

Engraved Upon the Palms of His Hands

by Erlo Stegen

God has a personal and intimate relationship with us, and He will never forget us, giving us a future and a hope.

Duration: 48:42

Scripture: Psalm 23:4, Jeremiah 29:11, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:13-14, John 6:37, Romans 8:28, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Protection"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being true and faithful to God and living a pure life. He encourages the audience to hold fast to God's will and not let anyone take away their crown. The preacher also highlights the amazing fact that God has thoughts about us, despite His greatness. He assures the listeners that if God is on their side, they will conquer and overcome any challenges they face. The sermon concludes by reminding the audience of the privilege they have as believers, as all things work together for their good when they love God.

Transcript

Before I speak about the text which the bridegroom, Fier, has chosen, I'd like to tell you a bit where your wife comes from, where the bride comes from, their forefathers. Maybe you know it already. Did they tell you? No, you know very little.

You've never been together. But now you can be. You can be together forever.

We in South Africa had apartheid, and we still got apartheid between boys and girls. When the father came with the daughter, she had a veil on. And then he took the veil away.

The veil means she's a virgin. So the parents and grandparents can rejoice. You are blessed to have children and grandchildren that have chosen to live the pure way.

Many years ago, the great-great-grandfather, I think, came as a missionary to South Africa. He was a sailor. And then a young preacher came by the name of Louis Harms.

He became a Christian. He was a theologian. And then revival broke out in the church.

And then many young people got converted. They stopped drinking. They stopped dancing.

They stopped living in the world. And they came to him and said, We've given up the old life. We're living a new life now.

Now we would like to go to the heathen and to other nations and preach the gospel. So, to make a long story short, they became missionaries. And the first Engelbrecht, he used to be a sailor.

Then he got converted and became a missionary as well. Then he came to South Africa. And he didn't ride on a horse.

He rode on an ox to visit the people in the different places. And then, I say to make a long story short, his son became a farmer and the next generation, missionaries. And then missionaries again.

And missionaries again. So, her father is a missionary. Her grandfather is a missionary.

Her great-grandfather was a missionary. Now you can understand why she's got a missionary's heart. And why she, I won't say why she married you.

God told her to do that. No man. She prayed and when you proposed, she prayed.

And then she felt it's God's will that she should get married to you. Now she's got married to a missionary as well. Her great-grandfather was the man who led me to the Lord Jesus.

He was a genius, a peer, but his Christianity was here and not there. He knew there was something lacking in his heart. So he thought if he worked hard and preached a lot, he'd find the true life.

And he did it in such a way that physically, he just about collapsed. So he went to a famous doctor, a medical doctor. And after he had thoroughly examined him, he says, I can't understand you Christians.

He was a Jew. He said, you believe that Jesus was the Messiah, but why do you fear death so much? He says, I know many leaders in the church that fear death. But I can't understand it because you believe that Jesus was and is the Messiah.

And that hit him below the belt. So he went home, he told his wife, I can't understand it, but there must be at least one person in the world who can help me. He says, I'm prepared to go around the world to find that one person.

In Pretoria, there was a man. People didn't speak well of him. And he said, I'll go to that man because sometimes those people of whom they speak evil are good people.

Because the Lord Jesus said, woe to you if everyone speaks well of you. And then he got to that person. He was an evangelist.

And then they, he couldn't, a theologian can't just say, I'm in need. They've got a bit of pride as well. So he spoke about Greek, the Greek language, and then he found that that person's knowledge of Greek isn't as good as his.

And he said to himself, I'm at the wrong place. This person can't help me. And his Hebrew knowledge was still worse than the Greek.

This poor man won't be able to help me. When he finished his studies in Germany for seven years, his professor says, what are you going to do now? He says, I'm going back to Africa. They said, no, Africa

doesn't need such clever people.

What do you want to do in Africa? He says, oh, we've got a big problem in South Africa and in Africa. All our bananas are bent and I want to straighten them out. So they said, oh, then you go.

So when he was with the evangelist, the evangelist noticed that I can't help this theologian. It's difficult to reach them with the gospel. A young girl who had just got to know the Lord Jesus and asked the Lord to come into her life was in the train.

And the first love was still real in her heart. And she said opposite him. So she said, so do you know the Lord Jesus? And he said, young girl, don't ask me such a question.

I'm a theologian. But then she again persisted and said, are you saved? Is the Lord Jesus really in your heart? He said, young lady, don't ask me that question. I'm a theologian.

And then she said, sir, please forgive me. I don't know what the theologian is. But I'm sure the blood of Jesus can wash that away as well.

Well, when he was with the evangelist, the evangelist saw I'm not getting anywhere with this man. He said, let's pray. And when they were on their knees and prayed, suddenly he realized that the Lord Jesus was here and not there.

And the word became alive to him. Behold, I stand at the door and I knock. If any man hears my voice and opens, I'll enter him.

And the word, he that comes to me, I will in no ways cast away. He said, Lord Jesus, I come now. When he got up from his knees, he says, he was like a new man.

New life had come into him. The doctor had said for three months, you're not allowed to preach again. You can't stand in the pulpit.

You'll have to have a complete break. But the next Sunday he was on the pulpit and we saw something has happened to him. Now, if in Anita's life you see that to be a missionary is in her blood, you can understand it.

Why? She's got missionary blood. Now let's go to the verse in the Bible. I went to Peer.

I said, Peer, have you got a word you'd like me to speak about? He said, yes. I said, jot it down for me. And he did that.

It's a well-known verse. Jeremiah 29, verse 11. For I know the thoughts I have for you, says the Lord.

Thoughts of peace and not of evil. To give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29, verse 11.

Verse 11. This is a wonderful word. When I was a young man, God spoke to me through this verse.

And I can still remember what an impact it had and made on my life. For I know the thoughts I have for you, says the Lord. Thoughts of peace and not of evil.

To give you a future and a hope. That's the word God gave to Israel when they were in a terrible, difficult situation. When they had to go to Babylon.

A heathen nation, godless nation. A heathen king ruled the whole world. Now, just in short, I would like to pick out a few points.

Maybe four, maybe five. When the prophets spoke these words, there were many other prophets. But those were false.

And they said, no, we mustn't go, it will be a terrible time. Be ruled by such a king. And such a godless nation.

And the prophet Jeremiah said, no, you go. God will be with you. You will have peace and not evil.

You will have a future, a blessed future and a hope. Now, the first point. There were false prophets.

Saying, Jeremiah is wrong. We can't live a world that has got a heathen king. Who doesn't believe in God.

It's a tragic thing. If a man of God speaks the truth. But some people say, go against it, those are lies.

But Jeremiah said, you be obedient. You will go there and you will build houses. And there will be a future for you.

God said, I've got a plan with you. And for your life. So off they went.

But many hated Jeremiah. And when they got there in Babylon. They found that it was a godless nation.

But God raised some men of God that shook the whole world. Like Daniel, Shadrach, Abednego. And those heroes of God.

And because of these men, the gospel of God was spread throughout the whole world. Not that they never met up with difficulties. Daniel one day was thrown into the lion's den.

But God closed their mouth. And when the king Darius came and said, Daniel, are you still alive? He said, yes, my lord. I'm still alive.

God has closed the lion's mouth. Because he didn't find any fault in my life. And then he made a law that the whole world, all the nations, have got to worship the king of Daniel.

So if you are true and faithful to God and live a pure life. God can change the world and nations because of you. Then I come to the third point.

Cling to God. In revelations it says, hold fast to that which I gave you. So that nobody will take the crown away from you.

Hold on to God's will. Whether the sun shines or doesn't shine. Whether there's thunder or lightning.

Whether it's good or whether it's bad. Just cling to God and hold fast to your faith. Then another point, point four.

The word says, God has got thoughts about us. That's amazing. It is difficult for me and I think for you as well to grasp this.

That the creator of heaven and earth who is so great has thoughts about us. Why should he think of us? He is so great. We are smaller than ants in his sight.

And he says, he thinks about us all the time because we are so precious to him. Man is so precious to God and you are so precious to him. That he says he's got your photo, your picture in both of his hands.

Whenever he looks at his hands, he sees you. He says, can a nursing mother forget her little child? Of course not. And he says, even if she should forget her child, but I won't forget you.

And he didn't just paint that picture that you can wash it off. Or even indelibly, he engraved you into his hands. He says, go to a graveyard and look at the stones and then you see the name and things written engraved in solid rock.

Engraved in granite. You can take a scrubbing brush, the best soap, you can't brush it away. And God says to you, Pierre, and to you, Anita, that your image, your picture is always before him.

Wherever he goes and whatever he does. He engraved in his hands, his side and his feet. He worked very, very, very hard.

It was difficult for him. He sweat blood, drops of blood to do that. But he did it.

For all eternity. He'll never forget you. Your picture is always before him.

Your parents, I'm France, Anita. In Australia. But God, who's with you all the time, doesn't forget you.

So always remember, Pierre. It's a wonderful word that you've chosen. That you are engraved in God's hands.

Not just one hand, in both hands. And then his feet, his side. And maybe he used thorns as well.

That's a wonderful word. And if you keep that in mind, you'll have a bright future. Whatever happens, things will never go wrong.

That's why the Bible says, those that love God, all things work together for good. How privileged we are. All the world has got this privilege.

But, Jesus said, only a few grasp it. Most of them don't. Broad is the way that leads to the wrong way.

Narrow, that one, that leads to heaven. So never, never, never forget whatever happens. In life and in death.

Cling to this and hold on to this. That's nothing in this world so wonderful, so marvelous, as this. So, engrave it into your mind as well and into your heart.

Never forget it. Both of you, whatever happens. So you needn't fear anything.

You are privileged. We needn't be fearful, anxious, but we can enjoy life to the full. That's why one man with God is in the majority.

Even if the whole world is against him. If God is on your side, you'll conquer, you'll overcome, and you'll be more than conquerors. There is no word that describes how wonderful it will be.

And he says he'll carry you on his wings like an eagle. He will be with you, and it will be good and not bad. Future will be full of hope.

So you've chosen the best, abide by it, never forget it, and let God be more precious to you than anything else in the world. You are part of God's family. He's your father.

The Lord Jesus is your brother. And the Holy Spirit, your comforter, and he'll lead and guide you in all the truth. Never turn your back on him.

This would be foolish and unwise. You've done well to have chosen such a word. On your wedding day, abide by it, and you'll be blessed for the rest of your life.

Now you can come to the front. Now, Pierre, do you believe that Anita was created for you as your wife? He says, yes, I do. And Anita, do you accept him as the man whom God has chosen for you? Yes, I do.

She says the same. What God has brought together, no man dares sever till God parts you. Shall we pray and ask God to bless them? God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

We pray that your blessing will be theirs. And all that heaven wills to give them, may it be theirs. To your glory we ask it.

They are starting with you, and may they end with you. And now, Lord, may your grace that abounds, and that is sufficient for any person, be with them. And the love of the Father fill and overflow in their hearts, their lives, and in their married life.

And may the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be real to them, leading them, guiding them, keeping them on the way everlasting. So that your name will be glorified and sanctified because of it. Amen.

Have you got your rings? This is an outward token of what you have promised and confessed. And vowed before God. If you should swim in the sea someday, and you lose your ring, that doesn't matter.

It's just an outward sign of the inward. May God bless you.

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