

REMNANT CHURCH SERMON NOTES - ISAIAH 10: 20-23

➤ INTRODUCTION

- My focus this morning is to explain why we are called Remnant. The Lord willing, we will start a sermon series on the Book of Romans next week.
- One of the dictionaries defined remnant as a piece of cloth or carpeting left when the greater part has been used or sold.
- Another said a remnant is a part of something left after the other parts have been used, removed, or destroyed.
- However, we selected the name remnant from scripture, particularly from the Book of Isaiah, so my prayer this morning and on our inaugural service is that God will speak to us from heaven to understand what it means to be a remnant of the Trinity.
- We will look at 4 points this morning:
 1. **The daily life of the people of Israel at the time of Prophet Isaiah**
 2. **Who are the Remnants?**
 3. **What are the characteristics of God's Remnant?**
 4. **The security of the Remnant**
- Let's turn to the Book of Isaiah to help us understand what being a Remnant of God means. We will read from Isaiah 10:20-23

20 In that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will no longer rely on him who struck them down but will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. 21 A remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God. 22 Though your people be like the sand by the sea, Israel, only a remnant will return. Destruction has been decreed, overwhelming and righteous. 23 The Lord, the Lord Almighty, will carry out the destruction decreed upon the whole land.

- Before we look at the points, I want to give a brief background about the nation of Israel.
- The nation of Israel was God's people in the Old Testament. Their forefather was Abraham, who was an idol worshipper.
- Like all of us, Abraham, who was married to a barren woman named Sarah, got up one day just trying to mind his own business, then the Lord, the God who created this world, appeared to him with these words in Genesis 12: 1-3

12 The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. ²"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

- Abraham did not get up thinking about God, nor had any expectation of having any encounter with God, but we are told that God took the first initiative to come to Abraham.
- He asked him to leave his country, people, and family to a land God would show him, which we know today as the nation of Israel.
- God promised to bless him by, among other things, making his name great.
- He also told him that all the people on earth will be blessed through him, through his seed or descendant.
- God literally said to Abraham, put your trust in Me, and I will bless you greatly, and all the people on earth will be blessed through Abraham.
- Our first song today was Great is Thy Faithfulness. Yes, this God was faithful to Abraham, and history tells us that God blessed the nation of Israel in so many ways.
- Through Moses, an Israelite, God gave the world the 10 Commandments. God gave us the Bible through His dealings with the Israelites.
- However, the ultimate blessing God had in His mind when He told Abraham that all the nations, all the peoples of the world would be blessed through him was a mighty descendant of Abraham who would be born, and through Him, people who are on their way to hell would be saved – the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Matthew started his gospel by telling us about the genealogy or the family history of Jesus Christ, and he traced him to Abraham in Matthew 1:1-17.
- This is also how Paul put it to the Galatian Christians when he commented about Jesus Christ. Galatians 3:14

He (Jesus Christ) redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

- In summary, God told Abraham, trust me, and I will bring from you a savior, a Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would save sinners from hell, and that is the greatest blessing anyone could have on this earth.
- Our greatest blessings are not a high-paying job, good marriages, excellent education, political power, etc., but rather being saved from hell, eternal suffering.
- This is how the song writer put it:

My hope is built on nothing less, Than Jesus Christ, my righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand, All other ground is sinking sand.

- However, despite all the great things and promises God gave to the people of Israel, they were constantly faced with this question: whom should we trust – should we trust our God, the God who came to Abraham, or the nations around us?

- At the time of Isaiah, Israel was a tiny nation, surrounded by great nations like Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. So, what will you do, a tiny country surrounded by mighty nations?
- The Israelites reasoned that their safety would be guaranteed when they formed alliances with the great nations around them.
- Instead of putting their trust in their God for their protection and provision, they got into the politics of their day and formed an alliance with Assyria, one of the mighty nations, but God was not pleased with that.
- God wanted them to put their trust entirely in Him and not in Assyria, which later would turn on Israel to destroy them.
- God had sent several prophets to remind the Israelites to be faithful to Him, but they continued to rebel against their God by trusting in other things.
- God had also spoken through these prophets that these nations that were enemies of God would face His judgment someday to warn the Israelites to disassociate from them.
- But there was one problem - the Israelites were doing precisely what these unbelieving nations God had threatened to judge were doing.
- I have worked in prison before, and you would find prisoners who were active members of churches, yet they committed the same crimes that unbelievers committed, and they shared the same prison cells.
- So, we see not only the problem or challenge of the ancient Israelites but also of believers today.
- We are faced with the same question: will we trust our God or put our trust in ourselves, other people, possessions, etc?
- Now, let us consider our first point.

A. THE DAILY LIFESTYLE OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

- Let me mention a few of the sins the Israelites committed against their God:

1. PERVERSITY - A REVERSAL OF THE MORAL ORDER

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And clever in their own sight! Isaiah 5:20-21

- God's people became so wicked and proud that they celebrated and promoted what was essentially evil, and labeled as evil what had traditionally been seen as good. They called what God has called sin, good.
- They changed the moral order so that sinfulness was now considered acceptable, and holiness, faith, and obedience were to be rejected.
- For example, there was a time when almost all churches or believers agreed with Scripture that same sex marriage was a sin. However, today we have some churches supporting and promoting same sex marriages, a reversal of the moral order, even in our generation.

2. ARROGANCE

Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And clever in their own sight! Isaiah 5:21

- God, through Isaiah, warned Judah not to form alliances with ungodly nations, but the leaders of God's people **thought they knew better than God** and did exactly what God had warned them not to do. They formed alliances with nations such as Assyria. Who is God to dictate to us? They thought- Arrogance.
- That is, they ignored God's Word and did what they desired.
- Do we not see similar disobedience in our time among even believers?

3. MATERIALISM (OPPRESSED THE POOR TO BE RICH)

Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left and you live alone in the land. Isaiah 5:8

- God's issue with them was not people making properties or planning for the future, but rather those who did so oppressed the poor to be rich, and God was not happy with that.

4. IDOLATRY

Their land is full of idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their fingers have made. Isaiah 2: 8

- God created us to depend on Him, the creator, for our needs. Anything that we rely on instead of on God is an idol.
- Idol worship is therefore not only an ancient practice, but also contemporary or modern. As you all know, we can easily live for things (creatures) and depend on things instead of on the creator God.
- The Israelites made idols of things they had made and foolishly bowed down to creatures and items they had produced.
- It's like replacing God with your work, entertainment, etc. Like refusing to pray, going to church, etc., because you are engaged with other things.

5. DEBAUCHERY – ABUSE OF ALCOHOL

Woe to those who rise early in the morning to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine. Isaiah 5:11

- God was not against them for drinking a moderate amount of alcohol. The Bible is not against drinking any alcoholic beverages.
- What the Bible forbids is drunkenness, the abuse of alcohol.
- They woke up early in the morning, and their drinks occupied their attention.
- Don't we have such people in our generation?

6. DEBAUCHERY – SEXUAL SIN

The Lord says, “The women of Zion are haughty, walking along with outstretched necks, flirting with their eyes, strutting along with swaying hips, with ornaments jingling on their ankles. Isaiah 3:16

- God also had an issue with their women who made it their habit to seduce people into sexual sin by the way they dressed, talked, walked, etc.
- You will think the Bible was written today. As you can see, history teaches us that history teaches us nothing. Human beings have not changed. The behavior of the ancient Israelites can be seen in the modern generation of our time.

7. SUPERSTITION – BELIEVING IN MAGIC, CHANCE, LUCK

They are full of superstitions from the East; they practice divination like the Philistines and embrace pagan customs. Isaiah 2:6b

- A recent YouGov survey suggests that one in ten Americans admits to being superstitious. According to Dr. Stuart Vyse, author of “Believing in Magic: The Psychology of Superstition”, more than 50% of Americans consider themselves superstitious.

8. INSINCERE WORSHIP SERVICES

11 “The multitude of your sacrifices— what are they to me?” says the Lord.

13 Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me.

New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations— I cannot bear your worthless assemblies.

15 When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers. Isaiah 1: 11-15

- What was interesting about the Israelites was this: despite their lack of trust in their God and their many sins, as Isaiah presented, they still worshiped God weekly.
- They thought it didn’t matter to God what you did during the week; you could come to Him to worship and then go back and engage in sin.
- God said, No. It doesn’t work that way with me. Habitual sin and worship don’t go together.
- He asked them, What is your worship to me if you continue to sin? Stop bringing me your insincere worship. I won’t accept your worship if you keep on sinning willfully.

B. WHO ARE THE REMNANT?

- Isaiah had told the Israelites that God would judge the unbelieving nations, so the question was, is God going to judge Israel together with all these unbelieving nations? Is God going to destroy all the nations, including Israel, because of sin?

- What happened to the grace, love, and mercy He had promised the people of Israel and Abraham? Has He given up on His own people?
- Isaiah responded to this question by saying, NO. God won't destroy His true or genuine people with all the unbelievers. However, not everyone who calls himself or herself a child of God is actually a child of God.
- Isaiah said God is preserving some people who would be spared the judgment to come, but they may be very few.
- At the time of Isaiah, it seemed God had lost the battle. Everyone was disobeying Him, but Isaiah tells us that God has a purpose for this world, and He is actively in charge of all the activities of this world, and His chief business is that He is preserving a people for Himself. He is showing grace and mercy to some people even though they may be few.
- This is how Isaiah put it:

²⁰ In that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will no longer rely on him who struck them down but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. ²¹ A remnant will return,^[a] a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God.

- Isaiah called the few people God was preserving for Himself a Remnant. It is the remnant that God would not destroy because He would show them grace and mercy.
- It wasn't because these people were wonderful and intelligent, but God preserved them for Himself. God kept them. God protected them.
- We see the same or similar behavior in our time, so the question can also be asked: Will God destroy everyone in the world on the Day of Judgement because of sin?
- Like Isaiah told the Israelites of old, even though there may be darkness or disobedience against God everywhere in the world, God would, in fact, not destroy everyone. He is busy preserving some people for Himself, even in our generation.
- God has not failed in His work of salvation. When He has finished His work, everything in this world will come to an end, and those he did not show grace and mercy would be destroyed in hell, and those He preserved would spend eternity with Him.

C. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REMNANT

- Isaiah then told the Israelites the characteristics of the remnant.
- How do you know who the remnants are? What signs should you look out for?
- Isaiah tells us that there are two things you can use to identify the remnant.

1. A TRUE HEART REPENTANCE

²⁰ In that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will no longer rely on him who struck them down but will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.

- The remnants would no longer rely on or trust powerful nations like Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria for their protection but would turn to their Lord. That is what true heart repentance is.
- So how do you know that you are a remnant of God? How do you know that God is preserving you? How do you know that you are a true believer?
- It is when you turn away from one pattern of life and embrace another. It is when you turn away from trusting in yourself, others, material things, etc, and totally trust in God for your salvation and every other thing.
- It doesn't matter how many years you have been attending church; until you turn away from everything and embrace God and His word as your pattern of life, you are not a true believer and will be destroyed in hell.
- You will know the true believer by how they live their life, especially by letting Jesus be the Lord of their life by exclusively attaching to His Person, exclusively devoting to His purpose, and exclusively obeying His will.

2. A TRUE SAVING FAITH

- What does it mean when we say someone has faith?
- Saving faith means trusting God. Putting your trust in God.
- Isaiah tells us that the second characteristic of the remnants is that they will be the people who trust their God.

20 In that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will no longer rely on him who struck them down but **will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.**

- Is that the story of your life? Do you trust the Lord for everything?
- In every generation, God has a remnant, a people He is preserving, and they will be known by their true heart repentance and their true faith in their Lord.
- So, being a Christian is not as simple as saying that I believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior; it includes abandoning every other pattern of life and embracing the Biblical pattern of life. Letting Scripture alone lead and guide your life.
- This means before you say anything, you must ask if this is the will of God, is it what the Scripture allows me to do or say? It means living our lives according to God's Word.
- It also means completely trusting in God. That means we must ask God for direction in our employment, marriage, schooling, and all other matters.
- We are to go to Him with everything through our prayers.
- So being a Christian means making Jesus both your Savior and Lord. He has to decide how you live your life. He is in charge of your life; you do only what He says in Scripture.

D. THE SECURITY OF THE REMNANT

- So, if you are a remnant or true Christian, can you lose your salvation? Isaiah responds to that:

²¹ A remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God. ²² Though your people be like the sand by the sea, Israel, only a remnant will return.

- Isaiah tells us that the remnant will surely return to their Lord. Nothing can stop God's remnant from returning to Him because their salvation is guaranteed.
- God is the one preserving them, they will surely believe and trust in their God. Nothing can separate them from the Love God has for them.
- Listen to Paul on this matter in Romans 8:38-39:

38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Paul said he was convinced that none of God's remnants will lose their salvation because they are Earth's most secure people.
- Paul said nothing in this world can separate God's remnant from Him because He is preserving them for Himself. He is the one carrying them.

E. APPLICATION

- So, if you are here and are not sure if you are a believer or a remnant of God, this is the opportunity for you. It will be too late someday when you die.
- Please don't wait until you die and regret it in hell forever.
- Isaiah has given us two characteristics of the true believer:
- They will be known by their true heart repentance. This means you will admit that you are a sinner and that you deserve God's judgment. You deserve to be in hell with the Devil and his angels and all unbelievers. You will put your trust in God by believing in His Salvation, the salvation He has provided in Jesus Christ. We will study more about this from next week.
- Then you will commit the rest of your life obedient to His Word as written in the Scripture. That is, you will do only what the Scripture tells you to do and refrain from anything the Scripture tells you not to do.
- Then you can say IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL, because of the security you will have.
- Death will no longer frighten you because you are in Christ and your eternal life is guaranteed.