

PRAYER, DIVINE INTERCESSION

Request: “Since God is omniscient and knows all our prayers and their outcomes, why do we need the intercessory prayers of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit?”

“Why do we need the intercessory PRAYERS of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit?”

The better question would be, “Why do we need the intercessory MINISTRY of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit?”

Note carefully the intercessory ministry of Jesus Christ in Heb.5-7 (Heb.7:24-25; Rom.8:34; 1 John 2:1-2).

Now note carefully the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit in Rom.8:26-27. Who is praying? What is the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit? Who and why knows the mind of the Holy Spirit?

This lesson will study four aspects of the INTERCESSORY MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1. Paul mentions three categories of groaning in our lesson text.

The Greek word for groaning is *sustenazo* (Rom.8:22, 23) or *stenagmos* (Rom.8:26). It refers to an inward unexpressed feeling of sorrow or grief.

We will examine our lesson text by the following three homiletical points of groaning.

- Rom.8:18-22 Creation groaning **exasperation** regarding suffering (wait eagerly/ 19)
- Rom.8:23-25 Christian groaning **expectation** regarding suffering (wait eagerly/ 23, 25)
- Rom.8:26-27 Comforter groaning **expression** regarding suffering (and in the same way/ 26)

“For I consider that the sufferings (*ta pathema*/ undeserved) of this present time (*tou nun kairos*) are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed (*apokalupto*) to us.” (Rom.8:18)

2. In all three categories, Paul connected the groaning of suffering from a weakness (*ta astheneia*/ 26) produced by curses of Adam’s original sin (AOS).

Creation (Rom.8:18-22) groaning or unexpressed feeling of sorrow associated with AOS (Gen.3:17-19).

Christian (Rom.8:23-25) groaning or unexpressed feeling of sorrow associated with AOS
(Gen.2:17; 1 Cor.15:20-23, 42-49; 2 Cor.5:2-8).

Comforter (Rom.8:26-27) – groaning or unexpressed feeling of sorrow associated with A/C or undeserved suffering for Christ (Phil.1:29-30; 1 Pet.5:8-10; Luke 22:31-32).

3. The confident expectation (*hope/ elpis*/ Rom.8:20, 24-26a) of liberation is found in all three categories of suffering.

Creation (Rom.8:21) set free

Christian (Rom.8:23) adoption as sons the redemption of our body

Comforter (Rom.8:26) helps (*sunantilambano* / p.m.ind) [to help carry a burden together] (1 Pet.5:6-7) our weakness

4. The divine intercessory ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Cor.6:19-20) is necessary during prolonged period of undeserved suffering (Rom.8:18, 20).

The Spirit also helps (sunantilambano/ p.m.ind) our weakness (astheneia/ without strength to carry on normal tasks; Ps.61:1-3)-

For (gar/ reason) we do not know (oida/ perf.a.ind) how to pray (proseuchomai/ p.m.subj) as we should

But (alla/ contrast) the Spirit, Himself intercedes for us (huperentugchano/ p.a.ind) with groanings too deep for words (alaletos/ unutterable)-

And He (God the Father) who searches (ereunao/ p.a.ptc) the hearts knows (oida/ perf.a.ind) what the mind (to phronema) of the Spirit is -

Because (hoti) He (God the Holy Spirit) intercedes (entugchano/ p.a.ind) for (huper +abl. / on behalf of) the saints according to (kata+ norm and standard) the will of (not in text) God (Rom.8:20; 1 John 5:14-15).

Whenever a prolonged time of suffering, distress, or calamity causes a believer to become over-whelmed by it, he has the promise of the intercessory ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The English word **comforter** consists of two Latin words: com = with and forte = strength. The NIV bible translates the Greek word parakletos as Comforter for the Holy Spirit in John 14-16 – “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (NAS) or Counselor (NIV) or Comforter (KJ) that He may be with you forever.” 14:16 Amplified Bible says (Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners, and Stand-by).

While Creation groans to be free from AOS and Christians groan to be free from their mortal bodies and the Holy Spirit groans to see the will of God fulfilled in our lives.

The indwelling Holy Spirit groans in the **language of omniscience** thinking behind the plan of God for our lives – “And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.” (Rom.8:26)