

FAITHLABZ MINISTRIES

WORDS THAT SHAPED THE FAITH · MONTH 3



# Words of Freedom

*What It Means to Be Truly Free  
A 6-Session Study in the Hebrew and Greek of Liberty*

JULY 2026

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# Welcome

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## A Word Before We Begin

Ask most of us what freedom is and we reach for the absence of rules. Do what I want, answer to no one, owe nothing to anybody. Scripture means something deeper and stranger. Freedom is being bought out of a slavery you could not escape on your own, walked out through a door Someone else opened, and set down in a wide, open place where you can finally breathe.

I'll be honest before we start. For years I treated grace like it was cheap, like my freedom cost no one anything. And once I was set loose, I mostly spent that freedom on myself. So this study corrected me on both ends. There was a price, in blood, with my name on the receipt. And the freedom I was handed was never meant to terminate on me.

This month we walk thirty-one words, sixteen Hebrew and fifteen Greek, from the cry of slaves under Egypt all the way to the title a freed slave carried for the rest of his life: the Lord's freedman. Along the way the Bible refuses to flatten freedom into one idea. There is a word for the ransom that bought you. A different word for the yoke that got broken. Another for the snare that finally snapped. Another for the rest you get to walk into now that no one owns you.

You were not let off. You were bought back. The record of debt with your name on it was not reduced, it was nailed to a cross. The yoke was not loosened a notch, it was broken in half. And the freedom you were handed is not a license to serve yourself. It is room to love.



## Month Overview

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### The Shape of the Month

**The theme.** July is the third month of “Words That Shaped the Faith,” and it follows from where we have been. In May we studied Words of Relationship, who we are to each other. In June we studied Words of Identity, who God says we are: image, treasure, chosen, child, heir, priest. July answers what all of that makes possible. If you belong to Him, if you are sealed and called by His name, then you are not a slave anymore. The thread of the whole year runs through here: relationship leads to identity, and identity yields freedom. No longer a slave, but a son, and a son is free.

#### THE ARC, IN FIVE MOVEMENTS

**1. Out of the House of Bondage.** The great liberation. The honest cry, the Passover lamb, the exodus, and the Jubilee proclamation of liberty. Independence Day, July 4, lands on *deror*, the very word cast onto the Liberty Bell.

**2. Freedom Was Bought.** Freedom is not free. The ransom paid, the freed servant sent out full, the bent and the bound set loose, the one drawn out of the pit.

**3. Free From the Old Master.** The interior of the gospel. No condemnation, the record of debt nailed down, the broken yoke, the snapped snare, the pit, the fear of death beaten, and the plain word: free indeed.

**4. Free Into the Open.** Freedom is not only out of something, it is into something. The broad place, the resting place, God's own rest, the relief, the breathing room, the open door no one can shut.

**5. Free For Love.** The point of freedom. Spent on the family, poured out willingly, and capped by the title a freed slave carries for life.

**The two languages.** Sixteen Hebrew words and fifteen Greek, woven together so they answer one another across the Testaments. Liberty proclaimed in Hebrew as *deror* is the release Jesus reads aloud in Greek as *aphesis*. The free person, *chofshi* in Hebrew, becomes *eleutheros* in Greek, and is crowned *apeleutheros*, the freedman. Rest, *menuchah* in the Psalms, becomes *katapausis* in Hebrews. The Old Testament sings the freedom; the New Testament hands you the receipt.

**A word on Independence Day.** Only the July 4 entry carries an explicit Independence Day focus, and that is on purpose. The hook is not a week of flag content. It is that America's founding liberty verse was lifted straight out of Leviticus, and that God's idea of freedom goes further than any nation has ever dared to legislate. The bell quotes the Jubilee. The Jubilee was God's first.

**How deep, how long.** This is a medium-deep study, about forty-five to sixty minutes per session, built for a small group or for solo work at the kitchen table. There are six sessions. Five carry the words. The sixth pulls the whole arc together.

## How to Use This Study

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### The Rhythm of Each Session

Each of the five teaching sessions keeps the same rhythm, so you always know where you are.

**Open** with the confession that sets up the session. Read it slowly, out loud if you are in a group. Nobody teaches until somebody has told the truth first.

**Scripture Reading** gives you the main passage to read aloud together and a few reference passages to have open. Read them in your own Bible. The locked translation for FaithLabz is the ESV, so the group leader reading in ESV will track most closely with the teaching, but read whatever faithful translation you have.

**The Teaching Summary** is written to be read aloud by a group leader in ten to fifteen minutes. It walks the same movements as that week's daily FaithLabz videos, so the study and the channel reinforce each other.

**The Words table and the Word Study Spotlight** give you the Hebrew or Greek, the transliteration, the pronunciation, the Strong's number, the occurrence count, and the key verse for every word in the session. Occurrence counts are marked with "about" on purpose; counts vary a little between concordances and manuscript families, so we hedge and you can confirm in your own.

**Talk About It** moves from observation to interpretation to application. The questions are built to lead from confession, not performance. There are no trick questions and no wrong answers said out loud in good faith.

**The Practice** is one freedom to actually walk in this week, not just discuss. Discussion that never reaches your Monday is just a nicer kind of bondage.

**Personal Reflection** is for solo journaling between sessions, and **Close** gives you a prayer prompt to end on.

The matching daily teachings are on YouTube at @FaithLabzMinistries, one word per day across July. Each word also gets a full library card at [library.faithlabz.com](http://library.faithlabz.com) once its video is live. You can run this study a week ahead of the videos, a week behind, or right alongside them. There is no wrong pace. That is rather the point of the whole month.



SESSION 1

# Out of the House of Bondage

*Based on Week 1: Out of the House of Bondage*

Key Words: zaaq, pesach, exodos, deror, yovel, shemittah, aphasis



## OVERVIEW

The freedom story does not begin with a strong people. It begins with a loud, honest cry from people who could not free themselves. This session walks the great liberation, from the groan under Egypt to the lamb on the doorpost to the Jubilee proclamation of liberty, and shows that the verse America put on a bell was God's idea first.

## OPENING CONFESSION

*I used to think faith meant never letting God hear me complain, so I kept the groan quiet and stayed polite. Then I read how the whole rescue started. Not with a strong people. With a loud, honest cry from people who could not free themselves. The freedom story begins the moment they stopped pretending they were fine.*

## OPENING QUESTION

*When something is genuinely too heavy for you, what is your first instinct: to say it out loud to someone, or to handle it quietly and keep face? Where did you learn that instinct?*

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Read aloud together:** Exodus 2:23–25

**Have these open as reference passages:**

Exodus 12:1–13 (the Passover)

Leviticus 25:8–10 (the Jubilee and the proclamation of liberty)

Luke 4:16–21 (Jesus reads the year of release)

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## THE WORDS AT A GLANCE

צַעַק

**zaaq (zah-AHK) · H2199**

Key Verse: Exodus 2:23

**To Cry Out** — the groan under bondage that reaches God

פסח

**pesach (PEH-sakh) · H6453**

Key Verse: Exodus 12:13

**Passover** — the lamb and the blood; freedom's first night

ἔξοδος

**exodos (EX-od-os) · G1841**

Key Verse: Luke 9:31

**Departure** — Jesus' own way out, the great departure

דרור

**deror (deh-RORE) · H1865**

Key Verse: Leviticus 25:10

**Liberty** — liberty proclaimed; the Liberty Bell verse

יובל

**yovel (yoh-VALE) · H3104**

Key Verse: Leviticus 25:10

**Jubilee** — the ram's horn of release

שמיטה

**shemittah (shem-it-TAW) · H8059**

Key Verse: Deuteronomy 15:1-2

**The Release** — the seventh-year cancelling of debts

ἄφεσις

**aphesis (AF-es-is) · G859**

Key Verse: Luke 4:18

**Release** — liberty to the captives; Jesus reads it aloud

## TEACHING SUMMARY

10 to 15 minutes, read aloud

I want to start by admitting something, because the whole month falls apart if I pretend to be the expert here. For a long time I believed that a good Christian does not complain to God. So I swallowed it. I prayed politely, from across the room, and I kept the real weight to myself, because saying it out loud felt like a lack of faith.

Then I actually read how the rescue of the whole nation began. And it humbled me.

It did not begin with a strong people. It did not begin with a deserving people. Exodus says the people groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help, and their cry came up to God. That is the first word of this session, *zaaq*, to cry out. Not a polished prayer. The raw, involuntary sound a person makes when the weight is more than they can carry. And here is what I missed for years. That cry is not the opposite of faith. In this story, it is where faith starts.

Look at what God does next, because four verbs land in a row. God heard their groaning. God remembered His covenant. God saw the people of Israel. And God knew. Heard, remembered, saw, knew. The rescue does not begin with their strength. It begins with His attention. They cried, and the God of heaven leaned in.

But notice the Bible will not let freedom stay a feeling. The night Israel actually walked out, a lamb died in every home, and the blood on the doorframe was the difference between judgment passing over and judgment coming in. That is *pesach*, Passover. We talk about freedom like it is a mood. Scripture ties it to a doorpost and a lamb. And centuries later, on a mountain, while He is glowing with glory, Jesus stands with Moses and Elijah and they talk about His coming death. Luke uses one specific Greek word for it. *Exodos*. His departure. The same word the Greek Old Testament used for Israel walking out of Egypt. Jesus is not just going to die. He is going to make an exodus, and He walks out ahead of us so we can follow Him through.

Then God does something no nation has ever had the nerve to legislate. Every fiftieth year, He says, you will sound a ram's horn and proclaim liberty throughout the land. That liberty is *deror*, and that horn is the *yovel*, the Jubilee. Slaves go home. Debts are cancelled. Land returns to the family that lost it. The seventh year had its own version, the *shemittah*, the release that wiped the debt clean. Now here is the part that gets me every July. When America wanted a verse for its Liberty Bell, it reached past its own founding documents and lifted four words straight out of Leviticus 25:10. Proclaim liberty throughout the land. We put God's Jubilee on a bell. God put it in His law first, and His version goes further than any flag ever could.

And then the proclamation became a Person. Jesus walks into His hometown synagogue, opens Isaiah, and reads about liberty to the captives and the year of the Lord's favor. The Greek word under that liberty is *aphesis*, the very word the Septuagint used to translate the Jubilee release. Then He rolls up the scroll, sits down, and says, today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing. The year of release did not stay on a page. It walked into the room on two feet.

So here is what you can stop carrying this week. You do not have to perform fine. You do not have to keep the groan quiet to protect God's opinion of you. The freedom of an entire nation started with people who finally stopped pretending. He is not annoyed by your cry. He is moved by it. And the Lamb has already made the way out.

You are not tolerated for complaining. You are heard. And the door is already open.

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## WORD STUDY SPOTLIGHT

### זַאֵק **zaaq (zah-AHK)**

**H2199**

Appears: about seventy times in the OT. It has a near-twin, tsaq (H6817), with the same meaning.

**Meaning:** To cry out, to call for help under distress; the loud, desperate cry of the oppressed.

| *Key Verse: Exodus 2:23*

This is the cry that precedes salvation. Again and again it is paired with God hearing. Honesty about your weight is not the failure of faith; it is the doorway to rescue.

### פֶּסַח **pesach (PEH-sakh)**

**H6453**

Appears: about forty-nine times in the OT.

**Meaning:** Passover; the lamb, the meal, and the night God's judgment passed over the blood-marked homes.

| *Key Verse: Exodus 12:13*

It comes from *pasach*, to pass over or spring over. Freedom in the Bible has blood in its story, and the New Testament gives that Lamb a name (1 Corinthians 5:7).

### ἔξοδος **exodos (EX-od-os)**

**G1841**

Appears: three times in the NT (Luke 9:31; Hebrews 11:22; 2 Peter 1:15).

**Meaning:** A departure, a going out; literally "the road out," from *ex* (out) and *hodos* (way).

| *Key Verse: Luke 9:31*

At the Transfiguration, Jesus calls His own death His *exodos*, the same word as Israel's way out of Egypt. He does not just escape death; He leads a new exodus through it.

## דְּרוֹר **deror (deh-RORE)**

**H1865**

Appears: about eight times in the OT.

**Meaning:** Liberty, release, a free flowing; freedom proclaimed for slaves and captives.

| *Key Verse: Leviticus 25:10*

This is the Hebrew word behind the Liberty Bell inscription. It names the liberty proclaimed in the Jubilee and the liberty Isaiah 61:1 promises to captives, which Jesus claims as His own mission.

## יוֹבֵל **yovel (yoh-VALE)**

**H3104**

Appears: about twenty-seven times in the OT.

**Meaning:** Jubilee; the ram's horn sounded to announce the fiftieth year of release.

| *Key Verse: Leviticus 25:10*

The *yovel* is literally the horn, and then the year the horn announces. Every fiftieth year reset the whole society: debts gone, slaves freed, land returned. God built an undo button into His law.

## שְׁמִטָּה **shemittah (shem-it-TAW)**

**H8059**

Appears: about five times in the OT.

**Meaning:** A release, a letting drop; the seventh-year cancellation of debts.

| *Key Verse: Deuteronomy 15:1-2*

Every seven years, debts were released. Not restructured. Released. God built a rhythm of freedom into the calendar itself, so that no one stayed owned forever.

## ἄφεσις **aphesis (AF-es-is)**

**G859**

Appears: about seventeen times in the NT.

**Meaning:** Release, liberty, forgiveness; a sending away of what was held.

| *Key Verse: Luke 4:18*

This is the Greek word the Septuagint used for the Jubilee release, and it is the word Jesus reads aloud in Nazareth. The year of release became a Person standing in the room.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

20 to 25 minutes

## OBSERVATION (WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?)

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1. In Exodus 2:23–25, what four verbs describe what God does in response to the cry? What is the order, and why might it matter?
2. In Luke 4:18–21, what does Jesus read, and what does He claim about the passage after He finishes?

### INTERPRETATION (WHAT DOES IT MEAN?)

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3. *Zaaq* is not a polished prayer; it is a raw cry under weight. What does it say about God that He starts the rescue at the groan, not at the performance?
4. The Jubilee (*yovel*) freed slaves, cancelled debts, and returned land. Why do you think God built a reset into the calendar, and what does it reveal about how He sees ownership?
5. *Aphesis* is the same word for forgiveness and for the Jubilee release. What does it do to your understanding of forgiveness to know it shares a word with “slaves go home”?

### APPLICATION (WHAT DO I DO?)

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6. Where have you been keeping the groan quiet, performing fine instead of crying out? What would it look like to stop pretending this week?
7. Is there a debt, literal or relational, you are holding over someone that God might be asking you to release as a Jubilee act?

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### CROSS-REFERENCES

**Exodus 6:6–7:** God’s four “I will” promises of deliverance. The same pattern of hearing, rescuing, redeeming, and taking as His own.

**Isaiah 61:1–2:** The passage Jesus reads in Luke 4. Liberty to captives, the year of the Lord’s favor. The Jubilee made personal.

**1 Corinthians 5:7:** “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.” The *pesach* given a name in the New Testament.

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### PERSONAL REFLECTION

#### *Solo journaling*

1. What is the groan you have been swallowing? Write it in a single sentence, unpolished, and let God hear it the way Israel did.
2. The Passover lamb died so the household could walk out. What has already been paid for your freedom that you have never fully acknowledged?

3. Jesus said “today this Scripture is fulfilled.” What would it mean for the Jubilee to be fulfilled in your hearing, today, in the specific bondage you are carrying?

### WEEKLY PRACTICE

**This Week’s Practice:** Cry out. Say the weight out loud to God, unpolished, and let Him hear it.

**How to do it:** Find a quiet place. Set a timer for five minutes. Do not compose a prayer. Just tell God the heaviest thing, the way you would tell a friend at midnight. No theology, no performance, just the truth. Then sit in silence for one minute and let Him respond however He does. The rescue starts at the cry.

### CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

As you close, pray about:

The groan you have been keeping quiet, and permission to say it out loud.

Gratitude that the Lamb already made the way out.

The Jubilee that Jesus fulfilled, and what it means for the debt you are still carrying.

*A way to begin:* Lord, I am done pretending I am fine. Here is the weight. You heard Israel’s cry and You leaned in. Hear mine. Thank You that the door is already open.





SESSION 2

# Freedom Was Bought

*Based on Week 2: Freedom Was Bought*

Key Words: apolutrosis, chofshi, apoluo, luo, patach, chalats, peletah



## OVERVIEW

Freedom is not free. This session walks the price that was paid: the ransom word, the freed servant loaded with provision, the bent woman unbent in a sentence, the dead man unbound by the community, and the God who draws you out of the pit because He delights in you.

## OPENING CONFESSION

*For a long time, forgiveness looked to me like God waving His hand from a safe distance. Debt cancelled, no big deal, nothing it cost Him. Then I looked at the word the New Testament actually uses for my freedom, and it stopped me cold. It means to release someone by paying a ransom. I was not waved off. I was bought back.*

## OPENING QUESTION

*Has anyone ever paid a real cost to help you, not because they had to, but because they wanted to? What did that do to how you saw yourself afterward?*

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Read aloud together:** Ephesians 1:7–8

**Have these open as reference passages:**

Deuteronomy 15:12–15 (the freed servant sent out full)

Luke 13:10–17 (the bent woman set free)

John 11:38–44 (Lazarus unbound)

Psalms 18:16–19 (drawn out into a broad place)

## THE WORDS AT A GLANCE

**ἀπολύτρωσις**

**apolutrosis (ap-ol-OO-tro-sis) · G629**

Key Verse: Ephesians 1:7

**Redemption** — a release secured by a ransom

יִשְׁפָּק

**chofshi (khof-SHEE) · H2670**

Key Verse: Deuteronomy 15:13

**Free / Freed** — the freed servant, sent out full

ἀπολύω

**apoluo (ap-ol-OO-oh) · G630**

Key Verse: Luke 13:12

**To Set Free** — the bent-over woman, unbent on the spot

λύω

**luo (LOO-oh) · G3089**

Key Verse: John 11:44

**To Loose** — unbind him and let him go

פתח

**patach (paw-THAKH) · H6605**

Key Verse: Psalm 116:16

**To Open** — You have loosed my bonds

חָלַץ

**chalats (khaw-LATS) · H2502**

Key Verse: Psalm 18:19

**To Draw Out** — drawn out because He delighted in me

פְּלִיטָה

**peletah (pel-ay-TAW) · H6413**

Key Verse: Genesis 45:7

**Escape** — the escape God built ahead of time

## TEACHING SUMMARY

10 to 15 minutes, read aloud

I have to confess where I started, because it shaped how cheaply I held grace for years. In my head, forgiveness looked like God waving His hand from a safe distance. Debt cancelled, no big deal, nothing it cost Him. And if my freedom cost nothing, then it was worth about that much to me. I treated it like a coupon, not a rescue.

Then I looked at the word the New Testament actually uses for my freedom, and it stopped me cold. The word is *apolutrosis*. It does not mean to wave a debt away. It means to release someone by paying a ransom. In the world Paul was writing to, everyone in that church knew exactly what it meant, because slavery was everywhere. You could walk into the market, pay the price for a slave, and set that person free. That is the word. So when Paul says we have redemption through His blood, he is not describing a polite cancellation. He is describing a purchase, in blood, with my name on the receipt.

And here is something I missed for a long time that I think will stay with you. That word, *apolutrosis*, is built on a smaller word, *luo*, which simply means to loose, to untie, to unbind. The same root shows up twice more in this session. When Jesus saw a woman who had been bent over for eighteen years, unable to stand up straight, the Greek says He set her free, *apoluo*, the loosing word again, and she stood up on the spot. And when Jesus stood outside a tomb and called a dead man by name, Lazarus came out still wrapped head to foot in graveclothes, and Jesus said, unbind him, and let him go. *Luo*. The price that bought you and the hands that unwrap you are the same word.

That detail about Lazarus matters more than it looks. He was alive. The miracle had already happened. And he was still wrapped up, still bound, until the people around him peeled the graveclothes off. Sometimes you have been made alive and you are still walking around in the wrappings, and the freedom comes through the family God puts beside you to help take them off. Being raised and being fully unbound are not always the same morning.

Then look at how God frees a servant in His own law. In Deuteronomy, when a Hebrew servant goes free in the seventh year, the word is *chofshi*, free, exempt, no longer owned. But God adds something that wrecks me a little. Do not send him away empty-handed. Load him up. Give to him generously from your flock, your floor, your winepress. God does not free you and leave you standing in the road with nothing. He frees you full.

And underneath all of it is one thing I had to learn the hard way. You did not pick your own lock. The psalmist does not say I worked my chains loose. He says, You have loosed my bonds, *patach*, You opened them, that was Your doing. In another psalm he says God drew me out, *chalats*, and gives the reason: because He delighted in me. Not because I was useful. Because He wanted to. And way back in Genesis, Joseph looks at brothers who sold him into slavery and threw him in a pit, and he calls the whole nightmare a *peletah*, a great deliverance, an escape God had been building ahead of time. What looked like the pit was the exit, laid years in advance.

So here is what you get to set down this week. You do not have to keep making payments on a debt that has already been paid in full. You did not buy your own freedom and you are not in charge of keeping it. You

were bought back, drawn out, and sent out with your arms full, and the One who did it was not gritting His teeth. He delighted in it.

You were not waved off. You were bought back.

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## WORD STUDY SPOTLIGHT

### ἀπολύτρωσις *apolutrosis* (ap-ol-OO-tro-sis)

#### G629

Appears: about ten times in the NT, most of them in Paul.

**Meaning:** A release secured by the payment of a ransom; deliverance by a price paid.

| *Key Verse: Ephesians 1:7*

Built on *luo* (to loose) by way of *lutron* (ransom). It is the word for buying a slave out of the market. You were not let off; you were purchased and then set free.

### חֹפְשִׁי *hofshi* (hof-SHEE)

#### H2670

Appears: about seventeen times in the OT.

**Meaning:** Free, exempt from bondage; the legal status of a released slave.

| *Key Verse: Deuteronomy 15:13*

The freed servant did not leave empty. The same law that set him free commanded the master to load him with provision. God frees people into supply, not into a vacuum.

### ἀπολύω *apluo* (ap-ol-OO-oh)

#### G630

Appears: more than sixty times in the NT.

**Meaning:** To set free fully, to release, to let go; from *apo* (away) and *luo* (to loose).

| *Key Verse: Luke 13:12*

Jesus speaks one sentence and a woman bent double for eighteen years stands up straight. Freedom, for Him, is not a process to negotiate. It is a word He says over you.

## λύω luo (LOO-oh)

**G3089**

Appears: about forty times in the NT.

**Meaning:** To loose, to untie, to unbind, to release what is fastened.

| *Key Verse: John 11:44*

Lazarus is alive but still bound, and Jesus hands the unbinding to the community. Being made alive and being fully free can be two different moments, and the second one often involves the people beside you.

## פתח patach (paw-THAKH)

**H6605**

Appears: well over a hundred times in the OT.

**Meaning:** To open; to loosen, to set free what was shut or bound.

| *Key Verse: Psalm 116:16*

“You have loosed my bonds.” The verb is passive toward us and active toward God. The chains came off, and the psalmist is clear about whose hands did it.

## חלץ chalats (khaw-LATS)

**H2502**

Appears: several dozen times across the OT, with a wide range of senses.

**Meaning:** To draw out, to pull off, to deliver; also to equip for battle.

| *Key Verse: Psalm 18:19*

God “drew me out into a broad place because he delighted in me.” The same verse holds the drawing-out and the wide-open destination. He pulls you out of the tight place because He wants to, not because you earned it.

## פליטה peletah (pel-ay-TAW)

**H6413**

Appears: about twenty-eight times in the OT.

**Meaning:** An escape, a deliverance, that which escapes; a surviving remnant.

| *Key Verse: Genesis 45:7*

Joseph calls his betrayal and the pit a great deliverance God prepared ahead of time. What you were sure was only ruin can turn out to be the escape route, laid years before you needed it.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

20 to 25 minutes

## OBSERVATION (WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?)

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1. In Ephesians 1:7, what is it that we “have,” and through what is it secured? What does Paul tie it to in the same breath?
2. In John 11:43–44, Lazarus comes out of the tomb alive but still bound. What does Jesus tell the people standing there to do?

### INTERPRETATION (WHAT DOES IT MEAN?)

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3. *Apolutrosis* means release by paying a ransom, the word for buying a slave out of slavery. How is “bought back” different from “let off,” and why does that difference matter for how you see grace?
4. In Deuteronomy 15:12–15, the freed servant is sent out loaded with provision rather than empty. What does that reveal about the way God frees people?
5. Lazarus is alive but stays wrapped in graveclothes until the community unbinds him. What might it mean that being made alive and being set fully free are sometimes two separate moments?
6. Psalm 116:16 says, “You have loosed my bonds,” and Psalm 18:19 says God drew the psalmist out “because he delighted in me.” What do those verbs say about who actually does the freeing, and why?

### APPLICATION (WHAT DO I DO?)

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7. Where have you been trying to pick a lock that only God can open?
8. What has God already loaded you with on your way out of an old bondage that you have never stopped to notice or thank Him for?

### CROSS-REFERENCES

**Mark 10:45:** The Son of Man came “to give his life as a ransom for many.” Jesus describes His own death in the exact language of *apolutrosis*. The price was His idea.

**Genesis 50:20:** “You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive.” Joseph’s *peletah*, said plainly years later.

**Luke 13:10–17:** The full account of the woman set free (*apoluo*) on the Sabbath, and the pushback Jesus took for it.

### PERSONAL REFLECTION

#### *Solo journaling*

1. Name one lock you cannot pick. Write it in a single sentence. Then read Psalm 116:16–17 and ask God to do the only thing that opens it.
2. Look back at a pit in your own story that later turned out to be an escape route God had built ahead of time. What could you not see while you were in it?

3. In your life right now, what is the difference between being made alive and being fully unbound? Where are you still wearing graveclothes that someone could help you take off?

### WEEKLY PRACTICE

**This Week's Practice:** Name the one lock only God can open, and stop forcing it.

**How to do it:** Write the lock down in a single sentence. Pray Psalm 116:16 over it out loud, naming the specific thing. Then, this week, deliberately take your hands off the picking, the managing, the over-trying, and let God be the one who opens it.

### CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

As you close, pray about:

Gratitude that He paid the price instead of waving from a distance.

The lock only He can open, named out loud.

The provision He has already loaded you with for the road.

*A way to begin:* Lord, You did not reduce my debt. You paid it. Thank You that I was bought back, drawn out, and sent out full.





SESSION 3

# Free From the Old Master

*Based on Week 3: Free From the Old Master*

Key Words: katakrima, cheirographon, motah, moqesh, bor, apallasso, eleutheros



## OVERVIEW

This is the interior of the gospel, the freedom that happens where no one can see it. The court is closed, the record of your debt is nailed to a cross, the yoke is broken instead of loosened, the snare is snapped, and the fear that ran your life underneath everything finally loses its grip.

## OPENING CONFESSION

*I lived a long time under a verdict. Not God's verdict, my own, read over me every morning before my feet hit the floor: guilty, again. I knew the list of charges by heart. This session is about what God did with that list, and with the fear that ran my life underneath all of it.*

## OPENING QUESTION

*Most of us carry a sentence we read over ourselves, a quiet headline about who we are. If you are willing, say what yours tends to be in three or four words. Where do you think you first heard it?*

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Read aloud together:** Romans 8:1–4

**Have these open as reference passages:**

Colossians 2:13–15 (the record of debt nailed to the cross)

Leviticus 26:13 (the broken yoke; walk erect)

Psalms 124:6–8 (escaped like a bird from the snare)

Hebrews 2:14–15 (freed from the fear of death)

John 8:31–36 (free indeed)

## THE WORDS AT A GLANCE

**κατάκριμα**

**katakrima (kat-AK-ree-mah) · G2631**

Key Verse: Romans 8:1

**Condemnation** — the sentence that no longer stands

## χειρόγραφον

**cheirophon (khy-ROG-raf-on) · G5498**

Key Verse: Colossians 2:14

**Record of Debt** — the IOU nailed to the cross

## מוֹטָה

**motah (mo-TAW) · H4133**

Key Verse: Leviticus 26:13

**Yoke-Bar** — the broken yoke; walk upright

## מוֹקֵשׁ

**moqesh (mo-KAYSH) · H4170**

Key Verse: Psalm 124:7

**Snare** — the fowler's trap is broken; we escaped

## בּוֹר

**bor (BORE) · H953**

Key Verse: Psalm 40:2

**Pit** — lifted out of the miry pit

## ἀπαλλάσσω

**apallasso (ap-al-LAS-so) · G525**

Key Verse: Hebrews 2:15

**To Set Free** — freed from the fear of death

## ἐλεύθερος

**eleutheros (el-YOO-ther-os) · G1658**

Key Verse: John 8:36

**Free** — free indeed, free at the root

## TEACHING SUMMARY

10 to 15 minutes, read aloud

Let me tell you how a lot of my mornings used to start, because I doubt I am the only one. Before my feet even hit the floor, a verdict would get read over me. Not from God. From me. Guilty, again. I had the charge sheet memorized. Every failure, every version of myself I was ashamed of, filed and ready. And underneath that verdict, quieter and older, there was a fear running the whole operation. I did not have language for it for years. This session gave me the language, because it is about what God actually did with the list, and with the fear.

Start with the verdict, because Paul starts there. Romans 8 opens with a word so emphatic in the Greek it is almost a thrown object. No condemnation. The word is *katakrima*, and it does not mean a bad feeling. It means the sentence, the verdict handed down by the judge. Paul is not telling you to feel less guilty. He is telling you the sentence has been struck from the record. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Not reduced. Gone.

And here is how God did it, in an image that wrecks me every time. In Colossians, Paul says God cancelled the record of debt that stood against us and nailed it to the cross. The word for that record is *cheirographon*. It is a handwritten document, an IOU, a certificate of debt with your name and your signature on it. Now hold this next part, because it is true to the Roman world and it is staggering. When Rome crucified a criminal, they would nail the list of his crimes to the cross above his head, so everyone walking by could read exactly what he was guilty of. Jesus had one too. It said King of the Jews. But Paul says God took your list, the one with your handwriting on it, and nailed it to that cross instead. Your crimes, posted above His head. Your debt, paid with His body.

Then the Old Testament gives you the picture of what that freedom looks like in your posture. Leviticus 26 says God broke the bars of the yoke so His people could walk erect. The word for that yoke-bar is *motah*. And notice: He did not loosen the strap. He broke the bar. A loosened yoke can be tightened again. A broken one is done. And the proof is in how you carry yourself. Free people stand up straight.

Psalm 124 gives you another picture: a bird in a fowler's snare, and then the snare breaks, and the bird is gone. That snare is *moqesh*. The traps that kept catching you are not stronger than the One who breaks them. And Psalm 40 gives you the pit, *bor*, and a hand that reaches down into it and sets your feet on rock. No pit is too deep for His arm.

And then Hebrews goes to the root of the whole thing. Jesus entered death, the headquarters of our deepest fear, and came back out, *apallasso*, releasing everyone held in lifelong slavery by the fear of dying. The fear that ran your life from underneath has been disarmed at its source. And then Jesus Himself says the plain thing: if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. *Eleutheros*. Free at the root. Not a temporary reprieve. A settled state.

So here is what you get to set down today. You can stop reading the verdict over yourself in the morning, because the Judge already ruled. You can stop carrying the list, because it has a nail through it. You can stand up straight, because the yoke is in two pieces on the ground. And the fear that has been quietly running your decisions has already been beaten by a man who came back from where it lives.

You are not a convict. You are pardoned, and the One who pardoned you is the one who already served the sentence.

## WORD STUDY SPOTLIGHT

### κατάκριμα *katakrima* (kat-AK-ree-mah)

**G2631**

Appears: three times in the NT (Romans 5:16; 5:18; 8:1).

**Meaning:** An adverse sentence, the verdict handed down; condemnation as a legal ruling.

| *Key Verse: Romans 8:1*

This is the sentence, not the feeling. Christ did not lower your guilt level; He removed the verdict. The opening word of Romans 8 is emphatic in Greek: no condemnation, now, full stop.

### χειρόγραφον *cheirographon* (khy-ROG-raf-on)

**G5498**

Appears: once in the entire NT (Colossians 2:14), a hapax legomenon.

**Meaning:** A handwritten document, a certificate of debt, an IOU; literally “handwriting.”

| *Key Verse: Colossians 2:14*

From *cheir* (hand) and *grapho* (write). It was the bond a debtor signed in his own hand. God cancelled yours, blotted it out, and nailed it to the cross, the way Rome nailed a criminal’s charge sheet above his head.

### מוֹטָה *motah* (mo-TAW)

**H4133**

Appears: about twelve times in the OT.

**Meaning:** The bar or pole of a yoke; figuratively, the weight of oppression.

| *Key Verse: Leviticus 26:13*

God says He broke the bars of the yoke so His people could walk erect. He did not loosen the strap. He snapped the bar. The proof is in the posture: free people stand up straight.

### מוֹקֵשׁ *moqesh* (mo-KAYSH)

**H4170**

Appears: about twenty-seven times in the OT.

**Meaning:** A fowler’s snare, a noose or bait-stick for trapping birds and animals.

| *Key Verse: Psalm 124:7*

It comes from *yaqosh*, to lay a snare, the same root behind the “fowlers” in Psalm 124:7. The picture is a bird in a trap, and then the trap snaps and the bird is gone. The traps that kept catching you are not stronger than the One who breaks them.

## בֹּר bor (BORE)

### H953

Appears: more than sixty times in the OT.

**Meaning:** A pit, a cistern, a dungeon; a hole dug in the ground, often used as a prison.

| *Key Verse: Psalm 40:2*

This is the word for the cistern Joseph was thrown into and the dungeon they lowered Jeremiah into. In Psalm 40, God reaches down into that pit and draws the psalmist up onto solid rock. No pit is too deep for His arm.

## ἀπαλλάσσω apallasso (ap-al-LAS-so)

### G525

Appears: three times in the NT (Luke 12:58; Acts 19:12; Hebrews 2:15).

**Meaning:** To release, to set free, to deliver; literally “to change away” from something.

| *Key Verse: Hebrews 2:15*

Jesus entered death, the headquarters of our deepest fear, and came back out, releasing everyone held in lifelong slavery by the fear of dying. The fear that ran your life from underneath has been disarmed at its source.

## ἐλεύθερος eleutheros (el-YOO-ther-os)

### G1658

Appears: about twenty-three times in the NT.

**Meaning:** Free, not a slave, free-born; free at the root, not merely released on paper.

| *Key Verse: John 8:36*

This is the adjective in “you will be free indeed.” It is the family member that completes the freedom word-group: liberty as a settled state of being, not a temporary reprieve. If the Son frees you, you are free all the way down.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

20 to 25 minutes

### OBSERVATION (WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?)

1. Read Romans 8:1. What is the very first thing the verse declares, and for whom is it now true?
2. In Colossians 2:13–14, what does God do with the record of debt, and where does He put it?

### INTERPRETATION (WHAT DOES IT MEAN?)

3. *Katakrima* is the verdict itself, not just a feeling of guilt. What is the difference between feeling condemned and actually standing condemned, and which one has Christ removed?

4. A *cheirographon* was a handwritten IOU, and Rome nailed a criminal's list of crimes to his cross. What does it do to you that God nailed your charge sheet to Christ's cross instead of yours?
5. Leviticus 26:13 says God broke the bars of the yoke so His people could walk erect. Why mention how they walk? What is the difference between a loosened yoke and a broken one?
6. Hebrews 2:14–15 says Jesus freed people from “the fear of death.” How can a fear be a form of slavery, and how does Jesus' own death break its grip?

### APPLICATION (WHAT DO I DO?)

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7. What verdict do you read over yourself before the day even starts, and whose voice is it really?
8. What fear has quietly been the boss of you, steering choices you would not otherwise make? What changes if that fear has already been beaten?

### CROSS-REFERENCES

**Romans 7:24–25:** “Who will deliver me from this body of death?” The desperate question in chapter 7 gets its answer in the first line of chapter 8: no condemnation.

**Isaiah 58:6:** God's chosen fast is “to loose the bonds of wickedness... and to break every yoke.” The broken yoke of *motah*, named again by the prophet.

**1 Corinthians 15:54–57:** “Death is swallowed up in victory.” The sting is gone, which is exactly why the fear can lose its grip.

### PERSONAL REFLECTION

#### *Solo journaling*

1. Write down one item from your old list of charges, then draw a single firm line through it, the way God already did. Read Romans 8:1 over it slowly.
2. Name the fear that has been quietly running your decisions. Where would your life look different if it were no longer in charge?
3. Where are you still walking bent under a yoke God already broke? What would standing up straight actually look like this week?

### WEEKLY PRACTICE

**This Week's Practice:** Cross out one charge on your old list, on paper, by hand.

**How to do it:** Write the actual charge in a single honest sentence. Then draw one firm line through it and write Romans 8:1 underneath. When the verdict tries to read itself over you again this week, do not argue with it. Just point to the line.

### **CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT**

As you close, pray about:

The verdict you keep reading over yourself, and the One who already ruled.

The yoke God has already broken that you are still walking bent beneath.

The fear that has been the boss, and gratitude that Jesus walked through it and came back.

*A way to begin:* Jesus, the sentence was served, the list was nailed down, the yoke is broken, and the fear is beaten. Help me stop living like a convict You already pardoned.





SESSION 4

# Free Into the Open

*Based on Week 4: Free Into the Open*

Key Words: merchav, menuchah, katapausis, sabbatismos, anesis, revachah, thyra



## OVERVIEW

Freedom in Scripture is not only an exit. It is a place. This session moves from the open cell door into the wide country beyond it: the broad place with room to run, the resting place where the afraid finally lie down, the rest that still remains up ahead, and the door no one can shut.

## OPENING CONFESSION

*For a long time I thought freedom just meant the cell door opening. Get me out, and I will figure out the rest. But Scripture keeps describing rescue as a place, not just an exit. Space. Rest. Room to breathe. I am good at staying braced, jaw tight, waiting for the next hit. This session is about learning to actually exhale.*

## OPENING QUESTION

*When was the last time you truly relaxed, not collapsed from exhaustion, but actually let your guard down because you felt safe? What made that possible, and how long ago was it?*

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Read aloud together:** Psalm 23 (the whole psalm) and Hebrews 4:1-11

**Have these open as reference passages:**

Psalm 118:5 (the broad place)

Exodus 8:8-15 (the respite Pharaoh wasted)

2 Thessalonians 1:6-7 (relief to the afflicted)

Revelation 3:7-8 (the open door)

## THE WORDS AT A GLANCE

מְרַחֵב

**merchav (mer-KHAHV) · H4800**

Key Verse: Psalm 118:5

**Broad Place** — the wide, open country after the squeeze

מנוחה

**menuchah (men-oo-KHAH) · H4496**

Key Verse: Psalm 23:2

**Resting Place** — the still place where sheep lie down unafraid

κατάπαυσις

**katapausis (kat-AP-ow-sis) · G2663**

Key Verse: Hebrews 4:3

**Rest** — God's own rest, entered by trust

σαββατισμός

**sabbatismos (sab-bat-IS-mos) · G4520**

Key Verse: Hebrews 4:9

**A Sabbath Rest** — the rest that still remains, up ahead

ἀνεσις

**anesis (AH-neh-sis) · G425**

Key Verse: 2 Thessalonians 1:7

**Relief** — the strain finally loosened

הַחֵה

**revachah (reh-vah-KHAH) · H7309**

Key Verse: Exodus 8:15

**Breathing Room** — respite, and the test of what you do with it

θύρα

**thyra (THOO-rah) · G2374**

Key Verse: Revelation 3:8

**Open Door** — the door no one can shut

## TEACHING SUMMARY

10 to 15 minutes, read aloud

I have to confess a strange thing about myself, and maybe you will recognize it. I am good at being rescued and still not resting. Even when nothing is chasing me, I stay braced. Jaw tight. Shoulders up around my ears. Waiting for the next hit. For a long time I thought freedom just meant the cell door swinging open, that God would get me out and I would handle the rest. But the more I read Scripture, the more I noticed that rescue is almost never described as just an exit. It is described as a place. And the place has room in it to breathe.

Start with the Hebrew, because it preaches before you even translate it. The word for Egypt is *Mitzrayim*, and inside it is the word for narrowness, for a tight, constricted, walls-closing-in place. In the Hebrew imagination, bondage is constriction. The breath gets short. And the word for freedom is its opposite, *merchav*, a broad place, wide open, room to run. Listen to both land in one line. Psalm 118:5. Out of the narrow place I called on the LORD, and the LORD answered me in the broad place. The cry goes up from the squeeze. The answer sets you down in the wide-open. That is the whole exodus compressed into one verse, and it is the shape of your rescue too. He did not just crack the door. He brought you out into a country with horizons.

And in that wide country, you are allowed to lie down. Psalm 23 is a freedom song, and people miss that. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside the waters of rest. That word for rest is *menuchah*, and it means settled peace, everything finally in its right place. Now, sheep taught me something I had missed. Sheep will not lie down when they are afraid. They cannot. If there is a predator, if there is tension in the flock, they stay standing, ready to bolt. A lying-down sheep is a sheep that trusts the shepherd is awake. So when the Psalm says He makes me lie down, it is not laziness. It is the exhale that only happens when you finally believe Someone else is on watch.

Then the book of Hebrews opens up a rest that is still out ahead of you. It uses one word, *katapausis*, all through chapters three and four for God's own rest, the rest the wilderness generation never entered. And we always assume they missed it because they were weak. They did not. Hebrews says they missed it because of unbelief. They could not trust, so they could not rest. And then at one specific verse, Hebrews switches to a brand new word it uses nowhere else in the whole New Testament, *sabbatismos*, a Sabbath rest, and says it still remains for the people of God. The rest is not behind you in some season you blew. It is up ahead, with your name on it, and the way in is the same way out of Egypt was: not effort, trust.

The last three words are about the body finally unclenching. Paul promises the afflicted *anesis*, relief, and the word literally means the slackening of strings that have been pulled tight, like a bowstring or a lyre let down out of tension. That clench in your chest? He loosens it. He gives *revachah*, breathing room. But I have to give you the warning Scripture gives, because it is in this exact word. In Exodus, when the plague lifted and there was finally *revachah*, breathing room, Pharaoh looked at the relief and hardened his heart. He used the breather to take back the wheel. So when the pressure lifts in your life, watch which way you lean. Do you soften toward God, or do you quietly grab control again? And then, last, He sets before you a *thyra*, a door, and says it is open, and no one is able to shut it. Not your enemy. Not your worst failure. Not your past. The door He opens stays open.

So here is what you get to lay down this week. You do not have to stay braced. You are not in the narrows anymore. You are allowed to lie down, because the Shepherd is awake. Resting is not laziness; it is trust with skin on. And the door He opened for you cannot be shut by anyone, including you.

He did not just open the cell. He led you out into the open. You can breathe here.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

20 to 25 minutes

### OBSERVATION (WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?)

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1. In Psalm 118:5, what two places does the psalmist name, and what happens between them?
2. In Hebrews 4:9–11, what word does the author use for the rest that still remains, and what does he say is the way to enter it?

### INTERPRETATION (WHAT DOES IT MEAN?)

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3. *Merchav* is the opposite of *Mitzrayim* (Egypt/narrowness). What does it mean for your rescue that God does not just remove the pressure but places you somewhere spacious?
4. Sheep will not lie down when they are afraid. What does it tell you about God that Psalm 23 says He *makes* you lie down? Is that control, or kindness?
5. The wilderness generation missed the rest because of unbelief, not weakness. What is the difference, and which one do you tend to blame your restlessness on?
6. Pharaoh got *revachah* (breathing room) and used it to harden his heart. What do you tend to do when the pressure lifts: soften toward God or quietly grab control again?

### APPLICATION (WHAT DO I DO?)

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7. Where in your life are you still braced even though nothing is chasing you? What would it look like to actually exhale this week?
  8. What is the open door in front of you right now that you have been afraid to walk through?
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## CROSS-REFERENCES

**Matthew 11:28–30:** “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” The *katapausis* of Hebrews, offered personally by Jesus.

**Isaiah 30:15:** “In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.” Rest as the posture of faith, not laziness.

**Psalm 31:8:** “You have set my feet in a broad place.” Another *merchav* verse, tied to God’s faithfulness.

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## PERSONAL REFLECTION

### *Solo journaling*

1. Describe the “narrows” you are in right now in a single sentence. Then write Psalm 118:5 underneath it and let the broad place be the promise.
2. When was the last time you actually lay down, not collapsed, but rested because you trusted the Shepherd was awake? What kept you standing before that?
3. Look at Exodus 8:15. The last time the pressure lifted, did you soften toward God or quietly take the wheel back? What do you want to do differently with the next breathing room He gives you?

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## WEEKLY PRACTICE

**This Week’s Practice:** Actually stop. Let resting be an act of trust, not laziness.

**How to do it:** Pick a set window this week. Put the phone down. Do nothing productive on purpose. Lie down or sit still and let it be obedience rather than collapse. The Shepherd is awake, and He is not rushing you.

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## CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

As you close, pray about:

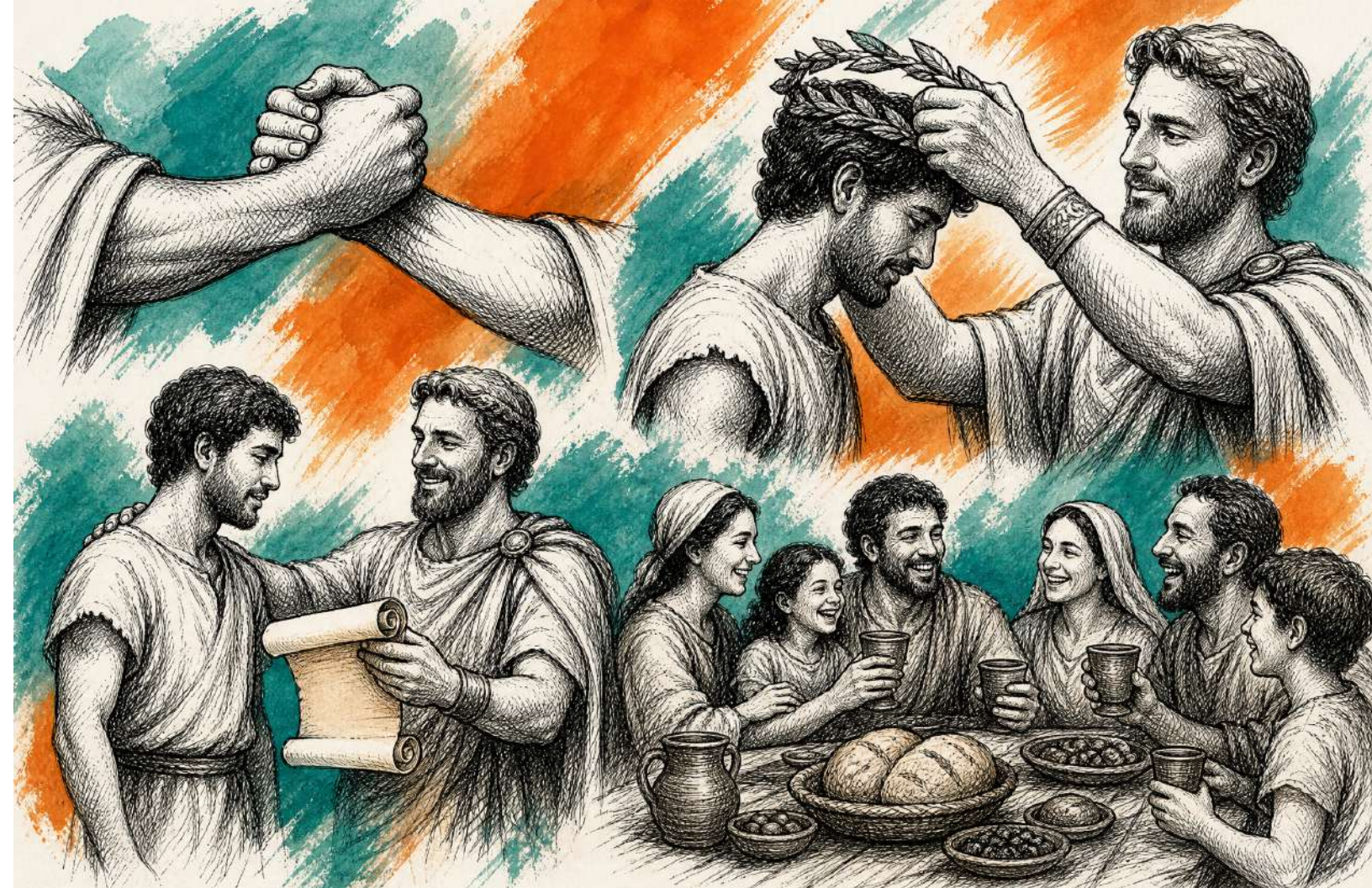
The narrow place you are in, and the broad place He is bringing you into.

Permission to rest, and the trust it takes to lie down.

The open door no one can shut, and the courage to walk through it.

*A way to begin:* Father, You did not just open the cell. You led me into the open. Teach me to breathe here, and to rest like someone who is no longer owned.





SESSION 5

# Free For Love

Based on Week 5: Free For Love

Key Words: philadelphia, nedabah, apeleutheros



## OVERVIEW

Here is the point the whole month has been walking toward. Freedom that terminates on yourself has gone wrong. The proof you are actually free is not that you finally get to do what you want; it is that your obedience has stopped feeling like a bill. Three words land it: love spent on the family, a gift given gladly, and the name a freed slave carries for life.

## OPENING CONFESSION

*Here is where my freedom kept going wrong. Set loose, I mostly served myself with it. I treated grace like a private upgrade. But the Bible aims freedom somewhere better than my own comfort. The proof that I am actually free is not that I finally get to do what I want. It is that obedience has stopped feeling like a bill.*

## OPENING QUESTION

*Think of the most generous person you know, the kind whose giving seems effortless and glad. What is it about them that makes their generosity feel free rather than forced?*

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Read aloud together:** 1 Corinthians 7:22–23 and Romans 12:9–13

**Have these open as reference passages:**

Exodus 36:2–7 (the people gave so freely Moses had to stop them)

Psalms 110:3 (a people who offer themselves freely)

Galatians 5:13 (called to freedom, so serve one another in love)

## THE WORDS AT A GLANCE

φιλαδελφία

philadelphia (fil-ad-el-FEE-ah) · G5360

Key Verse: Romans 12:10

**Brotherly Love** — freedom spent on the family

נדבָה

**nedabah (ned-aw-BAW) · H5071**

Key Verse: Psalm 110:3

**Freewill Offering** — obedience given gladly, not owed

ἀπελεύθερος

**apeleutheros (ap-el-YOO-ther-os) · G558**

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 7:22

**The Lord's Freedman** — the title you carry for life

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## TEACHING SUMMARY

*10 to 15 minutes, read aloud*

I have to make the most honest confession of the whole study here, because it is the one that took me longest to see. For years, every time I got a taste of freedom, I spent it on myself. I treated grace like a private upgrade, a better seat, a nicer life. And the strange thing is, it never satisfied. I kept getting what I wanted and finding out it was not the point. The Bible aims freedom somewhere far better than my own comfort, and once I saw where, I could not treat it as mine anymore.

The first word is *philadelphia*. We know it as a city, but it is a Greek word, *philos* plus *adelphos*, the love of brothers. And it is the same word, *adelphos*, we sat with back in June, when we learned we are family, born from the same womb of grace. Paul takes that family and aims your freedom right at it. Love one another with brotherly affection, he says, and then he says something almost competitive: outdo one another in showing honor. Picture that. A holy contest where everyone is racing to honor everyone else first. That is what the freedom is for. The freed person is not set loose to hoard the freedom. He is set loose to love.

The second word is one of the most beautiful in the Old Testament, *nedabah*, a freewill offering. It is a gift you hand over not because you owe it, but because you want to. And there is one scene that shows you exactly what it looks like. When Israel was building the tabernacle, the people brought their gold and cloth and skill as a *nedabah*, freely, and they brought so much, so eagerly, that the workers came to Moses and said, the people are bringing more than enough. And Moses had to send word through the camp telling them to stop giving. Stop. Let that be the picture. A slave gives because he must. A free person gives until somebody has to tell him to stop. And here is the part that turns it back on you: the same word shows up in Hosea, where God says of His people, I will love them freely. *Nedabah*. His love for you was a freewill offering before yours was ever for Him.

And then the capstone, the word this whole month has been walking toward. *Apeleutheros*. The Lord's freedman. In the Roman world, when a slave was set free, he did not just walk away anonymous. He took the family name of the man who freed him and he carried it for the rest of his life. Cicero had a slave named

Tiro, and when Cicero freed him, Tiro became Marcus Tullius Tiro. He wore his liberator's name like a banner. Everyone who met him knew whose generosity had bought his freedom. And Paul reaches for that exact word and hands it to you. Whoever was a slave when the Lord called him is the Lord's freedman. You were a slave. In Egypt. To the debt. Under condemnation. Owned by the fear of death. And a price was paid, in blood, and now you walk around carrying the name of the One who freed you. You are not your own anymore. You belong to Christ, not as His slave, but as the one He set loose. And the strangest, best part of that same verse is the flip side: the person who was free when Christ called him becomes Christ's slave. Free people become His willingly. That is not bondage going back on. That is love.

So here is what you get to lay down on the last day of this study. You do not have to spend your freedom on yourself, and you will be relieved to stop trying, because it never filled you anyway. You get to spend it on the people God has put right in front of you. And the surest sign that you are actually free is not a feeling of independence. It is the day your obedience stops feeling like a bill and starts feeling like a gift you cannot wait to give.

You were a slave. A price was paid. Now you carry His name, and you are free, all the way down, free to love.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

20 to 25 minutes

### OBSERVATION (WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?)

1. Read Romans 12:9–10. What two things does Paul tell believers to do toward one another?
2. In 1 Corinthians 7:22, what becomes of a slave who is called by the Lord, and what becomes of a free person who is called?

### INTERPRETATION (WHAT DOES IT MEAN?)

3. *Philadelphia* shares its root with *adelphos*, brother. Why does Paul aim freedom at loving the family rather than at personal liberty?
4. *Nedabah* is a gift given gladly, not owed. What is the difference between a slave's giving and a free person's giving, and how can you tell which one you are doing right now?
5. In Exodus 36:5–7 the people gave so freely that Moses had to make them stop. When was the last time your giving, of money, time, or love, had that kind of gladness in it?
6. A Roman freedman carried his liberator's name for life and belonged to him as patron. What does it do to you that you carry the name of the One who paid for your freedom?

### APPLICATION (WHAT DO I DO?)

7. How does freedom go wrong when it has no one to love?
8. Say it out loud: I was bought with a price; I am the Lord's freedman. What changes when that is your name?

## CROSS-REFERENCES

**Galatians 5:13:** “You were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” The whole session in a single verse.

**2 Corinthians 9:7:** “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” The *nedabah* heart, named in the New Testament.

**Romans 6:22:** “Now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God.” The same beautiful paradox as 1 Corinthians 7:22, freed and belonging at once.

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## PERSONAL REFLECTION

### *Solo journaling*

1. Where has your freedom quietly curved back in on yourself? Name one way you have treated grace as a private upgrade.
2. Who is one specific person God has put in front of you to spend your freedom on this week? Write their name down.
3. Sit with the title “the Lord’s freedman.” What would change in how you carry yourself this week if you truly believed that is your name?

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## WEEKLY PRACTICE

**This Week’s Practice:** Give one thing this week as a *nedabah*, freely and gladly, not because you have to.

**How to do it:** Choose something to give: money, time, an act of service, forgiveness, honor spoken out loud. Give it to a specific person with no obligation behind it and no expectation of return. Then pay attention to how free obedience feels in your chest. It feels different from paying a bill. That difference is the whole point.

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## CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

As you close, pray about:

Where your freedom has curved back onto yourself, and your willingness to turn it outward.

The specific person God is putting in front of you to love this week.

Gratitude that you carry His name as the Lord’s freedman.

*A way to begin:* Lord, I am Yours, bought and freed. Spend my freedom on the people You put in front of me, and let my obedience feel like the gift it is.





SESSION 6

# Bringing It Together

*July Integration Session*

All 31 Words · The Full Arc of Freedom



## OVERVIEW

This final session does not add new words. It steps back so you can see the whole shape. Freedom in Scripture was never one flat idea. It was a sequence: a cry, a price, an inner release, a wide-open country, and a call to love. By the end you can count the chains already on the floor.

## OPENING QUESTION

*Of the five movements we walked this month, the honest cry, the price that bought you, the inner release from the verdict and the fear, the wide-open country with room to breathe, and the call to spend your freedom on love, which one has met you most where you actually are right now?*

## THE THREAD

*Read aloud, 10 to 15 minutes*

When we started this month, most of us carried the same small definition of freedom: the absence of rules, doing what I want, owing nobody anything. Thirty-one words later, that definition looks thin. Scripture does not hand you a feeling. It hands you a story with five movements, and each one had to happen for the next to mean anything.

It began in the narrows. Not with a strong people, but with people groaning under a weight they could not lift, who finally stopped pretending they were fine and cried out. *Zaaq*. And the God of heaven heard, remembered, saw, and knew. That is movement one. Freedom started with an honest cry, and it had blood in it from the first night, a lamb on the doorpost, *pesach*, and a way out that Jesus would one day call His own *exodos*. Then God did something no nation has dared: He proclaimed liberty, *deror*, the Jubilee, *yovel*, the release, *shemittah*, the very word Jesus read aloud in His hometown, *aphesis*, and said, today this is fulfilled.

But movement two would not let freedom stay cheap. It cost. You were not waved off; you were bought back, *apolutrosis*, a ransom paid. And God freed you full, *chofshi*, not empty. He loosed the bent and the bound, *apoluo* and *luo*, and He made one thing painfully clear: you never picked your own lock. He opened it, *patach*. He drew you out because He delighted in you, *chalats*. And the pit you were sure was only ruin turned out to be an escape He had built years in advance, *peletah*.

Movement three went inside, to the place no one could see. The verdict you read over yourself every morning was struck from the record, *katakrima*, no condemnation. The handwritten list of your debts was cancelled and nailed to a cross, *cheirographon*. The yoke was not loosened a notch; it was broken in half so you could stand up straight, *motah*. The snare snapped, the pit had a hand reach down into it, *moqesh* and *bor*. And the fear that had quietly been the boss of you, the fear of death itself, lost its grip when Jesus walked into that room and came back out, *apallasso*. If the Son sets you free, you are free indeed. *Eleutheros*. Free at the root.

Movement four taught us that freedom is not just an exit; it is a destination. He brought you out of the narrows into a broad place, *merchav*, with room to run. He gave you permission to lie down, *menuchah*, because the Shepherd is awake. He set a rest ahead of you that still remains, *katapausis* and *sabbatismos*, entered not by effort but by trust. He loosened the strings that had been pulled tight, *anesis*, and handed you breathing room, *revachah*, and set before you a door no one can shut, *thyra*.

And movement five told us the point of all of it. You were not set loose to serve yourself. You were freed to love, *philadelphia*, to spend it on the family. Free people give until someone has to tell them to stop, *nedabah*. And you walk around now carrying one name, the name of the One who paid for you, *apeleutheros*, the Lord's freedman.

Here is how it fits the whole year. In May we learned relationship, who we are to each other. In June we learned identity, who God says we are. And July is what all of that makes possible. Because you know whose you are, and because you know who you are, you are not a slave anymore. No longer a slave, but a son. And a son is free.

So read the list slowly today, and count the chains. Most of them are already on the floor.

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## THE WHOLE ARC IN ONE BREATH

*You cried out and could not free yourself. A Lamb died and the judgment passed over you. Jesus made His own exodus and opened the road. Liberty was proclaimed, the debt released, the captive set free. You were bought back, drawn out of the pit, loosed from the graveclothes. The verdict was torn up, the record nailed down, the yoke broken, the snare snapped, the fear of death beaten. You were brought into a broad place, given rest, handed breathing room, set in front of a door no one can shut. And then you were sent, not to serve yourself, but to love, carrying one name for the rest of your life: the Lord's freedman.*

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## INTEGRATION QUESTIONS

20 to 25 minutes

1. The month opens with a cry from people who could not free themselves, and only then shows that freedom had to be bought. Why does the order matter, the honest cry first, the price second?
2. Session 2 says you were bought from the outside by a ransom; Session 3 says the verdict and the fear were dealt with on the inside. Why does real freedom require both an external price and an internal release?
3. Session 3 is mostly about what you are freed from; Session 4 is about what you are freed into. Why is the open door not enough by itself, and what happens to people who only ever experience the exit?
4. Session 4 leads you into rest, and Session 5 sends you out to love. How do rest and love depend on each other, and what goes wrong if you try to have one without the other?

5. Looking at the whole arc, where in your own life are you living as though one of these movements has not happened yet: still crying quietly, still paying a debt already paid, still under the verdict, still braced and unable to rest, or still hoarding the freedom?

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## MONTH-LONG REFLECTION

### *Solo journaling*

1. What is the single biggest insight you are taking with you from this month?
  2. Which Hebrew or Greek word has most changed how you read Scripture, and why that one?
  3. What is one thing you believed about freedom before this study that you now see differently?
  4. How has your view of God shifted or deepened through these thirty-one words?
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## GOING DEEPER

### **Martin Luther, “The Freedom of a Christian” (1520).**

The short Reformation treatise on Christian liberty. Its famous paradox, that a Christian is a free lord subject to none and at the same time a dutiful servant subject to all, is essentially 1 Corinthians 7:22 written in two sentences.

### **Sinclair Ferguson, “The Whole Christ.”**

On grace, legalism, and the freedom of resting in Christ instead of performing for Him. It speaks straight to the morning verdict of Session 3.

### **A word-study tool to keep going on your own.**

Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary or Vine’s Expository Dictionary, alongside the free Blue Letter Bible and the BibleHub interlinear. With those, you can do for any word what we did for these thirty-one.

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## NEXT MONTH PREVIEW

August is **Words of Wisdom**: knowledge, understanding, and discernment. It is the natural next question. Now that you are free, now that you are standing in the wide-open country with the chains on the floor, how do you walk? A freed person needs wisdom for the open road. We will spend August learning to think God’s thoughts after Him, so that the freedom we were handed this month gets spent well.

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## CLOSE THE STUDY

Read 1 Corinthians 7:22–23 aloud together one last time. Then pray the simplest prayer of the whole month:

*I belong to Christ. I am free. Thank You.*





APPENDIX

# Complete Word Study Glossary

*All 31 Words of Freedom at a Glance*

16 Hebrew · 15 Greek · Ordered by Movement



# Complete Word Study Glossary

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Thirty-one words, sixteen Hebrew and fifteen Greek, in the order we walked them. Counts marked “about” vary slightly between concordances and manuscript families; confirm in your own study Bible.

## MOVEMENT 1: OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE

צָעַק **zaaq** (zah-AHK) • H2199 • ~70x OT • Exodus 2:23 — to cry out for help under distress

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פֶּסַח **pesach** (PEH-sakh) • H6453 • ~49x OT • Exodus 12:13 — Passover; the lamb and the night judgment passed over

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ἔξοδος **exodos** (EX-od-os) • G1841 • 3x NT • Luke 9:31 — departure, the road out; Jesus' own word for His death

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דֵּרֹר **deror** (deh-RORE) • H1865 • ~8x OT • Leviticus 25:10 — liberty proclaimed; the Liberty Bell word

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יּוֹבֵל **yovel** (yoh-VALE) • H3104 • ~27x OT • Leviticus 25:10 — Jubilee; the ram's horn of release

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שְׁמִטָּה **shemittah** (shem-it-TAW) • H8059 • ~5x OT • Deuteronomy 15:1-2 — the seventh-year release of debts

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ἀφεσις **aphesis** (AF-es-is) • G859 • ~17x NT • Luke 4:18 — release, liberty, forgiveness; Jesus reads it aloud

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## MOVEMENT 2: FREEDOM WAS BOUGHT

ἀπολύτρωσις **apolutrosis** (ap-ol-OO-tro-sis) • G629 • ~10x NT • Ephesians 1:7 — release secured by a ransom

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חֹפְשִׁי **chofshi** (khof-SHEE) • H2670 • ~17x OT • Deuteronomy 15:13 — free, exempt from bondage; sent out full

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ἀπολύω **apoluō** (ap-ol-OO-oh) • G630 • 60+x NT • Luke 13:12 — to set free fully; the bent woman unbent

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λύω **luo** (LOO-oh) • G3089 • ~40x NT • John 11:44 — to loose, to unbind; unbind him and let him go

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פָּתַח **patach** (paw-THAKH) • H6605 • 100+x OT • Psalm 116:16 — to open; You have loosed my bonds

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χάλας **chalats** (khaw-LATS) • H2502 • dozens x OT • Psalm 18:19 — to draw out; drawn out because He delighted in me

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פֶּלֶטָה **peletah** (pel-ay-TAW) • H6413 • ~28x OT • Genesis 45:7 — escape, deliverance; the exit built ahead of time

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## MOVEMENT 3: FREE FROM THE OLD MASTER

κατάκριμα **katakrima** (kat-AK-ree-mah) • G2631 • 3x NT • Romans 8:1 — the adverse sentence; no condemnation now

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χειρόγραφον **cheirographon** (khy-ROG-raf-on) • G5498 • 1x NT • Colossians 2:14 — the handwritten record of debt, nailed to the cross

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מוֹטָה **motah** (mo-TAW) • H4133 • ~12x OT • Leviticus 26:13 — the bar of the yoke; broken so you walk erect

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מִקְשֵׁשׁ **moqesh** (mo-KAYSH) • H4170 • ~27x OT • Psalm 124:7 — the fowler's snare; the trap snaps and you escape

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בֹּר **bor** (BORE) • H953 • 60+x OT • Psalm 40:2 — the pit, cistern, dungeon; He reached in and drew you up

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ἀπαλλάσσω **apallasso** (ap-al-LAS-so) • G525 • 3x NT • Hebrews 2:15 — to release; freed from the fear of death

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ἐλεύθερος **eleutheros** (el-YOO-ther-os) • G1658 • ~23x NT • John 8:36 — free at the root; free indeed

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## MOVEMENT 4: FREE INTO THE OPEN

מַרְחָו **merchav** (mer-KHAHV) • H4800 • ~6x OT • Psalm 118:5 — a broad place; room to breathe after the narrows

מְנוּחָה **menuchah** (men-oo-KHAH) • H4496 • ~21x OT • Psalm 23:2 — resting place, settled peace; sheep lie down unafraid

κατάπαυσις **katapausis** (kat-AP-ow-sis) • G2663 • ~9x NT • Hebrews 4:3 — God's own rest, entered by trust

σαββατισμός **sabbatismos** (sab-bat-IS-mos) • G4520 • 1x NT • Hebrews 4:9 — a Sabbath rest that still remains, up ahead

ἀνεσις **anesis** (AH-neh-sis) • G425 • ~5x NT • 2 Thessalonians 1:7 — relief; the strings pulled tight, finally slackened

רֵבַחָה **revachah** (reh-vah-KHAH) • H7309 • 2x OT • Exodus 8:15 — breathing room, respite; and the test of what you do with it

θύρα **thyra** (THOO-rah) • G2374 • ~39x NT • Revelation 3:8 — a door; the open door no one can shut

## MOVEMENT 5: FREE FOR LOVE

φιλαδελφία **philadelphia** (fil-ad-el-FEE-ah) • G5360 • ~6x NT • Romans 12:10 — brotherly love; freedom spent on the family

נְדָבָה **nedabah** (ned-aw-BAW) • H5071 • ~26x OT • Psalm 110:3 — a freewill offering; obedience given gladly, not owed

ἀπελεύθερος **apeleutheros** (ap-el-YOO-ther-os) • G558 • 1x NT • 1 Corinthians 7:22 — the Lord's freedman; the name you carry for life

## BY LANGUAGE

**16 Hebrew:** zaaq, pesach, deror, yovel, shemittah, chofshi, patach, chalats, peletah, motah, moqesh, bor, merchav, menuchah, revachah, nedabah.

**15 Greek:** exodos, aphasis, apolutrosis, apoluo, luo, katakrima, cheirographon, apallasso, eleutheros, katapausis, sabbatismos, anesis, thyra, philadelphia, apeleutheros.

## CROSS-LANGUAGE PAIRS TO REMEMBER

**Liberty and release:** *deror* (Hebrew) answered by *aphesis* (Greek), the word the Greek Old Testament uses for Isaiah's liberty, which Jesus reads in Luke 4:18.

**The free person:** *chofshi* (Hebrew) answered by *eleutheros* (Greek), and crowned by *apeleutheros* (Greek).

**Rest:** *menuchah* (Hebrew) answered by *katapausis* and *sabbatismos* (Greek).

**Relief and breathing room:** *revachah* (Hebrew) answered by *anesis* (Greek).

**One root, three doors:** *apolutrosis*, *apoluo*, and *luo* all share the Greek root for loosing, so the ransom that bought you and the hands that unbind you are the same word family.

### THREE HAPAX WORDS WORTH NOTING

Three of these words appear only once in the whole New Testament, which makes each one a deliberate, weighty choice by its author: *cheirographon* (Colossians 2:14), the record of debt nailed to the cross; *sabbatismos* (Hebrews 4:9), the Sabbath rest that remains; and *apeleutheros* (1 Corinthians 7:22), the Lord's freedman.

## About FaithLabz

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### Connect, Go Deeper, Keep Walking

#### FREE

FaithLabz exists for one thing: to put the Bible, in the language it was first written, into the hands of ordinary people, in a way that is faithful, careful, and warm. We are not interested in adding rules to your life. We are interested in showing you what is already true, and letting the words do the work they were made to do.

Everything we make is free. If these materials help you get one step closer to Christ, they should never sit behind a paywall. That conviction is not a marketing strategy; it is the whole point of a Jubilee. If you are able to support the work, you can give what you can at [faithlabz.com/donate](https://faithlabz.com/donate). If you cannot, take what you need. That is exactly the kind of release this month was about.

#### KEEP WALKING WITH US

**Daily teachings, one word a day:** [youtube.com/@faithlabzministries](https://youtube.com/@faithlabzministries)

**The full word library, a card for every word:** [library.faithlabz.com](https://library.faithlabz.com)

**The monthly Bible study** (like this one): free every month, with email sign-up so the next one comes straight to you.

#### FAITH PIECES

If you want the single best way to support what we do, it is the Faith Pieces app. It takes all of the FaithLabz artwork you have grown to love and turns it into beautiful jigsaw puzzles. You put the pieces together, and when a puzzle is finished, you can set it as your phone wallpaper. There is a daily word study built right in. It is, we will say it plainly, the best puzzle app for Christians on the planet, because it is not just a game; it is the art turned into a game, turned into a wallpaper, with the Word built in.

#### OTHER WAYS TO GO DEEPER

**Doodles and Devotions** is a digital collection of original devotionals, original artwork, and short video readings, one for every week of the year. And for anyone walking through a hard season, **Doodles and Devotions for the Anxious Mind** is a set of devotionals written for the anxious heart. If money is a barrier to any of it, write us. Nobody gets turned away.

## REACH US

Questions, prayer requests, or a request for a free copy of anything: [adaw@faithlabz.com](mailto:adaw@faithlabz.com).

You were a slave. A price was paid. You carry His name now. Go spend the freedom on love, and come back next month, because once you are free, you are going to want wisdom for the open road.





FAITHLABZ



*“I belong to Christ. I am free. Thank You.”*



[faithlabz.com](http://faithlabz.com)