

art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" God never allows man to excuse his sinfulness (Rom. 9:20). on the ground that God caused it. James said: "Let no man when he is tempted, say, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed" (James 1:13-14).

There is an occasional touch in these two chapters of a sort of fatalism, a parody on true Calvinism. The Bible never condones denial of human responsibility. It never allows sinful man to make the excuse that he could not help himself. Calvinism recognizes that everything is in God's hands and that He controls all the events of the universe, but is very careful never to make Him the author of sin. We are punished, not because God causes us to wander astray from His paths and hardens our hearts, but because we have turned aside from doing His desire and have neglected to seek to follow His righteous way. His mercy is boundless, but it has as its necessary precursor a broken and a contrite heart.

This passage shows no trace of personal contrition for the sin that separates us from God. The latter part of verse 17 stresses the note that recurs over and over in the passage: "Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance." The makers of the prayer feel that they alone have a claim on God's blessing. He must help them because they are His. In verses 18 and 19 a sharp contrast is drawn between "the people of thy holiness" and "our adversaries." The King James Version renders verse 19: "We are thine: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name."

Isaiah 64

In 64:1-3, which should not be separated in any way from the preceding verses, the ardent plea for divine intervention is continued, and the great acts He had performed in past times are again vividly portrayed. All this is fine, if the right attitude is taken first; without such an attitude it is presumption and insolence. James said: "Thou believest that