**The Intercession of Our Spirit**

*Romans 8:26*

**Introduction**

1. The Christian life is one subject to suffering for Christ, on top of the general suffering experienced as a member of humanity.
2. The Christian is called to persevere through this adversity, and is given the hope of heaven, which we will inhabit with an incorruptible spiritual body, as a hope which helps us press on.
3. The Bible discusses this topic in several places, one of which is found in **Romans 8**.
4. This passage is difficult to say the least, but is a source of strength and comfort in this life of suffering we must endure for Christ.
5. Suffering and Aid
6. Suffering
   1. **1 Corinthians 15:42-45** – The nature of the body now VS the nature of the resurrection body.
      1. Corruption; dishonor; weakness; natural; ***“mortal” (v. 53*** – subject to death).
      2. These bodies were not meant to last, but are temporary. After death, they will be replaced in the resurrection **(vv. 36-38).**
      3. **With this comes suffering** – ***“Our outward man is perishing” (2 Corinthians 4:16)***.
   2. **2 Timothy 3:12** – Suffering for the cause of Christ.
   3. **1 Peter 1:6-9; 4:12-13** – This is necessary to test the genuineness of our faith – the end of genuine, proven faith is salvation. We must not think it strange 🡪
   4. ***“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you…Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:18, 20).***
   5. *This is suffering which must be endured, but cannot be endured alone – within ourselves. 🡪*
7. Our Aid in Suffering
   1. **Hebrews 7:17, 21b, 23-25** – Jesus serves as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek, forever available to intercede for us before God.
   2. **Hebrews 2:16-18** – He gives aid to us when we suffer and are tempted.
   3. **Having experienced the same sufferings and temptations which all men experience, and having overcome such, Jesus is the great mediator for us.**
   4. **1 John 2:1-2** – He is our Advocate!
8. Keeping these things in mind, look to **Romans 8:18-27**.
9. The Intercession of Our Spirit
10. The Present Sufferings and Hope of Glory **(vv. 18-25)**
    1. **(vv. 17-18)** – Heirs of God with Christ – of glory – **suffering comes first**.
    2. **Explanation of suffering and future glory:**
       1. **(vv. 19-21)** – Creation subjected to futility, corruption, but in hope.
          1. **Creation?** Some suggest it is all creation below the human level. (Animate and inanimate) (*Subjected to curse brought forth by sin – true, but is that the creation of this context?*)
          2. **NOTE: v. 19, 20, 21** – eagerly waits for sons of God? Subjected in hope? 🡪 Delivered from corruption?
          3. **These are not true of the physical creation** – **cf. 2 Peter 3:10** – These will be destroyed – no hope, but utter destruction.
          4. **SPIRITUAL CREATION – context**.
             1. **(v. 18)** – revealed **IN US**.
             2. *Chapter 8 has been considering the new creation in Christ Jesus* – **7:24-25a; 8:6, 9-10** – life and peace; spirit is life – our spirit.
          5. **SPIRITUAL CREATION – remote context.**
             1. ***“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works” (Ephesians 2:10).***
             2. ***“just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).***
             3. ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17).***
          6. *Christians are a NEW SPIRITUAL CREATION. However, our bodies are not new, but continue to grow old, and fade.*
          7. **So we “Eagerly wait” and “hope.”**
             1. **(v. 19)** – revealing of the sons of God? **Cf. 1 John 3:2** – **WE DO NOT KNOW HOW WE SHALL BE.**
             2. **(v. 21)** – ***liberty?*** – From suffering, sorrow, corruption, etc**. cf. Revelation 7:16-17.**
       2. (**vv. 22-25)** – *We groan in this physical vessel despite the renewal of our spirit, waiting and hoping for the redemption of the body – resurrection.*
          1. **(vv. 22-23)** – birth pangs? Firstfruits of the Spirit?
             1. **Firstfuits** – that which comes first, and promises the rest of the harvest.
             2. **Of the Spirit** – the HS work in us, namely, redemption. (Process)
             3. **Cf. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 –** They have something – renewal of inward man – and wait for another thing – eternal weight of glory 🡪
             4. **Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:1-4** – We groan, waiting and desiring our heavenly habitation.
             5. **Our spirits have been made new – NEW CREATION – but we lack a fitting body – RESURRECTION BODY. (Spiritual, immortal, incorruptible.)**
          2. **(vv. 24-25)** – However, we don’t have this yet – which is why it is called HOPE – this pushes us, and allows us to endure, and persevere through the suffering.
          3. NOT WORTHY TO BE COMPARED WITH THE GLORY WE HOPE FOR **(v. 18).**
    3. ***The present suffering is something we HAVE to go through. HOPE aids us in this suffering. Hope is not the only aid though 🡪***
11. The Intercession of Our Spirit **(vv. 26-27)**
    1. **Spirit?** – Most will say this is the HS.
       1. Makes intercession on our behalf before God.
       2. **There are a few things wrong with this 🡪**
    2. **Spirit** – *pneuma*; a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively, a spirit, i.e. (human) the rational soul, (by implication) vital principle, mental disposition, etc.
       1. Used in scripture to refer to a few things. NOT ALWAYS THE HS.
       2. **NOTE THE CONTEXT:**
          1. **(vv. 5-6)** – Spiritually minded – contrast between SPIRIT and FLESH. (**OUR SPIRIT not the HS**)
          2. (**v. 9)** – **Spirit of God** – HS – if we are concerned with our spirit, we will follow what the HS instructs.
          3. **(v. 15)** – ***“spirit of adoption”*** – contrasted to ***“spirit of bondage… to fear.”*** (**DISPOSITION** – as sons, not in slavish fear)
          4. **(v. 16)** – HS and our DISPOSITION as sons – **HS instructs us, and we have the DISPOSITION as sons to obey** – bears witness that we are children of God.
          5. **SPIRIT DOES NOT ALWAYS = HS.**
    3. **Himself** – does this word necessitate a reference to the HS?
       1. **Himself** – *autos* – a neuter gender pronoun – “self, himself, herself, itself, it, etc.” (**CONTEXT DETERMINES WHICH**)
       2. **(v. 16)** – Himself.
       3. **(v. 21)** – itself.
       4. **(v. 23)** – ourselves.
       5. **(v. 26)** – Himself – BUT WHY? (Assumption that it is the HS.) (KJV – ***“itself”)***
    4. **If the HS, what is He doing? – Making intercession. IS THAT HIS WORK? WHO INTERCEDES?**
       1. **FATHER** – Devises the plan; **SON** – carries out the plan; **SPIRIT** – reveals the plan.
       2. **INTERCESSION?** – **cf. 1 Timothy 2:5** – ONE MEDIATOR – JESUS.
       3. **If the HS is acting as the intercessor, He is taking on the role of the SON. THIS CANNOT BE SO.**
    5. **OUR SPIRIT** ***(“the spirit ITSELF”)*** – ***“groanings which cannot be uttered”*** – THEN, SOMEONE SEARCHES, AND KNOWS WHAT THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT IS…
       1. **(v. 22, 23)** – Who is groaning? – **creation – Christian**.
       2. ***“with groanings too deep for words” (NASB)*** – our suffering is to such an extent sometimes that we cannot put into words that which we need in aid of such sufferings. 🡪
       3. **The spirit groans** – **cf. John 11:32-33** – Jesus at the death of Lazarus; **cf. 2 Corinthians 5:2-3** – We groan in this tent waiting to be clothed.
       4. We don’t know what to pray for, and how to pray for it, but we groan in the spirit 🡪
    6. **(v. 27)** – He who searches the heart KNOWS the spirit, and intercedes for us.
       1. **Cf. Acts 1:24** – finding a replacement for Judas Iscariot – the Lord knows the hearts.
       2. **Cf. Revelation 2:23 (letter to Thyatira)** – Jesus searches the minds and hearts.
       3. He searches the heart, knows the groanings of the spirit, and can intercede for us because **HE KNOWS WHAT WE ARE GOING THROUGH** – **cf. Hebrews 4:15.**
    7. **During our suffering, sometimes all we can do is groan in our spirit. Jesus knows what we are going through, hears our groanings, and intercedes for us!**
    8. This, along with the hope we have, allows us to endure and persevere through the suffering!

**Conclusion**

1. It is God’s will that we suffer in His name before we get to heaven – ***“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22*** – Paul and the apostles.).
2. However, God has not left us to ourselves in that suffering. He gave us hope, and Christ intercedes for us.
3. These things are wonderful, and are part of God’s plan for our redemption.
4. All these things of God work toward our good (**cf. Romans 8:28-30** – toward our glorification).