

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Series: The Book of Isaiah

Teaching Summary for Isaiah 54: part 5

Isaiah Chapter 54

Chapter 54 looks forward to **the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom to follow.** Chapter 54 is directed to the remnant of Israel in the last days. It is a love song from the LORD to His bride, Zion.

Interlude

Isaiah is a long book – 66 chapters. From time to time, I like to read large portions of it at one sitting. I always leave with something new – an insight, a pattern, a flash of understanding. It always helps me to better understand the small section that I am studying at the time – in this case, Isaiah 54.

I encourage you to do the same thing. Read it in a different translation from the one you usually read. Read out loud. Begin by reading Isaiah 54 and 55 as a unit. Then continue to the end of Isaiah.

Hear the Lord speaking to your heart through the words of Isaiah. For me, it brings me back to times when these words rescued me, brought me peace, brought me back to life really.

Times of grief when I needed to hear the Lord’s compassion for me. Times when my heart was storm-tossed and I was driven to my knees. The afflictions, and the humility they produced in me.

One sample: let’s read **Isaiah 66:5-14**. Sometimes it helps to read the end of the story.

Did you see the references to that woman – this time she’s a mother with her children. Did you see the city, Jerusalem?

All right. Back to Isaiah 54. Let’s read **Isaiah 54** now.

Here is a high-level outline of Chapter 54:

	Subject
Verses 1-10	Restoration and hope for a disgraced woman - Zion
Verses 11-17	Restoration and hope for a ruined city - Jerusalem

We are now in our **verse-by-verse study** of chapter 54.

Verse-by-verse

Verse 1: The image of the barren woman and her expanding family.

Verse 2: The image of the expanding tent. In the ancient Middle East, families lived in tents. When a child was born, or when someone married, the tent had to be enlarged to accommodate more people.

Verse 3: The images explained (barren woman, numerous sons, desolate cities, the married woman, the expanding tent).

Verses 4-8: The image of a woman who is ashamed and humiliated for having no husband.

She is like a widow. And she is like a woman who was forsaken in her youth. Israel's situation includes aspects of both. But now her husband is calling for her and gathering her back, with great love and compassion. The shamed and humiliated woman is Israel; her husband is the Lord.

Verse 4: The LORD continues to speak to the woman, Israel.

She will forget the shame of her youth and won't remember the reproach of her widowhood. In fact, she will have everlasting salvation. She will not be put to shame for all eternity!

Verse 5: Here the LORD identifies Himself as her husband. See **Isaiah 62:4-5** (bridegroom and bride) and **Hosea 2:19-20** ("I will betroth you to Me forever").

But of course, He is no ordinary husband! His name is the LORD of hosts. He is the Holy One of Israel and the God of all the earth. He is her Maker, and her Redeemer. See **Isaiah 44:24, 49:26, and 60:16-20**.

Verse 6: The LORD has called his wife (Israel) back to Him. She will no longer be forsaken or grieved.

Verses 7: In the LORD's mind, He only forsook her for a brief moment, but with great compassion He is gathering her back. See **Psalm 30:5**.

But what does this "brief moment" refer to? There are several candidates: (1) The 70-year exile in Babylon; (2) A general expression for the LORD's discipline; (3) The time from the rejection of Jesus the Messiah until His return (see **Matthew 23: 37-39**); or (4) The Tribulation period (the day of the LORD; See **Joel 2:14-17**).

Now let's narrow it down by using the context of Isaiah 54. Which option makes the most sense to you? To help with this, see what "I will gather you" means in **Isaiah 11:12**.

Verse 8: says that same thing as verse 7 using different words.

We've seen this before: it's called synonymous parallelism.

Synonymous parallelism is a literary device often used in Hebrew poetry. A statement is repeated using different words. This device is used to highlight and amplify important things.

Verse 7	Verse 8
For a brief moment I forsook you	I hid My face from you for a moment
With great compassion I will gather you	With everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you