

Isaiah

Messiah's Mission to the Discouraged
Isaiah 49:14-23

1



Introduction

Messiah was given a mission to help the discouraged. In these verses, the prophet Isaiah is picturing a conversation between the Lord and Zion. Zion represents the Jews who were suffering through the Babylonian captivity and those who had been left behind in the devastated land of Judah. Due to the hardship of the captivity and the devastation of their land, the people had become extremely discouraged.

2



Isaiah 49:14-23

But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me." ¹⁵ "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. ¹⁶ See, I have inscribed you on the palms of *My hands*; Your walls *are* continually before Me. ¹⁷ Your sons shall make haste; Your destroyers and those who laid you waste Shall go away from you. ¹⁸ Lift up your eyes, look around and see; All these gather together *and* come to you. As I live," says the Lord, "You shall surely clothe yourselves with them all as an ornament, And bind them *on you* as a bride *does*. ¹⁹ "For your waste and desolate places, And the land of your destruction, Will even now be too small for the inhabitants; And those who swallowed you up will be far away. ²⁰ The children you will have, After you have lost the others, Will say again in your ears, 'The place *is* too small for me; Give me a place where I may dwell.' ²¹ Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has begotten these for me, Since I have lost my children and am desolate, A captive, and wandering to and fro? And who has brought these up? There I was, left alone; But these, where *were* they?' " ²² Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in *their* arms, And your daughters shall be carried on *their* shoulders; ²³ Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with *their* faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I *am* the Lord, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."

3



Isaiah 49:14

But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me."

Due to the hardship of the captivity and the devastation of their land, the people had become extremely discouraged. History teaches that once a nation was conquered and its people deported, they rarely returned to their homeland. After decades of captivity, the Jews began to feel abandoned by God. They felt as though God had forgotten and forsaken them.

4



Isaiah 49:14

But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me.”

But this is not true, and God spoke up to share the truth of the situation. What He had to say is one of the strongest declarations of His love ever given to His people or, for that matter, to the human race. Assuring His people of His love and His power, the Lord declares His compassion and awareness of His children.

5



Isaiah 49:14

But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me.”

In this passages God is describing His mission to the discouraged. When His people feel forsaken, forgotten, abandoned, and all alone, He reaches out to them in love, seeking to encourage and reassure them.

6



Isaiah 49:15

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.

**God’s Love is Like a Loving Mother
He will not forget His children**

God’s love can be compared to the love of a mother for her nursing child. Could a mother forget to feed and nourish her baby? Could she abandon and have no love for the child? Not likely! But even if she did, God will not forget His people.

7



Isaiah 49:16a

See, I have inscribed you on the palms *of My hands*;

Messiah’s Love is Engraved on His Hands

They are engraved, actually carved and chiseled, on the palms of His hands. This means that God’s people are permanently in His hands, under His care, protection, and provision.

What a beautiful prophecy of Jesus. He went to the cross, and His love for His children were permanently carved into His hands!

8



Isaiah 49:17

See, I have inscribed you on the palms of *My hands*; Your walls are continually before Me.

God is Aware of the Jerusalem

Those protected inside Jerusalem's walls are ever before Him. He is aware that they are broken down. God is aware of what they are facing. They are always in His sight, and they will stand forever before Him as a memorial. He will always be with His people, looking after them and the Holy City.

9



Isaiah 49:18

Lift up your eyes, look around and see; All these gather together *and* come to you. As I live," says the Lord, "You shall surely clothe yourselves with them all as an ornament, And bind them *on you* as a bride *does*.

God Will Bring His Children Home

For this reason, God will cause the Israelites' descendants to return to the promised land and cause their enemies to flee. The descendant's return is guaranteed by the Lord's oath. He swears that as surely as He lives they will return. And the returning people will be a spectacular sight, for each one will be like a piece of bridal ornament to add sparkle to the nation.

10



Isaiah 49:19

“For your waste and desolate places, And the land of your destruction, Will even now be too small for the inhabitants; And those who swallowed you up will be far away.

Although the land of Judah had been ruined and its population decimated, the influx of returnees will be so great that the land will be too small for them. God also promises to take those who oppressed them and remove them far away.

11



Isaiah 49:20

The children you will have, After you have lost the others, Will say again in your ears, ‘The place *is* too small for me; Give me a place where I may dwell.’

The people had lost so much. Babylon had taken so many captive, and many were killed. Yet in this passage we have a two-fold promise. God will bless with so many children. (both new and returned) that there will not be enough room for them all to dwell.

12



Isaiah 49:21

Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has begotten these for me, Since I have lost my children and am desolate, A captive, and wandering to and fro? And who has brought these up? There I was, left alone; But these, where *were* they?' "

The number of returnees will be surprising and totally unexpected because so many had died during their captivity and exile. Only a few exiles returned to Judah from Babylon when they were released by King Cyrus of Persia. Therefore, this prophecy was not fulfilled in those days. It clearly refers to the coming Messianic Kingdom, the day when Christ will return to establish His kingdom on earth.

13



Isaiah 49:22-23

Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in *their* arms, And your daughters shall be carried on *their* shoulders; ²³ Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with *their* faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I *am* the Lord, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."

When Christ returns to establish God's kingdom on earth, the nations will release and help return His people to the promised land. They will care for Israel as if they were their own children.

They will even bow down with their faces to the ground to honor and worship Christ.

14



Isaiah 49:22-23

Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in *their* arms, And your daughters shall be carried on *their* shoulders; ²³ Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with *their* faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I *am* the Lord, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."

In that day, God will prove two great truths. He alone is the Lord and that those who hope in Him will never be disappointed or ashamed. By keeping one's eyes on the future, God's people can conquer their discouragement. Holding fast to God's promises, one can know that they are neither forsaken nor forgotten. We are etched on God's hands, ever before His face. We are under His continued care, protection, and provision.

15



So What ...

We live in a fallen world. Bad things happen to good people. Life is filled with disappointment.

Focus determines reality. If we choose to focus on the disappointment, you will be led down a path of despair.

Or

You can focus on Christ. The nail prints in His hands are a declaration of His great love for you!

We are not forgotten. He is coming again!

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