

# GOD'S CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE

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Isaiah 41:8-9 contains comforting words from the Lord God for the children of Israel: "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away."

These words and what follows in this chapter should remind us to be aware of God's blessings for us in Christ, for which we should ever be thankful.

## **God's constant help for Israel**

God reminded Israel that they were His chosen servants, "the seed of Abraham my friend" (Isa 41:8-9). The Lord then told Israel, "*Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.* Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel. When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, *I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.* I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar,

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(continued)

the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together" (Isa 41:10-19).

## Counting our blessings

Israel being taken from "the ends of the earth" and "from the chief men thereof" (Isa 41:9) could certainly be alluding to their return from Babylonian captivity. God did help Israel at that time and made their conquerors "ashamed and confounded" until they perished and could no longer be found (Isa 41:11-12). Babylon did indeed fall. The picture of Israel as triumphant (Isa 41:13-16), and richly blessed (Isa 41:17-19), is unquestionably an accurate depiction of Israel after her captivity was returned. However, these verses might have a more general application to God's overall care of His faithful servants. The main lesson is to "*see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it*" (Isa 41:20).

We should all consider how many blessings we have from our heavenly Father. "*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust*" (2 Pet 1:3-4).

James 1:17 says, "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*" Indeed, we have been blessed by God "*with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*" (Eph 1:3). As long as we draw near to God, he will draw near to us (Jas 4:8), and He will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb 13:5-6). He will never allow us to be tempted above what we can bear (1 Cor 10:13). And He works all things together for our good to conform us to the image of His Son (Rom 8:28-29). We should be thankful to Him for everything (Php 4:6; 1 Thes 5:18).