

Dr. Craig Keener, Romans, Session 10

Romans 8:26-9:16

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

Romans 8:26-9:16

1. Abstract of Keener, Romans, Session 10, Romans 8:26-9:16, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Dr. Craig Keener **explains** Romans 8:23-9:16, focusing on the theme of a "new Exodus" where the Holy Spirit leads believers, mirroring Israel's journey. He **connects** this to the concepts of the "already, not yet" fulfillment of salvation, the Spirit's intercession, and God's sovereign work in believers' lives, even amidst suffering. Keener **discusses** the implications of God's foreknowledge and predestination, emphasizing God's grace and initiative in salvation while acknowledging human responsibility. He **draws** on Old Testament scriptures, Jewish traditions, and early Christian writings to illuminate Paul's argument. Finally, he **highlights** the unwavering nature of God's love and the ultimate victory believers have in Christ, even facing persecution.

2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Keener, Romans, Session 10 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → Pauline Epistles → Romans).



Keener_Romans_Session 10.mp3

3. Briefing Document

Briefing Doc: Romans 8:23-9:16 - Dr. Craig Keener

Main Themes:

- **New Exodus:** Keener highlights the imagery of a new exodus woven throughout Romans 8, paralleling the Israelites' journey from slavery to freedom with the believers' experience of salvation and transformation. This includes being led by the Spirit, experiencing adoption as God's children, groaning under bondage, and inheriting the promised future.
- **Already, Not Yet:** The new exodus unfolds in two stages, mirroring Israel's liberation from Egypt and subsequent journey to the Promised Land. Believers have the "first fruits" of the Spirit, a foretaste of the future world, while awaiting the complete redemption of their bodies.
- **God's Sovereignty and Assurance:** Keener emphasizes God's active role in the lives of believers. The Spirit intercedes, God works all things for good, and believers are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ. The assurance of God's love and victory is presented as a source of comfort and strength amidst suffering.
- **Theological Debates and Inclusion of Gentiles:** Keener navigates the complex theological discussions around predestination, acknowledging both God's sovereignty and human responsibility. He stresses that God's choice is by grace, not merit. He also addresses Paul's anguish over his fellow Jewish people's rejection of Christ, while underscoring the inclusion of Gentiles in God's plan of salvation.

Most Important Ideas/Facts:

- **Groaning and the Spirit's Intercession:** Believers "groan inwardly" (Romans 8:23) under the weight of a world still subject to decay and long for the fullness of redemption. However, the indwelling Spirit intercedes on their behalf, presenting their needs to God even before they articulate them.
- **God Working All Things for Good:** God's providence extends to all aspects of a believer's life, working even seemingly negative events for their ultimate good and for the advancement of His purposes (Romans 8:28).

- **The Chain of Salvation:** Keener breaks down the "chain" of salvation in Romans 8:29-30: foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification. He emphasizes that although glorification awaits the future, it is a certain reality for those in Christ.
- **Suffering and More Than Conquerors:** No hardship or persecution can separate believers from the love of God in Christ (Romans 8:35-39). Keener emphasizes that this message would have resonated deeply with the Roman believers who faced persecution and ultimately martyrdom.
- **Ethnic Descent vs. True Israel:** Paul challenges the prevailing Jewish notion that ethnic descent from Abraham automatically guarantees salvation. He emphasizes that true Israel is defined by faith in Christ, not by bloodline (Romans 9:6-7).

Quotes:

- **New Exodus:** "Their redemption happened in two stages. And for Paul also it happens in two stages. It's the already, not yet."
- **First Fruits of the Spirit:** "So, when he speaks of us having the first fruits of the Spirit, we have a foretaste of the future world... It means God is at work in us in a dramatic way."
- **God's Sovereignty:** "God is actually so much smarter than we are that the whole big picture may encompass... both God's sovereignty and human responsibility and work out his purposes within that."
- **Assurance in Suffering:** "And in all these things, we are more than conquerors. We overwhelmingly are victorious because of the one who loved us. We know he loved us. Nothing can separate us from God's love. And that's what matters most."
- **Inclusion of Gentiles:** "This isn't what the Jewish people were, most of the Jewish people hadn't embraced Paul's message. And Paul doesn't want you to miss the point that yet where the Old Testament talks about God's love for his people and so on. God hasn't stopped caring about his people."

This briefing document provides a concise review of the key themes and ideas presented by Dr. Keener in his lecture on Romans 8:23-9:16. It should be noted that this document reflects the specific interpretation and emphasis of Dr. Keener and does not represent the only or necessarily definitive understanding of these biblical passages.

4. Romans Study Guide: Session 10, Romans 8:26-9:16

Romans 8:23-9:16 Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. How does Romans 8:23 connect to the book of Exodus?
2. What does the concept of "first fruits" signify in Romans 8:23?
3. Who intercedes for believers, according to Romans 8?
4. What point does Paul make about suffering in Romans 8:28?
5. What does the term "Jus Gladii" refer to in the context of Romans 8?
6. How does Paul use the example of the fire in Rome to illustrate the message of Romans 8?
7. What does Paul emphasize in Romans 8:38-39 regarding the power of external forces?
8. What is the significance of Paul invoking his conscience in the Holy Spirit at the beginning of Romans 9?
9. What analogy does Paul use to demonstrate that ethnic descent from Abraham is not sufficient for salvation?
10. What is the ultimate source of salvation, empowerment, and ministry, according to Paul?

Answer Key

1. Romans 8:23 describes believers groaning due to the bondage of their perishable bodies, echoing the Israelites' groaning under slavery in Exodus 2:23-24. Both passages highlight the longing for liberation and redemption.
2. "First fruits" in Romans 8:23 represent the initial experience of the Holy Spirit's work, a foretaste of the future glorification and redemption of believers. It signifies the beginning of the harvest, a guarantee of the full harvest to come.
3. Romans 8 highlights the intercession of both the Holy Spirit (v. 26-27) and Jesus Christ (v. 34) on behalf of believers. The Spirit intercedes according to God's will, while Christ advocates for believers before God's throne.

4. In Romans 8:28, Paul argues that God works all things for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose. This signifies that suffering, though present, is ultimately utilized by God for the benefit of believers.
5. "Jus Gladii" refers to the Roman authority to exercise capital punishment, the "right of the sword." In Romans 8, Paul acknowledges that believers may face persecution and death under this Roman authority.
6. Paul uses the example of Nero persecuting Christians in Rome to demonstrate that even in the face of severe suffering and death, believers are more than conquerors through Christ's love. This historical event reinforces the message of unwavering hope and ultimate victory despite trials.
7. Paul emphasizes in Romans 8:38-39 that nothing can separate believers from the love of God in Christ, including external forces like tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, or the sword. He further asserts that neither angels, demons, rulers, powers, present, nor future realities can sever this bond.
8. By invoking his conscience in the Holy Spirit in Romans 9:1, Paul seeks to establish the genuineness of his deep sorrow for his fellow Jews who have not accepted Christ. He affirms that his statement is not merely emotional but rooted in a divinely informed understanding.
9. Paul uses the analogy of Abraham's descendants – Isaac chosen over Ishmael, and Jacob chosen over Esau – to demonstrate that not all who are physically descended from Abraham are true children of the promise. He argues that God's selection is based on grace and purpose, not merely on lineage.
10. Paul consistently emphasizes that God, through Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, is the ultimate source of salvation, empowerment to live for God, and the ability to minister effectively. This divine origin underscores the reliance on God's grace for every aspect of the Christian life.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the concept of the "New Exodus" as presented in Romans 8. How does this theme connect with the experience of believers in Christ?
2. Discuss the significance of the Holy Spirit's role in the life of a believer as described in Romans 8. How does the Spirit empower and guide Christians?
3. Examine Paul's argument in Romans 8 regarding the relationship between suffering and the love of God. How does this perspective offer comfort and hope to believers facing trials?
4. Explore Paul's assertion in Romans 9 that not all descendants of Abraham are true Israelites. What theological implications does this claim hold for both Jewish and Gentile believers?
5. Analyze Paul's understanding of predestination as presented in Romans 8 and 9. How does he reconcile God's sovereignty with human responsibility and free will?

Glossary of Key Terms

Adoption: The act of God making believers his children, granting them the rights and privileges of sonship.

First Fruits: The initial portion of a harvest, offered to God as a symbol of gratitude and a promise of the full harvest to come. In Romans 8:23, it represents the beginning of the believer's experience of salvation and a foretaste of future glorification.

Jus Gladii: The Roman legal principle granting the authority to exercise capital punishment, the "right of the sword."

New Exodus: A theological theme highlighting the parallels between the Israelites' liberation from Egypt and the believers' liberation from sin and death through Christ.

Predestination: The doctrine that God has eternally chosen certain individuals for salvation.

Intercession: The act of praying or pleading on behalf of another person. In Romans 8, both the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ are described as interceding for believers.

Sanctification: The ongoing process of being made holy and conformed to the image of Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Glorification: The final and complete redemption of believers, including the resurrection of their bodies and their eternal fellowship with God in a perfected state.

5. FAQs on Keener, Romans, Session 10, Romans 8:26-9:16, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Romans 8:23-9:16

What is the significance of groaning in Romans 8 and how does it connect to the idea of a new Exodus?

In Romans 8, groaning symbolizes the believer's longing for complete liberation from the limitations of our current physical existence. This echoes the Israelites' cries in Exodus as they endured slavery in Egypt. Just as God delivered them, we too anticipate a future redemption – a new Exodus – when our bodies will be resurrected and freed from decay.

How does Paul describe the Holy Spirit's role in our lives, particularly in relation to prayer?

The Holy Spirit empowers believers, guides them, and intercedes for them in prayer. Even when we don't know how to pray or what to ask for, the Spirit dwelling within us brings our needs before God. This constant intercession ensures we have the best possible support in our communication with God.

Does Romans 8:28, "God works all things for good," apply to everyone or only believers?

While the exact phrasing of this verse is debated, the core idea is that God actively works in all circumstances for the ultimate good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. This doesn't negate suffering, but it assures believers that God uses even difficult experiences to shape them into the image of Christ and bring about His ultimate plan.

How does the concept of predestination, as presented in Romans 8 and 9, relate to human free will?

Paul emphasizes God's sovereign choice in salvation, highlighting that it's not based on human merit but on God's grace. While this raises questions about free will, Paul doesn't explicitly delve into the debate. He focuses on the fact that God chooses and calls people according to His purpose, and that those called are ultimately glorified.

How does Paul reconcile the special position of Israel in God's plan with the inclusion of Gentiles in the church?

Paul acknowledges the unique privileges given to Israel, including their ancestry, the law, and the promises. However, he argues that mere ethnic descent doesn't guarantee salvation. Just as not all of Abraham's descendants inherited the promise, salvation now comes through faith in Christ, regardless of ethnicity.

What is the significance of the "first fruits of the Spirit" and how does it relate to the future hope of believers?

The "first fruits of the Spirit" refers to the present experience of the Holy Spirit's work in believers' lives. It serves as a down payment and a foretaste of the future fullness of redemption when our bodies will be resurrected and glorified. This concept underscores the "already, not yet" reality of salvation – we experience its benefits now while eagerly anticipating its complete fulfillment.

In what ways does Paul depict suffering as an inevitable part of the Christian experience, and how does he encourage believers to face it?

Paul acknowledges the various forms of suffering believers encounter, including persecution, poverty, and even death. He doesn't present suffering as punishment but as a shared experience for those who follow Christ. However, he assures believers that no hardship can separate them from God's love, and that they ultimately triumph through Christ.

How does Paul use the image of Jesus as our advocate or intercessor to comfort and reassure believers?

Drawing on the Old Testament concept of an advocate and the Jewish understanding of Satan as an accuser, Paul presents Christ as our defender before God. He emphasizes that nothing, not even accusations from Satan or condemnation for our past, can separate us from God's love because Christ, who sacrificed Himself for us, continually intercedes on our behalf.