

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE - Romans 8:16-25

The book of Romans is often seen as the book in the Bible that best describes our salvation as Christians. Now when we talk about salvation, we often think of salvation as just being saved, meaning that we are born again, that we are forgiven of our sins, and though this is true, this is only the beginning part of our salvation. John 3:5. There is also the second aspect of our salvation, which is often referred to as sanctification, that part of our lives where we are saying no to temptation and sin, are living for the Lord, and are carrying out His purposes on earth.

The third and final aspect of our salvation is called glorification, that is, receiving a brand-new body, which happens when Christ comes back. Now Christians who've died and gone to heaven are indeed now free from the power and presence of sin, but they are not yet glorified, which again, happens at Christ's coming at the end of this age. - Rom. 1:18 - Rom. 5 talks about the 1st part of our salvation, being justified, and Rom. 6-8:15 talks about the 2nd part of our salvation, being sanctified, and Rom 8:16-30 focuses on the 3rd part of our salvation, being glorified, and the hope that we have. Now Rom. 8:31-39 relates to the 2nd part, being sanctified, but it's very relevant to the end-times, and how we are to live for the Lord before His coming and being glorified.

Rom. 8:16-17. As Christians we are children of God, and because we are children then we are heirs of God, and fellow heirs of Christ. And this is really good news. Now an earthly heir receives from his parents or relatives an earthly inheritance, and it may be money, property, or some personal or valuable possessions. But we are talking about being an heir of God, the Creator, the Lord God Almighty, and now your heavenly Father. This means God Himself is your portion (Ps. 119:57), is your Father and you are His child, that He wants to have intimate fellowship with you, that He loves you personally, intensely, and eternally, and wants to spiritually and physically bless your life more than you could ever imagine. How wonderful to be a child of God and an heir of God!

But you are not just an heir of God, but a fellow heir with Christ. And Heb. 1:2 says Christ is an *"heir of all things"* (Heb. 1:2), and all things means everything in this world. In Ps. 2:8, we read that the Father said to Jesus, *"I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession."* As a child of God then, you are a fellow heir with Christ, which means you will fully share in Christ's inheritance. And to think that Christ will fully share His inheritance with every believer is beyond belief, but it's true and is eternally encouraging!

1 John 3:2 says Christians will be like Jesus Christ. Rev. 5:10 says we will reign with Christ. John 17:22 says, *"The glory which Thou has given Me I have given to them"* which means we will share in the glory that Christ received. And like Christ, we will inherit the earth, for it says in Matt. 5:3, *"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."* Rev. 21:1, 8 says, *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth... And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God... Behold the tabernacle of God is among men... He who overcomes will inherit these things."* This says you will inherit these things mentioned here. This then is talking about your inheritance, and this is truly and incredibly amazing, and what we should all be looking forward to.

Now here are some more vss. about your inheritance. Eph. 1:10 says, *"We have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will."* The fact that it says we have obtained it already means that, as children of God, we do have it, it's guaranteed - it's just that we haven't literally received it yet. Matt. 25:34 says, *"Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"* Here we read that you will inherit a kingdom, a kingdom which is Christ's kingdom, one that He will share with you. And it's an earthly kingdom, and you will be reigning over this kingdom with Christ.

Eph. 1:14 - *"... the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory"* As a Christian, you have received the Holy Spirit, and He lives inside you, and He's the down payment of your inheritance - He guarantees you that you will receive this most wonderful inheritance.

1 Peter 1:3-4. Once you are born again, you have a living hope, this expectation, this confidence that you will *"obtain an inheritance."*

- This inheritance is *"imperishable"*, for it is eternal in nature and can never be destroyed.
- It is *"undefiled"* which means it is perfect and can never be corrupted or marred by sin.
- It *"will not fade away"*, meaning that it will never lose its magnificence, beauty, or glory.
- In vs. 5, Peter says you *"are protected by the power of God for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time,"* which is God making sure that you will receive this inheritance.

Heb. 1:14 says, *"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?"* And these ministering spirits are angels, meaning that even the angels serve you, further ensuring you that you will receive this inheritance. Titus 3:5-7 says, *"He saved us... according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit... so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy statement"*

Here are some summary statements about being an heir of God:

1. An amazing result of being a child of God is that you are an heir of God, which means you have a sure hope, and are guaranteed a fantastic future. The best is yet to come!
2. Being an heir of God means you will be unbelievably rich. You won't be a random forgiven sinner sitting in some far corner of heaven, but you will be a child of God and an heir of God, and literally reigning and living with Jesus, and sharing in His spiritual and physical blessings.
3. Pray and ask God to reveal to you the greatness and the glory of your inheritance. *"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."* Eph. 1:18
4. Cry out to God, *"Abba Father"*, a phrase referring to the intimacy you have with your heavenly Father, and thank Him for how much He has loved you, loves you now, and will love you forever. Rom. 8:15, Ps. 86:12-13
5. That you are an heir of God relates directly to prophecy and His promises about the future and in particular, His personal and special plans for you. Gal. 3:29 - *"If you belong to Christ, then you're Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise."* Gen. 12:1-3

Rom. 8:18 – As Christians, we suffer during our lives here on earth. Life is difficult, we struggle, we are persecuted, we are to daily take up our cross and follow the Lord. John 15:18-21. And indeed, Jesus told us that we will suffer, and if He suffered for us, shouldn't we suffer for Him? And what vs. 18 says will help us to suffer for Jesus, for we realize the amazing future God has for us, this great inheritance we will receive, all this glory that will be revealed to us. That is, it's worth it to suffer for the Lord, for you can't compare the little suffering we go through during our short time on earth with the wonderful, marvelous, and eternal blessings we will receive in the future, in heaven and on earth. 2 Cor. 4:16-18

Rom. 8:19-25. This talks more about your hope, about this glory that will be revealed to you. And this glory speaks of the fact that you will be glorified, and that this creation will be freed from it's slavery to corruption.

- Vs. 20 – The creation was subjected to futility. Back in Gen. 3 we know that Adam and Eve sinned, which resulted in the whole creation being cursed - we have storms and spiders and weeds and fall and winter and leaves dying and falling off trees, and animals fighting one another. What we are saying is that creation doesn't work the way it is supposed to.

- Vs. 22 – *"The whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth."* And so the creation is now groaning but this is temporary for she will be freed from this suffering.

Vs. 24 tells us that we are groaning, but we have the Spirit, who, as it says in Eph 1:14 is a *"pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession,"* and this redemption is referring to believers being physically redeemed. Eph. 4:30. And we're to be longing, we're to be waiting eagerly for this redemption. Vss. 23, 25. Now let me explain what all this means, and how this relates to the future.

Jesus Christ will be coming back, and He'll appear in the clouds above the earth, and the Christians on earth will be raptured. And it is when we are raptured that we will be redeemed - and this word redeemed means that we will be delivered from our fleshly, sin-prone bodies, and from this evil world.

- Rom. 8:17, 18, 21 - These vss. speak about glory, and one aspect of this glory is that we will be glorified, we will be given a brand-new glorified body. And when the rapture takes place, it is at that time that we are redeemed, are delivered from our earthly body, and are immediately given a perfect, powerful, immortal, and glorified body. 1 Pet. 1:13

But when is the earth freed from its corruption to slavery? Vs. 19 says it will happen when the sons of God, and that's us believers, will be revealed. And when is that? I am not completely sure. Col. 3:3-4. We see that Christ will return, He will appear. Now is this talking about when Christ comes back in the clouds, or when Christ comes and lands on earth? I believe it refers to the latter, and it is at that time when Christ comes back and lands on earth, or shortly after that time, that we will be revealed. And then all people, all angels, the whole world will see us for who we really are, that we are God's children, and that we are perfect, powerful, beautiful, and glorious.

Then all of creation will be freed from its slavery to corruption, and will be changed, will be renovated, will be restored. Acts 3:19-21. J Mac. says it this way - *"the period of restoration of all things is another name for the future earthly reign of Christ, the millennial kingdom... the earth will be dramatically altered in its physical form."* Matt. 19:27-28. Speaking of this word regeneration, MacArthur says, *"Although it will not yet be a totally new earth, it will nevertheless be wonderfully superior to the present fallen and unredeemed earth."* Isaiah 35:1-2, 65:17-25; Psalm 65:8-13, 98:7-8; Amos 9:11-15

Yes, it is true we are now suffering for the Lord, and are serving the Lord.

And it's worth it to suffer for God, and it is for God's glory, and for the blessing, the rewards God will give us. *"To live is Christ, and to die is gain."* Matt. 5:10-12

- Rom. 8:23-25. Might we have hope, might we be waiting eagerly for Christ to return, to redeem us, to glorify us, and then we will glorify God like never before. Psalm 72:18-19