

Romans 8:19-22 - Pinning For Paradise – 11 Dec 2011

Turn your bible with me to the book of Romans and chapter 8, we have been journeying this book since February this year and so for the past nine months, we have looked at 8 chapters in Romans, we have at least 7 months to go, I guess, going by a chapter a month kind of schedule. But today let's look at Romans chapter 8 verses 19 to 22, a unique portion of scripture here, because it speaks not so much about you and I but it speaks of the world, the planet, the universe we live in in 3 verses. Romans 8 and verse 19, scripture says for the earnest expectation of the creature or creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature or creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature or creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Verse 22, For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. So ever so often in these 4 verses, the word creation or creature accursed. It's about the world, the planet, the universe we live in. Have you ever wondered what this world, this planet, this universe would be like if Adam and Eve had not plunged into sin. Have you thought about that? What would this world be like? If there had been no sin, no corruption, no stains because of the disobedience of men. Some years ago, Michael Jackson wrote and composed this song called "Heal the world". It is said that this is the song he himself is most proud of. And it was a popular hit, people loved the song, people loved the song 'Heal the world' because deep in our hearts we know this is a broken, fractured, sick world. And it is in need of healing. This is not the world as it should be. This is not a thought new to Michael Jackson or to us. Many years before Michael Jackson, there was a famous Christian thinker and author, his name is CS Lewis. Famous today and to our children because of the Chronicles of Narnia. Many of you love the chronicles of Narnia. CS Lewis is a born again believer and I believe there are elements in the story that are from the bible. For example, in the first installment of the Chronicles of Narnia, it is the story about the lion, the witch and the wardrobe. What an interesting title I think to myself. The lion, the witch, the wardrobe. The story is about 4 children, 4 kids, who stumbled or entered into a magical world called Narnia. The problem with Narnia is that it is not what it should be. Narnia is always in winter. It's cold, it's chilly, it's snowing. And the animals dare not talk too loudly. The trees are barren and stump. Narnia is not what it should be. It is not bright, it is not colorful, it is vibrant. It is winter, cold and pale. Why? Because a white witch is in rule of Narnia. She is white not because she is pure and holy; she is white because of the paleness of death. And she rules this land with deception. Those who believe her soon turned out to be statues, stone statues in a palace. So Narnia is not what it should be. It is cold, it is

winter time. And that is the picture of the world we live in today; the world is not what it should be you see. In Romans 8 and verse 22, the bible says the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain. The world is crying out, we are not what it should be. It is an interesting passage of scripture here in Romans 8, because if we look at verses 22, 23 and 26, you see groanings. 22 here we see the creation groaning, Verse we will see the believers, the children of God groaning. And then in verse 26 we have the Holy Spirit groaning. So we have creation groans, we have the Christian groans and we have the Comforter groans. You say what is everybody groaning about? What are they wailing, what are they lamenting about? They are lamenting this. They are groaning this. That we are living in a world of sin and pain, while there is a glorious world that is to come. It is that tension you see. I know there is a glorious future ahead of us but right now we are living in sin and corruption and pain. It is a groaning for glory. This whole creation is yearning, looking forward to the glorious liberation from the corruption and destruction brought about by sin. Now let me ask you a question. The bible says the whole creation. What exactly is included in this term creation? I asked the first service people and they gave good answers, so let me ask you right here. What do you think Paul meant when he says the whole creation. What is included here? I can see all the way to the back. And I will ask those whose heads are bowed. It is a bit far but I can still see. Anyone knows what this creation refers to? Universe. Alright, includes universe. Who answered that? Bee Hin. Brother Bee Hin. Universe. Any other answers? All the angelic beings as well. Alright, any other answers? What is included in the creation? Man, alright. Anyone else? Nature, anyone else? We need to define what creation is; otherwise we get confused what Paul is writing about isn't it? Not easy, anyone else? Creation. Now let me work this through with you. You might be angry with me, you might not agree with me but let me share with you what is this creation. First thing I think creation here does not refer to angels. Does not include angels. Why? Because if you read verses 19 to 22, you see that this creation is subjected to corruption. The bondage of corruption. Angels who did not fall with Satan, they are not subjected to corruption. So this verse doesn't refer to angels. It also doesn't refer to demons. Or the fallen angels. Why? Because there is no hope for them. This creation here is yearning for the hope but the demons have no hope reserved for them. So it is not referring to the angelic beings. The word creation here also doesn't refer to believers. Not specifically. Why? Because in verse 23, you see a specific reference to believers. So it is distinct in a sense from creation here. I think it also doesn't include unbelievers. Because again unbelievers will have no hope. So Pastor, then refers to who? Well, it is not referring to who so much as refer to what. See this creation does not refer to the angelic beings, it does not refer to human beings, it refers to creation,

as in the nature, the universe around us. The eminent objects we see, the mountains, the rivers, the stars, the animals, the plants, that is what creation here refers to. And this whole creation is personified, this is poetic liberty. It is personified to be like a person who is yearning and groaning for the day of deliverance. They are pinning, they are longing for the day they would be like paradise again. So let me just say I think if you forget what I have been saying, is this, the whole creation today, the rivers, the mountains, the lakes, the seas, the tigers, the lions, the flowers in bloom, the crops, the wheat, this whole creation, world, without the angels involved, without men which is specifically mentioned here, is pinning for paradise. I know this message may sound like heal the world, save the planet kind of thing, but I am not here to give you science or geography, this is spiritual. Because God wants you to know about your future home. Do you want to know about your home? How many of you have gone property hunting before? Look for place to rent, look for place to buy, it is always exciting right? Let me tell you about the property you will receive. Free one neh. You don't have to pay 1% down payment, 10% down payment. It is given to you free because of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is a beautiful paradise that God has installed for us. So let's see what he is saying about your future abode. First of all, the creation here has a certain expectation. Creation here has a certain expectation. It says here in verse 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. Earnest expectation. The world has, like I have been saying, yearning and looking forward to the day of deliverance. No more sorrows, no more corruption, no more futility. It will be returned to what it was intended to be. So it is earnestly expecting. And the word earnest expectation in the Greek is a graphic word; it is a very vivid word. It is a picture of a man, who is standing on his tip toes and his neck is stretched. My neck is not very long, so it is not very clear. But he is standing on the tip toe and stretching neck, craning, looking forward to the day that it should come. If you go to Changi Airport, at the belts at the gates where people emerge from within, you see a lot of people doing earnest expectation. Right? The hands on the rail, they tiptoe and they look forward whether daddy or mummy is back home. Hey that's daddy! Hey that's mummy! They get excited. Earnest expectation. Creation, personified here, is earnestly, longingly, waiting for the day that they will be delivered from the bondage of corruption and futility right now. You say when will that day be? When will this earth be totally changed? The bible says it is linked, it is related to the manifestation of the sons of God. This world will be changed when the sons of God are manifested. If you read the Chronicles of Narnia, and the lion, the witch and the wardrobe, CS Lewis wrote that for Narnia to be changed, it will be related to the day where the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve, the 4 children, will be enthroned or seated on the throne at Cair

Paravel. It is linked to the day they ascend to the throne. That is so apt; the kind of a picture isn't it? The world we live in today will not be delivered until there is a manifestation of the sons of God. In Narnia, all the trees, all the animals are looking at what is happening to the 4 children. Because they know it is intimately related. So this?? is going to change when the sons of man is manifested. The word manifestation here is the Greek word?? , from which we get the word apocalypse, which means a great unveiling, revealing or manifestation. So that day will come when the children of God will be made manifested and unveiled. Because frankly when I see you, you don't look like a son of God. You see me; I don't look like a son of God. I mean, we are so human, so much of the flesh, so much of the human-ness in us. It will come a day where the sons of God will appear in glory. In Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Now that is the apocalypses of the children of God where the glory which is in us shine through. I am reminded how Jesus shone through in his deity, his glory in the mountain of transfiguration. Remember that? Matthew 17. They were gathered there, some of his disciples saw the deity, the glory of Jesus. That was the time they beheld his glory. There will come a day when Jesus returns when we will be with Him and we will be revealed. Because right now it doesn't seem like we are obviously the children of God.

I mean you go to school; you go to workplace, nobody says, 'Wah, you are child of God. Wah you are very glorious. You are very shiny, unless you have a lot of oil on your face but other than that they are not going to say you are glorious, you are bright, you have untainted pure light comes from you. It happens to me a lot of times, I buy coffee, I buy drinks, I buy food from hawker centres and I am dressed in my shorts and t-shirts, they call me ah tee, I am like, they think I am 18 or 20 years old, they call me ah tee, I am not ah tee, aunty. But worse still they don't understand that I am a son of God. Or you are a child of God. But there will come that day when it is totally obvious. The manifestation, the apocalypses, the revealing, the unveiling, so that the glory shines through. That is the day the world awaits. Because that is the day the universe, the planet, the earth will be totally restored and regenerated. So first of all there is a certain expectation. But secondly, I would like to share with you about the exasperation of creation. There is a certain frustration; there is a certain anxiety about creation right now. Why? In verse 20, For the creature, creation, was made subject to vanity. The word vanity here means futility. The world right now is not achieving what it is made to achieve. Futility. This is a world like that. It is not functioning the way it was designed to function. You say who made the world like this? The bible says the creature is made subject to vanity, not willingly. It did not

make itself like that. It was not a voluntary choice of creation. It was not what the arm did to itself. It was unwilling. So who did this to them? Who did this to creation? It was by reason of him when subjected to him in hope. Who is the him here? We have defined first of all creation to not humans, not angels but the nature we see in earth and in the universe. Who is the him here? Let's interact again ok? Who is the him? Who subjected this earth this universe to such a state of vanity? Such a state of emptiness and futility. Who did this to the universe? Huh? Fabian, you are very brave to say God. Anyone else has any other answers? Before we stone him... No... Any other answers besides what Fabian offered as the answer God. Who else? Anyone? Any other possibilities in your mind. Adam, alright, Adam. Who gave the answer? JQ, alright, Adam. Who else? Any other answers? Satan, alright. Adam, Satan, God, very diverse. It is as far as it can get. Any other answers? A fourth answer you can throw in is man, which is general. Man, Adam, God, Satan. So who is the one who did this? Let's reason, let's think. Because I think studying the scriptures requires thinking. It is not a mindless, brainless activity. You must study and meditate, and let's look at this. This creation is subject to vanity by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. The key phrase who tells you who did it is the phrase. By the way if you are a King James translation user, when it is italics, it is not in the original text, it is added by translators to make the reading easier. So the key word cannot be 'the same'. It is not in the original text. Subject to vanity, that's what happened, the key phrase to knowing who did this is the word 'hope'. Satan did not subject creation to vanity in hope. He has no hope for the future. He has no hope for creation itself. No, he just wants to destroy it. Neither is it therefore referring to man or Adam. He choose to sin and he was not sinning with a good end in mind. Do you see? So this 'him' is referring to. I think Fabian is very thankful he is not stoned. Clearly refers to God. God is the one who judge the earth, who pronounce a judgement on this earth. And indeed if you remember Genesis, this is what he did. When Adam and Eve took of the fruit and ate it, they sinned against God. God said in Genesis in chapter 3 verse 17. My cursed, my cursed, it's from God by the way. Its God's curse and judgment on the earth pronounced. Cursed is the ground for your sake. In sorrow shall thou eat of it all the days of your life? Thorns and thistles shall bring it forth to you and thou shall eat of the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread? So this earth is judged of course because man sinned. But the direct subject to vanity is an act of God. It's an act of God. God did it. God did it. So this world right now is in a state of futility. The bible says it is subject to vanity. As I have said, aimlessness, it is not able to set out to achieve. It is futile. Not only that, the bible tells us it is in the bondage of corruption. It is in a prison of decay. The world today cannot escape from this reality of decay. The world today cannot escape

from this reality of breakdown. It is now inbuilt in the entire ecosystem. This is the reality. Who studied Physics? Wah, don't scare me. C'mon, raise your hands. Physics, a bit of it also can. Okay. Okay you studied scripture, which is far more important. For those who have studied physics, there are three laws of thermo dynamics that are key, at least 2 that are fundamental. There is a 2nd law of thermo dynamics, you know what it is? Anyone? The law of entropy. What is entropy? Wah so cheem. Alright, it is a law of randomness. Everything breaks down, increasing in randomness. This integration breaks down. This is the world we live in. I think the 2nd law of thermo dynamics came in, break down came in and the fall. The world was not made like what we have today. It is not. It is not meant to break down. But it is because of the curse. That's why today things rot. That's why things rust. That's why things break down. That's why things decay. Do you realise we are surrounded by the evidence of the curse that is brought about by sin. That's why your car, you have to renew it after 10 years. Besides vanity purposes, also have corruption reasons. You renew it because you know the engine runs down. That's why your house needs to have an A and A or reconstruction or repainting because it does run down. That's why for you, I know I should say some lady examples. For you ladies, you must take care of your handbag. You don't wipe it one day, the mould and whatever you have; I don't know what grows on it. But things will grow on it. It breaks down; it runs down, by itself. Why? Because of the curse. That's why today we have tornados, hurricanes, droughts, famines. That's why we have the hailstorms, pestilences, plagues. Do you think that was what God created? No. When God created the heavens and the earth, he said it was good. It is beautiful. It was not meant to break down. Adam could walk anywhere and he could pick up a fruit and he would be satisfied with it. It will not grow bad. It is not sour; it is not small and puny. It is big and juicy and sweet. That's the world that God created indeed. The world then or the garden that Adam was told to tend called Eden means pleasure. It is not meant to break down; it is not meant to be ravaged by floods, by droughts, by famines by pestilences and plagues. There is no need for insecticides. It's organic food all the day. For those who love organic stuff, you could have it at the garden of Eden. It's all pure good stuff. Let me bring it closer to home. It means that if you lived in the Garden of Eden then, you don't have to be scared of buying durians. You don't have to ask uncle, "is this bao chia or not?" All bao chia one. All nice one. Its all beautiful. You won't open up and see worms inside. No it is not. But if you bought a durian after Adam sinned, you better be careful. It is now subject to the bondage of corruption. So this is the world we live in right here right now and it affects us in our daily lives. And by the way I think this verse tells me that evolution is a lie. Evolution is about upgrade from a tadpole to a frog, from a frog to a don't know what. And it becomes an ape and an ape

becomes man. Evolution is a total contradiction of the verse in Romans 8 and verse 20. This world is subject to downgrades and disintegration and not upgrades, you see. This verse also tells me that if you want to choose a career today, be careful what you choose. Because some people love to, I am not saying it is wrong or bad, I am just saying it is like a losing battle, if you want to be an environmentalist, save the world, heal the planet, go green. Now, that I think has its useful place today but don't join those occupations thinking that you can reverse it all. All you can do is to slow it down. But you can never reverse it. Because it is in the bondage or prison of decay, corruption. That's why the ozone is punched with many holes. That's why today right now; people are meeting at South Africa for a global climate conference. And whatever is done, it cannot reverse the curse that God has set into this world. So this world is in exasperation. We are not what we are supposed to be. Volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, these are the upheavals of creation that frustrates it. But can I come to the last point that I have and that is the exhilaration. There is a day of joy. There is a day of deliverance. Because Paul says in verse 20, by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. The damage, the broken, the suffering we live in today is not a hopeless situation. There is a day of great hope that is coming. Why? Because in verse 21, the bible tells us creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. It is in the prison of corruption right now but the day when Jesus comes, the day we appear with Him in glory will be the day. The whole creation is set free from bondage, decay, corruption. It will be the day this earth will be restored to paradise. I was looking at Facebook yesterday; I noticed a lady wrote something like this. She wrote that after so many years, she finally realised there never was utopia and there never will be utopia. By the way utopia means paradise where there is no sorrow and pain. I guess somehow she must be discouraged in life and she says there never will be utopia. I choose to disagree. There will come a day of utopia. There will come a day where there is hope realised. There will come a day where creation will be delivered from bondage of corruption. There will come a day. How would that day be like? How would that day be like? Does the bible tell us? I think so. 2 Peter chapter 3 tells us, For the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; by the way, how do thieves come to your house? I am coming! I am coming! No, it doesn't create a lot of racket, it doesn't create a lot of noise, it comes in stealthily, quietly, covertly. He comes in a way that nobody really knows when he comes.

Do you know when is Jesus coming again? The same way, stealthily, in a day when no one knows when he is going to come. By the way, those who predict the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ are either foolish or deceived. Because the bible tells us that no

man will know that day. Just recall someone who had predicted the day that Jesus comes and his church supported him and many people who listened to him believed him and they sold their goods and they gave their goods and when Jesus did not come, I wonder what happens to them now. All that is unnecessary if they just knew that the coming of the day of the Lord Jesus Christ is unknown to men. He will come stealthily, quietly, but when he comes, we come to Him in glory, and the bible tells us this heaven shall pass away with a great noise. And the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Great melting away. Now God has already promised that he would not destroy the world with a flood. Right? Back in Noah's day, no more flood. But he is going to destroy the world with a fervent heat, with a melting away. And a lot of commentators and bible teachers believe that this refers to a nuclear atomic destruction. When I mean nuclear, I don't mean that a certain country launches some nuclear rockets. No, I think it is a nuclear process that is divinely done by God. He allows the atomic energies to be released. By the way, for those who have studied Physics, there is great energy in atoms, isn't it? Great energy to keep the atom together. And when that is released, great energies are poured out. That's why we have the nuclear reactor plants that try to have measured control release of these huge energy sources. But when the day of the Lord comes, there is going to be a great nuclear fission or breaking down and great energy is released. Again Peter uses an interesting word in 2 Peter 3 verse 11, he says dissolved. In Greek it is the word *luo* which means release. It is as if the energy that is used to bind the atoms together is now let loose. The world melts passes away. So we look forward to that day and that day involves Jesus coming again, we appearing in glory and the world melting. What happens? What happens there after? The bible then tells us that after that melting away, nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, so there is total restoration. A wiping away and a restoration of anew. It's interesting, the Greeks, the philosophers have a way of thinking of the cosmos, the world. They have this word *palingenesia*, big word, *genesis* sounds familiar with Genesis right? *Palingenesia* means cosmic rebirth. They look at the world today, they see that it is decaying, it is corrupting, it is breaking down, and they say ever so often there will be a *palingenesia*, there will be a rebirth, there will be a purging, refining process. So the world goes through cycles of *palingenesia*. Corruption, decay and then rebirth. Corruption, decay and then rebirth. That's the Greek philosophers thinking. *Palingenesia*. Now Jesus Christ used this exact same word *palingenesia* in one of his messages. In Matthew 19 and verse 28, he says verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me. By the way the word 'followed' there, if you look at verse 29 which is not screened here. Those who left houses, those who left fathers and mothers to follow Jesus. Those who left these

things to follow him. In the regeneration, that is the word palingenesia, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus applied the word palingenesia not in a cyclical way, where there are repeated cycles of corruption and rebirth, but he says it points to one point of history, that's it. In that one, the regeneration, the palingenesia, that's where whole history points or flows towards. So it's clear from the bible there will come a day where all will be dissolved, and all will be made new and restored. There will come a day. And this world is a world that dwells righteousness. No more sin, no more corruption. No more the vanity, the futility, the aimlessness, breaking down that this present earth and universe is subjected to. No more. Just righteousness, purity. Can you imagine what the world will be like? It will be the opposite of what we have right now in many ways. No more tornados, no more hurricanes, no more earthquakes, no more volcanic eruptions, no more famines, no more droughts, no more floods, no more hailstorms, no more pestilences, no more diseases. Dwells righteousness, no more corrupting influences of sin. It means if you have a car, it won't break down. Wah, better choose the first car properly. The thing of the world doesn't break down. It means when you go buy durians, actually you don't need to buy, you can pluck it off the tree, it is everywhere. I hear people waiting for durians; they sit at night and wait for the durian to drop. Actually no need lah, I don't know how you are going to get durians but you will have enough durians to eat. And I think the durians that you open up will be super fragrant, not mao shan wang, no need. This one is sheng shan wang, holy potent king, this is the best durian. It's yellow, it's sweet, it's fragrant and when you pop it in the mouth, no seed, where is the seed? No seed one! Super nice, I think they may not have thorns. You agree? They may not have thorns. Why thorns? No need thorns. Maybe you just caress it and it splits open for you. Wah, that's the day, that's the day, no more curse, no more futility, no more breaking down, no more worms. That's the world, these are petty little things by the way, petty little things, but the most glorious part is that there will be no more sin. Righteousness, purity, glorious children of God are now in a glorious place. Fit for God's children like you and me. Wow, this is a super duper abode and paradise utopia God has in mind for you and me. I think this is also what is going to happen. Millennium rule, I believe this palingenesia, this regeneration, starts with a Millennium rule which eventually ends with a new heaven and new earth. But during the Millennium rule, you will see that the wolf shall dwell with the lamb. Right now wolf love lamb chops, but in those days, in the days that is to come, no. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. How sweet. Now little children can only play with small puppies, in those days,

in the days that is to come, you can lead lions and tigers together with you. How grand, how amazing. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. For those who are dentists, I am sure you will be interested to know how the dentistry is going to change. They are fitted to eat meat, but there will come a day they will eat grass. Now I believe before Adam and Eve fell, there were no carnivores. This predator, hunting instinct came in after the fall. And so when it is restored again, no more corruption, no predators. You dwell together, no need for zoos, no need for cages, no need for fences, amazing. You will sleep and lie down with these animals. For behold I create the new heavens. Isaiah 65. And a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. You know the joy and the rejoicing that is promised to God's people is astonishing. As I mentioned last week, we yearn and pine for future glory and joy but today is a life of sufferings. God has his purposes, God has his timings. But the joy will be pure, undiluted, undefiled. Isaiah 65 verses 19 and 20, the voice of weeping will be no more heard in Jerusalem, nor the voice of crying. Look at how old you will be, alright. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, in other words, you will not die prematurely. Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days, for the child shall die an hundred years old; by the way you guys are all children, if compared to the age then. Hundred years old, a child. But the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall not build and another inhabit, there is no stealing, robbing. It's a righteous rule by Jesus and his people. They shall not plant, and another eats: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord. The work that you will do then will be joyous work, right now a lot of our work is painful work. In the sweat of thy brow, thou shall eat bread. It's painful, it's difficult. It's the curse of the world, but in the future, all is going to be changed. And again the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. People have asked what will happen to your waste. After you eat right, you need to, dare not say it, but you need to do something to get rid of it. If you step on it, will it be dirty? I don't know, don't ask me that. But I have a sneaky feeling that whatever you eat, it will be digested. Maybe no need to. I mean it will all be absorbed. I don't know, those things are not recorded in scriptures. This is the world we have, everlasting joy, pure undiluted, beautiful place. So in conclusion, verse 21 tells us, this is what Paul is saying. Creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty. It will come a day like this.

But right now let's not forget. Right now this is the reality, right now the whole creation groans and travails in pain. That beautiful picture that scripture paints for us, future. Right now, planet earth it's travailing. The word travail here is the word used for child bearing, giving birth to a child. It's a painful process. You have seen women give birth, it's painful right? But if you go to hospital today, and you hear screams from a ward, "ahhhh", you hear them scream. It's painful of course. But it does make a difference to you, if you find out whether the scream came from a labour ward where there is delivery, or whether it comes from a cancer ward where someone is about to die. Makes a whole world of difference.

What Paul is saying today is the whole world today is screaming, groaning, travailing. But it comes from the labour ward. In other words, this pain, though painful is going to result in a fruit. It is going to result in something productive; it is going to result in something good – a child. So these groanings for not death pangs but birth pangs. It does not result in hopelessness but results in glorious hope. Every single upheaval of creation today is a representation of the labour pains of its last final stages of pregnancy. Or last final stage of labour. It is going to produce something wonderful. Changes the way you look at the world, isn't it? You hear of volcanoes, you hear of eruptions, you hear of earthquakes. You know that is not a sign that things are falling apart, in fact it is a sign that things are finally coming together. And we are a day each time nearer to that beautiful day, blessed day where all will be regenerated. That's what it means for creation to travail in pain. I said a lot, it is quite an informative passage of scripture. But let me apply this spiritually to our lives before we close. Number one. Let us be reminded, as we look at these verses, about the traumatic, significant damage sin brings into lives. Just think about it. All it took was Adam to go against God once, to sin against God, and the whole creation is cursed. It speaks of the treachery and wickedness of sin; it speaks of the infinite righteousness and holiness of God. You see we seem to play around with sin. It's ok to have a little sin here but no, creation here today reminds us, every time you eat a durian it should remind you. Every time you hear news of a natural catastrophe, it should remind you of the grievousness of sin and the holiness of God. That all it took. God is infinitely pure and holy and I am reminded of it as I study this scripture in creation. Number two. As we look at this passage, let us be rejoicing and be reminded of the amazing saving work of Jesus Christ. You know in the Chronicles of Narnia, let me refer back to it as we close, yes, Narnia's fate is inextricably and intimately related to the manifestation of the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve. But they will never ascend to the throne without Aslan. Who is Aslan? Aslan is a lion. Without Aslan lying down his life for Edmund, one of them. Without the sacrifice, there will

not be the ascension to the throne. And indeed, this world has no hope without Jesus Christ. This group has no hope without Jesus Christ. You have no hope without Jesus Christ. But because of what he did on the cross, we will be saved. We will be glorified and this world will be restored in glory. Wow, to me it takes on a whole new meaning to look at those words in John 19: 30. It is finished. It's a complete, total reversal of what sin had done and more than that. I think the world that God is going to recreate is far better than the original one. My life with God is far better than Adam and Eve, because no more am I just a created being, I am his child. This is a world, or a future world that will never ever see corruption again. Can you imagine the saving work of Jesus Christ? If you today have not trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, let me tell you, you have great danger, you have no hope. This rotten, sick and dying world is the only heaven you have. Because there after the bible says you will be cast into the lake of fire, which is reserved for the devil and his minions. Now come to Jesus, he achieved it all, he paid the price for sin, he alone is able to save. Finally I think the point that Paul is making in these verses is to encourage you. If you are a child of God today and you are going through sufferings, if you are in pain, please, please, he says, be reminded that your sufferings is only for a present time. Be patient, hang in there, don't give up on your faith. Stay firm because there will come a day when all things will be made glorious. That's why Paul says in Romans 8:18, I reckon, I count, I calculate this that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. And if I may add, around us. So hang in there. You may have lost a child, lost a job, you may suffer terribly, but don't fall away from God. Don't believe in lies. Don't give up on your faith, stay close, hang in there, because God is working out for you a far more exceeding weight of glory. Creation is a message to God's people every single day of our lives. Hear what God has to say, from His word, and from his world. Let's bow for a word of prayer.

Father we are humbled once again, and we are grateful because without your revelation in the bible, we would not have an understanding where all these will head towards. We would have no clue what will become of this world, why this pain and futility and corruption has all come in. We are reminded today dear Lord that you are infinitely holy, pure and righteous. Put in our hearts a holy fear and a holy reverence for you. Give us a hatred for sin as you hate sin. And as we have prayed earlier on, we pray that you will lead us on to Calvary and to see the enormity of the sacrifice of your Son. That God who hates sin would take on the sins of the world and die for us. Lord I cannot fathom, it does not, my mind cannot comprehend all that. But by your spirit, would you allow your people even today to appreciate, to rejoice, to trust in the

finished work of Jesus Christ. I pray for my friends who are gathered here, and are outside your kingdom. They do not know your Son. Lord, they are without hope, by your spirit today, would you have mercy, give them that new birth. That they may appreciate your word and trust in you. That they will follow Jesus into everlasting life. Father we pray too who is suffering, you are intimately aware of their pains. And yet in your sovereignty and your infinite wisdom, you know it is for their good. It's for your glory. Would you strengthen their inner men and they will not let up or give up. But they will keep trusting, keep walking, because you have reserved for us a day of tremendous glory. Give us that patience of Job; give us the ability to persevere. Father would you bless your word, thank you again that we have a great hope of heaven and a great hope of a new world with you. Most of all, you will be with us henceforth forever more. We praise your name; we ask this in Jesus name. Amen. God bless.