

OpenTheo

The Remnant



Isaiah: A Topical Look At Isaiah - Steve Gregg

In this discussion, Steve Gregg offers insights into the idea of "the remnant" in biblical prophecy. While the term traditionally refers to the small number of Jews who remained faithful to God amidst multiple invasions and occupations, Gregg posits that the concept extends beyond ethnicity, encompassing righteous individuals of any nation. He highlights scriptures in Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Romans to illustrate the universal nature of the remnant, as well as the qualities that define them - namely, obedience to God's laws and righteous behavior. Ultimately, he suggests that the remnant is integral to the fulfillment of God's promises and the production of the Scriptures and the Messiah.

Transcript

In several of our previous sessions in Isaiah, I've made reference to the remnant. On occasions, we'd read a verse or something and say, now this is addressed to the remnant. But we have not looked at the subject of the remnant as a topic in itself, though we certainly must if we're going to address some of the major topics in Isaiah.

We must talk about the topic of the remnant. And this is not confined to Isaiah, but to all the prophets. And therefore, having looked at it in Isaiah, we will have given ourselves a head start in understanding the other prophets as well.

I would dare say all of them. The concept of the remnant is a very important one for us to understand the relationship of Israel in the Old Testament to the church in the New Testament. There are several theories about that, depending on one's theology.

There is something called replacement theology that teaches that the church has replaced Israel in God's economy. And seen one way, I believe that. There is another theory, another view, I should say, and that is that Israel is always going to be God's chosen people, and that there is a future for Israel.

And, of course, there is a future for the church, that both the church and Israel are God's chosen people. He simply has two chosen peoples. And those who advocate this view, which I think you know is not my own, would say, well, if we do not agree with this, then we simply are going to have trouble with many of the prophecies, because there are

certain prophecies made to Israel and to Judah which have never been fulfilled to the natural Israel or to Judah.

Now, one way to deal with this, and we do this in some cases, I do this sometimes, is to spiritualize when it says Israel or Judah or Jerusalem. You've heard me say, well, I believe this refers to the spiritual Israel, the spiritual Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem, the church, a spiritual entity. And I believe that this is correct, but that bothers some people, because especially the dispensationalists who do hold out for a distinction between Israel and the church permanently, they say, well, what you do is you take all the promises and apply them to the church and all the judgments and apply them to Israel.

It's sort of like, they would say, an exegesis of convenience, that all the good things that are promised to Israel you take for the church, and all the bad things you apply to Israel. And it's almost like an arbitrary thing, and the only canon for decision-making on it is whether it's a good prophecy or a bad prophecy. If it's good, then Israel is the church.

If it's bad, then Israel is natural Israel. Now, there's a sense in which this is true in general, but not completely. There are some prophecies, positive ones, that do have application to historical Israel.

For example, when God says he's going to judge them and take them into captivity, he also says he's going to bring them out of captivity, bring them back to their land. He did that. Those prophecies of restoration are true, and they are good, and they apply to natural Israel.

But in many cases, as I have pointed out, they foreshadow a spiritual return, which applies to the spiritual Israel. Now, the simplest way to understand how the natural Israel and the spiritual Israel are to be distinguished or to be in whatever way understood vis-à-vis one another is to understand this concept of the remnant. I will tell you that I understand the remnant to be a reference to those Jews initially who were truly believers, true Jewish saints.

In every generation in the Old Testament, God had such. Sometimes there were very few. We don't know in Abraham's day how many people besides himself knew the true God.

The impression is given that no one but he did, but that's not necessarily stated, and there may be other people on the planet that knew something of the true God. For example, Job. No one knows for sure when Job lived, but there is some evidence within the book of Job that he may have lived during the time of the patriarchs, that would be Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and yet he was not a Jew.

He seems to have been of a nearby country. Rather than a Jew, he does not seem to have known the law of God, and yet he knew the God of the law, which suggests that he

lived before the time of the law, but he knew the true God. He would have to have been in God's book, obviously.

He was righteous before God. He feared God, and he would have been part of the remnant of the true saints on earth even before there was a nation Israel to be a part of. And once there was an actual nation of Israel, then there was always a portion of it that was faithful to God, and in most cases it was the smallest portion.

Usually the nation as a whole was not godly. They tended to perennially get caught up in idolatry and also sensual sins of every sort, all kinds of things that brought God's repeated judgments on them in the time of the judges and the time of the kings, and of course in the Babylonian and the Assyrian invasions, eventually in the Roman invasion as well. These are all things that happened to the nation of Israel because the majority of the Jews never lived up to their high calling.

Now this doesn't mean that the whole nation was not in some sense God's chosen people in Old Testament times. We have to understand that salvation, personal salvation, eternal life, is, as Jesus said it, knowing God and knowing Jesus Christ whom he has sent. A personal knowledge of God saves a person.

Knowing the true God is what saves a man or a woman, and therefore salvation is personal, not national. There never was a nation, an earthly nation, that everybody in it were just by virtue of being born in that nation, saved. The Jews, as a nation, never were all saved as individuals.

There were always those who went to hell in every generation out of Israel. And there were those who, I believe, were saved and went to Abram's bosom and are now in heaven. But in terms of God's earthly program, he did choose the whole nation of Israel and give them an assignment.

This assignment was to know him, to preserve the knowledge of him in the earth, eventually to produce the scriptures, eventually, even further on down, to produce the Messiah. And therefore the nation of Israel, as a national entity, was chosen by God. They were indeed the chosen people.

But chosen for what? Well, they were chosen to carry out his redemptive program in terms of earth, earthly nations. No other nation was permitted to play the role they did. And if a person was born Jewish, simply had that ancestry, of Jewish ancestry, they were in the nation of Israel and therefore they were part of that program.

But that doesn't mean they were saved. It just means they were part of that nation that had the obligation to follow the laws of God, to thereby be a light to the Gentiles, to communicate to all onlookers what the God of Israel stands for, to preserve his knowledge in the earth, as I say, eventually to produce scriptures and the Messiah.

These are important roles that Israel was chosen for.

A lot of times when we think of someone being a chosen people, we think of, you know, chosen for privilege. You know, that if someone's chosen by God, some may feel that that means they're chosen to go to heaven. Not necessarily.

They may be chosen for something else. Cyrus was God's chosen. But whether he goes to heaven or not, the Bible leaves open to question.

Jacob was chosen over Esau, but we may see both of them in heaven, or neither. It's hard to know. I think Jacob's there because God said he was the God of Jacob.

But the Bible does not indicate that Esau must necessarily be in hell, though he may well be. He is said to have been a profane person in that he sold his birthright. But in his later years, he and Jacob were seemingly reconciled and so forth.

And he may well be, may have died in faith and may be in heaven, though his people, the Edomites, were never chosen by God, nor he, for God's earthly program. And this is where we need to make a very big distinction here, between being chosen by God for an earthly program that God intended to carry out among the nations of the world, and being chosen in the sense of actually approved as individuals to go and live eternally with God, to have eternal life. The latter has always been a matter of personal faith, and the former was a matter of national identity, so that a baby Jew, a boy who was born Jewish, would be circumcised on the eighth day, even though he might not end up in heaven, he'd nonetheless have the mark of being part of the earthly people of God.

Now, that earthly people of Israel, as I said, were given an assignment. I've told you a couple times already what that assignment was. However, many of the people of the nation of Israel never kept the assignment, never fulfilled their purpose.

They never obeyed the law of God, they never even knew God. Hosea complains of this. One of the recurring themes in the book of Hosea, if you'll notice, is God's concern that his people don't know him.

Likewise, Jeremiah says that even though the stork and the swallow know their time of coming and going, Israel didn't know God. Isaiah said something like that also, you may recall, in chapter 1 and verse 3, the ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know. My people do not consider.

Israel didn't know their owner, most of them. And so the nation, as a national entity, was made up of a majority of people who didn't fulfill the purpose God had for them. But, in the nation, there was always that minority, those few who collectively were, in reality, in fact, what the whole nation was in theory.

In theory, the whole nation was the people who knew God. But, within that nation, there

were the few who really did know God. Those few were what the scripture refers to as the remnant.

The word remnant, of course, we're familiar with from things like carpet remnants and things like that, little scraps left over after a major portion of the carpet has been used, you know, just little bits that are left over. And so the remnant of God's people, often in the context of after he's judged the nation as a whole, there's a remnant that are not judged. But the thought of the prophets moves beyond that fact that there's a remnant that we're not judged, to the fact that this remnant are the ones to whom he's going to fulfill his promises.

Let me show you something. You may have seen this. I didn't teach Romans this year, but I would imagine that you may have been shown this by your teacher when you were going through Romans 9. In Psalm 50, Psalm 50 in verse 5, God says, Gather my saints together to me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

But down a little further, verse 16 says, But to the wicked, God says, what right have you to declare my statutes or to take my covenant in your mouth, seeing you hate instruction, and cast my words behind you? Now, this latter statement, obviously, is people that God does not consider to be worthy of his name. What right do you have to take my name on you, to name my covenant? Now, clearly he's not talking to Gentiles, because the Gentiles never took God's covenant on their lips. He's talking to Jews, rebellious Jews.

And certainly the description there of those who hated his instruction and so forth fits the Jews in mass during most of their history. It's quite clear that God says to a number of Jews, the wicked, among them, in chapter 50 of the Psalms, in verse 16, that they have no right to claim a covenant relationship with him. But in verse 5, he mentions those who are in covenant relationship with him, his saints, which means holy ones, separated ones, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

Now, this psalm brings out clearly that the nation of Israel had two components. Those who were, in fact, in covenant relationship with God and in his favor. And those who were of the same race, but not of the same people, really.

They were the wicked. And as far as God was concerned, they had no right to claim covenant relationship with him, and therefore, of course, no right to claim the benefits of a covenant relationship with him. What this tells us, and Paul tells us this even more clearly in Romans, is that in the nation of Israel, there never was a time when the entire nation was promised, as a national group, that they be saved.

And that all the promises of God to Israel really are only rightly claimed by that remnant of Israel who were, as I said, in fact, what the nation as a whole was only in theory. What Paul indicates is that when the Bible talks about Israel, that is, when the Old Testament

talks about Israel, especially in terms of promises made to Israel, that not all of national Israel is in view. The Israel to whom these promises apply is a small segment of the population, which is the remnant.

I realize you've studied Romans 9 not too long ago, and it will refresh your mind, but let me just quickly show you a few verses that draw this point out in Romans 9. Verses 1 through, well, we'll just read from 1 on for a bit. Paul says, I tell you the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh.

They're Jews, they're his kinsmen according to the flesh, as opposed to his spiritual brethren in the church. Who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises. Notice the promises pertain to Israel.

Of whom are the fathers, that'd be Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and so forth, and from whom according to the flesh Christ came, who is overall the eternally blessed God. Amen. Now, what Paul is saying is, I'm grieved over these people.

Israel was promised many things, including that they bring forth the Messiah according to the flesh, and they did. But what he's about to suggest here is that it would appear that these promises have not come true, because if you look at the majority of Jews, they have not come into the Messiah's promises. And therefore one might argue, well God's words then, God's promises to Israel have taken no effect.

God's promises to Israel have not happened, he hasn't fulfilled them. And in verse 6 Paul says, but it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. In other words, don't anyone make the accusation of God that his promises to Israel have not come true, just because the majority of Jews have not realized the promises and the covenant benefits.

It's not as if God's promises had not come true, as though his word had taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, and that statement is very important. He uses the word Israel two ways in one sentence.

In the second case it means natural Israel, those who are of Israel. That is, those who are descended from Jacob, the man Israel. Not all of those are really Israel, and by Israel he means the Israel to whom the covenants apply and the promises apply.

Now what he's pointing out here is true, the majority of Jewish people have never come into the promises and probably never will. But that does not nullify the faithfulness of God in promising certain things would it be accomplished to Israel, because the Israel to whom he has made this promise is not comprised of every natural Jew, but only a smaller component of them. And he illustrates this in the verses following, where he

says, Nor are they all children, because they are on the seed of Abraham.

But in Isaac your seed shall be called. That is, those who are the children of the flesh, that's natural Jews, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. And then he goes on to illustrate how that, of course, well he mentions, Abraham had many children but only one of them, though all of them were physically descended from Abraham, only one of them was really the spiritual seed, the Israel of God, and that was Isaac.

And then he goes on after this, we won't read it, to say that even Isaac's children were not all of the spiritual seed either. There were two of those, Jacob and Esau, and only one of them was of the spiritual Israel, the other was not. I mean, one was chosen and elect before their birth and the other was not.

And he doesn't take the generations any further, but one could easily do so. You can go to Jacob's children, and see he had 12 sons, and I'll bet a bunch of those are going to be in hell. Joseph's in heaven, I don't know about the rest, Judah's probably there, but Simeon and Levi and Reuben, I wouldn't give them very good odds.

And, you know, only a portion of every generation of Abraham's descendants is really the Israel of God. So that in Paul's own day he could say, and it's true now too, not all who are physically descended from Israel can really claim to be the Israel to whom the promises appertain. So God, in fact, he goes on to say, God has in fact fulfilled his promises to Israel, but you have to understand that Israel means something different than you might think.

Israel means the remnant. Israel means that portion of the Jews that were faithful to God, they are the Israel to whom the promises pertain, and none other. By the way, he calls them the children of the promise, in verse 8 here.

You might note, if you would, over in Galatians chapter 4, I don't want to get sidetracked too much, but it's too rich to ignore. Galatians 4, Paul is contrasting the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. There are Jews relating to God under both.

There are Old Testament Jews, and now there are New Testament Jews. Because Paul said elsewhere in Romans 2.28, he is not a Jew who has gone outwardly, but he is a Jew who has gone inwardly. But in Galatians 4.21, he says, Now here he's going to make the same point he was making in Romans 9. He who was of the bond woman was born according to the flesh, that is, merely, and he who was of the free woman through promise.

Which things are symbolic, for these are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, and which is Hagar. For Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabian, and corresponds to Jerusalem, which is now the natural Jews, and is in bondage with

their children under the Old Covenant. But the Jerusalem above, the church, the spiritual Jerusalem, is free, which is the mother of us all.

The church is the womb through which God brings forth his children, it is the mother of us all. For it is written, he quotes Isaiah 54.1, which we've looked at before, Now notice over in Romans 9, he said, The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise, are counted as the seed. Paul says, I'm a Jew, and I'm one of the children of the promise, because I'm a Christian.

I agree to God in the Sarah covenant, not the Hagar covenant. The free man. He says, But as he who was born according to the flesh, who in this case represents the natural Jew, Galatians 4.29, That is to say, Ishmael persecuted Isaac, when Isaac was a baby, Ishmael mocked him, so also the natural Jew mocks and persecutes the spiritual Jew, the Christian.

That was certainly the case in Paul's day. Nevertheless, what does the scripture say? Now this quotes actually what Sarah said to Abraham, but God confirmed that he should do what Sarah said in this instance. Now, what he's saying is, a Jew or a Gentile, for that matter, can try to relate to God under the terms of the old covenant or the new.

Those Jews who are the natural Jews and not Christians, are children of the bondwoman, the old covenant. They are children of the flesh, but it says that the children of the bondwoman or the children of the flesh will not be heirs with the children of the free woman. Now, through all this, of course, he's using Ishmael and Isaac, Sarah and Hagar as examples.

But the examples are of the natural Jew, who relates to God only in terms of his fleshly descent from Abraham, and the spiritual Jew, who is a child of the promise, part of the remnant. Now, let me make this clear, that when Jesus came, he did not start something different than what was there before. He brought some new important promises, new dynamics, and a new life.

But he didn't start a new organization. He just took the remnant of Israel of his day and called them to himself. And those who were of that generation, the remnant of Israel, the faithful among the Jews, became disciples of Jesus Christ, later known as Christians.

On the day of Pentecost, there were 120 of them, then 3,000, then later 5,000, then we lose track. Eventually, there were 144,000 or more. And so, the remnant of Israel was simply the same as those Jews who were faithful to God in his generation, and to be faithful to God at that time meant to honor the Messiah.

How could a person be a faithful follower of God and reject the Messiah? It's clear that being of the remnant of Israel in the first century meant being a Jew who believed in Jesus, and that makes him a Christian. There's no Jew or Gentile in Christ, and that's

what became clear later on, because after a while, this remnant was joined by Gentiles. Eventually, the Gentiles outnumbered them, but that's not consequential for determining the identity of the group.

The group that we call the church today is simply the remnant of Israel, and a whole bunch of Gentiles grafted into that. Many of the Jews were broken off, many of the branches were broken off, and we all, wild olive branches, were grafted in. But the point that Paul makes when he talks that way in Romans 11 is that the remnant of Israel, in his day, were the Jews who were still attached to the olive tree and had not been broken off, those who believed in Christ.

Gentiles who believed in Christ had become part of the same tree, and partake of the same root and fatness of the olive tree, he said. The roots are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and we have become part of that faithful remnant. I hope that's not too confusing.

What I'm saying is, this sounds like replacement theology, as some people call it, because it's saying the church receives the promises that were offered to Israel. It's not so much replacement, it's continuation and fulfillment. There never was a time when the promises that God made applied to anyone other than the remnant, and the church is just another way of saying the remnant.

The church is the remnant. Whatever Jewish people are in the remnant today, as we stand here right now, whatever contemporary Jews of our generation are in the Jewish remnant are Christian Jews. They're in the church.

They're born-again Jews. And there's no distinction between them and us who are not Jews, because we've been grafted in with them. This is the New Testament teaching on it, and it grows quite organically out of the Old Testament teaching of the remnant.

Now, this idea of the remnant we will find throughout Isaiah and the other prophets. Welcome back, brother. I realize you got stranded.

Oh, that's all right. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

It was 1.30 yesterday. That's why the mistake was made. So, we come to Isaiah now to look at the remnant concept in Isaiah, and we'll see that much of what Isaiah says about the remnant is quoted by Paul as being about the church.

And so we will have no doubt that not only the New Testament, but the Old Testament gives us the church as the true Israel of God, the true remnant, faithful remnant, to whom the promises apply. This is not stealing from Israel the promises of God and giving them to the church. This is what dispensations usually say.

Oh, you are a millennialist. You steal from Israel the promises of God and give them to the church. But I'd turn around and say, well, listen, you steal from the church the

promises and give them to Israel.

Now, who's right in this, and who's wrong? Yeah, John? Said that very thing, right? Stealing the promises. Yeah, you can see I've talked to them. I've talked to them.

I know what they say. Well, let me tell you how we can determine who's right and who's wrong in that particular dispute. Look at 2 Corinthians 1 and 20.

2 Corinthians 1, verse 20. Paul said, For all the promises of God, that would include all the promises God ever made in the Old Testament or whatever, in Him, that is in Christ, are yes, and in Him, amen. Now, that's a strange way of saying it, but it's the same way of saying they've been affirmed.

They have come true. They've been fulfilled. All the promises of God in Him are yes, and in Him, amen, to the glory of God through us.

Through us who? Us Christians. Paul didn't mean us Jews. How could it be said of the Jews that all the promises of God have been fulfilled in Christ? They're not in Christ.

Those who are in Christ have realized all the promises of God because all the promises of God are yea and amen in Him. Through us, the church. This is how Paul understood it.

Therefore, if God intends that the children of the free woman get all the inheritance, and the children of the bondwomen are cast out and will not be heir with the children of the free woman, if God has declared that to be so, then how can it be that we, the remnant to whom the promises were made, are said to be stealing promises from somebody else? The somebody that they were made to in the first place was the remnant of Israel. And all we've done is tagged along with them. And we're a part of them now.

The Jews who were unbelievers, let's put it this way, all the Jews in Jesus' day who rejected Him were unbelievers. And all who accepted Him were Christians and became Christians. And in any generation, all the Jews who were unbelievers had no claim to the promises of God any more than Jews who are unbelievers today do.

By the way, Jesus certainly didn't indicate that the scribes and Pharisees were going to be in heaven with Him. He said, you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, how can you escape the damnation of hell? It's very clear that being Jewish didn't make them heirs of the promises. Okay, let's look at Isaiah now.

Now, the idea of the remnant develops a bit. Sometimes remnant in Isaiah seems to mean little more than survivors of the Holocaust. Survivors of the judgment that he's talking about.

And, you know, it's like the majority are swept away in judgment, but there's a little remnant left over. Now, this, in these cases, at least the first case, one could argue, this

just applies to those who are not wiped out in the Assyrian invasion, because many Jews were definitely wiped out and a smaller number survived than didn't. But I think that we have to understand survival here, though in the first instance it might look like it's talking about surviving some overwhelming Holocaust that was going on, it really applies to surviving eternally, having eternal life, and surviving the judgment of God generally.

I'll show you how this is so. In Isaiah chapter 1, verses 7 through 9, Isaiah 1, 7 through 9, says, Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire, strangers devour your land in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a hut in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

Now, this clearly has the look of applying to Jerusalem alone standing in the Assyrian invasion. You know, it's like the only standing building left in what's otherwise uncivilized, undeveloped, or whatever, you know, countryside. But, he says in verse 9, unless the Lord of hosts had left us a very small remnant, we would have become like Sodom and we would have been made like Gomorrah.

I mentioned in one of our introductory lectures that this technically means that if God hadn't left a remnant, none of us would have been left. Which is sort of a truism, you know, if none of us had been left, then none of us would be left. You know, if God hadn't left a few of us, there wouldn't be any of us.

But the idea is that he has come awfully close to making us like Sodom and Gomorrah. We've come dangerously close to being completely annihilated, except God has left us a very small remnant. Now, I dare say, if we had no New Testament to guide us in this, I would see nothing more in this statement than a reference to the survivors of the Assyrian invasion of Judea or Judah.

However, the New Testament gives us a fuller meaning to this. We were looking a moment ago at Romans 9, and that is where Paul quotes this very verse, Isaiah 1.9. In Romans 9, Paul is pointing out that as in every generation, there was only a remnant of the children of Abraham who were really God's elect. So now it is true, although that elect is Jews and Gentiles, he points out.

If you look at verse 23, Romans 9.23, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy. This would be the remnant that received the glorious inheritance and privileges, which he had prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom he has called not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. Now, this remnant is not of Jews only, but also Gentiles, he says.

As he says in Hosea, I will call them my people who were not my people, and her beloved who was not beloved, and it should come to pass in the place where it was said to them, you are not my people, they will be called the sons of the living God, reference to

Gentiles. Verse 27, and Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel, though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved. Now that's a reference to Isaiah chapter 10, which we'll look at in a few moments.

Verse 29, and as Isaiah said before, unless the Lord of Sabbath had left us a seed, and actually in the Hebrews, a remnant, but he's quoting from the Septuagint that says a seed, we would have become like Sodom and we would have been made like Gomorrah. Now Paul is quoting Isaiah 1.9, and he's saying that is what we see fulfilled now, essentially. The majority of Jews are lost, but a remnant of them have been saved, have come to Christ, Paul being a chief representative of that class.

He points that out also in Romans chapter 11, chapter 11.1 of Romans, I say then, has God cast away his people? Certainly not. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away his people whom he foreknew.

Now see, since Paul is writing off most of the Jews in his discussion, you're saying they're lost and they've failed to come into the righteousness of God and they're going to hell, someone might think, well, then has God cast off all the Jews? Has God cast off his people? And Paul says, come on now, how could God ever cast off his people? But let's define his people. His people are those whom he foreknew, the remnant. He spoke about them before, he foreknew them.

In fact, back in Romans 8.29, he says, whom he foreknew, he also did predestinate to be conformed into the image of his son. That's Romans 8.29. The ones that God foreknew are the elect, of which Paul was one. And he said, listen, you think God's cast off all the Jews? No, I'm a Jew, I'm saved.

He's cast off most of them, but not all. The ones that he foreknew, the remnant, he has saved. And he hasn't cast off.

And in verse 2 there, Romans 11.2, Or do you not know that the scripture says of Elijah how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life. But what does the divine response say to him? I have reserved for myself 7,000 men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Even so, then, at this present time, Paul says, there is a remnant, according to the election of grace.

So in answer to your question, has God cast off his people? He says, no. He's cast off those who never were his people. They were Jews, but they were never his people.

They never had faith. They were never part of the remnant. He's cast them off, but he would never have cast off his people whom he foreknew.

There is a remnant now, as there was in Elijah's day and in every generation of Jews. There's always been a remnant who were of the election. And he says, so is it now.

But it's quite clear that Paul intends us to understand that remnant is those Jews who have been saved. And then later in the same chapter, he compares them to olive branches that have remained on an olive tree after most of the branches have been broke off. They're the remnant branches.

Then he goes on to say that we Gentiles have been grafted on. And so we are now on the olive tree, too. We're now part of that remnant of Israel to whom the promises are made.

Okay, so this first reference in Isaiah to the remnant, Isaiah 1.9, which indicates it's a very small remnant. Had he not left us a very small remnant, we would have become like Sodom and would have been made like Gomorrah. Although it looks like simply a reference to survivors of a war, Paul applies it to the idea in principle is that in any generation, only a small number of Jews will really be saved, only a small remnant.

In Isaiah's day, they were the ones who survived that holocaust, but that's just typical of any generation of Jews. Some survived holocaust, some didn't live to see holocaust, but there were only a few saved ever out of the great number of Israelites. Over in chapter 4 of Isaiah, we have what I earlier identified as the second golden age passage in Isaiah, chapter 2 containing the first one and chapter 4, the second one.

Verses 2 through 6. In that passage, it says in verses 2 through 4, In that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing for those of Israel who have escaped. Now again, it sounds like the survivors, the ones who escaped a holocaust. However, these ones who have escaped have escaped the 70 AD holocaust, as we shall learn.

And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion, that is the remnant, those who have in fact escaped. When Jerusalem fell, those citizens of Jerusalem who were Christians did escape. And they are the ones who are left in the true Zion, they comprise the spiritual Zion even though they didn't live on physical Mount Zion anymore because that was desolated.

But those who are left in the spiritual Zion, and he who remains in Jerusalem, that would be the spiritual Jerusalem, will be called holy. Everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem, when the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning. So those who are left, they'll be holy people.

They'll be the ones who are worthy of the name Zion in Jerusalem. They'll be all that's left of that. Now, this idea of the remnant referring to those who have survived, let me show you in a couple of other passages in Ezekiel that the word remnant is used of that category also.

In Ezekiel chapter 6, in verse 8, well in verse 7 it says, The slain shall fall in your midst and you shall know that I am the Lord. But verse 8 says, Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have some who escape the sword among the nations when you are scattered through the countries. So here the word remnant also seems to speak of those few who survive when the sword of Babylon ravages Jerusalem.

In chapter 14 of Ezekiel also, Ezekiel 14, verses 21 and 22, says, For thus says the Lord God, How much more shall it be when I send my four severe judgments on Jerusalem, the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence, to cut off man and beast from it? Yet, behold, there shall be left in it a remnant who will be brought out, both sons and daughters. Surely they will come out to you and you will see their ways and their doings. Now, this remnant in Ezekiel 14, 22 has survived what verse 21 calls the four sore judgments of God, which are the sword, famine, wild beasts and pestilence.

When we later study the book of Revelation, we'll find that there are references to a quarter of the earth's population, a quarter of the inhabitants of the land, who are killed by sword, famine, wild beasts and pestilence, the four sore judgments. And that, in a passage which I personally understand to be about 70 AD, it actually uses the same four sore judgments that Ezekiel talks about here, which no doubt apply to Babylon. That is, the Babylonian wipe-out of Jerusalem.

But he applies those same four judgments to the second instance of the same, which was by the Romans. And there will be a remnant saved from that too. And in Isaiah, it's quite clear that that remnant in his thought develops into the church.

Look at chapter 7 of Isaiah. One of the themes of Isaiah that comes up again and again is that the remnant will return. In fact, one of Isaiah's own children was given that name, Shir Jashub.

In Isaiah 7, 3, God said to Isaiah, Go now and meet Ahaz, you and Shir Jashub, your son, at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool. Shir Jashub we know nothing else about, except that he's mentioned as Isaiah's son in this one verse. However, Shir Jashub means the remnant shall return.

And as over in the next chapter, chapter 8, in verse 18, Isaiah says, Here am I and the children whom the Lord has given me. We are for signs and wonders in Israel. His two children, Shir Jashub and Mehershal Elhashbaz, both have symbolic names, which characterize as signs or attention-getters.

His message had two prongs. One, Mehershal Elhashbaz means haste to the spoiled. Make haste to the booty.

It talks about plundering and destruction of the old Israel. But his other son, the older one, Shir Jashub, means the remnant shall return. And speaks of, after that plunder,

there will be a remnant surviving and returning.

But returning from where to where? You see, one gets the impression in many of the passages that the remnant refers to those who come back after the Babylonian exile, or who come back after the Assyrians have swept away most of Israel. In other words, one could easily get the impression that return speaks of geographical movement, from the land of captivity back to the land of Israel. And, well, it could if we didn't have light from Scripture telling us otherwise.

If you look over at Isaiah chapter 10, Isaiah chapter 10, verses 20 through 23. Isaiah 10, 20 through 23. And it shall come to pass in that day that the remnant of Israel, and such as have escaped of the house of Jacob, will never again depend on him who defeated him, but will depend on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

The remnant will return. The remnant of Jacob to the mighty God. For though your people, O Israel, be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them will return.

The destruction decreed shall overflow with righteousness, for the Lord God of hosts will make a determined end in the midst of all the land. Now, the determined end in the midst of all the land, no doubt has its ultimate fulfillment of that end, that permanent end, that came about with the final overthrow of Jerusalem in the generation following the death of Christ, and for that very crime it was a judgment. But notice how it speaks of the remnant here.

Now, it talks about the remnant returning. Many people believe that in the last days, and many of them who think this way think we're in those days, that God has said that a remnant of Israel will return back to the land of Israel. And as a matter of fact, some Jews have returned to the land of Israel.

They see that as a fulfillment of prophecy. The Apostle Paul, however, was familiar with this verse and fond of it, and didn't interpret it that way. When he quoted verse 22, we saw it a moment ago, because he quoted it in Romans 9, and we read the passage where he quoted it.

Verse 22 here says, For though your people, O Israel, be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them will return. Paul quoted it, yet a remnant of them will be saved. He replaced the word return with the term be saved.

And it was quite clear in the context of Romans 9, he means be saved in Jesus, be saved Christians, go to heaven. The vast majority of the Jews will not be saved, and he used this verse to prove it. In other words, he understood Isaiah's prophecy to have to do with salvation in Christ, though the language was that of returning.

But notice, if you would, verse 21 here, Isaiah 10, 21. The remnant will return. That's what Shir Jashub, his son's name is.

The remnant will return. But to where and from where? Look at the next line. The remnant of Jacob to the mighty God.

They're returning to God. They're not returning to the land of Israel. The remnant is returning to God.

And notice, what God? The mighty God. Why is that a significant term? The previous chapter, chapter 9, verse 6, says, For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder. His name will be called, wonderful counselor, mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Now, in Isaiah 9, 6, Jesus Christ is called mighty God. In the very next chapter, it speaks of a remnant of the Jews returning to the mighty God. In other words, to Jesus.

The return of the remnant is not geographical. It is spiritual. It is a portion of the Jews, the minority, the remnant, not the majority, come to Christ and become Christians.

Therefore, Paul was completely within his rights to quote verse 22 as a reference to their salvation in Christ rather than some kind of a return from exile. So when he said, Though the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, meaning very numerous, as God promised Abraham they would be, yet a remnant of them will be saved. That is, as Christians, they'll be saved in the church, in Christ.

Okay, let's look at another verse here. Isaiah 27, 12. Now, Isaiah 27, we took it as part of a larger portion, 24 through 27.

We rushed through chapter 27 because by the time we got there, we had covered 24, 25, 26, and we were about out of time. So I made very few comments. I figured that most of it would be self-explanatory in view of the points we had made in earlier lectures about much of the language there.

But if you'll note it in Isaiah 27, I said I believe that has to do with the church age. Verse 12 says, It shall come to pass in that day, verse 12, that the Lord will thresh from the channel of the river to the brook of Egypt, and you'll be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel. Now, the gathering of the children of Israel one by one suggests he's not taking them as a whole.

He's selecting from among them. From the river Euphrates down to the brook of Egypt, those are the boundaries of the land of Israel according to the 15th chapter of Genesis. Those are the boundaries promised to Abram that his offspring would live in.

And throughout the length of the land, in other words, God will select one by one, not family by family, not tribe by tribe, not nation as a whole, but as individuals, his remnant will be selected out of there. And so that we can see is a reference to the remnant also. Now, there are several passages in Isaiah.

We've seen a couple of them in our past lectures, but we'll look at all of them again real quickly here. Where God speaks of the remnant as if they were the gleaning fruit, the gleanings left over after a general harvest. Now, the harvest in most of these passages refers to a holocaust.

God comes through, sweeps through with the Assyrians, with the Babylonians, with the Romans, with some hostile army, and decimates the nation. The population is wiped out, but there's a few left. And the few left are likened to the gleanings.

And the gleanings would refer to heads of grain that have fallen out of the arms of the reapers, or in their haste they've left a head of grain untaken as they've gone by, or clusters of grapes or olives or something like that too. After the general harvesting, there's a few items left over for the poor. According to the law, the gleanings were to be left for the poor.

And there are a number of places in Isaiah where the survivors or the remnant are likened to the gleaning grapes after the general holocaust. In chapter 6 of Isaiah, in verse 13, this chapter actually closes a lengthy prediction of judgment upon Israel. And it closes this way in verse 13, but yet a tenth, that is a very small remnant, a small part, will be left in it and will return and be for consuming.

The imagery is like fruit, God's fruit. He'll have some fruit for him to consume, for him to take delight in. Even though he's going to wipe out the nation as a whole, a tenth will be left in it.

That a tenth being not a statistical fraction, but just a very small portion, a very small remnant. As a terebinth tree or as an oak whose stump remains in it when it's cut down, so the holy seed shall be its stump. The tree will look like it's totally dead.

It'll be cut down. However, there's some life left in the stump. It is capable of sending forth green shoots later on because there's some life left in it in the form of this remnant that's left behind.

Another passage that speaks this way is the 17th chapter of Isaiah. Isaiah 17, 4 through 8. You'll probably remember this. We read it under another heading in a previous lecture.

But Isaiah 17, verses 4 through 8 say, In that day it shall come to pass that the glory of Jacob will wane and the fatness of his flesh will grow lean. It shall be as when the harvester gathers the grain and reaps the heads with his arm. It shall be as he who gathers the heads of grain in the valley of Rephaim, yet gleaning grapes will be left in it, like the shaking of an olive tree.

Two or three olives at the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in its most fruitful branches, says the Lord God. In that day a man will look to his Maker and his eyes will have respect for the Holy One of Israel. He will not look to the altars, meaning the pagan

altars that they'd had in the land before, the work of his hands.

He will not respect what his fingers have made, nor the wooden images, nor the incense altars. What he means is that those few olives that have survived the general shaking, that are still attached, will be the most fruitful ones. They'll be on the most fruitful branches.

And those olives, those people, will no longer be idolaters. Those people will look to God instead. This will be a faithful remnant that survived the general pruning or harvesting.

Chapter 24, which we've looked at in detail in a previous lecture, but just a verse or two here. Isaiah 24, verses 13 through 15. It says, When it shall be thus in the midst of the land, by the way, this chapter I said about the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by the Romans.

When it shall be thus in the midst of the land among the people, it shall be like the shaking of an olive tree, or like the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. So, the same idea that we saw in chapter 17. Just the gleanings left over.

A small remnant saved. In chapter 65. Isaiah 65, verses 8 through 10.

It says, Thus says the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it, so will I do for my servants' sake that I may not destroy them all. I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, that would be a reference to the remnant, and from Judah an heir of my mountains. My elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

Now, this is a passage from which Paul could have received the insight that it's the elect, it's the remnant, it's those who are the true heirs of the promises. The heir that will inherit the heritage of the Lord is the elect. But he says they are there because he did not destroy them all.

The suggestion is he destroyed most of them. But because there were some good grapes there, he left a few without destroying the whole vineyard. In that same chapter, verse 13.

It says, Therefore, thus says the Lord God. Now, he's talking to Israel, but he says, Behold, my servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry. Behold, my servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty.

Behold, my servants shall rejoice, but you shall be ashamed. Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but you shall cry for sorrow of heart and wail for grief of spirit. Now, you may see some similarities in that passage to Jesus' Beatitudes as recorded in Luke, chapter 6, beginning at verse 20, because Jesus said, Blessed are those who are poor.

But later, he said, Woe to those who are rich. He said to the rich, you will, you have your consolation, I forget exactly how he put it in that case. But to the poor, he said, yours is the kingdom of God.

But he went on to say, And blessed are you hungry, for you shall be filled. But he said, Woe to you who are full, because you shall be hungry. He said, Blessed are you who mourn now, or weep now, you shall laugh.

He said, Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn. That set of Beatitudes sounds very much like this. My servants shall eat, but you'll be hungry.

My servants shall drink, but you'll be thirsty. Behold, my servants shall rejoice, but you'll be ashamed. My servants shall sing for joy of heart, but you'll cry for sorrow of heart and wail for grief of spirit.

What's being said here? He's talking to the nation of Israel in general. You're going to wail. You're going to be hungry.

You're going to be thirsty. You're going to be left unblessed. But my servants, I'll bless them.

Who are they? They're the remnant. Those in Israel who are his true servants, he will care for. The others he'll judge.

Now, there are a number of passages in Isaiah that focus on what constitutes a member of the remnant, what the character is of those who belong to this category. It's clear that the promises are only made to them, but they are defined in terms of character and spiritual attributes. If you look at chapter 33, for example, Isaiah 33-2, actually this whole chapter is a prayer of Isaiah in which he sort of takes the position of being one of the remnant, because he was, and he says we, we, we a lot, but the things he says can only really apply to the remnant.

He says in chapter 33-2, O Lord, be gracious to us. We have waited for you. Be their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.

Now, when he says we have waited for you, that certainly wasn't true of the majority of the Jews of his generation, but there were some who did. There were some who waited on the Lord, those who trusted in the Lord, who hoped in the Lord. They were the ones who were in the minority, but they were nonetheless there, and Isaiah was one of them.

In the same chapter, verses 14-17, he says, this is Isaiah 33-14-17, The sinners in Zion are afraid. These are not the remnant. Fearfulness has seized the hypocrites.

Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? They say. Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? This would be the judgment of God. Who's going to survive the

judgment of God? Does that sound familiar? We ran across that very question in Malachi.

Who shall endure? Who can endure the day of his appearing? And who shall stand? I pointed out to you that the same question was asked in Revelation 6, about the same holocaust. Who will be able to stand? The answer was the remnant, the 144,000 Jewish believers who escaped the city before it fell. Well, here are the same questions asked.

Who, the hypocrites and the wicked, who are Jewish, they're in Zion, but they are afraid. They're coming under judgment, and they say, well, who in the world can escape this? Who can survive this? Who can stand? Who can live in the presence of a God who is a consuming fire? The answer is given, however, in verse 15. He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly.

He who despises the gain of oppressions. Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes. In other words, he's emphatic in refusing a bribe.

Waves it away. Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed. This doesn't mean he's trying to live in a Pollyanna world where he doesn't know that such things go on.

It means that he will not participate or even listen to a plot to participate in a bloody deed. And shuts his eyes from seeing evil. He will dwell on high.

His place of defense will be the fortress of rocks. Bread will be given to him. His water will be sure.

That sounds very much like what we just looked at in chapter 65. My servant shall eat, but you'll be hungry. My servant shall drink, but you'll be thirsty.

The hypocrites, the sinners in Zion, will be hungry and thirsty. But the remnant will eat and will drink. Their bread will be given to him.

His water will be sure. Why? Well, look at the kind of person we're talking about here. The one who walks uprightly and righteously.

Doesn't make money by oppressing poor people. Won't take a bribe. Were there people in Israel like that? Some.

Isaiah was one of them. Micah must have been another one. He was contemporary.

And Hezekiah even seemed to be of that class. But they were certainly the minority. And here we have, as I say, the character description of the remnant.

You may remember that this passage we just read, Isaiah 33 is very much like one of the psalms, a very short psalm, 15, which says... Well, let me turn to it because there's actually two psalms that are quite similar in this respect. Psalm 15 also asks a similar question and answers it in a similar way. Psalm 15 says, Lord, who may abide in your

tabernacle? That is, stay there.

Who's going to continue there? Who may dwell in your holy hill? The answer, he who walks uprightly and works righteousness, speaks the truth in his heart. He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the Lord. He who swears to his own hurt and does not change.

He who does not put out his money at usury and does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved. You can see great similarity there between that and the passage we just read.

There's a shorter passage of the same type in Psalm 24, verses 3 through 6. Psalm 24, 3 through 6, asks the question that answers it. Who may ascend to the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully, he shall receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is Jacob, the true Jacob.

This remnant who fit this description, they are the true Jacob. This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face. Now, this is interesting because Jacob is here defined as the remnant.

Jacob is obviously a synonym for Israel. Now, different translations render that last verse a little differently. And we won't fight over the way it should be rendered.

But the point I'd make is that there are several passages of the same type. Psalm 15, Psalm 24. These basically point out that there is a class within the larger group of Israel, there is a class of those who stand out for their integrity, for their piety, and so forth.

Does it read differently in yours? Okay, I didn't know because I know that some translations are different. Okay, so Isaiah 33 also describes that remnant in terms of their godly character. So it's not just an eeny, meeny, miny, moe kind of choice of the remnant.

It's not an election based on nothing. It's an election of those who have a heart for God. Okay, chapter 51 of Isaiah also describes the remnant in terms of their character, I think.

First of all, Isaiah 51, verses 1 and 2. 51, 1 and 2. He's talking to the small remnant of those who really do follow after righteousness. They were few and far between in his day. And those who really did seek the Lord, he says, well, don't be discouraged, think of Abraham.

I called him all by himself. He was a pretty small remnant too. He was all by himself, him and his family only.

That was a small group. He seemed like the lone ranger, just like you sometimes do. In a religious world, if you really love God, you stand out like a sore thumb.

Sometimes you feel like you're the only one there, like Elijah did. But he says, think of Abraham. Look to Abraham and Sarah.

Think of them. I called him alone. He had to stand alone against everybody.

He was the only guy. He had no fellowship at all with people of like minds. But he says, I did increase him.

I blessed him and increased him. And that remnant did and does grow. Now, in the same chapter, Isaiah 51, verse 7 and verse 8, Listen to me, you who know righteousness, you people in whose heart is my law, clearly the remnant, do not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their revilings.

For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool. But my righteousness will be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation. Again, encouraging those few righteous ones who know righteousness and who fear him or in whose heart is his law.

Now, that statement, in whose heart is my law, distinctly connects it with Christians. Because Jeremiah said that the new covenant would be characterized by this very thing, that I will write my law in their hearts and put my words in their inward parts. Jeremiah 31, verse 32 and 33, it's actually Jeremiah 31, verses 31 through 34, is that promise that the new covenant will be one in which God writes his laws in their hearts.

Well, he's addressing those who have his word in their hearts. That'd be us under the new covenant. He says, don't be afraid of men.

Don't fear men. They're only temporary. They're like a garment that a moth is going to eat up.

Okay? Another place where the quality of the character of the remnant is determined, is defined in terms of their righteousness and their behavior, is chapter 57, verse 15. Isaiah 57, verse 15, God says, Thus says the high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place with him also who has a contrite and humble spirit to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones. Those who have humble and contrite spirit.

The word contrite is a word that we don't know much about outside the Bible. I mean, we don't use it much in English. Contrite literally means in the Hebrew, crushed, small.

A person who's got a broken spirit. A person whose pride and selfishness is broken and who's submissive to God and humble. Okay? That's the kind of person God dwells with.

That's the nature of the remnant to whom his promises apply and who are the children of his family. A similar verse like that is in Isaiah 66, the final chapter of Isaiah. Isaiah 66, a couple of different verses here.

If you look at verses 1 and 2, first of all, it says, Thus says the Lord, Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool. Where is the house that you will build me? And where is the place of my rest? For all those things my hand has made. And all those things exist, says the Lord.

But on this one will I look. On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit and who trembles at my word. Now, that's a description of the faithful remnant.

The one who is poor, of a contrite spirit, and trembles at his word. That is, fears God. Lives in the fear of God.

There are many people in the religious community who hear the word of God every week preached in the pulpit. Or they may read it, or they may watch or listen to religious broadcasting, or read religious periodicals, and they may, in one way or another, hear the word of God. They're exposed to the word of God, even sometimes on billboards as you drive down the road.

There's sometimes verses of scripture. But they don't live it. They don't live it and it never occurs to them to live it.

This is something that preachers often are amazed to learn once they get out of seminary and into the pulpit. That congregations have this almost supernatural capacity to hear the word of God, to absorb truth, to be confronted with error, to see and be convinced of what God wants them to do and to not change, and to do nothing about it, and to act as if it was just the word of man. But that's not the remnant.

They may be in the churches, but they're not in the church. They're not in the body of Christ. The remnant is described as those who tremble at his words.

And that means that when God gives orders, they say, Yes, sir. And that's not a word from man. That's a word from God.

And so, if we want to be in the remnant, I guess we ought to pay attention to what God says defines those who are in the remnant. By the way, this particular passage, Isaiah 66, 1 and 2, is quoted by Stephen just before his own death. Stephen was brought to trial partly on charges that he said that Jesus would destroy the temple and would set up a new system contrary to the laws of Moses.

And those who claimed that he said these things accused him of blaspheming against the temple and against Moses. So, in his sermon, which he gave in Acts chapter 7, he indicated that he was not guilty of blasphemy against the temple because the temple is

not God. And blasphemy against the temple is a misnomer.

You can blaspheme God, but you can't blaspheme that which is not God. And he pointed out that the Jews' very attitude toward the temple was idolatrous. That they thought of the temple as so divine.

They thought of the temple as the only place God could dwell. And in his sermon, he pointed out that God appeared to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees. That wasn't in Jerusalem.

And God was with Joseph in Egypt. That wasn't in Jerusalem. And God was with Moses in the wilderness.

That wasn't in Jerusalem. God was all those places. Wherever there were people who feared God and trembled at his word, God was there.

And God didn't dwell in temples made with hands. He dwelt among those so described here. Now, he actually quoted, in defense of his thesis, verse 1 here.

Heaven is my throne. Earth is my footstool. Where is the house that you will build me? He quoted that in Acts chapter 7 and verses 49 and 50.

Now, what's interesting, of course, is that Stephen had apparently been predicting that Jesus was going to destroy the temple. Which did happen in 70 A.D. And the remnants that survived that, that is where God now lives. Now that there's no temple in Jerusalem, where does God live now? Well, he inhabits eternity.

He also inhabits the humble and the contrite ones who tremble at his word. Which is the church. In the same chapter, Isaiah 66, verse 5 says, Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at his word.

Your brethren who hated you, who cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy. But they shall be ashamed. Then he goes on to describe the destruction of Jerusalem.

Now, he speaks to that remnant that he has defined in verse 2. He speaks to them in verse 5, those who tremble at his word. And he tells them that they were hated by their brethren. That was by the Jews who were not of the remnant.

The Jews who were not of God, but were the children of the devil. He says, they said, let the Lord be glorified. In other words, they talked real religious.

But they weren't. They'll be ashamed, they'll be judged, even though they talk like they're religious. Isaiah elsewhere said, these people draw near to me with their mouth.

But in their heart, they're far from me. Here's an example. Those who hate you, those

who hate the remnant, they talk as if they're devoted to God.

Let God be glorified. In fact, there's a case in the New Testament that's quite close to a fulfillment of this. In John 9, in the story of the man born blind, whom Jesus healed, he was brought before the religious authorities.

And they kept inquiring of him. You know, how did this happen to you? What procedure did this man do to heal you and so forth? Because they were trying to find some way to nail Jesus for healing on the Sabbath, as if he did some work, but he didn't do any. He just told the man to go wash the mud out of his eyes.

That's not exactly work. But in the process of their interrogation, because they were not satisfied with the answers they were getting, they said in John 9, in verse 24, unfortunately I'm looking at Luke 9, let me see here. In John 9, in verse 24, they called again the man who was blind, and they said to him, give God the glory.

We know that this man, meaning Jesus, is a sinner. Because they actually said, give God the glory. And it says in Isaiah 66, those who hate you, you remnant.

And this blind man was of the remnant. He worshipped Jesus when he met him. Those who hate you say, let God be glorified.

The same thing. They actually did say something quite like that. So what's being pointed out here is that the remnant who really tremble at God's word can pretty much expect opposition from those who just talk religion.

They talk religious. They draw near to God with their mouth, but they're far in their hearts. And I guess what we can learn from this is that not only are not most religious people really in the remnant, but further, most people who talk religious don't even tolerate the remnant.

They hate the remnant. And many people I know who just sought to live godly lives, tried to just live by the scripture, who tremble at God's word, and just say, well, if Jesus said that, I'll do it. No matter how unconventional it seems, no matter how much that puts me to stick out like a sore thumb in my church, I'm just going to do what Jesus said.

I've met many of these people, and invariably they say, you know, the most persecution I get is from the Christians. The people in the church. And that's exactly what this indicates should be anticipated.

Okay, now, I said earlier that all the promises of God apply to the remnant. Let's look at what promises there are to the remnant. In Isaiah, look at Isaiah chapter 45.

Isaiah chapter 45, in verse 17, Isaiah says, But Israel shall be saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation. You shall not be ashamed or disgraced forever and ever. Now, this

statement, Israel shall be saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation, is very possibly the verse that Paul has in mind.

In Romans 11, 26 where he says, Thus all Israel shall be saved. In other words, in fulfillment of God's promises, all Israel is in fact being saved. But you have to understand, not all are of Israel, not all are Israel who are of Israel.

In Romans 11, 26, you remember the passage, you covered it recently in Romans. He says, I don't want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brethren. This is verse 25.

That blindness in part has happened to Israel to the fullness of the Gentiles becoming, and thus all Israel will be saved. And by saying thus all Israel will be saved, he's practically quoting this line. Israel will be saved.

He's essentially saying, yes, there is a promise of God that Israel will be saved. But it will be in this way that that promise is fulfilled. How? By a portion of Israel and a portion of the Gentiles coming in.

And in this way, the promise is fulfilled that Israel will be saved. That's anyway what I think is likely. I think likely that he's thinking of this verse when he says that.

Because the true Israel is in fact promised salvation. Another thing, the true Israel is to be planted while others will be plucked up. In Isaiah 61, verse 3, we see certainly a description of the remnant in Israel.

The remnant of the saved people of God. In Isaiah 61, verse 3, it says, to console those who mourn in Zion. That's not everybody in Zion, but that portion who mourn.

Jesus said, blessed are you who mourn. His disciples he was referring to. To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.

So the promise to these who mourn in Zion, to the remnant, is that they will be planted by the Lord. They will be trees of righteousness. That means they will produce fruit, which is righteousness.

Trees of apples are trees that produce apples. Trees of righteousness produce righteousness. And God will be glorified in them by them bearing fruit.

Jesus said in John 15, when he told his disciples, he was the vine and they were branches, he said, in this my Father is glorified when you produce much fruit. I forget what verse number that is. I think it might be verse 8, but I'm not positive.

John 15. Anyway, the production of the fruit of righteousness is to bring glory to God. So it is the remnant that will glorify God by producing the fruit of righteousness.

They will be trees planted by God, which produce as their fruit righteousness. They are trees of righteousness. In chapter 37, another promise of a similar sort, in fact identical, not identical wording, but same promise.

Isaiah chapter 37, verses 31 and 32, says, the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant and those who escape from Mount Zion, and the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. So there is a remnant of Israel who produces the fruit.

They will take root downward because they are the planting of the Lord and they will produce fruit upward because they are trees of righteousness. Just the same promise in different words. Now, one of the most wonderful things that is promised to the remnant is that they have cradle to grave coverage.

This is something that Hillary Clinton has declared she'd like to give every American, but I don't need it, I already have it. I don't have any insurance coverage, but I have cradle to the grave protection if I'm in this remnant, because if you'll look with me at chapter 46 of Isaiah, a promise that he makes to the remnant, Isaiah 46, verses 3 and 4. Listen to me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel. Here's a promise made to the remnant.

Who have been upheld by me from birth, who have been carried from the womb, even to your old age I am he, even to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you. He says, I've carried you since you were babies, I'll carry you until you're old with gray hairs.

It's a full life coverage carried by God. In Jeremiah, there's something of an amplification on the same promise to the remnant. In Jeremiah chapter 23, Jeremiah 23, verses 3 and 4. The promise actually continues beyond that, but the point I want to make is here.

Jeremiah 23, 3, But I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries, the church comes from all lands, so Gentiles of every nation, where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds. Now Jesus, by the way, said to his disciples in John chapter 10, I have other sheep that you do not know of, I must go to them also and bring them also, then there will be one fold and one shepherd. That was in John chapter 10.

I'm afraid I don't have the verse number for you. Maybe it's even in the margin here. No, not so.

Okay. I've got to gather my remnant from all countries and bring them back to the folds, and they shall be fruitful and increase, and I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking, says the Lord. Now, here's the promise that he makes to his people.

He will feed them, they will have nothing to fear, they will not ever be lacking in any

necessary thing. That doesn't mean they're going to be the richest people on the planet, but it means that they're never going to lack any good thing because the promises of God apply to them. Ultimately, they will be crowned with him in glory.

In Isaiah 28, in verse 5, we have this final promise. Isaiah 28, verse 5. In that day, the Lord of hosts will be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of his people. A diadem of beauty, we already read in Isaiah 61, 3, that he'll give them beauty in place of their ashes.

That speaks of their mourning. Those who mourn in Zion, he'll give them beauty for their ashes. A typical Jewish way of mourning was to cast ashes on their head and so forth.

He's going to take away the ashes off their head and put beauty on there. Here, it's called a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty. It's one of the recurring promises of the New Testament that those who suffer with him will reign with him, that there are crowns awaiting God's people who are faithful unto death.

Jesus said to the church of Smyrna in Revelation 2, verse 10, be faithful unto death and I'll give you the crown of life. Here, it indicates that God himself will be their crown. In that day, the Lord of hosts will be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of his people.

They will be crowned with his presence. His glory will be upon them. The beauty of the Lord they will share.

You see, we're being transformed from glory to glory into his likeness according to 2 Corinthians 3, verse 18. So, it is the heritage of the remnant people of God that they will share in his glory and in his beauty and in his image. They are being changed from glory to glory, 2 Corinthians 3, verse 18 says, into that same image.

Now, these promises certainly make it worthwhile to be part of that remnant although hated by those who say the Lord be glorified and then persecute you. Now, it might seem not legitimate for me to talk as I have sort of done here as if even in the church there's a remnant when in fact, the passages are really talking about the remnant of Israel which became the church. But it's clear that what was originally the church eventually grew into a great institution that included people who never were qualified by these criteria to be called Christians.

And that was true, of course, especially in the dark ages when the so-called church was basically comprised of every European born on the European continent whether they had any knowledge of God or not. The majority didn't, including the popes and the leaders. But the Reformation has not entirely changed that circumstance.

What the Reformation did was recover some good doctrines that had been obscured for a long time. But what they did not do is change the institutional interpretation of what

church is. During the Middle Ages and probably before that actually, I think if we read the Church Fathers going back as far as the second century that early the spiritual organism that was the body of Christ that church that Jesus was building upon the rock of himself came to be interpreted not in terms of spiritual qualification but in terms well, I mean, spiritual qualifications were still considered necessary but the church was considered to be an institution that if you were to be saved you had to be regular in attendance at these meetings and you had to take the Lord's Supper on a regular basis.

This was as early as the second century these things were already being taught baptized into it as an infant and so forth none of which is scriptural but it was movements that start out organic usually within a generation or two become institutionalized or else they're gone and that happened the most corrupt form of the institution was seen during the Dark Ages but the recovery of good doctrine in the Reformation did not recover the organicness of what is the true church it's just made up of anybody who really loves God who really is a disciple of Jesus just anybody who trembles at his word and does their best to live obediently to God that's who the church is and when we look at what we normally call the church today it is quite institutional I mean, when you think of the church you think most naturally of either a building where you go to worship on Sundays or maybe the combination of all such buildings or the denomination that you go to or whatever none of which is really the right term is really the church that's a mixed multitude just like Israel itself was you see, the institutional church is every bit as much mixed as the nation of Israel was in its time all declaring themselves to be God's people but within them still only some I almost have said few but I don't know the number only God knows that but I would say some who are really of the remnant who really do make it their life to follow Christ and that is true whether it's the remnant of Israel or the remnant of the people who regard themselves as God's people in Christendom God never has saved the masses He saves individuals He saved the masses in terms of physical deliverance He did deliver the Israelites out of Egypt physically en masse but with many of them God was not well pleased Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10 and they fell in the wilderness because they were not saved they were not individually believers and so this is something that Isaiah as you can see, talks about a great deal you'll be pleased I think to find it throughout all the prophets to my mind a very attractive subject to study I've always found it intriguing and it explains how it is that the church can legitimately the true church can legitimately claim for itself the promises made ostensibly to Israel because the true church is the Israel to whom the promises were made OK, well that exhausts the material that I wanted to cover in this session Are there any questions?