

Romans Chapter 8

Romans 8:19-22 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 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. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

In light of verse 18, Paul quickly transitions from fact that the emotional distress is not in the ballpark of the glory to be revealed to us. Paul then shifts a little and sets his focus on our glorification.

This is the final stretch; by the time we finish Chapter 8, we will have all the results of being justified by faith. The first is for living. We have been granted everything in this so that we can live in accordance with our position. That in Chapter 5 through 8:1-17a. From 17b-25, it speaks of the hope of glorification and the impact it will have on all of creation.

Pictures of creation (beautiful), pictures of creation (destructive) — This world is in rebellion. It is not supposed to be this way. The sin of man has destroyed this world.

What we do not understand is that the world, as we know it, seems to be beautiful, amazing, and perfect. Scientific and archeological evidence shows some remarkable facts about the pre-flood Earth.

1. Atmosphere was optimal for life
2. Evidence of supersized animal kingdom
3. Evidence of supersized plant life
4. Evidence of supersized humans
5. Oxygen was more concentrated
6. Atmosphere was under a higher pressure (Hyperbaric)

But all the observational evidence only supports what we know from Scripture.

1. The average life span was over 800 years pre flood
2. All the Earth was meant to be inhabited (Genesis 2:4-16)
3. There were four main rivers and the theory of no major oceans (picture)
4. Humans were the caretakers of the original Earth
5. No thorns or thistles, no negative traits about creation
6. No poisonous or vicious creatures
7. The millennial and eternal Earth will be made like the original (Isaiah 11:1-11)

Now getting into the text of Romans 8, we see that not only do we eagerly await with hope for our glorification, but creation itself also is in pain waiting for the revelation of our glory.

Verse 19 begins with a word play. There are three words that have the prefix “apo-”

- **ἀποκαραδοκία** *apokaradokia*
- **ἀποκάλυψις** *apokalupsis*
- **ἀπεκδέχομαι** *apekdechomai*

The subject of the sentence is not really creation although that is not a bad understanding. The subject is what is translated “the anxious longing.” It is the Greek word “**ἀποκαραδοκία** *apokaradokia* (*ah-pah-kah-rah-dah-kee-ah*)” and is used only twice (Philippians 1:20). This is a tri-compound word combining the words for head, think, apo (used as an intensifier). Some have suggested that this is used to stick the neck out (head out), or to watch with the head. The literal word, the sum of its parts, is to be fully thinking about. All of these word pictures portray to be waiting for something. Hope is used in conjunction with this word in Philippians. Hope is an earnest expectation. This word indicates always keeping your head up, or always on the mind. The personification of this word for creation indicates a high emphasis on for that which is waited or anticipated.

The verb is “**ἀπεκδέχομαι** *apekdechomai* (*ahp-ehkh-dehkh-ah-my*).” This is in the present indicative (to be consistent and with new research) indicates a status of the event. This is another tri-compound word that is an intensified form of to receive out of, anxiously long to receive. It is used seven or eight times (Romans 8:19, 23, 25; 1st Corinthians 1:7; Galatians 5:5; Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 9:28; 1st Peter 3:20). All these passages are about the return of Christ. In Romans 8:19, the word is used in another aspect of waiting. For what is the forward thoughts of creation always waiting?

For the revelation. “**ἀποκάλυψις** *apokalupsis* (*ah-pah-kah-loops-is*)” is the standard word for revealed, made known. This is the noun form for “take off the veil or cover.” Specifically this is about the revelation of the sons (plural) of God.

- Man is the cause of distress
- Jesus came to save mankind
- Once man is in his glory, creation’s glory will also be restored
- Creation is in agony watching earnestly with great anticipation for the glory of the sons of God

Verse 20 needs a little retranslation.

Creation is the subject. The verb is “**ὑποτάσσω** *hupotassō* (*hoop-ah-tas’-soh*)” and means to be put into submission. This can both be active (I caused him to submit to me) or it can be passive (I was caused to submit

to the king). Here the verb is in the Third Person Aorist Passive Indicative. It was subjected by another (past time single event) “to futility.”

“**ματαιότης** *mataiotēs (mah-tie-ah'-tays)*” means lacking any true purpose. Creation is behaving in a way that was not its designed purpose. We watch nature shows and study animal behavior, but it is actually not what it is supposed to do. Based upon our review earlier, the animal kingdom is not supposed to be violent, carnivorous, poisonous. Acting like animals was supposed to be a compliment. This means not only the animal kingdom but all of creation (weather, the seas, the shifting of the plates, outer space (?)).

Immediately after this phrase, Paul adds “not willingly.” Creation was not the one who was desired to be subjected to purposelessness, rather it was placed in a condition. All the translations implicate that God now subjects the creation in hope.

“Not willingly” is in regards to creation being subjected to purposelessness; the antithesis is who then subjected it to this state. The prepositional phrase that follows is a “*dia*” with the accusative, as this is, means because of. The participle form is used to indicate “the one who subjected it.” This is in the Singular Masculine. Who was it that subjected creation to purposelessness? It was Adam, mankind.

Once again, a bad verse break causes confusion. “In hope” is better set with verse 21. It makes no sense to be part of this prepositional phrase.

If we add it to verse 21, the phrase now begins with an “*epi*” which, with the dative, indicates “on account of” hope. “**ἐλπίς** *elpis*,” used here and in verse 24, is a known future expectation. This is grasped in a sense of reality, not a pie in the sky. Hope is always used for the promises of God, or the promise of God in Jesus Christ. He is our hope; God has also furnished some promises of a future beyond this physical plane. But for creation itself, the hope is not heaven; it is waiting for man to return to what he should have been. Not only do we have a hope, but creation was also granted a promise.

“On account of hope that also itself, the creation, will be set free...” — that is, in my estimation, how this should be translated.

The verb “set free” is “**ἐλευθερώω** *eleuthero (ehl-yoo-theh-rah'-oh)*” and was used in secular Greek of freeing slaves. It is not that common in biblical uses, though they are important ones (John 8:32-36; Romans 6:18-22; 8:2; Galatians 5:1). All of these usages revolve around the result or potential benefit of having believed in Jesus. Here, the word is used to express the freedom that creation itself will experience when the sons of God

are revealed. The verb is a Future Passive Indicative, meaning, as we already understood, in hope. This is a promise to creation. It will be set free “from the slavery of the corruption.”

Corruption “**φθορά** *phthora* (*pfthor-ah*)” means that which is destroyed, brought to an inferior condition. All the other occurrences (nine in total) use this to describe the natural man, the unsaved, unbelieving man. Here it is used for creation; when Adam sinned, he brought all creation down to an inferior level.

The freedom from this bondage of corruption is into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. There is discussion on when all these things will be, but we cannot know for sure when, what, or how. Based upon evidence in Scripture, it appears there will be a partial restoration to glory and a then a full restoration.

The passage from Isaiah is most likely talking about the Kingdom of God, the 1000-year reign of Christ with the saints. But in Revelation 21:1-2; 22-24; 22:1-5, the eternal state replaces the cursed creation. So why re-fix something that He fixed the first time? So, that is why some say a partial restoration in the Millennium and then, in Revelation 20-21, a full restoration (maybe). It is in the eternal state that, I believe, all creation will be as God originally intended.

Verse 22 states emphatically “we know.” The next concept of creation groaning in agony is something that is either well known or self-evident. The observations of the natural world leave us to say something is wrong, but the full revelation of God tells us so specifically, as we have seen.

As we move forward, Paul not only speaks of our own glorification but also of the return to the God-intended state of the creation that man corrupted.

Conclusion:

- Salvation is not simply from this corruption, but a full restoration of us and all creation
- This needs to resonate as truth and reality – not a fairy tale
- Man was the instrument of destruction – Christ is the Savior
- Man will regain the glory and once again exercise authority over all creation

2 Peter 3:10-13 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. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.