

Wednesday, April 24, 2024 • Read Isaiah 54

Questions from the Scripture text: Who is commanded to sing (v1a)? Even though she hasn't done what (v1b)? What sort of singing (v1c)? Even though she hasn't done what (v1d)? How do her offspring and joy compare to whose? Who says this? What will she have to do for her growing family (v2-3)? What will they inherit (v3b)? What two things is she told not to do (v4a-b)? Why, what will be taken away (v4c-d)? Whom does she have now for a Husband (v5a)? What is His Name (v5b)? Whom does she have for nearest of kin/Redeemer (v5c)? What else is He called (v5d)? Who has called her (v6a, d, 8c)? From out of what condition (v6b-c)? How long was she in that condition (v7a)? How will the mercy into which we brings her compare (v7b, 8b)? How sure is His promise to do this (v9-10)? What is her condition now (v11a-b)? But how does the Lord describe His adorning her (v11c-12c)? What blessings will her children have, in addition to being many (v13)? How secure will she be in her new, righteous condition (v14)? What will the enemies still do, but what will happen to them (v15)? Why won't any weapons succeed against His people (v16-17c)? To whom does this heritage belong (v17d)? How will they come into it (v17e)? How can we be sure (v17f)?

What does the Servant secure for the church? Isaiah 54 prepares us for the first serial reading in public worship on the Lord's Day. In these seventeen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the Servant secures for the church an age in which He Himself is her Head, and the Lord deals with her accordingly.**

Flourishing joy for the currently barren, v1-3. Israel, in the time of her exile, is forsaken. But the seed that the Servant (Christ!) secures by His labor (cf. 53:10d), now produce a multitude of children for her that she did not even bear (cf. 49:18-23). This historical metaphor is often lived out by particular church members. That which is true for Israel as a church is true for barren (cf. Ps 113:7-9) and eunuchs (cf. Isa 56:3-5) among God's people, who receive church-family as a super-natural blessing that they enjoy especially on the Lord's Day, with a view toward eternity. We get a taste of the family-forming power of Christ when we are more than compensated at church for the emptiness that barrenness, singleness, or bereavement have brought to the home. This is the proper way for converted Jews to feel in the largely gentile church: sing (v1a)! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud (v1c)! You are the seed who are inheriting the nations (v3b)!

Affectionate love for the currently forsaken, v4-8. As conveyed so poignantly in the contemporary book of Hosea, Israel are desolate and alone because she has forsaken her Husband. But the Servant who has atoned for her sins (cf. ch53) has brought her back into her marriage to YHWH of hosts, her Husband (v5a) and closest of kin (e.g. "Redeemer," v5c, 8c). His chastening her has been momentary (v7a) and measured (v8a) in order to bring her into immeasurable compassions (v7b) and eternal covenant love (v8b).

Faithful covenant blessing for the currently sinful, v9-10. When God promises that the waters shall never again cover the earth (cf. Gen 9:15), it is in the context of noting that even with Noah's household as the only remaining humanity, it was still true that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (cf. Gen 8:21). Now in the wake of the Servant's work, the steadfast love (v10c), covenant of peace (v10d), and compassion (v10e) of YHWH are secured to His church forever. We know that particular congregations may be disciplined (cf. 1Cor 11:30-32) and even forsaken of God (cf. Rev 2:5), but when the church comes into the age of the Servant, she comes into an age in which corporately, as a whole, she is always being built and always under the shining of God's love like the sun rising until it is at full strength (cf. Mt 16:18; Prov 4:18; 2Sam 23:1-5). With Christ as our Head, even those who live in times and places of apostasy and dreadful chastening of the local churches may cling to the Servant and know they are part of a broader church that is still being built under the smile of God.

Fearless peace for the currently attacked, v11-17. In this final section, Zion is more than just built up; she is beautified. The word picture of the gems, sapphires, rubies, (v11) crystal, and precious stones (v12) takes our minds right to Rev 21:18-21. The greatest beauty, however, is the character of the bride (cf. Rev 21:2), presented here as the children obtained by the Servant for His church. They are not just plentiful, as we saw in v1-3, but peaceful. As those taught by YHWH (v13a, cf. 1Jn 2:27), they have the peace (v13b) of those who don't fear (v14) even when enemies are gathered against them (v15). The God Who so affectionately loves them (v4-8) is the Creator of swords and tongues and everything in between (v16-17b). The Lord is their portion (v17d), because from Him is their righteousness (v17e), even as He has said (v17f).

Who is the Head of the church? What has He secured from God for the church on earth? What will she be like when He is done with her? How do you experience the life, love, and mercy personally that He has earned for the church corporately? Who has been attacking you? Why don't you have to be afraid of them?

Sample prayer: Lord, we are those barren who are ashamed of our inability and our sin, knowing that You have been right in all of Your chastening us. But You have made us to flourish much; forgive us for not seeing how great this mercy has been! When we look at ourselves, we are ashamed, but we have failed to see how You have removed this shame as our Husband, our warrior, our Redeemer, our Holy One, our Sovereign God. Grant that we would be quick in repentance, turning from ourselves to You. We know that You will build Your church; give us to live in joy and hope and devotion to You, as part of Your whole church in the earth—even when we sometimes must grieve and be humiliated over what happens locally.

Suggested songs: ARP45B "Daughter, Incline Your Ear" or TPH404 "The Church's One Foundation"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Isaiah 54. These are the words of God. Sing O, Baron you who have not born? Break Forth into singing and cry aloud, you who have not labored a child. For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman? Says Yahweh. Enlarge the place of your tent and let them stretch out the law, the curtains of your dwellings, do not spare, lengthen, your cords and strengthen your Stakes for you shall expand to the right and to the left.

And your descendants will inherit the Nations. And make the desolate cities inhabited. Do not fear for you will not be ashamed. Neither be disgraced for you will not be put to shame. Free will forget the shame of your youth. And will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore.

For your maker is your husband. Yahweh of hosts is his name. And your Redeemer. Is the Holy One of Israel? He is called the god of the whole earth. Fury hallway has called you. Like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit like a youthful wife. When you were refused says your God.

For a mere moment. I have forsaken, you But with great mercies, I will gather you. With a little Roth. I hid my face from you for a moment. But with Everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you. Says you're you're a redeemer. For this is like the waters of Noah to me.

For as I have sworn that the Walters of Noah would no longer cover the Earth. So, I have sworn That I would not be angry with you nor rebuke you. For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from you. More shall my Covenant to peace be removed?

Says, Yahweh who has Mercy on you. Oh, you Afflicted one tossed with tempest and not comforted behold? I will lay your stones with colorful gems. Then lay your foundations with sapphires. I will make your Pinnacles of rubies, your Gates of Crystal. Your all your walls of precious stones. All your children shall be taught by Yahweh.

And great shall be the Peace of your children. In righteousness, you shall be established. You shall be far from oppression. For you to not fear and from Terror. For it shall not come near you. Indeed, they shall surely assemble. But not because of me, whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake.

Behold. I have created the blacksmith. Who blows the coals and the fire who brings forth an instrument for his work. I have created the spoiler to destroy. No weapon formed against you shall prosper in every tongue, which rises against you in judgment. You shall condemn. This is the Heritage.

Of the Servants of Yahweh. And their righteousness is from me. Says, Yahweh. So, for the reading of gods inspired, And Aaron twerked. In the Lord's, Mercy to us. We come into Isaiah 54 from Isaiah 53. So often. Isaiah 53 is studied outside of its context. So much of Uh, what we were able to see coming into it.

And from the rest of chapter 52 and not just the last couple verses, Well, it's a blessing to us last week and we continue now. To consider what it is that. Um, Jesus has secured for himself and for his Uh, and that is his seed, his offspring. And what it is that he has secured.

For those who are his spiritual Offspring. Uh, reward. Those whom he has secured and obtained. By his atoning work. So you remember from last week in verse 10 of chapter 53, Yet it pleased y'all wait to bruise him. He has put him to grief. When you make his soul an offering for sin.

He shall see. Offspring. It actually doesn't say his offspring. Although new King James has supplied, his he shall see Offspring. He shall prolong. His days. And so, the Lord Jesus. Obtains. Spiritual seeds, spiritual offspring for himself. And For his church. Uh, his church Israel. At the time that this is being written, or under judgment going into Uh, Exile there.

Um, the children of Israel will be much diminished numerically, even as they have been almost, Wiped out, spiritually. Unbelief and idolatry. And sinfulness. Uh, and what the people are in themselves is coming to a tragic. Climax. About who God is for his people. Is the point of all of this?

So that God himself would come in the flesh from the line of David and be the great king. Of the first half of the book of Isaiah and God himself. Would come as a man in the flesh. And be the servant. Has been the subject of the most recent?

Sections last quarter or so. Of the book of Isaiah. And that of course, is the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, where Israel has failed with respect to herself. She is not produced The Godly offspring that she should have. And they have not come in to the blessing of God.

As a result of their wickedness, they are bringing upon themselves, God's curse. Well, the Lord himself. The Lord will come. And he will be the true Israel. The king the servant will be the true Israel. And, What is described here? Metaphorical terms is actually something. That. Um is true for the church, generally speaking that there is flourishing Joy for Uh, those for the church that in this context is currently Barren.

Yeah, she is this Barren one who is being commanded to sing in verses 133, There is affectionate love for this. That is currently forsaken. She is the one who was an Unfaithful wife and there, therefore was Um divorced or bereaved or forsaken, as As the various. Um, Metaphors are used in Verses 4 through 8.

She is the one who. Forfeited. The blessing of the Covenant and deserved as bad as Noah's flawed and has received the Exile. Which is a great judgment. Uh yet the Lord is promising faithful, Covenant blessing completely for his own sake and by his own word Just as he did after the flood.

She is the one. Is currently being attacked by men and rightfully so. Not like the servant from chapter 53. Here, when he is attacked by men, it was not for anything that he had done. But this is happening to. For the sake of those for whom, he was substitute.

But Israel being rightfully attacked. Now, is being told that as a result of the work of the servant. Um, The Israel that emerges in the servant and from the servant, which will include of course, The remnant, that has proceeded. It was always a remnant of Israel. Um, the the entire time.

And the remnant that will follow. Um, then we'll have Fearless peace. Because, The Lord will make all of the attacks of Of any of her enemies to fall upon them while that which is true corporately for the church is true for individual Christians. Is true for individual Believers. The, the barren woman.

The one. Does not have children. She has a joy that is greater and children. Who are? More plentiful in the assembly in her church family than she could have ever had. Household. And Um, the eunuchs Who in Isaiah 56 are tempted to say? I am a dry tree. Because they're unable to father any children.

And therefore, Um, he uses the picture of a dry tree. They have a name that is better than Sons and Daughters when they keep the Sabbath when Uh, when they are part of the church that comes by the work of the servant by the work of Christ. Uh, and And so forth.

So, we'll be making Um, not just Church application, corporate application covenantal application, but we'll also be making individual application for our lives. So, in the first three verses here, we have flourishing joy for the currently Barren. He says sing a Barren one. You who have not born Break Forth into singing and cry aloud.

You who have not labored with child. Um the Lord giving his people a joy over what he has done for them spiritually and in the church and by Christ, he says The. More are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman? Says Yahweh. Enlarge the place of your tents are the word picture is.

Uh, this woman hurrying up and having to expand Um, Uh, her house. She's gotta undertake a building project to make room. For all of these children that the Lord is giving her, and this is true corporately for Israel. And Converted Israelites. Um, like Paul and Romans 9 through 11.

Although the grieve over ethnic Israel. Uh, the right and main response to seeing the Lord bring in from among the Nations, is to Rejoice. That God is providing children. That didn't even descend from them. They didn't bear them, they didn't conceive them. And here, the Lord is filling, Israel with these descendants now that are from all the nations and they will inherit all the nations.

And of course, in that place. Um, Especially in chapter 11, we learn that there continue to be Uh, Israelites who are gathered in until Not just the fullness of the elect from the Nations, but the fullness of the elect From the Israelite nation. Uh, will be gathered. But there is this joy for those who are Barren.

So, A woman who feels pain. Over not not being able to Bear children at all or perhaps over a recent miscarriage or Perhaps. Even. One of her dear ones, whom the Lord had given her for a time. A child dies. Um, young and out of season and the flower of Youth.

Um, When she applies personally to herself in the midst of the assembly, Um, like we saw in Psalm 113 also. Uh, recently in verses seven through nine of Psalm 113. Uh, when she is in the midst of the assembly, she has all these children. They may not be from her womb.

They not be may not be from Uh, in her own. A particular household. But her great and primary household is the household of God with Christ as the head, and he has secured all these Offspring. And yet he Gives us. Uh, the privilege of Of. Being used in one another's, lives in the church and having a fellowship in the blood of Jesus, which is closer.

Uh, then the fellowship that we have and any other Um, in any other blood. So the one who comes into the assembly thinking in her flesh, is going to be much grieved, and wounded and inward focused. And And yet, the Lord is, commanding here. The singing and this crying aloud, that that Seeing what Christ has done?

And the cost to him. In order to obtain these offspring and the great Glory that he's giving them and inheriting everything, Uh, that this makes the assembly. A place of. Also, for the Unix. Um yeah, a single man who for whatever reason has not been able to get married.

Or perhaps a man whose wife Um, abandoned him or died and he has not been able yet to father children. Um, He is on the Sabbath day. He does not suffer as a eunuch. He doesn't let don't let the eunuch say here. I am a dry tree. Thus says, Yahweh to the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths and choose what pleases me and hold fast my Covenant, even to them.

I will give in my house and within my walls. A place and a name better than that of Sons and Daughters. And so they're not to say well this isn't my household, these aren't my children, that I fathered. No. It's it's better to be in in the Lord's household.

Okay, so Flourish in Joy. For the currently Barren. And this applies. Uh, to all of our griefs and bereavements. That when the Lord gathers us with his people, he reminds us. That what he does. Lord said by Lord's Day Sabbath by Sabbath, he's doing on a much grander scale.

And that we are his people together. Forever and ever. And so, Um, in the Assemblies of the Lord, there ought to be singing and that should shape our hearts and minds and the rest of our life. That we would rejoice in the Lord. Well, in the next five verses then in verses four through eight, Uh, he then began saying, do not fear for you will not be ashamed.

And this is, especially not just for the church corporately that. New Gods Fury with her but particularly for the person who Um, who feels ashamed and disgraced? Because, Uh, they are unloved by others. And perhaps. Unloved by others because of the wickedness of others, but in this case, especially those who have done things.

Have destroyed those who have destroyed their own relationships. Those who have destroyed their own marriages. That can be very painful. The church is a place where Sinners are gathered. Uh, and someone who has made a Rec of their marriage. Often has difficulty in the church. Um because here they feel the pain of being ashamed and forsaken and rightfully.

So in part, at least for things that they have done and they look around and there are people who are married And seem to have very blessed lives. And perhaps do have blessed, marriages blessed lives. And that can be very painful. And not just with marriage. But anything else that we have done for, for which we might be ashamed.

But the church corporately has been like that. Israel had forsaken, the Lord. And had been rightly exiled and put away. Uh, What would be the 70 years? But the Lord comes now and he speaks to her corporately that which he also speaks to us individually that in his Redemption, he takes away.

The shame. And he speaks so affectionately. And so powerfully says your maker is your husband. Your way of hosts is his name. Your Redeemer. The Kinsmen who has nearest, you is the Holy One of Israel. So here, he's not, just saying I've taken away your shame from before me.

He's saying remember who the one who is your husband? Remember who it is? Who is your Kinsmen Redeemer? The one who takes up your case, The as the closest relative and defends you and and pleads your case in the Public Square represents you. It is Yahweh of hosts. It is the Holy One of Israel.

It is the god of the whole earth. Uh and so he says, you know, for a mere moment, I forsaken you, but with great mercies, I will gather you With a little Roth. I hid my face from you a moment, but with for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you.

It says Yahweh your Redeemer. And so he's he's saying yes, the person before whom we should always have been most ashamed was not people but the Lord. Because against him, we sent We deserved for him to forsake us and pour out his wrath on us, and to be furious with us forever.

But just as with Isaiah or in Isaiah with Israel. The time of his disciplining, his people is chastening, his people is putting them away. Uh, was short and light. By comparison. To the greatness of the restored. Uh Covenant, especially in Christ. And the greatness of the restored affection. And so, Um, this section, whereas the first section versus one through three is flourishing Jo For the currently bare in this section shows affectionate love.

Further currently, forsaken. In each of us can look to him for that. Receive that also. Uh, personally. Uh, that the Before whom we were once ashamed, when he brought us to a knowledge of our sin, when he brought us, That original first repentance unto life. And he made us to see ourselves.

And what our sin really is and against him and so forth. Um, That he has brought us into a knowledge of his love and um, in Saving Uh, and laying hold of Christ. Knowing ourselves to be righteous in Jesus and adopt it and his holy spirit, pouring out his love in our hearts and knowing the one that the one who loves us like this is the Creator is The Sovereign Lord of all things.

And so, not only do we much enjoy his love and his affection. Being the Beloved of God but also we are no longer ashamed in front of anyone else. Because he will take up our case. He will vindicate us. Not as those who did not sin. But as those who have been redeemed and Vindicated, In the Lord Jesus Christ.

So affectionate love. For the currently forsaken, taking away our shame. And then in verses 9 through 10 faithful Covenant blessing. For those. Uh, currently sinful and deserving of Covenant curse. You remember, the? Oath to which verse 9 is referring when the Lord swears that the Walters of Noah will no longer.

Um, cover the Earth. That at that time, even as Noah and his family are the whole of humanity. Now, when Um, at the end of Genesis chapter 8, Uh, he's he says Um, That the thoughts of men's hearts are evil from his youth. And so, it's not like, Uh, Noah is not morally deserving of the flood.

God would have been righteous as soon as Noah. Got off the boat to immediately. Send another flood and finish the job wipe out Noah's family. And so when God having wiped out everyone else and Sean what sin deserves now here's a family that still deserves the same thing and he swears that it will not happen.

He shows that it is because of his Covenant, his determination to save his determination to show Grace. That man will not be judged. And this is why you are not judged, this is why you are not in hell. Says, while you have not received what your sin deserves, this is why you will not receive Through faith in Jesus Christ.

You will not receive what your sin deserves is, because God, Determined to save. And now he says, in verses 9 and 10, That. The restoration of Israel, not just the restoration when they returned from Babylon. But this restoration that is in Jesus. When the remnant of Israel is gathered to God in Christ, this comes not because those who trust in Jesus Were Somehow better.

Than those who perish, as if, as if Noah's, family was somehow better. But because God by his oath, in his determination to save even such flood deserving Sinners even such exiled deserving Sinners. If we want to think about it in, Israel's terms, even such hell deserving Sinners. As we think about it in terms of Christ and what he endured

on the cross, and what we deserved.

God is determined to save and his Covenant to peace cannot be removed. Even the mountains and the Hills which seem like they would last forever. They are used often in scripture as pictures of that which lasts forever. Even the mountains and the hills could be wiped out, but God's commitment.

Covenant, determination to save. Um, will not be. Uh, wiped out and so faithful, Covenant, blessing for those who know that they deserve the opposite. But in Christ, in the seed in the ser, sorry in Christ, in the servant he is the seed of Genesis 3:15 but in Christ the servant Whose seed, we are.

His Covenant will be forever. And then, finally in verses 11 through 17, Fearless, peace for those who are currently attacked. Uh, as the Lord is building his church, he Um, Uh, just as Jesus says, Matthew 16:18, he's going to build his church and the Gates of hell will not Prevail against it.

Uh, so Lord builds his church and enemies will not Prevail against it as verses 11 through 17. Are saying, but here, the building is quite interesting because as he's laying foundation stones, he's using Not just Stone but colorful gems and sapphires and rubies, he's making the gates in at a crystal, instead of iron, the walls are being made out of precious stones.

Is very similar to the description in Revelation, 21 verses 18 through 21. Uh, and so These indicate that which is lasting and that which is beautiful. Um, and And we can be sure that as the Lord does this. He's building something that lasts forever. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Will never be rejected. The way that. Israel. Was forsaken and exiled and came under a general discipline. We know that particular congregations are threatened and disciplined Um, you know, First Corinthians 11, verses 30 to 32, And the church in Corinth being chastened by God, with many, being Afflicted with illness, and some even being killed.

Uh, and then Remember that it's even possible for a particular congregation that is unfaithful. To have its lamp, stand, removed altogether, but those are particular congregations, the church as a whole Has now as her head the Lord Jesus Christ who sits on the throne of Glory.

The great king, the great high priest. As he sits on that Throne, he is entered into the reality of which the holy of holies was just a copy. And so we have Fearless peace and we

We look to the Lord himself by his Spirit applying his word. Uh, to our children's Hearts, to keep raising up generations of The Godly. It says your children shall be taught by y'all and great shall be the peace of your children. So that if they walk with the Lord, by the spirit applying the Bible to them, if you my children Walk with the Lord.

By the Holy Spirit, applying the truth, the scripture to your heart. Then you can know that when you are attacked, it is an attack from the world that must fail. Not an attack that is coming. By the Providence of God to destroy you. Perhaps to chasing you perhaps to discipline you just as the Lord gives discipline to those who be loves.

Uh, very bit as much as he gives instruction to the children, whom he loves and who are legitimate children. But he says, you shall not. You shall be far from oppression, from terrorist shall not come near you, indeed. They shall surely assemble. Okay? So he's not saying you won't be attacked.

He's saying if you are taught by the Lord, Uh, and you have peace with him. Then, you know that no attack against, you can ultimately succeed. Says, indeed, they shall surely assemble but not by because of me, whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake. And he points out.

I'm the one who created everything he says. I created the blacksmith. I created the tongue, I created words. And so, even if we are killed, Remember, Jesus says, Don't Fear Him who can only kill the body fear the lord. Who after killing the body, can cast the soul into hell.

And it is fearful to think what those who kill us are bringing up on themselves. That is fearful to think. What those who attack us are bringing upon themselves. And so, just as Revelation, 12 says, Uh, even those who love not their life unto death, Are those who overcome?

By the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony. As they are these, who in this section of Isaiah 54, Are taught taught by the Lord. In their hearts. And so, Great is the peace. Of the one. Is established upon. Jesus Christ, the Chief Cornerstone. Who gives himself?

To be the precious Jewel. Upon which his church is built. So, that resting upon him, We may be Fearless. In our peace with God, even when Severe attack. Uh, from So, Um, Much blessing and great blessing. That the servant Christ. By his suffering has obtained for his. And for his offspring, whom he Obtained.

By his suffering work. Let's pray.

Our Father in heaven. We thank you that you have given. Your beloved son with whom? You are well, pleased. To be our King. To be your Church's husband. To be our Kinsmen Redeemer. To be your Church's foundation. And Cornerstone. And we thank you that. The blessedness and the joy.

And the And the confidence and the certainty and the peace. That we have with you is in him. And so it shall be perfect and it shall be forever. But we confess to you that we often do not live. With the confidence and hope.

Would be a right response to the truth that we see here. And so we pray for the help of your Holy. That he would help us to be mindful in the ordinary comings and goings of That he would help us to be mindful. Of what you have done for us in Christ.

That we might live with this Jo. And this confidence. This. Knowledge of your love. This piece and fearlessness. So help us. We pray by your spirit, right? The truths of this portion of your word on our hearts We ask in Jesus name. Amen.