

"IN THAT DAY" - THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL
MOST OF THE TIME Isa. 10:20-23
THE DAY OF THE LORD

Intro: It is impossible to understand what the Scriptures teach concerning the nation Israel without understanding what is meant by this term, "the remnant."

The term is used 3x in vv. 20-22. It means, as the term would suggest, that which is left over, or, that which remains as compared with that which preceded it.

In its use with Israel it seems to have developed out of the idea of judgment--judgment upon Israel. Isaiah first refers to it in 1:9.

IT WAS THE MEANING OF THE NAME OF ISAIAH'S OLDER SON, SHEAR-JASHUB^(7:3).
The Apostle Paul gives what is probably the fullest and clearest explanation in Rom. 11:1-8.

And many, many times throughout the OT prophets we have other references to this word, or to other expressions which mean the same thing. Cf. Isa. 65:8-10.

Also cf. Amos 9:8, 9,

"Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth, except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve; yet shall not the least kernel fall upon the earth."

Interestingly, the word is used in verb form in Gen. 7:23.
(Read.) Noah and his family were the remnant.

Like man terms in the Word of God, it takes on a fuller meaning the longer it is used.

What is its meaning? Keep in mind the background of judgment.

- I. IT MEANS THAT GOD NEVER HAS, AND NEVER WILL, ALLOW ISRAEL TO BE COMPLETELY DESTROYED.

They have deserved it. And they should have been. Cf. Isa. 1:9. Many of them were, BUT NEVER ALL OF THEM.

Thus, it is a term which speaks clearly of the mercy and faithfulness of God to His promises and to His purposes.

He has had to do this in grace, but He has done it!

- II. IT MEANS THAT GOD HAS ALWAYS EXERCISED HIS SOVEREIGNTY WHERE ISRAEL HAS BEEN CONCERNED.

Even in the darkest hours of Israel's history, the Lord has had His people who have known and loved Him.

Do you remember that Elijah once thought that he was the only one that the Lord had and that the people of his own nation were about to kill him--then there would be no one. And the Lord had to enlighten him in the following words:

"Yet I have left me" (a remnant) "seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kings 19:18).

This is a truth which applies especially to Israel, but there is certainly encouragement for us in these principles, too.

III. IT MEANS THAT THE OUTCOME OF GOD'S PURPOSES HAVE NEVER REALLY BEEN THREATENED.

Notice the certainly expressed in our text. And it was not just a return to the land, but a return to the Lord!

It applies to every generation. Isa. 1:9 has to do with Isaiah's time; our text tonight has to do with the day of the Lord--a time still future. Rom. 11:5 spoke of Paul's day. SO, REGARDLESS OF WHAT GENERATION YOU MIGHT BE SPEAKING ABOUT, THIS TRUTH APPLIES.

Do not ever be guilty of saying that the Lord has no further purpose for Israel. That does violence to some of the greatest doctrines in the Word of God. It undercuts the very doctrine of salvation in more ways than one. If God can cast aside Israel because of her unfaithfulness to Him, THEN THERE IS NOTHING TO KEEP HIM FROM DOING THE SAME THING WITH US.

This brings us to Romans 11. Like so many other doctrines in the Word, the NT puts the finishing touches on what are already great doctrines by showing us details that are not mentioned or clarified in the OT.

IV. IT ENLIGHTENS US CONCERNING THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION (Rom. 11:5).

A. Paul makes the word remnant = election.

This does not always mean that those who were left in any particular case were saved, any more than the great picture of redemption that we have in Exodus 12 means that everyone who left Egypt was genuinely saved. We must allow some leeway for types.

HAVE YOU BEEN ONE WHO HAS BELIEVED THAT ALL THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED BECAUSE THEY ARE ISRAELITES?

But Paul is talking about the true, spiritual remnant--

people of the nation of Israel who have been chosen of God for salvation.

Just because you and I do not have the wisdom to understand this great doctrine, let us not be guilty of:

- 1) Ignoring it, or
- 2) Denying it.

It is clearly taught in the Word of God.

Ill: The other night my wife and I were reading in the book of Acts, and we came across this interesting statement concerning the ministry of Paul and Barnabas in Antioch of Pisidia:

"And when the Gentiles heard this" (that Paul and Barnabas were going to start preaching the Gospel to them) "they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord;" (now listen to this) "and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48).

Or, take the Lord's words of encouragement to Paul in Corinth:

"For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have many people in this city" (Acts 18:10).

So he stayed there a year and a half. But where were the people when the Lord said this? They evidently had not been saved as yet.

The Lord has never done just a haphazard work. It has all been carefully planned from eternity past (cf. Eph. 1:3, 4). It is one of the most glorious of all truths for the child of God--and a truth which adds immensely to the doctrine of our security in Christ.

You do not hear the Arminians talking about election.

- B. The election of the remnant is according to grace--the grace of God (Rom. 11:5, 6).

If we are inclined to be proud about election, the terms of our election will keep us humble. It is an "election of grace."

Is this not what Isa. 1:9 actually means?

"Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been like Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah."

Who wants to be likened to these two places?

And yet, do you know that, apart from the grace of God, you and I could well be there?

How many were spared in those judgments? In Gomorrah, NONE; in Sodom, only FOUR--and one of them died on the way out.

The fact that God spared Lot can only be explained by one word: GRACE--not giving him what he deserved, and giving him what he could never deserve!

"And it by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6a).

Concl: There is a lot that God has put into a single word: the remnant.

Under the inspiration of the Spirit of God the prophet Isaiah could stand in his day and look ahead for what has now been almost 2,700 years AND PROCLAIM WITH ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY WHAT THE OUTCOME WOULD BE IN THE DAY OF THE LORD.

He could not have done that if it had all depended upon:

- 1) Israel's faithfulness to God, or
- 2) Israel's good works.

It could only be if the work were dependent upon God's faithfulness to a people that He had chosen by His grace!

Let us not miss these truths as they relate to our salvation.

The Lord will never have a time when He is without His people on the earth. And, concerning every one of them, it can be said that His purposes will be carried out to the fullest extent.