

# Creation Under the Curse

(Rom 8:18-23)

- Remember the context is the assurance of justification by faith
- I. Rom 8:18- “Worthy to be compared”
  - A) This is the key word in this section, and it tells us how Paul arrived at his “reckoning” or mindset concerning suffering (thus the many “for”s)
    - 1. “Worthy”- *axios*- The Greek word refers to the weights of the scale or balance
      - i. When used with *pros* as it is here, it has to do with a driving down-force of the scale caused by a heavier weight
      - ii. 2 Cor 4:17- “Light” affliction -vs- the more “weighty” glory to come
  - B) Paul is not saying that the suffering will soon end in death
  - C) Paul is not simply mitigating suffering, or detracting from it
    - 1. He isn’t “making light” (as with weights) of suffering
      - i. All is offset by the method of comparison with what is to come, and likened unto the slamming of the scales down when the future glory is placed in them
    - 2. He isn’t trying to “dull” our thoughts about suffering either
      - i. This is the common worldly method, like alcohol or drugs
        - a) Although some people do turn to religion for this purpose
        - b) “Religion is the opiate of the masses”- Marx
  - D) Hebrews ch 11 is full of this very thing:
    - 1. Abraham put the “city that hath foundations” in his scales
    - 2. Moses place the “recompense of the reward” in his
    - 3. Many placed the “better resurrection” in them
  - E) Heb 12:2- The example of Christ and the “joy set before Him”
    - 1. John 16:21- The joy of a mother
- II. Rom 8:18-23- The only explanation of the present state of things
  - A) Evolution- This theory of lost man has completely failed
    - 1. They explain away the corrupt state of things by saying it is the remnants of or the remaining imperfections of man, soon to be annihilated
      - i. This is why they were predicting a Utopia at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century
        - a) “All our naval vessels will be converted to floating hospitals within 20 years”
    - 2. The Naturalist says things have always been this way, but can’t explain the degrading and corrupting spiral downwards

- B) The Christian worldview- Creation was not always this way, neither indeed will it be this way forever
1. "Creature"- *ktisis*- that which is created
    - i. This same word is used throughout this section, and is best translated as "creation" (as in v.22)
    - ii. What is meant here by "creation"?
      - a) This cannot mean the entirety of God's creation
        - 1) The unfallen angels are not moaning and groaning, neither need redeeming
        - 2) The fallen angels are not waiting eagerly on that day
          - (a) Matt 8:28- "Have you come to torment us before the time?"
        - 3) Lost man is not eagerly awaiting the day of judgment
          - (a) They either deny it or hate the thought
        - 4) But this cannot refer to the regenerate man either, because of v.23
          - (a) "They" = "ourselves also"
          - (b) The regenerate man does long for that day, but this is not Paul's context here, he is referring to creation
      - b) "Creation"- here means all animals, growth, vegetation, trees, rivers, seas, mountains, heavens, planets, etc.
        - 1) In other words the "natural creation" itself
      - c) Paul uses personification here as is so often found in the O/T
        - 1) Isa 35:1-2- "The wilderness shall be glad and the desert rejoice"
        - 2) Isa 55:12- "Mountains shall sing and trees clap"
  2. "Earnest expectation"- *apokaradokeeah*- to stretch out the neck to look
    - i. To strain from the present position to see what lies beyond
    - ii. Like Drew Brees in the pocket
  3. "Manifestation of the sons of God"- when they are "put on exhibition"
    - i. This confirms our exposition of v.18 "revealed in us"
    - ii. This is the "glorified together" of v.17
      - a) Eph 3:10- God's manifold wisdom to be seen in the church
- C) Why is creation eagerly awaiting that day?
1. Because creation is inseparably linked to mankind and itself fell under the curse of sin
    - i. "Vanity"- emptiness, falling short, not fulfilling its purpose
      - a) This word also includes the idea of degradation, corruption, fading away, dying
        - 1) Creation doesn't "measure up" today to what it was or will become
    - ii. "Made subject to"- This verb is in the Aorist tense
      - a) So it refers to a moment in time, an event that took place once

- 1) So then it was in one condition and then in a moment in another
  - b) It is also in the passive voice- creation was acted upon and did not act for itself
    - 1) That matches the “not willingly” of v.20
    - 2) Not a result of anything it did or did not do
      - (a) This cannot be said for man
  - iii. “Bondage”- not able to deliver itself (as it seems to try each spring)
    - a) Neither is any creature able to redeem it, including man
- D) Who did this?
- 1. “Him who hath subjected”- does this mean Adam?
    - i. No, Adam has been trying to escape the curse ever since
      - a) Fighting weeds is a perfect picture of man’s existence ever since the fall
        - 1) We spray Roundup and then cause cancer
    - ii. Can this refer to the devil?
  - 2. “In hope”- This is the key to this phrase
    - a) Gen 3:14-19- It is God Who cursed the creation at the fall
      - 1) This shows us the horror of sin, and God’s hatred of it
        - (a) We have never seen the world as it was created
        - (b) We see its beauty today in its marred state
      - 2) When man fell his inheritance fell also
        - (a) Man was not going to be allowed to enjoy God’s creation as he could have
        - (b) What happened to man happens to creation
          - (1) Now this is Paul’s overall point: Creation is to be redeemed just as the elect are redeemed
          - (2) It’s not only man that needs a Redeemer, but creation itself
          - (3) We see this in the O/T type of the Kinsman-Redeemer who redeemed not only people but their inheritance