

## **Romans 8.18-25**

### **Subjected in Hope**

We have been thinking about hope. And there is no time more fitting for an in depth consideration of the topic than Christmas. For Christmas reminds us that God keeps His promises, even if it takes millennia. The coming of the Messiah was promised at the fall. And God continued to work His eternal plan through all of history... but it is important for us to understand that all of the chaos and unrest that marks out human history is not out of God's control, nor is it something that He was struggling to manage. All of creation is progressing along the path of God's eternal decree and it is exactly as it is supposed to be at this moment. Paul tells us that God subjected creation to futility in hope... a knowing exchange of temporary discomfort, misery and sorrow for the eternal receipt of glory.. And he further goes on to tell us that there is no comparison. It is a concept which is frankly difficult for us to understand... but it is a concept that we need to know.

# I. THIS LIFE IS FILLED WITH SUFFERING

a. That suffering is the result of sin

*Genesis 3:17–19 (NKJV) <sup>17</sup> Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. <sup>19</sup> In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”*

b. That suffering, like everything, was the act and will of God -

*Acts 15:18 (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> “Known to God from eternity are all His works.*

- i. The death of Christ was planned before the foundation of the world

*Revelation 13:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

*1 Peter 1:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you*

- ii. The terrible slaughter of Christ in all its details was the plan of God according to His perfect wisdom and plan

*Acts 4:27–28 (NKJV) <sup>27</sup> “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together <sup>28</sup> to do*

*whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.*

- iii. We have been chosen to be saved before the foundations were laid

Matthew 25:34 (NKJV) <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

### **Ephesians 1.3-6**

Revelation 17:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

- iv. His eternal love is the motive for His act of drawing us to Himself

Jeremiah 31:3 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> The Lord has appeared of old to me, *saying*: “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV) <sup>19</sup> We love Him because He first loved us.

- v. There is no catastrophe nor disaster which is not the will of God

Isaiah 45.1-7

Amos 3.2-8

- vi. His wisdom decrees the disasters as well as the blessings

Isaiah 31.1-3

c. He subjected creation to suffering for the power of hope

i. Wisdom comes to us when we consider the work of God

Ecclesiastes 7:13–14 (NKJV) <sup>13</sup> Consider the work of God; For who can make straight what He has made crooked? <sup>14</sup> In the day of prosperity be joyful, But in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, So that man can find out nothing *that will come* after him.

ii. We draw near to God when all other supports fail

Psalm 20:6–8 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> Now I know that the Lord saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand. <sup>7</sup> Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name

of the Lord our God. <sup>8</sup> They have bowed down and fallen; But we have risen and stand upright.

iii. We know His character and trust His plans

**Jeremiah 29:10–14**

iv. We learn to trust His promise

Psalm 13:5–6 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. <sup>6</sup> I will sing to the Lord, Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

## **II. HOPE AND THE PROMISE OF REDEMPTION**

a. Knowing the awesome scope of God's promise

**Isaiah 25.1-8**

b. Knowing the power of hope to transform this present chaos into meaningful necessity

Psalm 31:19–24

c. Knowing the strength of God to fulfill His every word, to accomplish His every aim

Psalm 37.1-11, 34-40

d. Knowing the joy of delayed gratification

Romans 5.1-5

### III. NOT TO BE COMPARED

This life's sufferings are not to be compared with the glory to be revealed, so it helps us to understand something of the glory that is coming.

a. God's outworking of grace in us

Romans 8.28-30

b. The redeeming, unstoppable love of God

Romans 8.31-39

c. The fullness of knowing His character

**Lamentations 3:19–33**

d. The wonder of being adopted as His sons and daughters...

**Romans 8.14-17**

#### **IV. CREATION WAITS AND GROANS**

Creation waits even as we wait for the coming fulfillment of the promise of God

This idea is clearly shown in Romans 8, but we will only touch it today... here is the upshot... hope is not only the province of man. Hope is the earnest expectation of what God has promised... held in our hand as surely as if we see it already. But all of creation has the hope of God's promise written in every cell. God's creation KNOWS His power and His promise and KNOWS that God will surely fulfill His every intention.