



ISAIAH 54

GOD’S TENDER LOVE FOR ZION ~ GOD WILL RESTORE

God loves his people! In this chapter of Isaiah, Israel is encouraged to burst into song because her punishment is over and the Lord, like a loving husband, is taking back His wayward bride and showering her with blessings. Her exile in Babylon was necessary because of her grievous sin, but it was only a temporary banishment because the Lord is faithful to His promises. Just as God honored His covenant with Noah, He will honor His “covenant of peace” with Israel. These verses await their complete fulfillment in the messianic kingdom.

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Notes	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>Isaiah 54:1 Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than the children of her who is married,” says the LORD. ² “Enlarge the place of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. ³ For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left, and your offspring will possess the nations and will people the desolate cities.</p> <p>⁴ “Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you will not be disgraced; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more.</p>	<p>a 54:1 This verse begins with only two words in Hebrew: barren and rejoice. These are two ends of the emotional spectrum. Nothing brings sorrow like being barren. Yet God promises that even in our greatest sorrow there can be a song of joy.</p> <p>b 54:1 This verse can be viewed as the remedy for spiritual barrenness—the song of triumph and the shout of joy! Spiritual barrenness is broken by the power of worship. Where God’s people are held back in worship, spiritual barrenness soon follows. Our worship has the power to bring new birth (evangelism) into our congregations. Worship is a mighty force to influence the lost and bring new birth. See Gal. 4:27.</p> <p>c 54:1 See Gal. 4:27.</p> <p>d 54:2 Or “Stretch out the curtains of your dwelling.”</p> <p>e 54:2 Or “Lengthen your cords; make firm your tent pegs.”</p> <p>f 54:3 Or “to the right and to the left.”</p> <p>g 54:3 Or “your seed,” the same Hebrew word found in 53:10 and Gen. 3:15.</p>	<p>God’s Tender Love for Zion</p> <p>Isaiah 54:1 “Rejoice a with singing, you barren one! You who have never given birth, burst into a song of joy and shout, you who have never been in labor! b For the deserted wife will have more children than the married one,” says Yahweh. c ² “Increase is coming, so enlarge your tent and add extensions to your dwelling. d Hold nothing back! Make the tent ropes longer and the pegs stronger. e ³ You will increase and spread out in every direction. f Your sons and daughters g will conquer nations and revitalize desolate cities.</p> <p>⁴ Do not fear, for your shame is no more. Do not be embarrassed, for you will not be disgraced. You will forget the inadequacy you felt in your youth and will no longer remember the shame of your widowhood.</p>

English Standard (ESV)	Passion Translation (TPT)	Passion Translation (TPT)
<p>⁵ For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. ⁶ For the LORD has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God. ⁷ For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you. ⁸ In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD, your Redeemer.</p> <p>⁹ “This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you. ¹⁰ For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.</p> <p>¹¹ “O afflicted one, storm-tossed and not comforted, behold, I will set your stones in antimony, and lay your foundations with sapphires. ¹² I will make your pinnacles of agate, your gates of carbuncles, and all your wall of precious stones. ¹³ All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children. ¹⁴ In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you. ¹⁵ If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you. ¹⁶ Behold, I have created the smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose. I have also created the ravager to destroy; ¹⁷ no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.”</p>	<p>h 54:5 This amazing verse gives us seven names of God.</p> <p>i 54:10 This is the covenant of shalom that God has made with us, his people. God’s covenant promise is that his shalom (“peace, prosperity, success, wholeness, and well-being”) will be our portion all our days on earth. See Eph. 2:14.</p> <p>j 54:10 The Hebrew word for “compassion” (racham) means “to love deeply, like a mother’s love.” Racham is a homonym for “womb,” with an implication that God’s love is like the love of a mother carrying a child in her womb.</p> <p>k 54:11 See Eph. 4:14.</p> <p>l 54:11 Or “I am about to set your stones in antimony.</p> <p>m 54:11 The sapphire stone was the second stone of the high priest’s breastplate and had engraved upon it the name Simeon (“he who hears”).</p> <p>n 54:12 Or “beryl.”</p> <p>o 54:12 Or “border.”</p> <p>p 54:13 See John 6:45.</p> <p>q 54:14 See Acts 10:38.</p> <p>r 54:14 See 2 Tim. 1:7.</p> <p>s 54:17 Or “condemn.”</p> <p>t 54:17 In ch. 53 we learn about the Servant of the Lord (Jesus Christ): his humiliation, his death, and the glory that followed. Here we find the Servant has become many servants (plural), a corporate body of believers. The Son has become sons. From this point on, Isaiah’s focus finds its fulfillment with the corporate church and the glorious bride of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>u 54:17 Or “righteousness.”</p>	<p>⁵ For your Maker is your husband; his name is Yahweh, Commander of Angel Armies! Your Kinsman-Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel! He has the title Mighty God of All the Earth! h ⁶ For I, Yahweh, have invited you to come back like a depressed, deserted wife. Like a young wife who has experienced rejection, I am drawing you back to me,” says Yahweh. ⁷ “For just a brief moment I deserted you, but with tender feelings of love I will gather you back to me. ⁸ In a surge of anger, for just the briefest moment, I hid my face from you, but with everlasting kindness, I will show you my cherishing love, “says Yahweh, your Kinsman-Redeemer.</p> <p>⁹ “To me, this is like the time when I vowed that the waters of Noah’s flood would never again cover the earth. Now I vow to you that I will neither be angry with you nor rebuke you. ¹⁰ Even if the mountains were to crumble and the hills disappear, my heart of steadfast, faithful love will never leave you, and my covenant of peace i with you will never be shaken,” says Yahweh, whose love and compassion j will never give up on you.</p> <p>God Will Restore</p> <p>¹¹ “You unhappy one, storm-tossed and troubled, k I am ready to rebuild you with precious stones l and embed your foundation with sapphires. m ¹² I will make your towers of rubies, your gates of sparkling jewels, n and all your walls o of precious, delightful stones. ¹³ All your children will be taught by Yahweh, p and great will be their peace and prosperity. ¹⁴ You will be established in righteousness. Oppression—be far from them! q Fear—be far from them! r Yes, terror will not come near you, nor will you be afraid. ¹⁵ If anyone dares to stir up strife against you, it is not from me! Those who challenge you will go down in defeat. ¹⁶ See, I am the one who created the craftsman who fans the coals into a fire and forges a weapon fit for its purpose, and I am the one who created the destroyer to destroy. ¹⁷ But I promise you, no weapon meant to hurt you will succeed, and you will refute s every accusing word spoken against you. This promise is the inheritance of Yahweh’s servants, t and their vindication u is from me,” says Yahweh.</p>

Bible Knowledge Commentary

JOHN A. MARTIN

- SALVATION TO COME FROM THE SERVANT (CHAPS. 54-57)

- These chapters speak of the great salvation which will come to Israel (chap. 54) and proselytes (55:1-56:8) on the basis of the work of the Servant, and of the condemnation which will come on the wicked (56:9-57:21). Ultimately the Servant will establish the millennial kingdom. Unlike Israel, He will not fail in His mission.

- **Salvation for Israel** (chap. 54)

- **Israel's numerical growth.**

- **54:1-3.** In Israel a barren woman was disgraced, for children aided in family chores and helped the parents in their old age. Fertility on every level was a sign of God's blessing. For example, when Hannah was not able to have children she was devastated, but when the Lord allowed her to have a son she sang for joy (1 Sam. 1:1-2:10). Israel was like a woman who had no children and was therefore in a continual state of mourning. But by God's sovereignty and grace He will enable her to have many children. So she will break into song and shout for joy. Jerusalem, once desolate and mourning (Lam. 1:1-5), will be revitalized and teeming with people. Also like a nomad who has so many children he has to enlarge his tent to accommodate them all, Israel's descendants will increase and even settle in the cities of foreign nations because there will not be enough room for them in their homeland.

- **Israel's Regathering.**

- **54:4-8.** The LORD will regather Israel the way a man would take back his wife. The nation need have no fear (cf. 41:10, 14; 43:5; 44:2, 8) of disgrace, for she will no longer be desolate and helpless like a widow. God, like a husband (cf. Jer. 3:14; 31:32; Hosea 2:16), will take back Israel, His wife. He is the LORD Almighty ... the Holy One of Israel, her Redeemer (cf. Isa. 54:8; see comments on 41:14), and in His uniqueness He is the God of all the earth, that is, its Creator and Sustainer. The Lord had deserted His people for a short while (a brief moment). Though not stated here, Isaiah had given the reason for it several times: because of the nation's sins (cf. 50:1) and God's commitment to His word. But because of His compassion (54:7) and kindness (Vol. 1, p. 1110, "loyal love," v. 8, trans. "unfailing love" in v. 10), He will restore the nation to Himself. The short moment during which God hid His face (i.e., abandoned Israel because of His anger against her sin) contrasts with the everlasting nature of His covenant loyalty.

- **Israel's Security.**

- **54:9-10.** After the Flood, in which God executed His anger against the world's depravity, He promised never again to devastate the earth in the same way (Gen. 9:11). Similarly God promised that the day is coming when He will never ... rebuke Israel again. Statements like this

show that Isaiah was speaking of the millennial kingdom rather than the return from the Babylonian Captivity, for the nation has suffered God's anger many times since the postexilic return. Even if the world could be punished again as in the Flood, God's love (cf. v. 8) and compassion will never cease. The covenant of peace (also mentioned in Ezek. 34:25; 37:26) refers to this promise which God had just made. God will give His people lasting peace (cf. Isa. 9:7; 32:17-18; 54:13; 55:12; 66:12; Jer. 30:10; 33:6, 9; 46:27).

- **Israel's Peaceful Future** (54:11-17).

- **54:11-12.** Jerusalem, the afflicted city, had been through many troubles, called storms, and no one had comforted her (cf. Lam. 1:2, 9, 15-17, 21). However, the Lord will build up the city with stones made of precious gems, symbolic of His care and esteem for the value of the city.
- **54:13-14.** Israelites always considered the training of their children a high priority. Many wanted them to be true to the Lord and not guided by the pagan world around them. In the Millennium, the children will be taught by the LORD Himself and will enjoy His peace (cf. comments on v. 10). Righteousness will prevail (cf. 33:5; 46:13; 58:8; 62:1-2) and Jerusalemites will no longer fear for the Lord will protect her from tyranny.
- **54:15-17.** In the millennial kingdom no nation will be allowed to defeat Israel because the Lord has so decreed. Nations rise and fall on the basis of His word. In the past He allowed the destroyer (Babylon) to overcome His people, but this will never again occur. Peace and safety are the heritage of those who trust in the LORD.

- **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Verse One of Chapter 54 holds a hidden treasure and strategy for the church at the end of the age...that our worship of God has the power to reverse "spiritual barrenness." How would you describe barrenness? What would be produced in our lives if we were set free from this kind of restriction? What do you think might cause spiritual barrenness and how might we avoid this terrible malady?
2. In verse 7 the Lord states, "For just a brief moment I deserted you." How does this statement align itself with the common belief that God's faithfulness and love are never-ending? What is the Lord trying to communicate with this message?
3. God seems to be saying in verses 9-10 that he will never rebuke Israel again. Since we have been grafted into the same vine as Israel, does this promise apply to us as well. Why or why not?
4. It seems that the Lord is desiring to rebuild us with "precious stones." What do you think these "stones" are and how do we get them? What is it that most people think their lives are being rebuilt with? If the Lord's end result is "Peace and prosperity," how do you think he would re-build your life to get you there?