

My Ways Are Not Your Ways: An Exegetical Discussion on Is 45:9-13

1. INTRODUCTION

Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him? With whom did He consult and *who* gave Him understanding? And *who* taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge, And informed Him of the way of understanding?” (Isa. 40:13-14)

These questions posed by the Prophet Isaiah, at the beginning of the so called Deutero Isaiah, serve as a mirror for our exegetical discussion of Is 45:9-17. The text places before us the resistance of the people of Israelite against God’s choice of means for their restoration and liberation. It calls for such questions like: To what extent is God free to act independent of human approvals? Is God limited to a particular people or as the Creator of everything that exists, is everything under his command? Is 45:9-17 presents us with this struggle between God and his people in which God wants to achieve something bigger than the liberation of his people: a universal acknowledgement of God as the only true God. In order to do this, God has to employ a means that was not so easy to be accepted by the people of Israel.

2. DELIMITATION AND CONTEXT OF OUR TEXT (Is 45:9-17)

The hymn of Is 45:8 serves as the doxology to Is 45:1-8. The הוִי at the beginning of our text (Is 45:9) marks it off from v. 1-8 and sets it as the beginning of a new section. We can say that the initial content of the oracle formula in vv. 18-19 makes v. 17 to be a kind of conclusion for our unit (vv. 9-17).

Though our text can be studied as a unit, it is not isolated from the rest of the Book of Isaiah. Firstly, our text falls under the Deutero-Isaiah which runs from Is 40-55. Then, it is located in a section (Is 40-48) in which we hear more about Cyrus as God’s chosen instrument and whose focus is on Jacob/Israel.¹ In its closer context, our text has connection with what precedes and what follows it. The following themes and words are some of the terms that link our text with the ones that precede and follow it: אֲנִי (Isa. 45:2,3,5,7) with which God places emphasis on himself; יֵצֵר (44:21; 45:7,9,11,18,21,22); עֲשֵׂה (44:24; 45:7,9,12); בָּרָא (45:7,12, 18); צֹדֵק (45:8,19,21,24); בֹּנֵה (44:26,28; 45:13). Hence, there is a connection and flow of discussions between our text and those before and after it.

¹ Cf., J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 40-55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (The Anchor Bible; New York 2000) 19A, 59.

3.0. THE STRUCTURE OF OUR TEXT

There is a no generally accepted structure for Is 45, and then particularly our text, Is 45:9-17. This is as a result of different changes of discussions and themes within the text and the difficulty in affirming whose voice is behind some of the sections. Therefore, coming properly to our text (Is 45:9-17) some scholars deem it better to separate vv 9-13 from vv. 14-17, and make vv. 14-19 to be a separate section.² However, the problem is that each of the verses in vv.14-17 even seem to stand off from the rest. The כה־אמר יהוה in v. 11 and again in v. 14 tends to put the two blocks (vv. 11-13 and vv. 14-17) on separate stands. However, this obvious division markers notwithstanding, I still see a connection that runs from v 9 to v. 17. Hence, the verses can be connected thus: vv. 9-10 is God's use of imagery to address Israel's resistance of his plan; then vv.11-13 serves as God's justification for his actions. Then vv.14-17 centres on what would happen to other nations after God must have executed his plans for his people, and also concludes our unit with what would be the reward of the people based on their relationship with either God of Israel or idols of other nations. However, for the purpose of our discussion of the text here, we propose the following structural outlines:

Vv. 9-10: A Clay is Not the Potter

vv. 11-12: God's Self Justification

vv. 13: God's Insistence on His Decision

vv. 14: From National Deity to the Universal Acknowledgement of God

Vv. 15-17: God who Hides Is the Same God who Saves and Rewards.

Our analytical discussion of this our structure will help us to see closely our chosen theme for this exegetical.

3.1. A CLAY IS NOT THE POTTER (vv. 9-10)

Though there are many possibilities of who might be the subject of the reproof in vv.9-10,³ I agree with the scholars who hold Jacob-Israel to be the subject. One of the reasons for this position is that "Israel has a long tradition of describing itself as objecting to Yhwh's

² There is a noticeable disagreement among the scholars on how to divide this section of the book. Some take it as far as trying to see how to put together Chapter 44:24 to 47. Coming down to our text, the different voices and even difficulty in indicating which particular voice is being heard in a particular verse, and also difference in the discussions, seem to create more problems. For instance, some people "... (e.g., Westermann) see vv. 14-17 as disjointed fragments, and vv. 18-19 as a rather artificial introduction to 45:20—46:13". Cf. J. N. OSWALT, *The Book of Isaiah*. Chapters 40-66 (NICOT: Grand Rapids – Cambridge 1998) 197-198.

³ Cf. J. GOLDINGAY, *The Message of Isaiah 40-55: A Literary – Theological Commentary* (London 2005)

treatment of it (e.g., Exod. 17.1-7; Num. 20.1-13; Jer. 2.29; Pss. 95.8; 106.32)".⁴ Having received the message that God has chosen Cyrus as his shepherd (44:28) and anointed one (45:1), the Israelites posited resistance.⁵ Why would a foreign king be chosen by God for the task of redeeming his people and rebuilding his temple? Why would YHWH address a king from pagan nation as *רעה* and *משיח* which are "the royal titles of Israel's kings?"⁶ These and similar questions must have constituted problem for the people of Israel.⁷ Their problem is not that they did not want to be set free from their exile in Babylon, nor that they did not desire that their temple in Jerusalem be rebuilt. The problem is in the way God wants to accomplish these important works. It is understandable that God uses other nations and their kings to punish Israel whenever they go against God's love. But for a foreign figure to occupy the Davidic position in the liberation and the restoration of the people and their temple, is for the people, "too shocking and unconventional and scandalous".⁸ Hence, the people resisted YHWH's decision through his prophet. In other words, "since the Israelites were not happy with God's plans, one must assume that this prophetic lament reacts to the people's questioning of the difficulties they must go through".⁹ And this necessitated the double *הוי* with which God rebukes the resistance of his people. God does not get angry with us when we ask questions about his revelations and words. But when we try to dictate for him how he should operate as God, either by resisting his plans or by positing obstacles, then it is no longer a humble human questioning but an attempt to take the place of God.

The beginning of our text presents us with the image of a clay and the potter (v. 9), and then a father and a woman (v.10). Just as a clay does not know what the potter would make of it and how he would do that, so also Israel does not have a say in God's work on her. The people of Israel are God's servants and cannot take God's place nor try to determine their own destiny. And just as a father decides when to add a child to his family, so does God alone decide what becomes of his children. Thus, the fact that "it would be unethical and absurd for a child to ask his parents why they are having more children or what kind of child

⁴ J. GOLDINGAY, *The Message of Isaiah 40-55...*, 277

⁵ Cf. J. GOLDINGAY, *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah* (Illinois 2014) 66-67.

⁶ J. D., WATTS (ed.), *Isaiah 34-66* Vol 25 (WBC; Nashville – Dallas – Mexico City – Rio De Janeiro – Beijing 2005) 700.

⁷ For similar analysis Cf. P. D. HANSON, *Isaiah 40-66* (Interpretation, a Biblical Commentary for Teaching and Preaching; Louisville, KY 1995) 106

⁸ J. D., WATTS (ed.), *Isaiah 34-66...*, 700

⁹ G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66* Vol 15B (NAC; Nashville, TN 2009) 261

they are having”, makes it analogous that “God’s children should not quarrel with God about his plans for his family”.¹⁰

3.2. GOD’S SELF JUSTIFICATION FOR HIS DECISION (VV. 11-12)

The two woe oracles presented in vv. 9-10 are immediately followed by God’s corresponding answer in vv.11-12 introduced by the divine oracle formula **כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה** (45:11). The question is “Should people question God (45:11) if God is the Creator (45:12)?”¹¹. With the rhetorical question in v. 11 God shows his independence of any external interference in whatever he decides to do with his children and the works of his hands. Hence, in a way, God replies the two questions in the **הוֹי** statement of vv.9-10.¹² The two titles of God **קדוש ישראל ויצרו** (the Holy One of Israel and its Maker) already establishes this relationship of God with the people of Israel and affirms God as having absolute authority over his people and whatever he decides of them. In verse 12, God provides further justifications for his actions. He is not just the Maker of Israel and its Holy One, but also the creator of heaven and earth and the humankind (v.12). Hence, from the national relationship with people of Israel we are led to the universal relationship between God and the entire creation. The merism (earth and heaven) shows that God created everything that exists in heaven and on earth. The use of personal pronoun **אֲנִי, אֲנִי** places emphasis on God, as the sole Creator. It is like saying, “It is I myself, and no other person, who created heaven and earth and all that is in them”. Whereas no one has the right to command God about the works of his hands (v. 11), God himself commands (**צוה**) everything he has created (v.12). Like a potter forms clay with his hands (v.9), so God establishes that it was his hands (**יָדֵי**) which formed the world (v. 12).¹³ We have a literary device of synecdoche where God’s hand (**יָדֵי**) is used to speak of God himself as the Creator of heaven and earth (v. 12). The use of the verbs **עָשָׂה, בָּרָא** (v.12) makes allusion to the account of creation in the book of Genesis. While

¹⁰ G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66...*, 262-263.

¹¹ G. V., SMITH, “Isaiah 40-66” ..., 260.

¹² There exists a kind of chiasmic structure between vv. 9-10 and then vv. 11-12. As the Potter (v. 9), God is the Maker of earth and heaven (v.12). And as Father (v. 10), Israel is God’s children (v.11). J. N Oswalt observes that “the rather ungrammatical *I—my hands—they made* . . . connects this verse with the craftsman imagery of v.9. But with the inclusion of *command*, there is also a direct parallelism with the last line of v. 11, where “hands” and “command” appear”. Cf., J. N. OSWALT, *The Book of Isaiah...* 194

¹³ “Note the contrast here with 44:9-20, where the hands of human craftsmen make the gods. Here the hands of God make humans”. Cf., J. N., OSWALT, *The Book of Isaiah* ... 194

עשה is more common for divine activities in Genesis 1, ברא is the more theologically freighted term used three times in the account of the creation of humanity in Gen 1:27.¹⁴

3.3. GOD'S INSISTENCE ON HIS DECISION (v. 13)

God, having once more responded to his people's resistance of his choice of Cyrus, and having affirmed himself as the Creator of everything that exists, and the commander of all, he reaffirms his choice of Cyrus as his instrument for the restoration of his people to their land and the rebuilding of the temple. It is true that the name, Cyrus, does not appear in v. 13, but with the suffix "him", and looking at the context, one can say that it is Cyrus that is being spoken of.¹⁵ Furthermore, we see another emphatic use of the pronoun, אנכי as to show that the rising to power of Cyrus is neither a coincidence nor by his political power but an act willed by God for a purpose designed by God himself. The verb עור "is typically used of God's unusual moving of unexpected people to do his will. It is used of the stirring up the dead (14:9), God's stirring up of the spirit of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III (2 Chr 5:26)"¹⁶ Yhwh goes on to insert the double purpose of rousing Cyrus: הוא יבנה עירי and

גלותי ישלח (45:13) thereby re-assuring his people that his objective has not changed, even though the "how" remains his to decide.

3.4. FROM NATIONAL DEITY TO UNIVERSAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GOD AS THE ONE TRUE GOD (v. 14)

To show that the action of Cyrus will be divinely controlled, God assures that he will carry out the projects without demanding any payment from the people of Israel (v.13). In fact, instead of the people of Israel paying to Cyrus, it is the great nations who will come with their riches to Israelites and submit themselves to them (v. 14). The people who are held in exile, will now be the receiver of other nations and their riches. I agree with J. N Oswalt in seeing Egypt, Cush and Seba "...as typical representatives of such things as the ends of the earth, great wealth, physical beauty, and so on...."¹⁷ These nations will bring their wealth and riches to the Israelites, not because of Israel, but because of God who is in Israel.

¹⁴ J., GOLDINGAY – D., PAYNE, *Isaiah 40-55* Vol 1 & 2 (ICC: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary; London 2006) 39.

¹⁵ J. GOLDINGAY, *The Message of Isaiah 40-55...*, 280.

¹⁶ G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66...*, 264.

¹⁷ Cf. J. N., OSWALT, *The Book of Isaiah* 198.

The confession that the nations would make: **אך בך אל ואין עוד אפס אלהים**, shows that there will be a universal acknowledgement of God as the only true God because of what he will accomplish for his people. In this way, God increases the number of his family. God's plan of using a foreign king to restore Israel, and then his plan of bringing other nations with their riches to the people of Israel, shows that "God's means of working with every nation throughout history will lead to the planned results of both Israel and the nations bowing before him and exulting in God their Savior".¹⁸

One may ask, "but what would necessarily attract these other nations to Israel, is it a kind of slavery by the people of Israel?" Our text does not provide us an answer to this question. The statement **ילכו בזקים** can easily make one to think that other nations will be brought as slaves to the people of Israel. But the statement **יעברו ואליך** suggests a free movement of a people who decide on their own to pass over to another place.¹⁹ The verb **עבר** "is used for the journey to a place of worship or pilgrimage (Amos 5.5), and specifically for the journey to Zion in [Isaiah] 35.8; cf. 51.10; 62.10; Ps 42.5 [4]."²⁰ Therefore, one may say that the people, presenting themselves to Israel in chains is "self-imposed as a sign of submission...."²¹ That is to say, "the nation's behaviour expresses their humble submission to the God of Israel and their deep respect for his people of Israel in cultural ways that made sense to them at that time".²² It is important to note also that the coming of these other nations "has nothing to do with restoring the losses of Israel when it was defeated;... these people come to honour the Israelites and especially the God of Israel".²³

Furthermore, we observe two sets of assonance in this verse 14: in the use of the personal pronouns **(עליך ולך אחרריך ואליך אליך)** (45:14) which are in emphatic position, and then in the use of the verbs in third person plural **(יעברו יהיו ילכו יעברו ישתחוו יתפללו)** (45:14)

¹⁸ G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66*...,267.

¹⁹ I do not agree with J. Blenkinsopp when he said "even if the chains are borne willingly, as some suggest, those who wear them become the property of Israelites". Cf. J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 40-55*:...257. From our analysis, the nations do not become property of Israelites because they are not captured by the Israelites as slaves. They are rather attracted by the God who is in Israel and the way to acknowledge the God of Israel is to come and associate with the people of Israel. Chains here does not necessarily make them properties of Israelites but shows a humble submission to Israel's God.

²⁰ Cf. J., GOLDINGAY – D., PAYNE, *Isaiah 40-55*.... 44.

²¹ J., GOLDINGAY – D., PAYNE, *Isaiah 40-55*.... 44

²² G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66*...,270

²³ G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66*....270; Cf., also P. D. HANSON, *Isaiah 40-66*...,108.

3.5.THE GOD WHO HIDES IS THE SAME GOD WHO SAVES AND REWARDS

The assertion in v.15, אֲכַן אַתָּה אֵל מְסֻתֶּר אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מוֹשִׁיעַ, creates problem of “who is the subject”? There are many possibilities which include: the prophet, Israel or other foreign nations.²⁴ I will take it to be the prophet’s confession about God. This is because, having seen how God has chosen a foreign king for the liberation and restoration of his (God’s) people, and then how other nations will be brought to Israel to acknowledge God as the one true God, the prophet is wrapped with awe about God’s ways. I agree with G. V. Smith in interpreting this assertion to mean “a reflection on how God’s action can sometimes be unusual, unexpected, and somewhat beyond the human understanding of the common person”.²⁵ Would Israel have imagined that God would choose a foreign king for the restoration of his chosen people? Would they have imagined how God, through the same action, wants not just to restore Israel, his people, but to bring other nations also, to the family of God, so that God’s worship be universalized? This makes the people to understand that “sometimes those events that initially appear to be unusual and have disastrous circumstances actually turn out to work perfectly together to accomplish his [God’s] will”.²⁶

Though God’s ways might be hidden from the people, his actions are always for the salvation of his people.²⁷ The only thing God expects of his people is to trust and obey him. And to those who do not believe in him but continue to go after idols, God brings shame (v. 16). But all those who remain steadfast to him, he saves eternally from any form of shame. Consequently, in vv. 16-17 therefore, “the prophet draws a sharp contrast between the people in the foreign nations who confess their faith in God as the only God (45:15) and other people (possibly Hebrews or foreigners) who construct and worship ‘forms, idols’.”²⁸

²⁴ Cf. G. V., SMITH *Isaiah 40-66...*, 268. Also J. N. Oswalt takes v. 15 as the continuation of the last part of v. 14. His argument is that there is no introduction of a new voice between v. 14 and v. 15. And since v. 14 ends with a what would be a profession by other nations regarding God of Israel, then v. 15 continues the profession by other nations. Cf., J. N. OSWALT, *The Book of Isaiah*....199. However, I would prefer to take the profession in v. 15 as prophet’s assertion. This is because, it takes someone who has experienced God in several occasions to make such a profession which attributes God as one who hides and at the same time saves. Other nations have not had this experience of God. It is either the prophet or the people of Israel. But God is addressed directly as אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in that v. 15. If it was by the people of Israel, they would have used “Our God” instead. Hence, I agree with J. Blenkinsopp in taking v. 15 as the words of the prophetic author. Cf. J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 40-55...*, 257, 258.

²⁵ G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66...*, 271

²⁶ G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66...*, 271

²⁷ “...God’s sovereignty is preserved, God’s nature is revealed to those of God’s choosing, God’s ways forever surpass human understanding. But this hiddenness of God is finally an aspect of God’s mercy.” Cf. P. D. HANSON, *Isaiah 40-66...*, 108.

²⁸ G. V., SMITH, *Isaiah 40-66...*, 272

4. CONCLUSION

In our introduction, we showed how the first chapter of Deutero Isaiah, in order to demonstrate God's total independence of any human being, asks: "Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him...? (40:13). Our discussions of our chosen text go on to demonstrate this independence of God in using whatever means he deems right in executing his plans for his people. Sometimes, as human beings, just like the Israelites, we may find it difficult to fathom why certain things happen and we question certain things that seem to differ from what we have taken to be normal. The answer to these things are provided also by the last chapter of this Deutero Isaiah when it says "... My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa. 55:8-9). If God freely chose the people of Israel as his own children, could he not as well freely choose from any of his creatures for his mission? God is not limited in his actions with his creatures because he alone made all things (45:12) and all human beings are his children and the work of his hands (45:11)

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Practical Story to Illustrate Further Our Discussion of Is 45:9-17

On 7th December 2012, the then Very Rev. Fr. Peter Ebere Okpaleke was appointed as the bishop of Ahiara diocese in Imo State, Nigeria since the diocese have not had a bishop after the death of bishop Victor Adibe Chikwe in 2010. This appointment was met with resistance, refusal and unacceptance by the majority of the clergy, religious men and women and the lay faithful of Ahiara diocese. The reason for their refusal was because the people wanted a bishop, the shepherd of the flock of God in Ahiara diocese, to be chosen from among them. The then, Fr. Peter Okpaleke hails from Amesi in Anambra State and was ordained for the Catholic diocese of Awka where he was working until his appointment. The people of Ahiara diocese, just like the Israelites, did not understand why a shepherd would be given to them from another land and not from among them. Hence, they fought against the appointment. The people murmured against God and the Church. And notwithstanding all the attempts by the Church's leaders to explain to them the fact that the Church is catholic and that any priest from anywhere can be made a bishop of any diocese within the same Catholic church, the people of Ahiara diocese understood God's choice of a shepherd of his flock as a game of politics. Fr. Peter Okpaleke was later consecrated a bishop on 21st May 2013 but had no diocese to exercise his duty as a bishop. As this crisis continued, Most Rev. Peter Okpaleke submitted his letter of resignation as bishop of Ahiara to the Pope and on 19th February 2018, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, accepted his resignation letter. This was an unfortunate situation and many people were having pity for the poor bishop. From 2018 till 2020, he was a bishop without a diocese. Then on 5th March 2020, Pope Francis created a new diocese called Ekwulobia diocese and made Most Rev. Peter Okpaleke the bishop of the new diocese. Then on 29th May, 2022, Pope Francis announced bishop Peter Okpaleke as one of the 21 new appointed cardinals. This became a great news.

This shows that sometimes, a situation may appear so ugly and difficult to be accepted by humans, but God continues to write in crooked lines. God's ways are not human ways.

ISAIAH 45:9-17

9 הוֹי רַב אֶת־יִצְרוֹ חָרַשׁ אֶת־חֲרָשָׁי אֲדַמָּה הִיאמֵר חָמֵר לִי־צִרוֹ מִה־תַּעֲשֶׂה וּפַעֲלֶךָ אִין־יָדַיִם לּוֹ:

10 הוֹי אָמַר לְאָב מִה־תּוֹלִיד וּלְאִשָּׁה מִה־תַּחֲלִין:

11 כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּצְרוּ הָאֱתִנּוֹת שְׂאֵלֹנִי עַל־בְּנִי וְעַל־פֶּעַל יָדַי תִּצְוֶנִי:

12 אֲנֹכִי עָשִׂיתִי אֶרֶץ וָאָדָם עָלֶיהָ בָּרָאתִי אֲנִי יָדִי נָטוּ שָׁמַיִם וְכָל־צַבָּאִם צִוִּיתִי:

13 אֲנֹכִי הַעִירְתֵּהוּ בְּצֶדֶק וְכָל־דֶּרֶכָיו אֲיֹשֶׁר הוּא־יִבְנֶה עִירִי וְגִלּוֹתִי יִשְׁלַח לֹא בְמַחִיר וְלֹא בְשָׁחַד אָמַר יְהוָה צָבָאוֹת:

14 כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה יִגִּיעַ מִצְרַיִם וְסַחֲר־כּוֹשׁ וְסִבָּאִים אֲנֹשֵׁי מִדְּהַ עָלֶיךָ יַעֲבְרוּ וְלֶךְ יִהְיוּ אַחֲרֶיךָ יֵלְכוּ בְּזָקִים יַעֲבְרוּ וְאֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ אֵלֶיךָ יִתְפַּלְּלוּ אַךְ בָּךְ אֵל וְאֵין עוֹד אֲפָס אֱלֹהִים:

15 אֲכֵן אַתָּה אֵל מְסַתֵּתֶר אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מוֹשִׁיעַ:

16 בּוֹשׁוּ וְגַם־נִכְלְמוּ כָל־יְחִדּוֹ הִלְכוּ בְּכַלְמָה חֲרָשֵׁי צִירִים:

17 יִשְׂרָאֵל נוֹשָׁע בִּיהוָה תִּשׁוּעַת עוֹלָמִים לֹא־תִבָּשׁוּ וְלֹא־תִכְלְמוּ עַד־עוֹלָמֵי עַד:

Poetic Devices Indicated in the Text

- a. Rhetorical Question: Introduced by מַה (vv. 9 and 10)
- b. Oracle formula: Introduced by כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה (vv. 11 and 14)
- c. Alliteration: occurrence of א at the beginning of a word in a series (vv. 14 and 15)
- d. Use of Contrast: vv.16, 17, while the makers of idols בּוֹשֵׁי וְגַם־נִכְלְמוּ , Israel לֹא־תִבְשֹׁ וְלֹא־תִכְלְמוּ
- e. Rhythm: we have rhythmic movements in v.16: נִכְלְמוּ כֹל־יִתְדוֹ הֵלְכוּ בְכֹל־מַה חֲרָשֵׁי צִירִים
- f. Synecdoche: יָדִי (hand) in v. 12
- g. Merism: heaven and earth (v. 12) is used to speak of all the existing things.
- h. Imagery: Egypt, Seba and Cush are used in v. 14 to represent wealthy nations.
- i. Metaphor: The potter and the clay (v. 9)

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