

Key Scripture: *Romans 8:18-25.*

For us to understand this verse, it is important that we understand certain key words used in this scripture. We see the word "creature". We know that everything that God creates is classified under the word creature. However, the creature here is more specific to mankind. This was the same reference as that in *Mark 16:15-16*, where Jesus asked them to preach the gospel to every creature. *Colossians 1:15* also speaks of Jesus as the first born of every creature. *2 Corinthians 5:17* also speaks of the new man as a new creature. Hence, this speaks of creature in relation to mankind.

Another subject here is "the Sons of God". There are two dimensions of the groaning here: the groaning of the creature and that of the Sons of God. We would categorize the creatures here as the nations, to distinguish it from the other subject, the sons of God. We see two fold groanings. We see that the creatures were subject to vanity but not of itself, but they are desiring to be set free from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the Children of God. *Romans 8:23* shows a distinction between the sons of God and the creature. The sons of God have the first fruit of the Spirit. This first fruit of the Spirit is given after we are saved, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. As children of God, our groaning is related to the transformation of the redemption of our bodies, however, we have been delivered from the bondage of corruption. The children of God and the sons of God, although different in the root word, mean the same thing. We see them being used interchangeably in *Mark 2:19*, *Luke 20:36*, *Acts 7:37*, *Romans 9:26*, among a few. With this understanding, we would see that what the nations are desiring is that they will have the experience of the children of God.

The groaning of the nations is a cry for the deliverance from the bondage of corruption. This is the burden of the message. The reason we have been delivered was so we could be sent back to deliver the creature from the powers of darkness and all manner of oppressions from the devil. This deliverance for us is a process, from our spirit towards our body, however, for the creature, they have not even begun the journey. We must understand that we have been delivered from the bondage of corruption and stand confident in that truth so we can successfully embark on the journey to deliver the nations.

How do we know we have been delivered?

1. We have the first fruit of the Spirit, Romans 8:23. Therefore we can worship God and understand the bible; we have a connection to our God. *Ephesians 1:13-14* says as we heard and believed the gospel of our salvation, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the down payment of our inheritance; the pledge that we will be fully recovered. *1 Corinthians 6:19-20*. We are God's and when we know that, we don't do things anyhow. An understanding is when you go to rent a house, you are expected to put a deposit if you like the house, if not they can show it out to other renters. However, the moment you put a down payment, the owner takes the ad off.
2. *2 Peter 1:3-12* shows that we have escaped the corruption that is in the world. This means we have escaped the bondage that has kept the creature captive. There is a tendency for a Christian to forget that they have been delivered, hence *2 Peter 1:9* says the one who lacks the virtues in the verses above is blind and has forgotten that he was purged. Saying he is blind means he cannot see afar off, meaning he is not able to see the glory that shall be revealed. When a believer forgets about his born-again experience, there is no hope. This is a sad thing. This is why *James 1:22-25*, speaks of believers that hear only and not do, deceiving themselves. However, those who look into the perfect law of liberty and continue in it, such a people are blessed in all what they do. Some people forget the liberty they received with the world is looking for, *Galatians 5:1*. To understand the perfect law of liberty, we can think of the first amendment right. If you wake up feeling sick, you can invoke your right to be perfectly free from illness due to the stripes of Jesus, *1 Peter 2:24*. We are to give diligence, study and be intentional to make our calling and election sure. It is one thing to know and it is another thing to be established in the present truth. We must accept it and hold on to God for these present truths, for them to become our reality.

Returning to the analogy of renting houses. Man is the house of God, *Isaiah 66:1-2*. If you enter a house and you like the bathroom and living room, etc., it is not enough to like it, you need to bring a down payment. *Hebrews 6:16-20*. Men would doubt unless there is a pledge. For us, to satisfy that tendency to doubt, that God is coming back for us, He gave us His Spirit. God will not change His mind regarding you. He gave us His word and His Spirit to prove that. This hope is as an anchor to our souls. How does an anchor work? The anchor not only works close to land, but it works in the middle of the ocean. If the sailor is about to sleep, if he is tired, He throws the anchor into the ocean and it hooks itself to any land that is available. The winds and waves still blow, but it never moves the ship away from the circumference that the anchor has been placed in. The hope we have is that the Lord will never leave

us nor forsake us. This will help us not to move, regardless of what is going on in our lives. This anchor ties our soul to the promises of God. In some situations, the anchor drives deeper and becomes more firm with the winds, to the point where the ship is no longer tossed to and fro. 2 Corinthians 4:8-12.

A prisoner cannot set a prisoner free, so it is necessary for us to know that we are not prisoners, so we can be among the rescued when we are supposed to be the deliverers.

Romans 8:19 KJV

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.