

Redemption E8 Transcript

[Recap and Setup for the Apostle Paul (0:00—15:09)]

Jon: The foundational redemption story in the Bible is when God rescued Israel from their slavery to Egypt and led them into freedom. And in the time of Jesus, Israel is under the thumb of Rome. And so Israel looks at that past redemption story and hopes for a future redemption.

Tim: A Moses, Exodus-style redemption is what people think Jesus is here to do.

Jon: Everyone expects him to confront Rome and overthrow the corrupt power structures, so that they can live free in the land. But Jesus focuses in on a different type of liberation, not a rescue from Rome, but a rescue from death itself.

Tim: He saw a deeper, more cosmic bondage of which Herod and Rome were just the latest manifestations.

Jon: But then, Jesus dies. And somehow, his death becomes a means of redemption. But how does that work?

Tim: There's no lecture Jesus gives on the meaning of his death. But Jesus explained, symbolically, at the Passover meal, with the bread and the cup: "This is my body, broken for you. This is my blood, shed for you."

Jon: But later in the New Testament, one writer in particular offers a much further explanation on how this all works.

Tim: The Apostle Paul elaborated and developed the redemption vocabulary set of ideas more than any early Christian writer that we have. His letters are packed with redemption language.

Jon: In Romans chapters three and six, Paul crafts an elaborate explanation of how Jesus, through his death and resurrection, lays claim on us, repossesses us, and takes back what is rightfully his.

Tim: Jesus willingly enters into that death realm as an act of love, and surrenders his life to join us in death and then bring us out through the other side. Death has a rightful claim on me, but death has no rightful claim over the Messiah.

Jon: Today, Tim Mackie and I unpack the Apostle Paul's redemption language in the letter to the Romans. Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

[Musical Break (2:15—2:20)]

Jon: Hey, Tim.

Tim: Hi, Jon.

Jon: Hello.

Tim: Hello.

Jon: We are going to read some passages from Paul's letters—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Today.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: We're in a discussion about the theme of redemption in the Bible.

Tim: Yep.

Jon: We've been calling it that because that's kind of the keyword that we've been focusing on. But regardless of the word that you use, we're talking about the idea—

Tim: Yes.

Jon: That you, or something that you own—should own—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Is owned by something else—

Tim: Hmm.

Jon: Or someone else.

Tim: Yeah. The story begins with something that rightfully belongs to you has ended up in the possession of an other.

Jon: There it is.

Tim: Yep.

Jon: Thank you.

Tim: Yep.

[Laughter]

Jon: A redemption is the act of transferring the ownership back to the rightful place.

Tim: That's it.

Jon: That's the idea.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: You can use the word redeem—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: But you could also see how that could be framed as a liberation story, a rescue—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Story.

Tim: It's "redeem" when I'm describing the action from my point of view as the owner who is repossessing. When I restore it back to my possession—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Then I call it "redemption." But if the thing being redeemed is a person, then you can describe it from their point of view as, you could say, "being redeemed"

in the passive, but you could also just call it: “I’m being released.” Or you could say—oh, if they were in a really bad or dangerous situation, then you could call that release a “salvation”

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Or a “rescue.” Mhm. So we’ve covered how this word fits into the storyline of the Bible—the Exodus stories.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And there, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, has wrongfully taken Israel into his own possession, but Israel is God’s possession. So God redeems Israel to himself.

Jon: Transfers them back into rightful possession—

Tim: Mhm. Yeah.

Jon: As free people who get to live in their own land.

Tim: That’s right. Yep. So we just finished, in our previous conversation, the story of how that Exodus-style redemption gets picked up and employed as a theme in the Gospel according to Luke—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: As a way of telling the Jesus story. And what we saw there was, at the beginning and ending of Luke, a Moses, Exodus-style redemption is what people think Jesus is here to do.

Jon: Yeah, it’s their expectation—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: That the deliverer will come and confront Pharaoh and release the people from the bondage of the Pharaoh.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And so in Jesus’ day, it was Rome, and Herod’s government in league with Rome, that they needed to be released from. At the end of the Gospel, you get the story of the couple who are walking away from Jerusalem after Jesus had died. And they’re just so confused because Jesus didn’t do that.

Tim: Mhm. “We thought he was the one who would redeem Israel.”

Jon: Is what they say.

Tim: Mhm. Yeah.

Jon: What Jesus was doing, actually, was a release.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And: "Let me show you how."

Tim: Hmm.

Jon: We don't get that Bible study.

Tim: Yeah.

[Laughter]

Tim: Yeah, exactly.

Jon: But you did bring us back to the Gospel of Luke and show how there's all of these stories with Jesus doing what we would just call miracles.

[Laughter]

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Well, we looked at two examples. And what he sees is that he's not just healing people's bodies. He's not just forgiving people's sins. He's actually releasing people—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: From a slavery of sorts.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And it's not to Rome, ultimately. And it's not because of Herod, ultimately.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: He calls it the Satan.

Tim: Yeah, being in bondage to the enemy.

Jon: The enemy.

Tim: The cosmic enemy.

Jon: The power of darkness.

Tim: Yeah. Which doesn't mean that Jesus didn't care about or didn't think that political or economic oppression wasn't important, rather, that he saw a deeper, more cosmic bondage, of which Herod and Rome were just the latest kind of manifestations.

Jon: Yeah. So in Moses' story, the Pharaoh is the Pharaoh—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And he needs to confront the Pharaoh. In Jesus' story, there is a bigger, badder Pharaoh that Jesus had to confront. And to do it, he died—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Suffered and died—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And then came to life. And that was his confrontation with that power.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And so what's that all about?

Tim: What's that all about?

[Laughter]

Tim: That's right. So the Gospel of Luke is just giving us the account that that is what happened. And Jesus explained, symbolically, in a dense way, at the Passover meal, with the bread and the cup that: "This is my body," you know, "broken for you. This is my blood, shed for you." So he's appealing to the symbolism of blood and bread—

Jon: During Passover.

Tim: During Passover. Yeah, so signaling all kinds of things with the Passover lamb, which, I mean, gets us back into this word group of redemption, because, one thing we haven't talked about in this episode yet, in our summary—was that sometimes, something of value will be exchanged so that the redeemed thing can be released back into rightful possession.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And God doesn't pay Pharaoh anything, but God does hand all of Egypt and everyone in it, all of the firstborn sons, over to death.

Jon: Yeah. Can I actually say about this?

Tim: Oh, please.

Jon: I h—okay. So I've been reflecting on this.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: The way I've been making sense of the Passover night, in relation to the Exodus story, is it feels like a story within a story, right? You don't actually have to have the Passover story. I mean, it is the hinge point in which Pharaoh is like: "Okay, enough with the plagues."

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Right?

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And so: "I'll let you go." But even there, he still chases him down. And—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: So there's another confrontation.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: But it's almost like the story world within the story, because—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: It's like a new confrontation. All of a sudden, it's no longer just God confronting Pharaoh.

Tim: Oh, yes.

Jon: Right?

Tim: That's right.

Jon: It's now the destroyer—

Tim: Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: This new character called “the destroyer—”

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Coming, and he's confronting everyone—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Right?

Tim: That's right. All of the firstborn sons.

Jon: All the firstborn sons.

Tim: Everyone's firstborn sons.

Jon: Which is a way to mess with every family.

Tim: Everybody.

[Laughter]

Tim: That's right. That's right.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: That's exactly right.

Jon: And so—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: We're no longer just dealing with Egypt's leader. We're dealing with some bigger cosmic darkness.

Tim: Mhm. Death.

Jon: Death.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And it's coming for everyone.

Tim: Yes. Yep.

Jon: And that's when we're introduced—

Tim: That's good, Jon.

Jon: To the exchange.

Tim: Yeah, that's great.

Jon: Right?

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: That's when the blood—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And the whole thing.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: And it, and it feels like a story within a story to me.

Tim: Mhm. Yeah. Then, God provides a blameless, representative life that can die and cover for the lives of the people in the house.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And therefore the blood on the door. And so a life is surrendered willingly as a gift. Like, God provides it.

Jon: Yeah. Everyone needs to go in their houses, blood on the door—everyone has a chance.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: That's a little story world in and of itself.

Tim: Yeah, that's right.

Jon: But then it's—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Plopped down as the final plague—

Tim: That's right.

Jon: To get Israel out of Egypt.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And so Passover meal becomes really important and part of the Exodus story.

Tim: Yeah. Yep.

Jon: And so they're very connected.

Tim: Yep.

Jon: But it feels like a story within a story to me.

Tim: Yeah, totally. That's a great way of putting it. What you're saying, maybe knowing it, not knowing it—this is how design patterns work in the biblical story, where you'll be within a certain cycle of the biblical story, and you've worked through pretty much the story of the whole Bible, just within that little—

Jon: Ah, yes.

Tim: Section of scenes.

Jon: Right.

Tim: And it's a way of the biblical authors putting the story within the story. That's exactly right. So this would complicate things to bring up Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22.

[Laughter]

Tim: Uhm—but it's a sim—

Jon: But why don't we do that?

[Laughter]

Tim: No, but it's a similar point in that God brings a reckoning for what Abraham and Sarah did to their Egyptian slave and her son, Hagar and Ishmael, which becomes kind of like a plague on the house of Abraham.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: It's the way biblical authors work, which is packing stories with hyperlinks—

Jon: Yeah, okay.

Tim: Through vocabulary to each other—

Jon: I see.

Tim: And thematic links, and so on. So when God provides that ram—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: That can be offered in the place of Isaac, that is playing the same role, in terms of the story within the story, as the Passover lamb. My point is just, in both those stories, God is holding someone accountable and handing them over to death.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But then God is the one who provides—

Jon: Ah—

Tim: This life that is—

Jon: The exchange.

Tim: Surrendered—this blameless life that is surrendered, so that those in the house or on the mountain can escape death.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: And that is at work in so many different stories of the Hebrew Bible.

[Laughter]

Tim: Passover is the specific one that Jesus activates, though.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: Mhm. And it's indirect in Luke's account of the Gospel, the Good News, meaning that that's about as explicit a statement about the meaning of Jesus' death as you ever get in the Gospel of Luke.

Jon: When he does the—

Tim: Is—

Jon: Lord's Supper?

Tim: Is the Passover meal.

Jon: Passover—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Meal, yeah.

Tim: There's no, like, explanation or lecture Jesus—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Gives on the meaning of his death.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But the narrative itself, and the way it hyperlinks to Passover, and to the story of Isaac, is important.

Jon: There's Moses' confrontation with Pharaoh—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: But then there's also the blood's confrontation with the destroyer.

Tim: Yeah. That's good.

Jon: Right?

Tim: That's great. That's good, Jon.

Jon: They're both happening.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And so what people were expecting was Jesus to confront the Pharaoh.

Tim: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Jon: But instead, Jesus' blood confronts the destroyer.

Tim: Yeah. Sure.

Jon: But by doing that—

Tim: He confronts Pharaoh.

Jon: He confronts Pharaoh.

Tim: Exactly. Thank you. That's fantastic.

[Laughter]

Tim: That's, that's really great. In other words, Passover is like the story within the story.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Yeah, that helps you reframe the outer story. That is very similar to how the gospels are working. People think that by redeeming Israel, that Jesus will confront Herod and Pilate. But in fact, he confronts the power of sin, and death, and the Satan. And in so doing, he launches a movement into history and accomplishes something on a cosmic level that will have huge implications for Herod and for Pilate, but for even more, for, like, everybody. So, you know, that first generation of followers of Jesus, the people he appointed, Jesus appointed to represent him and go share the story, these people called "the sent ones," the Apostles, they were the ones to work it out with the aid of the Holy Spirit of how to talk about the story, how to tell it. And so what we get in the New Testament letters, then, are these snippets, or teachings, or restatements of the whole story, you know, as they're instructing and writing to these churches. The Apostle Paul elaborated and developed the redemption-vocabulary set of ideas more than any early Christian writer that we have.

Tim: Hmm.

Jon: His letters are packed with redemption language. And what's cool is, sometimes, he'll just allude to it or use the redemption words. He's just begging the question like: "What do you mean?"

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: There's some story underneath that. Sometimes he'll just tantalize you with just a little description using the word redemption. And there's one letter where he really begins to unpack what he means in multiple places. And that's his letter to the churches in Rome. So let's turn our attention, first, to some of these real short allusions to the redemption idea in Paul's letters, because they set up kind of an interesting puzzle that I think will help lead us to the letter to the Romans.

Jon: Okay.

[Musical Break (14:46—15:09)]

[Paul's Condensed Redemption Story (15:09—22:03)]

Tim: So Paul, often when he opens his letters, in the first paragraph or two, he'll bring up what are some of the key themes that he's going to be working out throughout the other parts of the letter. The letter to the Galatians, which is likely one of his earliest letters, opens, uh, with this greeting to the churches in Galatia: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, who gave himself for our sins so that he might rescue us from this present evil age according to the desire of God our Father." So he doesn't use the word redeem, but he has this little story that—he's just packed a little story into what he means when he says: "The Lord Jesus, the Messiah, you know, the one who —"

Jon: "Gave himself—"

Tim: “Gave himself for our sins, so that he could rescue us from this present evil age.”

Jon: Hmm. The present evil age.

Tim: Yeah. So we’ve got a Moses figure—

Jon: The power of darkness.

Tim: We got a Moses figure—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Lord Jesus Messiah. We’ve got a Pharaoh figure—

Jon: The present evil age.

Tim: The present evil age. And then we have this—

Jon: Rescue.

Tim: Rescue and the means of rescue. “He rescued us by giving himself for our sins.”

Jon: And when you have to give something to rescue someone—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: You’re talking redemption category, right?

Tim: Exa—yeah. Exactly. So he doesn’t use the word redemption, but the ideas are all there.

Jon: Because the, the gift that’s the means of exchange, that’s the kopher.

Tim: That’s right.

Jon: Right?

Tim: Yeah. He gave something of value—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: In order to rescue. And what he gave is his life—his life for our sins. W—what does that mean?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So he's got a story underneath there.

Jon: Right.

Tim: So we'll talk about it more, but the point is, is he's got a—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Kind of a—

Jon: It's—

Tim: Fixed narrative in his head.

Jon: Tightly packaged—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Little story, there.

Tim: That's right. In—another place he does this is early in the letter to the Colossians, and he does use the word redemption here. But it's going to feel like the same type of story. Uh: "He," that is, the Son of God: "Rescued us—" so there's rescue: "From the authority of darkness."

Jon: New turn of phrase.

Tim: Yep. So that's the Pharaoh figure. "And he transferred us into the Kingdom of his beloved Son."

Jon: Hmm. The transferred language is very clear here.

Tim: Yeah. "In whom—that beloved Son is the one in whom we have redemption, that is, the forgiveness of sins."

Jon: You could have redemption in something.

Tim: Yeah. Or maybe: "By whom."

Jon: By whom, okay.

Tim: It's describing this—the beloved Son.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So you've got a little story here. "I was under the authority of darkness."

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "That was my Pharaoh. Somebody rescued me."

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "And that rescue involved a transfer from the authority of darkness, into a kingdom. Whose kingdom?"

[Laughter]

Tim: "Well, the Kingdom of the Son, who's beloved by the Father. And actually, it's that Son—is the one, by whom or through whom, in whom, we have the redemption." I guess that's the funky way for us—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: It seems funky, but he's saying: "The Son is the one who brought about the redemption."

Jon: Okay.

Tim: "He's the one who redeemed."

Jon: And then there's this little phrase at the end—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: "The forgiveness of sins," referring to the redemption?

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Okay. So another way to frame the redemption—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Is forgiveness of sins.

Tim: Forgiveness of sins. Yeah. So he actually has three words to describe this repossession.

Jon: Hmm.

[Laughter]

Tim: He has: "He rescued."

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So that's referring to: out of danger.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "He transferred us." It's about this movement from, like, one—

Jon: Yeah. From death to life.

Tim: Yep. And then we have "redemption," which is about this reclaiming or repossessing.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: And that redemption is about the release of sins. It's the same phrase as the Gospel of Luke.

Jon: Oh, the release of sins.

Tim: "In whom we have redemption, the release of our sins." Yeah. So apparently our sin was something that was—

[Laughter]

Tim: Keeping us under the authority of darkness.

Jon: Yeah. That's interesting because—I think you've talked about this before. Like, Genesis two, were introduced to the snake.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Genesis four, we're introduced to the word sin, right?

Tim: Yeah. Exactly right.

Jon: And so first it's—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: The deceptive power of the snake that lures them—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Away from—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: God. But then in Genesis chapter four, with Cain and his—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Anger and jealousy, it's sin that turns into murder.

Tim: I—sin is the animal crouching at the door trying to—

Jon: So these ideas kind of get merged.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: So to be under the power of—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: The enemy, darkness, is to also then be under the power of, of this sin.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: What does it mean to be released from—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Sin?

Tim: And with Cain, sin is both something that's like a, a possibility and a voice in his mind about something he could do—

Jon: The crouching tiger.

[Laughter]

Tim: And it lures him, it deceives him, like the snake.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But then also, it's something that he does—

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: That now he is—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Like, accountable for—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Before God. So this—man, this is a dense little two verses—

[Laughter]

Tim: But you can see there's a whole storyline.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "We have morally failed—sinned—"

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "Haven't done right by God and neighbor. And so we find ourselves trapped under the authority of darkness, and it's dangerous. We're dying. It's terrible. We're in slavery. But through the Son, who's beloved by the Father, we have been rescued, brought out of danger, we've been transferred, like, from one kingdom to citizenship in a new Kingdom, and we have been repossessed by being released from our sins."

Jon: You could talk about release from your sins. You could also talk about release from the power of darkness. And are we talking about the same thing in two different ways? Are we talking about—

Tim: Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: Two different aspects of the same thing?

Tim: Yeah. That's a great question. So not that Paul is answering our questions—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: In the letter to the Romans, but in the letter to the Romans, he unpacks this story multiple times and from multiple angles. And let's let him talk—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And just keep that question at the foreground.

Jon: Alright.

Tim: Don't let go of it. But I want to go to Romans now—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: To see how he unpacks the story under the story here.

[Musical Break (21:45—22:03)]

[A Gift of Redemption in Romans 3 (22:03—44:21)]

Tim: So in Paul's letter to the Roman churches, we know the problem Paul is addressing is that Israelite, and Jewish, and non-Jewish followers of Jesus are having a really difficult time getting along, and living, and celebrating life together in Jesus the Messiah.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: That's the crisis Paul is dealing with. And he wants these churches to be a unified network so that they can help further the missionary work and the spread of the Good News of Jesus further west, onto Spain is what he says—where he hopes to go. And so a big part of what he's going to work out in the letter is: "Listen, Israelites, non-Israelites, like—nobody has privilege over each other. You are all equal before the Messiah. We are all equally failures to love God and love neighbor, and in fact, Israel is even hyper-accountable for its failure to love God and love neighbor because God gave them the covenant and the Torah."

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: And so he has this big line of thought that he starts to bring in to a close at the end of chapter three, where the first time the word redemption occurs. And he starts talking about how, when it comes to failing to love God and others, there's no distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish. There's just humans.

[Laughter]

Tim: And he has this famous line.

Jon: That's what Passover night's all about—

[Laughter]

Jon: Isn't it?

[Laughter]

Tim: Yeah. That's right. Yeah. Uh—famous line: Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned and have failed to attain the divine honor."

Jon: "All have sinned and have failed to attain the divine honor."

Tim: Mhm. "The glory of God."

Jon: Instead of glory, divine honor.

Tim: Li—literally: "The glory of God." "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

Jon: Mhm. "All have sinned and have—"

Tim: That's the NIV—

Jon: "Failed—" and instead of fallen short: "Failed."

Tim: Yeah. If you fall short of something, it means you didn't get to something—

Jon: You didn't get to something to the goal.

Tim: That you ought to have—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: That was, like, the purpose.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Your purpose—

[Laughter]

Tim: Is the glory of God.

Jon: Failure's a little more intense.

Tim: I think when most people read—certainly when I read Romans 3:23 as a new follower of Jesus, what I thought—“All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God—” meant God has a standard of moral glory and perfection.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: I fall short of that.

Jon: Okay. I'm not moral enough.

Tim: Which is equal to sin.

Jon: I see. Yeah.

Tim: Sinning is failing to live up to God's perfect level of glory. That's what it meant in my mind. I'm just saying that's what it meant in English to me.

Jon: Well, that's actually also how I was taught it.

Tim: Oh—

[Laughter]

Tim: Oh, okay, okay.

Jon: And so you're saying that's not quite it?

Tim: Well, based on a whole bunch of things he says in—

Jon: Because it also sounds right.

Tim: Romans—

[Laughter]

Tim: Eight, what we know is that the glory of God is something that God has destined humans to embody—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: To be glorified—

Jon: Right.

Tim: And to share in God's glory.

Jon: Okay, yes.

Tim: Our failure to attain the glory of God is that we fail to become—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: The images of God that we are made to be—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But have sinned, failed to—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Be. Mhm.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: So one way to frame it is, like, there's this moral expectation that I've failed, and that's, like, God's perfection or glory.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Then the other way to frame it is, I actually am called as God's image to embody that, but then we're still talking about a failure of being able to—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Do it.

Tim: Totally.

Jon: In both ways of framing it, we're talking about moral failure.

Tim: That's right. But on my reading from many years ago, the glory of God was something about God—

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: Uniquely, and really, only.

Jon: Ah.

Tim: I failed to live up to God's glorious perfection. And—

Jon: I see.

Tim: What the glory of God means in Paul's letters, especially Romans, is the honored, elevated status that God destines humans for as his glorious images.

Jon: Yeah. Not some, like, elite moral status that, like, God expects because he's perfect, and so—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Like, if you're going to hang with him—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: You're going to have to somehow figure that out.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And the story of the Bible is God saying: "I'm actually giving that over to you, from the beginning."

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: “You get to participate in that.”

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And then it’s a rejection of it.

Tim: Mhm. The glory of God is a shorthand for the, the depiction of ideal humanity in Genesis chapter one—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: The image of God poem.

Jon: The image of God. Yeah.

Tim: Yeah. So both Israelites and non-Israelites have failed to attain what God destined them for.

Jon: The purpose of humanity.

Tim: That’s right. And how? Well, he gave some portraits in chapter one. We give away our dignity to our own created objects—

Jon: Oh, yeah.

Tim: And then give our allegiance and worship to those things. And then just, like, letting our appetites, physical appetites, for food and sex—let them rule us, and we become slaves to them. So that’s one mode. But then also there is a more cosmic problem that Paul’s tapping into when he uses the word sin. We’ll talk about that in a minute. So all that to say, is that’s the problem—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And it’s everybody.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But then he also says: “So everybody’s sinned and failed to attain the divine honor, but all can be, or are being, declared righteous by the gift of his grace.” So the failure is universal, and the gift of God, by his grace, is universal—to be declared as someone who’s right with God. And how did that happen? “Through the redemption—”

[Laughter]

Tim: “That is in the Messiah Jesus.” So let’s just piece together the logic here.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So we’ve got a bad situation. There’s no Pharaoh. There’s just—we’ve sinned and failed to attain the divine honor. That’s the problem.

Jon: No Pharaoh mentioned.

Tim: Right. It’s kind of implicit there.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But that’s the problem.

Jon: And so underneath of that, you could say, is something he’s not talking about, which is now being in possession of sin and death.

Tim: Exactly. That’s under the surface.

Jon: That’s under the surface.

Tim: He’s going to bring it explicit in a couple chapters—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Where he retells the story of—

Jon: But for redemption to make sense—

Tim: Exactly.

Jon: You kind of have to bring that up—

Tim: Yeah. Exactly.

Jon: Into there.

Tim: Yeah. That’s right. It’s interesting to try and put the story of—

Jon: I see.

Tim: Romans 3:23 and 24 together. So we’re in some bad situation: sin—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Failing to attain the divine honor. We're—been transferred into a good situation, which is being declared as right with God by being given a gift of grace. And how did I get from one to the other?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: He calls it redemption, which is in the Messiah Jesus.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: So there was a reclaiming—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: To move between those two states. What do you mean, Paul?

[Laughter]

Tim: Wh—what do you mean? So when he gets to Romans chapter six, Paul addresses an accusation that's been leveled against him by other followers of Jesus, specifically Jewish followers of Jesus—

Jon: Oh.

Tim: Who think that by not requiring non-Israelites to become circumcised, and keep kosher and, uhm, the purity laws—

Jon: Keep the Sabbath.

Tim: Keep the Sabbath. So by not taking on a Jewish ethnic and cultural identity in order to follow Israel's Messiah, Jesus—Paul took a different stance. And this is what the book of Acts—big controversy—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So people who thought that Paul was playing fast and loose with that biblical heritage of the laws—

Jon: Uh-huh.

Tim: Of the covenant. Uhm—

Jon: "Slippery slope, Paul."

Tim: “Slippery—”yes, he was accused of being on the slippery slope.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Yeah. So then he was accused—

Jon: “How are you going to attain the divine glory—”

Tim: Yeah, that’s right.

Jon: “If you’re not telling people to keep the Sabbath—”

Tim: Exactly.

Jon: “Of all things.”

Tim: That’s right.

Jon: “Of all things.”

Tim: Yes. So then he was misunderstood by people to mean like: “Listen, you can sin or not sin. It doesn’t matter. God’s going to give you his gift of grace no matter what.”

Jon: Yeah. That’s all the way to the bottom of the slope.

Tim: “In fact, the more we sin, the more God has to forgive us. And doesn’t that just glorify God?”

[Laughter]

Tim: So this is how people misunderstood Paul.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And so he opens Romans six by saying: “What, are we saying that you should keep on living in moral failure so that God’s grace can increase? “And—” you know, he says his famous line in Greek: “Mē génoito, may it never be.”

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: “God forbid,” I think is how the NIV translates it. And so then he just states this claim that the rest of the chapter is unpacking the logic underneath it—is: “How can we who have died to sin still live in it?”

Jon: Oh my goodness. When you look at this through the theme of this transfer—

Tim: Mhm. Mhm.

Jon: From death to life—

Tim: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yes.

Jon: That's what this is about.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: The Good News is the transfer from the slavery in sin to this new type of life in the beloved Son, as he said.

Tim: Yeah. Yeah. That's right.

Jon: If that's what it's about, then it makes no sense to say: "Let's continue to then live—"

Tim: Yeah, that's right.

Jon: "In the other kingdom."

Tim: "In—under the authority of darkness."

Jon: Right.

Tim: As in Colossians.

Jon: Then you're missing the whole point.

Tim: Yeah—

Jon: S—

Tim: You don't belong to that anymore. Mhm.

Jon: Yeah. You've been freed from that. And the means of release is grace and forgiveness. And I guess he has this theology, which we haven't really got into, but it's this freedom that the wisdom of the Torah can be alive in your life. And it doesn't have to mean that you eat kosher or strictly keep the Sabbath the way that—

Tim: That's right. For no—

Jon: Has been done.

Tim: Yeah, for non-Israelites.

Jon: For non-Israelites.

Tim: That's right. Yeah.

Jon: And so for an Israelite to look at that and go: "That's a moral failure—"

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: "To not keep to Sabbath. So are you saying, then, I can just do anything—"

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: "And that's just going to make God's grace even more significant?"

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: "And if we're going to praise God for his grace, then we can just praise God more for more grace."

Tim: Yeah, yeah.

Jon: And Paul's like: "You're missing the point."

Tim: Yeah. "How can we who have died to sin still live in it?"

Jon: Yeah. "You've transferred out." And he thinks of that as a death—

Tim: Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: To that way of being.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So how have we transferred out, though? "When did I die to sin?"

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: Right?

Jon: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Tim: So what's that about? Well then—so he unpacks it. He says: "Well, y'all were baptized. And what was baptism about? It was joining the Messiah in dying," going into the flood waters, in the symbolism of the baptism—that's a

whole thing we don't have time to talk about. But he calls that being baptized into the Messiah's death. Then, he calls baptism being buried with him through baptism into death.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So—and remember this is what Jesus said at the end of Luke? How did he accomplish cosmic redemption from the cosmic Pharaoh? By suffering, and dying, and then entering into glory, death, and resurrection.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: So here, Paul's activating that story.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: "The Messiah died, and he was raised," as he says right here: "So that just as the Messiah was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father—"then here: "So if you're buried with him in baptism, you're buried, and you might walk in the newness of life." So your life has now become closely joined to the story arc of Jesus' life. "Now, if we are united to him in his death—"because remember, he just said: "We've died to sin."

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So he just established—remember? "You died with Jesus and you were raised with him through baptism." That's a whole thing—

[Laughter]

Tim: But he's just taking for granted that that's what baptism means.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Then, he says: "Well, if we've been united with him in his death—"

Jon: Uh-huh.

Tim: "Then we'll be united with him in his resurrection, knowing that our old *adam*, our old *anthropos*, was crucified with him in order that our body of sin might be, whew, done away with so that we would no longer be slaves to sin.

Because you know, whoever is dead—well, if you're dead, you're finally liberated from sin."

[Laughter]

Tim: So notice sin and death—this is how Paul's mind works.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: So we're trying to get—what's the unifying story that link all these words together?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So the Exodus story is foundational here in terms of, like, the slots of the Exodus story—thinking of it as a redemption story. So you've got a pharaoh—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Who wrongfully possesses people. And here he doesn't name the Satan, he just names sin and death.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "Sin and death got you in their clutches."

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "They possess you. They possess the old humanity, the old *adam*."

Jon: And what we're being invited into is to be transferred out of that ownership into a new way—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Into a new Kingdom. And now he's talking about the means of that transfer.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And to talk about that, we're now talking about dying—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And being buried with Jesus.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Which, this is all new, right? Like, I'm not prepared for this, as we've done the theme of redemption?

Tim: Oh, yeah. We're now getting into, like, the logic of redemption. So the inner logic of the storyline—what does the suffering, and dying, and rising Messiah—how does that accomplish redemption?

Jon: And is there, underneath of this, something in the way he thinks about death, that I think I need to understand? Because when he says: "He who has died is freed from sin." Like, there's a story world in his mind that makes sense of that sentence.

Tim: Exactly. Yeah.

Jon: When yo—when you're dead, you're now free from the bondage of sin.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: So like, sin and death own you.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: You will be released from sin and death when you're dead.

Tim: Yeah, when you're dead, because that's what sin and death can do.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: They kill you.

Jon: They kill you, then it's over, you're released from sin and death.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And that's just an interesting story logic that I don't—

Tim: Right.

Jon: Have in my mind actually—

[Laughter]

Jon: I'm realizing.

[Laughter]

Tim: Yeah. Sure.

Jon: I don't think about it that way.

Tim: Yeah. Huh. It's the view of dying as being the extent of what somebody can do to me. Like, when we do wrong to each other, if I threaten you with violence to take your stuff, then the reason why you might give me your stuff, even though you don't want to, is because you're afraid of dying.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So death has a power over your imagination.

Jon: Ah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Tim: But if you're dead, you don't care.

Jon: If I'm dead, I don't care.

Tim: You're freed from that power of death over your imagination. Now, here, he's linking it so closely to the one who has died and was raised—

Jon: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Tim: Is freed from sin, because that's what he's talking about. "If we have died with the Messiah, we believe that we will live with him."

Jon: So then there's this next step of saying: "There is a way of being rescued from death which is just death."

[Laughter]

Jon: But then you're not really rescued from death. You're just dead.

Tim: You're just dead, yeah.

[Laughter]

Jon: But what if—

Tim: Yeah. What if?

Jon: What if, on the other side of death, is a new type of life?

Tim: That's right.

Jon: And that life is no longer enslaved by the power of death.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And how do you get there?

Tim: Yeah. That's right.

Jon: And that's what Jesus did, somehow.

Tim: Yeah, in fact, the next sentence, verse nine: "The Messiah, having been raised from the dead, will never die again. Death no longer is a ruler over him."

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Here's the ruler and slavery language—

Jon: I see.

Tim: Again.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "The death he died, he died to sin once and for all. But now, the life that he lives, he lives to God." So when we die, we die die.

[Laughter]

Tim: Uhm, but when the Son of God dies, he dies and lives. And then sin and death don't have any claim over the one who has died and lived.

Jon: Here's what's really interesting—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Is when you think of redemption as a transfer ownership kind of thing, let's say, then, you're under ownership to death.

Tim: Mhm. Yeah.

Jon: And I want to rescue you from death.

Tim: Yeah. I am owned by death.

Jon: So death's right behind you—

Tim: Okay.

[Laughter]

Jon: And you're chained to death.

Tim: Yeah. "Help me."

Jon: So I could pull you out, rescue you from death—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And now you're alive.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And you're freed from death.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: But here, what Paul seems to be saying is like: "Actually, the only way out is to turn around and go through death."

Tim: Sure. That's right.

Jon: Like that—"I can't pull you out."

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: “Death, actually, has got—”

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: “Too big of a grasp on you. But if you go through death, I could pull you out the other side.” It kind of seems like the logic here.

Tim: Yeah. And let’s say you—you’re the one who wants to redeem me. What if it’s like this? It’s like death has this claim on me.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: It’s dragging me down—what he calls: “The body of sin.”

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Like the body—this body in this mode of existence in this world of moral compromise, it’s dying. Death has a claim on me. But what you could do, if you’re my redeemer, is surrender what is most valuable, your life. And what if you surrender your life to death in order to join me in death, and I don’t have the ability to raise myself from the dead, but if someone could surrender themselves to death and then pick their life back up again—

Jon: Yeah. Behind you is death.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: I just see a wall of death behind you.

Tim: Yep.

Jon: But I’m like picturing this like—

Tim: Okay.

Jon: Cloud of chaos and death.

Tim: Great.

Jon: And you’re chained to it.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And it’s sucking you in, and there’s no way out. And there’s only one way, and now it’s through death. Now, Jesus is standing over here, saying: “Okay,

you're going to go through death. I can't pull you out on this side, but I can pull you out from the other side."

Tim: "Can't pull you out, but I can pull you through."?

Jon: "I can pull you through."

Tim: "Through."

Jon: Yeah. "But I got to get on the other side to pull you through."

Tim: Oh. Hmm.

Jon: Right?

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: "I don't belong on the other side."

Tim: Hmm. Hmm.

Jon: "In fact, death's not going to pull me through. The only way through death, is I've got to sacrifice myself." Right? "I got to surrender myself to death."

Tim: Surrender. Yeah, that's right.

Jon: Right?

Tim: But this is related—

Jon: Alright.

Tim: To what's happening with animals on the altar—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But that's another kind of story world.

Jon: Okay. "I have to surrender myself to death—"

Tim: Yeah, yeah.

Jon: "Willingly—"

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: "Go through death because death doesn't actually have any power over me."

Tim: Especially if you're somebody whose very essence is love.

Jon: Yeah. "I'm the opposite of—"

Tim: Yeah—

Jon: "Death."

Tim: Sin has no claim on you.

Jon: Yeah. "So the reason I will go through death is to then come to the other side so I can pull you through. And in doing that, I'm having a confrontation with death itself."

Tim: That's right.

Jon: Life and death are now—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: In confrontation.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: "And when I go through, it looks like death has taken me out from one angle."

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: "But from another angle—"

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: "Actually, I'm just passing through death."

Tim: Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: "And now, I'm on the other side, and now I can pull you through death into life." Because there's life on both sides, for the Messiah.

Tim: Yeah. That's exactly right. Yeah. So maybe just—this is helpful, and to retell it with a little nuance: th—death has no rightful claim over the Messiah.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Death has no right to possess the Son of God.

Jon: Right.

Tim: Me as a mortal, compromised creature, death has a rightful claim on me, clearly. It's like ruling my whole—

Jon: Yeah, yeah.

Tim: Body. So I belong to death. Death's got me. Death has no hold of its own power over the Son of God. And that speaks to the value, the cost, of the surrender. But he will surrender his life to death—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: As an act of generosity.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: To go through it on the other side to life, so that he's now given death what death wants. "And what you get is the life of the Son of God, oh, Death. Now where's your victory?" And he pulls those who are in him—right? Baptized into him. He pulls humanity through. So in his representative role as the human, he does for the rest of *adam* what we are unable to do for ourselves. So verse 11, he just repeats the thing that he said at the beginning: "So consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God. And don't let sin rule in your mortal body." So you have a body now, and it's dying. That's what—your mortal body. So your body's claimed by death, but your truest sense of who you are, sin has no power over. "So why would you go on living in sin? You died to it, because the Messiah died to it and went through it, and you have gone through with him."

Jon: Hmm.

[Musical Break (43:54—44:22)]

[The Transfer from Death to Life in Romans 6 (44:21—58:34)]

Tim: So what's really interesting is the word redemption is not used in Romans six—

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: But the storyline is.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: You have a Pharaoh, sin and death, that claim humanity as their possession. You have a Moses figure, who has, simultaneously—surrenders his life like the Passover lamb—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: But willingly goes through death. And it's all about: "Don't let sin and death be your ruler. Don't be enslaved to them." Slavery language is all over this—

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: But you can be liberated—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: From those, and are one with the Messiah. So that's Romans six. But remember, this is all unpacking that really dense thing he said in chapter three, which is: "Listen, everybody sinned, but now everybody can be declared right with God by a grace gift. And that happened through an act of redemption." So Romans six is like this zoom into the word redemption, and you hear the Exodus story.

Jon: Okay. So that's the redemption.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: What's the gift? Is the gift simply the surrender?

Tim: Hmm.

Jon: Or is there something deeper here, too, with the blood?

Tim: Oh, well, blood is the life. The blood is an image of the willingly surrendered, blameless life.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And the blamelessness is important because that means that death has no rightful claim on that life, because it's never failed to love God and others.

Jon: I see. So one way to talk about the blood is it's the means of exchange, right?

Tim: Oh—

Jon: It's the *kopher*.

Tim: It's the thing of value.

Jon: The thing of value.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And, uhm—

Tim: A blameless life.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And then I think when I—when we talk about that, is there some sense that the power of death needs something? Like God actually owes the power of death something?

Tim: Oh—no, God doesn't owe death anything. We do.

Jon: We do.

Tim: We owe death our lives—

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Within this story.

Jon: Because you could just think of it as an act of rescue.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And to rescue, Jesus had to go through death—

Tim: Yeah, yeah.

Jon: Because he's got to pull us out the other side.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And in which case, going through death isn't really a means of exchange or the thing of value, it's just the way to get to the place where he could rescue us.

Tim: Yeah. Yeah.

Jon: But there is also, it seems like, some logic around: his life stands in as a substitute for our life.

Tim: Yeah, a blameless representative. Death has no rightful claim over the blameless life of the Son of God. Death has a rightful claim on me.

Jon: Let me ask it this way. When Jesus pulls me out of death from the other side into a new life, dying with him, does he have the power and ability to pull me out just because he is—

[Laughter]

Tim: He is my creator.

Jon: He's Jesus.

[Laughter]

Jon: He's my creator—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Or is there something even more, in that, in order to do it, it's because he made this act of surrender?

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Or am I asking the wrong question?

Tim: Well, are you wanting to f—fill in this potential gap in how we tell the story, to say: "So did God have to owe somebody? Was the Son of God obligated to pay someone else off?"

Jon: Because when we talk about: “Purchased by the blood—”

Tim: Right.

Jon: The way I understood that phrase, constantly growing up, is there was a price to be paid.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Jesus paid that price.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And so it's like giving the grim reaper, you know—

Tim: Mhm. Yeah, that's right.

Jon: What he needs—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: To let me go.

Tim: Yeah. So there's not a trace of that in the New Testament, like, God paid off the devil. Death or sin—it is depicted as an oppressive Pharaoh or ruler—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Somebody who rules us. But think within the logic of the biblical story, the garden of Eden story, the reason humans are given over to the snake and to death, to go back to the dust—it's because of—God's the one enforcing, like, that consequence. But God also has the power to willingly enter into that dust and death realm as an act of love, and surrender his life to join us in death, and then bring us out through the other side. But it's not because God owes death anything. It's because this way of rescuing us—God joins us.

Jon: Hmm. So we can join God.

Tim: Yeah. Yeah. He becomes what we are so that we can become what he is, to use that classic phrase from Irenaeus.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So that's the thing is these economic metaphors are one way of talking about it. Another way of talking about it is this union language.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: We unite with him in his death so that we can be united with him in his life. His life becomes our life. And now we're to where redemption begins to merge with other themes in Paul, like being in Christ. Like, when I buy something at the store—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: I don't become one with it.

[Laughter]

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: You know what I mean? Like, I s—I give money to the store—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Uhm, because they possess it. But this is more like God redeems it or repossesses it by becoming one with the thing that he wants to possess.

Jon: Yeah. I think the, the frame that you're trying to shake loose, then, for me, is that because of the debt of my sin, consequences of my sin, someone needs to be paid off, and that someone is death. And one of the ways to think about death being paid off is to sacrifice an animal to satisfy death. And that whole schema of thinking about: that's what the sacrificial system was about, and that's what the blood of the lamb was about—it seems like you're trying to shake that loose.

Tim: Well, I'm trying to separate that this idea of redeeming and the surrendering of a life belongs to this language of redemption with the Exodus story, freedom from slavery—all those as a part of it. What's happening on the altar, through the offering of atoning sacrifices, is another story world connected to the garden of Eden story through the symbolism of the tabernacle. And these two s—the redemption storyline and the, the sacrifice-return-to-Eden storyline, like, these are analogies with each other, but I'm trying to pull them apart just—

Jon: Yeah, because the Passover lamb wasn't a sacrifice in the temple.

Tim: No, but, but in a way, the house became the altar.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And the blood was put on that just like the blood was put on the altar itself, of an animal.

Jon: Hmm. Okay.

Tim: So they are analogies to each other.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But the point is about a surrendered life over which death has no rightful claim.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: But someone, as an act of mercy, compassion, and love, offers their own life. But it's not because death is somehow owed. Death is the consequence that God is upholding. God is the one with power over death and life. And so God goes into death in the person of his Son.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: I mean, the reason why we're stuck at this point right here is because—well, I think it's for a—lots of reasons.

[Laughter]

Tim: But, I mean, this is like the nub of so many challenges in understanding atonement and this meaning of Jesus' life and death—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And why there's so many debates about it—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Is because the earliest Christians had these variety of words with attached story worlds—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: And they used all of them: forgiveness, redemption, salvation—

[Laughter]

Tim: Sacrifice. And, you know, there was never a fully agreed-upon definition of, like, finding some other language for what all these words mean by the early church. You know, all the early councils of the church were—never worked out some abstract definition of what all of this means. The trinity was their way of working it out. And so the early church's way of getting to the heart of this is to say God became human so that humans could be restored to the divine honor as divine images of God.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: And one way to think about it is how we purchase things.

[Laughter]

Tim: But it also is like, tweaking, redefining, what it means to purchase something.

Jon: Well, at the bottom of it is a transfer of ownership.

Tim: Yeah, that's right.

Jon: That's crystal clear—

Tim: Yes.

Jon: For me.

Tim: Yes, that's right.

Jon: And I think it's wonderful.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And so then, now, we're just talking about the means of the transfer.

Tim: The means of the transfer—

Jon: Wh—

Tim: And—

Jon: What was the role of the blood?

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: In what way did the blood keep the destroyer away—

Tim: Mhm, at Passover.

Jon: At Passover?

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And then in what way is Jesus' surrender to death—in what way was that an—a *kopher* of, of sorts?

Tim: Yeah. It's—it was a, a willing surrender of a blameless life over which death had no rightful hold. And once somebody comes and does that, that like, unlocks —

Jon: That unlocks me—

Tim: That un—

Jon: From death.

Tim: It opens up, yeah, the hands of death to have no hold over that person anymore. Death has no claim over someone who has done nothing worthy of death.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: And especially over the one who is the author of life.

[Laughter]

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: So that makes sense for Jesus.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And it only is going to make sense for me—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: If I am also in Jesus.

Tim: If he pulls me through. If I'm so united with him—

Jon: And the only way he can pull me through—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Is if I'm united with him.

Tim: Yeah. That's right. Yeah.

Jon: And the way I become united with him is by—and now were in this language of dying with Jesus.

Tim: Yep. That's right. Trust, faith, following, baptism, entering into his suffering—

Jon: But then Paul also calls this the forgiveness—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Of sins.

Tim: That's right. That's right.

Jon: The release from sin.

Tim: Yep. Sin and death are not your ruler.

Jon: Yeah, and then—

Tim: You're not slaves to them—

Jon: Once you transfer through death into new life, you now are in a place where you're no longer ruled by sin and death.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: At least—

[Laughter]

Jon: We are being pulled through.

[Laughter]

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: We are being rescued.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: We still have these mortal bodies—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: But that's where this is all heading.

Tim: Yeah. That's right. Or as he says in verse 22: "Now that you have been set free from sin, you are enslaved to God."

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "But man, the fruit of that is being made holy—"

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: "Which leads to eternal life."

Jon: Mhm. This is another example of: he uses past tense, and then he slips over to like: "This is still happening."

[Laughter]

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: "You have been freed from death—"

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: "But you are actually also leading—"

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: "You're still on the journey—"

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: “Into the life.”

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Yeah. Whew.

Jon: Okay. So being released from sin—

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And being released from the power of death—

Tim: That’s right.

Jon: Are also two sides of the same coin.

Tim: Yeah. That’s right.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: “Grace and peace to you, from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Messiah, who gave himself for our sins so that he might rescue us from this present evil age—”or Colossians: “He rescued us from the authority of darkness. He transferred us to the Kingdom of the Son, whom he loves. And in that Son, we have redemption, that is, the forgiveness of sins.” I hope that those dense, compact formulations feel a little more clear—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Now. But I’ve been trying to gain clarity from these words for years and years now. And I still feel like I have to work for it. So that’s okay. One step at a time.

[Musical Break (56:16—56:20)]

Jon: That's it for today's podcast. Next week, we continue in the letter to the Romans, and we'll also look at the letter to the Hebrews, and we'll continue to explore the meaning of the death of Jesus as a redemption.

Tim: Jesus' death is the supreme act of love, that he would enter into union with his suffering, dying, dispossessed creation to suffer its fate on its behalf so that he could return it to himself.

Jon: BibleProject is a crowdfunded nonprofit, and we exist to help people experience the Bible as a unified story that leads to Jesus. And everything that we create is free because of the generous support of thousands of people just like you. Thank you so much for being a part of this with us.

Noah: Hi, my name is Noah, and I'm from Salem, Oregon.

Kirsten: Hi, my name is Kirsten, and I'm from Los Angeles, California. I first heard about the BibleProject from a friend, and I use the BibleProject for learning more about God's Word, seeing his Scripture come to life through picture and animation.

Noah: I use BibleProject for anything relating to my master's degree of theology. My favorite thing about the BibleProject is the way that God's word is brought to life.

Kirsten: How it explains the Bible in a colorful, tangible way.

Noah: It draws me in and always gives me a fresh perspective. We believe the Bible is a unified story that leads to Jesus.

Kirsten: BibleProject is a nonprofit funded by people like me. Find free videos, articles, podcasts, classes, and more on the BibleProject app—

Noah: And at BibleProject.com.

Josh: Hey, everyone, this is Josh. I'm an app designer at BibleProject. I've been working at BibleProject for a little over a year, and my favorite part about my work is all the stories I hear about how our audience uses the tools we make to dive deeper into the Bible story. There's a whole team of people that bring the podcast to life every week. For a full list of everyone who's involved, check out the show credits in the episode description wherever you stream the podcast and on our website.