

not simply mean: to reply; but, as is proved by the only parallel in the N.T. (Luke 14:6): to reply to a reply, to reduplicate, as it were". This interpretation is bonné out by examination of the passage in Luke and very clearly by Job.32:12. Paul is here rebuking the objector for attempting to philosophize against the clear statements of God which have been quoted. Who art thou, O man, to reply with speculations to God's words quoted in answer to thy questioning of His right to elect whom he chooses? There is also in the rebuke an element of indignation at the one who presumes to answer back against the righteous judgments of God. Even while Paul thus rebukes the spirit of the objection, he is adeptly introducing his answer to the objection, bringing into sharp contrast the real relation of every man to God as that of created to Creator. Not only has man no right to complain, but God has the Creator's right to do what He will with those whom He has Himself moulded and fashioned. This thought is brought out explicitly in the next sentence: μη̄ ε̄ρει τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι τί με ἐποίησας οὕτως. The clause μη̄.....πλάσαντι is quoted verbatim from the LXX of Isaiah 29:16, which reads, "Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?" Doubtless Paul had this verse definitely in mind, as well as the similar one of Isaiah 45:9. πλάσσω is used only twice in the N.T., here and in 1Tim.2:13-- Ἄδὰμ γὰρ πρῶτος ἐπλάσθη. Clearly the reference in that case is to the original creation.

v.21. The O.T. analogy of the potter and his clay, which was introduced