

# Over & Above

04 - Dwelling with God

Church on the Park via Zoom | Sunday, 27 FEB 2022 | Glen Gerhauser

**Text:** “How should we respond to these things? If God is over us, who can come down on us? God did not hold back his own Son but gave him over for us. Won’t he bestow on us all his grace?” (Romans 8:31-32, Inspiration Translation)

**Theme:** Great security comes from knowing the extent of God’s love for us.

**Intro:** For over two years, the world has been shaken by the COVID-19 virus. People are weary and worn out. Now Vladimir Putin has raised his monstrous head and has arrogantly invaded Ukraine. This kind of aggression in Europe led to both World War I and World War II. And to make matters worse, Putin seems to be threatening the whole world with nuclear warfare if other nations step into the fight. This is shocking because it is estimated that Russia has over six thousand nuclear weapons. They can practically destroy the whole world with them. Yes, this is a time of upheaval. So how should we respond to what’s happening in the world right now?

*Romans 8:31-39 contains the answer. Let’s look at it.*

## 1) God is over the chaos (Rom. 8:31-32).

- “How should we respond to these things? If God is over us, who can come down on us? God did not hold back his own Son but gave him over for us. Won’t he bestow on us all his grace?” (Romans 8:31-32, IT).
- When Paul wrote Romans (57-58 AD), Emperor Nero was in power (54-68 AD).
  - Worldhistory.org says that Nero’s “14-year reign represents everything decadent about that period in Roman history. He was self-indulgent, cruel, and violent as well as a cross-dressing exhibitionist. His lavish parties combined with the burning of Rome continued the economic chaos that had plagued the Roman citizenry since the days of Tiberius (r. 14-37 CE).”
- In this period of time, Paul asked, “How should we respond to these things?”
  - I’m sure he was asked the question many times by fellow Christians.
  - It’s a critical question—an inquiry we should make over and over again.
  - Asking difficult questions is what makes a true believer.
    - We don’t live in a fantasy world.
- Paul answers the question of how we should respond with a series of questions.
  - This series of questions gets us thinking and meditating.
  - Paul’s goal (as well as the Holy Spirit’s goal) is to get us thinking about things above, not earthly things (Col. 3:2).

- Yesterday, the Lord led me to Romans 8:31-39.
  - It was a passage that was on my heart in September 2021.
  - Yesterday, I also did a fresh translation of Romans 8:31-39.
    - This made me read it slowly and think critically about it.
    - It also showed me something that I didn't realize.
- In Romans 8:31-39, Paul often uses the word '*huper*' ὑπὲρ, meaning 'over, above or for.'
  - And Paul seems to use the Greek word '*huper*' in word plays. We often see these kinds of word plays in the Hebrew Scriptures.
  - Our words 'super' and 'hyper' come from *huper*.
- Simply put, Paul is saying that God is over the chaos and troubles—and it's demonstrated in Jesus' resurrection from the dead and accession to the right hand of God. Jesus is at the highest place—over and above all.

## 2) Don't let the world's upheaval pull you down (Rom. 8:33-37).

- Let's listen to more of Romans 8:33-37:
  - "Who can accuse God's chosen? God declares us righteous. Who can condemn us? The Messiah sunk down into death for our sin. But that was not the end. He was raised and is at the right hand of God. Now, he intercedes over us, pleading our case. How can we be cut off from the Messiah's love?"
  - "Will crushing pressure and stress from all sides separate us from his love? What about persecution, hunger and lack of decent clothes? How about danger, war, even execution? Just like it is written (in Psalm 44:22), 'On account of you we are put to death all day, counted as sheep for the slaughter.'
  - "No, none of this opposition overcomes us. In all these things, we overwhelmingly conquer through the One who loves us" (IT).
- Again, listen to the thought-provoking questions Paul proposes.
- Paul invites us to think about all the worst things that can happen. Why? Because these are things that Christians go through.
  - But what we go through does not negate God's love.
- I used to say, "I'm not a superman."
  - But after reading this passage, I think I was wrong.
    - Why? Because Paul says, we *hupernikao*.
    - In other words, we are super-conquerors.
- As Christians in Christ, we are supermen and superwomen.
  - This passage teaches us that we don't allow the opposition to overwhelm and overcome us.
  - Instead, we overwhelmingly conquer. We rise above the crushing pressure and the stress from all sides.
- How?
  - Through the One who loves us.
  - This is why being connected to Jesus in a real and intimate way is critical.
  - Only an intimate relationship with Jesus allows us to be super-conquerors.

**3) Be convinced and completely confident of God's love in Jesus (Rom. 8:38-39).**

- Let's read the last part of our passage: Romans 8:38-39.
  - "We are convinced. Yes, we are completely confident. Why? Because neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither current events nor impending threats, neither proud adversaries nor deep rivalries – neither any other created thing – has the power to remove us from God's love in the Messiah, Jesus our Lord" (IT).
- Through being rooted and ground in the love of Jesus, we overcome.
- This is something we have to be convinced and totally confident in.
- Nothing can separate us, sever us or cut us off from God's love.
- We respond to all these things through living in Jesus' love and showing that love to others.
  - We can't allow anything to veer us off this course – not Putin, not COVID-19, and definitely not immature Christians.
- In Jesus, you are over and above all distress and opposition.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, 1) God is over the chaos, 2) Don't let the world's upheaval pull you down, and 3) Be convinced and completely confident of God's love in Jesus.

## ENDNOTES

### ὑπέρ 5228

From its original locative meaning “over” (as in P Par 1<sup>145</sup> (b.c. 117) τὰ μὲν ὑπὲρ [γῆς], ταῦθ' ὑπὸ γῆς), ὑπέρ came to be applied in a variety of ways.

1. c. gen. (a) = “for,” “on behalf of,” “in the place of”: P Tebt I. 6<sup>49</sup> (b.c. 140–139) ἐπιτ[ε]λεῖν τὰ νομιζόμενα τοῖς θεοῖς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν καὶ τῶν τέκνων, “to pay the customary offerings to the gods on behalf of us and our children” (Edd.), P Oxy IV. 743<sup>35</sup> (b.c. 2) συνπροσγενέσθαι αὐτῷ ὡς ἀνθομολογη(σομένῳ) ὑπὲρ σου οὕτως ὡς ὑπ(έρ) μου, “stand by him, as he will agree in everything for you just as for me” (Edd.), and BGU I. 246<sup>13</sup> (ii/iii a.d.) νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐντυγχάνω τῷ θεῷ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. Cf. also with Mk 9:40 the Christian P land I. 16<sup>8</sup> (v/vi a.d.) τὸ νόμιμον ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐστίν, and with 1 Cor 15:29 Michel 1001<sup>i</sup>.<sup>10</sup> (will of Epicteta—c. b.c. 200) τοῦ καὶ κατασκευαζαμένου τὸ μουσεῖον ὑπὲρ τοῦ μεταλλαχότος ἀμῶν υἱοῦ Κρατησιλόχου.

From this it is an easy transition to ὑπέρ in a substitutionary sense, as when one man writes a letter for another, seeing that he is unable to write it for himself, e.g. P Tebt I. 104<sup>39</sup> (b.c. 92) ἔγραψεν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ Διονύσιος Ἑρμαίσκου ὁ προγεγραμμένος διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν μὴ ἐπίστασθαι γράμματα, *ib.* II. 373<sup>23</sup> (a.d. 110–1) γέγραφα ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ φάσκοντος μὴ εἰδέναι γράμματα. Other exx. will be found s.v. ἀγράμματος, and see A. T. Robertson in *Exp* VIII. xviii. p. 321ff., where the bearing of this use of ὑπέρ upon certain theological statements in the NT is discussed. Note also P Oxy IV. 722<sup>28</sup> (a.d. 91 or 107) οὐκ ἐξόντος τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ οὐδ' ἄλλῳ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ ἀπαίτησιν ποιεῖσθαι ... τῶν προκειμένων λύτρων, where ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ seems to imply acting in his name or on his behalf (cf. Wenger *Stellvertretung*, p. 12), and BGU I. 361<sup>ii</sup>.<sup>17</sup> (a.d. 184) Φιλώτας ῥήτωρ ὑπὲρ Κασίου εἶπεν ...: cf. Jn 11:50; Gal 3:13; Philem 13.

(b) = “concerning,” “about,” “as to,” a somewhat colourless use of ὑπέρ, by which it is equivalent to little more than περί, for which it is often a *v.l.* in MSS. of the NT (see s.v. περί): P Par 45<sup>2</sup> (b.c. 152) (= *UPZ* i. p. 329) ἀπόντος μου πεφρόντικα ὑπὲρ σοῦ χρήσιμα τῶν σῶν πραγμάτων, P Tebt I. 6<sup>41</sup> (b.c. 140–139) καθάπερ οὖν καὶ πρότερον προστετάχαμεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνηκόντων τοῖς ἱεροῖς κομίζεσθαι, “in accordance therefore with our previous ordinance concerning the dues which belong to the temples” (Edd.), *ib.* I. 19<sup>4</sup> (b.c. 114) ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐσήμαινες πέμψαι γεωργῶν ἀπροσδέητοί ἐσμεν, “as for the cultivators whom you said you were sending, I do not require them” (Edd.), similarly<sup>9</sup>, P Goodsp Cairo 4<sup>6</sup> (ii/b.c.) (= *Selections*, p. 24) ὑπὲρ ὧν ἠβουλόμεθα, ἀπεστάλακαμεν πρὸς σέ Γλαυκίαν, “as regards those things we wished, we have sent to you Glaucias,” and *OGIS* 5<sup>69</sup> (b.c. 311) ὑπὲρ δὴ τούτων καὶ γράψαι μοι ἐδόκει, 90<sup>31</sup> (Rosetta-stone—b.c. 196) φροντίζων ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἰς αὐτὰ διὰ παντός.

The preposition is common also in connexion with payments, e.g. P Eleph 5 *recto*<sup>19</sup> (b.c. 284–3) ἐλογισάμην πρὸς Ἑρμαγόραν ὑπὲρ τοῦ οἴνου, P Oxy IV. 745<sup>2</sup> (c. a.d. 1) ὑπὲρ ὧν καὶ ἔθου χειρόγραφον, “for which (a purchase of wine) you drew me a bond,” *ib.* II. 278<sup>10</sup> (hire of a mill—a.d. 17) ὑπὲρ τοῦ σημ[αι]νομένου μύλου ἐκάστου μ[η]νὸς ἀργ[υ]ρίου δραχμὰς δύο τριώβολ(ον), *ib.* III. 522<sup>7</sup> (ii/a.d.) ὑπὲρ μισθ(οῦ) ἐργ(ατῶν) (δραχμαὶ) ἰβ, *ib.* 514<sup>3</sup> (a.d. 190–1) ἔσχον παρ' ὑμῶν ὑπὲρ ὄψωνίου ἀργυ(ρίου) (δραχμὰς) ὕ, “I have received from you as my salary 400 drachmae” (Edd.), and P land 37<sup>7</sup> (v/vi a.d.) ὑπὲρ συνηθείας τοῦ ῥίπαρ(ίου) with the editor's note. For the stronger ἀντί in connexion with the metaphor of purchase, cf. Mk 10:45 (= Mt 20:28) λύτρον ἀντί πολλῶν with 1 Tim 2:6 ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων: see *Proleg.* p. 105.

2. c. acc. = “over,” “above,” “beyond,” lit. and metaph.: P Hib I. 38<sup>7</sup> (b.c. 252–1) τῶν συρίων ὑπὲρ τὴν σκηνήν ῥούσων, “the Syrian cloths being above the cabin” (Edd.), P Petr III. 6(a)<sup>41</sup> (b.c. 236) ὑπὲρ ὄφρυν δεξιάν, P Tor II. 8<sup>70</sup> (b.c. 119) ὑπὲρ ἑαυτὸν φρονῶν, P Flor I. 86<sup>1</sup> (i/a.d.) ἀπὸ Ἑρμοῦ πρόλ[ε]ως τῆς ὑπὲρ Μέμφιν, P Ryl II. 74<sup>3</sup> (a.d. 133–5) εἰς τοὺς ὑπὲρ Κόπτον ἀνε<λ>θεῖν, “to visit the regions beyond Coptos,” P Flor I. 57<sup>62</sup> (a.d. 223–5) ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀριθμ[ὸ]ν [τῶν] ἐβδομήκοιτα ἐτῶν ἐγεγόμεν, and P Oxy X. 1298<sup>7</sup> (iv/a.d.) ἐγὼ μόνος πάνυ ἑμαυτὸν τηρῶν ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀσφαλῆν, “I have been keeping myself quite alone beyond the point of safety” (Edd.). Cf. also *ib.* XVI. 1849<sup>1</sup> (vi/vii a.d.) μίαν ὑπὲρ μίαν (sc. ἡμέραν), “day by day.”

The gradual weakening of the construction of ὑπέρ c. acc. in late Greek is seen in the fact that in the NT this construction occurs only 19 times, as compared with 126 occurrences of ὑπέρ c. gen.: cf. *Proleg.* p. 105. For the use of διὰ (with gen. and with acc.) for ὑπέρ in late Greek, see Bell's note *ad* P Lond 1917<sup>7</sup>, where reference is also made to Jannaris *Gr.* §§ 1521, 1534(c).

See as usual the monographs on the prepositions by Kuhring, Rossberg, and Regard, as described in Abbreviations I. General.

Moulton, J. H., & Milligan, G. (1930). In [The vocabulary of the Greek Testament](#) (pp. 651–652). Hodder and Stoughton.

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God did not hold back his own Son but gave him over for us. Won't he bestow on us all his grace?

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