

# Isaiah 54:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

## Analysis

**Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work: and I have created the waster to destroy.** This verse grounds God's sovereignty in creation: He made both the weaponsmith (charash, חָרַשׁ) who forges weapons and the "waster" (mashchit, מַשְׁחִית, destroyer) who wields them. The smith "bloweth the coals" and "bringeth forth an instrument"—God controls the entire process from manufacture to deployment. Similarly, He created the destroyer, suggesting sovereign control over destructive forces.

The verb "created" (bara, בָּרָא) is the same used in Genesis 1:1, denoting divine creative activity. This establishes God's ultimate control over all agents, both constructive (smith) and destructive (waster). The point: if God created those who make weapons and those who wield them, no weapon can succeed against His purposes for His people (v. 17).

From a Reformed perspective, this teaches exhaustive divine sovereignty. God doesn't merely react to evil; He created the mechanisms and agents, using even destructive forces for His purposes. This doesn't make God the author of sin (James 1:13), but does affirm His comprehensive control. Satan, demons, and wicked humans are God's creatures, acting only within His permissive will. This verse grounds assurance—since God created all potential threats, none can ultimately harm His elect (Romans 8:28-39).

## Historical Context

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Ancient warfare depended on skilled smiths forging weapons—swords, spears, chariots. Philistine control of iron-working technology gave them military advantage (1 Samuel 13:19-22). The destroyer could reference human armies, natural disasters, or spiritual forces (2 Samuel 24:16—destroying angel). Isaiah's point: God created all these, therefore controls them.

Church history demonstrates this principle: persecuting emperors (destroyers) were God's creatures, ultimately unable to destroy the church. Technological developments creating more efficient weapons (gunpowder, nuclear arms) remain under God's sovereign control. The principle extends to spiritual warfare—Satan himself is created, limited by divine permission (Job 1-2), ultimately serving God's purposes despite contrary intentions. God's creative sovereignty ensures His people's ultimate security.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's sovereignty over both creators and destroyers affect your fear of opposition?
2. What weapons (literal or metaphorical) forged against you need to be seen under God's creative control?
3. How do you reconcile God creating the 'waster' with His goodness and justice?

## Interlinear Text

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הִנֵּה	אָנֹכִי	בְּאַתִּי	בְּרֵשֶׁת	נִפְנִים	בְּאָשָׁה	פָּנִים
H2005	H595	<b>Behold I have created</b>	H1254	<b>the smith</b>	H2796	<b>that bloweth</b>
					H5301	<b>in the fire</b>
					H784	<b>the coals</b>
וְמִזְחֵץ	יָא	כָּל	לְמַעַשׂ	הָוֶה	בְּאַתִּי	
<b>and that bringeth forth</b>	<b>an instrument</b>	<b>for his work</b>	H595	<b>Behold I have created</b>	H1254	
H3318	H3627	H4639				
לְמַבְלֵל:	מְשַׁחַת	יְתָ				
<b>the waster</b>	<b>to destroy</b>					
H7843	H2254					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 16:4** (Creation): The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

**Exodus 9:16** (Parallel theme): And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.

**Isaiah 46:11** (Parallel theme): Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

**Isaiah 10:15** (Parallel theme): Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.