

Romans Session 112

The Holy Spirit Guarantees Our Glory

The Inexpressible Groans For Glory 2

Romans 8:19-22 (NASB)

¹⁹ *For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.*

²⁰ *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope*

²¹ *that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

²² *For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.*

Last time we were together we were talking about the groanings of the Universe for that day of redemption when the Sons of Glory are revealed. The day when the curse on the earth will be done away with. The day when redemption is complete. When there will be a new heaven and a new earth. Where sin no longer exists.

But we also talked about even under the curse the earth, and the universe show forth the wonderful attributes of God, His power, His majesty, His wisdom etc.

Despite their continual corruption and degeneration, neither man nor the universe itself will bring about their ultimate destruction.

That is in the province of God alone, and there is no need to fear an independently initiated human holocaust.

Men need fear only the God whom they rebelliously spurn and oppose.

The destiny of earth is entirely in the hands of its Creator, and that destiny includes God's total destruction of the sin cursed universe.

2 Peter 3:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.*

That destruction will be on a scale infinitely more powerful than any man-made devices could achieve.

In his vision on Patmos, John;

Revelation 21:1 (NASB)

¹ *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.*

Revelation 21:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ *and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."*

⁵ *And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He *said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."*

It is for that time of redemption and restoration that all nature groans in hope and expectation.

The words "*was subjected*" in verse 20, as well as the verb "*will be set free*" is passive, indicating that nature will not restore itself but will be restored by God, who Himself long ago subjected it to corruption and futility.

Jesus referred to that awesome time as the “*the regeneration*” a time when the old sinful environment will be radically judged and be replaced with God’s new and righteous one.

Matthew 19:28 (NASB)

²⁸ And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The words, “*the freedom of the glory of the children of God*” refers to the time when all believers will be liberated from sin, liberated from the flesh, and liberated from their humanness.

At that time, we will begin to share eternally in God’s own **glory**, with which **God** will clothe all His precious **children**.

John reminds us,

1 John 3:2 (NASB)

² Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

In describing that glorious day Paul wrote;

1 Corinthians 15:51-54 (NASB)

⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,

⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory.

It is impossible for our finite minds to comprehend such divine mysteries.

But by God’s own Holy Spirit within us we can believe all of His revealed truth and rejoice with absolute and confident hope that our eternal life with our Father in heaven is secure.

We acknowledge with Paul that;

Philippians 3:20-21 (NASB)

²⁰ Our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

We also acknowledge with the apostle that nature also awaits with hope for our redemption, a redemption it will share with us in its own way.

But until that wonderful day and in anticipation of it;

²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

Looking at this passage we see the word *Stenazo* (**groans**) which refers to the utterances of a person who is caught in a dreadful situation and has no immediate prospect of deliverance.

The term is used in its noun form by Luke to describe the desperate utterances of the Israelites during their bondage in Egypt.

Acts 7:34a (NASB)

³⁴ 'I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANS, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO RESCUE THEM;

The verb is used by the writer of Hebrews to describe the frustration and grief of church leaders caused by immature and unruly members;

Hebrews 13:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

The groanings and the suffering of the **creation** will one day cease, because God will deliver it from its corruption and futility.

In the meanwhile, it endures, "***the pains of childbirth***. Like Eve, whose sin brought the curse of painful human childbirth;

Genesis 3:16a (NASB)

¹⁶ To the woman He said, 'I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children;

Like this nature endures its own kind of labor pains. But also, like Eve and her descendants, nature's **pains of childbirth** brings new life.

Notice that Paul makes no mention of how or when the world will be made new.

Nor does he give the phases of that cosmic regeneration or the sequence of events.

There are however many passages of Scripture that shed light on the details of the curses being lifted.

Isaiah 30:23-24 (NASB)

²³ Then He will give you rain for the seed which you will sow in the ground, and bread from the yield of the ground, and it will be rich and plenteous; on that day your livestock will graze in a roomy pasture.

²⁴ Also the oxen and the donkeys which work the ground will eat salted fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.

Isaiah 35:1-7 (NASB)

¹ The wilderness and the desert will be glad, And the Arabah will rejoice and blossom; Like the crocus

² It will blossom profusely And rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, The majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the LORD, The majesty of our God.

³ Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble.

⁴ Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, But He will save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind will be opened And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

⁶ Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness And streams in the Arabah.

⁷ The scorched land will become a pool And the thirsty ground springs of water; In the haunt of jackals, its resting place, Grass becomes reeds and rushes.

And also;

2 Peter 3:13 (NASB)

¹³ According to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

Revelation 21:1 (NASB)

¹ *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.*

However, Paul's purpose here is to assure his readers in general terms that God's master plan of redemption encompasses the entire universe.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote with deep insight:

I wonder whether the phenomenon of the Spring supplies us with a part answer. Nature every year, as it were, makes an effort to renew itself, to produce something permanent; it has come out of the death and the darkness of all that is so true of the Winter. In the Spring it seems to be trying to produce a perfect creation, to be going through some kind of birth-pangs year by year. But unfortunately, it does not succeed, for Spring leads only to Summer, whereas Summer leads to Autumn, and Autumn to Winter. Poor old nature tries every year to defeat the "vanity", the principle of death and decay and disintegration that is in it. But it cannot do so. It fails every time. It still goes on trying, as if it feels things should be different and better; but it never succeeds. So, it goes on "groaning and travailing in pain together until now" it has been doing so for a very long time, yet it repeats the effort annually (Rom [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980], 6:59-60)

Thus, we have the groanings of the created world and universe.

THE GROANINGS OF BELIEVERS

Romans 8:23-25 (NASB)

²³ *And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.*

²⁴ *For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?*

²⁵ *But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.*

Not only does natural creation groan for deliverance from destructive consequences of sin into the promised new universe, **but also, we ourselves**, that is, believers.

It is the redemption of believers that is central to God's ultimate cosmic regeneration, because believers, as His own children, redeemed and adopted into His heavenly family in response to their faith in His beloved Son, Jesus Christ are the heirs of His glorious eternal, and righteous kingdom.

Every true believer agonizes at times over the appalling manifestations and consequences of sin in his own life, in the lives of others, and even in the natural world.

Because we have **the first fruits of the Spirit**, we are spiritually sensitized to the corruption of sin in and around us.

Because the **Holy Spirit** now indwells us, His work in us and through us is a type of spiritual **first fruits**.

They are a foretaste of the glory that awaits us in heaven, when our corrupted and mortal bodies are exchanged for ones that are incorruptible and immortal.

Although we will not be totally free of sin's power as long as we are in our present bodies, the Lord has given us complete victory over the dominion and bondage of sin.

When we experience the Holy Spirit's empowering us to turn from iniquity and to truly worship, serve, and obey, and love God, we have a taste of the future completed and perfected renewal He will work in us at the resurrection.

Because every genuine believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit;

Romans 8:9 (NASB)

⁹ However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

They will to some degree manifest the fruit of the Spirit that Paul enumerates in Galatians;

Galatians 5:22-23 (NASB)

***²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.***

Every time we see Him working His righteousness in and through us, we yearn all the more to be freed of our remaining sin and spiritual weakness.

Because of our divinely-bestowed sensitivity to sin, **we ourselves groan within ourselves** over the dreadful curse of sin that is still manifested by our remaining humanness.

We will look more at this next time.