



[Ecclesiastes 7:13](#)

(13) Consider the work of God;
For who can make straight what He has made crooked?

New King James Version

Even as man makes many things crooked ([Ecclesiastes 1:15](#)), [God](#), too, wrests things out of our hands and twists our paths in a different direction—and we certainly cannot undo what He has done. He exercises His sovereign authority, and it turns things upside down. He upsets the natural order of the cosmos, and the normal course of events for mankind in general and for individuals. He subverts the cause of anyone He chooses, according to His [goodness](#) and what He knows is best.

Many people have a hard time with this aspect of God, preferring to shy away from it. Yet He says Himself that He creates calamity ([Isaiah 45:7](#)). What is calamity if not crookedness on a monumental scale? He caused the Flood that destroyed all of mankind save eight. He removed a hedge around Job, which resulted in a tremendous trial. He decimated the nation of Egypt. When His people were obedient, He annihilated the armies of those who came against them, but when His people were rebellious, He fought against them and spoiled their efforts. He sent Israel into captivity, scattering them so thoroughly that most of them do not even know who they are.

Closer to home, He scattered His own church because He judged that its course needed to be upset—because it was not good. The course needed to be wrenched in a different direction in order for each child of His to examine his own ways to see what crookedness needs to be straightened out. And as Solomon rhetorically asks, who can undo what the Creator has willed to occur? Only He can—and only when and how He ordains.

If it seems like our every endeavor turns sour, or similar events are conspiring against us, it is not necessarily because we are being punished for being the worst of sinners.

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Perhaps we are—but we have to remember that even if we have the very best spiritual walk, perfectly resembling [Jesus Christ](#), we will always encounter things that are crooked because [the world](#) is crooked, because [Satan](#) is continuing to make things crooked, and because God, too, is making things crooked (at least according to human reckoning). The reality is that His actions are always good and will always produce good fruit in the end, but that does not change the fact that they may also turn our world upside down in a most uncomfortable way. And that is all before we add in the crookedness that we cause ourselves!

Even so, we should not despair. God makes things crooked, but He also makes things straight. He supplies what is lacking when we cannot. Recall the crooked hands and legs that He made straight during His earthly ministry and the [healing](#) He performs for us. Consider the [resurrections](#) that He performed and the crookedness that He straightened out in them. Ponder the food that He provided and the [truth](#) that He supplied when they were lacking. He came to a crooked world and began setting things straight.

He did not do it all at once, though He is nevertheless continuing to make straight the crookedness introduced into His creation some 6,000 years ago. The Father and the Son are always working ([John 5:17](#)), and they are working for our spiritual benefit. Part of Their work is making things straight for the firstfruits, intervening to bring us to a vastly different conclusion from the end we would reach on our own.

God, at times, grants His children favor in the eyes of others when the normal course would be for them to be despised. He gives [peace](#), which can include straightening out an interpersonal conflict. He takes things that are out of kilter and wrests them to bring them into alignment. “Power belongs to God,” the psalmist says, and so it should be common sense to seek favor with Him, because then He is willing to upset the order of things in a way that will help us toward the Kingdom.

He does not make everything perfect all at once, but as we continue to walk with Him, He straightens out sections of our road that we cannot straighten. He does not take away all of the consequences of our crookedness, nor does He undo all of the world's crookedness that impinges on us. Nevertheless, He straightens enough so that we can continue making spiritual progress and even receive unexpected blessings along the way.

— David C. Grabbe

To learn more, see:
[Crookedness](#)

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