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## **THE LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD.**

**"The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."**

**Rom. 8:21.**

At present none have liberty; the entire human race is under a fearful yoke of bondage. A bitter, relentless and merciless enemy holds the dominion, and leads his unwilling captives along the pathway of suffering down to the prison of death. By reason of this "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain." [R616 : page 6]

But the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for deliverance. Will it ever come? Six thousand years of tyranny and suffering has not obliterated earnest expectation and longing hope. All do not hope for deliverance because of the promise of God. With many the hope is begotten of desire. From the very earliest ages of history men have hoped for a "good time coming," a "Golden Age," in which a balm for life's various ills should be discovered. Groaning in pain, they waited and hoped, though they knew not, and know not yet, how their earnest expectation shall be more than realized. In some hope has almost died out in despair, or has become vague and uncertain; but believers in the Word of God, clinging to his promise, anxiously inquire, How long, O Lord, how long must we wait for its fulfillment? To this inquiry the inspired Apostle replies, that mankind must wait until the manifestation of the Sons of God; and the saints must wait until the entire "body" of Christ, of which they are members, is complete and adopted to the higher plane.

Again we inquire of Paul, Who are these sons of God, and how will they be manifested? His answer is that all those who are now led by the Spirit of God, and who have consequently received the

spirit of adoption, are the sons of God, for whose manifestation the groaning creation waiteth (vs. 14,15). These adopted sons – adopted into the divine family, made partakers of the divine nature, and joint-heirs with Jesus – shall be manifested together with him. When he shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory. Col. 3:4.

For this glorious appearing of the divine sons and heirs of God the groaning creation must wait. But, thank God! we have the glorious message to bear that the manifestation and the blessing are just at hand. At present the world does not recognize the sons of God, for now they, in following the footsteps of their Lord, are as he was, despised and rejected of men. But shortly this will be reversed, and mankind will recognise their exaltation and glory. Already their Lord and head has come to gather and glorify his chosen ones.

The deliverance of the groaning creation, we are told, is to be into the same glorious liberty that these sons of God will then be enjoying. It will be a complete deliverance from the bondage of corruption. When all are fully delivered "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. Rev. 21:4.

It is the mistaken idea of some that deliverance into the liberty of the divine sons of God means a transforming into the same nature and condition. But deliverance, or liberty, has reference simply to a common bondage, in which both classes had been held, and from which both classes will be released, one class to the perfection of life as human beings, "a little lower than the angels," (Psa. 8:5,6), the other class to perfection of life in the divine nature – "so much better than the angels" (Heb. 1:4; 2 Pet. 1:4) – that is, the bondage of corruption, or death. As Jesus was delivered from the bondage of death, and as the church will be delivered from the bondage of death, so likewise will the whole creation be delivered from death. "Now

Christ has been raised from the dead, a first-fruit of those having fallen asleep." And just as sure as the first-fruit came, so surely will all the after-fruits appear. All will enjoy the same liberty from death, and from all its accompanying distress and sorrow. All tears shall be wiped away.

But there is still something more implied in this expression, "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." It carries with it the idea that the liberty which God will grant will not be license to follow the bent of a depraved nature, but that it will be a blessed liberty from that depravity, and full freedom to follow the inclinations of a nature free from sin and in harmony with God, where the good of self and others will receive due and equal consideration. Surely that will be glorious liberty. Men sometimes call that liberty which is only Satan's license to trample on another's rights; but how different will be the glorious liberty of the sons of God! Though Jesus and his bride will be of the divine nature, while the mass of mankind will have a restitution to the perfection of the human nature, all will enjoy the same blessed liberty from the bondage of corruption (death), and the privilege of following the inclinations of their perfect being, which will be in harmony with and well pleasing to God.

One other statement of Paul in this connection – "The creature [mankind] was made subject to vanity [frailty – Diaglott], not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (v. 20.) That is, God, through the penalty of Adam's transgression, placed the entire race under death's dominion and bondage – made them subject to it. Not that man willingly came under the control of his captor, death, but contrary to his will and choice, God put him under it as a penalty for transgression.

Yet it was not a hopeless bondage, for when God condemned and gave mankind into death's control, he planned his redemption and ultimate deliverance again to the former liberty – the liberty or

freedom from death and pain which is the common privilege of all God's sons on every plane of being. In hope also that his experience under bondage would be of future benefit, and forever thereafter deter him from evil.

For this very purpose – the delivering of the groaning creation – the sons of God, now being prepared, are shortly to be exalted to that nature and consequent position of power, which will enable them to accomplish the glorious work – a "RESTITUTION of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."

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