

Devotional Questions – Romans 8:18-30

1. What kind of ‘present sufferings’* does Paul have in mind (Romans 8:18)? *The precise expression is **“the sufferings of this present time.”**
2. What ‘glory’ is he talking about (Romans 8:18)?
3. What hope, or expectation, is Paul talking about (Romans 8:24)?
4. To what was the creation* subjected, who subjected it, why was it subjected (Romans 8:20, Genesis 3:17-19)? *The correct term is **“creature”** because only **“the creature”** not **“the whole creation”** Romans 8:22 can explicitly fulfil Romans 8:19 **“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.”**
5. There are three kinds of ‘groaning’ in this passage. What is the cause of the groaning, [what/who is] the one doing the groaning, and the hoped-for outcome?
 - a. Romans 8:22
 - b. Romans 8:23
 - c. Romans 8:26
6. Why can’t we pray as we should (Romans 8:26)?
7. How does the Holy Spirit help us in prayer (Romans 8:26-27)?
8. If God knows our needs and the Spirit is praying for us, why do we need to pray?
9. How do Romans 8:28-30 provide strength and encouragement to me as I struggle with suffering and sin?
10. What is the believer’s ‘good’* that God is working for (Romans 8:28-30)? *The question is misleading. Note the following.

Romans 8:28

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The next “omission” is **Romans 8:28**, where **“all things work together for good”** has been altered to “in all things God works for the good” or similar by the NIV, JB, NJB, NWT, Ne, L. T, Tr, A are absent on this occasion, demonstrating once again that scholars are not unanimous in their attacks on the AV1611.

Given Psalm 72:18 and Proverbs 10:22, no Christian would ever need reassurance that God would neglect to do GOOD. The test of faith is whether ALL THINGS can be received as the agents for good. Nevertheless, in the Bible **“all things”** are used to encourage rejoicing IN THE LORD Habakkuk 3:17, 18; Philippians 4:4, to strengthen faith Psalm 112:7, 1 Peter 1:6, 7, to develop character Job 23:10, to deepen intimacy with the Lord Job 42:5, 6 and to reveal more of one’s real self Job 42:5, 6 again, 2 Chronicles 32:24-26, 31. Note that in the last reference, God is not ‘working’ at all. He simply lets events take their course - for Hezekiah’s admonition. See Isaiah 39:5-8.

Furthermore, the NIV reading implies that God may not always be able to control circumstances but must work in spite of them. This, of course is not so, Isaiah 10:5-15 [**“Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood”** Isaiah 10:15].

Note also Ephesians 5:20 ***“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;”***

If the critics were right – they’re not, as shown above – Ephesians 5:20 would have to read ‘Giving thanks to God for working all things’ but the NIVs, NKJV do not read that way. They essentially read with the AV1611.

Devotional Questions – Romans 8:18-30, Answers to Questions

See Dr Ruckman's commentary *The Book of Romans* pp 308-336 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 1497, 1535 for detailed comment.

1. What kind of 'present sufferings'* does Paul have in mind (Romans 8:18)? *The precise expression is **"the sufferings of this present time."**

"The sufferings of this present time" are:

- Internal **"the infirmity of the flesh"** Galatians 4:13. Paul states **"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me"** 2 Corinthians 12:9.
- External **"the enemies of the cross of Christ"** Philippians 3:18 **"Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved"** 1 Thessalonians 2:16. *Mama's Girls*– and *Mama* - **"MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"** Revelation 17:5 – are prime examples.



See www.chick.com/reading/tracts/1077/1077_01.asp.

Paul states **"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God"** Philippians 1:27-28.

- Spiritual **"the accuser of our brethren...which accused them before our God day and night"** Revelation 12:10. John states **"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death"** Revelation 12:11.

In sum, as Peter says **"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator"** 1 Peter 4:19.

2. What 'glory' is he talking about (Romans 8:18)?

Paul early gives an indication of this glory that awaits today's believer. **"But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel"** Hebrews 12:22-24.

3. What hope, or expectation, is Paul talking about (Romans 8:24)?

It is **"that blessed hope"** Titus 2:13 as Paul explains to the Thessalonians. **"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words"** 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

4. To what was the creation* subjected, who subjected it, why was it subjected (Romans 8:20, Genesis 3:17-19)? *The correct term is “**creature**” because only “**the creature**” not “**the whole creation**” Romans 8:22 can explicitly fulfil Romans 8:19 “**For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.**”

As Genesis 3:17-19, Romans 8:20 show, *Question 4* is answered with particular application to Israel by Daniel.

“Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him” Daniel 9:11(!).

Note then the wider i.e. global context and including the End Times “**The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left**” Isaiah 24:5-6.

Thankfully the Lord Jesus Christ will do away with the curse following the Second Advent.

“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband...And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him” Revelation 21:2, 22:3.

5. There are three kinds of ‘groaning’ in this passage. What is the cause of the groaning, [what/who is] the one doing the groaning, and the hoped-for outcome?

a. Romans 8:22

See *Question 4*. “**...the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain...**” Romans 8:22 because “**The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws...Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth**” Isaiah 24:5-6 but at the Second Advent “**...there shall be no more curse...**” Revelation 22:3 as the Lord has promised. “**And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful**” Revelation 21:5.

b. Romans 8:23

“...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” Romans 8:23 and therefore Paul gives assurance “**For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself**” Philippians 3:20-21.

c. Romans 8:26

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” Romans 8:26 which groanings are then received by the Lord Jesus Christ for effective prayer in that “**...he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us”** Romans 8:27, 34 with Hebrews 7:25 “**Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them**” and Matthew 6:8 “**...for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.**”

6. *Why can't we pray as we should (Romans 8:26)?*

The Lord Himself explains why. **"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts"** Isaiah 55:8-9.

7. *How does the Holy Spirit help us in prayer (Romans 8:26-27)?*

See *Question 5c* and note that the Spirit of God is the Comforter through prayer by His very presence, the Informant of what to pray and the Guarantor of prayer in the Lord's will as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself foretold. **"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you"** John 14:26.

8. *If God knows our needs and the Spirit is praying for us, why do we need to pray?*

- *Not to lose heart.* **"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint"** Luke 18:1.
- *Not to lose hope.* **"And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end"** Hebrews 6:11.
- *Not to lose holiness.* **"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting"** 1 Timothy 2:8.
- *Not to lose humility.* **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself"** Galatians 6:2-3.
- *Not to lose happiness.* **"...I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also"** 1 Corinthians 14:15.

9. *How do Romans 8:28-30 provide strength and encouragement to me as I struggle with suffering and sin?*

Romans 8:28-30 give assurance of what the Lord has said through the prophet Isaiah as applied to the believer that is testified further by apostles Paul and John with respect to God's overarching purpose for the believer **"...whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren"** Romans 8:29 with respect to God **"bringing many sons to glory"** Hebrews 2:10.

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" Isaiah 55:11.

"Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me" Acts 27:25.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" 1 John 3:2.

10. *What is the believer's 'good'* that God is working for (Romans 8:28-30)?* *The question is misleading. Note the following.**Romans 8:28**

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Little else need be said. *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"* Romans 8:28 because "all things" are germane to "his purpose" as perceived by them that love God as these testimonies show.

This is in part what Dr Edward 'Bill' Wilson, doctor for the ill-fated Scott expedition to the South Geographic Pole, 1911-1912, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Falcon_Scott, wrote to his parents in his last note to them, from *Mawson* by Peter Fitzsimons, pp 479-481.

Dear old Dad and Mother,

The end has come and with it an earnest looking forward to the day when we shall meet together in the hereafter. Death has no terrors for me. I am only sorry for my beloved Ory and for all of you dear people but it is God's will and all is for the best...God knows I have no fear in meeting Him – for He will be merciful to all of us...we have done all for the best believing in His guidance and we have both believed that whatever is, is His will, and in that faith I am prepared to meet Him and leave all you loved ones in His care till His own time is fulfilled.*

Now God be with you all,

You own loving Ted.

*Dr Wilson's wife Oriana. To his wife Oriana Dr Wilson wrote:

All is for the best to those that love God and...we have both loved Him all our lives. All is well*

*Romans 8:28, AV1611, free quotation

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep...Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen"
Hebrews 13:20-21.