this is how we do it. We need to figure out ways to connect the Old Testament to the New Testament. And this

episode is an example of how to do that. You have to pay very close attention to the words and to the phrases.

Another example of this is this idea of being set free. So for example, in Romans 6:18 Paul says, *and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness*. In other words, you have a different lord, you've been set free. This idea of being set free of course key to the Old Testament exodus story.

There is one last thing I want to point out here. Romans 6, obviously, is all about leaving behind your slavery, leaving behind the dominion of sin, leaving behind your bondage, and leaving behind the old lord that has exercised dominion over us. This is very consistent with the Old Testament texts such as exodus and Deuteronomy. In the Old Testament, in the Septuagint to be precise, there is a constant refrain, a constant reference to the "house of slavery" that you are leaving behind. So for example, in Exodus 13:3 in the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint, it says, *and so Moses spoke to the people, "remember this day in which you went forth from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. For with a strong hand the Lord led you out from there*. The idea is that Egypt represents the house of bondage, the house of slavery. So, this slavery motif is all throughout the exodus story. And leaving the slavery behind, leaving the bondage, the house, the place of your slavery. Leaving that behind by the Lord's hand through the waters of the exodus, through the Red Sea.

And that is what is key. You get these house of slavery texts in Exodus 13, Deuteronomy 5, and Deuteronomy 6, 7, 8, and 13. And there are lots of these little passages. And I think arguably, once you have all these Old Testament texts in your mind and shaping the lens through which you read these other New Testament texts, it really helps you really craft the picture that Paul is painting. Somebody might look back and object to this and say, "okay Matt, you're reading way too much in to Romans 6. Paul doesn't mention the exodus. Why doesn't he just say explicitly 'hey guys, I'm referring to the exodus.' (Wink, wink)."

Well, two things to that. First, he does say that. Not here, but in 1 Corinthians 10, that passage we looked at, he explicitly connects the baptism idea with the exodus story. And there were many different themes there that were mirrored in Romans 6 so it is not unreasonable to think that same background isn't on Paul's mind in Romans 6.

The second thing I would say is that Paul doesn't have to reference and say explicitly, "hey guys, I'm referencing the exodus story.", because he is a good Jewish person who just assumes it. Arguably that's the case. He's is just assuming it. And I suspect that he wants his readers, primarily the Jewish ones of his letter to the Romans, to pick up on this theme. He thinks, perhaps arguably, that they are just going to pick up on this theme. And there is no point in being explicit about it. It probably didn't even come to his mind because its so thoroughly, pardon the pun, immersed in the story of the exodus. He is so baptized in the story of the exodus that it just kind of bleeds through.

Now we, two thousand years later, have to do a little bit of work to find all this. Do a little digging. Do a little Indian Jones and digging through the text to find these treasures. But that doesn't mean they're not there. It just means that we are so far removed from the worldview of Paul that we have to do a little extra. We have to do a little mining through the Greek Old Testament and do a little homework to find those. So here's what I would say. I would say at the very least, I think this position is reasonable.

1:00:35 Could I be wrong? Of course. I could be wrong on a lot of things. I am wrong on a lot of things. I just don't which things I'm wrong on otherwise I wouldn't believe them anymore. I am always open to critique. I'm always open to being proved wrong, of course. Its just that when I read these

stories, and when I immerse myself in these exodus stories and work patiently through those Exodus texts, I can't help but see them in the Romans texts. Especially in light of 1 Corinthians 10, and union with Christ there, and how Christ is imported by Paul into the exodus story. That rock was Christ, he says. And then coming back to Romans 6, oh my goodness, this is everywhere. It is all over the page. Its so hard not to see it. Once you have the Old Testament in the background, it is so hard to undo that.

And really, that is my goal as a Christian. I want to be so immersed in the Old Testament story that I can pick up on these themes really easily in the Jesus story. That is how they would have been perceived in the 1<sup>st</sup>-century. And I want to be so immersed in the Jesus story that I pick up on these themes in the Old Testament too. And I want to be able to find them there.

So again, it goes back to what I said so many times. Interpretation is a dialog. It is taking your assumptions, and in our case as Christians, our primary assumption is Jesus. He is our pre-judgement. He is the pre-supposition. He is the center assumption for all of life for us. And we want to read the Old Testament in light of that. The Messianic, Christological assumption.

But we also do the reverse. We see the Old Testament and we can situate the story of Jesus within the Old Testament story so that both are mutually interpreting. Jesus is a Jew and therefore we can situate him and contextualize him within the Jewish story. And we can take the Jewish story and situate that within the messianic story because the Jewish story anticipated its fulfillment in the messiah.

1:03:00 One last thing before we close shop today. Think of it like this. Baptism is our union with Christ. And like I mentioned, we need to live lives that are consistent with our baptism. We need to live cruciform lives, resurrected lives. And how do we do that? We do that by what I said earlier – making Jesus our core pre-supposition of life. The center of all things. Make him the lens through which we view reality.

This past week, if you follow me on Facebook, Twitter or social media, I posted a little thought I had about all this here. And I will just read this to you here. I said this, *everything we read, everything we hear, every trial we encounter—everything is interpreted. We can't not interpret. And when Christians say "Jesus is Lord," we don't mean anything less than this: all of life should be viewed through the lens of our crucified and risen Messiah. He's our hermeneutic. Jesus is the Way, the one who teaches us how to walk, how to hear, how to see.*

As Christians, as those baptized united with Jesus the Messiah, lets challenge ourselves to be people who are dead to sin. Let's challenge ourselves to be people who have left Egypt behind. let us look confidently at the Red Sea as the mighty hand of the Lord parts the waters so that we can walk on dry land. Let's be a people of faith in the wilderness of life. And my goodness, there is a wilderness that we are living in. Let's be a people of faith who can confidently tread through the wilderness journey that we are on and faithful to eat the bread that comes from heaven. To be a Eucharistic people, to be a people that feeds on Christ. To be a people that are united and fellowshiping and are incorporated into the life of the Messiah so that we can come through the wilderness temptations. That we can come through our forty days and forty nights in the wilderness being tempted by Satan wot worship false things, to do bad things. Let us be a people who appeals to Scripture, to the word of God, to defeat the enemy so that at the end of our journey we can come through it and behold the Promised Land. Enter into the land flowing with milk and honey. And enter into that land refreshed on the person of Christ who was to us, all this time a gift. I want to challenge us, I want to challenge myself, I want to challenge you, to be a eucharistic people. To be a baptized people. To be a people united with Christ Jesus, our Lord. And with the help and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Let us never forget the power of the Holy Spirit in all of this. He is leading us through the wilderness and he is leading us home to the Promised Land.

Dear friends, I pray that you are encouraged. Because greater is he who is in you than he who is in the wilderness. Greater is he who is in you than he who is speaking doubts into your ears. Jesus is Lord. Look confidently at your day. Look confidently at the challenges that will come your way and look at them and say one thing. And that one thing is this: Jesus Christ is Lord and I am his. And he is mine. Go in peace, dear friends. May the Lord bless you and may he cause his face to shine joyfully upon you. You are deeply loved by God.

1:06:55 That's the end of today's episode. And thanks again for listening to The Bible Unmuted. If you like this podcast, consider rating it on your podcast platform, subscribing to it, and sharing with your friends. You can also support the podcast by becoming a patreon member. Go to: <https://www.patreon.com/TheBibleUnmuted> - or simply find the link in the description of this episode. Thanks for listening. Until next time, friends.