

New Creation (Groans and Labors)

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For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. (Rom 8:20-22 NASB)

The Old Creation was about to be “Set Free”

*. . . since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed **until a time of reformation.** (Heb 9:10 NASB throughout)*

*But when Christ appeared as a high priest of **the good things to come [or to be born/created],** He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, **not of this creation** . . . (Heb 9:11)*

*In the exercise of His will He **brought us forth** by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of **first fruits among His creatures.** (James 1:18)*

*But according to His promise we are looking for **new heavens and a new earth,** in which **righteousness dwells.** (2 Peter 3:13) [See also: Isa 1:26; 51:16; 54:1-14; 65:17; 66:22; Dan 12:3; Mal 3:3-4; Matt 5:18-19]*

*Then I saw a **new heaven and a new earth;** for the **first heaven and the first earth passed away,** and there is no longer any sea. (Rev 21:1) [See also: Isa 51:16; 65:17; 66:22; Rev 20:11; 1 Cor 7:31; 1 John 2:17; 2 Peter 3:10-13]*

*And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, **I am making all things new.**” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” (Rev 21:5)*

The books of Hebrews and Revelation provide a lot of support for Old and New Creation typology, as do the Old Testament prophets like Isaiah. The old creation was redeemed from its

Fall, and renewed-recreated spiritually, and had a new beginning or fresh start. It is a new heavens and earth, not just a new earth or a new heaven. There is both a **heavenly aspect** of the New Creation, as well as an **earthly aspect** of it (i.e., the **visible and invisible** church or Kingdom).

What I want to do here is to delve deeper into the understanding of this passage from the perspective of the “earthly seen realm.”

When trying to understand this Romans 8 passage, I believe a lot of the confusion for many people, stems from not understanding the “full scope” of what “*the creation*” is that Paul is speaking about, and thus what is meant by “*the whole creation groans and labors.*” It needs to be remembered that in Genesis 1:1 that God created BOTH the heavens (unseen realm) and the earth (seen realm). When Adam and Eve sinned, it affected “ALL OF CREATION”—both the **spiritual heavenly unseen realm** AND the **earthly seen realm**. The original purpose and function of both were altered.

Included in Christ’s redemptive work would be to “**restore and reunite**” the heavenly unseen realm with the earthly seen realm into His ONE eternal Kingdom (Eph 1:10).

Part of the “full scope” I wanted to add to this topical study was to include some further understanding into the “earthly literal” aspect of both what the original earth creation was supposed to do in its service to God, and how, once it was “*delivered from the bondage*” (in Christ), it was again able to accomplish what it was made to do—bring glory to God.

An aspect of “the whole creation” to remember is the condition of “the whole creation” **before** Adam fell. Heaven (unseen realm) and Earth (seen realm) were **united**. God, a resident of the heavenly unseen realm, could walk with Adam and Eve in the earthly realm of the Kingdom in the garden in “full fellowship” – unseen and seen realm of the Kingdom united and in full harmony. There wasn’t any sin—there wasn’t any separation from the Tree of Life. Creation was all around Adam and Eve, and everything reflected God to them. Everything was just about innocence, peace, purity, and knowing God in intimacy. Adam named all the animals in the Garden, so every time He saw an animal, it reminded him of God. Every time he heard a bird sing, it reminded him about God. Every time he would smell the perfume of a flower, it would remind him about the majesty and glory of God. The stars and moon at night would speak of the glory of God, and the Sun in the day would touch the soul as the warmth touched the skin. Nothing was hindering the full language of creation from “speaking the language” it was meant

to, as everything pointed to something glorious and incredible about the Creator who created it. The creation story in Genesis chapter 1 is full of imagery of how creation speaks of the creator and His majesty and glory.

So, in the beginning before sin entered the world, everything of creation was working in harmony to draw man's awe and give glory to God. Adam and Eve couldn't go through their day without walking by a babbling brook, or seeing a squirrel collecting nuts, and not be reminded of how God is taking care of the flowers, and the bees, and everything, and His creation was doing what it was created to do **which was to draw man in awe to His Creator, to worship Him in glory, to give Him the glory that He deserves.** That is why we were created—to be in fellowship and relationship with God, and to give Him glory.

But once sin came, humanity became “self-centered,” and everything was “all about us now.” Adam and Eve immediately started blaming each other or blaming the serpent. Later, Cain kills Abel. And there is greed, and there is lust, and everything is shifted and altered in the world, and the whole purpose of creation— “to draw man to constantly reflect” on God, and His goodness, and give Him glory—was ruptured and corrupted.

Recall in Romans chapter 1 how Paul writes in verse 18 that “*the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.*” Truth, which is supposed to draw them to God. Truth is supposed to be expressed in everything around them in creation. Creation is supposed to reflect God to them and draw them to Him. But they're suppressing it. It isn't that creation is not reflecting the truth and glory of God, but the ungodly are suppressing it “*in unrighteousness,*” “*because what may be known of God is manifest in them,*” (v. 19). They have a conscience, and they have an intellect, and they have the call from God to “*come let us reason together*” to know that He is the Creator of all that they see around them (Isa 1:18), and that they did not evolve, and that they are “*without excuse.*” Since creation, God's eternal attributes are said to be clearly known by man, including the eternal power and the divine nature, but they “*suppress the truth.*”

A child is not born in this complete hardened state, but rather, as the passage states, they “become” futile in their thoughts. That is where the battle is—in the mind. They become hardened through a process in their lives by the things they see, and hear, and the filth that they allow into their minds. They **become** futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts are darkened. It is a process, because the thoughts become bad—therefore the hearts become

hardened; the conscience becomes dull—therefore it leads them into further and further darkness.

So, reflecting on the “earthly” aspect of the whole creation, Paul is explaining that since the Fall, creation was subjected to futility, and it is metaphorically “groaning” because man has grown hard in sin and futile in their thoughts and creation has not been able to do what it was created to do—draw man to reflect upon God’s goodness and to draw us to have awe and give Him glory.

So, metaphorically, creation’s purpose was subjected to futility and had lost the ability to do what it was created to do. And when we come to Romans 8, Paul says that creation is groaning, it is in sorrow, it is in agony, and the time has come right to the verge of giving birth—**a new creation**. No matter how much (or how little) someone may understand about all of this, Paul clearly states that this was on the verge of consummation right there in the first century. Very helpful for us to remember is that there is a “seen and unseen realm” to all of this (earthly/seen and heavenly/unseen), and much was to take place in the spiritual unseen realm.

For the earthly realm on which we are focusing, as a “born-again” believer, a Christian is a “new creation” (Gal 6:15; 2 Cor 5:17). A born-again Christian has “new life.” They have God dwelling in them. They have the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16). The unbeliever’s mind has become darkened and futile in their thoughts, but the believer’s mind has been transformed and renewed (Rom 12:2).

The believer’s mind has been transformed—they have a new mind. They have entirely new thought patterns. Romans chapter 8 gives us a simple and clear description of this. In Romans 8:5 it says, “*for those who live according to the flesh* (that is, unregenerate people; non-Christian people) *set their MINDS on the things of the flesh* (To put it simply: unsaved people have an unsaved mindset. Fleshly people think about fleshly things), *but those who live according to the Spirit* (those born-again), *the things of the Spirit.*”

A believer has a NEW MIND: Romans 8:6 “*For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is LIFE and PEACE.*” They have a whole new mind—this is incredible! The Greek word here “*Froneema*” means “*mindset.*” An entirely NEW way of THINKING is what it means. Not a new brain, but a new way of thinking. As Christians they now have the Holy Spirit and think on the spiritual level and not the fleshly level.

Look at 1 Corinthians 1:30 “*But of him who are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God . . .*” Look at this—all of a sudden it says Christians have the wisdom of God! And

the Psalmist declares in Psalm 92:5, “. . . thy thoughts are very deep.” Now, suddenly, a Christian (born-again “**new creation**”) can plunge into the deep thoughts of eternal God. They think in ways they never thought before. They are able to think receiving God’s thoughts.

1 Cor 2:11-12, “*11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.*”

So, a Christian has the wisdom of Christ, and they have the knowledge of God granted to them by the Holy Spirit. Look at vv. 15-16, “*15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*” We have the MIND of Christ! A Christian is NOT like the natural man in v. 14, to whom it is all foolishness. A Christian now has the mind of Christ—they now understand the wisdom of God—the Spirit of God brings them wisdom about God that they would otherwise never ever have. A Christian is someone who is “born-again”—a **NEW CREATION**.

Since the beginning, after God had finished creation on the sixth day, nothing new has been created—but then, in the first century, you have “born-again” man called a **new creation**. A “new creation” which had the wisdom and mind of Christ—indwelt by God Himself, now with the ability to understand creation from the way it was created, and for what purpose it was created—to create awe in man and bring glory to God.

The visible realm of the Kingdom on earth (in the Church), was about to be reunited with the heavenly realm by Christ at His imminent *Parousia* in AD 66-70. The New Heavens and Earth would be consummated and it would grow forevermore saving souls from every nation, tribe and tongue (Isa 9:7; Eph 3:21). The “leaves of the Tree of Life” (the gospel) would bring healing to people from all nations (Rev 22:2; Ezek 47:12). The power of the gospel would change hardened sinners into “new creations,” as children in meekness.

The creation around us comes alive in power and majesty to the born-again believer. Prior to being saved one could go through life and take no knowledge or thought of a full moon, a flower blooming, the cycle of the seasons, or the song of a bird in the morning, whereas, upon new “born-again” life, all of creation becomes as “new” in its life and purpose—no longer “subjected

to futility,” but now in “new meaning and life” able to bring us in awe to God where we give Him glory for His majestic creation we enjoy all around us.

The “born-again” believer’s mind is now thinking with the wisdom from God because we are a NEW CREATION, with a new heart, new spirit, and the “mind of Christ.” Recall all of those verses above which tell us what happens to someone when they’re regenerated and have the Spirit of God living within them. Creation is now able to accomplish what it had been groaning for since the Fall—to draw a regenerated heart in awe to God to bring Him glory.

God had created everything around us to bring us in awe to Him. To draw us to Him in awe of seeing how all these creatures work together in an amazing eco-system designed by the Great Designer. Now a born-again believer can be in awe at a sunrise, the changing seasons, the birth-death cycle of so many things, such as a seed sprouting on the forest floor that had laid dormant for years waiting for the death of other growth around it allowing for space to clear for its new life to begin, and countless things each day, month and year that we will now see “anew” in creation around us that we wonder how we did not see before.

Paul was saying they were living on the cusp of a new birth. The “new creation” would not be a “literal” recreating of better bugs and snakes, but was metaphorical, typological, and spiritual, and would have **both** an earthly and heavenly aspect. Man himself was literally, spiritually a “NEW CREATION” upon being born again. Physical creation would have its purpose **restored, regenerated, refreshed, rebuilt, transformed,** and **renewed** in its ability to bring the “born-again” believer in awe to give glory to its Creator. And at Christ’s imminent *Parousia* all of those remaining living believers would be raptured into their own individual, new, perfect, immortal, spiritual bodies and enter the New Heavens to live with God forevermore in the heavenly unseen realm of the reunited Kingdom. All subsequent born-again believers after the *Parousia* populate the seen realm of the “forever increasing” (Isa. 9:7) consummated reunited “One Kingdom.” Forevermore, when each believer takes their last breath in this physical realm of the Kingdom they immediately step into the unseen realm of the reunited Kingdom and receive their individual, perfect, immortal, spiritual body, as Christ has, which is able to dwell in the heavenly spiritual Kingdom where the angels and all the other individual believers currently are.

At the *Parousia* in AD 66-70 the New Heavens and Earth eternal Kingdom was fully consummated. From then on, every believer who physically dies leaves this earthly realm (in the Church) of the Kingdom, and steps right into the unseen heavenly realm of the Kingdom. There

is no longer the waiting place of *Hades/Sheol*—the final resurrection took place at the *Parousia*. The born-again believer enters into the heavenly realm where there are no more tears, no more sorrow, no more dying.

For a born-again believer, they have the wisdom of God and mind of Christ and the Spirit of God indwelling them to enable their “new man” to understand the earthly physical aspects of the NEW CREATION and NEW HEAVENS AND EARTH, as well as the Heavenly aspects of Christ returning with His Kingdom in the heavenly realm at the *Parousia*, which had been cleaned out and access barred to Satan, the demonic beings, and anything unclean.

Will we understand it all while living life in the earthly realm of the Kingdom? No. But once we leave this world and go to heaven we will have all of eternity to be in awe as we grow in understanding of the great depths and riches of the majesty and holiness of YHWH and His glorious redemptive history. ✝