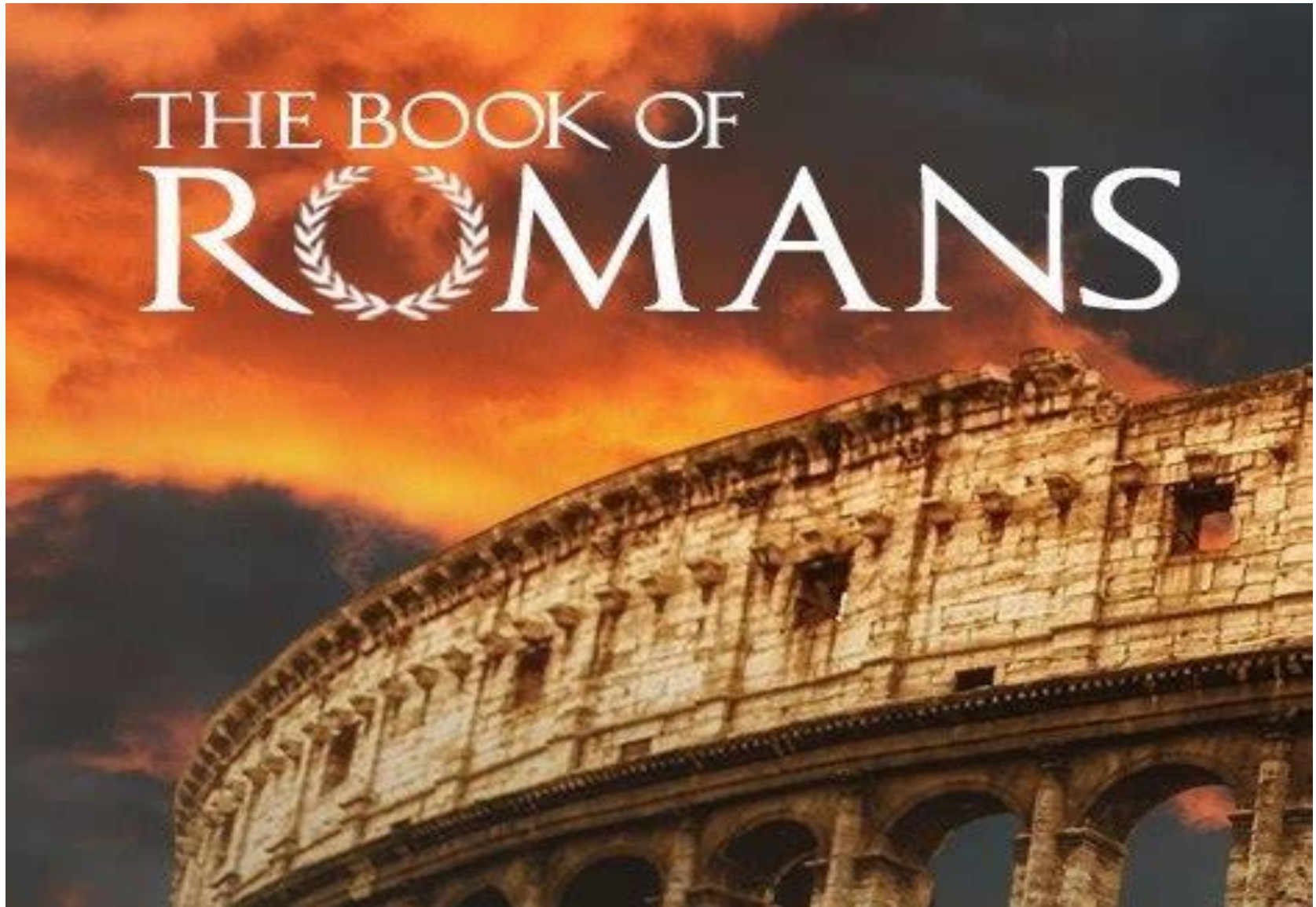


Rom 8:26-27 The Ministry of the Holy Spirit in Prayer



In Romans 8 we have had the following:*



- Suffering:

Rom 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

- Groaning:

Rom 8:23b having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

- Hope:

Rom 8:25 But if [since] we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

- Support:

Rom 8:26a In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should.

* adapted from McCalléy

Today's verses

²⁶ 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;

²⁷ and He [God] who searches the hearts knows what the mind of **the Spirit** is, because He [**the Spirit**] intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

²⁶ 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.

What does “In the same way” refer to ?

- Refers back to what has been said before concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit in Chp. 8
- The next slide gives us some of the ministry of the Holy Spirit presented in Chp. 8

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has **set you free** from the law of sin and of death.

⁶ For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is **life and peace**.

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also **give life** to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

¹⁴ For all who are **being led** by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

¹⁶ The Spirit Himself **testifies** with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.

²⁶ 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.

present tense
continuous action

the Spirit also helps our weakness

joins in to help - *synantilambanomai* - to take hold with at the side for assistance (i.e. "with" and "to help")

- hence "to take a share in, help in bearing, to help in general"

Vine

^{38b} a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister called Mary, ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her **to help me.**" Luke 10:38-40

the Spirit also helps (joins in to help) our weakness

What is “our weakness” in this passage?

weakness (noun) - *astheneia* - lit. “want of strength”
(a, “negative”, *sthenos*, “strength”),

- indicating [an] inability to produce results Vine

Interlinear: the Spirit joins in to help the weakness of us

- note this is singular, not plural !
- it is also a particular weakness [i.e. the]
- Rom 6 - 7 and many other verses have told us about a singular weakness in all believers – the sin nature
- Gal 5:17 For the flesh [sin nature] sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another.
- The sin nature is our source of the weakness

the Spirit also helps (joins in to help) our weakness

more on “the weakness” from Merryman

- it [*astheneia*] is a singular weakness of us
- and it is characteristic of all believers
- we have a general condition of weakness [i.e. our sin nature]
- specifically, the weakness is an ignorance of how to make our prayers bring glory to God and to meet our immediate need (ex: Paul’s thorn in the flesh)
- because of our sin nature our prayers can be self-focused rather than God-focused

McCalley

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

⁷ Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, **there was given me a thorn in the flesh**, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!

⁸ Concerning this **I implored the Lord** three times that **it might leave me**.

^{9a} And He has said to me, "**My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.**"

^{9b} Most gladly, therefore, I will rather **boast about my weaknesses**, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

¹⁰ Therefore **I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.**

²⁶ 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.

know - *oida* - is a perfect tense with a present meaning,
“to have seen or perceived” - hence, **the negative of**
“to know, to have knowledge of” Vine

- we are in a permanent state of ignorance
- the idea is we don't “know as we should” *or* we don't “know as is necessary” Vine

Interlinear:

we do not know “the what” we should pray for as is necessary

- we do not know “the what” to make our prayers specific*
- we do not know what to pray for as we should NASB 2020
- Paul is not talking about the manner in prayer (i.e. place, time, position, etc.)*

* Merryman

²⁶ 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.

More on “our ignorance” in prayer:

- The words “as we ought [should]” are in the Greek text *katho dei*, namely, “just what is necessary in the nature of the case to pray for.”
Wuest
- The idea is that we do not know “the what” as we should so that God’s purpose will be realized in our lives.*
- We will see the following in the last part of the verse:*
 - God the Holy Spirit lifts this burden of ignorance with us [joins in to help]
 - The Holy Spirit is so identified with us that He helps us
 - The Holy Spirit knows what to pray for in any situation

* Merryman

²⁶ 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.

but [alla] the Spirit Himself intercedes for us

with groanings too deep for words

intercedes - *hyperentynchanō* - "to make a petition" or

"intercede on behalf of another"

Vine

idea is : "intercedes on behalf of" *or* "pleads on behalf of"

Rom 8:34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Heb 7:25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

- So, both the Holy Spirit and Christ Jesus are making intercession for us

the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us*

with groanings too deep for words

groaning - *stenagmos* – a noun from the verb *stenázō* to groan “of an inward, unexpressed feeling of sorrow”

- We have seen this word used of creation and the believer
- Rom. 8:22 For we know that the **whole creation groans** and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.
- Rom 8:23 - - - even **we ourselves groan** within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.
- Now Paul will tell us how the Spirit’s groaning differs from creation and our groaning!

with groanings too deep for words

Wuest: but the Spirit Himself comes to our rescue by interceding with **unutterable groanings**

- unexpressed *or* unutterable groanings
- unutterable is the negative of to speak or to utter
- **wordless groanings** is the literal translation in NASB 2020
- God's grace is shown in that He intercedes for us without our asking (as is Christ's intercession for us)
- this intercession is similar to our groaning within ourselves but no word or sound heard
- next we have more information about the Holy Spirit's intercession for us in verse 27

27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

He who searches the hearts

oida – a permanent knowledge [perfect tense]

knows what is the mind of the Spirit

Who is “the He” who is searching the hearts?

- God the Father is characterized in His omniscience as entirely acquainted with all desires of your mind and heart. Merryman
- Ps139:1 O LORD, You have searched me and known me
- 1 Chron 28:9b for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts.
- We are told that He also knows “the mind” of the Spirit [idea: the Godhead “thinks the same thing” - *phroneō*]
- Since God is “One” this should be no surprise!

²⁷ and He who searches the hearts **knows** what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

- This statement modifies the verb **knows** and describes the Holy Spirit's ministry on behalf of the saints
- The word "**because**" is *hoti* and can be translated "**that**"
Merryman
- The usage of "**that**" emphasizes what follows which will be a description of the Holy Spirit's ministry

that He [the Spirit] *makes intercession for the saints according to God*
Merryman

intercession - *entynchanō* - to make petition, especially to make intercession or plead with a person
Vine

that He [the Spirit] *makes* intercession for the saints according to God

- He [the Spirit] continually makes intercession since it is a present tense verb
- Notice that this intercession is according to God, not the believer
- Also it is “for” or “on behalf of” the saints
- So the Holy Spirit’s groanings are “on our behalf” and “in accordance with” the will of God
- The Holy Spirit’s intercession [groanings] must be consistent with God’s mind and plan for each believer*
- So God takes this intercession [groanings] as adequate and responsible prayer which He can grant*

* Merryman

Summary

- The Holy Spirit's ministry is that of "joining in to help" our weakness (singular)
- The singular weakness of the believer is our sin nature
- We have been taught how to pray in this age of grace [John 16:23 and Jude 1:20]
 - prayers are offered to the Father
 - in the name of the Son
 - in the power of the Holy Spirit
- But we do not know "the what" we should pray for as is necessary in our case
- The Holy Spirit comes to our rescue (since we are ignorant) by interceding with unutterable groanings

Summary (cont.)

- God the Father is constantly searching our hearts and knows the mind of the Spirit
- The Holy Spirit continually makes intercession for us in accordance with the will of God
- God wants to answer our prayers, since He has given us the Holy Spirit
- The Holy Spirit comes alongside to make our prayers answerable by God
- God wants us to trust Him for the answers in His time
- God has provided all that is needed in our prayer life
- Our part is to trust His provision in our prayer life

Romans 8:26-27 (Wuest NT)

26 And in like manner also the Spirit lends us a helping hand with reference to our weakness, for the particular thing that we should pray for according to what is necessary in the nature of the case, we do not know with an absolute knowledge; but the Spirit himself comes to our rescue by interceding with unutterable groanings.

27 Moreover, He who is constantly searching our hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit because, according to God, He continually makes intercession on behalf of the saints.