

The Bible (Unmuted) Transcript
Episode 32
Romans, Part 13 (Rom 8)
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Episode Summary:

Matt takes listeners through Romans 8, where Paul continues his engagement with the Old Testament's Exodus narrative. In this chapter, Paul appears to be alluding back to God's leading the people of Israel out of Egypt, his dwelling with his people in the tabernacle, his adoption of Israel as his "son," and his judgment upon spiritual beings (the "gods"). Paul connects each of these themes to the Christian's own "exodus" from slavery by outlining the work/leading of the Spirit. The final aim of God's work, says Paul, is to restore all things, thus granting the cosmos the freedom after which it longs and for which it was made.

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Transcript:

0:00 Hey friends! Welcome back to another edition of The Bible Unmuted! My name is Matt Halsted Super excited to be with you again as we continue our study through the book of Romans. I hope this study has been good for you and benefits you, and is a blessing to you. It's been all of that for me. It's funny because I was thinking, every time I get into the book of Romans there is always something there that is fresh...something new. There is always a rock that is still left to be turned over and examined. And I know that you are familiar with Romans and that you've probably read it a lot. You've no doubt read through those main passages through Romans that we Christians love to quote. So I know you are familiar with it, but nonetheless I hope that this study has given you fresh insight, blessing and encouragement for your own study of Scripture and for the study of Romans. So anyway, its been a fun so I am excited to pick that up again today.

Speaking of which, I've got to say something about this episode and the next episode. Romans 8 is dense. There are a lot of things in Romans 8 that we need to get to. For example, the first thing we need to do, and this is what we will do today. We are going to end our current motif study of the exodus. If you have been following along, you know what I mean. Because we've been tracing an exodus motif throughout Romans 6, Romans 7, and now Romans 8. So Paul has been using the exodus story, in other words, to unleash his teaching on the Christian faith. And that is going to continue today in Romans chapter 8. I want to get through all of chapter 8 – every verse – and see how that tie into that exodus narrative as well. That is going to take up today's episode.

The next episode we are going to narrow our focus a little bit down to verses 29 and 30 of Romans chapter 8. Because as you know, these verses are highly controversial. These verses have to do with predestination. And inevitably, that raises questions about human free will, the sovereignty of God, how does salvation work, all of those things. So its going to be a lot of fun to tackle those topics together. We won't do that today. We will do that starting next week. I can imagine that

topic is going to take a couple of episodes in and of itself. Buckle up because its going to be a lot of fun to do that. So we will put all that aside for now and focus in on this exodus motif, this exodus narrative that Paul is weaving through the pages of Romans 6, 7 and 8. We will wrap that up today.

- 2:50 Before we get to all that though, if you would do me a favor, I really would appreciate it if where ever you are listening to this show right now, where ever you get your podcast, if you like the content of the show consider leaving a review. If you are enjoying the stuff that I talk about, you are enjoying the show and the interviews, leave a review. Give it two thumbs up, five stars or however that works on your end. I would really, really appreciate it. This helps get the word out about the podcast. It helps others know about it and I really appreciate that.

Also if you are interested in supporting this show through Patreon, I wanted to share again that we added a new benefit to all Patreon members no matter what tier you select and what level of support you give. So, everybody gets two things. A bonus episode every month and I just launched this and started this month, so I am super excited about this, we are doing a book club together. So periodically we are going to come together – probably every four to eight weeks or so – we will read a book and then come together by zoom meeting and chat about the book. This time, this month, we are chatting about *The Didache* which is the teaching of the twelve apostles. It is a very, very early writing in the early church that lays out...its kind of like a church manual. And early second century church manual. So we are going to get together and talk about it. There are lots of fun things in there about baptism, itinerant preachers, and things like that. So if you would love to support the podcast, jump in. We would love to have you for the book club. And of course there are other things depending upon the tier you sign up for. There are book giveaways, another monthly zoom meeting where we meet for a couple of hours every month and chat about the bible, theology and whatever you want to bring to the table, we chat about. I would love to have your support, but the best thing you could do for the podcast, if you would, is just pray. That means a lot to me that people are lifting me up in prayer. Ultimately I want this to be to the glory of God. This is a ministry. I treat it like a ministry and I want it to be a blessing for everybody who listens. Thanks so much to everybody for your support. So let's dive in to Romans Chapter 8.

- 5:20 Okay. I want to offer just a brief re-cap to where we've been. I think its super easy in Romans to be so focused on the individual tree that we forget the forest. The forest is beautiful. We need to have that 30,000-foot view of the forest so that we can get the contours of the land. Every little tree is super helpful to analyze, but we want to make sure we don't do that at the expense of forgetting the forest, or the big picture in other words. So as you know, we have been tracing how Paul is reading Old Testament stories.

We talked about in Romans chapter 4 how Paul takes the Abraham story and resituates it within a Christological context. A Christological horizon of understanding. He tells the Abraham story in Romans chapter 4 in a very creative, but faithful kind of way. For those who have missed that episode, you need to go back and listen probably before you listen to this one. Now in Romans 5 is where Paul retells the Adam story. We explored the Adam story and the way that Paul tells that story again, in a rather creative way to speak about his prior belief that Jesus is Lord. Prior belief meaning assumption, I should say. He approaches the Abraham story with the Christ story as his most basic assumption. That is what I mean by prior belief. So go back and listen to that one if you haven't.

We have also been exploring the exodus story in Romans 6, 7, and 8. Paul arguably, according to some scholars, talks about and retells the exodus story just like he retells the Abraham and Adam story previously. Once again, he retells the exodus story in a rather creative way. It's not just like an exodus story that his is telling. It is a Christo-exodus story. It's a Christological exodus story. And just like I mentioned in the podcast before, and I say this in my Paul book, is that really

what Paul is doing is taking the exodus story and christologizing it. And he is taking the Christ event, the Christ story and he is 'exodusizing' it. That's kind of a weird way of saying it, but I think you get the point. He is merging the two together. A better way to say it is that he is bringing fusion to these different concepts. So that is where we are in the middle of. We are ending that exodus story because in Romans 6, Paul talks about slavery. How humans are enslaved to sin. And we talked in that episode is how Paul is connecting that to the Egyptian slavery narrative that we've seen and read about in Exodus. So just like the Israel people were enslaved by Egypt, so to Paul says, that we as human beings are enslaved to our own sin. the Jew enslaved Egyptians is a counterpart to the bigger picture story of all humanity. We are all enslaved to sin.

Then Romans 7 comes along and that is where Paul brings up the Torah. The giving of the Torah was such that it enhanced our sin. it showed our sin to be exceedingly sinful. He has to bring up Torah there, because if he is following the exodus narrative, that is what comes next. God frees Israel from the Egyptian enslavement, takes them out of Egypt, and then he gives them the law at Sinai. And that is the order that we see this here in Romans 6 and 7. So you have enslavement, freedom from slavery, exodus through baptism of going through the waters in Romans 6 and then in Romans 7 you have the giving of the Torah. And the giving of the Torah enhances our situation by showing it to be extremely bad.

Now in Romans 8 we have what I would say is the entrance into the Promised Land. It is where we are led by the Spirit to victory and to rest. And I think that is a very important piece that we will see here in Romans chapter 8. As we get into the text, I want you to pay attention to some key terms that you will see in the text. I have identified six here that I want to share and as we get to them you will recall them from the outset.

So, we have the term freedom that will be used. Slavery will be used again. Then sonship, spirit, and then leading and dwelling. So, freedom, slavery, sonship, spirit, leading and dwelling. These are six terms that are very important. They are key terms that are really structuring terms for Romans chapter 8. We will see how Paul uses them to harken back to the exodus event and to look forward to what Christ has and will bring about at the eschaton when he frees everyone from slavery and he rescues all of us from our sin. Those are the key terms and keep those in mind. Lots of good things here. So, let's dive in to verses 1-17

10:50 I'm reading from the New Revised Standard Version,

Romans 8:1-17 (NRSV)

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you. 12 So then, brothers and sisters,

we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— 13 for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led [ἄγω] by the Spirit of God are children of God. 15 For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

12:45 Did you notice those key terms there? In verse 2, *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free*...that's a key word, a key term that we mentioned, freedom... *set you free from the law of sin and of death*. We also have here this idea of dwelling in verses 11, *If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you*. So you have that idea of dwelling which was another key word. Then in verse 14 we have *leading*, God leading. Verse 14 says, *for all who are led [ἄγω] by the Spirit of God are children of God*. Then we have this slavery idea. *For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption.* So, adoption is like sonship, we become sons and daughters of God. Children, verse 17, *and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ*—and then we will be glorified with him. That word glorified there is another key term I should mention. It comes up again later in Romans 8. But actually, we will get to that next week when we talk about predestination and all of that.

So, back to verse 2 here. It says, *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death*. Okay, 'the Spirit of life'. Why the Spirit in verse 2 here? Why mention that? And why this idea of leading us and dwelling with us? And calling us sons and daughters? And delivering us from slavery and whatnot? Well, we need to keep the exodus in mind. These are pointers that we need to keep in mind that Paul is using as place holders or markers. And he is using them here very strategically so that he can point us back to the exodus story.

I am convinced that the exodus story was part of Paul's psyche. It was part of his worldview because he was a Jew. The exodus story for Jews was *the* story. It was their salvation story. Today, if you were to ask a Christian, 'when did you get saved?', they would say, 'August 10, 1998 at a VBS.', or something. Typically they would name a date and a place. It's a very individualistic concept of salvation. If you were to ask a Jew that, they might look at you kind of odd. They would say, 'what do you mean? We were saved at the exodus. Is that what you are talking about?' Because to them, salvation was a corporate thing. Salvation was a very, broadly speaking, communal event. And it happened at the exodus. The exodus event was the salvation event. That's just how Jews thought of it. And by the way- hint, hint - this is going to be a very important point to remember when get into predestination stuff later.

So, keep that aside. Don't get distracted yet. So, that idea of the exodus being a communal event, and a salvation event, is, I think, just part of Paul's DNA. He probably doesn't even have to think about it, to be thinking about it. At least consciously. It just exists in his subconscious. Its like, a good example might be, like what water is to fish. Fish don't really go around thinking about water, because they live in it. I think Paul lived in the exodus story. And he is wanting to bring that into dialog with the Christ story.

So all these key terms that are appearing here, are appearing because they are just a part of Paul's stock vocabulary. His worldview, the concepts by which he lives, breathes and operates. And the way he does theology is via these concepts of the exodus. So, we should not be surprised that these come to bear upon his theological musings about the Christian life, and so forth.

16:55 I want to read a part of my book that addresses this head on. And it will be a good introduction to our further analysis here. So this is from my *Paul and the Meaning of Scripture Book*, pages 157-158. The end of 157. Its not a long piece. Here is what I say,

"When we arrive at Romans 8:2, Paul adds an important layer to the Christology of Romans 7:25 saying that it is 'the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.' Paul had employed language of the Spirit prior to this, but in verse 2 he qualified the freedom gained through Christ as the work of the Spirit. The reason Paul does this is because he is continuing his retelling of the exodus. Having spoken about enslavement in chapter 6 and the subsequent giving of the law in chapter 7, he needs to turn to that moment in Israel's exodus where they were led by God through the wilderness. For Paul, (this is going to be a quote from N.T. Wright's Romans commentary). For Paul, 'the Spirit takes the role within the new wilderness wandering of the liberated people of God that in the exodus story was taken by the pillar of cloud and fire.' (That is a quote from his Romans commentary, page 581). And this is me, resuming in my book. This is my words. Thus just as the pillar of the cloud and fire led the people away from the Egyptian bondage, so also the Spirit of life Christ Jesus can set the captives free from the bondage of sin and death. That Paul has in mind the exodus story in that the Spirit occupies for Paul the role of the pillar in that story is substantiated in the fact that Paul can speak of the Spirit leading or bringing out believers from slavery. Paul says for example that, 'those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.'"

19:00 So, this is a very important piece here that I want to talk about a little bit further.

In verse 14 where Paul uses the word, led. That word led is **agó (ἄγω)**. It's the Greek word, **agó (ἄγω)**. So let me read verse 14 again. *For all who are led [ἄγω] by the Spirit of God are children of God.* Now that word *agó* is very important. And I think, especially for those are familiar with the Old Testament. Because in the Old Testament when the exodus story is discussed, that the idea of God leading Israel is prominent. And that word *agó* or cognates of that word are used in the Greek Old Testament to describe that event. I want to read to you a couple of passages from that. I have about four of them from Deuteronomy that use this language of leading, God's leading. So let me turn to Deuteronomy chapter 8:7 from the Septuagint. And I am reading from the Lexham English Septuagint translation:

Deuteronomy 8:7 (LES)

7 "For the Lord your God is leading [εἰσάγω] you into a good and vast land where torrents of water and bottomless springs go out through the plains and through the mountains"

So, the Lord your God is leading. That is the word *eisagó*. That is a key word and I think it is worth reflecting on especially in light of what Paul says in Romans 8. Let me read from Deuteronomy 8:14-15. I'll read a selection from that, and those two verses.

Deuteronomy 8:14b–15a (LES)

14 "...the Lord your God who led out (exagó) [ἐξάγω] you of the land of Egypt from the house of slavery; 15 the one who led (agó) [ἄγω] you through that great and fearful wilderness..."

So you notice there a couple of things. You notice there this **exagó [ἐξάγω]** word, which literally means to lead out of something. Then you have that phrase house of slavery. Then you have the word **agó [ἄγω]** used in verse 15. So again, key word which is very important.

Deuteronomy 29:5 (LES), it says,

5 "And he led [ἄγω] you in the wilderness; for forty years your garments did not wear out, and your sandals did not wear out from your feet."

Again the word **agó** [ἄγω] is used there. Lastly,

Deuteronomy 32:12 (LES)

12 "The Lord alone was carrying (**agó**) [ἄγω] them; there was not a foreign god with them."

So here the LES is translating **agó** as carrying. This is the word that Paul is using in Romans chapter 8. It's this **agó** word. I think it's a very important word and should harken us back to the Septuagint. And by the way, we remember that in the New Testament Paul quotes a lot from the Septuagint. He doesn't really quote from the Hebrew. He quotes from the Septuagint. So its not a stretch of the imagination to think that as Paul is using exodus language, that he is going to use Septuagint exodus language. He is going to use words that come directly from there.

22:00 So those are just some connections to keep in mind as you read Romans chapter 8. Being led by the Spirit is an exodus motif and for Paul, that is a Jesus motif. That is what the Spirit does for people who are in Christ Jesus. So let's move to a couple of other verses that we just read. Romans 8:9-11, let me read that again and then we will connect that back to some exodus stuff as well.

9 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God **dwells** in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is **in** you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead **dwells** in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that **dwells** in you.

So this dwelling language, I think is very, very important. And when you go back and read through the exodus story you are going to see that sort of language. And really all throughout the Old Testament you are going to see that kind of language being brought up.

I want to read a quote from N.T. Wright's Roman commentary. It's a short little piece here. This is from page 583 of his Romans commentary. Here is what he says,

"First, Paul switches, bewilderingly, between describing Christians as being in the Spirit and describing the Spirit as being in them. The latter is what Paul wants to emphasize at this point using the image of indwelling that evokes the idea of the shekinah dwelling in the wilderness tabernacle and the Jerusalem temple."

I think that is a good insight. So when you go back and you read Exodus 25:8 (I will read from the New Revised Standard Version here. It says,

Exodus 25:8 (NRSV)

8 And have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell (**shakan**) [שכן] among them.

This is the (**shakan**) [שכן]. Think of the shekinah. This is the idea of God's dwelling among his people. I think it is a very important point here. And I think that again, we have to know these exodus stories so well that when we read Paul, we read like him. We can immediately pick up on these echoes and allusions. If you read in Numbers 9:15-16, you read this,

Numbers 9:15-16 (NRSV)

15 On the day the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant; and from evening until morning it was over the tabernacle, having the appearance of fire. 16 It was always so: the cloud covered it by day and the appearance of fire by night.

Now I think all of this is important to highlight this concept of God's dwelling with his people, not least of which was the exodus event. Because it was during this exodus event that God's presence for Israel was so important. I remember, and you remember this passage from the Old Testament. Moses was saying to God, 'God, if you don't go with us, we don't want to go.' Because they were dependent upon God's presence. So this idea of being indwelt by the Spirit and having the Spirit live among us, to be with us – this New Testament idea of the Spirit dwelling among Christ's people, that's an Old Testament concept that Paul is using to describe and to proclaim the message of the gospel. Because that's exactly what Jesus has affected for his people. His name is God with Us, Emanuel. And you see this sort of language and these concepts just jump right into these conversations in Romans chapter 8.

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27:15 The next thing that we want to notice is this concept of sonship, or adoption. So, let me read Romans 8:14-17 once more to get the full scoop.

14 For all who are led [ἄγω] by the Spirit of God are children of God. 15 For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

This is a very important piece here. And this idea of adoption and sonship is a very, very important piece that we cannot miss. Because when you go back, and you know the exodus story, you are also going to note that this concept of sonship was very, very important in a key moment in the exodus story itself. So if you go to Exodus 4:22-23, we read about Israel being called God's son. So, let me read verse 22 and part of verse 23.

Exodus 4:22–23 (NRSV)

22 Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: Israel is my firstborn son. 23 I said to you, "Let my son go that he may worship me." But you refused to let him go; now I will kill your firstborn son.'

Here you have Israel being called God's son. This idea of sonship belongs exclusively to Israel. And what is interesting here is that Paul is applying the concept of sonship and adoption to the Jesus people. It's the Jesus people who are the sons and daughters of God. We see this in Paul's writings elsewhere as well. It is a very important piece.

Now, we have to connect the dots. Because in the Old Testament, in the Torah, the son of God is Israel. Jacob is called the son...well, the whole of Israel, all of Israel is called God's son. And by the way, that is exclusive to Israel. It is very exclusive to Israel. Well, how do we make sense of Paul calling the Jesus people God's son? It goes back to what we've been saying. That this idea of believers being brought into union with Christ, qualifies them, whether Jew or Gentile, to be heirs as well. To be sons and daughters of God.

So, is Jesus God's son? Well, of course he is. We do have the doctrine of the Trinity. The creeds have taught us well, I think, about how to think about the Trinity. But prior to those creeds, we

have early Christianity that would describe Jesus as the Son of God. Now how could they do that? Again, early Christian traditions, the creeds both teach us how Jesus is both God and man. We get all that.

But in earliest Christianity, how did they conceptualize all that stuff? Well, its actually pretty easy. Because Jesus is, as we've said before on the show, the new Israel. Jesus re-embodies and re-enacts the story of Israel. You saw this in the gospel of Matthew. In Matthew's gospel, he has Jesus (Matthew does) replaying the story of Israel. Go back and listen to some of those episodes if you aren't sure what I'm talking about. Jesus replays the story of Israel. He lives for a time in Egypt, and his return from Egypt back to his homeland is called an exodus. Or it's referred to as an exodus type event. That is the point of Matthew 2:15. And then of course you have the temptations in the wilderness, the baptism in the Jordan River which is a very important spot in the story of Israel. And like I said, the 40 days and temptation in the wilderness. Forty days, that is certainly an exodus motif if there ever was one. Then you have Jesus on a mountain teaching about the Law. So this is clearly...clearly without any equivocation, I could say. This is clearly Jesus re-enacting the story of Israel.

31:42 Why does he have to re-enact the story of Israel? Because of the Jewish concept of election. I mentioned this before, I don't remember quite when, but I will say it again briefly. The concept of election is found in Genesis 12 where Abraham is elected, his family is elected out of all the nations of the earth, to be a special people to bring healing to the nations of the earth. This is what we call the Genesis 11, 12 Narrative. Genesis captures the full depravity of, the culmination of human arrogance which led human fracturing. The fracturing of the nations at the Tower of Babel. But it is in Genesis 12 where God begins the process of healing the nations, of repairing the nations, of bringing them back together again through the family of Abraham.

As N.T. Wright has said in many of his works, and as I have said many times here on the show, Israel is God's rescue plan for the world. And yet sadly, we know the narrative. Israel cannot rescue the world because she is in sin. She needs to be rescued herself. And yet, how is God going to rescue the world? He promised to use Israel to do that. So in order to do that he needs to find a faithful Israelite. And guess what? We have a faithful Israelite. Someone born of the Virgin Mary. Someone who has come, born under the Law at just the right time. I am talking about Jesus the Messiah. He is the true Israel. And as the true Israel, he is the divine Son of God. And everybody who is in the Son of God, by grace alone; either Jew or Gentile, that person, those people can be called sons and daughters of God.

So this idea of sonship that we are heirs. That we can say "Abba, Father", is Christologically founded. Its based on the Christological reality. The reality that Jesus is the Messiah and that he invites people into union with him (Romans 6). A union through baptism, a union through faith. That is what Paul is talking about. This concept of sonship – very, very important. And all that I have said in this last segment about sonship, you need to keep this in mind for next week. Why? Because we are going to talk about election. That's not a 16th century idea. That is not a reformation idea, merely. That is a Jewish idea. An ancient Jewish idea. So we want to get rooted back into the ancient Jewish worldview. So everything I've said in this last segment about adoption, sonship, Jesus re-enacting the story of Israel, and Jesus being the Son of God; all of that you have to keep in mind for next week. Do not forget that. Otherwise you will not understand, at least not properly I don't think, Romans 9, 10, 11 and all that stuff.

Let's move on to the next piece.

34:40 In Romans 8:2 which we have read a couple of times already, it says, *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.* This is the freedom that we have through the Spirit. The Spirit is associated with freedom.

Verse 14, “For all who are led [**ἄγω**] by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” It is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God and if children”. And he goes on to say that we are heirs, joint heirs with Christ.

When you go back and you look at some of these texts from the exodus story, particularly from Exodus, the book itself, you will see this idea of being delivered from slavery, the house of slavery. So listen to Exodus 13:3. I’m reading from the Lexham English Septuagint translation.

Exodus 13:3 (LES)

*3 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 [**οἴκου δουλείας**], for with a strong hand the Lord led out [**ἐξάγω**] you from here. And leaven will not be eaten.*

That is a very important piece. You have this idea of the Lord leading out. Again that is the word **exagó** [**ἐξάγω**], to lead out from the of house of slavery. God is leading the people out of that and into something new. This is Paul stuff. This is Romans 8 stuff. If you read Exodus 13:14, you get something similar. It says this,

Exodus 13:14 (LES)

*14 And when your son asks you about these things, saying, ‘What does this mean?’ then you will say to him, ‘It is because by a strong hand the Lord led us out [**ἐξάγω**] from the land of Egypt, out of the house of servitude [**οἴκου δουλείας**].*

So this is a really good piece there. I think that’s something that really captures what Paul is doing with exodus story and with the Jesus story, bringing them together into dialog. You have all these key terms; freedom, sonship, slavery, Spirit, leading, dwelling. All these things are coming together. And those are the key terms that Paul uses because he’s a Jew and as a Jew, he knows the exodus story. And the exodus story defines him as a Jewish man. And those are the categories in which he thinks because the Messiah to him, Jesus of Nazareth to him, is someone who completes the exodus story. Its somebody who completes it and brings it together.

So you have on the one hand, for Paul, the exodus story. And on the other hand you have the Jesus story. And he brings fusion between those two stories. They are not in competition with one another. Its not Paul showing the world how he left Judaism to become a Christian. That is such a terrible way of conceiving of things. No, no, no. For Paul, he’s a Jew who is completed. He is a Jew who has found completion of the Jewish story. All of the Jewish stories, in the Christ story. So it’s a Christological exodus. That’s what we’ve seen in Romans 6, 7, and 8. It’s a Christological exodus. And his Christian faith is very exodus-like. It is a retelling of the exodus story. And the Jesus story for Paul is all about how the world can leave Egypt. How the world can leave slavery. So that’s what we want to walk understanding. We want to think Paul’s thoughts after him and you cannot do that unless you understand the exodus story.

38:13 Let’s read verses 18-30.

Romans 8:18-30 (NRSV)

18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been

groaning in labor pains until now; 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. 26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. 27 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. 28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

39:45 So I think verse 21 here is very key. It says, *“that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage... and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”* This is very interesting if you think again along the exodus lines about how Israel is leaving her bondage. And for Paul, this is the whole world. The whole world is going to leave its bondage. Its going to be set free. But how, and why, and by whom? Well, its interesting here because in verse 21 it says that it *“will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God”*. So the idea here is that the children of God, the Jesus people, the people who have been engrafted into the story of Israel by way of Jesus; those people will be glorified and as a renewed humanity they will offer the creation as a sort of redemption. And really that is kind of think about here. Its kind of hard to put it all together if we know the Jewish story. Because in the Jewish story, God makes humans to take care of the world. To be its caretaker and keeper. When humans sinned, the world suffered. But when humans are redeemed, the world gains its health back again.

And this is the purpose of election. Think of Genesis 1-11. Or actually, Genesis 3-11. Its just chaos. You have murder. You have arrogance. You have hubris. You have the fracturing of humanity in Genesis 11 at the Tower of Babel. The next thing is the calling of Abraham. He is called to be a blessing to families of the earth. He is called to help be that repair that the world needs. Its his family, rather, its not just him – its his family that is called to do that. And as we’ve seen in Romans, that Paul envisions the Christian family to be that family because they have been engrafted by way of Christ into the story of Israel. And here Paul is saying that we will continue that project. We will complete the project because that is the project that God has in mind. He has always had that in mind.

Before time, you might say, he has predestined this idea of redemption and bringing health to his creation. To take what was first chaos in Genesis 1 and bringing a cosmos to it, order to it, grace to it, Spirit to it. Notice again in Genesis 1 how the Spirit above hovers over the waters. It is always the Spirit who brings cosmos to the chaos. He always brings order to the mess. And he is using the people of God to do that. It is the Spirit led people of God who will bring the creation back again through the glorification that we experience through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Here's the thing. God uses people. God uses people to do his stuff. Its all God doing it. We don't get any pride for this. We don't do this ourselves or out of our own strength. We have no bootstraps by which we can pull ourselves up. Its all grace. Its all God. And God uses agents, he uses people. He uses us to take care of the earth and to eventually help bring about its healing. Even though we need healing ourselves too, even though we are groaning ourselves too, even though we are suffering... the suffering of the present era is not worth comparing to the glory that is going to be revealed to us. And, as Paul will say in Romans 8:30, that we will be glorified. We will experience this glory in ourselves by way of Christ himself.

43:30 So, I think this whole idea is closing out beautifully. This entire idea, this exodus motif; we've explored it and have open every door down the hallway. We've looked inside of these and looked inside each of these and in each chapter. And each facet we have explored. And even this big exodus story this motif that has been driving us for these past three chapters, is linked back up to the Genesis 11 and 12 narrative. Its linked back up to this idea of election and Abraham being called to bring about the healing of the earth.

So I hope you see that all of this is connected. And I hope you see the value of the 30,000-foot view that we've been taking so that we can appreciate the ground floor level of the forest. And as we pay attention to the trees, we rise above 30,000 feet to look at the forest and then we go back down. And this cyclical idea of getting the big picture and then getting the small analysis, and the big picture again, then back to the small analysis and smaller pictures; all of that has an effect on our understanding. And it helps us understand the story, the main plot, and all the sub plots. All of that, seeing how its all linked together.

Now I'm moving through this 18-30 passage somewhat quickly. There is more I want to say about it, but I want to wrap this show up. When we come back next week and we talk about verse 29, we will get to more of this stuff. At least that are my plans. I just had a thought here, I'm thinking we should probably have a show that addresses these bigger issues. These theological issues; predestination, freewill... I think we may do that first. But anyway, don't hold me to any of this because we will get to all of it eventually. How we do that, I need to think about.

45:15 Quickly, I want to say because I think its really, really important is; how Christians tend to think that the goal is to escape the earth and go to heaven when you die. Right? I grew up thinking that. I grew up thinking that heaven was my eternal home. I can't tell you how many funerals I've been too, or how may times I've heard Christians refer to those who have died, as entering into...like at a funeral or something Christians will say something like 'so and so is entering into heaven, their eternal home'. I keep wanting to say, 'no, no, no! they have gone to their intermediate home, because they are in their intermediate state. They are not in their final state'. You see, the final state, the true hope is the restoration of the world. The true hope, in other words, is resurrection. This is exactly what Paul says in Romans 8. He says that, *'the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.'*

This is fascinating. The redemption of our bodies. This is not Paul saying that we are going to go to heaven when we die, play harps and wear togas, floating on a cloud. That is not the Christian vision. The Christian vision is paradise that was lost, will be paradise restored. Everything made new. Heaven and earth combined together at the end of time; at the eschaton to bring about new creation.

Romans 8:18-30 really pushes back against that false idea that many evangelical Christians have which is that we are going to heaven when we die, and we are going to stay there forever, and we will live like spirits. You remember that old show in the 90's, maybe 80's – when I was a kid it was *Casper the Friendly Ghost*. His ghostly apparition is floating around, he doesn't have a body, he is just a spirit. We have that idea...well, maybe we will have legs or something, but we will still be spirits forever. Guys! That's wrong. That is not true. That is not Christianity. That is some sort of weird pagan idea that has crept in. True Christianity, the Jewish hope, has always been the renewal of all things.

47:45 I want to wrap up with verses 31-37.

Rom 8:31-37 (NRSV)

31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 33 Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

48:42 I want to say a couple of very brief things about this. Again, in next couple of episodes we will dive into the predestination stuff and the elect – all that stuff and language. But there is one thing here that I want to mention. And I do mention this in my book because I think its important. And I think it's a good spot to end because I think it's yet another reference to the exodus in some sense. Do you notice that verses 38 and 39 where Paul says...well it starts in verse 37 where Paul says, '*we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*' Then he says, '*that neither death, nor life,*' Then he says, *nor **angels**, nor **rulers**, nor things present, nor things to come, nor **powers**, nor height, nor depth, nor **anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Did you notice all that? What does that mean? Why did Paul bring that up? I think it's yet another echo back to the exodus story. If indeed it is the case that Paul has the exodus in mind in Romans chapters 6, 7, and 8, then I don't think what I am about to say is a stretch. I think it's definitely worth some thought and analysis. When Paul talks about angels here; when he talks about the rulers and the powers, I think he is definitely talking about the sinister forces in the spiritual realm. Sometimes in the New Testament, the idea of the rulers and the powers are cosmic powers, spiritual beings who wreak havoc among the earth. They are essentially enemies of the Christian. It's interesting here that Paul brings this up. Because he says that the love that we have in God and from God; that keeps us safe from these things, it conquers those things. *We are more than conquerors, in fact.*

So I think this is an important thing to bring up with respect to the exodus story. I say this because when you go back and read Exodus 12, you find out that the events that are happening against the Egyptians; the judgements that they are experiencing so that Israel can be set free and go to her Promised Land, those events are judgments not merely upon Egypt. According to Exodus 12, they are judgements upon the gods. So Exodus 12:12 says this,

Exodus 12:12 (NRSV)

12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.

So, there you have it. He is executing judgment against the gods. And really that is what the exodus event is all about. It is about the idea of destroying the perception that the gods of Egypt were powerful. That they are more powerful than YHWH. It is seeking to destroy that misconception. Its seeking to establish the fact that YHWH is more powerful than the gods of Egypt. And this is important, I think, for our study of Romans chapter 8. Because if Paul is talking

about an exodus that the Christians experience, that the Jesus people experience, then we might expect him to bring this up here. That the true exodus that we experience is not only from our sins, (plural), in us, but also of the evil that is outside of us. The powers, the rulers, the cosmic forces that hold us down and have held us captive. Jesus' death has affected, yes, the forgiveness of sins. He has brought about the cleansing of our own faults and so forth, but he has also destroyed the powers. And that is what happens at our conversion. That is what happens when become united to Christ, we are becoming 'dis-united' from the powers. So if Paul is casting all of that in the language of the exodus, it makes perfect sense. Indeed, we might expect him to bring up the powers, and he does here in Romans chapter 8. So I think that is a very important piece and I don't want us to miss that. I think that we should see this as reference to the spiritual realm and as a reference to the defeat of the sinister spiritual beings that seek to hold us down. And that have held us down. But when Jesus came, he set us free from them. He set us free from our sins and he has set us free from evil. And that is good news, is it not? That is news that we should find great joy in. And that is the news that we should share with others.

53:45 well, friends, that ends our study of Romans 6,7, and 8 with respect to the exodus story. There is so much more to talk about with respect to Romans 8 and next episode we are going to revisit Romans 8:29 and talk about the topic of all topics: predestination. Now that is a question and a topic that will lead to other questions such as: do humans have free will? And if humans do have free will how does that relate to and how is that compatible with divine sovereignty and salvation? If you are interested in those sorts of question, then be sure to tune back in to the next episode because we are going to have a lot of fun.

54:30 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.