Does God Subvert Justice?

(by Al Sandlin)

In all the pain, loss, and travail which Job endured, never did he turn his back on God. Though death would have been a welcome relief from the bitterness which he suffered, God did not grant such a request to Job. Job’s friend, Bildad, just refused to believe that the great catastrophe which had befallen Job was not of his own making. It was a commonly held belief that bad things happened to people because of their sinfulness. So Bildad asked in **Job 8:3**, ***“Doth God subvert judgment? Or does the Almighty pervert justice?”*** Bildad was challenging Job’s assertion that his predicament was not due to unrighteousness. In other words, Bildad was saying to Job, *“Surely, Job, you don’t expect me to believe a man falls victim to circumstances like yours unless God’s judgment for unrighteousness be the reason! If you’re the good guy you say you are, then the only way these things could be coming upon you is for God to warp His judgment and justice toward you.”*

Of course, you and I are privy to the reason for Job’s circumstances by virtue of chapters 1 and 2 of Job. It was the work of Satan. We can rest assured that God does not pervert His judgment nor His justice. Job said as much in **9:19-22**, ***“If it is a matter of strength, indeed He is strong; And if of justice, who will appoint my day in court? Though I were righteous, my own******mouth would condemn me; Though I were blameless, it would prove me perverse. I am blameless, yet I do not know myself; I despise my life. It is all one thing; Therefore I say, ‘He destroys the blameless and the wicked.’”*** God allowed Job to be tested to demonstrate the genuineness of Job’s faith and loyalty to Him. **Job 1:22** says, ***“In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.”*** As suggested by brother Homer Hailey in A Commentary On Job (p. 40), *‘When we know not the background and underlying causes of our problems in life, let us be cautious that we do not draw unfounded conclusions and unjustly blame God for the trials and evils that we must face and meet in life.’*

My brother and sister in Christ, be aware that even as Christians, and especially as Christians, temptations will come our way. We must choose the proper attitude toward trials if we will be victorious in them. But know this one thing: ***“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it”*** (**1 Corinthians 10:13**). Temptations may be looked upon as being two-fold in nature.

First, temptations are fire tests for our faith. In **James 1:2-4** we find this: ***“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”*** Because Job’s faith did not collapse, he is remembered as a man of endurance in **James 5:10-11**, ***“As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.”***

So, when it seems that we are experiencing undue trials and tribulations, think not that God has perverted His judgment and justice – that is simply not the case! Rather, seek the way of escape; pray for faith and strength to endure; know and believe that God is faithful and will not abandon you whatever the temptation. **2 Peter 2:9** says, ***“The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations.”*** **Psalm 34:17** says, ***“The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.”***

Secondly, temptations can be means of conscripting servants into the camp of Satan. When we are tempted and we fail to endure temptation, Satan has gained one more victory; he has diminished God’s army by one and increased his own band by one. Such a feat brings pleasure to that old serpent.

No matter how strongly your friends may try to tell you, *“You must be a mean person for such a calamity to befall you,”* be assured that God is not picking on you. He is not putting a stumbling block in your path. He is fortifying your faith! With a fortified, fire-tested faith, one can be of greater use to God in accomplishing His purposes upon the earth. Job observed in **9:22**, ***“He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.”*** In saying such, Job pointed out that judgments come upon both the righteous and the wicked. It is the righteous who endure because they turn to God for deliverance, whereas, the wicked simply cave in to temptation. Elihu, another of Job’s friends, observed in **Job 34:12**, ***“Surely God will never do wickedly, nor will the Almighty pervert judgment.”*** Christian, we can take comfort in the fact that God will always be just.

In **Genesis 18:23-25**, Abraham was negotiating with Jehovah concerning the plight of that wicked city of Sodom. Notice the conversation: ***“Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will You indeed sweep away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”***

God’s own Son had to endure what appeared to be abandonment by His Father. ***“And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?’ Which is, being interpreted, ‘My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?’”*** (**Mark 15:34**). ***“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, ‘Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit!’ And having said thus, He gave up the ghost”*** (**Luke 23:46**). Yes, the Judge of all the earth will always deal justly! Saints can take comfort in that very fact.