

The Bible (Unmuted) Transcript**Episode 27****Romans, Part 10 (Rom 5)****August 8, 2023****Teacher: Matthew Halsted****Episode Summary:**

In Romans 5, Paul continues his discussion about justification by describing what results in justification, namely, peace with God. Paul continues his exposé by hearkening readers back to Genesis, where Adam sins. Modern readers are left with pressing questions -- not least about how the sin of Adam impacted humanity as a whole. Does this negate individual responsibility? Following other scholars, Matt offers a perspective that keeps a balance between the communal and individual aspects of human sinfulness. Additionally, with respect to hermeneutics, other questions are just as important: Does Paul argue from plight to solution or from solution to plight? What hermeneutical conclusions result from the answer to that question? Listen to find out!

If you like this podcast, consider subscribing and sharing with your friends.

+ + +

If you like this podcast, consider becoming a Patreon supporter. You can do so by visiting: <https://www.patreon.com/TheBibleUnmuted>

Don't forget to subscribe to the podcast and share it with others!

www.matthewhalsted.com

Transcript:

0:00 Welcome back to another episode of The Bible Unmuted. I'm excited to join you once again on our journey through Romans. So, it's been a while since we've been in Romans – we had several other types of episodes the past month, which were a lot of fun. But it's cool to be back on the Romans road, so to speak. I'm really excited to be in today's episode. In fact, we are going to be in Romans chapter 5. Now, Romans 5 is a text that no doubt you are familiar with. This is the passage, the chapter in Romans where Paul takes Adam and Christ and compares the two. And he talks about the two things each respective person brings about in human history. And it's a text that we are all familiar with. That's a good thing, but in some ways its not a good thing. Because here's the thing about familiarity. When we are so familiar with the biblical passage, sometimes the passage will lose its punch. And its so familiar that we are blinded by the beauty that is contained in that passage. What we need to do is figure out a way to make the passage strange again, to make it weird again. That way it becomes a thing that we encounter as if for

the first time. Then it speaks to us in the way that we need most. And the way that you make a bible passage strange again is actually quite simple: you just ask fresh questions. You look at it and ask new questions. Questions that you haven't asked before. And once you ask those new and fresh questions, you get fresh answers and perspectives back. Its sort of like opening a door for the first time and seeing treasure beyond the door in the room that was hidden behind the door in that room. So, what we want to do today is ask fresh questions of Romans chapter 5. Its going to be a lot of fun.

2:00 Before we get to that, let me share with you what's coming down the pike. We have some fun interviews coming up soon. We have, first, Dan Wilt coming on the show to talk about his new book on the Holy Spirit. I'm super excited about that. It's going to be a lot of fun. And then we'll have Nijay Gupta, an amazing New Testament scholar—we'll be chatting about his new book *Tell Her Story: How Women Led, Taught, and Ministered in the Early Church*. It's a very important topic. I'm really looking forward to that discussion. Both interviews will be fantastic. So be on the lookout. Those will be dropping probably at the end of August or first of September, or thereabouts.

More news here, also. I've got a couple more episodes coming out with The Naked Bible Podcast. If you haven't subscribed to The Naked Bible Podcast, you need to pause this episode and go subscribe right now. Because there is a ton of resources on that podcast going years back from Dr. Michael Heiser. So much treasure there – I can't emphasize that enough. It's a privilege to be back on the show and to finish out this series through first Samuel. It's been a lot of fun working through that text. So be sure to check those out over the course of the next month. They will be dropping at the end of August as well. And another bit of information here is in September, I'm interviewing Matthew Bates about his new book *Why the Gospel? Living the Good News of King Jesus with Purpose*. That interview will be on The Naked Bible Podcast. I'm really, really stoked about that. We're going to be holding those discussions in mid-September, which means it probably won't drop until mid-October, but I'm not sure exactly.

So just be on the lookout. That's what's coming down the pike. Lots of fantastic discussions coming up in the days ahead. An I know that you are going to be blessed by each guest as well.

Alright, let's dive into today's episode.

4:03 In this episode, we are looking at chapter 5. This is where Paul talks more about justification and, importantly, the story of Adam. And as we'll see, Paul's use of the Adam story is *somewhat* like his use of the Abraham story in Romans chapter 4: Paul faithfully employs these Old Testament stories to help his readers see how the ministry of Jesus is no mere isolated, detached story. To the contrary, for Paul, the Jesus story exists within the same story started long ago in the Old Testament. It's been said before, and it needs to be said again: Paul is not inventing theology in distinction to the Old Testament (or in isolation to the Old Testament is perhaps a better way to say it). He's not doing that. Instead, what he is doing is *continuing* the theology of the Old Testament.

This doesn't mean, though, that Paul's use of the Old Testament is stale, or that it lacks faithful levels of creativity. Far from it... for Paul, the Old Testament stories need to be fleshed out for his time, for his era. And Paul sees Jesus as the one in whom the Old Testament stories are enfleshed. For Paul, the incarnation of the divine Son of God has hermeneutical ramifications: Jesus embodies and enacts the story of Israel such that the stories of Israel can take on fresh light and perspective.

We saw this most definitively, I think, in the way in which Paul re-tells the Abraham story. Remember how in Chapter 4 Paul was creative with that story? He was. But this did not mean that Paul was unfaithful in his interpretation. No, no, no. Paul was being faithful to the Abraham story *by* creatively weaving the Jesus story into it (and vice versa).

Now, in Romans 5, Paul will do something quite similar: The Adam story will be weaved into the Christ story; and the Christ story will be weaved back into the Adam story. The result will be a sort of *fusion of horizons* (to steal a concept from the great philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer).

Before Paul gets to the Adam story, he's got a few other things to say first.

With all that said, let's keep all of that in the back of our mind and let's dive into the text.

6:25 Let's begin by reading Romans 5:1–11 (NRSV)

1 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. 8 But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. 9 Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. 11 But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

7:45 In this text, Paul begins with a comment about justification by faith: “since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God” (v.1). It’s important to know that some early Greek manuscripts say something slightly different. Some texts say this: “since we are justified by faith, *let us* have peace with God.” You can tell the difference: some Greek texts make peace with God to be something that necessarily results from justification, while other texts make peace sound as if it’s something we should pursue because we have been justified.

In Greek, it all comes down to one word. In Greek, the word *echomen* means “we have peace”; whereas the word *echōmen* means “let us have peace.” (that’s the subjunctive idea for all you Greek nerds out there – this is like catnip for you). *Echomen* and *echōmen*. The difference is actually in just one letter: *Echomen* has a short “o” sound (from the letter called omicron), while *echōmen* has the long “o” sound (from the letter called omega). So, it’s easy to tell how, perhaps, the scribes would have gotten this slightly confused when they were copying the texts. But here’s the thing: It’s likely that omicron and omega sounded the same anyway, or very similar. An “o” or an “ah”. Even though the spelling is different—and the letters look different—they perhaps had the same sound. So, that would have contributed to the confusion as well.

But anyway... we should ask the question, which is it? Which is the correct reading? I’m not 100% sure. I tend to go with “we have peace” reading—the indicative reading, the *echomen*. And it’s the traditional reading found in most modern English bibles. We’ve already seen, for example, in a previous episode how forgiveness of sins is linked with justification. And forgiveness of sins is, of course, another way of saying peace with God. So, I suspect that *echomen*, we have peace, is the best reading here. But I could be wrong. Folks disagree about this kind of stuff all the time.

Either way, what we can say is that—theologically speaking—it is true either way that *peace* is opened up to those who are justified in Christ. There’s been lots of ink spilled on this textual variant, and it is worth all the effort. But for our purposes, it’s sufficient to simply note that there is a link (whatever it might be) between one’s justification and one’s peace with God. I favor the indicative, “now that we have been justified, we do have peace with God.” That makes the most sense to me and so that’s what I go with.

11:30 Okay, let’s talk about *boasting*. In verse 2 – 5, I will read it again because it’s worth going over.

2 we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

This is a fascinating text. What does Paul mean here by boasting in the “hope of sharing the glory of God”? Interestingly, the ESV renders this slightly differently: “we rejoice [or boast] in hope of the glory of God.” The Greek is: **καυχώμεθα ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ**. Literally, “we boast upon [the] hope of the glory of God.”

I don't have a problem with the NRSV or, for that matter, the ESV's translation. I suspect that what Paul is getting at here is what he will say later on in Romans 8:30, where he says - *"And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified."*

The idea of glorification in Romans 8 includes the idea of being resurrected with new bodies at the eschaton, at the end when God makes all things new. And this idea of glorification is really all about union with Christ. As Christ was crucified, so we crucify our flesh; as Christ was resurrected, we too will be resurrected. Paul mentions this in Romans 6:5 - *"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."*

The idea is that we will share in the glorification of which Christ's own body was glorified at that first Easter morning. In Christ, humanity gets a re-start such that, if you are in Christ, you will be renewed as part of God's new creation. Jesus is the new Adam, and union with Christ means you are part of the New Adam. Paul will actually have a lot more to say about that in Romans 5. But before he gets into the Adam stuff explicitly, he's going to share a bit more about Christ's own death with respect to fallen humanity. It's a beautiful passage, so let's look at verses 6-8:

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. 8 But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

Just a quick comment here: I really like talking about the love of God. The reason is because *love* necessitates a discussion about volition and agency. In other words, the fact that God *loves* us is due to him being a *personal* deity—someone who, due to his nature and character, cares for us to the point of giving of himself for our benefit. And that's actually a good point: God's love is rooted in his character—it's who he is. God is love; this means that God can't not love. Let me repeat: God can't not love. And his love is revealed in, and manifested by, the cross of Christ. You can't divorce the cross of Christ from the love of God. Verses 9-11:

9 Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. 11 But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

This is an important passage. Notice how there is a difference between justification and salvation. They're not the same thing: *"now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God"* (v.9). Justification is an event of declaration—a declaration of a person's righteous status before God. It's a declaration that a person is in covenant with God. And that happens by faith, faith alone in the faithful one. The Spirit, of course, is very much involved—and the free gift of justification cannot be separated from one's growth in holiness. What I mean by that is that the Spirit who *draws* us to Christ is the same Spirit who

works to *conform* us to Christ. I don't think, in other words, that there is space for saying a person can be justified without entering into the long road of sanctification—you can't have Jesus as your Savior and not as your Lord, in other words. As this passage says, this is all about reconciliation with the holy God. We are brought near to him, given his righteousness as a free gift.

16:45 Become a Patreon member! <https://www.patreon.com/TheBibleUnmuted>

17:45 This brings us to the Adam stuff. I want to read the entire thing so that we get the full perspective. Let's read Romans 5:12–21 (NRSV)

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— 13 sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. 14 Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. 16 And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. 17 If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. 18 Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. 19 For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. 20 But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let's talk about several things that come from this passage. The first thing I want to talk about is original sin. To argue for the idea of original sin, this text is often quoted in support of, specifically vv. 12 and 19. So, let me read those two verses again just so we can get the landscape here. Verse 12 says this: "*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned*". That's verse 12 and verse 19 says this: "*For just as by the one man's*

disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."

It's clear from this passage that two things are going on: (1) Each individual person is responsible for his/her own sin and (2) every individual in Adam has, by definition, inherited a sinful nature. It's been a while since I've read it, but in the book, *Adam and the Genome*, written by Dennis Venema and Scot McKnight, Scot talks about the individual and corporate/communal aspects of the situation. And I think we need to pick up on those two things here. Yes, we are all responsible for our sin, *and...* every human has a sinful nature because of the sin which came through Adam. In other words, we all share in this common lot.

We need to hold these two things in mind. The person responsible for the sin is the person who sins. Listen again to verse 12: *"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned. But our sinfulness, in some way or another, comes from being in communion with Adam as human beings. Note here verse 19 again: "For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."*

On the one hand, we have to say that individual human responsibility is paramount in this case. So, for example, I don't think infants go to hell just because they were born with a sinful nature. To say that babies who die in infancy go to hell when they die is not only pastorally insensitive, it's just ludicrous and doesn't align with the heart of God—it doesn't align with his justice, his love, his truth. After all, an infant cannot make free, informed choices—both of which are required for moral culpability. I was a Baptist for a long time, and we routinely talked about "the age of accountability." Perhaps that's a phrase that you are familiar with. I still think something like that is true. In v. 12, Paul does seem to place the weight upon individual responsibility: *"death spread to all because all sinned."*

None of this cancels out the idea of communal unity as human beings. We are in Adam, and as a result, we inherit sinfulness that he somehow, some way, brought into the world and has trickled down to us all. I'm not sure how that works exactly, but that's what Paul seems to think. Paul's point is simple: If you were born in Adam, you need saving through Christ. I like the phrase from Article 9 of the 39 Articles (Anglican tradition). It says how humanity "is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his [humanity's] own nature inclined to evil." We are inclined to evil. We are very far gone from original righteousness. I like that way of understanding this text.

And so, if you're a human being listening to this today, then—from the very beginning of your life—you were born with a sinful nature, which unfortunately leads you to sin. Romans 5 teaches that you need healing. You need to be united to the One who is truly Human so that you can be healed and restored—born again, according to John 3.

23:55 So let's ask a question. Perhaps a fresh question -a question you have not thought to ask before when reading this text. What's up with this no mention of Eve? There is no Eve here, just Adam. What's extremely interesting in this passage is that there's no mention of Eve. This is something that Scot Mcknight observes in the book I mentioned earlier. I talk about this in my book too. It's

honestly a glaring absence, given how Paul talks about things where you would expect at least a brief mention of Eve or even the serpent. Like Scot points out in his book, and I in my book, it's clear that Paul is not ignorant of the Adam, Eve, and serpent story. He knows Genesis 3. He refers to it in 2 Corinthians 11, as well as in 1 Timothy 2. He mentions Eve and the serpent's deception in these passages, so why not here in Romans 5?

For example, in v. 12, Paul says "...sin came into the world through one man." One would think that here Paul would mention Eve. Because technically, sin entered the world through Eve. And depending on what you mean by "word," technically it was the serpent who brought sin into the world.

Like I said a moment ago, it's interesting because elsewhere Paul seems to minimize Adam's role in the first sin and emphasize Eve's role (see again 1 Timothy 2 and 2 Corinthians 11). Why? The answer, I think, is in large part due to different contexts. Paul has different purposes in Romans 5 than he does in places like, say, 1 Timothy 2 and 2 Corinthians. He has different arguments to make here than he does in those other places. This permits him to emphasize one thing and not the other. We do this all the time in our own discussions. Depending on the person we're talking to and the situation we're in, we might leave out certain details.

26:05 When you compare Romans 5 with the book of Sirach, which is an apocryphal or deuterocanonical work which was written by another Jewish thinker from the around same era—well, this would have been a couple hundred years before Paul, but it still gives us some good insights. Anyway, when you compare Romans 5 with Sirach, you see something interesting. Let me read Sirach 25:24 (NRSV): "*From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die.*" For Paul in Romans 5, sin came into the world through one man—no mention of Eve. In my book, I look at other passages from Sirach, and we won't get into those here today, but let me read a selection from p. 139 of my Romans book:

Important observations ought to be made at this point. Ben Sira clearly blames humans for the existence of sin. (MH: and by the way, Ben Sira, just think Sirach, the book of Sirach). Specifically, he blames individuals for their own sin. This is similar to Paul who likewise places blame on humans for sin, not least the individual person. However, one clear difference emerges. Whereas Paul blames Adam for human sin with no mention of Eve, Ben Sira blames Eve with no mention of Adam. One can only speculate why Ben Sira singles out Eve and not Adam. But it should be clear why Paul singles out Adam and not Eve. Paul believes Jesus is launching a new epoch. A new sort of humanity. To illustrate this belief, he needs to single out humanity's pater familias for comparative purposes. Adam might not have been the first to sin, but he was the first human, genealogically speaking. This shows that Paul's primary concern was not primarily about the precise origins of sin. If it were, surely Eve would have been mentioned. Neither was it Paul's point to discuss how sin has been passed down to others through the ages. His point, rather, was to extol the person of Christ as the solution to the plight of humanity which is embodied in Adam, the first human archetype. Christ, for Paul, is the

second and better human archetype. In this way the purpose for which and the assumption from which that Paul employs the Adam story is Christological. And because of his Christological pre-judgements, Paul could retell the Adam story the way he did, singling out Adam with no reference to Eve.

Alright. Let's unpack this a little bit. We have to ask a question about solution and plight. Let me explain it. One question that is important for Romans 5 is this: Was Paul arguing from *plight to solution* or from *solution to plight*? What I mean by that is whether Paul was so distraught at the sinful situation of humanity (Adam, the Fall, etc.) that he highlights that problem and, as a result, leads readers to the solution that is in Christ? Or could it be the other way around? Is he so convinced that Christ is the Messiah that he can look backward from his Damascus Road experience and see in the Old Testament questions to which his Christ is the answer? The answer is yes to both.

As a Jew, Paul was well aware of the sin problem—the plight of humanity as a whole and the Jewish situation of exile in particular. He knew that this plight needed a solution. But also, as a good Jew, he would have believed that the answer to the problem was steadfast obedience to the Torah. That's why Pharisees and others were so intent on themselves and others keeping Torah—Torah was the path of life. The problem, many Jews thought, was that their exile was a result of disobedience to Torah and compromising their loyalty to its commands and ordinances. This is why 1-2 Maccabees, I think, is so important to study—it gives you insight into the mindset of Jews about the Torah and how important it was *not* to compromise its teachings. So for Paul, he did know about the plight of Israel and the world and, as a Jew, he would have run to Torah as the solution to that plight.

But here in Romans 5, Torah is not the solution. In fact, he says it only increases the problem. He says in v. 20: *“But law [Torah] came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied...”* So what made Paul's mind change so suddenly? Why, in Romans 5, does he not appeal to the Torah as the solution to the plight of the world?

The answer is simple: Because he met the Messiah on the Damascus Road and, as a result of that encounter, his life and his way of interpreting the situation changed. So, that's why I say Paul also argued not just from *plight to solution* but also from *solution to plight*. The solution was on the Damascus Road, and he can no look backward and re-read the situation and re-read the Old Testament texts in light of the revelation that he experienced on the Damascus Road.

This is why I call Paul's use of Scripture *and his use of Old Testament stories* as “dialogical.” The Old Testament texts and stories are the answers to his questions *and* they are the questions to his answers. Let me unpack this a bit more.

32:05 It's true that the plight and problem of sin needed an answer. And for Paul, that answer was Christ. So, all those Old Testament texts and stories that talk about sin (such as the Adam and Eve story) are sort of like questions – Paul would ask, “What do we do about sin? What do we do about the plight of humanity?” The answer to that question is Jesus the Messiah. That's why

I say that the Old Testament is full of questions to which Paul will supply the answer, which is Christ.

It's the other way around too.

See, Christ is also a question. Think about it. When Paul was on the Damascus Road, he had this while experience. Acts 9:3 says, "*Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.*" Paul hears a voice, saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" And do you know what Paul says first? He asks a question! He says, "Who are you, Lord?" And the answer he hears is, "I am Jesus."

You have to wonder: What did Paul think about all this? Paul, no doubt, had to spend lots of time figuring out how Jesus—this leader of the community known as The Way—was the Messiah, who superseded all his expectations. In other words, there no doubt had to be lots of questions in Paul's mind: Who is *this* Messiah? How does *he* fit into the plan of redemption?

Those are Paul's questions—for Paul, Jesus is the question. Jesus embodies the ultimate question. And Paul finds the answer in the Old Testament texts and stories. He can now look backward on many Old Testament texts and stories and see how they answer the question of Jesus. Who is this Messiah? This Messiah is found in these Old Testament stories and texts.

Who is this resurrected Jesus? He is the embodiment of—and the complete expression of—the hopes of, say, Abraham's story. Abraham's body was good as dead, Sarah's womb was as good as dead. And God raised them both up from deadness. *My goodness*, Paul must have thought. *These are types and shadows and glimpses of Jesus' own ministry.* For Paul, the Old Testament becomes the context in which the Jesus story can live and have meaning. And Jesus' life and ministry is itself the home in which the OT finds its meaning and life.

That's how Paul can connect all the dots. That's how Paul's dialogical—back and forth—interpretive approach works. Listen to how I describe it in my book, *Paul and the Meaning of Scripture*: Its pages 134-135.

To show this, we start with how Paul understood Adam to be a type of Christ. Paul grounds this understanding in the contrasts that he sees existing in Christ when Adam is placed in parallel. Christ's grace gift is unlike Adam's trespass. Christ grants justification where Adam ushered in condemnation. Christ brought life where Adam passed on death. Christ was obedient while Adam was disobedient. Here Paul's dialogical approach to the Adam story is rather clear. On the one hand, for example, note how the Adam story informs his Christological convictions. Adam brings death, the negation of life, by means of his trespass, disobedience. Here Paul alludes to Adam's sin in the garden specifically to the "function of the tree of life in Genesis 2-3" (MH: That's a quotation from Dunn, by the way). Because Paul places the Christ event within that story by means of the various Adam-Christ parallels discussed above, the story itself serves to raise his Christology out of historical isolation and embed it within the Jewish story

itself. Thus for Paul, the Christ event is in continuity with the original Jewish story of humanity. In this way, Paul's Christological convictions are informed. On the other hand, note how Paul's Christological convictions informed his understanding of the Adam story. Paul does not merely rehash the story's every detail. In fact, he purposely leaves out important details to conform to what he already believes about the Christ event.

37:00 So, let's get back to our original question: Why does Paul leave Eve out of the story? It's simple, I think. Because Paul already believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and hence the start of the new era of the Kingdom of God, he needed to focus exclusively on Adam. Why? Because Adam was the first in the human *genealogical* records, according to Scripture. Because of what he already believed Jesus bringing life to the world, Paul needed a corresponding archetypal person to whom he could make the comparison.

37:50 Let me read one more time from my book. There are two paragraphs that I think capture the situation in a way that I think is helpful. This is from pages 140-141.

And here is the point. Because of what Paul already believes about Christ, particularly about his resurrection and hence his status as the second and last human archetype, he needs a first genealogical first archetype to which he can compare Christ. This archetype could not be Eve, though she was the first to sin. It could only be Adam given that he is the genealogical first archetype in Jewish tradition. Thus, Paul re-tells the original story about the first human pair in a way that he can legitimately say that "sin came into the world through one man." Even though this is not technically precise, given that Eve, and not Adam, was the first to bring sin into the world. But due to his christological pre-judgement, Paul's interpretive lens blurred that which was irrelevant to the story. That is, Eve's chronological priority so that it could recede from view. This allowed what was relevant to his christological retelling to emerge from the shadows of the Adam story. That is, Adam's genealogical priority. So that the end result might be meaning and understanding.

In light of these observations, we can conclude two things. First, Paul's Christological horizon is clearly in play, just as one might expect. He is an interpreter after all. The apostle's pre-judgements about the Christ event enable his subsequent judgments about the Adam story. The story itself was employed to continue his stream of thought about the primacy of Christ over and against works of the law which began in Romans 1 verses 16-17. Paul's interpretations therefore were creative. But Paul's reading of the Adam story was not a one-way street such that he was merely reading into the story his own assumptions. To the contrary. His reading was dialogical in that the Adam story could also inform and give shape to his Christology. Paul's Christology is itself contextualized within the matrix within Torah's

own story of Adam. In light of Gadamer's theory, we might say that Paul's understanding of the Adam story was what it was due to a fusion of horizons. The horizon of the story and text of Genesis to which Paul alludes, and his Christian horizon.

40:25 Now in that quote that I just read I mentioned Gadamer. This is the 20th-century German philosopher whose ideas and concepts I employ in my book to make sense of all these sorts of things. That's the philosophical side of things. We don't have to get into that, but I just wanted to give a reference for that for further study if you are interested.

Let me give some final thoughts here. When it comes to hermeneutics (interpreting texts), we need to avoid two extremes. On the one hand, some say that meaning is only in the eye of the beholder. That is to say, some people believe that the reader alone creates his or her own meaning by themselves. On the other hand, some say that all that matters is the text of Scripture and so we need to suspend and get rid of our own presuppositions so we can read Scripture without any bias.

I think both approaches are wrong. The reader does not create meaning by themselves. The biblical text can't mean just anything the reader wants it to. And yet, the text is not all there is. Every reading of a text is an interpretation of the text. Readers are interpreters—they don't read Scripture apart from their presuppositions. Interpreters can't rid themselves of having assumptions any more than a water can rid itself of being wet. The goal isn't to do away with one's presuppositions, but rather to adopt the right presuppositions.

The same goes for Paul. He's a reader of Jewish texts. He's an interpreter. He has pre-understandings. And his pre-understandings are thoroughly christological. I suspect his Damascus Road experience so altered his life and hermeneutics that the Old Testament took on fresh perspective. We've seen that already throughout Romans. And we see it here. And we'll see it more down the road as we go through Romans further in the weeks ahead. For Paul, to be faithful to Scripture is to see it as a testimony to the Messiah. Like he says in Romans 3:21-22: *"But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ..."*

Paul loved Scripture. And he would not tolerate compromising its truth and power and authority. He didn't think Scripture could be twisted into just any meaning the reader wants. To the contrary, for Paul, Scripture is a living testimony of Jesus the Messiah.

43:10 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. You can go to my website at: <https://www.patreon.com/TheBibleUnmuted> - or simply find the link in the description of this episode. Thanks for listening. Until next time, friends.

