

as the Supreme Good even evil deeds to the eternal condemnation of those whom He had justly predestinated to everlasting punishment, and to the eternal salvation of those whom He had predestinated unto grace . . . by the very fact of their acting contrary to the will of God, by that very acting the will of God was done through them So that, by an inexplicable manner of operation, that is not done without the will of God which is, in Itself, even contrary to His will, because without His will it could not have been done at all. And yet God willeth not unwillingly, but willingly. For as the God of Goodness, He would not suffer evil to be done at all, unless, as the God of Omnipotence, He could, out of that evil, bring good!

Calvin then adds:

No spot of iniquity is affixed by us on God. All we affirm is quite the reverse. All we maintain, throughout our arguments, is that God rules and overrules all the actions of the world with perfect and Divine rectitude.

In Calvin's treatise, *Defense of the Secret Providence of God* he says:

The . . . difficult question is, whether it is God who works in the hearts of men, directs all their counsels, and turns their wills this way and that, and prevents them from doing anything but that which He hath decreed they should do. We are not here inquiring whether or not God works all the godly and holy affections which are found in the hearts of His people, because that is, beyond all dispute, certain. The great question is, whether He holds also in the hand of His power all the depraved and impious affections of the wicked, and turns them hither and thither, that they might desire to do that which He hath decreed to accomplish by their means? Moses saith that the heart of Pharaoh was hardened by the Lord Himself And Moses positively affirms that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart was the work of God Nor does that passage at all alter the case, where it is said, that "Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also" (Exod. 8:32), because we do not make it appear that the minds of men are impelled by any outward influence to do violently, nor do we impute to God the cause of their being hardened; as if cruel and hardhearted persons do not act spontaneously from their own malice, and become of themselves excited to obstinacy and presumption! What we maintain is, that when men act perversely, they do so (according to the testimony of the Scripture) by the ordaining purpose of God. . . From all that has been said, we can at once gather how vain and fluctuating is that flimsy defense of the Divine justice which desires to make it appear that the evil things that are done, are so done, not by the will of God, but by His permission only. As far, Indeed, as those evil things which men perpetrate with an evil mind are, in themselves, evil, I willingly confess (as I will immediately