

Part II, Lesson 19

Isaiah

The Lord is Salvation

Israel
Doubts

Isaiah
49:14-26

*Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex
Curriculum*

Isaiah Part II, Lesson 19

Israel Doubts

Isaiah 49:14-26

This lesson lets us see what would be in the mind of the Israelite who was a slave in Babylon. What would that person think upon hearing what we studied in our last session. In that lesson, we talked about Israel being freed from captivity and led home to Zion (Jerusalem) by God Himself. Three questions in today's Scripture are in verses 14, 21 and 24. The first question gets a beautiful response. Read Isaiah 49:14-20.

These words from the prophet are spoken as if to a mother who has questions. This woman cries as if her husband or family has abandoned her. The response has two of the most wonderful pictures in all the Bible. The first is of a mother who has a baby. That child is still nursing...totally dependent on the mother. Without the mother, the baby would die. God asks, would a mother in that situation just abandon her child? It is an idea that seems impossible. God said, however, that even if human mothers did this outrageous thing, this thing which goes against all that one believes about good mothers, God would and will not. This is the wonderful picture: God will not forget His children. No matter what trouble you are in, no matter what you do or say, no matter how you treat other people, God will not abandon you.

We don't want to misunderstand here, both Israel and you will be held accountable for sins, but God forgives, and like a devoted mother, will not let you go...ever!

The second picture is even more incredible. Verse sixteen quotes God as saying that He has "engraved" His children on the palms of His hands. Let's take a serious look at what that means. Engraved, as used here, is the same as our word tattoo. God is saying that the names of His people are tattooed on the palms of His hands. Could this be possible? We know that the Egyptians were using ink to stain their skin hundreds of years before Isaiah wrote this. So, tattoos were not uncommon in that day. If God tattooed your name on the palm of His hand, no one can remove it. It is permanent. In our day, sweethearts often have the name of their loved one tattooed on their body somewhere. It is seen as a proof of undying love. God will not forget His children, because our names are permanently written, tattooed, on His hands.

That should be a great encouragement to all believers. Not only has God promised that He will not abandon us, but He has also said that He can't forget us because our names are tattooed on His hands. These two pictures assure us that God's love is not temporary or conditional. There is not a reason on earth that God will give up a child of His, nor will He lose interest or forget.

Also, God promises that He always has the "walls" of Zion in view. At this point, the walls of Jerusalem were in ruins. But soon, the people would be led to rebuild those walls. God keeps the walls of the city in His sight, which means that He is looking out for their protection. Just another assurance that God can't forget His role of Creator, Father, Savior and friend.

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Israel Doubts

God then spoke of their children. He promised that the children of Zion would return and would be like pieces of jewelry to Zion. Even though the city was destroyed. It was desolate...forsaken, soon it would be overflowing with people and Zion would be made beautiful by the presence of her people returning. And, those who had destroyed the city would be far away. They would no longer be a threat.

Next we read another question of Zion. This sounds like a mother questioning the existence of the children, like she is not sure they are her children. Read Isaiah 49:21-23.

All the children of Zion seemed lost. The mother could not have anymore children. The children were being held captive in a foreign land and could not continue normal life. These slave children don't seem to be hers and she wonders not only where they came from but also who raised them.

The response is another set of pictures. During their captivity, Israel felt like they had been abandoned like children. Now, in verse 22, "the Sovereign Lord" said that the rulers of the earth would be their servants, they would provide child care. And one of the hardest statements in the Bible is spoken: "They will bow down before you with their faces to the ground; they will lick the dust at your feet." Does this mean that kings and queens will literally get down on their knees and lick the dirt? No, it is another picture for this beaten down nation, Israel, letting them know that their freedom will be real. No one will have authority over them.

The final question, in verse twenty-four, is about God's ability to rescue Israel. Babylon is a mighty military nation known for its fierce warriors. Can God take these captives from the great Babylon?

Read Isaiah 49:24-26.

But, the Lord answers, "Yes." God will be the one who contends (battles) the Babylonians. We have another awful statement, "I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh; they will be drunk on their own blood, as with wine." We should see this as another sad picture. Those who are great warriors and who build great weapons, often destroy themselves. They become their own enemy.

Maybe this should make us ask ourselves about building more and more terrible weapons of war. They have the potential for destroying all humans. When we build things that kill, we are likely to see them do their job, even on those who create them.

Our lesson today should help us see God's love and protection for His children.

*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

Page Three

Scripture Memory: "See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me."

Isaiah 49:16

Lesson Goal: To remind students of God's love and protection for His people.

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Israel Doubts—Isaiah 49:14-26

Student Worksheet

Listen during the lesson for this information:

1. What are the two “wonderful pictures” in verses 15 and 16?
2. What does the word engraved, as used in our lesson today, mean in today’s language?
3. Not only has God _____ that He will not _____ us, but He has also said that He can’t _____ us because our names are _____ on His hands.
4. What does it mean when God says, “your walls are ever before me?”
5. What does verse 22 say the rulers of the world would do for Zion?
6. Those who are great _____ and who build great _____, often destroy themselves. They become their own _____.
7. Our lesson today should help us see God’s _____ and _____ for His children.

Page Four

Scripture Memory: “See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.”
Isaiah 49:16

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.