

Never Forgotten

Isaiah 49:15-16

15 “Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. 16 Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands before me.

Being remembered is very important to virtually all people. Recently my wife and I got a letter from students that both she I had once taught in our careers. It made not only that day, but many days and weeks after.

Being forgotten, can be distressing and not what anyone wants to experience. That was what the people of Israel felt was happening to them. They thought that God had forgotten them midst their being in exile. Even though it was their fault that they were in Babylon, they felt that God had forgotten them.

By way of assurance comes one of the loveliest words of the entire OT. The Lord’s concern for Zion is likened to what may be the most selfless love that mankind know, mothers love. As impossible as it is for a normal mother to forget a child she nursed at her breast, so the Lord’s concern for Zion is indestructible. Even if the unthinkable happened, like a mother forgetting her child, God will never forget His own.

It was normal practice that an owner’s name be engraved on his slaves; it is reversed here to show how far the Lord will go to remind Israel of His love. (TLSB)

To change the figure, it is as though the Lord had deeply engraved the name or picture, of Israel on the palms of His hands, that His eyes might lovingly dwell on her features and be continually reminded of the one whom He so deeply loved.

What wonderful picture of God’s constant attention to the affairs of His people! Just as we see the palms of our own hands so often each day, so God thinks of us. We need to mark well how the love of God for us burns in His heart. What a comfort to know that He has pledged to love us so!

Prayer: Dearest Jesus, the memorials of my salvation are graven on your palms. Show them to all as a sign of your mercy and forgiveness toward me and all sinners. Amen. (TLSB)