

THE MESSIAH'S SEED -- GOD'S GROWING FAMILY
Isaiah 54

Intro: The prophecies of Isaiah combine predictions for the future with preaching to his own generation.

It is interesting to see the connection between Isaiah 53, 54, and 55 considering the type of ministry which Isaiah had.

Isaiah 53 -- There is no question but that this has to do with the first coming of Christ.

Isaiah 54 -- I want to show that this has to do with the second coming of Christ, and the millennial period that will follow.

Isaiah 55 -- Here we see Isaiah preaching again to his generation, exhorting them to seek the Lord while they can.

Isaiah 54 is a development of the statements that are made in Isa. 53:10-12 regarding the Lord's seed and the ultimate outcome of His work of redemption. The language indicates a final gathering of the nation. No dispersion will ever follow this. We must conclude from the language of the chapter that such a gathering has never yet taken place, and so we must look for it in the future. It fits in with all that Isaiah has said about the glorious aspect of the Day of the Lord.

The time sequence is as follows.

First, the Messiah would come in accordance with what is predicted in Isaiah 53. This much has been fulfilled.

Second, Isaiah 54 describes the Messiah in an entirely different role--that of Creator, Redeemer, and Sovereign over the whole earth. See Isa. 54:5.

He will gather Israel as a wife that has been forsaken, and with her there will be a mighty work among the nations of the earth so that the seed of the Lord will inherit the nations. See Isa. 54:3. Such a statement indicates that the kingdoms of the world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

Isaiah does not describe the judgments which the Messiah will execute on the earth, just the outcome. But he does indicate in the last three verses of the chapter that there will be opposition, opposition designed by Satan himself to destroy the seed of the Lord. But that will fail, as several verses in the chapter indicate.

The opposition described at the end of chapter 54 helps us to locate the Great Tribulation. The Lord will do away with the opposition, and the peaceful millennium will follow.

The church does not enter into the picture here. Isaiah was actually ministering to Judah, but his prophecies include people from the whole nation: Israel as well as Judah. As far as God's purpose is concerned, He does not distinguish between them.

This does not mean that all Jews are going to be saved. Nor does it mean that all Gentiles will eventually be saved--not even all of those Jews and Gentiles who are living on the earth at the time of the Lord's return. The doctrine of election governs salvation in the OT and in the NT. It governs God's work in salvation in this present age as well as in the Great Tribulation and in the Millennium. So there will be an elect people in Israel who will be saved, and an elect people from among the Gentiles who will be saved--not all of either group. Isaiah was prophesying concerning that work of salvation as it will be seen in connection with the coming of the Lord at His second advent.

The prophecies of this chapter are centered around three exhortations:

- 1) "Sing . . . break forth into singing, and cry aloud" -- in v. 1.
- 2) "Fear not" -- in v. 4.
- 3) And then three times that we have the word "behold" in vv. 11, 15, 16.

So we could divide the chapter in this way:

- 1) Vv. 1-3.
- 2) Vv. 4-10.
- 3) Vv. 11-17.

(Note the significance of the three commands.)

But, even though I must not ignore those commands, I want to recognize that there is an important distinction to be noticed in the third division, and so I will divide it into two parts.

So this is my outline:

- I. The rejoicing and its cause (vv. 1-3).
- II. The mercies of the Lord (vv. 4-10).
- III. The glory of the Lord's people (vv. 11-14).
- IV. The opposition and its defeat (vv. 15-17).

I. THE REJOICING AND ITS CAUSE (Isa. 54:1-3).

Here we see the prediction of an amazing increase in the family of God, and it will come at a time when it seemed that God has forsaken Israel. They are called upon to enlarge their tent, just as a man would add rooms to his home when his family got too large to contain all of his children.

This enlargement will include multitudes from the Gentile nations.

II. THE MERCIES OF THE LORD (Isa. 54:4-10).

The redeemed will rejoice to such an extent that they will forget their past miseries.

The Lord will claim Israel as His wife.

He will deal with her in mercy.

Vv. 8-10 indicate that the situation between the Lord and Israel will never be changed again. Obviously we have not seen this yet.

III. THE GLORY OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE (Isa. 54:11-14).

The glory is described in the most picturesque terms, but obviously it points to their righteousness in v. 14, and to that which is described in v. 13. All of the shame of Israel's sin will be removed, and she will be clothed in the spotless righteousness of God--a provision described in Isa. 53:11.

IV. THE OPPOSITION AND ITS DEFEAT (Isa. 54:15-17).

As I have said, this could refer to the Great Tribulation before the Millennial reign, or it could refer to the gathering of the nations after the Millennium which is described in Rev. 20:7-10.

There are those who feel that Isa. 54:16 describes what Satan will attempt to do, but which will fail.

See the great and glorious victory promised in Isa. 54:11.

And then it is on the basis of the predictions in these two chapters that we have the preaching of Isaiah in Isa. 55 (and in the chapters after that as well).

Concl: What are the lessons of this chapter for us today?

- 1) The love of God for His people.
- 2) The certainty of His promises. Note again His names in v. 5. See also v. 8b. To His promises He has added His oath. See vv. 9, 10.
- 3) The results of sin, and the fruits of righteousness.