

155 54:2-3

2. God had predicted through the prophets that for a time Israel would be blinded and only a remnant saved (9:25-29; 10:19-21). As evidence of this, Paul quoted Deuteronomy 32:21; Isaiah 1:9; 10:22-23; 65:1-2; and Hosea 1:10; 2:23.
3. The immediate reason for so many Israelites failing to receive the Messiah is that they are trusting in their own righteousness instead of receiving in simple faith the righteousness available through Christ (Rom 9:30-33 and following).

In Romans 11 Paul declared that all this was part of God's will in order to bring salvation to the Gentiles, and he used the figure of an olive tree from which some of the branches were broken off and branches of a wild olive tree grafted in. He predicted that eventually the branches that were lopped off will be grafted back into their own olive tree, saying, "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved" (Rom 11:25-26).

Though Paul did not quote Isaiah 54:1 in Romans, he had already done so in his earlier epistle to the Galatians, where he contrasted the Jerusalem that existed in his day, trying to win God's favor by obeying legalistic interpretations of the Law, with "Jerusalem which is above ... which is the mother of us all." He pointed out that the children of the desolate, where the Word of God had previously been unknown, had become more numerous than the children of the married woman, who had sought Him by works of the Law instead of by faith (Gal 4:25-27).

Thus we can see that Isaiah 54:1-3 is a prediction of the outreach of the atoning work described in Isaiah 53 to those who had previously been in darkness.

Verses 2 and 3 describe the extension of the work of the LORD's Servant as the message is carried to distant areas of the world. Verse 2 is the great text on which William Carey preached when he urged that a mission be formed to take the Gospel to India. Carey was not taking a few Bible words out