**The Providence of God in Romans 8:28**

**Introduction**

Romans 8:28 states: “All things work together for good to them that love God and who are called according to His purpose.” Let us consider some questions about this verse.1)How many things work together for good? 2) For whom do all things work together for good? 3) What does Paul mean by “good?” 4) Is there anything that happens that does not work for the good of the people of God? 5) What does it mean “to be called?” 6) What does it mean “to be called according to his purpose?” 7) What are the implications of this verse for how we live? 8) How is the format of verse 28 similar to that of verse 1?

To answer these questions, we must understand the context of Romans 8:28. 1) We know that God “upholds all things by the word of his power” (Heb. 1:3). 2) The theme of Romans is “The Gospel of God” (v. 1). Paul says that the gospel is “the power of God unto salvation” (1:16) and is intended for Jews and Gentiles alike (2:11; 3:29). All have sinned (3:23), and all need redemption (6:23). 3) Christ died for sinners (5:8). Sinners are united with Christ in baptism (6:3-6), and the redeemed are delivered “out of the body of death” (7:24-25). 4) Promises to Israel are reconciled with the promises concerning the Gentiles (chapters 9-11). These promises come through the Deliverer (Rom. 11:26). 5) Chapters 12-15 deal with Christian life and service, and 6) Chapter 16 describes the outflow of Christian love.

Romans 8:28 is a summation of God’s Providence. Non-Christians will not understand this verse. Weak Christians will not always believe it. Christians who trust in God’s providence will 1) pray for increased faith in the face of increased adversity; 2) see the divine purpose behind events in their lives; and 3) look for God’s principle of universal harmony.\*

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blessed through him? They were blessed through God’s providence, of course. Some of Abraham’s actions were deceitful, and at times he did not demonstrate complete trust in God. We must remember, however, that all people are imperfect and that God can change lives through his Special Providence.

We should note that God’s promises to Abraham were conditional. 1) The condition of character: “Walk before me and be thou perfect” (Gen. 17:1). 2) The condition of risk: “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred…” (Gen. 12:1). 3) The condition of action: “Arise, walk through the land…” (Gen. 13:17). 4) The condition of faith: “Look now toward heaven…” (Gen. 15:5). 5) The condition of obedience: “By faith Abraham obeyed” (Heb. 11:8).

God’s promises to Abraham involved the *Scheme of Redemption.* 1) Isaac was the promised heir (Gen. 21:1-3). 2) Christ was the promised seed (Gal. 3:13-16). God’s promise to Abraham benefits all of God’s people (Matt. 28:19). The redeemed in Christ are heirs according to the promise to Abraham (Gal. 3:29). God’s covenant with Abraham shows the relationship between faith and providence. **God’s part** in man’s redemption is grace (Eph. 2:8-9). The redeemed are “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24). **Man’s part** in the scheme of redemption is obedient faith (Heb. 11: 17-19; James 2:21-22).

**God’s providence in the Life of Esther**

These are the principle events in the book of Esther. 1) The Jews are in captivity in Persia. 2) Queen Vashti displeases the king and is displaced. 3) Esther, Mordecai’s cousin (adopted daughter), is made queen. 4) Mordecai saves the king’s life by revealing a plot. 5) Haman becomes jealous of Mordecai and convinces the king to decree the death of all Jews. 6) Mordecai asks Esther (who has not revealed her ethnic background) to plead for her people. 7) Esther is

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