

in order that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, and there will be none after me. (11) I, even I, am the LORD, and there is no savior besides me. (12) I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; therefore you are my witnesses, says the LORD. I am God (13) and also from today I shall be he, and there is no one who can snatch you out from my hand. When I work, who can reverse it?

Verses 8-13 describe a confrontation similar to that in chapter 41. All the nations are gathered together, and their gods are challenged to explain the course of events. The LORD calls on them to present their witnesses. Then He turns to the Israelites and says: "You are my witnesses and my chosen servant." God raised up Israel to be witnesses to the truth of His Word. Almost alone of the people of antiquity, they have survived to this day. Scattered throughout the world, their very existence witnesses to the truth of the predictions of God's Word.

Most interpreters consider verse 8 as beginning the challenge to the idol worshipers. Very few think that it goes with the preceding section and refers to Israel.

In verse 9 there is a ringing challenge to the idols to prove that they are really gods, and the following four verses repeatedly stress the eternity of God and His existence as the only God.

The passage thus has two purposes: (1) to denounce the folly of worshiping idols, presenting Israel as a witness against it; and (2) to encourage the Israelites to be true to God and to follow Him.

(14) Thus says the LORD your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: On account of you I have sent to Babylon and will bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice.

Since verse 14 begins with a statement that God is the Redeemer of Israel and mentions Babylon, it is natural to interpret it as a prediction of the coming deliverance from Babylon, but its precise meaning is obscure. The word the King