

God Honors Motherhood
Sermon delivered on May 10th, 2015

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Text: *Isaiah 49:13-18*

Introduction

On this Mother's Day, it is appropriate to honor the mothers. The Bible says in ...

Romans 13:7 **Render** therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; **honour to whom honour**.

The Bible is full of verses commanding the respect of children for both mother and father. In fact, this is such a basic principle that it is one of the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. (cf. Deuteronomy 5:16)

Leviticus 19:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2: Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy. 3: **Ye shall fear** (honor, reverence, respect) **every man his mother, and his father**, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.

In the book of Proverbs, the duty of reverence, love, and obedience of sons to their mothers is emphasized again and again.

Proverbs 1:8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and **forsake not the law of thy mother**:
9: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

Proverbs 6:20 My son, keep thy father's commandment, and **forsake not the law of thy mother**:
21: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

Proverbs 23:22 Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and **despise not thy mother when she is old**.

This is also such a recurring theme in the New Testament ...

Matthew 15:4 For God commanded, saying, **Honour thy father and mother**: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

Ephesians 6:1 Children, **obey** your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2: **Honour** thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; 3: That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Colossians 3:20 Children, **obey** your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

God Pays Tribute to Mothers

There are many places in the Scripture where we read, God pays a wonderful tribute to motherhood.

Isaiah speaks of God's care for us ...

Isaiah 46:3 Harken unto me, (Listen to me) O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, **which are carried from the womb:**

God compares Himself to a mother tenderly carrying a child. Like a mother, God has cared for His people since they were born. He has carried them even before they were born.

He promises to continue to carry them ...

4: And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.

Yes, even to gray hairs He will carry His people!

Isaiah speaks of God's love for His children as "a mother's love".

Isaiah 66:12 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. 13: **As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you;** and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

Jesus paid the same tribute to motherhood when He spoke of His concern and love for Jerusalem being typified by ...

Matthew 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, **how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings,** and ye would not! 38: Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. 39: For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Here, our Lord compares Himself to a mother hen who gathers her chicks under her wings for protection. A mother hen will cover her baby chicks to protect them from danger and will not move until the danger is past, even to her own death.

Then, in our text ...

15: **Can a woman forget her sucking child,** that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

God gives motherhood great compliment by comparing His great love for us with the tender, compassionate love of a godly mother toward her children.

15: Can a **woman** forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

Women are not men. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to know that women are different from men. Women are designed different from men: physically, mentally and emotionally.

Physically

Women have a larger stomach, kidneys, liver, appendix but they have smaller lungs than a men.

In physical strength, man generally have 50% more strength than the woman.

The woman's heart beats more rapidly than a man.

A woman can withstand a higher temperature than man.

Mentally and Psychologically

From shortly after birth female are more sensitive to certain type of sound or voice or to loud noises. They are more attentive to social contacts, faces, and speech pattern.

Spiritually and Emotionally

Psalm 33:13 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. 14: From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. 15: **He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.**

God who made or formed the hearts of all, the heart of woman as well as man, knows that the women are more tender and more sensitive than men. Therefore, God chose a woman to illustrate His love and compassion.

15: Can a woman forget **her** sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of **her** womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

It is not merely the tenderness of the woman, but the tenderness of the woman who is a "mother." Not all women have the tenderness of a mother. God not only uses the highest type, but the highest specimen of that type. Mother!

What is a mother?

Webster defines it as "*a female parent.*" **What an understatement!** How this definition should be revised!

Another understatement is, *Your mother is the woman who gave birth to you.*

This definition should be replaced by ...

A mother is she who can takes he place of all others, but whose place no one else can take.

A mother is one person who does the work of twenty people, for free!

Mothers have the ability to multi-task. They cook, watch the news, talk on the phone, and hear and see everything their children are doing at the same time. Mothers are lovers, caretakers,

nurses, teachers, drivers, personal shoppers, counselors, administrators, party planners, chefs, housekeepers, and more!

Still, most mothers feel that they are not doing a good job. Women tend to compare themselves with others and always come up short. Imperfections can be giant in their minds.

Mothers are under pressure. They need encouragement and maybe nothing is as encouraging as God comparing Himself to a mother.

Motherhood is a solemn calling

It is a very significant and a demanding calling. God has placed the lives of the children in their hands. They will bear the imprint of their love and concern throughout their lives. Mothers can have a powerful effect on the next generation.

Great men and women through the ages have attributed their success to the devotion and influence of their mothers:

No man is poor who has a Godly mother. All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother's prayers, and they have followed me. They have clung to me all my life. - **Abraham Lincoln**, U.S. President

My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual, and physical education I received from her. - **George Washington**, U.S. President

I did not have my mother long, but she cast over me an influence which has lasted all my life. The good effects of her early training I can never lose. If it had not been for her appreciation and her faith in me at a critical time in my experience, I should never likely have become an inventor. I was always a careless boy, and with a mother of a different caliber, I should have turned out badly. But her firmness, her sweetness, her goodness were potent powers to keep me in the right path. My mother was the making of me. She was true and sure of me, and I felt I had something to live for...someone I must not disappoint. The memory of my mother will always be a blessing to me. - **Thomas Edison**, Inventor

Aren't you thankful for mothers and grandmothers who loved and served God faithfully, sometimes under incredibly difficult circumstances.

Greater than Mother's Love

God pays tribute to mothers by comparing Himself to mothers. He carries us like a mother carries her child in her womb. We are like babies at His breasts – babies whom He has borne. He comforts us like a mother. What an encouraging comparison for mothers. Mothers – the way they love their children – mothers can give a glimpse of what God Himself is like. Mother's love is the strongest love of all. Many mothers continue to love their children no matter what they do.

But God reminds us, though mothers reflect the love of God, they are not perfect. As great as the love of mothers are to their children, **there is one greater love** than that and that is, God's love and care for His people!

15: Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? **yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.**

There are some people we don't expect to forget us, aren't there? Our parents, our spouses, our children. But the truth is, people are people, and all people sometimes forget. Isaiah, in our text, asks, "Can a woman forget her nursing child?"

While it is not likely, it is possible. Mothers are human. We are all human. We are all finite. In our text from Isaiah, the Lord grants this. He says, "Even these may forget, but I will not forget you."

God wants us to know that His love is greater. He wants you and I to know that we can trust Him. He will never forget His children. He will never forsake them.

It's a reassuring promise, isn't it. And it encourages us to rely on God like no other. Isaiah uses word pictures in this passage to show us how trustworthy our God is. These images tell us that we ought to trust God because of what He is like.

God reassuring His people

It will be good to remember the historical setting behind these words. Judah had suffered conquest at the hands of the Babylonians. In fact, the Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem, completely destroyed the temple. They carried every able-bodied person into captivity. It was an awful time, and you can understand how the people might have thought God had forgotten them.

But listen to what God says ...

16: **Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.**

Note we are not just written on God's hands, nor painted on, nor scribbled on, we are engraved indelibly on His hands. This signifies that His people are always in His sight, His eyes are ever upon them, and never withdrawn from His people.

Spurgeon says that the phrase *"I have graven thee" does not say, thy name. Our name is there, but that is not all: I have graven THEE! See the fullness of this! I have graven thy person, thine image, thy case, thy circumstances, thy sins, thy temptations, thy weaknesses, thy wants, thy works; I have graven thee, everything about thee, all that concerns thee; I have put thee altogether there. Wilt thou ever say again that thy God hath forsaken thee when he has graven thee upon His own palms?"*

Scripture records ...

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29: My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Psalms 31:14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my God. 15: My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

God will ever watch us

16: Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; **thy walls are continually before me.** God says. He is like a night watchman who never takes a break. And He will ever watch over you. God says that's how He is. Then He declares ...

17: Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

When children see these, they will make haste to rebuild and the enemies shall cease and be no more. So you can sleep securely. God is watching over you.

But now, God says to Judah, **all your exiles are coming home.**

18: Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth.

Judah's exiled people would be restored to her land and prosper them. This a picture of what the Lord is going to do to those who trust Him.

Closing thoughts

So, why wouldn't you put your trust in a God like this? Mothers may forget -- they are human, too. But God will never forget. He will never leave you. He will never look away. And he will always bring beauty and joy to your heart. That's the way He is, and that's why we should place our trust in Him.

God's plan for human fathers and mothers is to be a picture of Himself. Mothers were designed to display the love and compassion of God to His children. May our parenting show our children what God is like. May our children learn what God's love and care is like, as they watch us. May God bless every mother in our assembly today as they seek to be like our Heavenly Father. Amen!