

**An exegetical and theological analysis of Romans 8:18-30 with specific
reference to the role of the Holy Spirit in intercession**

By

Brenda Joy Boddy

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Supervisor: Professor Dan Lioy

Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted to any institution for a degree.

Date: 18 June 2015

Signed: Brenda Joy Boddy

ABSTRACT

In John 14:16, Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as 'another Helper', who would abide with His disciples, and thus all believers, forever. But, in what ways might the Holy Spirit help the followers of Jesus Christ in this life as they anticipate their final day of redemption? Whilst there are many scriptures in the Bible that allude to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, it is Romans Chapter 8 that reveals what life in the Spirit looks like and what kind of help believers can expect as they anticipate their glorification. Romans 8:18-30 specifically focuses on the role the Holy Spirit plays in preparing believers for this future glory. Whilst believers can be greatly encouraged, assured and strengthened by the Holy Spirit's presence in their lives, Paul made reference, in verses 26 and 27, to intercession as one specific and practical way the Holy Spirit helps believers in their walk of faith. Traditionally this intercession has been interpreted and understood to be the act of prayer, but an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis of the text revealed that this intercession goes beyond the boundaries of prayer to include an invasion and mediation in the life of the believer to bring about reconciliation of those areas and issues that are contrary to God's will and purpose. It includes giving believers the appropriate supernatural help needed to accomplish God's will and purpose in their life. It includes using all circumstances and situations as tools to conform believers to the image of Christ. It involves the Holy Spirit's aggressive fight against the sin and weaknesses that plague and incapacitate believers in their walk of faith. It also includes active intervention in the believer's life to bring every circumstance and situation into agreement with God's will. Thus, the Holy Spirit's help in the form of intercession may intervene in various ways to empower and supernaturally strengthen believers to accomplish the purpose and plan of God for them. It is this intercession that assures believers that all things do ultimately work together for good according to the will of God. And it is this intercession that believers are far more dependent on than they may realize, for it is this intercession that carries, sustains, guides, and encourages them in this life and guarantees that their end will be a glorious one.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

When Jesus introduced the Holy Spirit to His disciples in John 14:16, He referred to Him as 'another Helper' (*New King James Version*) who would abide with them forever. With this promise, the disciples, and thus all believers, could be assured of the Holy Spirit's assistance and support in their walk of faith after Jesus' ascension into heaven. But, in what ways might the Holy Spirit help the believer? Whilst there are many Scriptures throughout the Bible that allude to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, it is Romans Chapter 8 that instructs the believer on life in the Spirit. In this chapter, Paul is preoccupied with the work of the Holy Spirit. John Stott (1994:216) points out that in the first twenty-seven verses of this chapter, Paul mentions the Holy Spirit nineteen times as he emphasizes the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit to help believers in their Christian walk. In verses 26 and 27, Paul makes reference to prayer and intercession as one specific and practical way in which the Holy Spirit helps believers. The focus of this research project is on this one aspect of the Holy Spirit's ministry, within the context of Romans 8:18-30. Hence, an in-depth study on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is beyond the scope of this thesis.

A preliminary literature review seems to indicate that there is a general consensus among scholars that Romans 8:18-30 offers the believer encouragement in three main areas in the midst of their suffering and while they

wait patiently for the day of glorification. These three areas are: (1) the hope of future glory, (2) the help of the Holy Spirit, and (3) the providence of God.

The first area of encouragement is related to the hope of the believers' future redemption. Gerald Bray (2002:6-7) commented, that although believers are reconciled to God and are justified by their faith in Christ, life on earth is 'essentially tragic', as believers are still subject to living in a fallen world. Despite this, he added, believers should not be discouraged as they share in the sufferings of Christ, but should rather be encouraged by this hope of redemption. Roger Hahn (n.d:84) also agreed, and acknowledged that the believers' hope of redemption is their source of encouragement, but adds to this that the indwelling Holy Spirit is the firstfruit or pledge of this future redemption. David Guzik (2012: loc 3478) reported in his commentary that this glory will be revealed not only to believers, but it will also be revealed in believers. Leon Morris (1988:320) stated further that this glory, though not evident now, already exists and will therefore not be created, but rather revealed on that day of redemption. William Newell (n.d:loc 6919) added that the believer and the whole of creation look forward to this one goal, the liberty of the coming glory of the sons of God. Don Fleming (2005:536) includes that on this glorious day, all of physical creation, which has also suffered because of human sin, will enter its full glory along with redeemed human life.

In these six examples, the authors' main focus and emphasis is rightly the believers' hope of redemption in the midst of their present suffering. Whilst brief reference is made to the Holy Spirit and prayer, it doesn't appear to be a point of real interest or one of real importance, and therefore is not emphasized or researched to any great depth. Whilst they all acknowledge and agree that the Holy Spirit prays for the believer in accordance with God's will, it is, however, noted that they have not discussed the intercessory work of the Holy Spirit in any great detail.

The second area of encouragement noted in this pericope is in the area of how the Holy Spirit might help the believer. Whilst the High Priestly ministry of Jesus is not in view here, John Murray (1968:311) drew attention to the fact that believers have two divine intercessors, Jesus who intercedes in the courts of heaven and the Holy Spirit who intercedes in the believer's heart. That there are two intercessors is not just an encouragement for the believer, but rather a topic of interest and curiosity that encourages and fuels this research. Robert Boyd (n.d:38,42) discussed the Holy Spirit's help in the area of the believer's not knowing *how* to pray and not knowing *what* to pray, and draws attention to the fact that His prayers are always in accordance with God's will. Boyd (n.d:40) also offered the idea that the 'correlation of human and divine co-operation' in prayer is so interfused that it 'may be impossible for the saint to know whether he himself is praying, or whether he is simply the temple in which the Holy Spirit offers up intercessions for the saint'. The point being raised here is whether the Holy Spirit intercedes directly or indirectly for the believer. Douglas Moo (1991:562), however, said it is preferable to understand these groanings of the Spirit as the Spirit's own intercession, which takes place within the believer. Hence, the groanings are related directly to the Holy Spirit, and not to the believer, as He intercedes for them. Curtis Mitchell (1982:234-236) probed this aspect of intercession further, and considered whether the Holy Spirit's groanings are uttered or unuttered and thus audible or inaudible. Mitchell (1982:237) added that this aspect has been hotly debated among scholars for centuries since Origen (AD 182-254) and Chrysostom (AD 347-407).

John Bertone (2003:54) shed more light on this debate, and explained that Pentecostals have interpreted the groanings or intercessions of the Spirit as biblical support for *glossolalia*. Despite the majority of scholars disagreeing with this interpretation, strong proponents of this interpretation are Gordon Fee (1994:577) and Ernst Kasemann (1996:130). It appears that this interpretation

borders on eisegesis, as the text does not naturally fit the idea of *glossolalia*. It seems that it is the groanings of the Spirit (*that cannot be uttered*, NKJV) that become the perfect intercessions to God for the believer, and not the forced idea of *glossolalia* being the perfect intercession. The point to be emphasized here is the Spirit's intercession and not the believers' participation. It must be noted that this research is not promoting passivity in the area of believers praying. The focus and topic of interest is specifically the Spirit's intercession for the believer, which seemingly has not been a priority for many scholars.

The *Online English Dictionary* (www.dictionary.reference.com accessed 27/3/2014) defined *intercede* as 'one who mediates or one who interposes on behalf of someone in difficulty or trouble'. The same dictionary defined *intercession* as 'interposing or pleading on behalf of another person'. Also, to *interpose* means to intervene or assume an intervening position between parties (or on behalf of parties) at variance and to mediate and bring reconciliation. Thus, *intercession* is an intervention by an intercessor or mediator who mediates between parties at variance to bring about reconciliation. If one applies this definition to the Holy Spirit as Intercessor, then He would assume the intervening position between God and believers to present their case and plead in their favour, in order to bring about reconciliation.

Charles Hodge (2013:loc 4026) described the Holy Spirit's intercession along similar lines, as the help of an advocate who pleads the cause or case of believers before God. Norman Grubb (2011:82) took this idea further, as he wrote about identification being the first law of an intercessor, whereby the intercessor identifies with the needs and sufferings of the one for whom intercession is made. He goes on to say that intercessors are willing to become the answer to the very prayer they pray for others (2011:93, 97). Richard Foster (1992:202) said that intercession is selfless, self-giving, priestly prayer that pleads with God on behalf of others. Doris Ruscoe (2011:loc 688) added that the

intercessor 'loves enough to take the place of others'. Hence, Ruscoe and Grubb take intercession beyond the boundaries of prayer alone, and include acts of service as they comment that intercessors are also willing to become the answer to the very prayer they pray for others.

Interestingly, of the works reviewed thus far, only James Rosscup (1999:139), John Stott (1994:245) and John Bertone (2003:58) mentioned the Spirit's groanings of Romans 8:26 within the context of identifying with and having empathy for the believer. It appears that the idea of empathizing or identifying with the one for whom intercession is made, in such a way that the intercessor feels the pain and suffering of the individuals and becomes their representative to stand in the gap between them and the God of heaven pleading their case is largely missed in the scholarly work reviewed thus far. And yet this is not a foreign concept when it comes to intercession. There are examples of intercession in the life of Abraham (Genesis 18), Moses (Exodus 32), Esther (Esther), Paul (Romans 9) and especially the life of Jesus who '*bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors*' (Isaiah 53:12, NKJV). And so it appears, from this preliminary literature review, that the ministry of intercession has not been adequately addressed from this perspective.

The third area of encouragement for believers in this pericope is in the area of God's providence as noted by Frank Pack (n.d:45). H Moule (2013:loc 2618) wrote in his commentary that the children of God are the objects of a final blessedness where all things will finally be worked out according to God's purpose and good pleasure. Thomas Hale (1996:559) acknowledged that God's eternal plan and purpose is for believers to become like Jesus, and that all the suffering they presently endure ultimately works towards this end. Hence, there is always a purpose to the believers' suffering, because as Woodrow Kroll (2002:135) pointed out, it is the prelude to their glory, the redemption of their bodies.

In these four examples, the authors rightly highlighted the believers' present sufferings in light of God's providence and purpose to conform believers into the image of Jesus. However, the intercessory ministry of the Spirit seems to be neglected in the interpretation of these two verses, despite the fact that it is His ministry that ultimately carries the believer through the process of sanctification to the place of glorification. Could it be because of the Holy Spirit's ministry and perfect intercession, that believers who are called according to the purposes of God, can be assured of all things working together for good? Could it be that believers are far more dependent on the ministry of the Holy Spirit than they realize?

This, therefore, is the basis for undertaking a study of how the Holy Spirit might help believers while they wait for the day of redemption. Although scholars such as Rosscup (1999:139), Stott (1994:245) and Bertone (2003:58) have identified the aspect of empathy and identification in the Spirit's intercession for believers, it appears that it has not been fully researched, and therefore a gap seems to exist for further study to be done in this area. Hence, the researcher does not think that the ministry of the Holy Spirit, especially in the area of intercession, has been given enough attention, and consequently, some important aspects have been overlooked. If a study of this nature is able to contribute to the current knowledge and understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in the area of prayer and intercession, then this research is a worthwhile project and useful to the Body of Christ. Additionally, it will be meaningful to the Church if it is able to add to and deepen the understanding of how God relates to His people through His Spirit. Furthermore, it will be a valuable project if it is able to encourage and strengthen individual believers' faith in God; by revealing how intimately involved He is through His Spirit in the process of their salvation.

1.2 Problem Statement

Based on an exegetical and theological analysis of Romans 8:18-30, in what ways might the Holy Spirit help believers in their weaknesses, especially as they anticipate the day of their glorification?

1.3 Objectives

- a. To review what scholars have written about Romans 8:18-30 concerning the ways in which the Holy Spirit helps believers in their human frailty.
- b. To assess the historical, social, cultural, and literary background of Romans.
- c. To undertake a biblical and theological analysis of Romans 8:18-30 and thereby determine ways in which the Holy Spirit helps believers in their weaknesses.
- d. To synthesize the major findings of the research as it pertains to the ways in which the Holy Spirit helps believers in their weaknesses.

1.4 Hypothesis

Based on an exegetical and theological analysis of Romans 8:18-30, the Holy Spirit helps believers in their weaknesses by identifying with them and by interceding for them, while they wait for the day of their glorification.

1.5 Research Design and Methodology

Having completed a preliminary literature review to introduce the research problem in this first chapter, the research project will continue with a substantive literature review in the second chapter. This substantive literary review will ascertain even further how other scholars have interpreted this passage of scripture within the context of the book of Romans, placing this research firmly within the context of related scholarship.

The third chapter will cover the historical and literary context of the book of Romans. This section will present the general, historical, literary and theological contexts of the letter. The research will commence with the reading of the letter to determine the context of the passage within the book. The historical and literary aspects of the book will be researched, and the general background of the book in terms of its author, date of writing, and audience will be discussed to determine its cultural setting. The purpose and occasion of the epistle will be reviewed to explain further any other historical or cultural aspects that may be important to understanding the text. The literary context, the book's structure and argument or flow of thought, will be considered, and the major theological themes will be reviewed and analysed, especially those relevant to the pericope, to establish a clear relationship between the passage and the message of the book.

The fourth chapter will focus on the pericope (Romans 8:18-30) to determine the meaning of the passage. Hence, an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis will be done in order to establish the author-intended meaning of the text for its original readers. This part of the study will begin with a preliminary analysis to analyse textual variants to determine their effect on the overall meaning of the pericope. After this preliminary analysis, the research will move through the text verse by verse and discuss all the points relevant to its meaning. A verbal analysis will be done to establish how specific key words and phrases may influence the interpretation of the text. In this exercise, certain Greek words will be examined to determine their individual meanings and their contribution to and significance for the text. For example, the Greek words used for *intercession* in verse 26 (*hyperentynchano*) and verse 27 (*entynchano*) are not the same words, which ultimately affect the interpretation and understanding of the text. Likewise, Paul refers to the *groaning* of creation in verse 22 (*systemazo*), of believers in verse 23 (*stenazo*), and of the Spirit in verse 26 (*stenagmos*), and in each case a different Greek word is used. This word study will be followed by a literary analysis to determine how the genre, the structure, the composition and the

rhetoric found in the text may also influence its meaning.

The fifth chapter will summarize the exegetical findings of this study, establishing what contribution it has made in the knowledge of God, His creation (especially mankind), and the relationship between the two. Finally, it will discuss the practical implications for the believer / church today and how the ancient message speaks to our modern context empowering the reader to move 'from theory to practice, from doctrine to application, from belief to behaviour' (Smith 2008:154).

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the topic and research question of this project. It has established the fact that a study gap exists specifically in the area of the Holy Spirit's intercession on behalf of the believer. This research will endeavour, therefore, to highlight how the Holy Spirit might help believers in their weaknesses, while they eagerly wait for the day of their redemption, giving special attention to the area of intercession. This chapter has also discussed the research plan and revealed how this research is organized and how the flow of thought in this study will unfold to achieve its objectives. The preliminary literature review in this chapter has placed this research in the context of related scholarship. A substantive literature review in Chapter 2 will deal with this topic in greater detail and reveal further how this topic relates to what other scholars have written.

CHAPTER 2

FORMAL LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to critically assess and evaluate the literature of additional scholars to those reviewed in Chapter 1, to ascertain even further how Romans 8:18-30 has been interpreted. An investigation of this nature will highlight in more detail how the research question in this thesis relates to the current literature reviewed.

From the preliminary literature review in Chapter 1, it was noted that there are at least three areas of encouragement for believers who are waiting for their day of redemption. These three areas are: (1) the hope of future glory (2) the help of the Holy Spirit and, (3) the providence of God.

To maintain the direction and flow of this project already set in Chapter 1, the contributions of the theological scholars in this chapter are presented below under the same headings used in Chapter 1: the hope of future glory; the help of the Holy Spirit; and the providence of God. These three areas of encouragement are closely related in this thesis, as each area addresses an aspect of how the indwelling Holy Spirit might help believers in their weaknesses by being the guarantee of their future redemption, by interceding for them and by participating with them while they wait for the day of their glorification.

2.2 The Hope of Future Glory

Persecution, trials and suffering are part of the Christian life, and believers need encouragement to strengthen and sustain them until their final day of redemption. This area of encouragement is related, therefore, to the hope believers have in their future redemption and the role the Holy Spirit plays in guaranteeing this redemption taking place. The reviewed scholars have commented on this area of encouragement in the following way.

Allen Ross (2006:n.p) wrote that the sufferings of this life are light when compared with the glorious future that awaits those who believe in Christ. He briefly mentioned that the Holy Spirit is the believer's guarantee of the life to come. Mark Pretorius (2007:10, 11) added that believers ought to weigh their sufferings in the balance with their future glory so that they do not become discouraged in adversity. He also noted that the Holy Spirit is the present guarantee assuring believers of their future glory. Similarly, Steven Cole (2013:n.p) was of the same opinion, and said that if believers focus on the future glory that is promised to them, they will be able to endure their present sufferings with hope and perseverance. Whilst this glory is not discussed in detail by these scholars, Cole mentioned four points about this glory that are of encouragement to believers: (1) it includes the revealing of all that God has promised to them, (2) it includes the renewal of creation to its original perfection and purpose, (3) it includes freedom from sin and the full redemption of the believer's body, and (4) it is guaranteed by the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is the firstfruits of this redemption. Grant Osborne (2004:214) explained further that the Holy Spirit is the 'foretaste of the glory' that awaits believers and the 'first instalment of their final redemption'.

David Bernard (1987:187) has noted that God not only promises the believers future glory, but He also gives them the help of the Holy Spirit to see them

through to the day of redemption. Similarly, Gordon Fee (2011:loc 2413) agreed and wrote that the Holy Spirit empowers believers for life and service in the midst of their present weaknesses. He adds that the Holy Spirit is the essential component of the Christian life from beginning to end. Douglas Moo (2009:268) was of the same opinion, and noted that just as the hope of glory sustains believers in their present sufferings, so the Holy Spirit sustains and upholds them in their time of weakness. Regarding the believers' weaknesses, Leon Morris (2012:326) wrote that Paul was referring to the believers' overall weak human nature in Romans 8:26. He went on to say that this weakness is not specific sin or specific suffering, though these may be in view, but that Paul was referring to the fact that believers are not the spiritual giants they think they are, and therefore continually need the help of the Holy Spirit, especially in the area of prayer. While some agree (Stott 1994:245, Fee 1994:578 and others) that prayer is an example of the believers' weaknesses, others (Cranfield 1975:n.p, Schreiner 1988:445-446) interpreted this text as prayer being the only specific weakness to which Paul was referring.

Assessment of Contributions: The Hope of Glory

Scholars Ross, Pretorius and Cole have observed that in order to be encouraged in the midst of suffering, believers ought to keep focused on the future glory, which will far outweigh all the present suffering they may endure. In other words one is able to persevere and withstand temporary adversity by staying focused on the prize of future glory. This truth is alluded to by Paul in Philippians 3:12-14 when he mentioned that he was 'pressing on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ' and not focusing on his past accomplishments or sufferings. Furthermore, this concept was demonstrated by Jesus 'who for the joy set before Him endured the cross' (Hebrews 12:2). Hence, what believers focus on and what they give their attention to in the midst of their suffering has a direct impact on their ability to persevere and stay encouraged in their walk of faith. Ross and Pretorius do not really discuss what this future glory may involve, but

Cole offered some valid points that explain why this future glory promised to believers is a strong area of encouragement for them. If one considers these four points (God's promises fully realized; renewal of all things; freedom from sin; redemption of the body) one would have to agree that the future glory promised to believers is definitely something they can look forward to, and as a result be an area of encouragement for them to focus on in the midst of present sufferings.

In addition to this, Ross, Pretorius, Cole and Osborne agree and make mention of the presence of the Holy Spirit within the believer being the firstfruits, the guarantee, the foretaste and the first instalment of this future glory. 'Firstfruits' is an agricultural term that points to the rest of the harvest being certain and assured (Stott 1994:242). In other words, the indwelling Holy Spirit is the initial taste, the first down payment and the pledge of what is to come. This is a valid and important observation, because the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit gives believers the assurance and the confidence that the plan of God will be completed and His promises to them will be fulfilled (Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:14). The Holy Spirit, who started a good work in the believer, will complete it until the day of redemption (Philippians 1:6). Hence, the presence of the Holy Spirit is an encouragement to believers in the midst of any suffering they may encounter. As a result, the contributions of Ross, Pretorius, Cole and Osborne support the research question of this thesis, as they contribute to an understanding of how the Holy Spirit may help believers in their weaknesses while they wait for their day of redemption.

Scholars Bernard, Fee, Moo and Morris agree, and have noted that just as the hope of glory encourages and sustains believers in adversity, so the help of the Holy Spirit encourages and sustains believers in their weaknesses. This is an important truth, because it means that believers are not left alone struggling to work out their own salvation, which is impossible to do, but that they have the help of the Spirit to empower, encourage and sustain them until their day of

glorification (Philippians 2:13). Consequently the scholars' observation is a relevant one that supports this project, as they highlight the fact that the Holy Spirit does not forsake believers, but helps them in their weaknesses.

While Morris, Moo, Stott and Fee agreed that prayer is an example of the believers' weaknesses, others like Cranfield and Shreiner interpret this text as prayer being the only weakness to which Paul was referring. Despite the slight controversy regarding the interpretation of the believers' weaknesses, there is ultimately a consensus that prayer is involved, either specifically or as an example of this weakness. The weakness in prayer that all believers tend to encounter from time to time is not knowing what to pray for according to the intricate details of God's will for their lives. In other words, the believers' weakness in prayer is related to their lack of understanding and their ignorance of God's perfect will. Even Paul experienced this dilemma when he wrote about his 'thorn in the flesh' from which God would not deliver him, because it was sent on purpose to keep him humble (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). Stott (1994:245) offered a valid and supporting point in this regard when he said one often does not know whether to pray for deliverance from one's situation or for the grace to endure the situation. As a result one may feel that one's prayers are often ineffective and fruitless, highlighting one's need for the Holy Spirit to lead one, and help one pray aright. Hence, these reviewed scholars have contributed to and supported the research question of this thesis by drawing attention to the supportive role the Holy Spirit plays in the prayer life of believers while they wait for the day of their redemption.

In summary, this assessment has evaluated the contributions of the authors reviewed, and it has observed that despite the present suffering and adversity which believers encounter, the glory promised to them, of which the Holy Spirit is the guarantee, can be an area of encouragement while they wait for the day of glory. It also observed that not knowing what to pray for is a weakness that most

believers seem to encounter in their prayer life, and that the Holy Spirit helps believers in this regard.

2.3 The Help of the Holy Spirit

This area of encouragement relates to the help the Holy Spirit gives weak and frail believers in the midst of their adversity, specifically in the area of intercession as referred to by Paul in Romans 8:26-27. Whilst there was a consensus among the reviewed writings that the Holy Spirit helps believers by interceding for them, it was observed that the argument becomes evident in the interpretation of what this may involve and mean for the believer.

The preliminary literature review in Chapter 1 revealed that there are three main areas of interpretation among scholars when discussing the intercessory groanings of the Spirit. As already mentioned, the interpretation of these groanings has been a controversial topic for centuries (Mitchell 1982:230-239). The three debated views are (a) indirect groans (b) glossolalia and (c) direct groans. An in-depth critical assessment and evaluation of each view follows the contributions of the authors in each case.

2.3.1 Indirect Groans

The reviewed scholars have interpreted the Spirit's groanings, mentioned in Romans 8:26, in the following way.

Arthur Pink (2012:loc 3285) said these groans are produced by the Spirit but expressed by the believer as inward sighs or sobs. Leon Morris (2012:327-328) was of the same opinion, and believes these groanings are inspired by the Holy Spirit, who takes them and turns them into effective intercession. David Jeremiah (1998:loc 438) also agreed with this view, and reported that the Holy Spirit translates the believer's groans into eloquent petitions and presents them to the Father.

Martin Lloyd-Jones (1975:135-136) came across a lot stronger as a proponent of this view, and stated that since it is inconceivable for God to groan, the groans referred to must be those of believers, which the Holy Spirit then translates. Similarly, Robert Haldane (2013:loc 8657) believes it is unthinkable for the Spirit of God to be subject to such emotions, and thus refutes the idea that these groanings are from the Holy Spirit. Consequently he proposed that it is the believers who groan as the Holy Spirit excites and motivates them.

Wayne Grudem (1994:381-382) wrote that the use of the Greek word *sunantilambanomai*, translated *help*, implies that the Holy Spirit prays with believers and not instead of them, and as a result has concluded that the Holy Spirit participates with believers and assists them in prayer by turning their wordless groans into effective prayer. Likewise, Benjamin Warfield (2013:loc 689) commented that the Holy Spirit does not remove the believers' weaknesses or bear the burden wholly for them, but He comes to their aid and shares the load with them. John Parry (1912:120) offered the same opinion, and said the Holy Spirit cooperates with believers in prayer. Charles Ryrie (1999:loc 2314) and Allen Ross (2006:n.p) both agreed, and pointed out that this Greek word *help* in Romans 8:26 is only used in one other place in the New Testament: when Martha asked Jesus to tell Mary to help her with all the meal preparations (Luke 10:40), hence the implication of the word is that believers will still do their part. To this, Kent Hughes (1991:163) added the illustration of two men carrying a log, one at each end, to demonstrate how the Spirit helps believers with their prayer.

Other scholars (Hale 2007:558, Krell 2012:n.p, Cereghin 2013:259) emphasized even further the importance of believers praying by stressing the fact that if they do not pray, the Holy Spirit cannot help them, because He will have no prayers to interpret or remould and deliver to the Father.

2.3.2 Assessment of Contributions: Indirect Groans

All the proponents of this view agreed and seemed to understand that the Holy Spirit causes the believer to groan in prayer. However, this interpretation does not appear to be accurate, because the text seems to imply that the Holy Spirit is the one doing the groaning, not the believer (Romans 8:27). Nevertheless, two possible reasons emerged from the authors' contributions which may have contributed to their arriving at this conclusion.

The first reason is offered by Lloyd-Jones and Haldane, who are of the opinion that it is unthinkable for the Spirit of God to be subject to such emotions, and therefore believe that it is inconceivable for the Spirit to groan. Consequently they are of the opinion that the groans referred to in the text must be the groans or prayers of believers. However, the Scriptures teach that God is capable of emotions like grief, anger and joy, and that He is able to express these emotions if He so chooses (Genesis 6:6; Exodus 32:10; Nehemiah 8:10; Psalm 37:13). Would it not then be logical to conclude that the Holy Spirit is able to groan? Curtis Mitchell (1982:234) rightly counters the claim that the Spirit cannot groan, and says by way of argument, 'God is not devoid of emotion. If God loves, grieves, and rejoices, why is it inconceivable that He groans?' Furthermore, the groaning of the Spirit would naturally fit the empathy and identification that accompany and sustain the intercession mentioned in Chapter 1.

The second possible reason for believing that the groans are from the believer is offered by Grudem, Warfield, Ryrie, Parry, Ross and Hughes, who believe that the word *help* implies that the Holy Spirit does not bear the burden wholly for the believers, but that He comes to their aid and shares the load with them in prayer. In other words it implies that believers are still involved, doing their share of praying. This view was strengthened even further by the illustration given by

Hughes, of the two men carrying a log, to describe how the Holy Spirit helps believers when they pray. As a result, the emphasis in this view is on the help the Spirit gives believers in prayer, which certainly is needed, and is most definitely a source of encouragement in the midst of the believer's weaknesses. However, it appears that the intercession of the Spirit for believers is overlooked by this emphasis, and the depth and significance of His help is therefore not discussed. Hale, Krell and Cereghin emphasized the believer's prayer even further by commenting that the lack of prayer inhibits the work of the Holy Spirit. It appeared, therefore, that the emphasis in this view also suggests that God only responds or acts when believers pray. Where then does God's sovereignty and providence fit in, if He is completely limited to the believer's prayer? Leon Morris (2012:332) offers an accurate opposing comment, and says one should not think that God can only take action when one invites or gives Him permission to do so. In addition to this, it seems that the emphasis on prayer in this view may also cause the motivation of prayer to shift from a 'desire to pray' to 'having to pray' which may not contribute to building an intimate relationship with God or be a real source of encouragement for believers who are waiting for the day of redemption.

Furthermore, one may also need to consider that Hughes' illustration gives a picture of possibly two equally matched participants. But this is not the case when the Holy Spirit, who is omniscient and omnipotent, participates with believers. Whilst there is participation taking place, it is more a picture of a toddler and an adult sharing the load. The toddler may be willing and eager to carry the load, but in reality is totally incapable of offering much assistance, just like believers in their weakness when they don't know how to pray. Thus, sometimes the believer's part may just be very small, and may amount to a simple cry for help. It may look like the toddler merely putting its hand on the heavy load but not actually carrying it, just like believers when they do not know how to pray and the Holy Spirit intercedes for them. Hence, this research is not promoting passivity in prayer, and therefore does not dispute the fact that

believers need to pray, or that there is participation taking place with the Holy Spirit when believers pray. It does, however, highlight the point that the participation may not be equally shared, because one participant is finite while the other is infinite. Furthermore, the point emphasized in this thesis is that the proponents of this view seem to be interpreting these groanings from the believer's perspective and not from the Spirit's perspective. In other words, the position being highlighted is the believers' prayer-life, in which the Holy Spirit participates and helps them, which He does. But, this emphasis redirects the focus of the text, and puts it on the believer as opposed to keeping the Holy Spirit as the focus of the text and viewing what His intercession involves and means for the believer.

Most of the authors reviewed who hold this view also propose that the Holy Spirit translates the believer's groans into eloquent and effective petitions. However there is no biblical support given by these authors for this understanding of the Spirit perfecting the believer's prayer. Their view also seems to imply that without the Holy Spirit translating these prayers, God would not know what believers are praying. However, Scripture teaches that God knows all things, including believers' desires and needs before they even ask (Jeremiah 17:10; Matthew 6:7-9; Luke 16:15). This belief also seems to imply that God only accepts and responds to perfect prayer. On this point, Richard Foster (1992:104) offers an accurate contrary opinion. He maintains that God accepts the believer's prayers just as they are, for 'in the same way that a small child cannot draw a bad picture, so a child of God cannot offer a bad prayer'. Would one's prayers not be acceptable to God because of one's relationship with Him as a son or daughter (Matthew 6:8-9, James 5:16)? Would one's prayer not be effective because of the God one prays to, and not because of one's eloquence or lack thereof?

In summary, this assessment has evaluated the view of 'indirect groans' based on the contributions of the writings reviewed, and it has observed that the emphasis on the believer praying with the help of the Spirit has largely overlooked the Holy Spirit's intercession on the believers' behalf and what significance that may have for them while they wait for the day of their redemption.

2.3.3 Glossolalia

The proponents of this view have interpreted the Spirit's groanings, mentioned in Romans 8:26, as the believer praying in tongues, and have contributed as follows.

Grant Osborne (2004:216) explained that the proponents of this view argue that praying in tongues best explains the groanings of the Spirit, because the language used is similar to the *glossolalic* prayer referred to in 1 Corinthians 14:14-15 and Ephesians 6:18. For example, Ernst Kasemann (1994:241) said, 'praying in tongues' (*glossolalia*) makes good sense, in his interpretation of the text. Gordon Fee (2011:loc 2463) is of the same opinion, and wrote that the 'inarticulate groanings' most likely refers to *glossolalia*. Likewise, Robert Kendall (2014:loc 2073) is personally convinced that Paul was describing the practice of *glossolalia*. David Bernard (1997:188) agrees too, and commented that *glossolalia* can certainly be included in the interpretation of the text. Frederick Bruce (1985:175) has the same opinion, as he commented that 'tongues may be included in this expression'. He suggested further that believers praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18) and the Holy Spirit interceding on their behalf (Romans 8:26) are one and the same thing.

Counterarguments from Academic Scholars

There are scholars who contest this perspective on the grounds that *glossolalia* does not naturally fit the interpretation of this text. For example, Colin Kruse

(2012:382) highlighted two valid reasons why it is unlikely to be *glossolalia*: (1) the apostle is speaking of the Spirit's intercession for the believer, not His inspiration of prayer in the believer, and (2) Paul says that the Spirit's intercession is through wordless groans, which suggests that the intercession is silent, and not verbal as is the case with speaking in tongues. Likewise, Bob Deffinbaugh (2004:n.p) and John Cereghin (2013:260) rightly agreed that speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) is not in view here because the text refers to 'wordless groans' and tongues are uttered and expressed by the believer. Charles Ryrie (1999:441) is of the same mind, and said these groans are wordless and therefore not *glossolalia* or any other kind of formulated expression. Likewise, Allen Ross (2006:n.p) and Wayne Grudem (1994:1078) both agree, refuting the idea of tongues because the intercession in question is on behalf of all believers and not just for those with the gift of tongues. Ross argued further that the result of such teaching creates guilt and confusion on the part of those who do not speak in tongues.

2.3.4 Assessment of Contributions: Glossolalia

Kasemann, Fee, Kendall, Bernard and Bruce all agreed, and are of the opinion that the groans of the Spirit are believers praying in unknown tongues (*glossolalia*), based on the view that the language used in Romans 8:26 is similar to the tongues referred to in 1 Corinthians 14:14-15 and the prayer in Ephesians 6:18. This explanation would imply that the tongues prayed by the human spirit (1 Corinthians 14:14-15) and believers praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18) are the same as the Holy Spirit making intercession for them (Romans 8:26-27), which is exactly what Bruce has concluded. However, the Holy Spirit praying for believers (*intercession*) is not the same as believers being led by the Spirit to pray effectively according to the will of God. Hence, this interpretation appears to be forcing the Scripture to say something that it is not saying, which would be a typical example of eisegesis. A more accurate view may be that it is the groanings of the Spirit on the believer's behalf which become the perfect

intercessions to God, and not the forced idea of tongues being the perfect intercession. That said, this research is not disputing or contradicting the fact that believers sometimes speak in tongues when they pray. The point being emphasized is that this view may be guilty of eisegesis, as this specific text does not seem to naturally fit the idea of the gift of tongues. Three valid counterarguments were given, aptly explaining and showing why the text does not naturally fit the idea of tongues.

Firstly, Kruse rightly argued that the Spirit's intercession is for believers, and it therefore does not refer to the prayers He inspires believers to pray (Ephesians 6:18). This interpretation seems to be the most sound, and therefore the one most preferred by the majority of scholars. Hence, this argument refutes Bruce's suggestion that 'believers praying in the Spirit' and 'the Holy Spirit interceding on their behalf' are one and the same thing.

Secondly, Kruse, Deffinbaugh, Cereghin and Ryrie concurred and argued further that the groans are wordless groans, implying that tongues, which are spoken by believers, cannot be what is meant. This observation rightly refutes the claims of all the proponents of this view, who seem to be forcing the text to say something it is not saying. Although not mentioned, it may be possible that the proponents of this view may be of a similar opinion, and also believe like Lloyd-Jones and Haldane (indirect view) that it is inconceivable for the Spirit to groan, and therefore have concluded that believers groan with unknown tongues.

Thirdly, Ross and Grudem both accurately argued that those who don't speak in tongues would be excluded from this intercession, resulting in guilt and confusion. To this, one could add that those who do not have this gift may feel inadequate and somewhat rejected by the Holy Spirit not interceding for them by withholding tongues from them. It appears therefore that this view could be guilty of exclusivity, which seems to be contrary to the inclusive generous heart of God

that freely gives believers all things (Romans 8:32).

In summary, this assessment has evaluated the view of *glossolalia* based on the contributions of the authors reviewed. As a result, it has noted that because the interpretation of this view has resigned 'the groanings of the Spirit' to *glossolalia* it has also contributed to the lack of research on the topic of the Spirit's intercession on behalf of the believer and what significance that would have in their life as they wait for the day of redemption.

2.3.5 Direct Groans

The proponents of this view have interpreted the Spirit's groanings, mentioned in Romans 8:26, as His own groanings and have contributed in this way.

Douglas Moo (1991:562) and John Stott (1994:245) agreed and seem to understand that the groanings are the Spirit's own intercession, which takes place within the believer. Similarly, William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad (1997:n.p) agreed that the groanings are related directly to the Holy Spirit, and not to the believer as He intercedes for them.

Keeping the focus on the Holy Spirit, Earl Radmacher, Ronald Allan and Wayne House (1999:n.p) remarked that the groanings of the Spirit are unexpressed and unspoken, and therefore are inaudible. Similarly, John Stott (1994:245) refers to the Holy Spirit's intercession for believers as 'speechless groans; he goes on to explain that the 'unutterable' or 'speechless' groans are 'unexpressed, rather than inexpressible' because the Greek word used for *unutterable* is *alaletos* meaning *wordless*. John Polhill (1976:425-436) agrees, and says these 'unutterable groanings' are probably 'unformulated, unexpressed words'.

To Stott and Polhill's observations, Robert Gundry (2011:loc 1688) added that the Spirit's groanings are not only unexpressed but 'ineffable' because they are

too deep and way beyond words. Wesley Duewel (2013:327-328) explained that the Greek word for *groan* is *stenagmos*, meaning 'an inward groaning'. He commented further that deep inner groanings don't need to be expressed or vocalized for God to hear, understand, and answer them. Likewise, authors Charles Barrett (1957:168) and Charles Spurgeon (2014:loc 1027) agreed that the Spirit's groanings do not need to be spoken or expressed, because God the Father knows the mind of the Spirit (Romans 8:27).

John MacArthur 2013:1676 proposed that the Spirit's intercession takes place within believers and on behalf of them, but that it is something that is imperceptible to them. On this subject of imperceptibility, Wayne Grudem (1994:1078) commented that this would mean the Spirit's intercession would be similar to the continual intercession of Jesus mentioned in Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25.

James Rosscup (1999:151-152) noted that in the context of Romans 8:18-30 Paul was emphasizing the Spirit's ability to intercede for believers. He also drew attention to the fact that verse 26 is the only reference to the Spirit of God interceding by prayer, 'whether in the Old Testament, Jewish apocryphal or pseudepigraphical books, rabbinic writings, Qumran literature, or any known source up to Paul's words in Romans 8' (1999:139). Nevertheless, he also observed that this intercession fits naturally with one of the Holy Spirit's ministry titles as Intercessor. Similarly, Charles Hodge (2013:loc 4026) described the Holy Spirit's intercession, as 'the help of an advocate who pleads the cause or case of believers before God'. John Schultz (2005:72) is of the same opinion, and noted that the Holy Spirit's intercession proves Him to be all that His name, *Parakletos*, implies and represents.

Colin Kruse (2012:352) argued further and pointed out that these groanings are of a different order to those of creation and those of believers, which stem from

frustration and suffering, and noted that the Spirit's groanings are associated with intercession for believers. John Stott (1994:245) agreed and explained that the groanings of the Spirit are not because of imperfection and weakness, but are in empathy and identification as the Holy Spirit shares in the believers' longing for final redemption. Grant Osborne (2004:217-219) contributed that the Holy Spirit's deep groanings are an expression of His deep love and concern for them. In the same vein, John Schultz (2005:73) added that the intensity of the Holy Spirit's intercession reveals His compassion for believers as well as His participation in redeeming God's creation.

2.3.6 Assessment of Contributions: Direct Groans

Moo, Stott, MacDonald and others agreed that the groanings are related directly to the Holy Spirit, and not to the believer. As a result, the focus is kept on the Holy Spirit and not transferred to the believer. This seems to be the most accurate and least complicated interpretation, because it does not twist or force the text to say something it is not saying, but it allows the passage to remain true to its original author-intended meaning of the Holy Spirit making intercession for believers in the midst of their weaknesses. If this is a correct observation, then it directly supports the argument in this research project.

Radmacher, Stott, Polhill and others agreed that the groanings of the Spirit are deep inward groanings that are not expressed or are wordless, and therefore are inaudible. Observing that these 'unutterable groans' are more accurately translated from the Greek text as 'wordless groans' adds weight to their findings, making their observation a valid one, as it proves that these groans could not be tongues. It is possible, therefore, that the Spirit's deep groanings point to emotions of sorrow and heartache, alluding to the idea of empathy, compassion and identification that accompanies and sustains intercession. As a result this point directly supports the argument in this thesis.

Duewel also said the groanings do not need to be vocalized for God to hear, understand, and answer them. This is a correct and valid observation that contributes to this thesis, because God knows all things including the mind of the Spirit, and therefore knows and understands exactly what the Spirit's groanings are about without any vocalizing or interpretation needed (Romans 8:27). This point highlights the confidence believers can have in the intercessory help of the Holy Spirit, and as a result it directly supports the research question of this thesis.

Rosscup noted that Paul was emphasizing the Spirit's ability to intercede for believers in the midst of their weaknesses. In other words, Paul was not trying to stress the need for believers to pray, but rather the Spirit's ability to intercede for them and help them in their weaknesses. His observation is therefore an accurate and valid one for this project, because it keeps the focus on the Holy Spirit's role of intercession, and does not deviate to the prayers of the believer. And rightly so, because it appears that Paul devoted the whole chapter to what a life controlled by the Holy Spirit looks like. It seems unlikely, therefore, that he would change focus by putting emphasis on the prayers of the believer, though prayer is important, but not the focus in this text. It seems more likely that Paul wanted to highlight the believers' inability to help themselves in the midst of adversity as compared with God's ability to sustain and keep them while they wait for the day of glorification no matter what suffering and adversity they have to endure in the meantime (Romans 8:18).

Cranfield, MacArthur and Grudem commented on the imperceptibility of the Spirit's intercession taking place within believers and on behalf of them, but not noticeable to them. Grudem also noted that the Spirit's intercession would thus be similar to the continual intercession of Jesus mentioned in Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25. This is an accurate observation, for believers know that this intercession is taking place only because the Bible tells them so, and not because they hear anything from the Spirit who dwells within them. But this

should not be a difficult thing to grasp or accept, neither does it need to be an area of contention, because the Christian life is one of faith, and there are aspects of the faith (e.g. trinity) that believers accept as true even though they may not fully understand them. This intercession by Jesus and the Spirit is a case in point. So, if this intercession is taking place, then what does it mean for the believer?

Rosscup noted that Romans 8:26 is the only reference to the Spirit of God interceding by prayer in any known source. This obviously highlights the fact that there are no other sources with which to compare it, making interpretation of the text complicated and tricky. To underscore this point even further, the Strong Concordance (1981:518) only records *intercession* nine times and *intercessions* only once. As a result, Biblical evidence for this word is indeed very sketchy; however, the practice of intercession in Scripture is not vague at all. Hence, each example of intercession found in Scripture contributes to the knowledge and understanding of the topic under discussion. So, even though there may be mystery surrounding this topic, and even though one may not fully understand the implications of this ministry, one cannot deny that the reference to the Spirit's intercession is in the text. And so, if it is there, what does it mean, and what significance or encouragement may it have for believers while they wait for the day of final redemption?

Rosscup, Hodge and Schultz also made a valid point that this intercession fits naturally with the Holy Spirit's ministry title as Intercessor. This is a title hidden within the Greek word *parakletos* translated *helper* (NKJV), which according to Strong's Concordance means *intercessor, advocate, consoler and comforter*. So despite the fact that this is the only reference to the Spirit of God interceding for believers, it is still a valid reference to His ministry and, as scholars have observed, it proves that He is all that His name (intercessor) says He is. If the Holy Spirit is interceding for believers, what encouragement does it give them as

they endure suffering and patiently wait for their redemption to be fully realized?

Kruse, Stott and Osborne argue that the groanings of the Spirit are not because of imperfection and weakness, but are in empathy and identification as the Holy Spirit shares in the believers' longing for final redemption. This observation is correct and true, because the Spirit is perfect and strong, and would therefore not be groaning in weakness and imperfection. However, intercession is accompanied and sustained by empathy and compassion, so it seems logical to conclude that the groanings of the Spirit are a reference to His empathy and compassion for believers and not because of any weakness or imperfections on His part. Hence, this point made by Kruse, Stott and Osborne directly supports the argument in this thesis; however, they have not discussed what this may mean for the believer.

Schultz noted that the Spirit's intercession does not only reveal God's compassion for believers, but it also reveals His participation in redeeming God's creation. This is a valid and significant observation, because the Holy Spirit, who is God's agent in the earth, has been participating and working to redeem all creation since the fall (Genesis 3) and will continue His work until the day of final redemption, when the sons of God are revealed and all creation is delivered from the bondage of decay due to sin (Romans 8:19-21). This observation also implies that the Holy Spirit has always been an intercessor interjecting on mankind's behalf to redeem that which was lost due to sin, and as a result the observation contributes to the research in this thesis. It may also imply that the intercession in view may involve more than prayer and include the possibility of further acts of service, sacrifice and the participation that may accompany intercession as mentioned in Chapter 1.

In summary, this assessment has evaluated the 'direct view' based on the contributions of the authors consulted. As a result, it has observed that although

these scholars agree that the groanings in question are from the Holy Spirit, some of them have not acknowledged the empathy and identification found at the heart of intercession. This does not mean that they disagree with the concept, but merely have not acknowledged it. Those who have acknowledged this aspect have not discussed it in detail. As a result, not much consideration has been given to the significance and the encouragement which the Holy Spirit's intercession may have for believers waiting for their final day of redemption.

2.4 The Providence of God

This area of encouragement is related to God's involvement, and participation by His Spirit in the destiny of believers. The reviewed scholars have commented on this area of encouragement in the following way.

Steven Cole (2013:n.p) remarked that the believer's sufferings do not undermine God's eternal plan, which is continuously unfolding. Warren Wiersbe (1997:n.p) added that the circumstances of life work for the good of believers, no matter how painful they may be. Likewise, Anders Nygren (1978:338) noted that all that is negative in this life has a positive purpose in the completing of God's eternal plan. Grant Osborne (2004:219-220) wrote that the sovereignty of God responds to the Spirit's intercession and turns everything around for the believer's good. He goes on to say that as believers place their hope in God they can be confident in God's love and know that all the suffering they endure works together for their good. Along these lines, Charles Ryrie (1999:442) wrote that the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of the believers' redemption, and as a result, they can be assured of a glorious future.

Kent Hughes (1991:167) commented that everything believers go through will work out for their good, not necessarily in this life, but ultimately. He went on to say that Paul had 'our eternal rather than our temporal good in mind'. Douglas Moo (2009:269) concurs, and wrote that in the context of Romans 8:18-30 the

good Paul refers to is particularly the final glory for which God has destined believers. John Stott (1994:247) also noted that the good referred to in the text is the believer's ultimate well-being or final salvation.

Woodrow Kroll (2002:139) pointed out that the promise of 'all things working together for good' is to the believer who loves God and not to the unbeliever who denies Christ and does not love God. John Stott (1994:247) also agreed and commented that the beneficiaries of this promise are God's people who love Him. Likewise, Leon Morris (2012:331) is of the same opinion, and noted that Paul was making reference to believers who love God and not to the general public or the unbeliever. Keith Krell (2012:n.p) also noted that the same people for whom God 'works all things out for good' are the same people for whom the Holy Spirit is interceding, in other words, the believers.

Bob Deffinbaugh (2004:n.p) commented that all the believer's struggles are part of God's plan and under His control to conform them to Christ. Mark Pretorius (2007:11) also noted that God is continually busy reproducing the moral image of Jesus in believers, and observed further that all that believers endure in this life is used to accomplish this glorious goal. Clark Pinnock (1996:74) is of a similar opinion. He wrote that the purpose of the believer's existence is to become Christ-like. In the same vein, Henry Blackaby (2009:7-8) remarked that believers cannot remain unchanged, because the Holy Spirit is on an assignment to conform them to Christ's image. Allen Ross (2006:n.p) agreed and stated that believers are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus.

Robert Gundry (2011:loc 1713) added that the doctrine of predestination is the foundation of all things working together for the believer's good, because God has predestined believers to be conformed to the image of His Son. John MacArthur (2013:1677) suggested that God made a predetermined choice to set His love on mankind and establish an intimate relationship with them. Douglas

Moo (2009:270) wrote that God's plan for humanity began in His decision to enter into relationship with them, which led to His decision to predestine believers to be conformed to the image of His Son. John Cereghin (2013:262) has noted that this predestination does not deal with salvation but rather with sanctification. Don Fleming (2005:536) concluded that the love and compassion God has for believers compels Him by His Spirit to be at work in all their affairs, right from His eternal choice to make them His children, to His act of final glorification when they will share in the likeness of Christ Jesus.

Assessment of Contributions: The Providence of God

Cole, Wiersbe and Nygren agreed and noted that the believers' sufferings do not undermine God's eternal plan, but work together for their good, no matter how painful they may be. Indeed, if one's sufferings could undermine God's eternal plan, then one would have to question His sovereignty. But, because God is sovereign, one's sufferings do not undermine, weaken, hinder or stop the Spirit of God from accomplishing God's eternal plan. This observation highlights the fact that suffering does not hinder God's plan for the believer, but that the Holy Spirit works all things together for good, and as a result contributes directly to the research question in this thesis.

Osborne and Ryrie agreed that the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit turns everything around for the believer's good. This implies that the Spirit's intercession guarantees the believers' redemption, so they can be assured of their glorious future despite their present sufferings. In other words, it appears that the connection of the believers' present sufferings with the Holy Spirit's intercession and their glorious future alludes to the idea that it is because of the Holy Spirit's ministry and perfect intercession that believers can be assured of all things working together for good. It appears, therefore, that it is the intercessory ministry of the Spirit which carries and sustains believers through this life until the day of their final redemption. This point directly supports the research question

of this thesis, and suggests that there may be more than just prayer taking place.

In Romans 8:28, Paul wrote that 'all things work together for good' and authors Hughes, Moo and Stott agreed that the good Paul refers to in this text is particularly the final glory to which God has destined believers, and not their immediate good. In other words, everything believers presently suffer will work out for their good, not necessarily in this life, but ultimately, as it achieves the will and purpose of God for them. This 'final good' for which believers have been destined ought to encourage them to endure hardship with a joyful expectation until that glorious day. Hence the authors' conclusion is a valid one as proposed in this thesis, as it highlights how believers may be encouraged by the Holy Spirit working all things together for their ultimate good.

Kroll, Stott and Morris concurred that the promise of 'all things working together for good' is for God's people who love Him and not for the general public or the unbeliever. Krell observed further that the same people for whom God 'works all things out for their good' are the same people for whom the Holy Spirit is interceding. This is an accurate and true observation, because unbelievers cannot be conformed to the image of Jesus, which is the ultimate good to which Paul is referring, and would thus exclude them from this promise. Similarly, the 'ultimate good' includes the 'revealing of the sons of God', which would also automatically exclude the unbeliever (Romans 8:19). However, the hardships that unbelievers endure may also be used by God to bring them to salvation, and then include them in this promise, thus resulting in all things working out for their good too. Nevertheless, in the context of the Holy Spirit's intercession being the reason why all things work together for good, the promise is to believers and not to unbelievers, making the contributions of these authors valid and a source of encouragement for believers in the midst of hardship and adversity in this present life.

Deffinbaugh, Pretorius, and others agreed believers are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus, and that the Holy Spirit uses all life's circumstances to achieve this purpose. Gundry emphasized this further, and remarked that the doctrine of predestination is the foundation for this transformation to take place. In other words, it is God's ordained plan that all those who come to salvation (believers) will be changed in moral character to be like Jesus (1 John 3:2). Hence, the knowledge of God's ordained destiny for the believer should fill them with hope and encourage them to persevere in their faith in all circumstances until that glorious day appears. This position supports this research in highlighting the Holy Spirit's involvement and participation in the life of believers to conform them to the image of Christ while they wait for the day of their final redemption.

MacArthur and Moo agreed that in His foreknowledge God made a predetermined choice to set His love on mankind and establish an intimate relationship with them. This would imply that God's purpose for man was determined or chosen beforehand to be one of close intimacy with Him. This is true, because Scripture teaches that God chose believers, before the foundation of the world, to be adopted in Christ as His own sons and daughters (Ephesians 1:4-6). The knowledge of God's purpose for believers to be His own sons and daughters encourages them and gives them confidence to relate to Him as a loving Father, intimately involved in their life by His Spirit, and not as a distant unresponsive deity. Hence, the contributions of these authors highlight the encouragement believers can find in knowing God's plan and intention for them.

Cereghin observed that within the context of Romans 8:18-30 predestination is primarily unto sanctification and not unto salvation. In other words, the believers' sanctification is in view here, not the salvation of unbelievers. This observation is an important one, because it means that the focus of the text is on the sanctifying journey of the believer becoming like Jesus and the role the Holy Spirit plays in

this journey. Hence, it is the road of sanctification that leads to the glorification being discussed, and not the pathway to conversion as some, like the Calvinists, may argue. Consequently, believers can be encouraged by the doctrine of predestination, because it gives them the confidence that what is promised to them and predestined for them will be fully realized on the day of redemption. As a result, the point made here is a valid and supportive one for this thesis, as it highlights the Spirit's involvement in the believer's life.

Fleming concluded that God's love and compassion compelled Him to be intimately involved with believers by His Spirit from His eternal choice to adopt them, to His final work of glorification in them. In other words, God's providence or His intervention in their lives to redeem them and glorify them is motivated, inspired and sustained by His love for them and is accomplished by His Spirit in them. This point is important and relevant because it highlights the encouragement God's providence is to believers encountering adverse circumstances while they wait for their day of redemption.

In summary, this assessment has evaluated the contributions of the authors consulted, and has observed that sufferings do not undermine God's eternal plan for believers, but that the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit, which may go beyond the boundary of prayer, works all things together for their good. It also observed that God's predetermined will for believers, to make them His own sons and daughters and to conform them to the image of His Son, is being accomplished by the Holy Spirit, which highlights His divine intervention and intercession in their lives.

2.5 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to review and assess scholarly research that contributed to the understanding and the interpretation of the Holy Spirit's intercessory help referred to in Romans 8:18-30, and thus shed more light on

how the Holy Spirit might help believers in their weaknesses while they anticipate the day of their glorification. From the large corpus of literature reviewed it was established that there is general consensus among scholars in the interpretation of Romans 8:18-30, as all of them generally acknowledge the same three areas of encouragement, namely (1) the hope of future glory (2) the help of the Holy Spirit and (3) the providence of God.

In summary, the contributing authors generally agree that believers are not exempt from pain and suffering while they wait for their final day of redemption. Nevertheless, these scholars also concluded that the despair and discouragement of suffering believers can be combated if suffering is viewed in light of the future glory promised to them. Furthermore, encouragement and support accompany the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is their present help in the midst of suffering and the guarantee of their future glory being realized.

Secondly, whilst there was a consensus among the reviewed writings that the Holy Spirit helps believers by interceding for them in the midst of their weaknesses, it was observed that the interpretation of what this help may involve is an area of contention. Within this controversial debate, scholars have generally decided on three interpretations regarding the Spirit's intercession, namely (1) indirect groans (2) glossolalia and (3) direct groan.

The indirect view proposed that the Holy Spirit causes the believer to groan as He intercedes through them, for it is inconceivable, as some have suggested, that the Holy Spirit should groan. The glossolalic perspective claimed that the groanings of the Spirit are the unknown tongues expressed by believers when they pray. It was noted that the emphasis in these two views was on the importance of the believer praying, and as a result, the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit has been largely overlooked and seemingly ignored. Having said

this, this research is not disputing or contradicting the fact that believers ought to pray, or that they sometimes speak in tongues when they pray. However, it is highlighting the fact that these views seem to redirect the focus of the text from the intercession of the Spirit to the prayer of the believer. The direct view proposed that the indwelling Holy Spirit intercedes for the believer directly with His own wordless groans that seem to be inaudible. It was observed that the emphasis in this view remained on the work and ministry of the Spirit; however, it failed to explore the depth of this ministry and the significance it may have for those who believe. Thus, each of these interpretations was reviewed and discussed within the context of the target pericope, and in each case the study gap for researching the nature of the Holy Spirit's intercession on behalf of believers remained evident.

The contributions of the reviewed writings have also revealed that the believers' present sufferings do not undermine God's eternally ordained plan for them, but are used by His Spirit to conform them into the moral image of Jesus Christ. As a result, all things work together for the ultimate good of those who love God and for whom the Holy Spirit is interceding (believers). The connection between these sufferings and the Holy Spirit's intercession was recognized by Osborne and Ryrie, but not discussed in detail. Consequently, the imperceptible intercessory ministry that takes place within believers, assuring them of all things ultimately working out for their good, appears to have been largely overlooked in the interpretation of the text, highlighting once again the research question of this thesis.

Whilst the findings of this literary review have contributed in a small way to an understanding of the ways in which the Holy Spirit may help believers in their weaknesses, they have contributed in a much larger way by highlighting the lack of research on the topic of the Holy Spirit's intercession, and thus also emphasizing unanswered questions that relate to what this intercession may

involve. For example, if the Holy Spirit is interceding for believers, what does it mean for them? Is it possible that the Spirit's intercession in view goes beyond the boundaries of prayer to include far more in the journey of sanctification? Could it be that this intercession assures believers that all things work together for their good?

These types of questions have highlighted the fact that there is still some mystery regarding the intercession of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, which begs for further investigation. As a result, these findings have justified doing further research, hopefully to answer the questions already posed, and those that may emerge as this thesis progresses. They justify further research that may contribute to the Church's current understanding of the role the Holy Spirit's intercession may play in the believer's life of sanctification, which may ultimately encourage and strengthen their faith in God.

To accomplish this, a clear relationship between the target pericope and the message of the book must be established in order to contribute further to the accuracy of the interpretation of the text under investigation. Hence, the historical, social, cultural, and literary background of the book of Romans will be researched and investigated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL AND LITERARY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to establish a clear relationship between the target pericope and the message of the book of Romans in order to contribute further to the accuracy of the interpretation of the text under investigation. Establishing this clear relationship will ultimately contribute to answering the thesis question of how the Holy Spirit helps believers as they anticipate the day of their final redemption.

The research for this chapter commenced with the reading of the epistle to consider the letter's structure in order to determine the letter's argument or flow of thought and the context of the passage within the epistle, to avoid, as much as possible, misinterpretation of the text under review. Next, the general background of the letter was briefly addressed in terms of its authorship, its date and its recipients to contribute to the understanding of the letter's content. The purpose and occasion of the epistle was reviewed to further explain any other historical or cultural aspects that could have contributed to the reason why the letter was written. Finally, the major theological themes were reviewed and analysed, especially those relevant to the pericope, to establish how the Holy Spirit might help believers anticipate the day of their final redemption. Hence, the findings of this chapter are presented below under the following headings: Literary Context, Passage Context, Theological Context General Context, and finally, Historical Context.

3.2 Literary Context

How one interprets and understands the overall structure and argument of a book determines how one understands the meaning of the passage being researched (Smith 2008:173). Hence, this section focused on the structure and the argument of the letter, how it was organized and the flow of thought it contains.

3.2.1 Structure of the Letter

Unlike modern-day letter writing, which commences with the name of the recipient, continues into the body of the letter and concludes with the name of the sender, the letter writing of Paul's day commenced with the name of the sender, followed by the name of the recipient, followed by the body of the letter. Then, usually, the body of a personal letter would conclude with some personal greetings and a signature (Woodrow 2002:251).

Paul's epistle to the church in Rome seems to be a combination of a personal letter and a theological essay or treatise due to its large doctrinal body. The opening section (identifying the author and recipients, with a greeting and thanksgiving) and closing section (relating his situation and future plans, with greetings and doxology) resemble a personal letter, and the large body that expounds and defends the Gospel resembles a theological essay or treatise (Kruse 2012:11). In general though, it appears that the basic arrangement or structure of the epistle can be viewed in three parts, namely, an introduction, a body and a conclusion.

When scholars have studied, analysed and commented on this letter, it appears that they have organized or divided the letter into sections according to the subject matter, possibly to make it easier for the reader or researcher to determine at a glance Paul's argument or flow of thought. From the commentaries reviewed, there appeared to be a consensus among these

scholars in the portions of the text recognized as the introduction (1:1-17) and the conclusion (15:14-16:27), and thus agreement on the portion designated to the large doctrinal body (1:18-15:13) in this letter. However, when considering the large body of the letter, these scholars seemed to differ on how they viewed and discussed the subject matter it contains. As a result of this, various divisions have been offered by these authors. Some authors used a simple two-part division to comment on this letter, while others used three, four, six and even seven sections in their commentaries, as discussed below. This research has also suggested a structure (see 3.2.2) that could be helpful in observing the flow of thought or argument contained in this letter.

3.2.1.1 Two-part Division

Robert Haldane (2013:loc 139) simply divided the letter into two sections: (1) doctrine (1-11) and (2) practice (12-16). He explained that the first section teaches what one ought to believe, and the second section teaches what one ought to practise. While this structure is simple and uncomplicated and even accurate in observing the two parts common in Paul's letters, namely doctrine and practice, it does not appear to be helpful in revealing anything of the content and argument contained in the letter.

3.2.1.2 Three-part Division

Other scholars (Dunn 1988:vii-xi, Gingrich 2002:loc 71, Carson and Moo 2011:loc 9416) have discussed this epistle in three sections: (1) an introduction (1:1-17), (2) a body (1:18-15:13), and (3) a conclusion (15:14-16:23). Furthermore, Dunn described the large doctrinal body as a 'treatise', a 'literary dialogue' or 'letter essay'. Donald Carson and Douglas Moo (2011:loc 9416) agree that it is a theological treatise framed by an introduction (1:1-7) and a conclusion (15:14-16:27) that explains the redemption plan of God (Gospel). Like the two-part structure above, this structure is also simple and uncomplicated. Authors Carson and Moo highlighted the fact that the large body of the letter contains the

message of the Gospel. Thus, it seems logical to assume that Paul's argument or flow of thought in this letter would also pertain to this topic.

3.2.1.3 Four-part Division

Some scholars, like Irving Jensen (1981:250), have discussed the book in four sections: (1) a prologue (Chapter 1:1-17), (2) doctrine explaining the Gospel (Chapters 1:18-11:36), (3) practice (Chapters 12:1-15:13) and (4) an epilogue (Chapter 15:14-16:27). This structure seems to be a combination of the previous divisions discussed above. Here Jensen combines the doctrine and practice offered by Haldane (two-part division) and then does much the same as Dunn, Gingrich, Carson and Moo (three-part division) by highlighting the fact that the largest part of the letter is a doctrinal explanation of the Gospel. Although there are no themes or details given, it seems evident, once again, that the flow of thought contained in this letter is related to the Gospel.

3.2.1.4 Six-part Division

Others have used six sections to discuss the contents of this book. For example, Osborne (2004:24-26) uses the following six sections: (1) introduction (1:1-17), (2) universality of human sinfulness (1:18-3:20), (3) salvation by faith (3:21-8:39), (4) Jew and Gentile in God's plan (9:1-11:36), (5) living the Christian life (12:1-15:13) and (6) a conclusion (15:14-16:27). In a similar way, John Stott (1994:37-43) discusses the six sections as follows: (1) introduction (1:1-17), (2) the wrath of God against all humankind (1:18-3:20), (3) the grace of God in the Gospel (3:21-8:39), (4) the plan of God for Jews and Gentiles (9-11), (5) the will of God for changed lives (12:1-15:13) and (6) a conclusion (15:14-16:27). Similarly, Moo (2000:28-29) divides the letter as follows: (1) introduction (1:1-17), (2) justification by faith (1:18-4:25), (3) the hope of salvation (5:1-8:39), (4) the problem of Israel (9:1-11:36), (5) Christian conduct (12:1-15:13) and (6) a conclusion (15:14-16:27). In a similar way, Woodrow Kroll (2002:ix-x) uses key themes as titles in his commentary: (1) prologue (1:1-17), (2) condemnation (1:18-3:20), (3)

justification (3:21-5:21), (4) sanctification (6:1-8:39), (5) redemption (9:1-11:36), and (6) application (12:1-16:27).

These authors have chosen to divide the large doctrinal body into sections which discuss different aspects of the Gospel or themes contained therein, making the flow of thought contained in the letter more obvious to the reader or researcher. Hence, the argument that seemed to emerge in the letter commenced with human sinfulness and progressed to a salvation freely available in Christ (1-8). It moved on and incorporated how both Jew and Gentile are included in this salvation (9-11), and then concluded with the expression of this new life in daily living (12-15). In addition to the flow of thought emerging in this structure, the doctrinal and practical aspects of Paul's letters, as mentioned above, also remained evident.

3.2.1.5 Seven-part Division

There are some authors who preferred to discuss the book in seven sections, such as Lea and Black (2003:400-401) who have discussed the seven sections like this: (1) an introduction (1:1-17), (2) the sinfulness of humanity (1:18-3:20), (3) the path of righteousness (3:21-5:21), (4) the path of holy living (6:1-8:39), (5) the problem of Israel's unbelief (9:1-11:36), (6) practical Christian living (12:1-15:13) and (7) a conclusion (15:14-16:27). In a similar way, Leon Morris (2012:33-34) uses the following headings for his seven sections: (1) introduction (1:1-15), (2) thesis (1:16-17), (3) the way of deliverance (1:18-5:21), (4) the way of Godliness (6:1-8:39), (5) the place of Israel (9:1-11:36), (6) Christian living (12:1-15:13) and (7) conclusion (15:14-16:27).

In this structure the large doctrinal body describing the same Gospel message was given a further breakdown. In other words, to the same flow of thought mentioned above in the six-part division, these authors have added an extra division. Morris added a section that highlights Paul's main argument in the letter

(his thesis) (1:16-17) and Lea and Black added a section that highlights holy living (6-8). Consequently, the flow of thought observed from these contributions would look something like this: the argument in the letter commenced with a statement that highlights the overall argument as the 'Gospel of Christ' (1:16-17), it then emphasized human sinfulness and progressed to a salvation freely available in Christ (1-5). It then moved on to describe a life of holiness (6-8) and incorporated how both Jew and Gentile are included in God's plan of salvation (9-11). Finally, it concluded with the expression of this new life in daily living (12-15). As mentioned above, in addition to the argument being evident in this structure, the doctrinal and practical aspects of Paul's letters, once again, were apparent. From all these contributions, it appears then that the more section titles there are, the more obvious Paul's argument becomes to the reader or researcher, making it easier to see at a glance what the argument or flow of thought is in this letter.

3.2.2 Argument of the Letter

As mentioned above, the contributing scholars seem to agree that the body of the letter reads like a theological treatise that discusses the redemption plan of God for humanity. If one uses the various structures offered by the above authors to ascertain the flow of thought or argument of this letter, the redemption plan of God becomes obvious, as demonstrated below.

Osborne (2004:24-26) showed how Paul progressed from the universality of human sinfulness (1:18-3:20) to the provision of salvation by faith (3:21-8:39). He highlighted that God's salvation includes both Jew and Gentile (9:1-11:36) and included the practical application of living the Christian life (12:1-15:13). Likewise, John Stott (1994:37-43) illustrated how Paul's argument developed from the wrath of God against all humankind (1:18-3:20), to the grace of God revealed in His provision of salvation (3:21-8:39). He highlighted that the redemption plan of God included both Jew and Gentile (9-11), which ultimately resulted in changed lives (12:1-15:13). Similarly, Moo (2000:28-29) pointed out

how Paul, in his argument, moved from explaining that the heart of the Gospel is justification by faith in Jesus (1:18-4:25) to how faith in Christ provided believers with the assurance of salvation (5:1-8:39). He considered how Israel fits into God's redemption plan (9:1-11:36) and expanded on how the transforming power of the Gospel should influence one's conduct (12:1-15:13). In the same way, Lea and Black (2003:400-401) explained that the flow of thought progressed from the sinfulness of humanity (1:18-3:20) to the path of righteousness that is freely available (3:21-5:21) and how this righteousness should result in holy living (6:1-8:39). Paul then addressed the problem of Israel's unbelief (9:1-11:36) and concluded with a section on practical Christian living (12:1-15:13). Also, Leon Morris (2012:33-34) showed the letter's argument progressing from the way of deliverance for fallen man (1:18-5:21) to the way of Godliness in Christ (6:1-8:39). He highlighted the place of Israel in God's plan (9:1-11:36) and concluded with the practical application of salvation in daily Christian living (12:1-15:13).

Thus, from the above contributions, it seems evident that the flow of thought in this letter moved from sinful humanity being an enemy of God and an object of His wrath to the gracious provision of forgiveness and righteousness given to all humanity (Jew and Gentile) through faith in Jesus Christ that ought to result in holy living. Hence, the argument contained in this letter highlights the fact that the Gospel is good news for fallen humanity, as it reveals the merciful heart of God and shows how He graciously intervened (interceded) on man's behalf to redeem him from sin and hell and reconcile him to Himself. Thus the structures offered by these scholars, which were possibly intended to make it easier to establish the argument and flow of thought in this letter, have done just that, and have contributed positively to revealing the message and flow of thought contained in Paul's letter to the church in Rome.

Before closing and summarizing this section, this research would suggest that another possible structure to consider is one that would highlight the role of the

Holy Spirit within the Gospel. For instance, (1) an introduction (1:1-17), (2) condemnation due to man's rebellion (1:18-3:20), (3) justification through faith in Christ (3:21-5:21), (4) sanctification through the Holy Spirit (6:1-7:25), (5) life in the Spirit (8:1-39), (6) Israel's place in the plan of redemption (9:1-11:36), (7) practical daily living (12:1-15:13) and (8) conclusion (15:14-16:27). This example alludes to the role of the Holy Spirit within the redemption plan of God, which adds to the argument or flow of thought already observed in the various structures offered by the authors above. Thus, by including the Holy Spirit in the structure of the letter, the reader and researcher is made aware of the Holy Spirit's involvement and participation in the Gospel, thereby contributing to the argument or flow of thought being observed.

3.2.3 Section Summary: Literary Context

From the above evidence, the research concluded that Paul's letter basically has three parts to it, namely, an introduction, a body and a conclusion that discusses the redemption plan of God. There also appeared to be consensus on the portions of the text recognized as the introduction (1:1-17) and the conclusion (15:14-16:27), and thus also agreement on the portion designated to the large doctrinal body (1:18-15:13). However, it was evident that the contributing scholars seemed to differ in their discussion of the subject matter contained in the body of the letter, which resulted in various divisions being offered. From these divisions, it seemed evident that the more section titles there were the clearer the subject matter and flow of thought was for the researcher to see. Thus, it seemed logical to conclude that this information proved to be helpful in revealing the flow of thought or argument contained in Paul's letter to the church in Rome.

In addition to this, it seemed reasonable to conclude that the flow of thought in this letter progressed as follows: the overall argument is first made known as the 'Gospel of Christ'; it then emphasizes human sinfulness and progresses to a

salvation freely available in Christ. After that it moves on to describe a life of holiness and incorporates how both Jew and Gentile are included in God's plan of salvation. Finally, it concludes with the expression of this new life in Christ in daily Christian living. It was therefore concluded that the flow of thought in this letter highlighted the Gospel of Christ, which turns out to be exceedingly good news for fallen humanity, as it reveals a righteousness freely available through faith in Christ. The merciful heart of God was also observed while ascertaining the argument of this letter, for the Gospel message reveals how He graciously intervened in humanity's hopeless situation and interceded on their behalf to redeem them from sin and hell and reconcile them to Himself.

This research also suggested that another possible structure be considered, one that added the role of the Holy Spirit within the Gospel to the flow of thought already observed by the structures offered in this section. The reason for this suggestion was to draw attention to the role of the Holy Spirit within the redemption plan of God in order to make the reader or researcher aware of the Holy Spirit's involvement and participation in the Gospel from the start of the contextual exercise in this chapter.

3.3 Passage Context

To avoid a misinterpretation of the text, this section focused on the context of the passage within the context of the chapter and the letter. To achieve this, the message of the letter, the chapter and the passage were examined.

3.3.1 What is the Message in the Letter?

After reading the entire letter to the Romans it was observed that the central message contained in this epistle is 'God's redemption plan for humanity', often referred to as the Gospel of the Kingdom. Scholars have also acknowledged this observation to be an accurate one. For example, David Guzik (2012) wrote that the letter of Romans focuses on 'God and His great plan of redemption' and

James Dunn (1988:lxii) pointed out that the letter ‘provides a coherent and integrated vision of the eschatological people of God’ for both Jew and Gentile. The epistle to the Romans thus explains many of the great doctrines of the Christian faith, and as a result has rightly been referred to as ‘the Constitution of Christianity’ (Woodrow 2002:xi). Hence, the scholars consulted for this chapter seem to agree on the overall message being conveyed in the letter to the Romans.

Why is it important to know the central message being conveyed? Knowing the central message that an author is communicating in a letter is of paramount importance, because it provides the foundation for the interpretation of the individual chapters or portions thereof. Without the knowledge of the overall message, and failing to keep this message in mind, interpreting smaller portions of the letter could lead to misunderstandings of the text and the possibility of eisegesis taking place.

3.3.2 What is the Message in Romans 8?

It was observed that the Gospel message contained in Chapter 8 became more specific as it focused on the role of the Holy Spirit within God’s redemption plan for humanity and all of creation. The contributing academic scholars generally agreed with this conclusion, as their observations and contributions will reveal below.

John Stott (1994:217) said that the apostle Paul has the reader scanning God’s redemption plan from eternity past to eternity future in this chapter. He also emphasized the Holy Spirit’s involvement and participation in the life of the believer, and highlighted the fact that the Spirit is the assurance and guarantee of this plan being accomplished. Similarly, Lea and Black (2003:398) commented that this chapter described how the involvement and participation of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who guarantees the future glory promised to them, enables

believers in Christ to have the victory over sin and death, and consequently be encouraged and empowered to approach life with confidence. In the same way, Leon Morris (2012:299) highlighted Chapter 8 as being extremely important in the life of believers, because of the work of the Holy Spirit enabling and empowering them to overcome evil. He also noted that Paul described a life so continuously and perfectly guided by the Spirit that no imperatives or commandments are needed, and thus in the text none are given. Irving Jensen (1981:257) also noted that the chapter's focus is on the power of Christian living. He explained that the believers' victory in daily conflict is only possible by the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, Grant Osborne (2004:192) wrote that the Holy Spirit is the theme of this chapter, and is the power that enables believers to live in victory over the flesh, enjoy the privilege of sonship and inheritance, and the assurance of security in God. Also, James Dunn (1988:412-413) noted that Chapter 8 explains that the Holy Spirit is the key to believers understanding the eschatological tension they live in, and the key to the fulfilment of God's purpose of salvation, sanctification and glorification.

The importance of this chapter and its message for the believer is rightly highlighted and acknowledged by these six authors, as it is the work and power of the Holy Spirit accomplishing all things within God's redemption plan. His role in the life of the believer cannot be overemphasized, and should therefore not be understated, for without the Holy Spirit's work and power, nothing of redemption would be experienced or realized by humanity. Thus, from these contributions there appears to be a general consensus and acknowledgment that the role of the Holy Spirit is the main message contained in Chapter 8, as each author has acknowledged the Spirit's involvement and participation in God's redemption plan in various ways.

Due to the possibility of misinterpretation and eisegesis taking place, as mentioned in the previous sub-section (3.2.1), it seems important to remember

that the role of the Holy Spirit is the main message of the chapter when one focuses on the task of interpreting individual passages or verses contained within the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). An example of misinterpretation happening was alluded to in Chapter 2 of this thesis in the discussion on the Spirit's groanings (see 2.3) and how some scholars and popular authors have interpreted the groanings of the Spirit as the believer groaning or praying and not the Holy Spirit, as the text in Romans 8:26-27 seems to imply. Thus, by shifting focus and emphasizing the prayer of the believer, it seems that the intercession of the Holy Spirit has largely been ignored and seemingly reduced to a rather passive role. But as mentioned in the previous chapters of this thesis, and what hopefully becomes more evident in this study is that the help the Holy Spirit gives to believers is intervention and involvement that possibly goes beyond prayer.

3.3.3 What is the Message in Romans 8:18-30?

Whilst the entire chapter focused on the Holy Spirit's role within the redemption plan of God, the target pericope focused on the Holy Spirit's role in the final stage of this plan, namely, glory. Hence, the subtitles in most modern translations of the Bible have signposted this portion of the text 'The Future Glory'. Consequently, there also appeared to be a general consensus among the academic authors consulted, as the examples below will reveal.

Douglas Moo (1996:508) commented that the future glory promised to believers is the central point in this portion of the chapter, because it frames the passage at the start and finish of the text (vv 18, 30). Similarly, Frederick Bruce (1985:169, 171) noted that the message in the target pericope is the glory to come, as it focuses on the restoration of creation and the final redemption of believers guaranteed and accomplished by the indwelling Holy Spirit. John Stott (1994:217) echoed these sentiments as he noted that the passage focuses on the future glory of believers described as their ultimate liberty, which all of creation will enjoy and in which it will participate. James Dunn (1988:467) also

pointed out that Romans 8:18-30 is the climax of the chapter as Paul describes the future glory as the reversal of man's failure and the height or crowning point of his restoration.

Thus, these six authors seem to confirm that the future glory of the believer, in which all creation will also share, is the main message of the target pericope. There is also confirmation, specifically from Bruce, that this future glory that all believers are presently being prepared for is guaranteed and accomplished by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Therefore, the role of the Holy Spirit within the final stage of God's redemption plan (future glory) should be remembered as one interprets the individual verses and themes in the text, to avoid misinterpreting Paul's original intended message to his recipients. Hence, the focus of this project is on what the Holy Spirit's role is within this final stage of redemption, and how His intercession referred to in Romans 8:26-27 helps prepare believers for their future glory.

3.3.4 Section Summary: Passage Context

From reading the letter and from the contributions of authors Guzik, Dunn and Woodrow, it was observed that the message contained in the book of Romans is God's redemption plan, the Gospel of the Kingdom. From the contributions of Stott, Morris, Jensen, and others, there also appeared to be a general consensus that the redemption plan of God for humanity and all of creation is only accomplished by the power of Holy Spirit, and that the Christian life is only possible by the indwelling and empowering presence of the Spirit in every individual believer. There also appeared to be a general consensus among the consulted authors, Moo, Bruce, Stott and Dunn, that the message contained in the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) is the future glory of believers, which is the culmination of God's redemption plan for all of creation, accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the importance of this chapter cannot be overemphasized, and the significance of its message for believers should not be

understated, as it pertains to their faith and the role the Holy Spirit plays in aiding them in their weaknesses as they await this future glory.

But, how does the message of the book, the chapter and the target pericope influence or contribute to the research of this thesis? By giving attention to the message of the book and the chapter, the foundation for the rest of the research is set and the section under investigation (Romans 8:18-30) is kept in context to avoid misinterpreting the text. Hence, the role of the Holy Spirit is the focal point in the chapter and should remain the focal point when one interprets the individual aspects and themes that Paul mentions in the text. Thus, when one considers 'the future glory' it should be viewed within the context of the Holy Spirit being the guarantee and the power to fulfil this promise. Consequently, the focus of this research is the intercession of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the believer, and not on how the Holy Spirit aids the believer in prayer or how He may prompt believers to intercede for others.

3.4 Theological Context

This section focused on the themes of the Gospel that were relevant to the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) and the research question of this thesis. For this reason, the themes that were focused on were the ones relevant and helpful to the understanding of how the Holy Spirit's involvement and participation in the Gospel helps believers while they anticipate their final day of redemption. More specifically, the themes addressed were the ones mentioned by name as well as the ones that were not mentioned by name but were alluded to or implied by the words or phrases used in the text. For example, 'foreknowledge' is a theme that will be discussed, and it is mentioned by name in verse 29. Condemnation, however, is not mentioned by name in the Romans 8 text, but it is alluded to or implied in verses 20-21 by the phrases 'subjected to futility' and 'delivered from the bondage of decay'.

3.4.1 Themes in the Letter

Most scholars would agree that 'Justification by faith' has traditionally been acknowledged as the central theme in the book of Romans since the time of Luther and the Reformation in 1517. However, as Grant Osborne (2004:21) has noted, this belief has been challenged by those scholars who have chosen to emphasize other themes in the letter like, 'the Spirit-filled life' in Chapters 5-8; or 'election' in Chapters 9-11; or the 'unity of Jew and Gentile' in Chapters 14-15. Similarly, James Dunn (1988:lxii-lxxii) highlights the Jew/Gentile relationship as a major theme of this letter. Likewise, Leon Morris (2012:20) argues that the overarching theme in this letter is 'God', because he has observed that Paul's emphasis is on God throughout this letter. Some scholars like Woodrow Kroll (2002:ix-x) and Irving Jensen (1981:260), have highlighted in their writings condemnation, justification, sanctification, and redemption as dominant themes. Thus, it is evident that there are many topics or themes contained in the book of Romans, but scholars like Moo (2000:26), Osborne (2004:21) and Carson (2011:loc 9733) argue that a much broader theme is necessary to encompass and unify all these topics. As a result, they suggest that the 'Message of the Gospel' should be the overarching theme adopted to do the job of holding the epistle together.

Having one overarching theme as suggested by the above authors does make sense in holding all the individual themes of the letter together. However, the individual themes should not be ignored or downplayed at the expense of the main overarching theme. This is because it is only really when one focuses on the individual themes and understands them that the context of the overarching theme comes into focus. Furthermore, appreciation for the whole Gospel message is intensified by understanding the individual themes at a deeper level. In addition to this, not only does one appreciate the overall Gospel message more, but one's appreciation and awe of God is also deepened with the revelation of the individual parts.

3.4.2 Themes in the Target Pericope: Romans 8:18-30

Different themes or aspects of the Gospel message are evident in the portion of the text under review. For example, condemnation, foreknowledge, predestination, called, justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification are all themes found in the text that explain a different aspect of the Gospel. As mentioned above, it is these separate parts that make up the whole that increases one's knowledge of God and deepens one's appreciation and awe of Him. Consequently, the individual themes relevant to the study of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) as explained in 3.4 above, are the focus for the rest of this section.

3.4.2.1 Condemnation (1:18-3:20; 8:1, 20-23)

In the book of Romans, the theme of condemnation is addressed in Chapters 1-3 and again alluded to in Chapter 8. It is a sobering theme that explains the reason for such a verdict on humanity. Scripture teaches that man's rebellion against God in the Garden of Eden resulted in man and creation being cursed and condemned to eternal death (Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 6:23). Thus, creation's bondage is as a direct result of man's rebellion against God (Romans 1:18-3:20; 5:17-22). In verses 20-22 of Chapter 8, Paul mentions that all creation was 'subjected to futility' and that there is an 'eager expectation' for deliverance from this 'bondage of decay'. He sums up the result of God's curse on creation with one word *mataiotes* (frustration) meaning 'emptiness' or 'purposelessness'. Hence, John Stott (1994:239) has rightly observed that the sinfulness of man had far-reaching effects, as the condemnation and judgment of God on Adam's sin also fell on the natural order.

The Greek word for this condemnation is *katakrima* which *Mounce's Greek Dictionary* (2014:n.p) defines as a 'condemning sentence'. Likewise, Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014.) explain that it is a

'damnatory sentence', which originated from the root word *katakrino* meaning: to judge, in light of one's own goodness, that another is worthy of punishment.

From the dictionary definitions and the contributions of Paul and Stott above, it seems evident that the theme of condemnation highlights sin as the reason for the condemnatory sentence on humanity. It also reveals the far-reaching effect of sin and its consequences on both man and the natural order. Furthermore, it highlights the fact that it was the verdict of a righteous and holy God on man's sinful act of rebellion against Him. Fallen humanity was therefore at the mercy of a righteous God to rescue him. Consequently, this theme reveals man's rebellious heart, his desperate fallen state and his need for divine mercy and pardon, and thus his need for a Saviour who would be able to reconcile him to God and deliver him from eternal death.

As already mentioned in sub-section 3.3.3, the message in the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) focuses on the final stage of this desperately needed redemption plan. It focuses on the stage that culminates with Christ's return and believers being glorified with Him. This is also the time when all creation is released from its bondage to decay, a time when the restoration of all things will be complete. Hence, as one focuses on the fall of man and the consequences thereof, an awareness of God's redemption plan increases, which in turn promotes a greater appreciation for the grace and mercy of God? And so, the theme of condemnation highlights creation's fallen state, but also seems to create an awareness of the intervention or intercession of a merciful and gracious God, whose redemption plan involved action on His part as He stooped down and took on human flesh in order to redeem that which was lost due to sin. Thus, in Romans 8:1, Paul declared the good news that there is no longer any condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

3.4.2.2 Foreknew (8:29)

Foreknowledge is a biblical term from the Greek word *proginosko*. Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014.) explain that it comes from two words: *pro* meaning 'before' and *ghinosko* meaning 'to acquire knowledge of something'. Hence, *proginosko* means: to have the knowledge of something beforehand. To this, Thayer and Smith add that it refers to those elected or predestined by God for salvation. *Mounce's Greek Dictionary* (2014:n.p) agrees with Thayer and Smith's definition, but adds that it also means to decide or resolve (determine) something beforehand. For instance, foreknowledge can mean deciding beforehand to appoint someone to future privileges, like salvation. Consequently, some commentators have concluded that foreknowledge forms the basis of the doctrine of predestination, because God is able to foresee who will and who will not believe the Gospel (Stott 1994:248). However, Stott (1994:249) also adds that other commentators have pointed out that in the Hebrew language when God 'knows' people it refers to those He cares and provides for. Thus, it includes more than just knowing about events taking place before they happen, and accordingly involves God's favour extended to people before their existence (Grenz, Guretzki and Nordling 1999:53). For this reason some scholars have concluded that 'foreknowledge' is equivalent to being 'foreloved' by God (Stott 1994:249).

From the definitions and the contributions above it appears that foreknowledge speaks of God knowing exactly what purpose and destiny He wanted for man before He even created him. In other words, in His foreknowledge, He made a predetermined choice to appoint man for salvation or relationship, as observed above in *Mounce's Greek Dictionary*. Thus foreknowledge seems to focus more on the predetermined purpose for man, that is, God's intention for man to be in relationship with Him. Consequently, it does include more than just knowing about events taking place before they happen, as Stott (1994:248) noted above. However, it does not appear to be setting some aside for eternal salvation and

some for eternal damnation as the doctrine of predestination in Calvinism seems to teach (Erickson 2013:848). On the contrary, the doctrine (theme) of foreknowledge highlights the fact that God chose to set His love and affection on all of humanity, and thus being 'foreloved' seems to be an apt equivalent to the foreknowledge of God, as Stott (1994:249) has observed. This was also confirmed by Grenz and others (1999:53) who suggested that foreknowledge reveals that God chose beforehand to extend His favour towards humanity, even before their existence. Being 'fore-loved' is also confirmed by Paul (Ephesians 1:4) who wrote that God chose to love humanity before the foundation of the world. Thus, foreknowledge seems to reveal that the motivation for God's providential intervention and intercession in redeeming and restoring human beings to their predetermined place of relationship with Him was His decision beforehand to love His creation. As mentioned in the previous chapter (see 2.4), the knowledge of God's predetermined plan for humanity to be His sons and daughters enables one to relate to God as a loving Father intimately involved in the affairs of human life, and not as some distant unresponsive deity.

3.4.2.3 Predestined (8:29-30)

Predestined comes from the Greek word *proorizo*. Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014) explain that *proorizo* comes from two words: *pro* meaning 'before' and *horizo* meaning to define, to mark out the boundaries or limits (of any place or thing). It also means to appoint to what has been previously decided or determined. *Mounce's Greek Dictionary* (2014:n.p) defines *proorizo* as marking out or defining beforehand, or planning and decreeing beforehand. The *New Bible Dictionary* (1996:951-953) says that predestined means 'appointing in advance a situation for a person' or 'appointing in advance a person for a situation'. Thus Charles Ryrie's (1999:361) definition to 'mark off beforehand' or to 'preplan a destiny' would also be an accurate one. To these definitions the *Easton Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) has added that predestination refers to the eternal, unchanging decrees of God that sovereignly

govern all events, and as a result, highlights the majesty and supremacy of God. Furthermore, Easton concludes that predestination deepens humility and increases the believer's confidence in God's redemption plan being accomplished.

These above definitions seem to communicate the idea that God in His sovereignty has planned in advance the purpose, the function, the limits, the path, the events and the destiny of all that He has created. Consequently, some scholars have defined predestination as synonymous with God's foreknowledge as noted previously by John Stott (1994:248). The *New Dictionary of Theology* (1998:528) explains that those holding this view have seemingly concluded that in His omniscience God has foreseen all those who will come to salvation, and has thus accordingly predestined to salvation those individuals He has foreseen responding to Christ. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter (see 2.4), the context of predestination in the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) is not related to salvation (conversion), but to sanctification, which is the lifelong process of becoming like Jesus. In other words, because God predestined that believers be conformed to the image of His Son (see Romans 8:29), it appears that predestination is not the foundation for salvation, but rather the foundation for sanctification that ultimately leads to the believers' glorification, as noted by Gundry (2011:loc 1713) in the previous chapter. Thus it appears that the doctrine of predestination gives believers the assurance that what God has decreed and promised for them (to be like Jesus and share in His glory) will be fully realized on the final day of redemption. This assurance is based on the fact that God - who declares the end from the beginning, whose counsel stands forever, and who accomplishes all that He has purposed to do - has promised it (Isaiah 46:9-11). Hence predestination highlights God's majesty and sovereignty as well as His mercy and grace, which ultimately deepens one's awe and wonder of God, as was observed by Easton's (2014) contribution above. Thus, it seems evident then that humility increases as a result of this awe and wonder, and at

the same time, the confidence and hope of those captivated by His sovereignty are strengthened and encouraged. Consequently, it seems reasonable to conclude that predestination is a doctrine of encouragement, strength and hope, as it highlights the fact that man's life is not left to haphazard events with an unknown destiny, but that there is an eternal divine plan unfolding that includes all of humanity and all of creation.

3.4.2.4 Called (8:30)

The Greek word translated 'called' is *kaleo*. Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014.) define *kaleo* as to call out in a loud voice, to give someone a name or a title or to invite or to summon someone. *Mounce's Greek Dictionary* (2014:n.p) agrees with these definitions, but adds that *kaleo* also means to call someone to be a part of something or to participate in something. Therefore, just as foreknowledge appoints to future privileges, like salvation (see 3.4.2.2), so 'called' can mean to invite to participate in or partake of the privileges offered in the Gospel message. To these definitions, the *Easton Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) adds that the invitation is extended to all of humanity, to both Jew and Gentile alike, and goes beyond the verbal invitation extended by the preaching of the Gospel message. *Easton* explains further that it is also the internal enlightening work of the Holy Spirit, who draws men to Christ and prepares and enables them to receive the word of truth proclaimed to them (John 6:44-45; 16:14; Acts 16:14; Ephesians 1:17). Thus, the explanation given in the *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (1999:23) is an accurate one when it says that 'called' is God extending an invitation to all of humanity 'through the testimony of general revelation in creation (Romans 1:20) and through the preaching of the Gospel (Romans 10:14-15) and conviction of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-11) to enter into a saving relationship with Him'. *The New Dictionary of Theology* (1998:119-120) has noted that this 'calling' is the first step in the process of salvation, on which all the other themes, like justification, sanctification and glorification, build.

From the above definitions and contributions, it appears that *kaleo* generally means: to call out aloud, to give someone a name or title, to summon someone or as it relates to the Gospel, to invite humanity to participate in the privileges of the Gospel. In other words, as it relates to salvation, this call (which is based on God's foreknowledge and predestined plan) is addressed to all men, both Jew and Gentile alike, and is an invitation to come and participate in an intimate relationship with Him, as observed by *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) above. It is God's desire that none would perish, but that all would come to know Him, which is confirmed by the apostle Peter in 2 Peter 3:9. Hence, it seems logical to conclude that the Gospel message is inclusive and is thus good news to all of mankind.

It was also observed in the *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms* (1999:23) that this invitation or call has generally gone out in three ways, namely, creation, the preaching of the Gospel and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. In other words, what can be known about God and the Gospel is made plain to all men in the created order, in the preaching of the Gospel and in the enlightenment and conviction of the Holy Spirit. Paul has confirmed this in Romans 1:19-20, as he wrote that God has shown His eternal power and divine nature (His invisible attributes) in all of creation so that man is without an excuse. Regarding the preaching of the Gospel, Paul confirms in 2 Corinthians 5:19-20 that God pleads through His ministers of the Gospel for fallen humanity to be reconciled to Him. Regarding the enlightenment and conviction of the Holy Spirit, John confirms in his gospel (6:44-45, 65; 16:8-11, 13) that it is the Holy Spirit who draws, enlightens, convicts and enables humanity to respond to the invitation of salvation. It appears to be evident then that God has gone to great lengths to invite humanity into a relationship with Him. It also seems logical to conclude, and thus agree, with the observation of *The New Dictionary of Theology* (1998:119-120) mentioned above, that this invitation (calling) is the first step in

the process of salvation on which all the other themes like justification, sanctification and glorification are built. Thus it seems evident that this doctrine or theme not only reveals the fact that a call or invitation has been extended to all humanity; it also reveals the methods that God uses to call or invite humanity to come and participate in the life and destiny for which they were originally predestined. In addition to this, it also appears to reveal the heart of a merciful and loving God, who has personally interjected and interceded on man's behalf by making reconciliation possible.

Of the three ways in which this invitation (calling) has gone out, the one of particular interest, as it relates to this thesis, is the ministry of the Holy Spirit involved in accomplishing God's redemption plan in the life of every believer. While it is true that the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) focuses on the final stage of this redemption plan (the future glory) and the intercessory role the Holy Spirit plays in accomplishing it, the invitation (calling) of God draws attention to the role the Spirit plays in pursuing the individual for salvation. In other words, it draws attention to the first stage of the redemption plan, as rightly mentioned above by *The New Dictionary of Theology* (1998:119-120). This was also confirmed above by the *Easton Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p), which explained how the Holy Spirit prepares and makes individuals fit and ready for this salvation as He draws them, enlightens them and enables them to receive and respond to the truth of the Gospel. It seems reasonable to conclude, that this theme draws attention to the importance of the Holy Spirit's work in the first stages of the salvation process thus increasing the awareness and the appreciation of His role in the whole redemption process.

3.4.2.5 Justified (3:21-5:21; 8:30)

Justified comes from the Greek word *dikaioo*. Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014) explain that *dikaioo* has its root meaning in the word *dikaioo* meaning 'upright, virtuous, and keeping the commands of

God'. They explain further that it describes one who is completely conformed to the will of God in word, in thought and in deed. It seems unlikely that this description would be referring to any human being on the earth, other than Jesus, and Paul confirms this in Romans 3:10-23 where he wrote that all men have sinned and fallen short of God's glory and as a result are condemned to eternal death. However, the righteousness described by Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014) above is the righteousness needed to satisfy the law and demands of God. Paul makes it known in Romans 3:24 that this righteousness is made freely available by God's grace and mercy to all who believe in Christ Jesus. In other words, believers freely receive the righteousness necessary to satisfy the righteous demands of a holy God. This is confirmed by Grenz, Guretzki and Nordling (1999:69), who have noted that by God's grace and through faith in Christ a sinner is pardoned from punishment. *Mounce's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) also confirms this in its definition of *dikaioo*, which it says is to make or render right or just. In other words, it means to be vindicated and acquitted and thus declared blameless (not guilty) and as a result accepted as righteous. *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) validates this even further and adds that 'justification' is a forensic term that is opposed to condemnation. It explains that it is the judicial act of God, which pardons the believer in Christ from the condemning consequences of sin and considers them to be righteous in His eyes due to the imputing of Christ's righteousness to them. Hence, the righteous law of God is not ignored or violated in any way, but is rather fulfilled by the attributing of Christ's righteousness to the believer. Consequently, the justified person is considered to be innocent and is therefore entitled to all the privileges of a law-abiding citizen (Romans 5:1-10). In other words, a believer is no longer condemned by God but justified by faith in Christ and is brought into a relationship with God that repositions them and gives them the opportunity to fulfil their originally predestined purpose as sons and daughters of God.

From the above contributions and definitions, it seems logical to conclude that justification is extremely good news, because as Millard Erickson (2001:314, 319) explains, it withdraws God's judgment from those who believe in Christ. As a result, it changes the believer's destiny for eternity. In other words, justification is really the 'game changer', as it offers hope for the future and the promise of everlasting life, where those who believe share in the glory of Christ Jesus. In short, and as aptly noted, 'It saves from the past and secures for the future' (Marshall, Millard, Packer and Wiseman 1996:636-637). In addition to this, justification removes all the striving of man to achieve salvation by works, and presents a salvation by faith, based on God's grace and mercy. Bruce Milne (1998:194) seems to agree with this observation when he says that justification is not based on man's own righteous efforts, but is based purely on God's grace and mercy. In other words, there is nothing man can do to save himself except humbly accept and believe in the One who is able to save. The idea that sinful man can be acquitted and rendered righteous by his belief in Christ (justification) increases one's awe and wonder of God, as it draws attention to His mercy and love and it highlights, once again, His intercession and intervention in the affairs of fallen humanity. As a result of this brief research, it seems obvious why 'justification by faith' has been favoured and traditionally acknowledged as the central theme of this letter (see 3.4.1), because it really is very good news for those who believe in Christ.

3.4.2.6 Adoption (8:14-17, 19-20, 29)

Adoption comes from the Greek word *huiothesia*. *Mounce's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) defines *huiothesia* as 'a placing in the condition of a son'. *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) adds that it is giving the name, place and privileges of a son to one who is not a biological son. Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014) explain that adoption refers to the true disciples of Christ, who have become sons of God by receiving the Spirit of God into their soul. *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) expounds a little more on the

'condition of these true disciples' and says that this adoption is an act of God's grace by which He brings men into His redeemed family through justification, and makes them partakers of all the blessings and privileges He has provided for them, some of which would include a new nature, protection, comfort, encouragement, provision, fatherly discipline, and a future glorious inheritance. *The New Bible Dictionary* (1996:16) agrees with the above definitions, but adds that it redeems those under the law and changes their position, from slavery to sonship (Galatians 4:1). It also highlights the fact that this adoption was planned from eternity, mediated by Jesus Christ (Galatians 4:4-6; Ephesians 1:5) and is accomplished by the Spirit of God, who is both the instrument and the consequence of this sonship (Romans 8:14; Galatians 4:6). Frederick Bruce (1985:167) observed that the 'adoption of sons' and sonship are equivalent terms, and adds that an adopted son (or daughter) was one deliberately chosen by the adoptive father to perpetuate his name and inherit his estate. He also adds that an adopted son (or daughter) was not inferior in status to a natural biological son or daughter, and would thus have enjoyed equal affection and equal rights in the family.

From the above definitions and contributions it appears evident that adoption is the deliberate act of making someone part of the family with equal status, equal rights and equal privileges based on grace and not on merit with the intention that they will perpetuate the family name and carry on the family business. This would imply then that the adopted son or daughter would naturally have to embrace the family in its entirety to accomplish this task effectively. In other words, the adopted one would gladly embrace and enjoy all the rights, privileges and inheritance available, but would also need to embrace, with just as much joy, the change of nature that comes with the change of name and the fatherly discipline that is inherent in a family as alluded to by Bruce (1985:167) and *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) above.

When applying these principles to the Gospel, it was observed that this adoption was planned from eternity, as noted by *The New Bible Dictionary* (1996:16). In other words, in God's foreknowledge, as discussed above in 3.4.2.2, God's intention was that mankind would be intimate with Him and relate to Him as family. From the contributions of *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) and *The New Bible Dictionary* (1996:16), it was observed that this adoption, which is a change in status from slavery to sonship, is an act of God's grace through justification, which is the judicial act of forgiving the sins of those who believe in Christ and the imputation of His perfect righteousness to them which results in their being accepted as holy and righteous in the eyes of God (see 3.4.2.5). Thus, by faith in Christ, the pardoning of sin and the imputation of righteousness, the adoption of humanity as sons or daughters of God is achieved. Having said this, it should not be forgotten that this adoption is only accomplished by the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of adoption, as noted by *The New Bible Dictionary* (1996:16).

Referring back to the contribution of Bruce (1985:167), there is also an expectation from the Father that the adopted ones embrace their new family along with its responsibilities and fulfill the task of perpetuating the family name and carrying on the family business. This means that the believer has the responsibility, not only to carry the name of Jesus and make it known in this world, but to live a life worthy of that name, as a true son or daughter, as they continue the work that Jesus started when He walked this earth. Having said this, it also seems necessary, in light of the Holy Spirit's role in this work, to highlight the fact that the Holy Spirit is the One who empowers believers to be authentic witnesses of Jesus Christ. This was confirmed by Jesus when He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received the power of the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses in the earth (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8).

From this research it seems evident then that the theme of adoption highlights the great lengths that God is prepared to go to, to reconcile those He loves to Himself. Consequently, this theme draws attention, once again, to His preordained purpose for humanity (predestination) and the depth of His love for them (foreknowledge). His willingness to give His adopted sons and daughters equal rights and privileges and make them co-heirs of an inheritance with Jesus, His own Son, goes even further and reveals how generous and extravagant He really is in His love for them. The knowledge of this extravagant love should encourage believers to persevere in their faith as they anticipate the day of final redemption knowing that the Spirit of God within them works all things together for good according to the will and predestined purpose of God for them.

3.4.2.7 Sanctified (8:29)

Sanctified comes from the Greek word *hagiazō*. Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014) define *hagiazō* as to make holy, and thus to separate from profane things and be dedicated to God. Spiritually speaking it is the internal purification that renews the soul. *Mounce's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) appears to agree with Thayer and Smith, and uses the following words to define *hagiazō*: to separate, to consecrate, to cleanse, to purify, to make holy. To these definitions, *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) adds that sanctification involves more than a mere change in moral character. It explains further that it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit that conforms the fallen nature of man into the nature of Jesus by the word of God that was implanted in the soul of man at regeneration (James 1:21). It also points out that this work is an ongoing and continual process that takes place in the life of the believer until the final day of redemption (Philippians 1:6).

From the above definitions it appears then that sanctified generally means to make holy, to purify or to consecrate. Although the word sanctified is not mentioned in the target pericope, it is implied by the words 'conformed to the image of His Son' in Romans 8:29. As discussed in 3.4.2.5, the justification that sinners freely receive declares them righteous or innocent before God, but sanctification, as defined above, is what makes them holy and pure. Or, as *The New Dictionary of Theology* (1998:615) says it is 'the gradual assimilation of the believer to Christ'. Millard Erickson (2001:325) explains it as becoming like Christ Jesus in moral character and thus 'one is brought into conformity with one's legal status before God'. In this description, Erickson uses the words 'becoming like Christ' and 'brought into conformity' which seems to confirm and highlight the fact that sanctification is a continual process in the life of the believer. Wayne Grudem (1994:748-750) also confirms this, as he highlights three stages in the process or progression of sanctification: (1) it begins at regeneration, (2) it increases throughout life, and (3) is completed at death (for our souls) and at the second coming of Christ (for our bodies). He explains further that while this is generally the accepted view among most systematic theologians, the Wesleyan/Holiness view is slightly different in that it holds that sanctification is a single event that takes place after conversion (a second blessing) where the believer attains a higher level of holiness referred to as 'entire sanctification' or 'sinless perfection', and freedom from conscious sin in this life is experienced. This seems to be contrary to what Paul taught about the Spirit's sanctifying work continuing until the day of Christ in Philippians 1:6, and believers being transformed into the image of Jesus from one level of glory to another in 2 Corinthians 3:18. Hence, it does not seem possible to view sanctification as a single event or single experience subsequent to conversion. Grudem (1994:751) also seems to confirm this, and makes the point of stating that there do not seem to be any convincing verses in Scripture that teach 'sinless perfection' in this life. *The New Bible Dictionary* (1996:1058-1059) also confirms this and explains it this way: 'the Spirit's presence does not confer final

perfection in this present age, but rather leads to a growing maturity in Christ, whereby Christians are ripened for their final transformation'. It seems more feasible, then, to view sanctification as a continual progressive process of transformation, development and growth in the area of holiness within the believer.

The New Dictionary of Theology (1998:314) also points out that this movement which began with John Wesley's Methodism eventually developed into two other forms, namely, Keswick holiness and Pentecostal holiness, each having its own interpretation of the process of sanctification. For instance, and very briefly, Keswick holiness viewed the second blessing as the infilling of the Holy Spirit for the ongoing battle with sin, while the Pentecostal Holiness equated the second blessing with the baptism of the Spirit with the evidence of *glossolalia* (tongues) and a thorough separation from worldly ways which lead to issues like elitism, legalism, and quietism, to name but a few. Thus, from the few contributions above, it appears that the understanding and interpretation of sanctification has resulted in denominations and movements forming that have influenced the course of church history. It seems reasonable to conclude though, that sanctification is a process that progresses throughout the believer's life until the day of final redemption. From this brief research it seems evident that justification and sanctification work together in the redemption plan of God as the one deals with the sinner by repositioning them and changing their status (justification) and the other purifies the believer until they are conformed into the holiness of Christ (sanctification).

Easton's Bible Dictionary (2014:n.p) accurately emphasized the truth that sanctification is a work or ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is echoed by Marshall, Millard, Packer and Wiseman (1996:1058-1059), who write that the sanctified life is only possible through the 'indwelling presence of God's empowering Spirit' (Romans 8:5-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13). In other words, just as it is impossible

for an individual to save or justify themselves (see 3.4.2.5) it is impossible for the believer to make themselves holy and acceptable to God. This holiness is only accomplished by the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Robert Sproul (2012:n.p) says a similar thing. He comments that the Holy Spirit's chief and principal role in the New Testament is to apply the sanctifying work of Christ to believers. Having said this, it does not mean that the believer does not have a part to play in this sanctifying process. On the contrary, for the Holy Spirit to accomplish His task of sanctification successfully, the believer is encouraged to participate in the process. Millard Erickson (2001:327) confirms this when he says believers are encouraged to play their part and 'participate with the Holy Spirit in both the removal of sinfulness and the development of holiness in their lives'. So, it is the Holy Spirit's job to make the believer holy and acceptable, but it is the believers' job to yield and participate. Thus, it appears that sanctification involves a certain level of partnership between the Holy Spirit and believers in reaching the goal of Christ's image being seen in them and the 'sons of God', mentioned in Romans 8:19, being revealed.

With regard to the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30), it has already been mentioned in Chapter 2 (see 2.4) that all the trials, tribulations and sufferings believers endure in this world are used by the Holy Spirit in the process of sanctification to conform them to the image of Christ. It was also discussed in Chapter 2 that the involvement and intercession of the Holy Spirit on behalf of believers in and through this process of sanctification gives them the assurance that all things work together for good and in accordance with the will of God (Romans 8:28). Hence, the doctrine of sanctification seems to emphasize, even further, the importance of the Holy Spirit and His involvement or role in the redemption plan of God. Even though the message of the target pericope focuses on the future glory, it alludes to the process the Holy Spirit employs to accomplish His mission of preparing believers for this glory. Consequently, this theme seems to reveal not only an aspect of the Holy Spirit's ministry in

redemption (sanctification), but also the methods (suffering and trials) He uses to accomplish it, as well as the reason (conforming to the image of Christ) and the purpose (intimate relationship) for it in the life of the believer. Ultimately, the doctrine of sanctification seems to create an awareness of the Lord's continual involvement (intercession) in the life of the believer and thus His commitment, dedication and devotion to accomplishing His preordained plan for humanity to be in an intimate relationship with Him for all eternity.

3.4.2.8 Glorified (8:30)

Glorified comes from the Greek word *doxazo* which according to Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014) has its origins in the word *doxa* (*glory*) meaning to have an opinion or viewpoint or to make a judgment call regarding the creation, man and God. In other words, glory can relate to the splendour of creation, the majesty and excellence of God and of Christ, as well as the future glory of believers. Therefore, *doxazo*, according to Thayer and Smith, means to have an opinion about something or someone. It also means to praise, celebrate or hold something or someone in honour. It can also mean to make glorious (magnificent, wonderful or beautiful) or to impart glory to something and thus render it excellent. It can also mean to cause the dignity and worth of something or someone to become manifest and be acknowledged. *Mounce's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) concurs with Thayer and Smith's definition and defines it thus: to praise someone, to invest or endow someone with dignity, majesty or splendour, or to adore and worship God. It can also mean the manifestation of dignity, excellence, or majesty as it relates to God's presence. And, it can also relate to the future glory of believers as they are glorified or beautified by admission to a state of bliss.

From the definitions of Mounce, Thayer and Smith, *doxazo* generally means 'to give glory' or 'to make glorious' depending on the context the word is used in, whether it relates to God, creation or man. In other words, when the context is

creation, it refers to the splendour and beauty given to creation. When the context is worship and adoration, then it would relate to God, who alone is worthy of worship. When the context is about having a good opinion of someone that would result in praise and honour being given to them, it could relate to both God and man. Likewise, when it refers to the dignity and worth of something becoming manifest and acknowledged, it is possible that it is referring to the revelation of Jesus, but it could also refer to the future glory of believers as their sonship is fully realized and recognized by all creation. When the context refers to the 'beautifying of something', it would seem that this may also be referring to the future and final redemption of believers.

With regard to the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) it would appear, due to the focus of the text being the believer's future glory (see 3.3.3), that the context of 'glorified' is referring to the future glorified state of believers when they are clothed with their glorious resurrected bodies; their dignity and worth is made manifest; their sonship is fully realized, acknowledged and celebrated by all of creation as it too is released at this time from its bondage to corruption (Stott 1994:217, see 3.3.3). This deduction seems to be confirmed by Grenz, Guretzki and Nordling (1999:55), who have noted that 'glorified' refers to the final stage of salvation when the transformation of believers into the image of Christ is completed and they are freed from all physical and spiritual defects, never having to experience or struggle with sin, death, illness or bodily decay ever again. Millard Erickson (2013:926-927) is of a similar opinion and thus also confirms this reasoning when he says that it involves the full and final justification of the believer, which he explains is the 'moral and spiritual perfecting of the individual, the fullness of knowledge and the redemption of the body'. Like Stott (1994:217, see 3.3.3), Erickson also adds that it includes the renewal of creation. Thus, it appears from the various definitions and contributions above, that 'glorified' as it relates to the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) refers to the time when believers and creation are restored to their former glory (resplendent in beauty and

magnificence) and state of perfection as they reflect the nature of Jesus, the Son of God, and Creator of all things.

Believers thus have wonderful promises from God and an amazing future awaiting them, but what guarantees the fulfilment of these promises and what guarantees that this glorious future will even take place? Firstly, believers can be confident of this glorious future because Scripture assures them that the One who has promised this future is God, who cannot lie (Numbers 23:19), and whose words never pass away (Matthew 24:35). Secondly, God has, in His mercy and grace, also given believers the Holy Spirit of promise to help them and sustain them in this life, because He knows that without His Spirit they are but flesh and unable to live righteously or be faithful to His covenant (Psalm 78:39). This point was confirmed in Chapter 2 (see 2.2) by contributing authors Bernard (1987), Osborne (2004), Pretorius (2007) and Fee (2011). Douglas Moo (2009:265) also confirms this interpretation, as he has noted the critical role the Holy Spirit plays as 'the bridge' between the believers' current experiences and their final glorification as God's sons or daughters. This theory is also confirmed by Paul's letters to the church in Corinth (2 Corinthians 5:5) and to the church in Ephesus (Ephesians 1:13-14). In these letters he mentions that the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit assures believers that their glorious future is certain. Thus it seems reasonable to conclude that it is both the promise of God and the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit that guarantees that the believer in Christ will experience full and final redemption one day when Christ Jesus returns. It also appears, from all the research and contributing authors thus far, that the intercession of the Spirit, which Paul refers to in Romans 8:26-27, is inextricably linked to the will and purpose of God being fulfilled in the earth. It seemed reasonable to conclude, from the comments of contributing authors Ryrie (1999: 442) and Osborne (2004:219-220) in the previous chapter (see 2.4), that the perfect intercession of the Holy Spirit assures believers of all things working together for good, and thus seems to allude to the idea that it may be the Holy

Spirit's intercessory ministry that carries and sustains believers through life until their day of final redemption. What's more, it appears that it may involve more than just the traditional view of prayer and possibly include acts of service, sacrifice or some form of participation common to intercession as mentioned by Grubb (2011: 82) and Ruscoe (2011:loc 688) in Chapter 1 of this thesis.

3.4.3 Section Summary: Theological Context

The writings examined in this section suggested that the broad overarching Gospel theme be adopted to do the job of unifying and of holding all the individual themes of this epistle together. Whilst this research agrees with this suggestion, it was also demonstrated that it is by looking at the individual themes that one gains an appreciation and a greater understanding of the Spirit's involvement in God's redemption plan, which may not have been there before. Although the individual themes discussed in this chapter only briefly traced God's redemption plan from beginning to end, it seems it was sufficient to reveal and highlight the intercessory heart of God intervening on behalf of fallen humanity. His intercessory heart seems to be evident in the actions He took to redeem humanity from eternal damnation, to restore them and to give them a glorious future united with Him.

But, what significance does an overarching theme or the individual themes have on the target pericope? It seemed evident that, whether one focused on one main overarching theme or on the individual themes, it is the Holy Spirit who accomplishes God's redemption plan in the earth. The research appeared to show that the whole process of salvation from beginning to end is accomplished by the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual believer, from the first call to salvation, to being justified and adopted, to being sanctified and finally glorified. Thus, it seemed logical to conclude that God's intervention or intercession in the life of humanity (to redeem and glorify them) is motivated, inspired and sustained by His love for them, and accomplished by His Spirit in them. It also appeared

reasonable to consider that it is the continual intercession of the Holy Spirit on the believers' behalf that works all things together for good according to the purpose of God. Thus, it also seemed logical to conclude that His intercession carries and sustains believers through this life until the day of their final redemption. Hence, this thesis draws attention to the supportive role that the Holy Spirit seems to play in going beyond prayer in the fulfilling of this redemption plan in the earth.

3.5 General Context

This section focused on the authorship, the date and the recipients of the letter. These three areas were briefly addressed to determine how they might add value to the understanding and interpretation of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30).

3.5.1 Authorship

It appears to be generally accepted in modern scholarship that the book of Romans was authored by Paul, the apostle (Osborne 2004:13). This is supported by the internal evidence of Scripture (1:1, 7; 11:13; 15:15-20) as well as the external evidence of the testimony of early believers like Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Polycarp and Irenaeus, to name a few (Kroll 2002:xvii). However, it is also acknowledged that Paul may have had the help of a scribe, named Tertius, mentioned in Romans 16:22, in the writing of this letter (Carson and Moo 2011:loc 9468).

But, who was Paul? By consulting the Scriptures and briefly gleaning from the work of Stephen Motyer (1999:689-690) it was discovered that Paul, originally born Saul, was also an orthodox Jew, a Pharisee and thus an expert in the Law. He hated and persecuted Christians until he was dramatically confronted by the risen Lord on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-16; 22:3-16; Galatians 1:13-14; Philippians 3:5-6). After his conversion he understood by way of revelation that God graciously extended salvation to both Jew and Gentile through faith in Jesus

Christ (Galatians 1:1, 11-12). But, despite his transformed life, he was viewed with suspicion by believing Jews, whom he had formerly persecuted (Acts 9:20-30; 13:42-45). As a result he focused on evangelizing the Gentiles (Acts 13:46-50; 16:16-24). However, he never lost the burden for the Jews, to come to the saving knowledge of the Gospel (Romans 9:1-3).

Whether a scribe, as mentioned by Carson and Moo, was involved in the writing of this letter or not, it appears to be generally accepted among the scholars reviewed that the apostle Paul authored this letter. From the gleanings of Scripture and Motyer's writings it was discovered that Paul was a Jewish expert in the law, ministering to Gentiles, who had a sound understanding of God's redemption plan. This observation is confirmed by John Stott (1994:35), who wrote that Paul was a patriotic Jew commissioned by God as an apostle to the Gentiles. So, as an expert in the law and as a Jew ministering to Gentiles, Paul was in a unique position and thus well qualified to write a letter of this nature detailing the redemption plan of God and the role the Holy Spirit plays within this plan.

3.5.2 Date of Authorship

Although dating can only be approximate, there appears to be a general consensus among the scholars consulted that the letter was written sometime between AD 54 and AD 58. This was possibly towards the end of Paul's third missionary trip while staying in Corinth in the home of Gaius, and during the reign of Emperor Nero (AD 54-68) (Acts 20:1-4; 16:21-23) (Jensen 1981:248; Dunn 1988:xliv; Kroll 2002:xv; Osborne 2004:13; Carson and Moo 2011:loc 9468; Morris 2012:7). Even an approximate date of authorship reveals that Paul had been preaching the Gospel for almost twenty-five years, during which time he had planted several churches and had worked out his theology by dealing with many pastoral issues and by debating with many opposing groups of people (Moo 2000:16). Thus, it seems possible to conclude, from Moo's observation,

that after twenty-five years of ministry, Paul was no longer a novice in the Kingdom of God at the time of writing this letter, but rather a seasoned expert. Paul's expertise and skill was also confirmed, by Motyer (1999:689-690) in the previous sub-section (3.5.1). Consequently, it seems that one can reasonably conclude that at least twenty-five years of ministry contributed to the content of this letter. This should ultimately instil confidence in those who read and study this theological masterpiece, as one can be assured that it was penned by a seasoned missionary and theological scholar, who had keen insight regarding redemption and the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers.

3.5.3 Recipients of the Letter

Because the words 'in Rome' are absent in some manuscripts, some scholars have concluded that this letter was not addressed to the church in Rome, but was intended to be a circular letter, and that Rome may have been only one of the addressees. However, according to Leon Morris (2012:2-3, 5) there has not been strong enough evidence to support this claim, and thus the consensus among the quoted scholars is that the original recipient of this letter was the church in Rome, which was a mixed group of both Jewish and Gentile believers, the latter probably being in the majority at the time of Paul's writing (1:13; 2:17) (Jensen 1981:249; Dunn 1988:xliv; Kroll 2002:xviii; Osborne 2004:23).

From the contributions above it seems evident that the letter was addressed to the church in Rome, consisting of both Jew and Gentile. Among the previous contributions in sub-section 3.5.1, Stott (1994:35) mentioned that Paul was a Jew commissioned by God to minister among Gentiles. As a result, he would have understood this mixed audience very well. For, as a Jewish believer and as an expert in the law, he would have known and understood the concerns other Jewish believers would have had about how the law related to grace and salvation. This observation is confirmed by Stephen Motyer (1999:689), who says that these law and grace issues would have been the same issues that Paul

would have personally dealt with after his own conversion. Likewise, as a minister among the Gentiles for many years (at least twenty-five years, according to Moo) he would have understood their culture and any issues they faced regarding salvation. Thus it seems evident, as mentioned in 3.5.1, that Paul was in a unique position and well qualified to write a letter to an audience of this composition.

3.5.4 Section Summary: General Context

From the contributions in this section, the reviewed scholars seem to agree that Paul, the apostle, authored this letter. Research revealed that Paul was an orthodox Jew, a Pharisee and thus an expert in the Law, but after his conversion he was called to be an apostle to the Gentiles. It was concluded that as an expert in the law and a Jew ministering to Gentiles, Paul was in a unique position, and thus well qualified to write a letter of this nature, detailing the redemption plan of God for creation and all of humanity.

The approximate date of authorship revealed that Paul had experienced at least twenty-five years of ministry by the time he wrote this letter, and was therefore not a novice regarding the Kingdom of God or things pertaining to the Spirit. Therefore, those who read and study this letter can be assured that it was penned by a seasoned missionary and scholar who had a wealth of knowledge gained only through many years of experiencing God and life in the Spirit.

The consensus among the scholars reviewed was that the church in Rome was a mixed group of both Jewish and Gentile believers. It seemed logical to assume that because Paul was a Jew ministering among Gentiles he would have understood this mixed audience very well. Hence, it also seemed reasonable to conclude, once again, that Paul was in a unique position and well qualified to write a letter to an audience of this composition.

But, how does knowledge of the authorship, date and recipients influence or contribute to the research of this thesis? The research reveals that Paul was an expert in the law and a seasoned missionary. As a result, it seems evident that he would have understood well the involvement, participation, leadings and promptings of the Spirit. Thus his sound insight on redemption and the Holy Spirit ought to give the reader (Jew and Gentile) the confidence to readily embrace his teachings as truth by which to live.

3.6 Historical Context

This section focused on the historical background of the church in Rome as well as the circumstances that Paul and the believers found themselves in that may have contributed to the reasons why this letter was written. John Stott (1994:32) has pointed out that all the letters of the New Testament were penned from within a particular context. He also noted that it was usually a combination of the writer and the recipient's circumstances that determined the content of a letter and the occasion for its writing. Consequently, the circumstances of both Paul and the church in Rome were considered to determine the occasion and purpose for this letter.

3.6.1 Historical Background of the Church in Rome

There appears to be no historical evidence that confirms that the church in Rome was founded by Peter or by Paul (Osborne 2004:15-16). Woodrow Kroll (2002:xii) pointed out that Peter was definitely in Jerusalem until the first Church Council meeting in AD 49 (Acts 9; 15). In addition to this, Grant Osborne (2004:15) noted that the church in Rome was well established before this time. This makes it unlikely for Peter to be the founder of the church in Rome. Paul also makes it very clear in the text that he had never been to Rome (1:10-13, 15). Furthermore, there was already a significant group of believers in Rome at the time of the writing of this letter (1:6-8; 15:14) making it impossible for Paul to

have been the founder of this church (Morris 1988:4). Hence, it appears that no apostle was associated with the birth of the church in Rome (Carson and Moo 2011:loc 9489).

How then did the church in Rome start? Woodrow Kroll (2002:xiii) pointed out that a large Jewish community already existed in Rome as early as the second century BC. Thus, scholars have generally understood that the church in Rome was started by Jewish believers who returned to Rome from Jerusalem after the day of Pentecost around AD 30 (Acts 2:9-11). Douglas Moo (2000:17) also pointed out that God-fearing Gentiles living in Rome would have been a part of this group, thus creating a mixed congregation of both Jewish and Gentile believers. However, in AD 49 Emperor Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome, which resulted in the Gentile believers establishing new Gentile leadership in the church. After the death of Claudius in AD 54, many Jewish believers returned to Rome, under Nero's rule, to find that the church, which was once led by Jews, was predominantly Gentile in membership, in leadership and in lifestyle. As a result of this, tension between Jew and Gentile developed (Woodrow 2002:xii; Pawson 2003:1022; Osborne 2004:15-16; Carson and Moo 2011:loc 9512).

From the contributions above, there appeared to be agreement among the scholars referred to that the church in Rome had no apostolic beginnings, but that it was formed by Jewish believers and God-fearing Gentiles living in Rome at the time who had experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the Feast of Pentecost in AD 30, as recorded in Acts 2. This would imply that two people groups or cultures (Jew and Gentile) worshipped and functioned together as one congregation. From this it seems reasonable to assume that the mix of these two cultures would have resulted in some tension and conflict as they individually and corporately worked out their salvation. The reviewed authors also observed that the leadership of the church changed when the Jews were expelled from Rome in AD 49. Additionally, these authors also noted that in the Jews' absence, the

church became predominantly Gentile in membership, in leadership and in lifestyle. It is probably also safe to assume that the conflict between these two groups may have escalated after the once predominantly Jewish church became predominantly Gentile in membership, in leadership and in lifestyle. Thus it seems evident and reasonable to conclude that the church in Rome may have been a church in conflict. This historical background would have formed the perfect backdrop and setting for Paul to write a letter detailing the Gospel of the Kingdom the way he did, with possibly the hope of defusing some of the presumed, and even expected, and maybe unavoidable conflict in a group of this composition.

3.6.2 Occasion for writing the Letter

When considering the occasion for the writing of the letter to the Romans it was necessary to consider the circumstances of the recipients as well as the circumstances of Paul.

3.6.2.1 Recipient's Circumstances

As explained above, the historical background of the church set the tone and created the circumstances and the tension that the believers in Rome found themselves in. However, this conflict between Jew and Gentile was not so much an ethnic one, but rather a theological one as it involved a difference of opinion and conviction regarding salvation, law and grace (Stott 1994:34). Just how much of the law were they able to keep without replacing the cross of Christ and the grace of God? Additionally, Grant Osborne (2004:19-20) highlighted the fact that the Jewish believers, who still observed the law as an expression of their worship, being careful not to deviate from grace and true faith in Christ, should not be confused with the Judaizers, who claimed that the law (especially circumcision) was a requirement for salvation. He explained further that the Jews and Gentiles were split over dietary laws and holy days, as Jewish believers judged the Gentiles for not keeping the food laws and holy days, while the

Gentiles judged the Jews for their failure to realize that Christ had freed them from the law. Thus the law-observant Jews were considered 'the weak' and the law-free Gentiles were considered 'the strong' (Romans 14) (Marcus 1989:68-70). Would Paul have known about this conflict, since he had not yet been to Rome? Grant Osborne (2004:19) suggests that it was possible that Paul knew of this conflict because he had friends in Rome, like Priscilla and Aquila, who would have informed him of this conflict.

Thus, it appears, from Osborne's observation, that Paul may have been aware of the conflict and tension within the church. Stott and Osborne seem to agree that the conflict in the Roman church was not one of ethnicity, but rather one that related to law, grace and salvation, and as a result was a theological one. From Osborne and Marcus's contribution it looks like the observance of dietary laws and holy days was at the centre of the conflict which appeared to have resulted in a level of discrimination that seemingly caused some tension and conflict between the 'strong' and the 'weak' believers. It seems reasonable to conclude that Paul would have been the perfect candidate to write a letter that addressed these issues of law and grace, because, as has already been observed in sub-sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2, Paul, who was an expert in things pertaining to the law, had at least twenty-five years of experience dealing with opposition and conflicting issues that related to the law, grace and salvation. It appears logical to assume then that Paul would have had a thorough understanding of any Jew/Gentile conflict by this stage of his ministry, making him the perfect candidate to write a letter of this nature to a group of this composition. Consequently, by considering the circumstances of this mixed congregation within the context of its historical background, it is not difficult to see how these conflicting circumstances may have contributed not only to the content of the letter, but also to the occasion for writing it.

3.6.2.2 Paul's Circumstances

After spending ten years (AD 47-57) evangelizing the Roman provinces of Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and Asia, Paul was ready to leave the churches he had established in these provinces to the spiritual leadership of others and turn his attention to new unreached territory in the west (Bruce 1985:19-20). His sights were thus set on Spain, far-off in the west, where he would continue to preach the Gospel in uncharted territory (Romans 15:20) (Kroll 2002:xvi). In planning his trip to Spain, he intended to first visit Rome, and become acquainted with the believers there, to encourage them in their faith and possibly gain their support for his trip to the west (Bruce 1985:20). Hence, preparing them for his visit and informing them of his missionary vision in the west appear to be the two obvious reasons that could have motivated Paul to write to the church in Rome (Jensen 1981:249). To these reasons, Leon Morris (2012:17) added that if Paul intended to use Rome as a 'base church' or a 'sending church' like the one in Antioch (Acts 13), they would have needed to be assured of his authenticity and theological position, as he had not been to Rome previously and so never preached there before. Thus, a weighty epistle introducing his Gospel would have been very much in order. James Dunn (1988:xliv) also pointed out that there is evidence in Paul's letter that shows that he must have known something about the tensions and conflict that existed within the church (11:18-23,25; 14:1-15:13), which resulted in a large portion of the letter addressing God's redemptive plan for both Jew and Gentile (Chapters 9-11) and how they should endeavour to live in harmony and unity of the Spirit (Chapters 12-15). As a Jewish apostle sent to minister among the Gentiles, Paul was therefore in a unique position to be an agent of reconciliation, because he would have understood the conflict between Jew and Gentile very well (Stott 1994:35).

From the comments offered by these authors it seems clear that all of the mentioned aspects of Paul's circumstances are relevant and could therefore have contributed to why Paul wrote to the church in Rome. Visiting Rome was

definitely according to Scripture a desire in Paul's heart (Acts 19:21; Romans 1:10-11, 13; 15:22-24), and thus his writing to inform them of his plans to visit them makes complete sense. The next phase of Paul's ministry would have been a priority in his mind, and if he planned to include the Roman church in his plans in any way, as Morris suggests, sharing his vision and intentions with them also makes good sense (Romans 15:24). If he was aware of the conflict in the church, even though he was not the founder of the work, he would have taken the opportunity, as an apostle and a leader in the Church of Jesus Christ, to address these issues, because sound doctrine and unity was important to him (Romans 13:16-18; 16:17-18). So, it would be remiss of this research to try and emphasize one aspect above another. It seems to be more beneficial to view them all as contributing factors that provided Paul with the opportunity to write this letter detailing God's redemption plan and masterfully addressing the Jew/Gentile issue with regard to its relationship to the law and the grace of God, encouraging them to live in peace and unity.

3.6.3 Purpose for writing the Letter

From the previous two subsections, it seems evident that there were many possible motivating factors that inspired Paul to write to the church in Rome. But, what were his intentions and what was he hoping to achieve by sending a letter to a church he had not founded? It seems that Paul's intentions for writing to Rome have been an area of debate among academic scholars, as the contributions below reveal.

Grant Osborne (2004:16-20) explained that the purpose of a letter is only discovered by examining the contents and internal statements of the text and then ascertaining what circumstances may have prompted them. As a result, he pointed out that it is unlikely that Romans was intended to be a treatise written for the whole body of Christ, as some claim. He argued that everything in the text can be shown to address the situation in Rome, thus refuting the idea that it is

purely an exposition of Paul's Gospel. He concluded, therefore, that it must first be seen as a letter sent to a church with specific needs that Paul addressed and in the process summarized his doctrine resulting in a theological masterpiece for all believers to read since then. Along similar lines, Douglas Moo (2000:20) wrote that while Romans may appear to be a doctrinal treatise, it is misunderstood when not viewed in its first-century context. He explained that Paul did not just decide one day that it would be a good idea to write a 'textbook on doctrine'. On the contrary, he wrote a letter to a specific group of people who were dealing with some real-life issues. He concluded that Paul's purpose for writing this letter would not have come from a single reason, but a combination of both Paul's circumstances and the church's circumstances.

Woodrow Kroll (2002:xvi) claimed that Paul knew that the origin of the church had no apostolic beginnings, and since he was an apostle specifically sent to the Gentiles he used the opportunity to not only prepare them for his visit, but also instruct them in the faith through his letter. Along similar lines, Robert Gundry (2011:loc 136) wrote that because Paul had not founded this church his letter was one of 'self-introduction' in order to prove his authenticity and gain their support in his missionary work in Spain. Highlighting another intention, Walter Elwell and Robert Yarbrough (2013:loc 7702) wrote that from the score of greetings in the sixteenth chapter it seemed evident that Paul was acquainted with many of the believers in Rome, and thus must have been aware of the conflict between Jew and Gentile. This would have been a concern for Paul, whose desire and gospel promoted unity amongst the Jewish and Gentile believers. Consequently, it would have been natural for him to compose his letter with the circumstances of his readers in mind. Lea and Black (2003:392) noted that the purpose of a letter should not be assumed, but must be deduced from its contents. In this case, Paul's desire to visit Rome and his intentions to do so are evident in the text (Romans 1:9-12; 15:22-24). His desire to secure the church's prayer support for his visit to Jerusalem and their help in his trip to Spain is also

evident in the letter (Romans 15:24-32). It also appears that bringing reconciliation and peace to a church in turmoil may have been another purpose, as he addressed conflicting social issues that existed between the Jewish and Gentile believers (Romans 14-15). Leon Morris (2012:8-17) acknowledged that academic scholars have offered many possible reasons for this letter, but concluded that the most satisfactory reason is Paul's preparation for his visit to Rome. He explained that by sending the believers in Rome a letter, he prepared them for his visit in three ways: (1) he introduced himself in preparation for his visit (1:13; 15:22-24), (2) he hoped to secure their help and support for his trip to Spain (15:24), and (3) he sought their prayer support for his trip to Jerusalem (15:30-32). Likewise, James Dunn (1988:xliv-lviii) offered three possible reasons: (a) a missionary purpose, (b) an apologetic purpose, and (c) a pastoral purpose. He noted that debates seem to arise when one reason is emphasized over another, and thus concluded that all three of these purposes work together and strengthen each other when viewed as one.

It seems apparent, then, that when one considers the purpose for this letter one ought to keep in mind the historical background of the church as well as the circumstances surrounding Paul and his recipients. In other words, Paul's intentions or what he was hoping to achieve should not be separated from all the surrounding circumstances, as they provide the motivation (reason) and the intention (what he was hoping to achieve) for his letter. For example, it is quite possible that Paul was aware of the Jewish/Gentile conflict that existed in the church in Rome (reason) and consequently may have hoped to bring peace to a church in turmoil (purpose/intention) by explaining how the law relates to salvation and grace in his letter. In like manner, each scenario mentioned above is relevant and therefore a possible contributing factor to the purpose of this letter. It appears to be evident from the contributions above that emphasizing one reason or purpose over another leads to debates as Dunn (1988:xliv-lviii) rightly noted. Hence, it seems more beneficial to consider all the motivating factors

together, as Dunn further suggests, as they seem to strengthen one another when viewed collectively. In other words, all the above-mentioned reasons contained purpose and intent. Consequently, it seems logical to conclude that Paul was achieving more than one purpose in writing to the church in Rome.

3.6.4 Section Summary: Historical Context

Scholars have generally agreed that the church in Rome was birthed by Jewish believers and God-fearing Gentiles from Rome who had journeyed to Jerusalem and experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the Feast of Pentecost in AD 30. Consequently, it is also agreed that the church in Rome had no apostolic beginnings.

The contributions from the works reviewed for this chapter seemed to agree that this church was a church experiencing some tension and conflict. However, as Stott pointed out, the conflict was not so much an ethnic one, but rather a theological one, as it involved a difference of opinion and conviction regarding salvation, law and grace. Specifically, just how much of the law were they able to keep without replacing the cross of Christ and the grace of God? Hence, the debate was particularly over dietary laws and holy days, which resulted in a certain level of discrimination and conflict within the congregation between the 'weak' law-observant Jews and the 'strong' law-free Gentiles. These circumstances would have formed the perfect backdrop and setting for Paul to write a letter of this nature, explaining God's redemption plan and masterfully addressing the Jewish/Gentile issue with regard to its relationship to the law and the grace of God, with possibly the hope of defusing some of the presumed and even expected and unavoidable conflict in a group of this nature.

It seemed most beneficial to view all of Paul's circumstances as contributing factors to why he wrote to the church in Rome. Visiting Rome was definitely one of his expressed desires, and thus writing to inform them of his plans to visit them

seems logical. The next stage of his ministry would have been a priority for him, and sharing his vision and intentions with them also makes good sense. If he was aware of the conflict in the church, even though he was not the founder of the work, he would have taken the opportunity to address the conflict and promote unity. Thus, it appears that none of these factors seem to be more important than the others, but that they all collectively could have presented Paul with good reason and opportunity to write to the church in Rome. Consequently, by considering the historical background of the church as well as the circumstances surrounding Paul and his recipients it seems logical to conclude that Paul was achieving more than one purpose in writing to the church at Rome.

The research in this section has revealed how the historical background of the church coupled with the circumstances of Paul and his recipients contributed to the content, the occasion and the purpose of the letter. It has shown how all extenuating circumstances played a part in what Paul wrote and why he wrote it, and thus also revealed Paul's purpose for writing. But, how do the extenuating circumstances influence and contribute to the interpretation of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30)? If Paul had any idea of the history of the church in Rome, then it seems very likely that he would have been aware of the possible turmoil they may have endured due to the Jews being expelled from Rome. It also seems likely that he would have been aware of the tension that existed between Jew and Gentile due to the theological conflict within the church. Thus, in the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30), Paul mentions the issue of 'present sufferings' within the context of future glory promised to believers and the intercessory role of the Holy Spirit. It appears then that his words were intended to encourage the believers, who had experienced much unrest, persecution and even exile, to fix their eyes on the surpassing glory promised to them, and to persevere to the end with the knowledge that the Holy Spirit's intercession works all things together for good according to the purpose and will of God.

3.7 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to establish a clear relationship between the target pericope and the message of the book in order to contribute further to the accuracy of the interpretation of the text under investigation. To do this, the historical and literary aspects of the letter were researched and investigated under the following headings: literary context, passage context, theological context, general context, and finally historical context. The findings of this research are as follows:

When analysing the literary context of the letter it was discovered that the structures offered by the authors consulted for this section contributed to exposing the argument or flow of thought contained in the letter. These scholars generally agreed that the basic structure of Paul's letter is the traditional three parts, namely, introduction, body and conclusion. The flow of thought or argument of the letter became evident in the different divisions these authors offered in their organization of the letter's content. It seemed evident that the more divisions there were, the more obvious the flow of thought was for the reader or researcher. From these organized structures, it appeared that the flow of thought in this letter revealed the message of the Gospel. It showed how Paul first emphasized humanity's sinfulness and thus their need for salvation, to revealing that salvation is freely available in Christ. It then described a life of holiness filled with the Spirit and revealed how both Jew and Gentile are included in God's plan of salvation. It then concluded with describing what this new life in daily Christian living would look like. Thus, it seemed logical to conclude that the structures offered by these authors proved to be helpful in revealing the flow of thought or argument contained in Paul's letter. This research also suggested that another structure be considered, a structure that highlighted the role of the Holy Spirit in the flow of thought already observed in the structures offered by the contributing authors in this section. The reason for this suggestion was to draw attention to the Holy Spirit's role within the redemption plan of God in order to

create an awareness of the Holy Spirit's involvement and participation in the Gospel from the start of the contextual exercise in this chapter.

Regarding the main message contained in Paul's letter, the contributing authors of this subsection agreed that the core message seemed to be the 'Gospel of the Kingdom' that reveals the redemption plan of God. They also appeared to concur that the Holy Spirit is the one who accomplishes the redemption plan of God in the earth, and is also the focal point of Chapter 8. These few contributors also agreed that the main message in the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) seemed to focus on the future glory of all believers, which is the final stage of this redemption plan.

It was also discovered that regardless of whether one focuses on the one main overarching Gospel theme or on the individual themes, it is still the Holy Spirit who accomplishes God's redemption plan in the earth. The whole process of salvation from beginning to end is accomplished by the intercession or divine intervention of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual believer, from the first call to salvation, to being justified, adopted, sanctified and finally glorified. Hence, this knowledge seemed to emphasize and enforce the message and importance of Chapter 8 in the book, as it focused attention on the intercessory role the Holy Spirit plays in fulfilling God's purpose for every individual believer.

The academic scholars reviewed in this chapter seemed to agree that the apostle Paul authored this letter and addressed it to a mixed group of Jew and Gentile believers in Rome after almost twenty-five years of ministry. Thus, Paul was not a novice in the Kingdom of God, but rather someone who had experienced much suffering, and who understood the mystery of God's redemption plan and life in the Spirit well, and consequently was well qualified to write a letter of this nature. From these few contributing authors this research has understood that it was a combination of Paul's circumstances and the church's historical background and

present situation that contributed to the reason and content of this letter.

Thus, by researching the historical and literary contexts of this letter a clear relationship between the passage and the book has emerged. The findings of this chapter have contributed positively in five ways to the research of this thesis: (1) they proved to be helpful in revealing the flow of thought or argument contained in Paul's letter, (2) they established the foundation for the message of the target pericope to be interpreted within the context of the chapter and the book, (3) they contributed to and explained why Paul wrote what he wrote, (4) they assured the reader or researcher that Paul was well qualified to write a letter of this nature, and (5) they highlighted different aspects of the Holy Spirit's ministry and thus His importance in accomplishing the redemption plan of God in the life of every believer. However, it appears that the intercession of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the believer and what that might look like or involve has not been adequately addressed in the findings of this chapter, and as a result, neither have the subsequent questions posed in this thesis been adequately answered. For example, some of the subsequent questions needing answers are: if the Holy Spirit is interceding for believers what does that involve and what does it mean for them? Is it possible that the Spirit's intercession in view goes beyond the boundaries of prayer to include far more in the believers' journey of sanctification? Could it be because of the Holy Spirit's ministry and perfect intercession that believers can be assured of all things working together for good? Could it be that believers are far more dependent on the ministry of the Holy Spirit than they realize?

These questions, and others that may emerge, emphasize the fact that there is still some mystery regarding the intercession of the Holy Spirit, and thus further investigation of the text seems justified. To accomplish this, an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis will be done in the next chapter. This exercise will establish the author-intended meaning of the text for its original

readers. This part of the study will commence with a preliminary analysis to analyse textual variants in order to determine their effect on the overall meaning of the pericope. The research will then move through the text, verse by verse, to discuss all the points relevant to its meaning. A verbal analysis will then be done to establish how specific key words and phrases may influence the interpretation of the text. In this exercise certain Greek words will be examined to determine their individual meaning and contribution to the text.

CHAPTER 4

EXEGESIS OF ROMANS 8:18-30

4.1 Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to determine the meaning of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). To do this, an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis will be done, in order to establish the author-intended meaning of the text for its original readers. This type of analysis will, in due course, contribute to answering the thesis question of how the Holy Spirit may help believers as they anticipate their day of glorification.

This part of the research commenced with a preliminary analysis of different Bible translations to discover and analyse any textual variants in the passage, in order to determine their effect or influence on the overall meaning of the target pericope. A translation of the text was then employed to do in-depth exegesis to explain and interpret the text. The research then progressed through the text, verse by verse, and points relevant to its interpretation and meaning were discussed. A verbal analysis was then done to establish how specific key words and phrases may have influenced the interpretation of the text. In this exercise, certain Greek words were examined to determine their specific meaning and their contribution to and significance in the passage. A literary analysis followed this word study to determine how the genre, the structure, the composition and the rhetoric found in the text may have also influenced its meaning and interpretation. And so, the findings of this chapter are presented under the following headings: Preliminary Analysis of the Text, Interpreting the Passage, Verbal Analysis, and

lastly a Literary Analysis.

4.2 Preliminary Analysis of the Text

The aim of this section was to discover and analyse any textual variants in the translation of the text in order to determine their effect on the overall meaning of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). To find these textual variants, different Bible translations were consulted and compared. After this, a translation was chosen for the purpose of an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis. Hence, there were two main tasks involved in this section: (1) analysing the textual variants (comparing translations), and (2) deciding on a translation for the exegesis of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30).

4.2.1 Comparison of Translations

Seventeen different translations of the Bible were consulted and examined to discover and analyse any textual variants to determine the contribution they may have on the interpretation and understanding of the passage. The translations consulted are as follows: New International Version (NIV), New King James Version (NKJV), International Standard Version (ISV), New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), English Standard Version (ESV), Darby Translation (DARBY), American Standard Version (ASV), King James Version (KJV), God's Word Translation (GW), Young's Literal Translation (YLT), Lexham English Bible (LEB), Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB), Wycliffe Bible (WYC), New Century Version (NCV), Common English Bible (CEB), Good News Translation (GNT), and Mounce's Reverse-Interlinear New Testament (MOUNCE).

These Bible translations all seemed to communicate the same general message of the future glory promised to all believers. There also did not appear to be any contradictions between the different translations. Although they convey the same general message, there did appear to be some textual variants worth mentioning.

4.2.1.1 First Textual Variant

The first difference was found in verse 18. It was observed that ten of the seventeen translations reviewed (ISV, YLT, KJV, NKJV, HCSB, ESV, ASV, DARBY, LEB, MOUNCE) started this verse with the explanatory conjunction ‘for’, while the remaining seven translations mostly commenced with the personal pronoun ‘I’. Hill and Archer (2015) explain that the explanatory conjunction introduces an explanation for the preceding verse and consequently joins two ideas together to form one semantic unit. For this reason, the verse should not stand alone, nor should it be viewed as a new section with a new idea. With this in mind it seems more correct that the conjunction ‘for’ be included in the text, because it is a key to understanding and interpreting the passage correctly.

4.2.1.2 Second Textual Variant

The second variant was also in verse 18. It was noted that five of the seventeen translations (NIV, KJV, NKJV, WYC, YLT) say the glory ‘will be revealed **in** us’ while the remaining translations say the glory ‘will be revealed **to** us’. In other words, will the glory promised to believers be revealed ‘to’ them or will it be revealed ‘in’ them? Or, is it possible that both renderings be true? Frederick Bruce (1985:173) and Leon Morris (2012:320) concur and are of the opinion that both renderings may be true. John Stott (1994:237) writes that this end-time disclosure will be ‘to us’, be ‘in us’ and also be ‘in store for us’, because believers will see it, share in it and be changed by it. Grant Osborne (2004:210) comments that ‘revealed for us’ is probably a more accurate rendering than ‘to us’ and ‘in us’. Douglas Moo (2009) comments that the preposition *eis* that Paul used does not mean ‘in’ or ‘to’, but says that Paul was making reference to the glory that already exists that will be given to believers so that it can reside within them and transform them into Christ’s image. The *Amplified Bible* (1987) addresses all areas and says the disclosure of this glory will be ‘to us and in us and for us and conferred on us’. It seems more helpful to include all aspects rather than being dogmatic about one aspect, because the future glory has more than one facet to

consider. This was discussed in Chapter 2, and it was observed from Steven Cole's (2013) writings that the promised future glory would include the full realization of all that God has promised, freedom from all sin, the redemption of the body, and the renewal of creation to its original state of perfection and purpose. This would then seem to be a glory that is revealed 'to us, in us, for us and conferred on us'.

4.2.1.3 Third Textual Variant

The third textual variant was in verse 21. It was noted that eight of the seventeen translations (GNT, CEB, NCV, NIV, LEB, GW, NRSV, MOUNCE) say that all of creation will be set free from its bondage, slavery or servility to 'decay' or 'ruin', while the remaining translations use the word 'corruption'. The original meaning of the word 'corruption' in the 1600s was 'decay' and 'ruin', but in today's vocabulary it means 'fraudulent' and 'dishonest' and, as Ann Nyland (2010) points out, the Greek word *phthora* meaning decay, destruction, ruin and death, cannot have the meaning of fraud and dishonesty. Hence, it appears that today's understanding of the word 'corruption' could be somewhat misleading when interpreting the text in some of the modern Bible translations. Thus with regard to interpreting the original text it seems more correct to use the words 'decay' or 'ruin'.

4.2.1.4 Fourth Textual Variant

The fourth difference was noted in verse 26. Two of the seventeen translations use the word 'infirmity' (ASV, WYC) and one uses the word 'infirmities' (KJV). The remaining translations use the word 'weakness' (ESV, ISV, HCSB, NIV, NCV, CEB, GNT, NRSV, LEB, GW, DARBY, MOUNCE) or 'weaknesses' (NKJV, YLT). It appears, then, that the majority of the seventeen translations examined refer to man's infirmity or weakness (singular) as opposed to infirmities or weaknesses (plural). James Maloney (2013) comments that the word 'weakness' or 'infirmity' is correctly translated in its singular form, as it pertains to the

weakness of the human condition that encompasses all the weaknesses that one could possibly face in the spirit, soul or body. The choice of using the singular form in verse 26 seems to create the idea that Paul was referring to prayer as man's only weakness. As was noted in Chapter 2, some, like Cranfield (1975) and Schreiner (1988), have indeed interpreted this weakness or infirmity as prayer. This does not seem a reasonable interpretation, though, because it seems apparent in Scripture that man has many weaknesses due to his weak human nature. Some of these weaknesses Paul mentions as hatred, contentions, jealousies, anger, pride, selfish ambition and envy (Galatians 5:20-21). It seems to be more reasonable, therefore, to think that Paul was referring to the believers' ignorance in prayer as an example of just one of their weaknesses due to their overall weak human nature. This was discussed and confirmed in section 2.2 by Leon Morris (2012:326), who concluded that Paul was referring to the believer's overall weak human nature in Romans 8:26 and that ignorance in prayer is an example of this weakness. It was also mentioned in Chapter 2, that Moo 1996, Stott 1994 and Fee 1994 echoed this same point of view. Thus it would seem more correct to accept the singular form of the word 'weakness' or 'infirmity'.

4.2.1.5 Fifth Textual Variant

The fifth difference was observed in verse 26. Four of the seventeen translations (WYC, GNT, CEB, NCV) do not include the word 'intercession' or 'intercede'. Instead, these translations have explained the Spirit's intercession as pleading, speaking or asking God on the believer's behalf. However, it appears that, by not including the word 'intercession' or 'intercede' in the text, these translations have limited the Holy Spirit's ministry of intercession to prayer by their limited definition of pleading, speaking and asking. But, what if the intercession of the Spirit goes beyond prayer? The use of the word 'intercession' or 'intercede' in the text invites further research as to what this intercession may involve, whereas the absence of the word and its limited definition in the text does not seem to encourage or invite any further investigation in this area of ministry. Thus it seems more

correct to retain the word 'intercession' in the text, to eliminate the possibility of a limited view or understanding of the Holy Spirit's intercession and His involvement in the life of the believer.

4.2.1.6 Sixth Textual Variant

The sixth textual variant was observed in verse 28. Thirteen of the translations say 'all things work together for good to those who love God' while the remaining four translations (GNT, CEB, NCV, NIV) give God the credit and say, 'God works all things for good'. This draws attention to God's involvement in the life of the believer and thus reminds the reader that without God's sovereignty involved, it would be impossible to assume that all things could automatically work out for good. In other words, because God is involved in the life of believers they can have the confidence that there is design and purpose to the trials and tribulation they encounter in this life. The *Good News Translation* (1976) goes even further and says that 'in all things God works for good **with** those who love Him', which highlights the partnership of God and man in the process of sanctification to conform him into the image of His Son, as discussed in Chapter 3 (see 3.4.2.7). Although this may not be a necessary addition to the text, it is a preferred addition, as it highlights the intervention (intercession) of God in the life of the believer.

4.2.2 Choice of Translation

The six textual variants, mentioned above, were considered to determine which translation would be best for an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis of the text. The first variant was the importance of the explanatory conjunction 'for', which contributes to the understanding and interpretation of the text, and it seemed best that this conjunction be included in the passage. The second variant did not seem to play a strong part in determining which translation to use, because it seemed more correct that the glory promised to believers would be seen **in** them as well as be revealed **to** them, and thus both views seemed

possible. It also seemed more correct to use the word 'decay' to describe creation's condemned condition, and so the second variant narrowed the choice down to the eight translations (GNT, CEB, NCV, NIV, LEB, GW, NRSV, MOUNCE) using the relevant word 'decay'. All eight translations rendered man's weakness in the singular form, so the third variant did not play a role in choosing the translation that would be analysed further. However, the fifth variant narrowed the choice down to the four translations (NIV, NCV, CEB, GNT) that gave God the credit for working all things together for good, as this addition to the text supports the thesis in considering the role the Spirit of God plays and how He helps believers anticipate the future glory promised to them. Of these four translations, the NIV is the only one that uses the word 'intercede'. The other three translations (NCV, CEB, GNT) only refer to the Holy Spirit speaking or pleading with God on behalf of believers, and thus appear to limit the intercessory role of the Spirit in the life of the believer to prayer. This conclusion seems to be not only limiting but also somewhat misleading, because, as was mentioned in the previous chapters, intercession may include acts of service or sacrifice and thus possibly go beyond prayer. As a result, the choice of translation for the exegetical exercise in this chapter was the *New International Version* (2011), as set out below.

4.2.3 The Text (Romans 8:18-30) NIV Translation

¹⁸ **(For)** I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the God's people in accordance with the will of God. ²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. (*Emphasis Added*)

4.2.4 Section Summary: Preliminary Analysis of the Text

After comparing the seventeen Bible translations, six meaningful variants seemed evident. The first variant observed was the exclusion, in some of the translations, of the explanatory conjunction 'for', and it seemed best, for exegetical purposes, that this conjunction should be included in the text. The second textual variant regarded the future glory being revealed 'in us' or 'to us' and it seemed best to include both views as possibly correct. The third difference was the use of the word 'decay' as opposed to the word 'corruption' to describe creation's condemned state. In this case, it seemed best to use the word 'decay' in the translation, because the word 'corruption' has been redefined in today's vocabulary to mean 'fraudulent', which is not an accurate definition of the Greek word *phthora* meaning 'decay'. The fourth variant was the choice of using the plural or singular form of 'infirmity' or 'weakness'. It was observed that the majority of translations reviewed chose the singular form of this word. The fifth variant revealed, in some of the translations, the replacing of the word 'intercession' with the words 'speaking' or 'pleading', which seemed to limit or reduce the Spirit's intercession in the life of the believer to only prayer. The sixth difference was actually an addition of the noun 'God' to the text. This addition gives God the credit for working all things together for good, and it draws attention to the fact that God, by His Spirit, is intimately involved in the life of believers to accomplish His purpose in them, through them and for them. Hence,

these six textual variants were considered to determine which translation would be best for the in-depth exegetical and theological analysis of the text. As a result, the *New International Version* (2011) of the Bible was chosen for the exegetical exercise in this project.

4.3 Interpreting the Passage

This section focused on the target pericope, verse by verse, to determine the message Paul was conveying to the church in Rome. As mentioned above (see 4.2.1.1), the presence of the conjunction ‘for’ in the text would mean that verse 18 is joined to the preceding verses and does not stand alone; neither does it introduce a new section with a new idea. As a result, it also seemed logical to include the preceding two verses for the purpose of context and interpreting the text correctly. Some Greek words and their transliterations were included in the discussion of each verse for exegetical purposes. Various commentaries were consulted for this exercise, and the contributions from the various authors appear below in the examination and discussion of each verse.

4.3.1 Verses 16 to 18

¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. ¹⁸ **(For)** I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. *(Emphasis added).*

The presence of the explanatory conjunction ‘**for**’ reveals that Paul’s argument or train of thought, regarding suffering and the future glory, did not start in verse 18, but rather in verses 16 and 17. Verse 18 contains an explanation that relates to the statement in verse 17. Hence, all three verses should be viewed together for the sake of context.

Suffering (*pathema, παθήματα*), as discussed in Chapter 2, is part of the Christian life. Moreover, and according to Scripture, it is a necessary part of the Christian life that prepares and even qualifies the believer to share in the glory of Christ, and as a result, cannot be avoided (2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 8:17; Philippians 1:29). Furthermore, it seems that the ‘present sufferings’ Paul referred to in verse 18 are the sufferings common to all God’s people in this present life, for he does not seem to highlight any specific suffering in the text that could relate to his immediate audience. Ernst Kasemann (1994:232) validated this understanding in part, and said that these temporary afflictions are unavoidable as a disciple of Christ. John Stott (1994:237) also confirmed this observation and pointed out that these common sufferings are as a result of persecution, the believer’s ‘half-saved state’ and human frailty (both physically and morally).

This **suffering** (*pathema, παθήματα*) is the path that prepares and qualifies believers to share in the glory of Jesus, but Paul makes a point of encouraging his readers with the fact that the glory promised to them cannot be compared with the suffering they may endure in this present life. In one of his previous letters (2 Corinthians 4:17) he wrote a similar thing saying that the ‘eternal weight of glory’ awaiting believers cannot be compared to the ‘light and momentary’ sufferings of this present life. In other words, Paul was not minimizing their suffering in any way, but was encouraging his readers with the reality that their future glory would surpass the harshness and severity of their present sufferings, ultimately making it all worthwhile. John Cereghin (2013:253) confirmed this interpretation, when he said that once believers see heaven’s glory and they share in Christ’s glory they will conclude that the pain they endured in this present life was worth it all.

The details of the **glory** (*doxa*, δόξαν) to be revealed in believers may be sketchy, but as was mentioned, it seems to include the fulfilment of all God's promises, the freedom from sin, the redemption of the body and the restoration of creation to its original purpose and state of perfection (Steven Cole 2013:n.p). Hence, there appears to be more than one aspect in the revealing of this glory, and thus it seems more helpful to interpret the text as the glory that will be revealed 'to us' and 'in us'. Leon Morris (1988:320) confirmed this understanding, as he noted that Paul could have meant this future glory would reveal everything involved with the revelation of the sons of God, and thus it would be an unveiling to them as well as in them. The translators of the *Amplified Bible* (1987) seemed to concur and have addressed all aspects of this glory, and have said it will be revealed to us, in us, for us and conferred on us.

The word **consider** (*logizomai*, Λογίζομαι) means to reckon, to count, to compute, to calculate and to deliberate by weighing up all the reasons. It refers to the facts of a matter and not to ideas or suppositions (Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 10/12/2014). Thus Ernst Kasemann's (1994:232) comment would be an accurate one. He said that 'I consider' is a 'firm conviction or judgment' rather than a 'personal opinion or mere belief'. A firm conviction is defined in the *Online English Dictionary* (www.dictionary.reference.com accessed 2015/4/27) as a 'rightness of position' that no 'clever argument, persuasive fact or theory' could affect or change. In other words, it is 'a belief held as proven'. This seemed to be Paul's position in this verse. He seemed to have a firm conviction that the sufferings believers encounter in this present life are not worth comparing with the future glory promised to them. Where did his firm conviction come from? As was pointed out in Chapter 3, he had approximately twenty-five years of ministry credited to him at the time of writing this letter. Thus, it seems logical to assume that Paul's firm conviction came through many years of experiencing God and knowing God in the midst of his own trials. James Dunn

(1988:468) seemed to bear witness to this, and wrote that a firm conviction is the product of experiencing many years of life in the Spirit. Bob Utley (2013:n.p) also validated this understanding as he pointed out that *logizomai* (consider/reckon) is an accounting term that describes the act of arriving at a ‘carefully researched conclusion’.

4.3.2 Verse 19

¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.

The presence of the conjunction ‘**for**’ links this verse to the previous verse and gives an explanation for the statement made before. In other words, the future glory of believers, that Paul is referring to in verse 18, involves a revealing or an unveiling of the children (sons) of God; and it is this unveiling that creation eagerly anticipates. So, even though Romans 8:14-16 affirms that believers are already children (sons) of God, there is to be a **revealing** (*apokalypto, αποκαλυπτειν*) or an unveiling of God’s children in the future, that creation **eagerly anticipates** (*apokaradokia, αποκαραδοκια*). Grant Osborne (2004:211) validates this understanding as he commented that although believers are already spiritual sons (and daughters) of God, their final manifestation is in the future, when it will become a physical reality and a visible event. Likewise, William Newell (n.d:loc 6917) says that creation is eagerly anticipating the day when believers will be unveiled and revealed for who they really are, sons and daughters of God.

The Greek word **creation** (*ktisis, κτισεως*) means the act of founding, establishing, building or creating something. It can also mean the sum total of things made or created (Thayer and Smith www.biblestudytools.com accessed 23/9/2015). Therefore, it appears that Paul is referring to the created order but more specifically to the earth that God placed man on, for as John Stott

(1994:238) pointed out, Paul would have had the earth in mind, as this is the arena in which the fall and redemption history is taking place. Having said this, Leon Morris (2012:320) pointed out that, although the word 'creation' is a broad enough term to include all that God has created; there are those who disagree with such a broad understanding. He explained further that some scholars (Gager 1970:329 and Kasemann 1994:233) have difficulty with the 'idea of a cosmic fall', and thus adopt a view that confines, the fall and subsequent curse to mankind. It seems evident then that the interpretation of the word 'creation' has caused much discussion among theological scholars. What does seem obvious, though, is that the curse extended to the natural created order because in Genesis 3:14-18 it says that God cursed the serpent for deceiving Eve and the ground as a consequence to Adam's disobedience, and both the serpent and the ground are part of the natural created order.

Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 23/9/2015) define ***apokaradokia***, (*αποκαραδοκία*) as an 'anxious and persistent expectation'. Thus, scholars have described this '**eager expectation**' (*apokaradokia*, *αποκαραδοκία*) in various ways: as watching the horizon, with 'raised head', for the expected object to appear (Godet 1969:313); or it depicts someone standing on 'tip-toe' straining to see (Phillips 1972: 324); or a 'stretching (of) the neck and craning forward' (Cranfield 1975:410) to see the appearing of the anticipated object. Why would creation eagerly anticipate the revealing of the sons of God? It would seem that the creation's deliverance from the curse is linked to the revealing of the children of God. As John Stott (1994:238) has pointed out that just as creation has shared in the condemnation of man due to sin, so it will share in man's redemption and future glory. Likewise, Woodrow Kroll (2002:136) wrote that there is an inextricable link between mankind and the earth. He said further that just as the earth was cursed as a result of man's sin; it will be delivered as a result of man's freedom. In other words, both are in bondage together and both will be set free together (Stott 1994:238). And so, it seems obvious that the

reason creation eagerly anticipates the revealing of the children of God is because it is also the day when its freedom from the curse becomes a reality and it is restored to its original state of perfection. Hence, creation's freedom is inextricably linked to the freedom and glory of the sons and daughters of God.

4.3.3 Verses 20 - 21

²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

Creation was subjected to frustration because the consequences of man's sin extended to the natural created order as mentioned above. So, in these two verses, Paul is alluding to the condemnation that God pronounced on man and creation at the fall in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). The theme or doctrine of condemnation was discussed in the previous chapter (see 3.4.2.1) and it was observed that this condemnation was the verdict of a holy God on man's rebellion that had far-reaching consequences affecting all of the natural order. In other words, the ground was cursed as a result of man's sin (Stott 1994:238) and as a result of this damnatory sentence the creation was subjected to frustration.

The Greek word *mataiotes* (ματαιοτητι), translated as **frustration**, means "what is devoid of truth and appropriateness, perverseness, depravity, frailty, and want of vigour (Thayer and Smith www.biblestudytools.com 23/9/2015). It conveys the basic idea of 'emptiness' or 'purposelessness' (Stott 1994:239). It appears, then, that a purposeless creation would be a creation without a purpose or one that was not able to fulfil its purpose, resulting in a meaningless and pointless existence. Leon Morris (2012:321) confirmed this concept when he commented that if something 'lacks the purpose for which it was designed, it has no purpose'. This viewpoint

was also confirmed by Grant Osborne (2004:211), who wrote that since creation was cursed by God it has not been able to 'realize its God-intended potential'.

In these verses, Paul also highlighted the fact that creation was subjected to frustration by God **in hope** (*epi elpis*, επ ελπιδι) of liberating it from its bondage to decay and bringing it into the freedom and glory of the children of God. In other words, the earth's 'subjection to frustration will not last forever' (Stott 1994:239). Paul seems to link this hope of freedom to the promised liberty of God's children; hence the 'eager expectation' of creation for the revealing of the sons and daughters of God, for this is also the promised time creation is to be liberated and able to fulfil its God-ordained purpose. As explained by John Stott (1994:238) that just as man and creation have been in bondage together, so they will be liberated together. Similarly, Woodrow Kroll (2002:136) observed that just as man's fall was responsible for the curse on the earth, so man's full redemption will be responsible for the lifting of this curse from the earth, hence, the hope and eager expectation of creation.

Paul said creation is to be liberated from its '**bondage to decay**' (*phthora*). Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com 23/9/2015) define *phthora* as corruption, destruction, perishing and that which is subject to corruption. In 4.2 above, it was noted that Ann Nyland (2010:n.p) defined *phthora* as decay, destruction, ruin and death. In other words, creation is in bondage to corruption, destruction, ruin and death and will only be liberated from this when the sons and daughters of God are revealed. In a similar way, John Stott (1994:239) noted that 'decay' carries the idea that creation is enslaved in an 'unending cycle' of decline, death and decomposition. However, he added, creation will be liberated in the freedom and glory of the sons and daughters of God. Likewise, Grant Osborne (2004:212) commented that while creation is characterized by death and disorder, it also knows that it will be liberated from this cycle of death and

disintegration when it is brought into the freedom and glory of the sons of God. Consequently, it appears reasonable to conclude that God's creation will be liberated as the children of God are fully redeemed and glorified.

4.3.4 Verse 22

²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

In other words, creation is eagerly anticipating its freedom from bondage to decay, and even **groans** (*systemazo*, συστεινάζει) continually, as if it were in childbirth, expecting new life and purpose to be its portion one day. Frederick Bruce (2008:174) confirmed this concept, and commented that the earth's groaning and travailing 'carries with it the hope of new life for all creation'. David Bernard (1987:186) suggested that these groanings may be the convulsions of the earth experienced as hurricanes, tornados, volcanoes and earthquakes. Whether these groans be metaphorical or not, it seems reasonable to assume that creation's 'groaning' is as a result of man's sin, but is also in expectation of its redemption, as discussed in the preceding verses. John Stott (1994:241) confirmed that the earth groans in expectation, as he wrote that birth pains provide the expectancy and assurance of promised redemption. In other words, the painful groanings are not meaningless, but are in anticipation of something being birthed. In this case, it is the redemption and liberty of both believers and creation. Hence Stott concluded it is a 'painful prelude' that will herald in something glorious, as the 'pains of labour' are followed by 'joys of birth'. Woodrow Kroll (2002:137) is of the same mind, and commented that these pains are not 'death pains' but rather 'birth pains' that herald the day of redemption and liberty ushered in by the return of Christ. Grant Osborne (2004:213) has the same point of view, and remarked that these groanings are the pains of childbirth that signifies new life to come. Thus it seems logical to conclude that these groanings (real or metaphorical) are as a result of sin, but more so in expectation

of the glorious freedom that awaits creation in the revealing of the sons and daughters of God.

4.3.5 Verse 23

²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

Firstfruit (*aparche*, *απαρχην*) is an agricultural term that carries with it the idea or promise that there is more fruit to come. In other words, the rest of the harvest is on the way and is therefore certain and sure (see 2.2 in Chapter 2). In this verse, Paul seems to be saying that believers have a measure of the Holy Spirit, and that there is more of the Spirit to experience. Additionally, Grant Osborne (2012:324) pointed out that this could mean that the measure of the Spirit believers have now is but a foretaste of a greater measure to be experienced in the future or, he adds, that the gift of the Spirit is only a foretaste of the many blessings to be experienced in the future. It seemed logical to conclude that both views could be true. In other words, believers will experience the fullness of the Spirit as well as the fullness of blessings when they see the Lord face to face and experience and share in the splendour of His glory. Paul seemed to confirm this concept in Scripture when he said that right now believers only have partial knowledge, but one day, when they see Jesus face to face, they will know all things (1 Corinthians 12:9-12). In addition to this, James Dunn (1988:473) noted that the metaphor of firstfruits carries with it several implications. Firstly, it refers to the first sheaves of the harvest; as a result, one can assume that the harvest has begun. Secondly, it refers to a portion of the whole, and so the whole is a reference to the harvest of glorified believers. Thirdly, the firstfruit points to the continual work of the Spirit within the believer until the day of resurrection. Hence the final harvest has already begun and will be completed, because the firstfruit of the Spirit ensures that it will be so.

In this verse, Paul also points out that creation is not the only thing groaning, but that believers, who have the Spirit of God, **groan** (*stenazo*, στεναζομεν) too. In other words, believers are not exempt from this groaning even though they have the Spirit of God dwelling in them. Edwin Gifford (1886:n.p) confirmed this understanding, as he also observed that believers groan even though they have the Holy Spirit. But, why are believers groaning? It seems reasonable to assume that believers groan as a result of human frailty or weakness on the one hand (verse 26) and a longing for the redemption of their bodies on the other (future glory). James Dunn (1988:474) appeared to agree too, and described this groaning as an expression of an 'inward frustration' caused by living in the 'eschatological tension' of this age and the age to come. John Stott (1994:242) also confirmed this viewpoint when he wrote that believers groan with discomfort and with longing. He explained that this is because the Holy Spirit gives believers joy and hope with His presence and with the knowledge of their coming glory creating a longing within them, but living in the tension of what is and what is not yet creates discomfort in them. Hence, the tension of longing and discomfort causes believers to groan within. James Denney (1979:n.p) appeared to agree with Stott, and wrote that believers groan because they have the Spirit of God dwelling in them. In other words, the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit causes believers to groan in anticipation of their full redemption. Douglas Moo (2009:267) had a similar opinion as he said that the holiness of the Spirit contributes to the intensity of these groanings as believers yearn for the perfection of God in them. This view seems to be entirely possible because Scripture teaches in 1 Corinthians 2:9-12 that the Spirit reveals to the believers the things that God has prepared for them, and so it would make sense to conclude that the groanings of believers is intensified by the presence of the Spirit within them, as He gives them knowledge of that which they have inherited

as God's children.

Adoption (*hyiothesia*, υιοθεσιαν) was discussed in Chapter 3 (see 3.4.2.6) and it was observed that it is the decision to embrace and make someone a son, who is not one biologically. In this verse, Paul seems to be saying that although believers are already sons and daughters of God their **adoption** (*hyiothesia*, υιοθεσιαν) will be completed and fully realized in the redemption of their bodies. John Stott (1994:243) also commented along these lines, and said that while believers are spiritually redeemed and sons (and daughters) of God, their bodies still have to be redeemed, which will complete their sonship at a much deeper and richer level than they are able to experience right now. John Cereghin (2013:256) also confirmed this explanation and wrote that believers are presently only two-thirds saved, in spirit and soul, and thus wait for their full redemption when their bodies will be quickened and glorified to be like Jesus' resurrected body. In other words, sonship is a spiritual reality now, but will be experienced in its fullness when Christ returns and believers receive their resurrected bodies, as Paul and John teach in the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:38-53; 2 Corinthians 5:1-5; Philippians 3:21 and 1 John 3:2).

4.3.6 Verse 24

²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?

In other words, believers hope for what they do not yet have, for if they had what they were hoping for; they would no longer need to hope for it, because they would be in possession of it. Therefore, that which is hoped for cannot be a present reality. It appears the **hope** (*elpis*, ἐλπίδι) that Paul is referring to is the promise of redemption completed and fully realized in spirit, soul and body, which sustains believers in the midst of their suffering. John Stott (1994:243) seemed to confirm this point of view when he commented that believers are saved in hope

of their total liberation. Similarly, Leon Morris (1988:325) noted that believers 'look forward in hope to the full realization' of that which Christ Jesus has accomplished for them. It seems reasonable to say that hope has a foundation and is based on a promise, which in this case is the promise of redemption completed. This conclusion is confirmed by Woodrow Kroll (2002:137) who highlighted the fact that salvation cannot be separated from hope, because it forms the foundation of hope. In other words, the promise of salvation and redemption forms the basis of the believer's hope. That is to say, without this foundation, hope would have nothing to key into or build on. John Cereghin (2013:257) added to this that one ought not to get confused with being 'saved in hope' and being 'saved by grace through faith in Christ'. He aptly pointed out that it is faith in Christ that saves the sinner, but hope is that which sustains the believer. In other words, hope, he explained, has nothing to do with justification but everything to do with motivation and perseverance. This is because faith unites the forgiven sinner (justified individual) to Christ, while hope sustains the believer in his service to Christ. Hence, hope and faith operate on the same principle of things unseen. Consequently, as said above, hope is not a present reality, but it is a necessary aspect that sustains believers while they wait for their redemption to be complete and they are finally revealed as the sons and daughters of God.

4.3.7 Verse 25

²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Because the promise of redemption complete forms the basis of the believer's hope, it is certain and assured (because it is God who promised) and as a result believers are able to wait for this redemption **patiently** (*hypomone*, υπομονης). In plain words, because they know that what is promised is certain, they are able to wait for it patiently. John Stott (1994:243) says a similar thing. He commented

that believers can be confident in the promises of God and thus wait patiently for their full redemption. Douglas Moo (2000:267) also confirmed this when he said that biblical hope is solidly founded in God, and consequently enables the believer to wait for what is promised with patience and endurance. Woodrow Kroll (2002:138) offered a slightly different perspective, and said believers develop patience while waiting with confidence for their redemption to take place. This indeed is also true, because living in the tension of 'what is and what is not yet' creates an environment that requires patience, and as a result, the believers' patience is developed in the process of waiting for their full redemption. Hence, it appears that both perspectives may be valid in the interpretation of the text.

4.3.8 Verse 26

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

In this verse, Paul seems to be highlighting the fact that believers are weak and that the Spirit **helps** (*synantilambanomai*, συναντιλαμβάνεται) believers in the same way that hope helps believers. Put another way, just as hope helps believers by keeping them focused on the promise of final redemption, so the Spirit helps and sustains believers in their weakness while they anticipate their final redemption. Douglas Moo (2009:268) agreed with this point and commented that the Spirit sustains believers in the midst of their weakness in a similar way that hope does (see Chapter 2). Grant Osborne (2004:216) had a slightly different perspective, and said that just as the Spirit *gives* the believer hope so the Spirit helps to sustain them in their weakness. In other words, it appears that Osborne is saying that the Spirit is the source of the believer's hope, which would be true because He is the firstfruit (verse 23) and guarantee of their redemption being accomplished (Ephesians 1:14). So, it appears reasonable to say that just as the Spirit helps believers in the area of hope, He also helps them

in the area of their over-all human frailty or weakness.

What might that **weakness** (*astheneia*, ἀσθενεια) be? It was noted in Chapter 2, and mentioned above in 4.2.1.3, that some scholars (Cranfield 1975, Shreiner 1988, Kroll 2002) have interpreted prayer as the single weakness of the believer and not just an example of the many weaknesses the believer may exhibit from time to time. James Dunn (1988:477) commented that Paul had the whole weak human condition in view and not just external temptations or an inability to pray effectively. Nevertheless, Paul seems to be highlighting the fact that there are occasions when believers do not know what to **pray** (*proseuchomai*, προσευξομεθα) for, and as a result their prayers can be ineffective. Consequently, Paul encouraged his readers with the Spirit's ability to **intercede** (*hyperentynchano*, υπερεντυγγανει) on their behalf. John Stott (1994:244) appeared to confirm this interpretation and wrote that just as biblical hope sustains the believer, so the Spirit sustains the believer in their general over-all weakness and specifically in their weakness relating to prayer. He explained further that the believers' weakness in the area of prayer is their not knowing exactly what to pray for. Do they pray for deliverance from suffering or for strength to endure the suffering? Woodrow Kroll (2002:138) also confirmed this, and noted that because believers do not always know how to pray or what to pray, God gives them the Spirit, who makes intercession for them in accordance with the will of God, thus every time the Spirit intercedes on their behalf they can be assured that God's will is being addressed and accomplished. William Barclay (2002:131) verified this, and said believers are weak in prayer because they do not always know what is best for them and they cannot foresee the future. It seems reasonable to conclude that just as the hope of glory sustains believers in this present life, so the Holy Spirit sustains them in their weakness of prayer, by interceding for them when they are ignorant of God's will and cannot pray effectively for themselves.

In the text, Paul seems to clearly state that the Holy Spirit helps believers by interceding for them with **wordless** (*alaletos, αλαλητοις*) **groans** (*stenagmos, στεναγμοις*). As was noted in Chapters 1 and 2, there is a consensus among the scholars reviewed that the Holy Spirit intercedes for believers. However, it was also noted that they do not all agree on how He intercedes for them and what His intercession may include or involve. The debate was evident particularly in the interpretation of the Spirit's groanings. Despite the fact that Paul seems to specifically imply that the Spirit Himself groans, some have interpreted these groanings as those of the believer (see 2.3.1) and others believe it refers to the believer speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) (see 2.3.3). These two interpretations (the believer praying and tongues) seem to change the focus of the text from the Spirit interceding for the believer to the believer praying. As a result, the focus seems to be on what the Spirit causes believers to do as opposed to what the Spirit is doing on the believer's behalf. As mentioned before, this research is not denying or disputing that the Holy Spirit leads and guides the believer in prayer. It just seems that Paul's focus in the text is on what the Spirit is doing on the believer's behalf. Having said this, then, what does the Spirit's intercession involve and include? And, what does that mean for the believer who is anticipating the day of redemption?

Grant Osborne (2204:218) suggested the Spirit is entreating or petitioning God more deeply than believers ever could, and explains that the Spirit's groanings are expressions of His deep love and concern for them. This observation rightly draws attention to the Spirit's compassion for believers, which motivates His intercession for them, but it is also noted that it seems to limit this intercession to prayer in the form of entreating or petitioning. John Stott (1994:245) does not seem to interpret the Spirit's intercession as prayer, but as 'speechless groans'. He specifically says that His intercession is 'accompanied by them and expressed in them'. In a similar way to Osborne, he wrote that the Spirit's groanings are an indication of His empathy and compassion for believers and His

desire and longing for them to be glorified. Whilst it does not appear that Stott is limiting the Holy Spirit's intercession to prayer, he is also not saying what it may include or involve beyond 'wordless groans'. Nevertheless, it is also observed that Stott recognizes the Spirit's groanings are as a result of His compassion and desire for believers to experience redemption in its fullness. Hence, it seems evident that these 'groans' reveal the Spirit's empathy and compassion for believers, but the two contributing authors do not seem to shed much light on what the Spirit's intercession may include or involve, and as a result, neither do they suggest what significance the Spirit's intercession may have for believers anticipating glorification.

4.3.9 Verse 27

²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

It appears that Paul is saying three things in this verse, (1) God searches the hearts of believers, (2) God knows the mind of the Spirit, (3) The Spirit **intercedes** (*entynchano*, εντυγγανει) for believers in accordance with God's will. As a result of this, and in conjunction with the previous verse, it seems reasonable to conclude that Paul was encouraging his readers with the Spirit's ability to intercede on their behalf in accordance with the will of God. Thus, in these two verses, it also seems evident that Paul's emphasis is on the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers, who may often find that their own prayer life is ineffective due to ignorance of God's will in the midst of their circumstances. So, does one pray for deliverance from the situation or for strength to endure the situation (Stott 1994:244)? What is not clear from the text, though, is whether this intercession is inextricably linked to the believer's prayer (Hale 2007, Krell 2012, Cereghin 2013) or whether it takes place regardless of it. It appears, from the research thus far, that this has been a

debated topic among most theological scholars, resulting in various theories, some of which were discussed at length in Chapter 2.

Grant Osborne (2004:218) seemed to agree with the interpretation offered above, as he also said that the Spirit's petitions, which undergird the prayers of believers, are in accordance with God's will, and as a result believers can be certain of God's will being accomplished even if they should pray amiss. Woodrow Kroll (2002:138) has a similar understanding and wrote that God knows the mind of the Spirit as well as the hearts of all men, and as a result, knows exactly what the Spirit is praying for as He intercedes on the believer's behalf in accordance with God's will. Leon Morris (1988:329) also validated this understanding, and says that God searches the hearts of believers and finds the 'wordless groans' of the Spirit there, and answers these prayers accordingly. Thus it appears reasonable to conclude that Paul was encouraging his readers with the Spirit's ability to intercede on their behalf in accordance with the will of God.

These three observations seem to imply that the intercession of the Spirit does not go beyond prayer and petition. It also seems evident, from the contributions of the authors included in the previous chapters, that the Spirit's intercession is interpreted mainly as pleading or entreating God on the believer's behalf. Strictly speaking, it appears that 'intercession' is generally interpreted as prayer and nothing else. However, as this research has already pointed out, whilst prayer and petition is an accurate definition of intercession, it may not be a full explanation of what this ministry may involve, as has been mentioned in Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis.

4.3.10 Verse 28

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Paul seems to be saying at least two things in this verse: (1) In all things God works for the good of those who love Him, and (2) Those who love Him are called according to His purpose. It would also appear, then, that this verse does not apply to unbelievers, because they would naturally not fall within the category of those who love God. It would thus appear that Paul is specifically referring to God's providential care in the life of believers. John Stott (1994:247) confirmed the providential care of God in this verse, as he commented that God is continuously and purposefully involved in the life of believers. Stott and the additional authors reviewed for this section commented along similar lines, but seemed to raise three points in this verse as shown below.

(1) Those who love God.

Stott (1994:247) commented that God works on behalf of those who love Him. He agreed that this verse excludes those who reject God from appropriating this promise, because they do not fall within the category of those who love God, as mentioned above. It was observed that Woodrow Kroll (2002:138) agreed with this reasoning and commented that this verse is not a 'universal, unqualified, blanket statement'. Leon Morris (1988:331) also agreed, and wrote that Paul is referring to believers who love God and not to the 'general public'. It would appear that until unbelievers respond in faith and are justified by God they are not able to assume that God would work all things out for good in their life. However, as was mentioned in Chapter 2, because God loves humanity and desires that none should perish, it is not impossible for God to use all things to bring the unbeliever to the place of responding to His call and thus be included in God's family, and as a result qualify for the promise of God working out all things for their good.

(2) Called according to His purpose.

John Stott (1994:247) said that God works according to His eternal saving purpose. Likewise, Leon Morris (1988:332) agreed with Stott and explained that God's saving purpose would involve God's redemption plan (the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ) that prepared the way and enables fallen humanity to be rescued from sin and darkness to be given new life in His Kingdom of light. Woodrow Kroll (2002:141) is of a similar opinion, and commented that the purpose of God Paul was referring to is God's redemption plan, but viewing it from the perspective of 'five works of grace' namely, foreknowledge, predestination, called, justification, sanctification and glorification. Thus, it is noted that the text speaks about God's purpose (singular) and it seems evident that it relates to His eternal redemption plan to redeem lost humanity.

(3) God works all things out for good.

John Stott (1994:247) noted that God works, in all things (good and bad), for the good of believers according to His eternal plan. In other words, in God's economy, none of the pain and suffering believers endure is meaningless or purposeless. On the contrary, God works all things together for the believer's good. He explains further that because God is good, everything He purposes, designs and does is good, but adds that Paul had the believer's final redeemed state in view here, and thus the good in this verse refers to the believer's ultimate good. Grant Osborne (2004:219) commented that the good may not always result in what believers desire, but it will always be what is best for them according to the will and purpose of God for them. God's will, he explained, is as a result of His eternal love and plan for them, which ultimately ensures and guarantees the best for them. Hence the believer's 'ultimate good' looks to be the best interpretation here, because it seems apparent that all things do not always work out for one's immediate good in this present life. David Bernard (1987:189) offered this explanation regarding the different aspects of the

believer's suffering. He said that just as some of the individual ingredients of a cake are rather distasteful when eaten separately, when mixed together in the right proportions and baked, they offer a much tastier result: his point being that the good and the bad of life's experiences together mould and make the believer's final character. John Cereghin (2013:261) highlighted the biblical example of Joseph in this regard, and said that the evil his brothers intended for him in Egypt was turned into good by God, according to His purpose for the nation of Israel (Genesis 50:20). Douglas Moo (2000:269) seemed to support and confirm this understanding, as he commented that this verse promises that all circumstances believers experience are all sovereignly used by God for their ultimate good. Grant Osborne (2004:219) also noted that it is as a result of the Holy Spirit's intercession that 'all things work out for good' as God responds to the Spirit's petition on behalf of the believer. However, Martin Luther (1961:n.p) understood that the Holy Spirit (and not God) is the one who makes all things work together for good. The objection to this view is that the transition from this verse to the next verse is not a smooth one, because it seems to involve an 'unexpected change of subject' (Morris 1988:331). Consequently, it seems best to interpret 'God' as the one who works all things for good. From these contributions there appears to be a general consensus among these authors, and it seems reasonable to conclude that God works all things together according to His plan and purpose and for the believer's ultimate good.

4.3.11 Verse 29

²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

The conjunction '**for**' in this verse joins it to the previous verse, providing the reason for knowing that all things work together for the believer's good. In other words, being 'conformed to the image of His Son' is the reason why believer's

can know that 'in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose'.

The two theological terms in this verse, **foreknew** (*proginosko, προεγνων*) and **predestined** (*proorizo, προωρισεν*), were discussed in Chapter 3 (see 3.4.2.2 and 3.4.2.3) and from the various contributions it was discovered that '**foreknew**' or '**foreknowledge**' (*proginosko, προεγνων*) is more than just knowing about something beforehand. It includes the choice God made beforehand in eternity past to create mankind for relationship or sonship. Also, in the Chapter 3 contributions, it seemed apparent that **predestined** (*proorizo, προωρισεν*) has the basic meaning of appointing to what was previously determined, which in this case, is being **conformed** (*symmorphos, συμμορφους*) into the **image** (*eikon, εικονος*) of His **Son** (*hyios, υιου*). Hence, the focus of this verse seems to be on what believers in Christ have been predestined to. Thus, Paul seems to be saying that God, the Father, had a very large family in mind, which would be made up of individuals who would resemble Jesus, His Son and their elder brother. Consequently, God predestined that believers in Christ be conformed into the image of His Son to achieve this purpose.

Leon Morris (1988:333) confirmed the above-mentioned focus of this verse, as he also commented that believers have been predestined to become like Jesus. He also validated the interpretation offered above, as he said that God had a large family in view, which would not only be like Christ, but relate to Him as their elder brother and to God as their Father. In a similar way, John Stott (1994:249) also confirmed this interpretation, and observed that believers were predestined to become like Jesus through the process of sanctification, adding that God wanted a family of individuals who would relate to Him as a Father and to Jesus, as their elder brother (1994:252). Frederick Bruce (1985:176) also validated the interpretation of this verse, and said that God seemed to have had in mind, from

eternity past, as the object of His foreknowledge and predestination, a family of sons and daughters conformed to the image of His Son. Thus it seems possible to conclude that this verse highlights what believers in Christ have been predestined to as God's adopted sons and daughters.

4.3.12 Verse 30

³⁰And those he predestined he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Like the previous verse, **called** (*kaleo*, *εκαλεσεν*), **justified** (*dikaioo*, *εδικαιωσεν*) and **glorified** (*doxazo*, *εδοξασεν*) are also theological terms that have already been defined and discussed in the previous chapter. From the study in Chapter 3 it was discovered that '**called**' (*kaleo*, *εκαλεσεν*), as it relates to redemption, is the invitation given by God to all people (Jew and Gentile) to come and participate in an intimate relationship with Him (see 3.4.2.4). It was also noted that '**justified**' (*dikaioo*, *εδικαιωσεν*) is the judicial act of God that declares believers in Christ righteous, due to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them, and consequently repositions them and gives them the opportunity to fulfil their predestined purpose as sons or daughters of God (see 3.4.2.5). It was also observed that, in the context of the target pericope, '**glorified**' (*doxazo*, *εδοξασεν*) is a reference to the future glorified state of believers when they are clothed with resurrected bodies and their sonship is fully realized (see 3.4.2.8).

Having said this, verse 30 appears to be a continuation of Paul's thought or argument in verse 29, as he continued to systematically lay out the process of salvation in theological terms. Thus, in light of the above-mentioned definitions, and with regard to verse 29 and 30, Paul appears to be saying that in God's

foreknowledge He chose to create mankind for relationship (sonship) and thus appointed (predestined) them to this relationship. Consequently, an invitation is given (called) to all humanity (both Jew and Gentile) inviting them to come into relationship with Him. However, only those who respond to this invitation (call) are justified in His sight and are subsequently perfected (conformed) to be like Jesus in order to ultimately share in His glory. Thus, it appears that these two verses contain the redemption plan of God in a nutshell. Further, it would also appear that 'called' is the defining step in the process that justification and glorification build on (*The New Dictionary of Theology* 1998:120). In other words, whilst the invitation to salvation is given to all people, it is only those who respond in faith who are justified and glorified.

Grant Osborne (2004:223-224) confirmed this understanding, as he similarly wrote that God calls or invites individuals to salvation, but there is a need for them to personally respond to this call to make it effective. Likewise, in justification, he drew attention to the fact that whilst God is the one who justifies individuals, it is only those who respond in faith to the Gospel who are justified and ultimately glorified when Christ returns. Similarly, Woodrow Kroll (2002:142-143) also validated this interpretation and commented that although sonship was foreknown and predestined, the individual still has to respond to the invitation or call to salvation. He also mentioned that as individuals respond in faith to the call and enlightening of the Spirit, they are justified by God, and as a result are made to be sons or daughters in every sense of the word, which includes the process of sanctification that culminates in glorification. Frederick Bruce (1985:177) noted a similar thing, and said that those who respond to the call of God are justified by their faith and are recipients of the climax of God's divine purpose for humanity, namely, glorification, when their sanctification will be complete. Thus it seems reasonable to conclude that although this verse addresses the process of salvation it would appear that 'called' is the defining step in the process, since it is the individuals' response to the invitation that determines whether they are

justified, and in due course, then glorified according to the purpose of God.

4.3.13 Section Summary: Interpreting the Passage

After researching and consulting the different commentaries on the message of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30), an understanding of what Paul was saying to his original audience seemed to become apparent. The results of these findings are summarized in the following paraphrase offered by the researcher.

I (Paul) am fully persuaded and therefore say without hesitation, that the sufferings we encounter in this present life, that prepare us for our inheritance and future glory, are not worth comparing with this glory that will be revealed in us, to us and conferred upon us. Even creation groans and eagerly anticipates this future glory when we, the children of God, are finally unveiled. Creation eagerly anticipates our unveiling as the children of God, because it was subjected to frustration by God as a result of our sin and has not been able to fulfil its God-ordained purpose since then. But this curse on creation was pronounced with the promise of setting it free one day to share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. And so, creation is eagerly anticipating its freedom from its bondage to decay and even groans continually as if it were in the pains of childbirth, expecting to be restored to its original state of perfection and beauty when we, the children of God, are revealed. But, creation is not the only thing groaning with eager expectation. Even though we have the Spirit of God dwelling in us, we also groan with keen anticipation for our adoption as sons and daughters to be completed in the redemption of our bodies. The Spirit's very presence even intensifies our groaning and longing for that day. Yet we groan in hope, because we know that our promised redemption is certain and we are able to wait for it patiently because the indwelling Holy Spirit is the firstfruit guaranteeing what is still to come. Furthermore, just as hope helps us to wait patiently for our redemption, so the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness by interceding and intervening for us according to the will of God until the day of our

final redemption. This is especially helpful when we do not know how to pray according to God's will in every situation. As a result of the Holy Spirit's intercession, which is in accordance with God's will, we can be certain that God works all things out for good according to His eternal purpose of conforming us into the image of His Son. We can be certain of this, because in His foreknowledge God chose to set His love on us and predestined that those who respond to His invitation of salvation would be justified and conformed into the likeness of His Son, that Jesus may be the eldest among many brothers and sisters who will not only resemble Him but share in the riches of His glorious inheritance.

4.4 Verbal Analysis

This section investigated the vocabulary and sentence structure of the passage. To achieve this, a lexical analysis and a grammatical analysis were done. The lexical analysis investigated the meaning of key words to establish their importance and influence in the text. Significant grammatical features in the passage were also examined to determine their contribution to the understanding and interpretation of the passage. Hence, the investigation is presented below under the following headings: (1) Lexical Analysis (2) Grammatical Analysis.

4.4.1 Lexical Analysis

This subsection focused on the meaning of specific words, to discover their significance in the text. Because some of the words in the target pericope (foreknow, predestined, called, justified, glorified) have already been researched and discussed in the previous chapter (see 3.4), the key words explored in this subsection were those that pertained specifically to how the Holy Spirit might help believers in their weakness as they anticipate their day of glorification. Consequently, words that pertained to the believer's situation were of particular interest, because they shed some light on the reason why they would need the Holy Spirit's help. Hence, the words suffering and weakness were examined. In

addition to this, words that pertained to the Holy Spirit's role were also of special interest, and as a result, helps, intercede, conformed, image and son were investigated to gain some insight, if possible, into the help the Holy Spirit may give believers anticipating the day of their final redemption. The findings of the lexical analysis are presented below.

4.4.1.1 Suffering (*pathema*, παθηματα)

The issue of suffering (*pathema*) has already been mentioned and briefly dealt with in Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis. From the contributions reviewed in these chapters there appeared to be a general consensus that suffering (in its various forms) is part of the Christian's life and cannot be avoided because it seems that the sufferings are necessary in preparing them for their future glory. *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (2014:n.p) confirmed this deduction, as it stated that these sufferings are the afflictions common to all believers for their ultimate good. In other words, as was mentioned in Chapter 2, the believers' eternal good is in view here and not their temporal good. Thus it is the final glorious state that God has planned for them in the future.

Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) agreed with the above interpretation, but explained further that *pathema* is the ability and privilege to feel strong emotion or feelings, like suffering, agony and passion, experienced through affliction and persecution. They added that it has a redemptive role that prepares the believer to know the Lord better in this life and forever in glory. Consequently, these authors also wrote that sharing in the sufferings of Christ is not something believers should despise, but rather embrace, because it is a tool authorized by the Lord to prepare them for their future glorification. They explained further that the Lord is always in control, making each circumstance (whether good or bad) work for the believer's highest, eternal good. In other words, they clarified that no circumstance functions outside of God's sovereignty, but that He authorizes all

that the believer encounters for His eternal purpose. This point was also mentioned previously in Chapter 2 (see 2.4) where it was noted that suffering does not undermine God's eternal plan, but that He works all things together for the believer's ultimate good. In other words, because God is sovereign, the believer's suffering does not undermine, weaken, hinder or stop Him from accomplishing His redemption plan in their life.

Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) also added that the suffering believers experience under the protection of God's Spirit and His authorization is essential to their ongoing sanctification, because it prepares them to know God and experience Him in His fullness. Hence, they also said that suffering is an important part of believers developing as sons and daughters of God. This means that, just as Jesus learnt obedience by the things He suffered, so believers learn obedience as sons or daughters of God by the things they suffer (Hebrews 5:8) Indeed, for although believers are justified in Christ (declared righteous and innocent by God) it is the lifelong process of sanctification that makes them holy and pure (see 3.4.2.7). That is to say, believers are brought into conformity with their legal status before God (Erickson 2013:840), where they are not only called sons or daughters of God, but they also conduct themselves as true sons or daughters of God. So by way of explanation, believers learn how to conduct themselves as true sons and daughters of God by learning how to obey the Father and walk in His ways, just as Jesus demonstrated in His life here on earth. Thus, it appears that suffering is designed for the purpose of training believers to become true sons or daughters of God in conduct and not just in name. That is to say, true sons and daughters of God bear His name and character and do His will, just as Jesus demonstrated in the Gospels.

According to Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) the sufferings (*pathema*) Paul made reference to in Romans 8:17-18 are the trials, hardships, misfortunes and calamities one encounters externally (physical)

or internally (emotional or psychological) as one shares in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. Likewise, *Mounce's Expository Dictionary* (2014:n.p) explained that these sufferings are the afflictions one suffers physically or emotionally in order to share in or partake in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 1:5-7; Colossians 1:24; Philippians 1:29; 3:10). Consequently, it would seem logical to conclude that the sufferings believers encounter are not limited to one aspect of their life, but that they can be of a spiritual, emotional, psychological or physical nature that afflicts them in spirit, soul or body as they share in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings that they may also share in His glory.

4.4.1.2 Weakness / Infirmary (astheneia - ασθενειας)

The issue of 'weakness' was mentioned and briefly discussed in Chapter 2. From the authors reviewed in this previous chapter, there appeared to be a general consensus that Paul was making reference to the overall weakness and frailty that still afflicts believers in this life. Leon Morris (2012:326) explained that the believers' weak and frail state is the reason why they need the continual help and intervention of the Lord, for they are not the 'spiritual giants they think they are'. Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) seemed to confirm this interpretation, and said that 'weakness' means 'without strength' and it refers to a weakness that deprives someone of enjoying or accomplishing the task at hand. In other words, it is a limitation that incapacitates and makes one powerless to do or experience something. In a similar way, Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) defined 'weakness' as a lack of strength and an infirmity that may be experienced in the body or the mind due to its frailty. In other words, due to their frailty, believers may lack the ability to understand something or do something perfectly. They may also be incapable of restraining corrupt desires, or lack the ability to bear the trials and troubles they encounter in this life. Likewise, *Mounce's Expository Dictionary* (2014:n.p) agreed with Thayer and

Smith, and noted that it may be a weakness or feebleness of the body or a frailty and imperfection of the mind that affects one intellectually and morally.

From these definitions it would appear that the weakness the believer encounters is one of body and mind and not one of the spirit, for none of these resources seem to address the area of the spirit in their explanations. So, it would seem logical to conclude that the weakness lies in the area of the body and soul and not in the area of the spirit. This seems to allude to the idiom Jesus used: 'the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak' (Matthew 26:41). In other words, believers are not always physically capable of doing what they are willing to do, and thus fail or find it very difficult to live up to the moral standards that Scripture demands of them. As a result, they need the continual assistance of the Holy Spirit to help them where they are weak and incapable of helping themselves to attain the level of holiness and perfection that Scripture describes and God expects from them. In plain words, believers are incapable of sanctifying themselves and thus incapable of conforming themselves into the image of Jesus Christ, and thus remain completely reliant on the ministry of the Holy Spirit within them.

4.4.1.3 Helps (*synantilambanomai*, συναντιλαμβάνεται)

Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) have noted that there are three parts to the Greek word *synantilambanomai*. *Syn* means 'to be closely identified with' and *anti* means 'corresponding to'. Both of these prefixes add meaning to the root word *lambano* which means to 'aggressively lay hold of'. Thus, *synantilambanomai* means to personally and aggressively take hold of a task, together with another in order to give corresponding or appropriate help.

Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) defined 'helps' as 'to strive to obtain with others, to help in obtaining, or to take hold with another'. *Mounce's Expository Dictionary* (2014:n.p) added to this definition 'to

support and to aid someone'. Consequently, and according to Hill and Archer (2015:n.p), this type of help is one that 'gives assistance with initiative'. In other words, it supplies help as it corresponds to the real need. Hence, this type of help, as Hill and Archer explain, gives the 'intimate and appropriate help' that would bring respite and 'active assistance' to individuals who are incapable of helping themselves. They explain further that this is the type of help used to describe the Holy Spirit's active intervention in the lives of believers to help them live according to God's will. Thus it refers to the Holy Spirit's 'aggressive help and personal interest' in helping believers as He deeply identifies with their real need in every circumstance of life, and gives them the help that is necessary to enable them to fulfil God's purpose in their lives. It would appear then that the help the Holy Spirit gives is not demure and passive, but an aggressive and active one set on accomplishing the will of God. It also reveals a commitment and determination on the Holy Spirit's part to fulfil His task in sanctifying and preparing sons and daughters of God for their final unveiling. In light of this explanation, this research finds it difficult to envision the intercessory help of the Holy Spirit as only being one of prayer.

The contributing authors in Chapter 2 (see 2.3.1) highlighted the fact that this help (*synantilambanomai*) implies that there is a participation taking place between the believer and the Holy Spirit. Wayne Grudem (1994:382), Charles Ryrie (1999:loc 2314) and Allen Ross (2006:n.p) pointed out that this word is only used one other time in Scripture, when Martha wanted Mary to help her serve Jesus, in Luke 10:40. Hence, this word 'help' does not imply inactivity on the believer's part, but a joint-participation of the Spirit with the believer. In other words, the Holy Spirit does not bear the burden wholly for believers, but bears the burden alongside them. James Dunn (1988:476) confirmed this understanding too, and commented that *synantilambanomai* conveys the meaning to 'take part with, to assist in supporting, to lend a hand, and to come to the aid of'. He added further that this Greek word creates a vivid image of the

Spirit shouldering the burden that the believers' weakness and frailty imposes on them (Dunn 1988:477). Hence, the illustration mentioned in Chapter 2, of two individuals carrying a log between them to illustrate the help the Holy Spirit gives to the believer (Hughes 1991:163). Likewise, James Maloney (2013:loc 285) wrote that God knows man's weakness and frailty, and understands that they are incapable of fulfilling His purpose in their lives, and so in His grace and mercy He gives them the help and assistance they need. He added that the Greek word *synantilambanomai* means 'to take up our cause, to champion our case, and to heave with us'. Hence, it implies a joint-participation of the believer and the Holy Spirit, and therefore does not imply or condone inactivity or laziness on the believer's part. From these contributions it seems reasonable to conclude that the help the Holy Spirit gives believers is an aggressive and active one that corresponds to their real need in order to accomplish the will of God in their lives. Having said this, it does not, however, permit or condone inactivity or laziness on the believers' part, but requires willing and active participation from them.

4.4.1.4 Intercede (*hyperentynchano*, υπερεντυγχανει) in verse 26 and (*entynchano*, εντυγχανει) in verse 27

From a Greek-English inter-linear translation of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) it is clear that Paul used two different Greek words for 'intercedes' (NIV) or 'intercession' as some of the translations have rendered it. In verse 26 the word *hyperentynchano* is used and in verse 27 the word *entynchano* is used. In verse 26, Paul used the prefix *hyper* to modify the word *entynchano* and thus add emphasis and meaning to it. *The Free Dictionary* (www.thefreedictionary.com accessed 26/03/2015) defined *hyper* as over, above, beyond and excessive. This resource also stated that *hyper* originated from the Greek root word *huper* meaning 'over and beyond'. Similarly, the *Online English Dictionary* (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) says that *hyper* meaning 'over'

has its origins in the Greek language and implies excess or exaggeration. Thus James Maloney's (2013:loc 283) definition of *hyper* would be an accurate one. According to Maloney, *hyper* means 'over and above' and 'exceedingly much', which, he explained, would imply that the Holy Spirit intercedes over and above or in addition to and even beyond (exceedingly much) what believers could ever think or know to ask in any given circumstance. In other words, the Holy Spirit goes way beyond the believers' lack of knowledge to know what to ask for and He intercedes on their behalf according to the will of God. Benjamin Warfield (2013:loc 716) has a similar understanding, and commented that the Holy Spirit's intercession in Romans 8:26 is 'over and above' the believer's prayer. Thus it seems that the prefix *hyper* emphasizes the fact that the intercession of the Spirit takes place over and above, in addition to and way beyond the believer's ability to know what kind of help to even ask for.

As was mentioned in subsection 4.4.1.2, the weakness or frailty Paul was referring to in verse 26 is one of body and soul. Thus believers may lack the ability to understand something perfectly or accomplish something perfectly. They may also be incapable of restraining corrupt desires, or lack the ability to bear the trials and troubles they encounter in this life (Thayer and Smith www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014). This is the reason why believers need the continual help of the Spirit. In other words, the limitations that incapacitate believers in body and soul and render them powerless to accomplish God's purpose and reach their full potential are the reasons why they need the Spirit's help over and above and in addition to their weak and feeble efforts to help themselves. Consequently, these various contributions seem to confirm and support the researcher's understanding and interpretation thus far, that the Holy Spirit's help and intercession is extremely extravagant and goes way beyond what believers could ever imagine is taking place let alone ask for.

Keeping the above in mind, both *Mounce's Expository Dictionary* (2014:n.p) and

Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) defined *entynchano* as interceding for someone or on behalf of someone. In a similar way, Youngblood, Bruce and Harrison (1995) defined *entynchano* as 'the act of petitioning God or praying on behalf of another'. Likewise, *The New Strong's Guide to Bible Words* (2015:n.p) defined *entynchano* as to entreat, to petition and to impinge. Thus it appears that the general meaning and understanding of intercession (*entynchano*) is petitioning, pleading or entreating on behalf of someone else. As mentioned in Chapter 1, and in line with these definitions, the *Online English Dictionary* (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) defined *intercede* as 'one who mediates or one who interposes on behalf of someone in difficulty or trouble'. The same dictionary defined *intercession* as 'interposing or pleading on behalf of another person'. Additionally, this dictionary also said 'interpose' means to intervene or assume an intervening position between parties in conflict (or on behalf of parties in conflict) in order to mediate and bring reconciliation. Thus, *intercession (entynchano)* is an impinging and an intervention by an intercessor (mediator) who mediates between the parties at variance to bring about reconciliation. If one applies this definition to the Holy Spirit as the Intercessor, then He would assume an impinging, intervening position between God and believers to bring about reconciliation of those issues that still cause conflict and hinder the purpose of God in their life. Hence the sanctifying works of the Spirit, already discussed in the previous chapter, to bring about the necessary reconciliation.

Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) confirmed this interpretation as they commented that intercession is an intervening to convey a benefit on someone, and that it is used only in Romans 8:26 in reference to the Holy Spirit bringing sons and daughters of God 'in line with' His eternal purpose. Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) thus explained that *entynchano* is intervention and not intercession (prayer) as such, because, as they clarified, the Holy Spirit is continually intervening for the eternal benefit of believers, as this is the way that He brings every circumstance of the

believer's life into agreement with God's will. It would seem that with this understanding that the Holy Spirit's intercession is not altogether dependent on the believer praying as some authors (Hale 2007:558; Krell 2102; Cereghin 2013) have suggested (see 2.3.1). These authors seem to suggest that the believer's lack of prayer inhibits the intercession of the Spirit, and that God also only responds when believers pray. However, as mentioned in Chapter 2, where then does God's providence and sovereignty fit in? It would seem incorrect to assume that a sovereign God only takes action when believers ask Him to or give Him permission to do so (Morris 2012:332). Furthermore, this would seem to suggest that God's plan and purpose hinges on the prayer of believers. Yet the Lord says that nothing will hinder or stop His plan and purpose from being accomplished in the earth (Numbers 23:19; Job 42:2; Isaiah 46:10). It would seem that believers partner with God through prayer in accomplishing His plan and purpose in the earth, and as a result, believers are encouraged and even commanded to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). However, thinking that God is completely limited to the believer's prayers would appear to be presumptuous and possibly foolish.

What if Paul was not trying to emphasize the active prayer of the believer in this text at all? What if his focus was on the believers' weakness that renders them powerless to help themselves? What if his intention was to emphasize the Holy Spirit's ability to intercede and intervene on their behalf when they are incapable of helping themselves? This would mean that although believers should pray, and do pray, the onus is not on them praying eloquent prayers or long-winded prayers for God to respond to their needs. In other words, a simple prayer request would be sufficient, because as a son or daughter of God faith and trust ought to be in the One they pray to and not in the prayer itself. What's more, the motivation for prayer ought to be to partner and build relationship with God and not to create a tool to manipulate Him into action.

James Maloney (2013:loc 283) offered a similar explanation as Hill and Archer's (2015:n.p) comment on *entynchano* being an intervention rather than intercession per se. Maloney said that the Holy Spirit throws Himself into the believers' case to direct their prayers and to positively intervene in the circumstances of their life. He explained that the Holy Spirit wraps Himself around the believers' cause, in order to free them from those things that weaken and prevent them from displaying and manifesting the glory of the Lord in the earth. Along similar lines, Michael Bird (2013:loc 14279) commented that the Holy Spirit acts to set believers free, in order to release and redeem them from enslaving powers. Thus, in His intercession, the Holy Spirit frees them from sin, from guilt, and from weaknesses that limit God's plan and purpose in their life. Hence, this confirms the understanding that the Holy Spirit's intercession and intervention brings the exact benefits believers need to accomplish God's plan and purpose in their life.

Additionally, intercede (*entynchano*) means 'to get in line with', 'to light upon', and 'to intervene in order to confer a benefit' (Hill and Archer 2015). Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) offered a similar definition, and said *entynchano* means 'to light upon a person or thing, to fall in with a person or thing or to hit (strike) upon a person or thing'. According to the *Online English Dictionary* (www.dictionary.reference.com accessed 2014/3/27) 'fall in with' means to 'become acquainted with'. This would seem to imply that the Holy Spirit who dwells within believers knows their weakness and is well acquainted with what they need, and is thus able to give the appropriate help. This dictionary also said that 'get in line with' means to 'conform and agree with'. This definition seems to allude to the purpose and final result of the Spirit's intercession, which is, according to Scripture, to bring the believers' situation and nature in line with the purpose and plan of God for their life (Romans 8:27). That is to say, to conform believers into the image of Christ Jesus and prepare them as sons or daughters of God for their future glory (Romans 8:29-30). This seems

to confirm the understanding mentioned above that the Holy Spirit, as the Intercessor, assumes an impinging and intervening position between God and the believers to bring about reconciliation of those issues and areas of their life that limit them and still cause conflict and hinder the purpose of God in their life.

Additionally, the definitions mentioned above also highlighted the fact that *entynchano* means to 'light upon' someone (Hill and Archer 2015, Thayer and Smith 2014). The *Online English Dictionary* (www.dictionary.reference.com 2014/3/27) commented that 'to light upon' means 'to come to rest on' or 'to fall and settle on'. This understanding seems to allude to the presence or power of the Holy Spirit descending upon individuals to empower them to perform a task. This 'lighting upon' is demonstrated in Scripture when the Holy Spirit descended upon individuals like Othniel (Judges 3:10), Gideon (Judges 6:34), Samson (Judges 14:6; 15:14), and Jesus (Matthew 3:16) to name four. Hence, these few examples confirm how the Holy Spirit in His intercession may descend upon individuals to empower and supernaturally strengthen them for the purpose and plan of God.

Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) also mentioned above that *entynchano* means 'to hit or strike upon'. This definition seems to allude to some force and hostility taking place in freeing believers from those issues that incapacitate them. James Maloney (2013:loc 283) confirmed this, as he explained further that one of the ideas *entynchano* conveys is an aggressive action of throwing oneself into the midst of a situation to make a case for or against someone. He added that the inference made by some theologians (none mentioned) is that the Holy Spirit strikes out against the believer's infirmity in an aggressive and angry manner, because He is angered by the weakness that plagues them, and consequently rises up to intervene on their behalf, in order to rip away that which hinders the progress of God's plan in their life. Maloney (2013:loc 297) added further that because the Spirit is somewhat

enraged by the things that weaken and prohibit believers from helping themselves He 'lashes out against the weakness, striking it over and over, thus smashing the weakness on their behalf'.

From this vivid description, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Holy Spirit's intercession is not passive or demure, but rather proactive and bold, as He wars against those things that prevent believers from being conformed into the image of Christ, and being fully reconciled to God in every area of their life. Consequently, it also seems feasible to conclude that the Holy Spirit is not only the Comforter that Jesus promised to His disciples, but an aggressor who invades the believer's life to accomplish God's plan and conform them into the image of His Son. Jack Hayford (1995:n.p) seemed to concur, and wrote a similar thing. He said that although the word *entynchano* conveys the idea of pleading with a person on behalf of another, he added that at times the petition may be against another. This would confirm the idea that the Spirit intervenes not necessarily to always defend and protect, but in order to attack, release and reconcile those areas of the believer's life that are still at enmity with God. Hayford (1995:n.p) justified this idea by explaining that sometimes this word refers to 'falling upon' an enemy in battle with hostile intent. This would then confirm the idea of the Holy Spirit also being an 'aggressor' and not only a 'comforter' as mentioned above. This concept is not contrary to Scripture, for Jesus is sometimes referred to as the Lion of Judah and the Lamb of God (John 1:29; Revelation 5:5-6), and because the Holy Spirit is both the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9), one can safely assume that He has the same aggressive and comforting nature. It seems feasible to say that when the Holy Spirit encounters an enemy of God in the believer's life (sin and weakness in its various forms), He approaches it with hostile intent in order to redeem them and reconcile those areas to God that they may truly be pure and holy and 'brought into conformity with their legal status before God' (Erickson 2013:840).

As stated in the previous chapter, this 'legal status' is a reference to the believer's justified state where God declares those who believe in Christ as innocent and righteous in His eyes due to the imputing of Christ's righteousness to them (see 3.4.2.7). Thus it appears that the Holy Spirit's intercession may be a part of the sanctifying process as He actively intervenes and interposes on the believers' behalf to purify them and conform them into the image of Jesus. This would also seem to confirm that His intercession is not a passive and demure prayer, but rather an aggressive proactive intervention to set believers free from those weaknesses that limit and incapacitate them, rendering them helpless to fulfil God's plan in their life. Thus, from the contributions in this subsection, it seems logical and sound to conclude that due to the believer's weakness and frailty in body and soul they are physically, emotionally and psychologically limited in their abilities to accomplish God's will in their life, and do not even know what kind of help to ask for, but the Holy Spirit does know, and thus intervenes on their behalf (aggressively if need be) according to the will of God and way beyond what they could even contemplate happening. From these definitions and contributions it also seems reasonable to conclude that intercession has a much broader meaning than traditionally understood and believed. It seems to incorporate more action from the Holy Spirit than just prayer. It appears to include an empowering that enables believers to withstand trials and tribulations. It also seems to be an empowering to accomplish the works that God has ordained for them to do. It looks like it includes an enlightening to know God and to understand the will and purpose of God in the midst of adverse circumstances. It also appears to include a warring against those issues that are contrary to God's will and purpose in order to redeem and reconcile every aspect of the believer's life to God. Thus, in a nutshell, the Holy Spirit's intercession seems to be active and even aggressive mediation (intervention) on every level to bring about reconciliation between God and the believer.

4.4.1.5 Conformed (symmorphos, συμμορφους)

Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) defined 'conformed' as 'having the same form as another', or 'having a similar appearance as another'. Likewise, *Mounce's Expository Dictionary* (2014:n.p) defined it as 'having the same or similar form as another'. Thus, 'conformed' refers to having the same or similar form or appearance as another. In other words, it implies that there is a likeness or a resemblance between two individuals. Biblically speaking, it refers to believers being in the likeness of Jesus Christ. That is to say that their natures are reconciled and harmonized with His nature, and as a result they resemble Him, reflecting and reproducing His nature. Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) confirmed this understanding, as they noted that believers are conformed through sharing in the same inner essence or identity that Christ Jesus has.

In Chapter 3 it was established by the various contributing authors that the conforming of believers into the moral character of Christ takes place as the Holy Spirit sanctifies them throughout their lifetime on earth (see 3.4.2.7). In other words, just as it is impossible for man to save and justify themselves, it is impossible for them to make themselves like Christ. Michael Bird (2013:loc 14228) also confirmed this understanding, and wrote that a major task of the Holy Spirit is to purify, cleanse, and prune God's people until they are conformed into the image of His Son (Galatians 5:22-23). Having said this, it does not mean that the believers are inactive in the process, but are rather participants as they yield to the Holy Spirit while He actively removes sinful issues in their life and develops holiness within them. Hence, being conformed is part of the process the Holy Spirit employs in preparing sons and daughters of God to share in the nature and inheritance of Christ Jesus.

4.4.1.6 image (*eikon*, εΙΚΟΝΟΣ)

In the subsection above it was established that the believer is conformed into the likeness or image (*eikon*) of Christ Jesus. What exactly is that likeness or image? Thayer and Smith (www.biblestudytools.com accessed 10/12/2014) defined 'image' as 'the shape or likeness of something or someone'. Within the context of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) it refers to the likeness of believers to Christ, not only to His heavenly body, but also to His state of mind, His divine nature and His moral excellence. This would imply that the conforming process ultimately affects and changes all areas of the believer, that is to say, in spirit, in soul and in body.

Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) said *eikon* is an 'exact or mirror-like representation'. In other words, it is an exact reflection of its source. They also added that it assumes a prototype, which it not merely resembles, but from which it is drawn. They also added that it is a replication and not just a shadow, as the word *eikon* implies derivation. The *Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (www.merriam-webster.com accessed 10/12/2014) defines 'prototype' as 'an original or first model of something from which other forms are copied or developed'. It is 'the first of its kind' which means that there are others exactly like it to follow. This would seem an accurate interpretation, because Paul wrote in Romans 8:29 that it was and is God's intention that Jesus be the firstborn among many brothers who would bear His image or likeness. Believers are to be copies of Christ Jesus, who is the original or the prototype or firstborn among many brothers, who resemble His divine nature and moral excellence, His state of mind and ultimately His resurrected body. James Maloney (2013:loc 479) agreed and confirmed that *eikon* means a likeness of His divine nature and moral excellence, but added that it is experienced on this earth and is not just a future heavenly reality. This means that the conforming process has already started in the lives of believers and will be fully completed when Christ returns. Consequently, it refutes the idea

of condoning slack lifestyles, because believers are supposed to be representing Christ now, and reflecting Christ now, according to the measure of their faith and level of transformation that has taken place and is taking place within them (Romans 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:16). Hence it is the responsibility of every believer to participate with the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, who uses all things and all situations as tools to aid in conforming them to Christ (Romans 8:28). This was confirmed by the contributing authors in Chapter 2 (see 2.4) where it was generally agreed that adverse circumstances do not hinder God's plan in the life of believers, but rather advance and aid in completing His plan and thus, instead of hindering or frustrating the purpose of God, adverse circumstances produce the positive results of Christ's image being formed in them.

4.4.1.7 Son (hyios, υἱος)

Hall and Archer (2015:n.p) have said that a son, by birth or adoption, is someone sharing the same nature as his birth or adoptive father. In other words, it implies that a son possesses certain characteristics derived from his father. For example, 'sons of darkness' will possess evil and dark characteristics, whereas 'sons of light' will possess good and pure characteristics. Paul confirmed this when he referred to believers walking as children or sons of Light who bear the fruit of the Spirit in Ephesians 5:8. Jesus also made a similar reference when He told the Jews, who were claiming to be sons of Abraham and thus also claiming to be sons of God, that they were of their 'father the devil' only desiring to follow in their father's lying and murdering footsteps (John 8:44). The implication of this statement is that if they were truly sons of Abraham and sons of God they would have produced the fruit of this relationship. That is to say, there would have been evidence of faith and righteousness. Hence it seems reasonable to conclude that the key characteristic of a son, by birth or adoption, is in resembling the father. Therefore, the words 'sons (*hyios*) of God' emphasize the

likeness of believers to God their Father. It would appear that while believers (both male and female) are being conformed into the image of the Son they also will resemble the Father's nature. This is because Scripture says that Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus also confirmed this truth when He told Phillip, His disciple, that he who sees Him (Jesus) has seen the Father (John 14:9). Hence, there is no contradiction here, for it seems logical that believers (male and female) in Christ's image would naturally also be like the Father in nature and in moral excellence.

In Chapter 3 it was also established through the contributing authors that the adopted son (or daughter) has equal rights, and is therefore also heir to the father's estate. He is also a partaker of all the privileges and blessings of the family (see 3.6.2.6). From a biblical perspective, this would imply that believers (sons and daughters) have equal rights in the Father's house, are partakers of all privileges and blessings, and are heirs, along with Jesus, to His estate. Thus, James Maloney's (2013:loc 479) definition of *hyios* would be an accurate one, as he wrote that *hyios* denotes one whom God 'esteems, loves, protects and benefits above others'. In other words, sons and daughters are privileged individuals who have access to all that the Father has. In addition to this, Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) commented that every adopted son and daughter is an heir to the Father's eternal inheritance as they live in conformity with the Father's nature as true sons and daughters. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the sons and daughters of God have the responsibility to live a life worthy of their Father and His nature while they embrace and enjoy all the blessings, privileges and inheritance they have access to (see 3.4.2.6). Thus true sons and daughters are obedient to God and receptive to His loving chastisements, so that their nature might be shaped by the Father into the image of the Son (Maloney 2013:loc 493). In addition to this, Maloney (2013:loc 493) also pointed out that a son or daughter has the inherited right to act on the Father's behalf to execute His will and fulfil

His purpose in the earth. This would be a true description of Jesus' authority and mission, as He ministered with the Father's authority to execute the Father's will on the earth (Luke 10:22; John 6:38). Thus it seems reasonable to also conclude that believers (sons and daughters) have the same responsibility, and have also inherited the right to minister with His authority in order to execute His will and purpose on the earth. Jesus confirmed this concept in John 20 and in Matthew 28. In John 20:21, Jesus said, 'As the Father sent Me, I am sending you', and in Matthew 28:18-19, He said, 'All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Me. Therefore go'. Thus, it seems logical to conclude that there is an expectation that true sons and daughters of God not only reflect the Father's nature and enjoy His blessings and inheritance, but that they also execute the Father's will and purpose on the earth. According to James Maloney (2013:loc 499), this is exactly what the Holy Spirit 'aggressively pursues' in His intercession for believers. He explained further that the Holy Spirit helps believers step into their rightful place as sons and daughters of God to accomplish the Father's will and make Jesus 'famous' (well-known and celebrated) in all the world. Thus, Maloney's contribution seems to confirm the idea that the intercession of the Holy Spirit may go beyond prayer on behalf of the believer, and include the making (sanctifying and conforming) and empowering of believers to be and conduct themselves as true sons and daughters of God, now and in eternity.

4.4.2 Grammatical Analysis

In this subsection significant grammatical features in the text were examined to determine how they may have influenced the interpretation of the passage. Hence, grammatical features like conjunctions, personification, metaphors, anthropomorphism, and word tense were discussed here.

4.4.2.1 'For' in verse 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 29

It was noted that Paul used the conjunction 'for' (*gar*) at least six times in the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). Hill and Archer (2015:n.p) explained that 'for'

is a conjunction that best translates the Greek word *gar*, because it introduces an explanation for the preceding verse. The second statement explains the first statement by giving the logic (understanding, reason, and explanation) for the preceding verse. Thus, 'for' (*gar*) is an explanatory conjunction and not a causal conjunction, as it introduces what clarifies and explains the preceding statement. Consequently, it does not introduce a new section, nor is the verse completely freestanding. This means that the statement commencing with 'for' forms one continuous thought with what immediately precedes it. Hence this conjunction joins two ideas together to form one semantic unit. For this reason, 'for' (*gar*) should not be translated 'because' as it is not strictly causal but explanatory, as it conveys the underlying reason for what was said before. In short, it is 'the why that explains the what' (Hill and Archer 2015:n.p). For example, in the three verses below, verse 20 and 21 reveal the reason why creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.

¹⁹ ... the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰ **For** the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

To explain: verses 20 and 21 reveal that creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed, because this is also the promised time when creation will be liberated from its bondage to decay. Likewise, the same rule and explanation would apply to the other verses that commence with the same conjunction. Thus, the explanatory conjunction 'for' (*gar*) is important and exegetically significant in understanding and interpreting the text, because it points to and explains the reason or logic for what was said before.

4.4.2.2 Personification of Creation in verses 19 and 22

¹⁹ ... creation waits in **eager expectation** for the children of God to be

revealed.

²²We know that the whole **creation has been groaning** as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Personification is ‘the attribution of human nature or character to animals, inanimate objects, or abstract notions for literary or artistic effect’ (*Online English Dictionary* www.dictionary.reference.com accessed 2014/3/27). Thus, it appears, as demonstrated in the text above, that creation waiting in ‘eager expectation’ and creation ‘groaning’ are examples of personification, as Paul attributes human emotions to creation to emphasize and describe the hope and anticipation of creation waiting for the children of God to be revealed. This interpretation is confirmed by Douglas Moo (2009:266), who explained that Paul personified creation using ‘vivid poetic language’ to describe its ‘frustration’ in verse 20 and its eventual ‘liberation’ in verse 21. Similarly, Robert Gundry (2011:loc 1649) and Bob Utley (2013:n.p) concur that Paul used this personification to emphasize the expectation of the new life to come. Thus, from these contributions it seemed reasonable to assume that creation’s eager expectation and its groanings are a personification and are metaphorical. It seems that Paul’s intention was to ascribe human emotions to creation for literary effect in order for his readers to fully grasp, identify with and understand the significance of their future glory in light of their sufferings mentioned in verses 17 and 18.

4.4.2.3 Metaphor of Childbirth in verse 22

²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning **as in the pains of childbirth** right up to the present time.

A metaphor is a ‘figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action that it does not literally denote in order to imply a resemblance’ (*Online English Dictionary* www.dictionary.reference.com accessed 2014/3/27).

It is a comparison made without using the word 'like' which would point to a simile. In this verse, creation is said to be groaning in childbirth. Thus, Paul used the metaphor of creation in childbirth for literary and artistic effect to create a vivid picture of creation's expectation for new life despite its present frustration and bondage to decay. Douglas Moo (2009:267) verified this understanding, and explained that the pain of childbirth is a 'graphic metaphor of suffering' that has a joyous and happy ending. James Dunn (1988:472) agrees with Moo, and said that the metaphor of childbirth was a natural one to use in Scripture when describing a time of tribulation that would end in a new order of things. For example, the tribulation period before the return of Christ Jesus is a case in point (Isaiah 13:8, Jeremiah 4:31; Hosea 13:13). Consequently, one can see how Paul used the same idea to describe the time when creation, though presently in bondage to decay, will experience new life when the sons and daughters of God are fully unveiled at the return of Christ.

4.4.2.4 The Spirit's Groanings in verse 26

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us **with groans that words cannot express.**

The question that arises from this verse is whether the Spirit's groanings are literal or metaphorical. In other words, is it possible for the Spirit of God to groan? This was discussed at length in Chapter 2, and it was pointed out that these 'groanings' have been a rather controversial topic for centuries (see 2.3.1). Some scholars (Pink 2012, Jeremiah 1998, Lloyd-Jones 1975, Haldane 2013) have claimed that these groanings are inspired by the Holy Spirit but expressed by the believer in prayer, because they say that it is inconceivable for God to groan. However, as was argued, God is capable of expressing emotions of grief, anger and joy (Genesis 6:6; Exodus 32:10; Nehemiah 8:10; Psalm 37:13). Thus, if God is not devoid of emotion then why is it unthinkable for the Holy Spirit to groan (Curtis Mitchell 1982:234)? In light of the biblical evidence it would seem

logical to conclude that the Holy Spirit is able to groan in order to express His emotions.

Stephen Cole (2013) offers an opposing view and proposes that these groanings are an example of anthropomorphism – an attributing of human emotions to God. However, man, according to Scripture, is created in God's image; not God in man's image (Genesis 1:26-27). This would seem to imply that humanity has feelings and emotions because God has feelings and emotions and not vice versa. Thus, in light of the biblical evidence given above and in the previous paragraph, the Spirit's groaning does not seem to be a case of anthropomorphism.

Leon Morris (1988:328) commented that some scholars (none mentioned) suggest that these groans are metaphorical and not literal. This would mean that Paul was using, once again, a metaphor for artistic and literary effect to enable his readers to grasp the Spirit's empathy, compassion and involvement in their life. This may well be the case: however, because these groans are not heard with the human ear (they are inaudible) one cannot really claim that these groans are not literal. They may well be audible in the spirit realm but inaudible in the physical realm. It is true that the Spirit's groans are said to be 'wordless groans' or 'groans that words cannot express', which seems to imply that they are groans that have no words or no appropriate words. The *Online English Dictionary* (www.dictionary.reference.com accessed 2014/3/27) defines 'groan' as 'a low mournful sound uttered in pain'. Thus, groaning could be a moaning, a grunting, a growling, or a crying out. These expressions are all wordless expressions that are synonymous with great pain. If the Holy Spirit is displeased and even angered by the things that limit and prevent God's plan from being accomplished, it seems reasonable to think that His groanings, though wordless and inaudible to the believer, are nevertheless sounds (and not words) in response to His anger and displeasure as He actively and aggressively intervenes to bring every area of

the believer's life in line with God's will. Having said this, the focus of the text within the context of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) is the Spirit's intercession and not the groanings, and so it does not seem helpful to argue whether they are literal or metaphorical. The important point in the verse is that the Spirit is interceding on behalf of the believer, and thus it would appear to be more helpful to consider what this intercession includes and involves, in order to determine the significance it may have for believers in this present life.

4.4.2.5 'the Spirit Himself intercedes' in verse 26

²⁶In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit **himself** intercedes for us through wordless groans.

It seems reasonable to suggest that Paul could have said 'the Spirit intercedes for us through wordless groans'. However, he included the pronoun 'himself' to underscore and emphasize the point of the Spirit interceding on behalf of the saints. This observation is confirmed by Leon Morris (2012:327) who said that the pronoun 'himself' emphasizes the fact that it is the Spirit interceding for believers. Thus, it seems feasible to conclude that the use of this seemingly unnecessary pronoun was to emphasize and accentuate the Spirit's active intervention (intercession) on behalf of believers. This also seems to contradict those who understand this verse to say that the Holy Spirit inspires believers to pray because it is inconceivable that God groans, as mentioned in subsection 4.4.2.4. It would seem that this understanding has kept the focus of the Spirit's intercession specifically on the prayer of the believer, led or aided by the Spirit. While believers do pray and intercede on behalf of others as they are led by the Spirit, this does not seem to be what Paul is saying in this verse. Paul clearly states in the text that the Holy Spirit, Himself, is groaning in intercession on behalf of the believer and not through or via the believer.

4.4.2.6 The tense of glorified in verse 30

³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also **glorified**.

It seems strange that Paul would ascribe the same past tense, used in the sequence of redemption events (predestined, called, justified), to a future event (glorified). In other words, Paul could have said, 'those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, **he will also glorify**'. However, he chose not to say it this way, and instead used the word 'glorified'. Leon Morris (1988:333) explained that the believer's glorification is so certain that Paul speaks of it already accomplished. He explained that because it is in the plan of God, one can consider it a *fait accompli* in the heart of God. Similarly, John Stott (1994:252) commented that even though 'glorified' is still a future experience and event for the believer, Paul emphasized its certainty by putting it in the past tense. Likewise, David Bernard (1987:192) commented that glorification is rendered in the past tense even though the whole section points to a future event. He also explained that this reveals the certainty of this event taking place, because from God's perspective it is as good as done. In the same way, Douglas Moo (2009:270) mentioned that the verb glorified is in the same tense (aorist) as the other verbs in the sequence. He explained further that aorist is a tense that often refers to action in the past. Thus, he concluded that the best possible explanation for Paul using this tense for a future event is because, from God's perspective, the decision to glorify those whom He has justified was already decided in eternity past. Thus, while it seems strange to read of a future event in the past tense, there was good reason for this tense in Paul's mind. It appears from the contributions above that Paul was highlighting this event as one decided on in eternity past and, therefore, predestined by God to be a certainty in the life of every believer.

4.4.3 Section Summary: Verbal Analysis

This section comprised a lexical analysis and a grammatical analysis where the vocabulary and sentence structure of the passage was examined. Hence, key words were investigated to discover their true meaning in order to establish their contribution to the meaning of the target pericope. Thus, the key words explored in this subsection were those that pertained specifically to how the Holy Spirit might help believers in their weakness as they anticipate their day of glorification. Consequently, words that pertained to the believer's condition and situation were of particular interest, since they highlighted the reason why they would need the Holy Spirit's help. Hence, the words suffering and weakness were examined. Additionally, words that pertained to the Holy Spirit's intercessory role were also of special interest, and as a result the following words were of particular relevance: helps, intercede, conformed, image and son. These words were investigated to gain some insight into the help the Holy Spirit may give believers as they anticipate the day of their final redemption.

From this investigation, it seemed logical to conclude that the sufferings believers encounter in this present life may be of a spiritual, emotional, psychological or physical nature that may afflict them in spirit, soul or body, as they share in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, so that they may also share in His glory. It seemed right to understand that the weakness Paul was referring to is the overall weakness and frailty of the believers' body and mind that limits and incapacitates them, rendering them powerless to help themselves, and as a result they are dependent on the help of the Holy Spirit to intercede for them. From this word study it also seemed reasonable to conclude that the help the Holy Spirit gives believers is an aggressive and active one that corresponds to their real need in order to accomplish the will of God in their life. However, the Holy Spirit's help does not permit or condone inactivity or laziness on the believer's part, but requires a willing and active participation and yieldedness from them. It also seemed reasonable to conclude that due to the believers' weakness and frailty in

body and soul, they are limited in their abilities to accomplish God's will in their life, and are ignorant of the kind of help they need. But, the Holy Spirit, who is fully acquainted with their needs does know what they need, and thus intercedes on their behalf (aggressively if need be) according to the will of God, and way beyond what they could even ask for or contemplate happening. From the various contributions it also appeared that the Holy Spirit's intercession is an impinging (an intrusion or invasion) and an intervention between God and the believers to bring about reconciliation of those issues that still cause conflict and hinder the purpose of God in their life. There also appeared to be a general consensus that the word 'conformed' refers to having the same or similar form or appearance as another. In other words, it implies that there is a likeness or a resemblance between two individuals. From a biblical perspective, it refers to believers being in the likeness of Jesus Christ. Their natures are reconciled and harmonized with Christ's nature and as a result they resemble Him. Hence, it was concluded that being conformed is part of the process the Holy Spirit employs in preparing sons and daughters of God to share in the nature and inheritance of Christ Jesus. Furthermore, the likeness or image of Christ refers not only to His heavenly body, but also to His state of mind, His divine nature and His moral excellence. This would imply then that the conforming process ultimately affects and changes all of areas of the believer, that is to say, in spirit, in soul and in body. It was noted that the key characteristic of a son, by birth or adoption, is in resembling the father. It would appear that while sons and daughters of God are being conformed into the image of the Son, they will also resemble the nature of their Father in moral excellence. Furthermore, it was discovered that there is an expectation that true sons and daughters of God not only reflect the Father's nature and enjoy His blessings and inheritance, but that they also execute the Father's will and purpose on the earth, which is what the Holy Spirit aggressively contends for and pursues in every believer.

Grammatical features like conjunctions, personification, metaphors, anthropomorphism, and word tense were also investigated to determine their significance in the meaning and interpretation of the text. In this section it was discovered that the explanatory conjunction 'for' (*gar*) was important and exegetically significant in understanding and interpreting the text, because it pointed to and explained the reason or logic for what was said in the preceding verse. It was understood that the personification of creation was used for artistic and literary effect to describe the frustration and liberation of creation so that Paul's audience might fully grasp, identify with and understand the significance of the future glory that awaits them. Similarly, Paul used the metaphor of creation in childbirth to describe how and when creation, though presently in bondage to decay, will experience new life when the sons and daughters of God are fully unveiled at the return of Christ. It also seemed reasonable to conclude that the Holy Spirit is not devoid of emotions, and is quite capable of expressing them. Consequently, and contrary to some scholarly viewpoints, He is more than likely able to groan in order to express His displeasure. Thus, although some prefer to say that His groanings are metaphorical, it is a position about which one cannot be dogmatic, because there is no concrete evidence that these groanings are not literal. This is because it was also discovered that 'groaning' is a wordless expression like moaning, grunting, growling or crying, and is synonymous with great pain. If the Holy Spirit is displeased and even angered by the things that limit and prevent God's plan from being accomplished, it is reasonable to think that His groanings, though wordless and inaudible to the believer, are nevertheless sounds, and not words uttered in response to His anger and displeasure as He actively and aggressively intervenes to bring every area of the believer's life in line with God's will. From the contributions it also seemed logical to conclude that Paul used the pronoun 'himself' to underscore and emphasize that it is definitely the Spirit interceding on behalf of the believers. This seemed contrary to the opinion of those who prefer to believe that the Holy Spirit inspires believers to pray because it is inconceivable for God or the Spirit to groan.

Finally, the past tense of 'glorified' seemed to be a strange choice of tense for a future event, but there looked to be good reason for this tense in Paul's mind. It appeared, from the contributions, that Paul was highlighting this event as one decided on in eternity past, and therefore predestined by God to be a certainty in the life of every believer.

Thus, from all the contributions in this section it has become clear how important lexical and grammatical features are in understanding and interpreting the text. Each lexical and grammatical feature investigated in this section has helped and significantly contributed in revealing something of the original message that Paul was conveying to his recipients in Rome.

4.5 Literary Analysis

This section focused on the literary aspect of the text with special attention given to the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). The aim of this section was to determine the type of literature (genre) it is and how its structure and composition have contributed to the meaning of the text. Furthermore, the rhetoric found in the target pericope was also examined to determine how it may influence one's understanding of the passage. The findings of this section are thus under the following four headings: (1) genre of the literature (2) structure of the letter (3) composition of the letter (4) rhetoric in the letter.

4.5.1 Genre of the Literature

What class or type of literature is the book of Romans? It is generally accepted by the academic scholars consulted in this thesis that this literature is a letter that somewhat fits the pattern of personal letter writing of Paul's day in its introduction and conclusion. Thus, the book of Romans is classed as one of Paul's thirteen epistles in the canon of Scripture. However, due to its doctrinal content this conclusion has not stopped debates on what type of letter it may be. For example, James Dunn (1988:lix) concluded that it would seem more logical to

view Paul's letter to the Romans as a combination of a personal letter and a theological treatise, based on the fact that while the introduction and conclusion of Paul's letter is typical of a personal letter in Paul's day, the large doctrinal body of the letter is more a treatise than a personal letter. Similarly, Grant Osborne (2004:17) agreed with this deduction and commented that although this literature sums up Paul's gospel, it is still a letter addressed to a specific group of people. Hence, it is first an epistle that contains aspects of a treatise, as Paul presented a summary of his gospel in the letter. Whilst Carson and Moo (2011:loc 9612) agreed that Romans is a letter written within a definite set of circumstances, they suggested that it could be viewed as a tractate letter, because its main part can be viewed as a theological argument or series of arguments. Carson and Moo (2011:loc 9365) have also pointed out that in an attempt to categorize this letter scholars have labelled it as 'a memorandum, an epideictic letter, an ambassadorial letter, a protreptic letter, or a letter essay'. They also argued that a diatribe is rather a style of writing that could be used in many different genres, and thus refute this label too. However, they conclude that Romans has similarities to all these genres, and suggest that Paul employed various literary tools to communicate his message, rather than sticking to one genre. Likewise, Colin Kruse (2012:11) also suggested that it is best to view this letter as one that utilizes various forms of genre to convey the message of its author. Despite the debate on the genre of this literature, it seems apparent that there is a general consensus that this writing is indeed a letter addressed to a specific group of people, that just so happens to also be doctrinal, as Paul expounded and defended the gospel he preached.

4.5.2 Structure of the Letter

How is the letter structured? In other words, how are the different parts of this letter arranged? The academic scholars consulted seemed to generally agree that this letter has three basic parts to it in its arrangement, namely, an introduction, a body and a conclusion. Also, as mentioned in Chapter 3, most of

the writings reviewed seemed to recognize the portions of the text designated to the introduction (1:1-17) and to the conclusion (15:14-16:27) and thus also agreement on the remaining portion of the text devoted to the large doctrinal body (1:18-15:13) was recognized (see 3.2.1).

It was noted that the introduction of this letter commenced with Paul identifying himself as the author and sender of the letter. It then moved on to identify the recipients of the letter, which in this case was the church in Rome. In this introduction, Paul also made known his desire and longing to visit Rome. The large doctrinal body of this letter then follows, as Paul expounded on the Gospel he preached. In the conclusion, Paul, as an apostle to the Gentiles, gave his reason for writing as boldly as he did (so that the Gentile may become an offering acceptable to God) and the reason why he had not yet visited them (he preached where Christ was not known). He subsequently made his missionary and travel plans known to them and concluded with many personal greetings, a few warnings and finally a short doxology. James Dunn (1988:lx) acknowledged and thus confirmed this three-part structure and explained it as follows: the large theological body of Paul's letter is 'sandwiched' between the two statements revealing his future plans. Dunn explained further that Paul must have thought it necessary to share his understanding and revelation of the Gospel before he could expect the help and support of the Roman church in his missionary endeavours in Spain, hence the large doctrinal body of this epistle.

Having described the arrangement of the three general parts (introduction, body and conclusion) it has also been mentioned in this thesis that the large body of the letter has two main sections, namely, a doctrinal section and a practical (application) section (see 3.2.1). These two divisions, discussing doctrine and application, were a common pattern in Paul's letters (Stott 1994:317). Hence the doctrine taught in the first eleven chapters set the foundation for the application of this doctrine in the remaining chapters. Thus from the above contributions it

seems evident that this letter has two main parts (doctrine and application) within its general three-part structure of introduction, body and conclusion as demonstrated in the table below.

The Structure of the Letter to the Romans		
Introduction 1:1-17	Doctrinal Body 1:18 - 15:13	Conclusion 15:14 - 16:27
Author and Recipients identified.	<u>Doctrine</u> (1:18-11:36) Gospel is expounded.	Reason for his bold letter and for not visiting before.
Paul's desire to visit Rome made known.	<u>Application</u> (12:1-15:13) Gospel in daily life.	Missionary and Travel plans made known. Personal greetings. A few warnings and a brief doxology.

4.5.3 Composition of the Letter

This subsection focused on the different parts that make up the whole. To do this, it focused on the individual parts of the Gospel to determine how Paul pieced them together to form a continuous argument that expounded the Gospel he proclaimed. As mentioned in Chapter 3, while this letter has the Gospel of redemption as its main overarching theme, its individual parts explain its composition (see 3.2.2 and 3.6.1).

Paul began his argument by highlighting the fact that due to the universality of humanity's rebellion and sinfulness, a Saviour is necessary (1:18-3:20). He then progressed in his argument to explain the provision of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus (3:21-5:21), a sanctification that leads to holiness through the Holy Spirit (6:1-7:25) and what life in the Spirit entails (8:1-39). He never failed to highlight

the fact that God's salvation includes both Jew and Gentile (9:1-11:36), nor did he neglect to explain how this doctrine is to be lived out in daily conduct (12:-15:13). Thus the flow of thought or argument in Paul's letter moved from sinful humanity being an enemy of God and in need of a Saviour, to God's gracious provision of forgiveness and righteousness given to all who believe on Jesus Christ, both Jew and Gentile. It also described what this new life in the Spirit entails and how it ought to affect the believer's daily living. Thus the individual aspects or doctrines of this letter, all systematically pieced together, form the whole, and create a complete understanding of the overarching Gospel theme. Hence, it seems apparent that although this is a personal letter, there also appears to be a systematic flow to it in the progression of the individual doctrinal themes. Jack Hayford and Watkins (1997:n.p) confirmed this understanding. They have commented that while this literature falls within the category of a letter, its overall composition falls within a more systematic explanation of the Gospel, as it contains the central themes of the Christian faith. Irving Jensen (1981:257) also confirmed this systematic progression, and commented how Paul's argument progressed from condemnation to justification to sanctification to glorification and application in the text. Likewise, Roy Gingrich (2002:loc 359) observed and thus confirmed that Paul's letter to the Romans is logical and systematic in its composition. However, Douglas Moo (2009:20) offers a different perspective. He says that although this letter is thoroughly theological, it is occasional rather than systematic, because the circumstances of the church, in general and in Rome in particular, set the stage for Paul to develop a theological argument which addressed theological issues significant to the church universal. This may well be the case, but the systematic progression evident in the letter seems to trump the idea that this letter is causal and not systematic. Thus from the evidence and contributions of the authors above it seems feasible to conclude that the individual parts of this letter have a building progression that ultimately forms an excellent systematic composition of the Christian faith. Having said this, David Bernard (1987:25) has highlighted the fact that although

Paul's letter teaches doctrine in a structured way, it is not systematic theology as such. In other words, his letter does not discuss all the major doctrines and present them in a complete systematic system. For example, Bernard (1987:25) explains that systematic discussions like Christology and eschatology are notably absent from this letter. Thus, it may be said, that while this letter covers important aspects and principles of doctrine in a methodical and 'comprehensive way', it is not systematic theology in its entirety, as some aspects are notably absent.

4.5.4 Rhetoric in the Letter

This subsection focused on the effective use of rhetoric in the letter to determine its effect and contribution to one's understanding and interpretation of the letter and the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). In other words, the persuasive strategies or literary tools Paul employed to convey his message were investigated in this subsection.

Mark Powell (2000:n.p) noted that Paul relied heavily on the Old Testament Scriptures to endorse and support his arguments. For example, a list of Old Testament references is used in at least three places in this letter (3:10-18; 9:25-29; 15:9-12) to support and strengthen Paul's argument. This observation is confirmed by David Bernard (1987:24), who commented that the letter to the Romans 'contains more quotations from the Old Testament than the rest of Paul's letters put together'. Thus, it seems apparent that Scripture reference or Bible citation was used as one of Paul's rhetorical tools in this letter to endorse, support and strengthen his theological argument.

Paul also used the technique of biblical interpretation to emphasize and illustrate his theological statements. He took familiar biblical events or biblical characters and 'explained their contemporary meaning in a creative way' (Powell 2000:n.p). For example, in Romans 4 he used Abraham, the father of faith, to explain the

doctrine of righteousness through faith in Christ, and thus implied that the righteousness required of God's people was not from the Law, but is by faith in Him. Another example is in Romans 5, where Paul used the analogy of Adam, the first man, and Christ, the second Adam. In this comparison he showed how Adam's sin meant condemnation to all, whereas Christ's righteousness meant justification for all (Romans 5:18). Hence, one can observe from these two examples how Paul not only used Old Testament references to support his arguments, but that he also used specific biblical examples as analogies to get his point across.

Paul also made use of the rhetorical style of argumentation or diatribe, which at its core is 'dialogue with an imaginary partner' (Powell 2000:n.p). Mark Powell (2000:n.p) explained that in addition to posing questions to his readers for consideration (2:3-4, 21-23; 7:1; 8:31-35), Paul also responded to questions that he anticipated his readers might ask in response or in objection to his argument (3:1; 6:1). He thus demonstrated that he was one step ahead of any potentially quarrelsome and belligerent readers. Thus, one can see how the use of diatribe in his letter engaged his audience in a meaningful and thought-provoking way. It is also possible to see how Carson and Moo (2011:loc 9635) rightly argued (see 4.5.1) that a diatribe is rather a style of writing that could be used in many different genres, and thus refuted the idea that this letter could be classed or labelled as a diatribe as a whole.

Powell (2000:n.p) also noted that Paul used analogies from daily life to explain his theological points. He used situations from daily life that his readers could easily identify with to draw theological comparisons that would illustrate and explain his theological argument. For example, he used slavery to explain that believers are no longer 'slaves to sin' but 'slaves to righteousness' (Romans 6:16-19). He also used adoption to illustrate how believers are children of God and indeed co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:14-17). He also used the agricultural

term of grafting to illustrate how Gentiles have been included in God's plan of salvation (Romans 11:17-24). Thus, from these three examples one can observe how Paul employed the use of simple analogies from daily life to creatively illustrate and masterfully explain complex theological concepts to his readers.

In addition to these few examples Paul used figures of speech already mentioned in the grammatical analysis above (see 4.4.2). These figures of speech were of special interest, because they are found in the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) and thus reveal how Paul illustrated his theological argument in such a way that his audience could identify with what he was saying and understand his theological ideas. Consequently and as already mentioned, the figures of speech, specifically the use of personification and metaphors, have been used for artistic and literary effect. For instance, creation waiting in 'eager expectation' and 'groaning in childbirth' were used to describe creation's struggle and anticipation for new life. By using the metaphor of childbirth, Paul created a vivid image of creation's present suffering that will have a joyous and happy ending (Moo 2009:267). Likewise, whether the groanings of the Spirit are metaphorical or literal (Morris 1988:328), the use of the emotive word 'groan' in the text seems to create the idea that the Spirit is fully engaged in the welfare of the believers, that He is emotionally involved in their situation as He intercedes for them and that He has empathy and compassion for them in their weaknesses (see 2.3.5 and 4.4.1.4). Thus, Paul's 'vivid and poetic language' (Moo 2009:266) describing creation's frustration, struggle and liberation was to enable his audience (in light of their suffering) to fully grasp and understand the significance of the future glory promised to them. It therefore seems apparent that Paul's rhetoric in this passage emphasized and expanded on his argument, and served to draw his audience into his vision of the anticipation and the preparation of the final stage of God's eternal plan of redemption, namely, glorification. Thus John Cereghin's (2013:7) description of Paul's writing would be an apt one. He says that Paul argued like a 'trained Rabbi, with forcible expressions, pithy sentences, apt

metaphors and winning appeals'. Consequently it seems apparent and logical to conclude that Paul masterfully used rhetoric in various ways to state, endorse, strengthen and support his theological argument in the text.

4.5.5 Section Summary: Literary Analysis

The aim of this section was to determine the type of literature the book of Romans is, and how its structure and composition have contributed to the meaning of the text. From the contributions in this section there appeared to be a general consensus among the scholars consulted that the book of Romans is one of Paul's thirteen letters in the New Testament. Despite the debates on its genre, and the attempts to label it otherwise, it seemed reasonable to conclude that it is a personal letter with detailed theological and doctrinal content, addressed to the church in Rome. There also appeared to be a general consensus among the reviewed writings that this letter has a general three-part structure to it, namely introduction, body and conclusion. In addition to this there was also a consensus that the large doctrinal body has two main parts to it, namely doctrine and application, which is a pattern typical of Paul's letters. This structure was also demonstrated in a table diagram to illustrate the different divisions in the letter's structure. The composition of the letter focused on the different parts that made up the whole that contributed to the flow of Paul's argument. The flow of thought progressed from sinful humanity being an enemy of God and in need of a Saviour, to God's gracious provision of forgiveness and righteousness given to all who believe on Jesus Christ, both Jew and Gentile. It also described what this new life in the Spirit entails and how it ought to affect the believer's daily living. Thus the individual aspects or doctrines of this letter, all systematically pieced together, formed the whole and created a complete understanding of the overarching Gospel theme. Hence, it seems apparent that though this is a personal letter, there also appeared to be a systematic flow to it in the progression of the individual doctrinal themes.

The rhetoric found in the target pericope was also examined to determine how it might influence one's understanding of the passage under investigation. From the contributions it was also observed how Paul used rhetoric effectively in his letter to successfully convey, endorse and support his message to his audience. The persuasive strategies and literary tools He used, like scripture referencing, bible character analogies, diatribe, life analogies and figures of speech, were employed to creatively illustrate and communicate his theological arguments in meaningful and thought-provoking ways. The figures of speech, specifically the personification of creation and the metaphor of groaning, used in the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) were of special interest, as they revealed how Paul illustrated his theological argument in such a way that his audience could identify with what he was saying and thus understand his theological concepts.

4.6 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to determine the meaning of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). To do this, an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis was done to establish the author-intended meaning of the text for its original readers.

The chapter commenced with a preliminary analysis of Bible translations to discover and analyse any textual variants to determine their effect or influence on the overall meaning of the target pericope. Thus, there were two main tasks involved in this section: (1) analysing the textual variants (textual criticism), and (2) deciding on a translation for the exegesis of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). Six textual variants were highlighted in the seventeen different Bible translations consulted, and after considering the six different variants, the choice of translation for the exegetical exercise was the *New International Version* (2011). The research then progressed through the text, verse by verse, and points relevant to its interpretation and meaning were discussed. The results of these findings were summarized in a paraphrase offered by the researcher.

A verbal analysis was then done to establish how specific key words and phrases may have influenced the interpretation of the text. In this exercise, certain Greek words were examined to determine their individual meanings and their contribution to and significance in the passage. The key words explored in this subsection were those that pertained specifically to how the Holy Spirit might help believers in their weakness as they anticipate their day of glorification. Consequently, words that pertained to the believer's situation (suffering and weakness) were of particular interest, because they shed some light on the reason why believers would need the Holy Spirit's help. In addition to this, words that pertained to the Holy Spirit's role (helps, intercede, conformed, image and son) were also of special interest, as they shed some light on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of every believer in this present life.

Significant grammatical features in the text were examined to determine how they may have influenced the interpretation of the passage. Hence, grammatical features like conjunctions, personification, metaphors, anthropomorphism, and word tense were discussed. It was discovered that explanatory conjunctions like 'for' are exegetically significant in understanding and interpreting the text, because they point to and explain the reason or logic for what was said in the preceding verse or verses. It was evident that personification and metaphors were used for artistic and literary effect to illustrate a theological point. The seemingly unnecessary use of a pronoun (himself) was used to underscore and emphasize that the Holy Spirit is the one interceding on the believer's behalf. Whilst the past tense of 'glorified' seemed to be a strange choice of tenses for a future event, there seemed to be good reason in Paul's mind for the use of this tense. It appeared, from the contributions, that Paul was highlighting this event as one decided on in eternity past and therefore predestined by God to be a certainty in the life of every believer. Hence, each lexical and grammatical feature contributed significantly in revealing something of the original message

that Paul was conveying to his recipients in Rome.

A literary analysis was done to determine how the genre, the structure, the composition and the rhetoric found in Paul's letter may have also influenced its meaning and interpretation. It was generally accepted by the academic scholars consulted in this thesis that the book of Romans is a letter that somewhat fits the pattern of personal letter writing of Paul's day in its introduction and conclusion. Hence, it is classed as one of Paul's thirteen epistles in the canon of Scripture. However, it was noted that due to its doctrinal content, this conclusion has not stopped debates on what type of letter it may be. It was suggested that it is best to view this letter as one that utilizes various forms of genre to convey the message of its author. There also appeared to be a general consensus among the reviewed writings that this letter has a general three-part structure to it, namely introduction, body and conclusion. In addition to this there was also a consensus that the large doctrinal body has two main parts to it, namely doctrine and application, which is a pattern typical of Paul's letters. This structure was also demonstrated in a table diagram to illustrate the different divisions in the letter's structure.

The composition of the letter focused on the different parts that made up the whole that contributed to the flow of Paul's argument. The flow of thought progressed from sinful humanity needing a Saviour, to God's gracious provision of forgiveness and righteousness to all who believe on Jesus Christ, both Jew and Gentile. It also described what this new life in the Spirit entails and how it ought to affect the believer's daily living. Thus the individual aspects or doctrines of this letter, all systematically pieced together, formed the whole and created a complete understanding of the overarching Gospel theme. Hence, it was apparent that though this is a personal letter there also appeared to be a systematic flow to it in the progression of its individual doctrinal themes.

From the contributions it was also observed how Paul used rhetoric effectively in his letter to successfully endorse, support and convey his message to his audience. The persuasive strategies and literary tools he used, like scripture referencing, bible character analogies, diatribe, life analogies and figures of speech, were employed to creatively illustrate and communicate his theological arguments in meaningful and thought-provoking ways. The use of personification and metaphors revealed how Paul illustrated his theological argument in such a way that his audience could identify with what he was saying and so understand his deep and complex theological concepts.

Thus, the in-depth exegetical and theological analysis in this chapter has revealed much on the author-intended meaning of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). The findings of this chapter have contributed positively in the following ways: (1) the textual variant exercise revealed the importance of studying the text as close to the Greek translation as possible, in order to understand and interpret the text correctly and thus avoid the possibility of eisegesis. (2) The verse by verse examination of the text revealed a greater understanding of the original message that Paul was conveying to the church in Rome. (3) The lexical analysis revealed the importance of understanding the full definitions of theological words to avoid a limited understanding of the theological themes and doctrines certain words convey. Hence, the words studied in this section proved to highlight areas of the Holy Spirit's intercessory ministry that have seemingly been missed or ignored by a limited understanding of the word 'intercede' or 'intercession'. As a result, it has contributed to the current and traditional understanding of how the Holy Spirit helps believers while they wait for their day of final redemption. (4) The grammatical analysis revealed the importance of understanding the different grammatical features that serve as exegetical tools in interpreting the text correctly. Thus the verbal analysis in this chapter (lexical and grammatical) significantly contributed to revealing something of the original message that Paul was communicating to his original audience. (5) The literary analysis revealed

how Paul made use of rhetoric as persuasive tools to effectively communicate his theological message to his audience. In other words, the use of different figures of speech enabled his audience to understand the complex theological ideas he was communicating to them. At the same time it contributed significantly to the understanding and interpretation of the text. Thus the exegetical and lexical analysis of this chapter has contributed considerably to understanding and interpreting the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30), and thus in some ways also contributed to answering the thesis question of how the Holy Spirit may help believers as they anticipate the day of their glorification.

Additional questions have been posed in the course of this research regarding the help the Holy Spirit gives to believers anticipating their day of final redemption. In the next chapter of this thesis, these questions will be addressed and hopefully adequately answered as all aspects of this research are summarized and concluded. Thus, in the fifth and final chapter, the exegetical findings of this study will be summarized in order to establish the contribution it has made in the knowledge of God, His creation, and the relationship between the two (especially with man). Finally, it will discuss the practical implications for the believer today, and how the ancient message speaks to our modern context empowering the reader to move 'from theory to practice, from doctrine to application, from belief to behaviour' (Smith 2008:154).

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF EXEGETICAL FINDINGS, THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE, AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to ascertain the theological significance of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) and its practical implications for the believer today in a Pentecostal/Charismatic setting that will ultimately contribute to answering the thesis question of how the Holy Spirit may help believers as they eagerly anticipate the day of their final redemption.

This chapter commenced with a summary of the exegetical findings of the research to establish the contribution it has made in knowledge of God, knowledge of His creation, and knowledge of the relationship between God and mankind. Finally, the practical implications for the Pentecostal/Charismatic believer in a contemporary setting were discussed to discover how the ancient Gospel message still rings true today, and how it still empowers the believer to move 'from theory to practice, from doctrine to application (and) from belief to behaviour...' (Smith 2008:154). Consequently, the findings of this chapter are presented below under the following headings: (1) Summary of Exegetical Findings, (2) The Theological Significance, and (3) The Practical Implications.

5.2 Summary of the Exegetical Research

This section takes the form of summarizing the exegetical findings of the thesis to establish how it has contributed theologically to the believer's knowledge of God, creation and the relationship between God and mankind, and thus reveal how this research has contributed to answering the research question of the thesis.

Chapter 1 introduced the topic and research question of the thesis, namely, in what ways might the Holy Spirit help believers in their weaknesses, especially as they wait for the day of their glorification? This chapter also discussed how this project would progress in its research to achieve the objective of answering the thesis question. The preliminary literature review in the first chapter placed this thesis in the context of related academic scholarship, and it was discovered that the majority of the authors consulted discussed the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) in three main sections, namely, (1) the hope of future glory, (2) the help of the Holy Spirit and (3) the providence of God. These three aspects were viewed from the perspective of how the Holy Spirit encourages believers in this present life with the hope of future glory, with the knowledge that He helps them by interceding for them, and with the understanding that in God's providence all things will ultimately work out for good and according to His plan and purpose. Thus, one can conclude that believers can be greatly encouraged by the presence of the Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of their future glory, and by the help He gives them by interceding for them in this present life. However, it was noted that not much discussion had taken place on what this intercession might include or involve, and the general consensus among the reviewed scholars in this chapter was that the intercession of the Spirit involved Him praying on the believer's behalf. It appeared that the main contention regarding the Spirit's intercession seemed to be related to the interpretation of the Spirit's groanings, whether they are direct or indirect, audible or inaudible, and as a result more important aspects of the Spirit's intercession appeared to be overlooked. Hence, Chapter 1 highlighted the study gap regarding the Holy Spirit's intercession on

behalf of believers.

In Chapter 2, the target pericope was discussed under the same three headings mentioned in Chapter 1, namely, (1) the hope of future glory, (2) the help of the Holy Spirit, and (3) the providence of God. It was noted that despite the present sufferings that believers endure in this life, the future glory promised to them, of which the Holy Spirit is the guarantee, can be an area of great encouragement while they anticipate future glory. Whilst there was a consensus among the reviewed writings that the Holy Spirit helps believers by interceding for them, it was observed that once again not much discussion had taken place on what this intercession might include or involve. It seemed evident that the Spirit's groanings have received more attention than His actual intercession. Hence, there appeared to be three areas of interpretation regarding the Holy Spirit's intercessory groans, namely, indirect groans, glossolalia and direct groans.

The indirect view proposed that the Holy Spirit causes the believer to groan and pray because it is inconceivable to some that the Holy Spirit should groan. The emphasis of this view was on the prayer of the believers, which is needful and a source of encouragement in this life, but it appears that the intercession of the Spirit for believers is overlooked with this emphasis, and the depth and significance of His help is largely ignored. The glossolalic view proposed that unknown tongues best explains the Spirit's groanings; however, many scholars contested this view on the grounds that glossolalia does not naturally fit the interpretation of the text and thus borders on eisegesis. It was also noted that because those who subscribe to this view have resigned themselves to the fact that glossolalia best fits the Spirit's groanings, they have contributed to the lack of research on the Spirit's intercession on behalf of believers, and what significance it would have in their life as they wait for the day of final redemption. These two views emphasized the importance of the believer praying, and thus redirected the focus of the text from the intercession of the Spirit to the prayer of the believer.

The direct view interpreted the Spirit's groanings as His own groanings and not the believer's prayer, and as a result the focus is kept on the Holy Spirit and not transferred to the believer. However, it was noted that not much consideration had been given to what this intercession might include or involve other than empathy and identification of the Spirit with the believer's situation. Neither was there much reflection on the significance this intercession might have for believers in this present life.

The providence of God, in this second chapter, related to God's involvement and participation by His Spirit in the life and destiny of believers. It was thus noted that God's predetermined will is being accomplished by the Holy Spirit, which highlights His divine intervention and intercession in the lives of believers. It was observed that adverse circumstances do not undermine God's eternal plan, but that the intercessory work of the Holy Spirit, which may go beyond prayer, works all things together for the believer's good. It was also noted that the connection between the believer's adverse circumstances and the Holy Spirit's intercession, that conforms believers to the image of Christ, was recognized but not discussed in detail. As a result, the imperceptible intercessions of the Spirit, assuring believers that all things work out for good, appeared to be largely unnoticed in the interpretation of the text. Thus, the findings of Chapter 2 contributed mainly by highlighting the lack of research on the topic of the Holy Spirit's intercession and what that might include or involve. Hence there still appeared to be some mystery regarding the intercession of the Spirit in the life of the believer that warranted further investigation to answer the research question of the thesis.

Chapter 3 focused on establishing a clear relationship between the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) and the message of the book, in order to contribute further to the accuracy of interpreting the text, to assist in answering the thesis question. To accomplish this task, the literary and historical aspects of Romans were researched. In the literary section (3.2) the letter's structure was

considered to establish its argument or flow of thought. There appeared to be a general consensus that the basic arrangement or structure of this epistle has three parts to it, namely, an introduction, a body and a conclusion. It was noted that the reviewed scholars seemed to agree that the body of Paul's letter reads like a theological treatise that discusses the redemption plan of God for humanity. The flow of thought moved from Paul discussing sinful humanity, being an enemy of God and an object of His wrath, to the gracious provision of forgiveness and righteousness given to all of humanity (both Jew and Gentile) who believe in Christ Jesus, the Son of God. Furthermore, the righteousness freely given to believers in Christ would also result in holy living. The authors consulted in this section seemed to all say that redemption for humanity and creation is only accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit. They also agreed that the Christian life is only possible by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Therefore, the researcher suggested that the Holy Spirit ought to be highlighted in the discussion of Paul's argument, because it is the Holy Spirit who accomplishes the redemptive plan of God in the earth and enables believers to live this righteous and holy life.

In the passage context section (3.3), it was noted that the central message contained in this letter is the Gospel which forms the basis for the interpretation of the individual chapters and portions thereof. Hence, the central message contained in Chapter 8 is the role the Holy Spirit plays within God's redemptive plan for humanity and all of creation. Whilst Chapter 8 emphasized the role of the Spirit in God's redemption plan, the target pericope (8:18-30) focused on the final stage of this redemption plan, namely, the future glory of all believers. Hence, the focus of this thesis has been on what the Holy Spirit's role is in this final stage, and how His intercession helps prepare believers for this future glory.

In the theological context section (3.4), the scholars consulted agreed that the individual themes contained in this epistle are held together by the broad

overarching theme of the Gospel. However, it was demonstrated that a greater appreciation of the main theme is achieved when the individual themes are examined. Furthermore, it was also noted that a greater knowledge and appreciation of the Holy Spirit's involvement in God's redemption plan is gained when studying each individual theme. Thus, the themes investigated in this chapter (condemnation, foreknowledge, predestination, called, justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification) all related to the main Gospel theme in some way.

It was concluded that 'condemnation' is the condemning or damnatory sentence on humanity for sin that had far-reaching effects on all creation. It was discovered that 'foreknowledge' includes more than knowing about future events before they happen. It carries the idea of deciding or determining beforehand to appoint someone or something to a special task or privilege, like salvation. It was understood that 'predestination' means to appoint to what has been previously decided or determined, as it carries the idea that God in His sovereignty has planned in advance the purpose, the function, the limits, the path, the events and the destiny of all that He has created. For example, God predestined (decided beforehand) that believers would be conformed to the image of Christ and are thus appointed to this end. It was also understood that 'called' means to invite someone to participate in something, like salvation. In other words, God has given an invitation to all of humanity (both Jew and Gentile) to participate in salvation. It was concluded that 'justification' means to be vindicated and acquitted and thus declared blameless (righteous) in the eyes of God due to the imputation of Christ's righteousness. It was understood that 'adoption' is the deliberate act of making someone part of the family with equal status, rights and privileges, based not on merit but on grace, with the intention that the adopted one would perpetuate the family name and carry on the family business. Hence, the believer (adopted son/daughter) has the responsibility to carry the name of Jesus and make it known in this world as well as continue the

work that He started in the power of the Holy Spirit. It was observed that 'sanctified' means to be made holy and refers to the lifelong process carried out by the Holy Spirit that purifies the soul. It was noted that 'glorified' within the context of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) refers to the future glorified state of believers when they are finally free from sin and clothed with resurrected bodies; their dignity and worth is made manifest and their sonship is fully realized and celebrated by all of creation.

Although these individual themes only briefly traced God's redemption plan from beginning to end, it seemed sufficient to reveal and highlight the intercessory heart of God that continually intervenes on behalf of humanity. His intercessory heart seemed evident in the actions He has taken to redeem humanity from eternal damnation, to restore them and give them a glorious, everlasting future with Him. It seemed evident that God's intervention or intercession in the affairs of humanity (to redeem and glorify them) is motivated, inspired and sustained by His love and accomplished by the Holy Spirit in the earth. Furthermore, it seemed evident that it is the continual intercession of the Spirit on the believer's behalf that works all things together for good according to the plan and purpose of God. Hence, the supportive role the Spirit plays is an important role in the fulfilling of God's redemption plan in the earth.

The authorship, date and recipients of the letter were investigated in the general context section (3.5), to determine how they might contribute to the interpretation of the text. There was a general consensus among the writings reviewed that the apostle Paul authored the letter to the Romans. It was observed that Paul was a Jew ministering to Gentiles and that he was an expert of the law, which put him in a unique position to write a letter of this nature detailing the redemptive plan of God and the role the Holy Spirit plays within this plan. The approximate date of this letter (AD 54-58) revealed that Paul was a seasoned missionary at the time of writing this letter, and consequently at least twenty-five years of ministry

contributed to the content of this epistle. There was also a general consensus that the recipient of this letter was the church in Rome, consisting of both Jew and Gentile believers. As a Jew commissioned by God to minister to Gentiles, Paul would have understood his audience and their concerns and issues very well, making him the best qualified to write a letter of this nature. It was concluded that the reader can therefore approach the book of Romans with confidence, as it contains the knowledge and experience of a seasoned missionary and theological scholar, who had keen insight regarding redemption and the role of the Spirit in the lives of believers.

The content, occasion and purpose of a letter are usually determined by the circumstances of both the writer and the recipients. In the historical context section (3.6), it was generally agreed that the church in Rome was birthed by Jewish believers and God-fearing Gentiles from Rome who had experienced Pentecost in AD 30. As a result, there appeared to be a general consensus that the church in Rome had no apostolic beginnings. The writings reviewed agreed that there was a certain amount of friction in this church regarding their interpretation of salvation, law and grace; with the main argument being about dietary laws and holy days. These circumstances formed the perfect backdrop for Paul to write a letter that would help to defuse some of the conflict that possibly existed in the group. It also seemed apparent that Paul's desire to visit Rome and his future missionary plans, (that possibly included the church in Rome), were also a motivating factor in the writing of this letter. Thus the historical and circumstantial background of Paul and the church contributed to the content, occasion and purpose of the letter.

Thus, the findings of Chapter 3 contributed positively in five ways to the research of this thesis: (1) they proved to be helpful in revealing the argument contained in Paul's letter, (2) they established the foundation for the message of the target pericope to be interpreted within the context of the chapter and the book, (3) they

highlighted different aspects of the Holy Spirit's ministry in the individual themes of the Gospel and thus His importance in accomplishing the redemption plan of God in the life of every believer, (4) they contributed to and explained why Paul wrote what he wrote to the church in Rome, (5) they assured the reader or researcher that Paul was well qualified to write a letter of this nature. However, it appeared that the intercession of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the believer and what that might look like was not adequately addressed, thus justifying an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) in the next chapter to contribute to answering the thesis question.

The task of Chapter 4 was to determine the meaning of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). To accomplish this, an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis was carried out in order to establish the message Paul intended to communicate to his original audience, and from these findings to consider how they might contribute to answering the thesis question of how the Holy Spirit may help believers as they anticipate the day of their glorification.

In the preliminary analysis of the text (4.2) different Bible translations were consulted and compared. Whilst the seventeen translations consulted all communicated the same general message of the future glory promised to all believers, there were at least six textual variants noticed. After considering these variants, the 2011 NIV translation of the Bible was chosen on which to carry out an in-depth exegetical and theological analysis of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30). The research then progressed through the text (4.3), verse by verse, and relevant points to its interpretation and meaning were discussed. Various commentaries and dictionaries were consulted for this exercise, which resulted in contributing to the interpretation and understanding of the text. From this investigation it appeared that Paul was saying the following:

I (Paul) am fully persuaded and therefore say without hesitation, that the sufferings we encounter in this present life that prepare us for our inheritance and future glory are not worth comparing with this glory that will be revealed in us, to us and conferred upon us. Even creation groans and eagerly anticipates this future glory when we, the children of God, are finally unveiled. Creation eagerly anticipates our unveiling as the children of God, because it was subjected to frustration by God as a result of our sin, and has not been able to fulfil its God-ordained purpose since then. But this curse on creation was pronounced with the promise of setting it free one day to share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. And so, creation is eagerly anticipating its freedom from its bondage to decay, and even groans continually, as if it were in the pains of childbirth, expecting to be restored to its original state of perfection and beauty when we, the children of God, are revealed. But, creation is not the only thing groaning with eager expectation. Even though we have the Spirit of God dwelling in us, we also groan with keen anticipation for our adoption as children to be completed in the redemption of our bodies. The Spirit's very presence even intensifies our groaning and longing for that day. Yet we groan in hope, because we know that our promised redemption is certain and we are able to wait for it patiently, because the indwelling Holy Spirit is the first-fruit guaranteeing what is still to come. Furthermore, just as hope helps us to wait patiently for our redemption, so the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness by interceding and intervening for us according to the will of God until the day of our final redemption. This is especially helpful when we do not know how to pray according to God's will in every situation. As a result of the Holy Spirit's intercession, which is in accordance with God's will, we can be certain that God works all things out for good according to His eternal purpose of conforming us into the image of His Son. We can be certain of this, because in His foreknowledge, God chose to set His love on us and predestined that those who respond to His invitation of salvation would be justified and conformed to the likeness of His Son, that Jesus may be the eldest among many brothers and sisters who will not only resemble Him but share in the riches of His glorious inheritance.

A verbal analysis (4.4) of the text was then performed, where the vocabulary and sentence structure of the passage was investigated. This exercise took the form of a lexical and grammatical analysis. The lexical analysis investigated key words to establish their importance and influence in the text. The key words discussed in this section were those that pertained to how the Holy Spirit might

help believers in their weakness as they anticipate their day of glorification. As a result, the words 'suffering, weakness, helps, intercede, conformed, image and son' were investigated, as these words related directly to either the believer's state or the work of the Holy Spirit.

From this word study it was discovered that the suffering Paul was referring to in Romans 8:18 may be of a spiritual, emotional, psychological or physical nature that may afflict the spirit, soul or body, as believers share in the sufferings of Christ that they may also share in His glory. In addition to this, the weakness that Paul was referring to in Romans 8:26 was a reference to the overall frailty and limitations of the believers' mind and body that incapacitates them and renders them powerless and thus dependent on the help of the Holy Spirit which may sometimes be an aggressive and active help that corresponds to their real need. However, the Holy Spirit's help does not condone or permit inactivity on the believers' part, but requires a willing and active participation from them, that the will of God may be accomplished in their life. Because the believers' weakness in mind and body limits them in knowing and accomplishing God's will, the Holy Spirit, who is fully acquainted with their needs and God's will, intercedes and intervenes for them, aggressively if need be, that the will of God may be fulfilled in them and through them, and that they may be conformed to the image of Christ Jesus. Hence, the Holy Spirit's intercession is an impinging (an intrusion or invasion) and an intervention between God and the believer to bring about reconciliation of those issues that are contrary to God's will and purpose and Christ's image. The image of Christ refers not only to His heavenly body, but also to His state of mind, His divine nature and His moral excellence. Furthermore, the key characteristic of being a son or daughter is in resembling the nature of one's father. Thus, there is expectancy that true sons and daughters of God will not only resemble Christ, but also the Father, as they enjoy His blessings and execute His will and purpose in the earth. It was thus concluded that this is what the Holy Spirit aggressively contends for, and pursues

in every believer.

In the grammatical analysis (4.4), grammatical features were investigated to determine their significance in the text. In this section features like explanatory conjunctions, figures of speech and word tenses were considered, and it was understood that each feature helped and contributed by adding value and meaning to the text by explaining something, by adding artistic value and literary effect, or by emphasizing a point.

The literary analysis section (4.5) discussed what type of literature Romans is, and how its structure and composition may have contributed to the meaning of the text. It was generally accepted by the scholars consulted in the thesis that Romans is a personal letter with doctrinal content addressed to the church in Rome. As a result, it is classed as one of Paul's thirteen epistles in the New Testament. The scholars reviewed agreed that this letter has three basic parts in its arrangement, namely, introduction, body and conclusion. It also seemed evident that the large doctrinal body has two main sections to it, namely, a doctrinal section and practical section, which was a common pattern in Paul's letters. Thus one can conclude that the Romans letter has two main parts to it (doctrine and application) within its three-part structure of introduction, body and conclusion.

The composition of the letter focused on the individual parts of the Gospel to determine how Paul pieced them together to form a continuous argument. Paul's argument moved from discussing sinful humanity as an enemy of God, to God's provision of forgiveness and righteousness given to all who believe in Christ Jesus, to both Jew and Gentile. His argument also included what new life in the Spirit entailed, and how it ought to translate and influence the believer's daily life. The individual doctrines contained in Paul's argument were thus systematically pieced together to form a complete illustration of the Gospel message. Having

said this, it must also be said that although there is a systematic flow in the progression of the argument, this letter is not systematic theology in its entirety, as some doctrinal aspects, like Christology and eschatology, are notably missing.

Paul also made effective use of rhetoric in his letter to effectively convey his message to his audience. Some of his persuasive strategies and literary tools included the use of Old Testament references, biblical characters as examples, diatribe, life analogies, and figures of speech. These all contributed in various ways to state, endorse, strengthen, support and explain his sometimes difficult and complex theological concepts and arguments to his audience.

Thus, the findings of Chapter 4 contributed positively in the following ways: (1) the textual variant exercise revealed the importance of studying the text as close to the Greek translation as possible, in order to understand and interpret the text correctly and thus avoid the possibility of eisegesis, (2) the verse by verse examination of the text revealed a greater understanding of the original message that Paul was conveying to the church in Rome, (3) the grammatical analysis revealed the importance of understanding the different grammatical features that serve as exegetical tools in interpreting the text correctly, (4) the literary analysis revealed how Paul made use of rhetoric as a persuasive tool to effectively communicate his theological message to his audience, (5) the lexical analysis revealed the importance of understanding the full definitions of theological words to avoid limited understanding of the theological themes and doctrines certain words convey. Hence, the words studied in this section proved to highlight areas of the Holy Spirit's intercessory ministry that have seemingly been missed or ignored due to a limited understanding of the word 'intercede' or 'intercession'.

The lexical analysis, therefore, contributed in part to answering the thesis question of how the Holy Spirit helps believers while they wait for their day of final redemption in the following ways: by entreating, petitioning or pleading on the

believer's behalf; by mediating between the believer and God to bring about reconciliation of those areas that are contrary to His will and Christ's character; by actively intervening to convey a benefit on the believer and bring every circumstance of the believer's life into agreement with God's will; by being fully acquainted with the believer's needs, the Holy Spirit is able to give the appropriate help; by conforming believers to the life and image of Christ; by empowering and supernaturally strengthening believers for the purpose and plan of God; by aggressively warring against the weaknesses that plague believers to free them to progress in the plan and purpose of God; by invading the believer's life to accomplish and pursue God's plan and purpose for them; by sanctifying believers so that their lifestyles match their legal status of justification. Thus it seems evident from the investigation done in this project that intercession has a much broader meaning than traditionally understood and believed (see 4.4.1.4).

Regarding the secondary questions posed in this thesis, it is reasonable to conclude, then, that the Holy Spirit's intercession is not passive and reserved, but rather proactive and bold involving more than prayer in its various forms. It also seems obvious that believers are far more dependent on the intercession of the Holy Spirit than they may realize. It is also apparent that this intercession assures believers that all things do indeed work together for good according to the plan and purpose of God. Hence, believers ought to be greatly encouraged by the extent of this intercession. They ought to be confident, secure and delighted at the extravagant help the Holy Spirit gives them in this present life. Furthermore, they can be optimistic in the midst of suffering and adverse circumstances, because they are beneficiaries of the Holy Spirit's intense and extreme intercession.

Having said this, it would appear that academic scholars like Wayne Grudem (*Systematic Theology* 1994) and Millard Erickson (*Christian Theology* 2013) who have done in-depth systematic studies on the Holy Spirit have included some of

these individual aspects of the Holy Spirit's ministry, mentioned above, as separate works that He performs, and not different aspects of His intercession. However, by definition, it seems possible for the intercession of the Spirit to include all of the above-mentioned ministries as different aspects of His intercession. In other words, wherever and whenever the Spirit of God intervenes in the life of God's people, in whatever form, it seems reasonable to conclude that intercession is taking place on their behalf.

5.3 The Theological Significance of Romans 8:18-30

This section focused on the contribution that the research of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) has made to knowledge of God, knowledge of creation, and knowledge regarding the relationship between God and mankind. The results of this section are thus presented below under the following headings: (1) knowledge of God, (2) knowledge of creation, and (3) knowledge regarding the relationship between God and mankind

5.3.1 Knowledge of God

The following points were apparent in the research of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30).

5.3.1.1 God is sovereign

From this research it seemed evident that the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) highlighted the providence of God in alluding to the redemption plan for humanity and creation. Providence is God's continued action of governing and preserving all creation and guiding it to His intended purpose (Erickson 2013:359). From this research it was understood that, in God's sovereignty, He has planned the purpose, the function, the limits, the path, the events and the destiny of all that He has created. He is therefore intimately involved with creation, preserving it and guiding it to its predestined end. This sovereign involvement is demonstrated in His redemption plan, which includes humanity and all of

creation.

5.3.1.2 God is merciful and gracious

God's mercy and grace appeared obvious in the text, and were demonstrated, once again, by Paul alluding to the redemption plan of God for humanity and all of creation. The different aspects of God's redemption plan for humanity (foreknowledge, predestination, called, justification, adoption, sanctification and glorification) revealed the merciful heart of God, and showed how He graciously intervened (interceded) on sinful man's behalf to redeem him from sin and hell, and reconcile him to Himself. The depth of His involvement and intervention (intercession) and the extent of His love were clearly highlighted by the individual gospel themes. The extent of His extremely generous and extravagant love is demonstrated even further in the adoption of every believer as His own son or daughter, making them recipients of a glorious inheritance. His continual involvement or intercession in the life of believers reveals His commitment, dedication and devotion to accomplishing His preordained plan for them. It seems evident, therefore, that the motivating factor in God's providence and redemptive plan is love, aptly summed up by the words of the apostle John: 'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life' (John 3:16 NIV) (see 3.4).

5.3.1.3 God accomplishes all things by His Spirit

It was evident, whether one focused on one main overarching theme or on the individual themes, that it is the Holy Spirit who accomplishes God's redemption plan in the earth. The research showed that the whole process of salvation from beginning to end is accomplished by the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual believer, from the first call to salvation, to being justified and adopted, to being sanctified and finally glorified. Thus, it was logical to conclude that God's intervention or intercession in the life of humanity (to redeem and glorify them) is motivated, inspired and sustained by His love for them and accomplished by His

Spirit in them. It also appeared reasonable to conclude that it is the continual intercession of the Holy Spirit on the believers' behalf that works all things together for good according to the purpose of God. Thus, it also was logical to conclude that His intercession carries and sustains believers through this life until the day of their final redemption. Thus, without the Holy Spirit's work and power, nothing of redemption would be experienced or realized by humanity and creation (see 3.4).

5.3.2 Knowledge of Creation (natural order)

The target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) alluded to the fact that creation's bondage is as a direct result of man's rebellion (Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 1:18-3:20; 5:17-22; 8:20-22). Thus, man's sin had far-reaching consequences, as the condemnation and judgment of God on Adam's sin also fell on the natural order (Stott 1994:239). In other words, creation has been a victim of circumstances since the fall and as a result has not been able to fulfil its God-ordained purpose. However, creation's damnatory sentence came with the promise of future freedom when the children of God are fully revealed (Romans 8:20-21). Thus, creation eagerly waits for the day that the children of God are unveiled, so that it too might enjoy freedom from its cycle of decay. Creation's liberty is therefore inextricably linked to the freedom of God's children. This means that as believers in Christ fully enter their glorious freedom as sons and daughters of God, all creation will experience its own freedom and renewal. This implies that both are in bondage together, and both will be set free together (Stott 1994:238). Thus one can conclude that Paul's understanding of redemption was not restricted to humanity, but that it encompassed the whole of creation (see 3.4.2.1).

5.3.3 Knowledge regarding mankind's Relationship with God

The following points were apparent from the study of the text (Romans 8:18-30).

5.3.3.1 The Gospel is Good News for all humanity

This research has revealed that the Gospel is good news to all of sinful humanity (both Jew and Gentile) who hear its message and respond in faith, because it withdraws God's judgment on them and repositions them as His sons or daughters, giving them a glorious future. In other words, sinful mankind can be acquitted and rendered righteous by believing in Christ Jesus, and thus change their destiny from one of hell and damnation to one of glory and freedom (see 3.4).

5.3.3.2 Believers are sons or daughters of God

The Scriptures teach that believers are adopted by God and are thus His sons and daughters (Romans 8:14-15). From the research it was understood that a son or daughter is one who shares the same nature as their birth or adoptive father. Thus, sons and daughters of God would, by definition, possess His nature and character. Furthermore, adopted sons and daughters have equal rights and privileges in the house, and are heirs to their father's estate. This means that sons and daughters of God are privileged individuals, who have access to all that the Father has. They also have the inherited right and authority to act on the Father's behalf to execute His will and purpose in the earth. Consequently, true sons and daughters of God not only reflect the Father's nature and enjoy His blessings and inheritance, but they also execute their Father's will and purpose in the earth. It was also observed from the contributions in Chapter 4 that this is exactly what the Holy Spirit 'aggressively pursues' in His intercession for every believer. God, by His Spirit, helps believers step into their rightful place as a son or a daughter to accomplish the Father's will and make Jesus 'famous' in the earth (Maloney 2013:loc 499). Thus, the believer's relationship to God is one of an intimate Father/child relationship (see

4.4.1.8).

5.3.3.3 The believer's present sufferings do not hinder God's plan

In the interpretation of the text it was understood that suffering is a necessary part of the Christian life that prepares and even qualifies the believer to share in the glory of Christ, and as a result cannot be avoided (2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 8:17; Philippians 1:29). It was also discovered that suffering does not undermine, weaken, hinder or stop God's providence or eternal plan from continually unfolding in the life of believers. On the contrary, it is actually used by God to accomplish His plan and purpose for them. In other words, all circumstances (good or bad) in the life of believers are used by God to achieve His good plan and eternal purpose (Romans 8:28). This would imply that God's intervention, carries, sustains guides and shapes the believers in this life and guarantees that their ultimate end will be a glorious one (see 4.4.1.1).

5.3.3.4 The Holy Spirit helps believers in their weakness

It was understood that believers are still weak and frail in body and mind, and thus need the continual help and intervention of the Holy Spirit. Believers are weak in many ways and therefore incapable of helping themselves attain the level of holiness and perfection that God expects from them, and, as a result, need the continual help of the Spirit to achieve this end. By way of explanation, believers are incapable of sanctifying themselves and therefore also incapable of conforming themselves to the image of Christ, and thus remain completely reliant on the help that God affords them in the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit. This intercessory help, as already mentioned, seems to go beyond prayer and includes various methods of intervention. Thus, God, in His love and mercy, has given believers the help and assistance they need to fulfil His plan and purpose for them. Having said this, it was also understood that this help does not condone inactivity and laziness on the believers' part, but rather expects active participation from them (see 4.4.1.4).

5.4 The Practical Implications of Romans 8:18-30

This section paid attention to the practical implications for the believer today in a Pentecostal/Charismatic setting to ascertain how the ancient message speaks to the modern context empowering the believer to move 'from theory to practice, from doctrine to application, (and) from belief to behaviour...' (Smith 2008:154).

5.4.1 The Central Idea in the Exposition of the Text

It was ascertained that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is the focus of Chapter 8 and thus it would be a mistake to say that the central idea of the target pericope (Romans 8:18-30) within this chapter could be something else. Thus, in the target pericope, it seemed as if Paul was emphasizing the Holy Spirit's role in the final stage of God's redemption plan. In other words, the final stage in God's redemption plan is glorification, and so, the central idea within the target pericope concerns the help the Holy Spirit gives to believers in preparing them for this glorious future. Believers are those who have been justified and adopted by God as His own children. And so, the preparation in view would obviously focus on the lifelong process of sanctification, and thus cover the various ways, means and tools the Holy Spirit employs to conform believers to the image of Christ Jesus in preparation for this glory.

It was understood that the Holy Spirit helps believers in this present life, which, as mentioned, is a time of sanctification, by interceding for them. As stated in Chapter 4, this intercession includes entreating and praying on the believer's behalf. It includes mediating between God and the believer to bring about complete reconciliation of all things. It includes aggressively warring against sin, and intervening and invading the believers' life in a way that would benefit them in their walk with God. It includes using all circumstances and situations as tools to conform believers to the image of Christ Jesus, so that their lifestyle matches their legal justified state. It also includes empowering and supernaturally

strengthening believers mentally and physically to accomplish God's plan and purpose in the earth. Thus, it appears from the exposition of the text that the intercession of the Spirit is inextricably linked to the will and purpose of God being fulfilled in the life of the believer, and is therefore the central idea of the text.

5.4.2 The Application of the Text in a Contemporary Setting

How do the findings of this thesis translate from doctrine to application? And, what might this look like in a practical way in the life of a Pentecostal/Charismatic believer?

Firstly, suffering, trials and persecutions are used by the Holy Spirit in the process of sanctification to conform believers to the image of Christ that prepares and qualifies them to share in the glory of Jesus (Romans 8:18, 29). Thus the believers' eternal good is in view and not their temporal good or comfort. Hence, as the believers share in the sufferings of Christ it prepares them to know the Lord better in this life and forever in glory. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the sufferings in view are the trials, hardships, misfortunes and calamities that one encounters spiritually, emotionally, psychologically, or physically as one shares in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. Additionally, and as mentioned, the Lord is in control of each situation (whether good or bad), working all things for good according to His eternal purpose. No situation functions outside of God's sovereignty, but each and every one is authorized by Him to bring about His eternal purpose in the life of the believer.

John MacArthur Jr (2011:loc 305-532) offers the following reasons for suffering in his book *The Power of Suffering: Strengthening Your Faith in the Refiner's Fire*: (1) it is used by God to test, refine and strengthen the believer's faith (Genesis 22), (2) it is used to keep the believer humble (Romans 12:3; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10), (3) it may also be used to break the power of materialism in the believer's

life (Matthew 6:24; Mark 10:17-22; Hebrews 11:24-26), (4) it causes the believer to focus 'on things above' and to long for heaven (Romans 8:18-24; 2 Corinthians 5:1-8; Colossians 3:1-2), (5) it reveals what the believers truly love and whether the Lord is first priority in their life (Matthew 22:36-37), (6) it teaches the believer to appreciate and value the blessings of God, which most often come through obeying His word in the midst of sufferings and trials (Hebrews 5:7-9; Philippians 2:8-9), (7) it equips believers to help and comfort others in their times of suffering (2 Corinthians 1:4), (8) it develops perseverance for greater usefulness (James 1:2-4). Hence, one can conclude that no suffering or trial hinders, weakens or undermines God's sovereign purpose in the earth. On the contrary, suffering is part of the training as sons and daughters of God, for just as Jesus learnt obedience by the things He suffered, so believers learn obedience as sons and daughters by the things they suffer (Hebrews 5:8). Therefore, the suffering believers endure is designed for the purpose of training them to be true sons and daughters of God, not just in name but in character and conduct also. Yet in every situation, the grace of God given to every believer is sufficient for them to endure and persevere in their faith (2 Corinthians 12:9). Consequently, and as mentioned in Chapter 4, suffering in its various forms should not be despised by believers, but rather embraced by them, as it is a tool used by the Lord to prepare them for glory.

Secondly, it is true that prayer is an area of weakness that the Holy Spirit helps believers with. As was pointed out in Chapters 2 and 4, there are times when believers do not know what to pray for according to the will of God because they do not always know what is best for them, and neither can they foresee the future. In other words, do they ask for endurance in the situation or for deliverance from the situation? At these times the Holy Spirit, who is fully acquainted with their needs, does know what is needed and is able to direct their prayers in accordance with God's will as James Maloney (2013:loc 310) pointed out. However, it was understood, from this research that the intercession of the

Spirit is over and above and goes beyond the believer's ability to pray aright. His entreating goes way beyond and much deeper than the believers ever could and is motivated by His deep love and compassion for them and by His desire for their freedom and complete reconciliation (spirit, soul and body) with God. Thus, every time the Spirit intercedes on the believers' behalf they can be assured that God's will and purpose is being attended to and will be accomplished.

Is this intercession inextricably linked to the believer praying, as some (Hale 2007:558, Krell 2012:n.p, Cereghin 2013:259) have suggested? In other words, does the Holy Spirit intercede only when the believer prays? It was noted in Chapter 2 that Leon Morris (2012:332) suggested that one should not think God can only take action when He is invited to or given permission to do so. Where would God's sovereignty and providence fit in if this were so? The point is that when believers do not know what to ask God for in the midst of their difficult situations, the Holy Spirit is well able to intercede or intervene for them to bring about the plan and purpose of God in their life. It does not mean that the believers are not praying, it just means that even if they pray amiss, the Holy Spirit is still able to bring about God's plan for them.

Thirdly, it was established that believers are weak and frail in the area of body and soul and need the continual help of the Holy Spirit. In other words, believers experience physical, emotional and psychological limitations that incapacitate them and render them powerless to do or experience something. Furthermore, they may be incapable of restraining corrupt desires or be incapable of bearing the trials they encounter in this life. As a result, they need the continual support and help of the Holy Spirit where they are weak and incapable of helping themselves. The help the Holy Spirit gives is an intervention that is appropriate to bring relief and active assistance to the weak and helpless believer. As mentioned in Chapter 4, it refers to His active and sometimes aggressive help in

assisting believers in fulfilling God's purpose in their life. Having said this, this help does not imply inactivity on the believer's part but rather a joint-participation of the believer with the Spirit. What might this look like? The Spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel and empowered him to judge Israel (Judges 3:10). Othniel was able to judge Israel because the Holy Spirit enabled or empowered him to do so. Gideon was also empowered by the Spirit of God to lead Israel in battle against the Midianites (Judges 6:34). Thus, Gideon was only able to fulfil his purpose in God and lead Israel to victory because the Holy Spirit empowered him to do so. The Spirit of the Lord also came upon Samson and empowered him to kill a lion and to break the ropes that bound him (Judges 14:6; 15:14). This implies that Samson's supernatural strength to kill a lion and break the ropes that bound him was only possible because the Holy Spirit was upon him. Bezalel was filled with the Spirit of God and equipped with wisdom, understanding and knowledge to design and create artistic works for the tabernacle of God (Exodus 35:31-32). Thus, without the presence of the Holy Spirit, Bezalel would not have had the ability to accomplish the task of designing and making articles for the tabernacle. The disciples were empowered by the Holy Spirit to be authentic witnesses of Jesus in the earth (Acts 1:8). Without the Spirit's empowering, the disciples would have lacked the boldness and courage to be effective witnesses of Christ Jesus. For example, the Holy Spirit empowered Peter to preach before the crowds (Acts 2:14-36; 3:12-26; 4:8-12), and those who disputed with Stephen could not resist the wisdom of the Holy Spirit within him (Acts 6:8-10). Though not an exhaustive list, these few examples illustrate how the Holy Spirit in His intercession may intervene in various ways to empower, equip and supernaturally strengthen believers for the purpose and plan of God.

Fourthly, the Holy Spirit assumes an impinging and intervening position between God and believers to bring about reconciliation of those issues that still cause conflict and hinder the purpose of God in their life. Hence the sanctifying works mentioned in previous chapters to bring about this necessary reconciliation. In

other words, the Holy Spirit actively fights to redeem and release believers from sin and enslaving powers in order to bring them in line with God's will, purpose and holiness. For example, Jesus delivered the demonized man by the Spirit of God, and he was seen by all and found to be clothed and in his right mind, and able to testify of God's goodness (Matthew 12:28; Mark 5:1-20). Also, according to Scripture, believers have been set free from the law of sin and death by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2). Therefore, they are to reckon themselves no longer a slave to sin, but rather a slave to righteousness (Romans 6:11-13, 18). Believers, therefore, have the power and supernatural ability of the indwelling Holy Spirit to say no to sin and yes to righteousness. Thus, by the Spirit, believers say no to and put to death the sinful deeds of the fallen flesh (Romans 8:13). Hence the Spirit of God does not always intervene to defend and protect, but rather to attack, deliver, release and reconcile those areas of the believer's life that are still at enmity with God. Consequently, His intercession is not necessarily only one of reserved and passive prayer, but rather an aggressive proactive intervention to set believers free from those weaknesses and sinful issues that limit and incapacitate them and prevent them from fulfilling all of God's will and purpose. Having said this, believers are to participate with the Holy Spirit as He attacks the different areas in their life that still need reconciling, which may be in the form of abstaining from something sinful and by doing something righteous instead.

Having examined what the practical outworking of the Spirit's intercession may look like, what relevance do these findings have for the believer in a Pentecostal/Charismatic setting today? Firstly, believers can be grateful that God, who knows their weak state, has given them His Spirit to help them and sustain them in this life. In other words, because God knows that without His Spirit believers are but flesh and unable to live righteously or be faithful to His covenant, He has given believers the Holy Spirit to help them and sustain them (Psalm 78:39). Thus, believers ought to be grateful for all the benefits they

receive from the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives (Ryrie 1997:loc 2326).

Secondly, because sanctification is a lifelong process, believers will never outgrow their dependency on the Holy Spirit. In fact, the opposite is true. As Charles Stanley (2005:n.p) says, the more mature believers are in their faith the more dependent they will be on the Holy Spirit. Thus, the different aspects of the Spirit's ministry are needed continually by all believers throughout their walk with the Lord, and as a result they remain reliant on Him.

Thirdly, believers can be encouraged, refreshed and invigorated by the reality that God, by His Spirit, is present and actively involved in their lives. This means that the knowledge of this intercession ought to raise the believers' 'drooping souls' (Pink n.d:loc4537) and transform their understanding of their life and God's involvement in it.

Fourthly, believers can be assured and have confidence in the sovereignty of their God. In other words, God's providence increases and strengthens the believers' hope and confidence in this life. That is to say, they can be confident about their present and future life because what is promised to them and predestined for them by God will be fully realized, and that which God began in them will be brought to completion by His Spirit within them (Philippians 1:6).

Fifthly, God's extravagant and lavish love should encourage believers to persevere in their faith as they anticipate the day of final redemption. In other words, believers are able to be secure in God's love and therefore persevere and continue in their faith no matter how difficult their circumstances may be, because the future glory promised to them is certain and will outweigh all the pain and suffering they may endure in this life (Romans 8:18).

5.5 Conclusion

The results of the research have contributed significantly to answering the research question of this thesis. The four objectives stated in the first chapter have been addressed. The first objective was to review what scholars have written on Romans 8:18-30 concerning the ways in which the Holy Spirit helps believers in their weaknesses. The second objective was to assess the historical, social, cultural, and literary background of the book of Romans to determine how they might contribute to the understanding and interpretation of the text. The third objective was to undertake a biblical and theological analysis of Romans 8:18-30 to determine the ways in which the Holy Spirit helps believers and the fourth objective was to synthesize the major findings of the research as they pertain to the ways in which the Holy Spirit's help benefits believers in their weaknesses. After addressing each objective, it was discovered that the findings of this research have contributed to the current knowledge and understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in the area of intercession. It has emphasized how God continually relates to His people and intercedes for them through His Spirit. Furthermore, it serves as encouragement to the individual believers' faith in God by revealing how intimately involved He is through His Spirit in the process of their salvation. Thus, the hypothesis stated in the first chapter seems to be true. Therefore, based on an exegetical and theological analysis of Romans 8:18-30, the Holy Spirit helps believers in their weaknesses by identifying with them and by interceding for them while they wait for their day of glorification. Consequently, it seems that the thesis question of how the Holy Spirit helps believers in their weaknesses while they anticipate their day of glorification has been adequately answered.

Whilst this research has shown that the Holy Spirit's intercession goes beyond the boundaries of prayer to include aggressive intervention and participation in various ways, the scope of this thesis has not allowed for a systematic approach to discover what this intercession may look like from a practical perspective. It

has not studied every example in Scripture of the Holy Spirit's intervention to ascertain positively what His intercession actually includes or involves. It appears, therefore, that further research in this area may be needful to establish this issue.

It is noted that academic scholars like Grudem (1994) and Erickson (2013) have already done systematic studies on the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments (and in the life of Jesus Christ) and have included intercession as one of the Holy Spirit's works along with conversion and regeneration of the individual; empowering the believer for spiritual life and service; giving giftings for various tasks; purifying or sanctifying the believer; leading, guiding and directing the believer; giving believers assurance; and revealing, teaching and illuminating believers. It seems evident, though, by definition of the term that many of these separate works may be included as aspects of the Holy Spirit's intercession on behalf of the believer as discussed in this thesis and as demonstrated in the above section on application. In other words, wherever and whenever the Spirit of God intervenes in the life of God's people, in whatever form, it seems reasonable to conclude that intercession may be taking place on their behalf.

Thus, it seems apparent that the whole spectrum of the Holy Spirit's work, as it relates to intervening in the affairs of mankind (especially believers), has not been viewed as intercession before. This is possibly due to the limited connotation of the word 'intercession' and the fact that Biblical evidence of the word 'intercession' or 'intercessions' is rather scarce. Having said this, the practice of intercession in Scripture as intervention is not scarce at all. Consequently, this may be an area for further research.

This further research would have to systematically examine every intercession and every intervention of the Holy Spirit in Scripture to come up with an exhaustive list of what His intercession includes and involves. A study of this

nature would contribute significantly to the current understanding of the Spirit's intercession and possibly reveal the depth and extent of this ministry in much greater detail.

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