

them. Those who war with you will be as nothing, and non-existent. (13) For I am the LORD your God, who upholds your right hand. It is I who say to you, Do not fear, I will help you. (14) Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel. I will help you, declares the LORD. Your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. (15) See, I will make you a new sharp threshing sledge with double edges: you will thresh the mountains and crush them. You will make the hills like chaff. (16) You will winnow them, and the wind will carry them away, and the tempest will scatter them; but you will rejoice in the LORD; you will glory in the Holy One of Israel. (17) When the poor and needy seek water but there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the LORD will answer them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them. (18) I will open rivers on the bare heights, and springs in the middle of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. (19) I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, and the myrtle, and the olive tree; I will set in the desert the juniper, together with the box tree and the cypress, (20) that they may see and know and consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this and that the Holy One of Israel has created it.

This beautiful passage presents a message of encouragement to the Israelites, assuring them that they are in an entirely different situation from the terrified heathen, since they have a special relation to the God who called Abraham His friend. This promise of blessing did not include all of Abraham's descendants but only those of the grandchild who was called "Jacob" in his early life and "Israel" later on. In verse 8 both names are used to represent all of Jacob's descendants. The Israelites are told that they need not fear, because God's blessing will continue with them. Even though in themselves they are so weak that He calls them a worm (v. 14), He declares that He will protect and strengthen them and will destroy their opponents.

The specific promises given in verses 11-12 have already been fulfilled to a very great extent. Most of the nations that oppressed Israel in ancient times have disappeared or been