

All Things Work Together for Good

(Lesson 4)

Introduction:

1. The special principle revealed in Romans 8:28 is illustrated in the book of Esther.
2. Review of ch.1-3:
 - a. (ch.1) Ahasuerus, king of Persia, removed Vashti from being queen.
 - b. (ch.2) Esther, a beautiful young Jewish woman, was chosen to be the new queen.
 - c. (ch.3) Haman devised a plot to destroy the Jews, and it was made an official law.
3. In ch.4, Mordecai involved Esther in the situation that had developed.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.1-3) THE JEWS WERE UPSET WHEN THEY LEARNED ABOUT THE LAW
 - A. (vs.1-2) Mordecai was upset.
 1. He put on sackcloth and cried loudly and bitterly.
 2. This type of behavior is mentioned a number of times in the Bible.
 - a. (2 Samuel 1:11-12) David tore his clothes when Saul and Jonathan were killed.
 - b. (Job 2:11-12) Job's friends acted in a similar way when they visited him.
 - c. (Jonah 3:5-8) The people of Nineveh acted in a similar way when they repented.
 3. He came before the king's gate but was not allowed to enter because of his clothing.
 - B. (vs.3) Other Jews were upset, and their response was like Mordecai's.
 1. The Jews had been released from captivity to Babylon, but they remained under the authority of the Persians.
 2. It is doubtful that the Jews were prepared to defend themselves.
 3. People also demonstrated this kind of behavior when they asked God for deliverance (Joshua 7:6-9).
- II. (vs.4) ESTHER LEARNED ABOUT MORDECAI'S BEHAVIOR
 - A. Esther became upset and sent a change of clothing to Mordecai because no one could enter the palace clothed in sackcloth.
 - B. Mordecai refused the clothing sent by Esther.
- III. (vs.5-17) ESTHER COMMUNICATED INDIRECTLY WITH MORDECAI
 - A. (vs.5-9) In their first conversation,:
 1. Esther wanted to know the problem and the reason for it.
 2. Mordecai informed Esther of Haman's plan to kill the Jews, and he instructed her to approach the king.
 - B. (vs.10-14) In their second conversation,:
 1. Esther sent Mordecai word about a law that related to approaching the king.
 2. Mordecai informed Esther that she would be destroyed with the other Jews, that God would use someone to deliver His people, and that Esther may have become queen for that purpose.
 - C. (vs.15-17) As they communicated the third time, Esther agreed to appear before the king.
 1. She asked the Jews to fast on her behalf.
 2. She was willing to accept her fate.

Conclusion:

1. Mordecai and Esther possessed great faith.
 - a. Mordecai was confident that God would deliver His people (vs.14).
 - b. Esther was willing to appear before the king uninvited.
2. In ch.5, Esther approached the king.