



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

December 20, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

GOD WON'T FORGET YOU

I will not forget you!

Isaiah 49:15

READ Isaiah 49:13-18

As a child, I collected postage stamps. When my angkong (Fukienese for "grandfather") heard of my hobby, he started saving stamps from his office mail every day. Whenever I visited my grandparents, Angkong would give me an envelope filled with a variety of beautiful stamps. "Even though I'm always busy," he told me once, "I won't forget you."

Angkong wasn't given to overt displays of affection, but I felt his love deeply. In an infinitely deeper way, God demonstrated His love toward Israel when He declared, "I will not forget you!" (Isaiah 49:15). Suffering in Babylon for idolatry and disobedience in days past, His people lamented, "The Lord has forgotten me" (v. 14). But God's love for His people hadn't changed. He promised them forgiveness and restoration (vv. 8–13).

"I have engraved you on the palms of my hands," God told Israel, as He also tells us today (v. 16). As I ponder His words of reassurance, it reminds me so deeply of Jesus' nail-scarred hands—stretched out in love for us and for our salvation (John 20:24–27). Like my grandfather's stamps and his tender words, God holds out His forgiving hand as an eternal token of His love. Let's thank Him for His love—an unchanging love. He will never forget us.

By **Karen Huang**

PRAY & REFLECT

Father, thank You for Your constant love and presence. Amen

When were you clearly reminded that God never forgets you? How can His unchanging love give you hope and security in your present situation?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The scope of Isaiah's ministry is introduced in Isaiah 1:1: "The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." While Isaiah's ministry was largely localized to Jerusalem and Judah, it spanned decades and the rule of four different kings. J. A. Martin, writing in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, says: "Isaiah ministered for at least 58 years (from at least 739, when Uzziah died [6:1], to 681, when Sennacherib died)." Isaiah's name means "Yahweh is salvation," which is appropriate since his writing gives numerous prophecies of Jesus the Savior, including Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; and 53. The work of Jesus is clearly in view in Isaiah 53:5: "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed." – By **Bill Crowder**

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