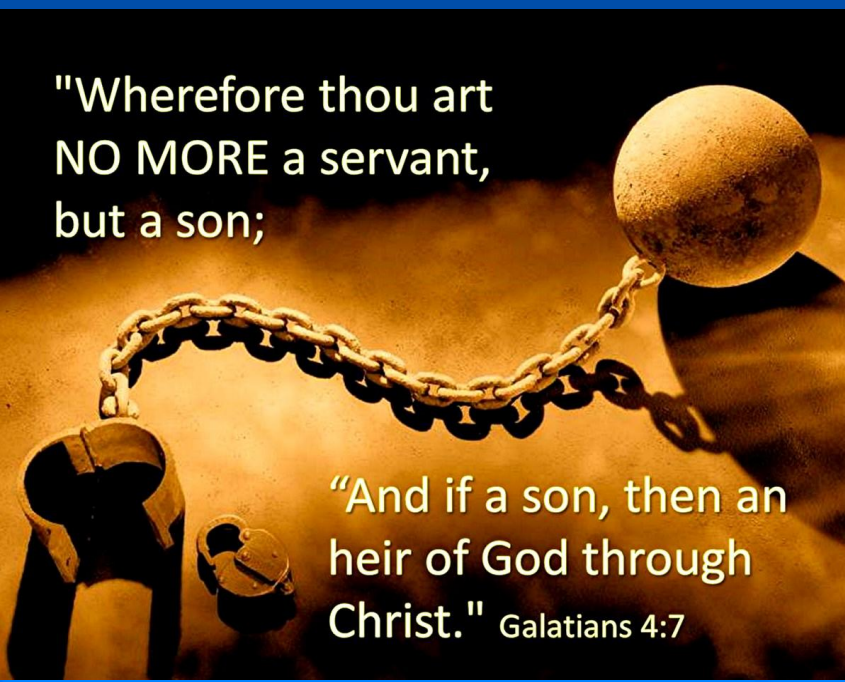




*"the least and the greatest in the kingdom"*

"Wherefore thou art  
NO MORE a servant,  
but a son;



"And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Galatians 4:7

- Matthew 5: strive to obey The Law and teach it, status is the GREATEST
- Matthew 5: disobey The Law and teach it as irrelevant, status is the LEAST
- A servant obeyed his master from fear
- A son obeyed his master (his father) from love
- A son could inherit; a servant could not
- Although all these statuses are "good", Son and Greatest are higher than Servant and Least





LED BY THE  
SPIRIT



- Pattern for classes of status is set by Levites
- Levites set-apart as servants of God
- NO land inheritance
- Deut. 18:1
- Sons were heirs
- Rom. 8:14 “ *All who are led by God’s Spirit are God’s sons*”
- Believers have “son” status available to us, but we must trust God that we are His sons
- If we do not, then we are seen as His servants





- Believer's conundrum: we have BOTH God's Spirit and the spirit of the evil inclination living within us
- We must be retrained to be led by the Spirit
- We ought not to strive for the higher statuses before God because of the benefits it gives us; rather the higher statuses should be the natural outcome for obedience to the Lord



# SUFFERING AND END TIMES

- “Suffering” in the sense of personal identity in Christ
- No organized persecution against Jews at this time
- Paul believed that the End Times were imminent, in his lifetime
- This is why his urgency to evangelize
- Glory is grounded on the notion of enduring suffering as proof of faithfulness in God
- Essenes (Dead Sea Scrolls) felt the same way and used terms like “poor in spirit”, “paupers of grace”, “desperate of justification” to describe themselves

OUR PRESENT  
*Sufferings*

ARE NOT WORTH  
COMPARING WITH THE

*Glory*

THAT WILL BE  
**REVEALED**

IN US





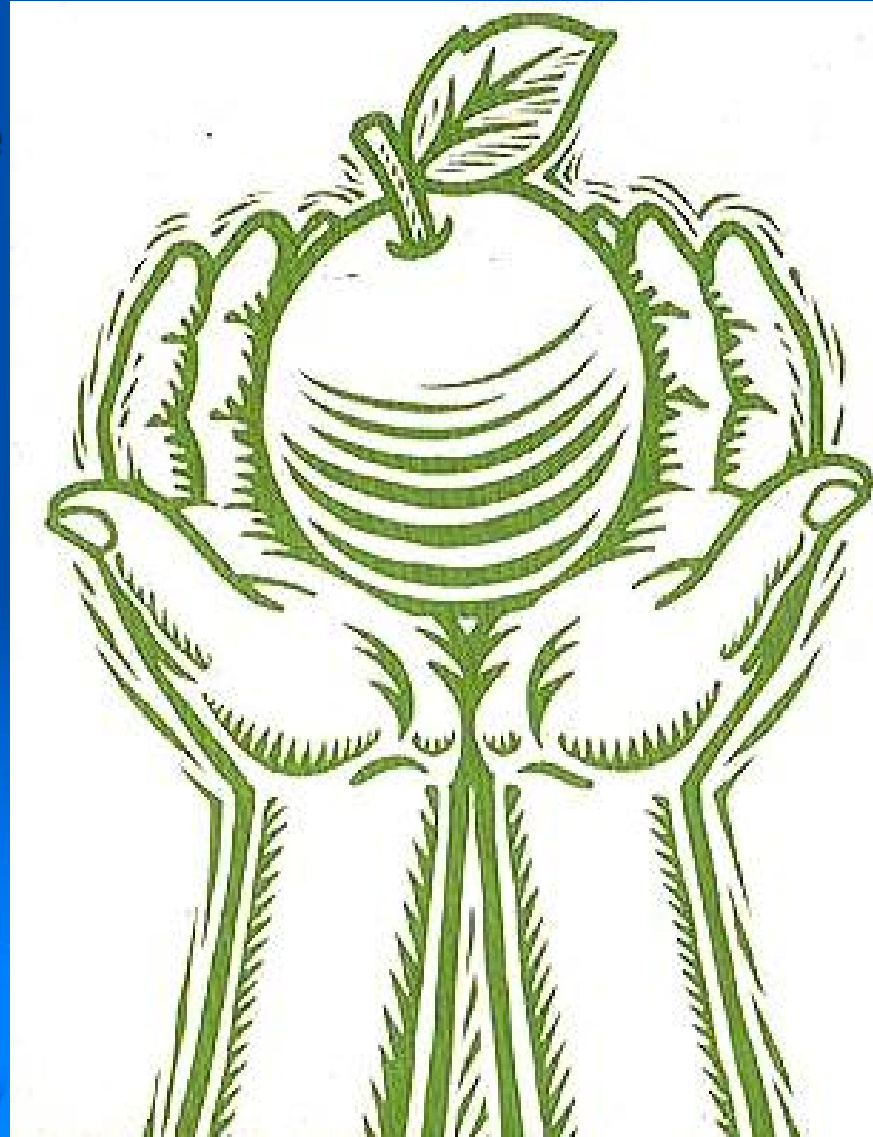
# CREATION GROANS

- Our trust today in Yeshua, will give us a future glory
- This glory will be revealed later; today we can only speculate what it will be like
- ***Olam haba*** = World to come
- Paul is using personification to speak of “the creation”
- “The creation” speaks of everything in existence that is NOT human
- Believers are the sign that restoration has begun
- The creation is anxious because it is decaying



# FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

- ***Bikkurim***, a festival of Firstfruits (Barley)
- ***Shavuot***, also a festival of Firstfruits (Wheat)
- Firstfruits is the sign that the harvest is ripening, and soon it will be time to reap
- “Being made sons of God” means for our entire bodies to be redeemed and freed
- Redemption is a process, not an event
- The Kingdom of God is here: but it is a fraction of what it will become





# HOPE



- Salvation is the reason for our hope
- Our troubles don't end with salvation
- Our faith in Christ brings obligations, duties, and suffering....not utopia
- We must pray for perseverance
- When we don't know how to pray, God will help us with that
- Our faith doesn't insulate us from a darkening world; it makes us more aware of it



# INTERCESSION AND ELECTION



God's Chosen People  
Israel

- Vss. 27 & 28 speak of intercession
- “We know” means common knowledge
- Vs. 28 is more about Israel’s election as God’s people than about gentiles and Christianity
- Underlying theme of Romans is God’s faithfulness to Israel, despite their unfaithfulness to Him
- Paul insists that God has not rejected Israel even if Israel has rejected their Messiah





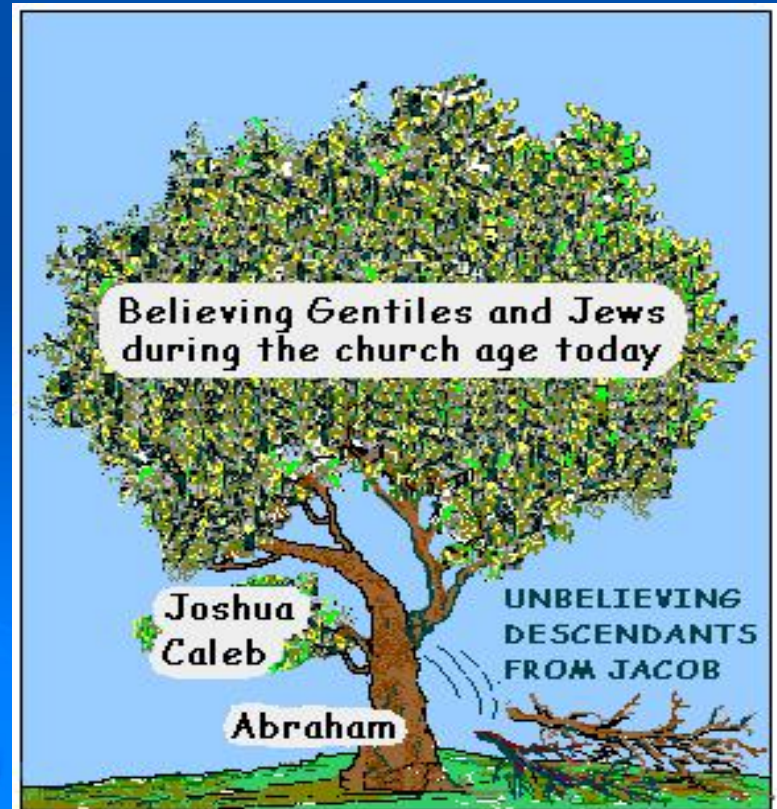
- Romans 7 & 8 are linked as nearly one single unit
- Romans 7:1 *“Surely you know, brothers – for I am speaking to those who understand Torah (The Law)....”*
- Since chapter 1 Paul has been defending God’s election of Israel
- Vs. 31: *“What then are we to say?”* = a *Halakhic* ruling is coming!
- *“If God is for us, who can be against us?”* Who is “us”?
- “Us” is Paul’s Jewish brethren



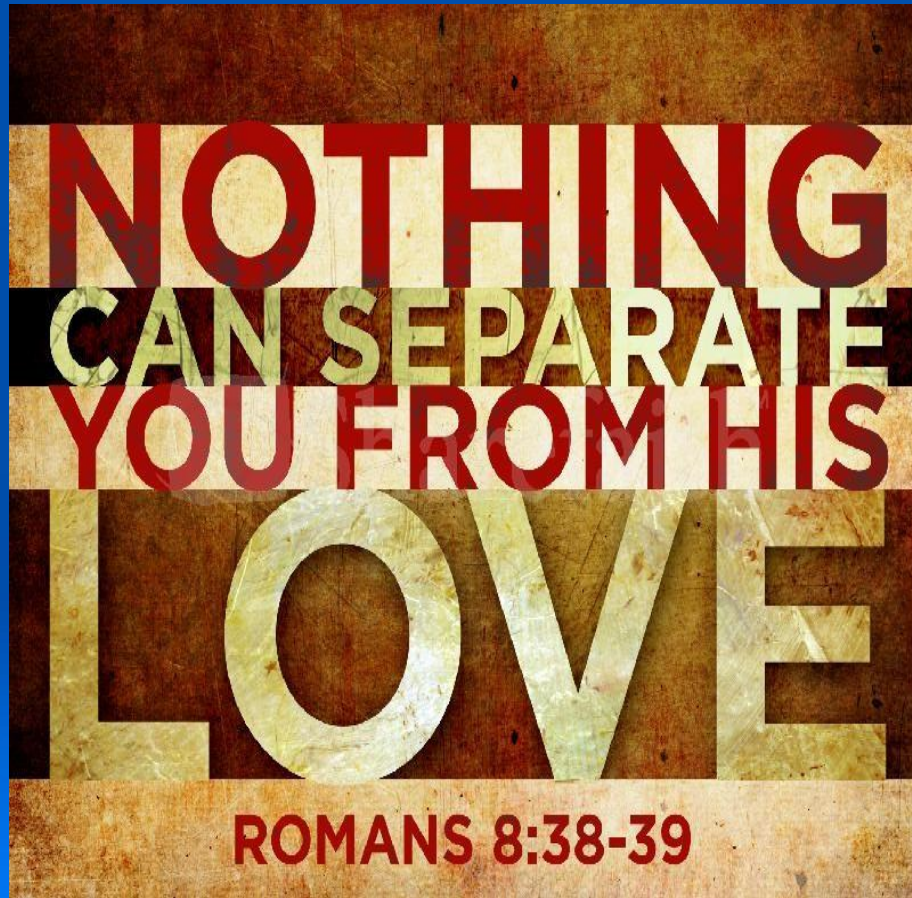
# GOD AND THE NATION OF ISRAEL



- Romans 9 – 11 is a vigorous defense of Israel by Paul that God did not reject Israel
- Paul anticipates that this accusation will happen, even though there is little evidence it was currently happening
- No power, principality, or human king can revoke Israel's election
- But....Bishop of Rome declared Israel was rejected, and much of the Church does so today!
- It is a lack of understanding of 1<sup>st</sup> century Judaism and Jewish culture that is the primary problem







- *Vs. 32 “He who did not spare His own son, but gave him up on behalf of us all....”*
- Paul widens the scope back to directly including gentile Believers
- If God allowed His Son to die He won't condemn those who His son died for!
- Nothing dead or alive, no spirit beings, no evil spiritual force, nothing that will exist in the future, and nothing that God will create can snatch us away from God's love
- But....remember the warning in Romans 8:12, 13