

# STRAIGHTWAY

*And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him [Mark 1:18].*

## CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

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### **The Biblical Perspective of the Remnant In Times of the Apostasy Isaiah 37:1–4**

Dr. H. T. Spence

During a crucial time of Judah's history, the evil counselor Rabshakeh was sent by the King of Assyria to intimidate the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Jerusalem at this time was the only city in Canaan unconquered by the Assyrians. Rabshakeh declared to the Judean leaders that the Assyrians would overthrow the city of Jerusalem and scatter the inhabitants to its other conquered lands. When Hezekiah the king of Judah received this disturbing news, he sent word to Isaiah the prophet: "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for

the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth" (Isa. 37:3).

What a day this was—a day of trouble, rebuke, and of blasphemy by the evil counselor Rabshakeh against God and His remnant. "The children had come to the birth" was a proverbial phrase expressing a time of extreme difficulty. Judah was in sore trouble and was expecting deliverance. It seems now as if she would not have strength to go through the crisis, that she would perish through weakness. King Hezekiah had hope that the Lord

*This edition includes two more articles*

**The Awakening Call to the End-time Remnant  
The Need of Remnant Voices**

had heard the confrontational words of Rabshakeh.

The king pled with Isaiah to lift up his prayer for the remnant that was left, or the remnant that was found. Out of all Israel at this time, this remnant was only Judah. Although the northern tribes had been carried away captive, the kingdom of Judah still survived, the only tribe left of the nation of Jacob.

Although Jerusalem still was unconquered, there were numerous Judean captives conveyed to Assyria by Sennacherib when he took the other fenced cities.

### **The Concept of the Remnant**

A number of months ago we presented a brief history of the remnant. It is important in this issue of *Straightway* to review it and to deepen our understanding of what is the remnant. This will enable us to discern its importance in the End Time of the last days.

## **STRAIGHTWAY**

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Although the concept of the remnant was used earlier in the Bible, the prophet Isaiah developed it in detail. He stands mid-ground in history between Moses and the coming of Messiah. In the very first chapter of his writing, Isaiah saw the remnant as “very small”; it was because of this very small remnant that Jerusalem had not been destroyed by God as Sodom and Gomorrah had. As the book unfolds in the early part, Isaiah saw the remnant as the small group of Israelites who would survive the invasion of the Assyrian army under Tiglath-pileser III. This remnant is promised salvation, in that those who compose the remnant will one day be brought back to the Promised Land by the Lord.

Isaiah again uses such terminology during Sennacherib’s siege of Jerusalem. “Remnant” has a special significance in the prophecies of Isaiah as denoting “a holy seed,” or a spiritual kernel of the nation which should survive the impending judgment and become the germ of the people of God, being blessed of God and made a blessing.

Though it may appear to be a rare subject, the idea of a remnant is found 540 times in the Bible. The concept of the remnant was taken up by several other prophets including Micah, Jeremiah, and Zephaniah. The post-exilic biblical writings of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah consistently refer to the Jews who have returned from the Babylonian captivity as the remnant.

Most of the time, the remnant concept is disguised by the way the words are translated into English. In the Old Testament, *remnant* is translated by six Hebrew root words, each of which has the underlying meaning of “what is left” or “what remains”; “survivors,” “escapees,” or “the rest.” The one Greek root used in the New Testament and in the Septuagint has the same meaning. The concept of a remnant represented that part of the nation that was faithful in living before God even though most people rejected the ways of God.

A most important fact to be understood about the remnant is that its existence is said to be due to God Himself. Isaiah 1:9 states that the Lord left unto Jerusalem “a very small remnant.” Zephaniah 3:12, 13 further declares the following:

*I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.*

The remnant, then, are the true people of God, amidst the professing people of God. This concept we also find in the New Testament: “the remnant according to the election of grace” as Paul dealt with the remnant of Israel at the end (Rom. 11:5).

## **A Biblical History of the Remnant**

Following this brief overview of

the remnant in the Old Testament, it is in the Book of Genesis where the concept of true remnants before the Lord begins. For some 1656 years the world population before the Flood grew rapidly as the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve spread over the earth enjoying lifespans of nearly a thousand years in length. The Gospel was proclaimed to these people but increasingly ignored as time progressed. At the end of the Antediluvian Age, Noah and his family suffered 120 years of scorn and ridicule while constructing the ark. That age came to an end with a very small believing (eschatological) remnant of only eight persons. Among possibly billions of persons of an entire ancient civilization utterly destroyed, there were only eight believers left in the world at the time of the Flood. One hundred years of preaching by Noah had not resulted in even one convert by the time of the Flood.

Abraham interceded for the city of Sodom where his nephew and family had taken up residence. God assured Abraham in Genesis 18 that He would spare the city from judgment if there were but ten righteous citizens in that city of thousands of inhabitants. In the end only Lot was saved (according to the words of 1 Pet. 2:7, 8). The righteous remnant in this case appears to have been only one individual, though Lot's two unmarried daughters fled Sodom with him. Lot's wife was encrusted by salt, and Lot's other children perished in Sodom.

There is also the remnant of Caleb and Joshua who, out of twelve spies, believed in the promises of God. In the days of Gideon there were three hundred out of thirty-two thousand. Elijah in the days of Ahab and Jezebel complained that all had left loyalty to Jehovah except himself (1 Kings 19:14). To this God replied, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." A remnant existed unknown and unseen (I Kings 19:18).

Jeremiah was pessimistic about the historical remnant which he said would become insignificant if not totally destroyed. All of the Jews who fled to Egypt *were not to be* the carriers of the divine promise. Nevertheless, it is Jeremiah who eloquently speaks of the New Covenant and the final regathering of the Jews. Ezekiel pled with God to add mercy in the midst of punishment; he understood that a historical remnant would survive and be scattered among the nations. Ezekiel also knew that God would bring a future generation back into the land under the new covenant involving "a new heart" and "a new spirit." Daniel in his prophetic writings in Babylon emphasized the importance of the remnant that were to be found in various times of prophetic history. Seventy years later a goodly remnant (about 50,000 Jews) returned to Jerusalem to rebuild first the temple, and later the walls and the city. This took place under

the leadership of outstanding godly individuals: Zerubbabel, Joshua the high priest, Haggai, Zechariah, Nehemiah, and Ezra. Most of the Jews stayed behind, comfortably living in Babylon after the time of the return. Only a fraction returned. This returning group is considered "only a remnant."

The Old Testament closes with the Book of Malachi which addresses God's final redemption of Israel. Malachi's admonition resulted in a remnant's responding and God's writing their names in a book of remembrance. When it comes to the last days and the regathering of Israel, it is clear that there will be a remnant to represent the nation to come in the acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah. Their believing will be the coming of Israel back to the Lord.

### **The Last Day Remnant**

In the New Testament, it is evident that the Gospel is only accepted by a remnant of people. When Christ came into the world only a remnant was looking for Him; only a few came to an acknowledgment of Him. Throughout His ministry only a remnant truly trusted in Him. At the time of His ascension only 120 were found in the Upper Room. As the Gospel spread throughout the inhabited world in the time of the New Testament, it was evident that two churches were forming: a true Church (wheat, with its head being Jesus Christ), and a false church (tares, with its head being Satan). Of the

soil upon which the Gospel fell, only twenty-five percent was good soil; and even of that soil only one-third received one hundredfold.

As the New Testament continued to be written, it was evident that a false Gospel was rising within the ranks of the church, a false faith, a false teaching of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Rising up within the visible Church was an apostasy, a defection, a falling away from the truth of Christ. The apostle Paul would first declare to Timothy that “some . . . have turned aside” (1 Tim. 1:6); “some . . . have made shipwreck” (1:19); “some are already turned aside after Satan” (5:15); “some . . . have erred from the faith” (been led astray; 6:10); and “some professing have erred concerning the faith” (6:21). But in the second epistle to Timothy the “some” has become “all.” “All they which are in Asia be turned away from me” (2 Tim. 1:15). “At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me” (2 Tim. 4:16). A crisis point was coming into the institutional Church at the end of the first century and church history will prove the wholesale falling away in the public church in contrast to the continuing biblical remnant.

Peter and Jude warn God’s people of the apostasy and defectors taking over the church during their times. Paul warned the Ephesian elders of this falling away at the Ephesus church (Acts 20); by Revelation 2, they had left their first love. Christ

warned in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24) that “many” false prophets shall rise (v. 11); many shall be deceived (vv. 5, 11); the love of many shall wax cold (v. 12). But *he* that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved (v. 13). Yes, many are called, but few will be chosen. As the Old Testament declared that only a remnant of the Jewish nation would come through, so the New Testament indicates that only a remnant of the visible Church would come through; all else would be lost.

In the final book of the Revelation, the Greek adjective the “rest” or “the remnant” is used eight times. That which “remains,” “a few names” in Sardis (3:2, 4) is part of that faithful, that remnant. Each of the letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 contains a special message to the remnant of each of those churches—the true ones who had the ear to hear. They are viewed as overcomers. Each of these groups is given a special challenge appropriate to its circumstances and its generation.

Church history reveals that, individually, great local churches tend not to last more than two or three generations; by the fourth generation they tend to fall into the apostasy. Denominations seem to have a season of strength, but all too soon they become mediocre at best. All of the original seven churches of Revelation quickly faded into obscurity in spite of their strong foundations.

From even a brief study of the

Bible, it seems that in any age the number of true believers among either religious Jews of the Old Testament or professing Christians of the New Testament is always very small. We read of many coming to Christ at the beginning of the Book of Acts, with the Word of God increasing among them, but from the latter part of the book we do not read of such overwhelming numbers. It is evident that the Gospel was spread through much tribulation. More and more there was a falling away rather than a coming unto. Everywhere the Gospel goes, apostasy will be right on its heels. There can be no apostasy without the Gospel, for it is the rejection of the Gospel that produces apostasy.

Often movements and denominations were born in the womb of revival sweeping a community. Churches were built and people were brought into the kingdom of God. The power of prayer was prevalent. In such revivals there is a surge of the movings of God at the beginning, but then a falling away takes place. Time has proved that in the second and third and fourth generations, the fervency for God of the founding years is no longer evident within the movement or the denomination. With the passing of time the believing minority tends to become a smaller and smaller fraction. The tendency towards backsliding, compromise, and spiritual decline seems to be the norm throughout history; only a remnant continues to walk and live in

the noble life of Christ. How often a wrong view of sovereignty and a wrong view of eternal security deny the need of communion with God and perseverance in abiding in Christ.


## Conclusion

The End Time will be marked not by simply a defection from the Truth, but by a global defection covering every compartment of truth in life. We must remember that while the whole world lieth in the Wicked One, there is the tendency for Christians to sleep (Matt. 25). This is why we pray for revival among the remnant and the longing for the second coming of Christ for His own. There have been times when God granted repentance and revival (Acts 3:19), and it became the deliverer of the hour. But there were times when no revival came and the remnant had to escape in order to be saved, such as in the days of Noah and Lot.

It is our prayer that through this issue of *Straightway*, God will speak to us as a people about this matter of praying for the remnant. They are out there, but not many. They are in the severest conflicts of any time in history. They are not the norm of Christianity or by no means the majority. But they are a unique seed, a remnant within whom is the power of God. The power of Election drives them on while all others are cast to the wind and deceived. Remember, many are called, but few are chosen.

While others compromise, the

remnant remain separated; while others are polluting themselves with the world, the remnant remain unstained by the world; while others give lip service to God, the remnant have their lives bathed in prayer and in God's Word, and are anointed by the Holy Spirit. While others are clamoring for change and a new direction, the remnant cry for the unchanging God, the unchanging truth, and the unchanging way of the biblical Christ. While others are trying to conform to the world in order to alleviate persecution and defamation, the remnant still believe they are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. They know that persecution awaits them.

Dear reader, do not expect bigness now in this postmodernity of the mega churches. You will have to fight for every soul now won into the Kingdom of Heaven; spiritual warfare will be a life-long reality. May God help us to be part of the remnant at this time in history. We must see this truth about the remnant or we will get discouraged. God will always keep to Himself His remnant. 

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**2012**

**Men's Prayer Conference**  
*June 7-9*

**Marriage Conference**  
*July 28*

**Ladies' Prayer Fellowship**  
*August 10-11*

**Opening of Fall Semester**  
*August 22*

**Special Evening Services**  
*August 22-24*

## **Foundations Bible Collegiate Church**

### ***Sunday Services***

Prayer, 9:00 AM

Bible Class, 9:30 AM

Morning Worship, 10:30

Prayer, 5:30 PM

Evening Worship, 6:00

### ***Midweek Service***

Wednesday Evening Service, 7:00

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# The Awakening Call to the End-time Remnant

Dr. H. T. Spence

What a sobering word Isaiah gives early in his book: “Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant” (Isa. 1:9). The commencement of the Book of Isaiah refers to the vision of Isaiah which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. What did this prophet see concerning his contemporary, his Judah and Jerusalem? Two entities are presented here: Judah—the people, and Jerusalem—the city of God where the people reside. In our day of the End Time (the consummation of the church ages), the spiritual Judah is the people who are to be the people of praise, and Jerusalem would appropriately be the institutional Church.

After Isaiah gives a list of the sins of the people and the city collectively, there is the acknowledgment, “Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.” Isaiah then cries for the rulers of this Sodom city (Jerusalem) and the people of Gomorrah (the people of Jerusalem). The leaders of this people had set the pace for the falling away of this people.

What is this small remnant “left unto us,” or within Jerusalem? The remnant is that of the few godly men who still inhabit Jerusalem. It is the Lord of Hosts who had preserved this very small remnant. The institutional

Church in the End Time of the last days is in deep apostasy; it has become the Sodom and Gomorrah before God. As Judah and Jerusalem went, so go the professing people of God and the Church today. We must candidly acknowledge that Isaiah is not speaking to the world or about the world; he is speaking to God’s people and to His city.

We can see a spiritual parallel between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament Church. Just as the Northern ten tribes were taken into captivity, the public realm of Christianity called Christendom has been in captivity for some time now. It has basically come down to the Fundamentalist movement within the land of Christendom. This movement has been like the last city left, the last truly identifiable city for Christ’s sake. But now it is becoming part of the decline, the falling away. What has kept it from total captivity? It has been a remnant still within the movement that has honored God. Why has not Fundamentalism, the last of the movements before the secret coming of Christ, sunk fully into Neo-Christianity? Is it not because of the fact that there is the remnant of Christ (though getting smaller and smaller) still within the movement? Otherwise, Fundamentalism would have plunged a long time ago fully into the dregs of the apostasy.

It is clear that the remnant belong



to the Lord of Hosts; His hosts are the remnant. The remnant cannot be judged by quantity, only by quality. They are the ones that are arresting the disease that has come into the body of Fundamentalism. While Fundamentalism has gone the way of all flesh, there is still a remnant of believers who are preaching, living, singing, teaching, and keeping the movement from absolute apostasy. The movement may be dying (or even dead), but there is a remnant that has kept it from absolute apostasy up to this hour.

### **The Present Remnant**

What is the remnant for the End Time of these last days? They are initially those who abide in Truth within a decaying Christian identity. They are the puritans who long to get back to what Judah is to be, to what Jerusalem is to be: a true biblical Christian who longs and prays for what should be a true biblical church in a given generation? The remnant are those people left still believing and living the Truth, or what remains for Truth when that, which at its beginning identified with truth, finally leaves truth. The remnant do all they can to stop the disease, the decay; they become the singular hinderer of the city of Christianity from getting further away from the Truth.

However, if the movement, the city, or the church does not change and return to its Lord, then the remnant is forced out of the city—either forced to leave by the city or

by their own soul's conscience. They know they must not succumb to the spiritually decaying city or allow the pervading leaven to leaven them. The remnant then becomes separated from its city identification, from its visible nativity, from its public family, and becomes in the eyes of organized Christianity, nomadic. This nomadic or refugee heart commences with an awakening call from God to "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing" (Gen. 12:1, 2). Once this happens, it is a permanent departure from home, never to return. Like three heavy blows are the phrases about "country," "kindred," and "house." Even more moving is the mysterious uncertainty about the destination. This has been a recurring theme of refugee wanderings through many centuries.

From its inception, the Church has been "called out" to a larger destiny, and the remnant continues to be the "true church," ever being called out. The departure is not like Cain in his act of leaving God, going eastward, farther and farther away from God, into the land of Nod, wandering with no goal or culmination of life. The honorable departure is that of Abraham moving westward, with direction and exactness of walk, journeying a way divinely appointed by God. The remnant will always

be a “sojourner,” a true Hebrew in contrast to the organized, institutional Church. This is his lot in life especially in the days of apostasy. The remnant’s exodus is with purpose, and his quest of journey is Christ in His fullness. He is on a spiritual journey, not a carnal wandering. He has made his exodus from Egypt, from sin, from the world, never to return. He not only has made his exodus from Egypt but also from Babylon, the fallen religious system of this world that controls the institutional Church.

The remnant will be slandered by the organized city. The institutional Church will try to hunt down the remnant, blackballing its voice from pulpits, churches, and conferences. Every day it becomes more obvious that the remnant is truly becoming a fugitive in the earth. The institutional Church of the End Time will also try to defame God’s remnant in private conversations, defaming and maligning its reputation. They will try to suppress the influence of the remnant’s preaching and living before others. Yes, God’s remnant will be a fugitive all its days. Demeaning titles and labels will be aggressively branded upon it: legalist, fanatical religionist, close-minded person, misguided soul, cultist, fool, man-follower, etc. The names will even rise to mark it as a disorderly brother, a troublemaker, an enemy of God’s people, and even an apostate. Yet in the sight of God individuals of the remnant are true children of God, the apple of His eye, found in His beloved Son; they

are marked as part of the Lord of Hosts’ remnant.

An individual of God’s remnant becomes in the eyes of the world a refugee. Therefore he must be wise in his flights, always looking for refuge, for sanctuary, a place of rest. Where does he find this refuge, sanctuary, and place of rest? He finds it in his Lord and in the moments of fellowship with other spiritual refugees. Sometimes his refuge is his home, a church in the home; sometimes it is a storefront church; and sometimes it is through a spiritual spring “streaming” from an Internet connection. The refugee is not looking for a kingdom or a temple here. Remnant ministries are not building their kingdoms here; they are tent dwellers with an altar. They are militant against the apostasy, yet they want to fight the fight of faith with a golden spirit. Their very lives within adorn their Lord; they are seeking and dwelling in His life as a land of blessing and fruitfulness.

Triumphantly, God gives them power over this world and the powers of sin. They live in this world, but it is for another world that they are longing. They are awake when others are asleep; they are hungry for God when others don’t care; they are pursuing holiness of heart and life while others commend carnality and worldliness; and, they discern others who are of that remnant.

### **The Contexts of the Remnant**

It is important to note three major

contexts in which the remnant will be found in God's providence at the End Time of the Church ages. (1) Revelation 12 presents the remnant as the man child; (2) 2 Thessalonians 2 presents it as the hinderer and restrainer; and (3) Matthew 25 presents the remnant as the wise ones in their watching and waiting.

The first context of Revelation 12 consists of several personalities. Here we see the remnant's relationship to the Church. In more recent decades this chapter in Revelation has been enigmatically interpreted. At the outset of the chapter we are introduced to a woman. It is interesting to note that throughout church history this woman has been viewed by the remnant as the visible Church. It was only when Dispensationalism came in the mid-1800s that the woman was viewed as Israel and the man child as Jesus Christ. But through church history the woman was viewed as the Visible Church, or Christianization and later Christendom (the outward kingdom of Christ). Israel certainly is viewed as a woman in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament the Church is viewed as a woman. There is no hint in Revelation 12 that the woman is Israel; Israel is not even mentioned in the chapter.

There is also the man child; again in recent decades the man child has been dispensationally viewed as Jesus Christ. But there is no implication of such a connection.

Throughout church history the man child has been viewed as the manly, vigorous, fresh growth of the people of God. Within the body of this mystic woman the Church, concealed from human view but consciously to herself, there is a mystic seed maturing for manifestation. The child is not birthed until the end of its term. This child is within the visible Church; the Church has nourished this child. It is designated a male child, a son; however, it is the representative of the corporate true ones within the visible Church.

One may point dispensationally to Revelation 19:15 as Christ will "rule them with a rod of iron" and thus the man child is Jesus Christ coming forth from Israel. Yet, we dare not overlook the earlier hermeneutic statement in 2:27 that the overcomer (the remnant) "shall rule them with a rod of iron." This description of the remnant is a preface hermeneutic statement before Revelation 12.

Satan the dragon is poised over the woman, more so to lay hold of the child, not so much the woman. It is when this man child is brought to light, to his fullness of term, that the child is raptured or caught away to God and to His Throne. We read in Revelation 3:21, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." This will take place at the most intense point of Satan's attacks on earth against the saints. The

rapture will come in a most crucial hour when the woman will be crying, “travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered” (12:2), and at a time when the institutional Church will hate the saints and long to be delivered from them and their presence.

The Devil knows he has the institutional Church; he is not poised for her, but for the man child within her. The bloody red dragon, the murderer of God’s saints, will be poised in the End Time waiting for the moment of the birth, the rapture, to take place to destroy it. Nevertheless, we read that the man child at the moment of its birth (its final separation from the woman) is caught up to the heavens and to the throne of God. The remnant within the Church has always been attacked and maligned. He has always given the woman pain and travail; and the Devil has always been poised over the woman to destroy that which was within her. But there will come an hour when both the woman and the dragon will equally set their hatred against the remnant—in the End Time. Only the rapture will save the remnant, the Elect, from absolute destruction when the full term of the child comes.

A second context of the remnant is found in 2 Thessalonians 2. Here the remnant is presented as a hinderer to the world. We must carefully note the words of 2:3–7:

*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come*

*a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth [that which restrains] that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [hindereth] will let [or hinder], until he be taken out of the way.*

We read here of a force that will be withholding, or hindering, or restraining.

It is evident that the Antichrist would come prematurely if it were not for the remnant, or the Holy Spirit, the Word of God within God’s true saints. In every generation it has been the remnant’s prayers, preaching, standing for Truth, that have been the hindering forces on the planet. The delays of the iniquity are due to the light, the salt, in the form of living, preaching, and praying. It is clear that the mystery of iniquity doth already work, but what keeps the fullness of the Antichrist back? It is that remnant, that Elect of God empowered by God Himself to restrain.

The mystery of lawlessness is already working, only until he who restraineth is removed. When that takes place, when the restraining influence is removed, the mystery of lawlessness will no longer work secretly; it will be openly manifested in a man that will rule the world

through the power of the Devil. Only the remnant within the providence of God is keeping the nation of America from absolute collapse. I am to be a restrainer in the sphere in which God has placed me until God takes me out of the way. While so many professing Christians are compromising and giving in to the powers that be, God's remnant is the true restraining force. This is why the Tribulation Period will come in its fury; it will be right after the rapture, or after the hinderers are taken out of the way.

One final context in which the remnant finds itself today is presented in Matthew 25. This context addresses the personal responsibility of each individual of God's remnant. This chapter, part of the Olivet Discourse of our beloved Lord on Tuesday of Passion Week, certainly gives the history of the remnant. The parable opens at the moment when the virgins "took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." It is most evident in the New Testament that God's remnant were anticipating the imminent second coming of Christ during their lifetime. But, of course, He did not come. Then the years of delay came upon the world: "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept" (25:5). We have seen this for nearly two thousand years. "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him" (25:6).

In the 1840s and 1850s the Second Coming became a prominent cry

to the evangelical world. Even the first Congress of Fundamentalists in the 1850s presented the preaching primarily on this theme. The Greek rendering here for "cry" is a "loud, strong cry." This cry continues to this hour. This cry produced a response in these virgins: "Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps" (25:7). We have been in this season of response for over one hundred years now. These virgins became aware of the nearness of His coming. What the remnant knows today is the nearness of Christ's secret coming to the clouds, and thus it has produced an awakening for the life; meanwhile, the church continues to slumber and sleep. The remnant is fully conscious of the need of the vessel, the oil, and the life to be in a state of readiness. A greater consciousness has come to the beloved of God in the trimming of the lamps; they ask themselves, "What will make my light shine the brightest and the most balanced in this midnight hour?" There is also the great importance of the supply of the oil of communion with the Holy Spirit for the life to be in readiness.

## Conclusion

Dear reader, are you numbered among the remnant around the world? The number itself is getting smaller and smaller as we view more and more professing Christians falling prey to the powers of compromise, lukewarmness, and debilitating apathy. I must be aware of my relationship before the institutional Church and

before the world, as well as my responsibility to myself. As long as I am here, I am to influence all that I can until I am taken out of the way. Have we come to an hour in church history where the puritan ethic “within” no longer is working, and we find ourselves being forced outside the camp of God and going unto Christ bearing His reproach? Will the true child of God finally end up as a

pilgrim, a refugee, a biblical Hebrew?

While the institutional Church is ready to flee into a wilderness, ultimately to be assimilated into the rest of the world’s religions, and finally to rise in the earth during the Antichrist’s reign as a harlot riding on the back of the beast (Rev. 17), may the Lord make us ready for His Son’s soon return!

**S**

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# The Need of Remnant Voices

Dr. H. T. Spence

The Book of Zechariah is certainly a book for the End Time. God raised up this young prophet, along with the elder prophet Haggai, to call His people unto vision of rebuilding the temple. In Zechariah 8:6, 11, 12 we read the following:

*Thus saith the LORD of hosts; if it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts. . . . But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the LORD of hosts. For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.*

## The Uniqueness of the End-time Remnant

The remnant of God has been found in every generation of human history. What makes the end-time remnant unique is found in the fact of its being the most tested of any generation. This testing and trying will be found in many ways: through the ploys and temptations of the world, the Devil, and even the flesh and self. The greater the ploys and temptations, the greater will be the need of God's Word and Spirit.

It is evident in observing the various generations of church history that some had more of the Word of God than others. Many generations, such as the Old Testament Israelites,

only heard the Word of God once a week. It is amazing to the human heart to imagine the souls of individuals such as Hannah (1 Sam. 2) and Mary (Luke 1) being so saturated with Scripture while possessing no personal copy of the Scriptures. They only remembered what they heard at the readings of the Scriptures in the tabernacle, or temple, or synagogue. *So little hearing, and yet so great faith in what little they did hear!*

God knew that the end-time remnant would be in the greatest danger, the greatest generation of gospel deception, and the greatest generation of enemies from within. Thus, as we are the nearest to the coming of Christ of any other generation, the providence of God has given the Word of God in our vernacular and easily accessible. Nevertheless, we must always remember there have been others deprived of a copy who yet surely followed what little light they had.

There are two distinct identifications within the end-time remnant. The first identification is that they are truly the remnant in heart. This is a most important observation in that it is the proof of a sovereign God enabling the true ones, the Elect. Clear evidence is seen of God's presence within them. In 1 John 3:9 we read, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot



sin, because he is born of God.” The remnant are not given to sinning premeditatedly. As Job of old, they eschew sin.

Philippians 2:13 provides another identification of the remnant: “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” God is present, He is active, and He is enabling moment by moment the remnant.

Nevertheless, there are those who seem to be identified with the remnant but do not endure unto the end. This is clearly noted in the parable of the virgins in Matthew 25: these are like the five foolish virgins who were closely associated with the wise virgins. As those of Matthew 13 on the stony ground, they will endure for a while, but afterwards, in the time of intense persecution, they fall away; or they hear the call of the world and depart as Demas did from Paul. They may even later turn on the remnant and betray them as Judas did.

Although I do not know who are in heart the true remnant that will endure unto the End, I want to be numbered among those who will! Matthew 24:13 states, “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” He that “endureth” (Greek, *hupomeno*) refers to one who will abide under, who will bear up courageously under suffering. It is the power of God within the human heart giving life-perseverance unto the end of one’s days, which will be the proof of being part of the

biblical Elect. Accordingly, one who does not persevere unto the end will not be part of that Elect. One could be identified for a season with the remnant in its generation, yet eventually leave the very remnant of which he is a part. How many men do we know who for years were strong in voice for God and clearly identified with the remnant, that later following compromise after compromise, eventually turned on the very ones with whom they were once strongly identified. It is happening more often than we desire. Most assuredly, the perseverance of the saints will be the proof of the true remnant.

### **The Voices of the Remnant**

The remnant of God in every generation has had men whose voices became the public declaration of what the remnant was and believed. The “voice of God” in the Scriptures often is the prophet’s and preacher’s voice. Rather than God’s audible voice, it was God speaking to the world and to His remnant through His men. When God said to His people or to an individual, “They will not hearken unto my voice,” that voice was coming through a man or prophet. Paul in writing to the Thessalonians declared, “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you

that believe" (2:13).

The remnant knows that voice of God through a man of God and will follow that Word he gives. Such voices of the remnant have been called seers, watchmen, prophets, and preachers. They all were called in unique times; God sovereignly chose them. They did not appoint themselves; they were called amidst their insight for their times. They were men and women, products of the Word of God and Spirit of God for their generation. They usually were called in crises, at times when the voice of God needed to be proclaimed. They arose by the Spirit of God to rebuke, exhort, and encourage. Calling and identifying the wrong or the right, they were Declarers of God with courage. Sometimes they were from a called family; other times they had no spiritual lineage. Such an appointed voice *must* know God, God's Word, the times in which he lives, and clearly give the message for the days in which he lives. He must see the falling away within the camp of God; he must see the world age in which he lives. We desperately need to pray for God to ordain, to choose such men for this generation and for the next generation.

### **Zechariah, the Seer for His Age**

One man that examples this truth of a remnant voice is the prophet Zechariah. His time, his generation was during the exodus from Babylon, the exodus from the religious apostasy. He was around

the age of five when he came with the remnant from Babylon back to Jerusalem. Likewise, we are in a time when religious Babylon has made captive the institutional Church. It is a time when denominations have turned their backs on God's Word and godly living, and they have turned their backs on the remnant. It is a time when very few preachers are giving the exactness of the Word of God for *this* generation.

Isaiah 21:11 speaks of the burden of Dumah: "He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" This is what the remnant cries for from its remnant preachers: "Tell us about the times in which we live and tell us God's Word."

To carefully see such a voice for the remnant, we view the young man Zechariah, about twenty-one years old at this time. He was of a priestly descent. His name means "Jehovah remembers." He was the son of Berechah ("Jehovah will bless"); his grandfather's name was Iddo ("the appointed time"). Note the precious trilogy of his lineage: God will remember His remnant, and when He does He will bless them, and it will be at the appointed time.

Zechariah was born in Babylon and called a "young man" (2:4). He was called to minister to the remnant not only in times of discouragement but also in needed times of exhortation. Within his prophetic book he covers the entire future of Israel until the

first coming of Christ (at which time the offspring of the remnant will not accept the Messiah). He continues his prophecy through the second coming of Christ when they will look upon Him whom they have pierced. Zechariah will have more to say about the Messiah, His person, His Word, and His glory than all of the Minor Prophets combined. He truly is a man of God that becomes an important prophet to help us find ourselves in the End Time of the last days.

### **The Visions of Zechariah**

The young prophet's visions are for both the age in which we live and for the needed visions of Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. These specific burdens of preaching are needed by the voices of God's Word for the End Time. We must see our age and we must see the Christ! We must acknowledge the coming of the Antichrist and the falling away of the Church while yet beholding the Christ in such times.

All of Zechariah's visions came in one night. For our own time period in history, we must view these visions in our night of history. Although various commentaries number the visions of Zechariah differently, we want to divide all of them into two segments: the first segment is composed of the visions of the world-age, eight in number; and, the visions of the coming Christ which number seven. These visions were given concerning Judah, and

would include ultimately all of Israel. They do give precious insights for the remnant at this time in history.

The first of the world-age visions is found in 1:7–13. At this time the remnant seems to find itself in the silence of God with no evident workings of God. He describes the man on the red horse, standing among the myrtle trees in the bottom land. When it seems that God is not moving, and wickedness and compromise abound, there is providence that continues its workings for us and among us. The remnant must see and believe this to be true.

The second is found in 1:18–21: the vision of the four horns and four carpenters. Both of these are viewing the same powers: that of Babylon, Medo/Persian, Greco-Macedonia, and Rome. They became powers to both scatter and eventually gather God's people. God has His hand on the remnant in the placing of them throughout the world. Some of them God brings together, while others He may scatter. God may be drawing a number of hearts geographically together for the End Time to become strength for the remnant, while with others He may not do so, but keep them as an influence where they are needed.

The third vision is found in chapter 2: the vision of the man with the measuring line. This is a prophecy of the glorious restoration of Israel, their regathering yet to come, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, while the

enemies of God will be ultimately cast down. This should remind the remnant today that there is the true Body of Christ; it is beyond labels and tags; it is beyond the theological systems. The remnant sees that God is building His Son's Body, and though the gates of Hell (death) will prevail (and has prevailed) against the false church, those gates will never prevail against the true Church. That true Church, the heavenly Jerusalem, will rise in the earth as the remnant of God. This should also cause us to rejoice at the coming glory of heaven, with the rapture of the remnant from the corners of the earth; "and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The fourth vision is found in 3:1–7: the cleansing of the Jewish remnant that had returned to Jerusalem, represented in the taking off of the garments of the high priest. We must see the great need of an end-time revival of the remnant for our cleansing and waywardness of living. We must acknowledge the remnant has its blights, its weaknesses, and failures. Though this may be true, it is definitely not part of the apostasy of the End-time Church; it abhors that apostasy and remains true in its stand against it. The remnant knows it needs revival, but also knows that Christ is its Mediator. He will bring the changes of the garments, and He will bring forth the Mitre, the holiness of life unto the Lord.

The fifth vision is found in chapter 4. The two men presented as two olive trees are Zerubbabel

and Joshua the high priest. God will use these two men to feed the remnant: as the oil will flow from them into a bowl which then will feed the lampstand representing Judah. God was revealing that there is a lot of oil behind these two men; they are called by God for the leadership of the remnant. The remnant has men who have the oil given to them for this purpose. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (v. 6). This statement was not a condemnation of might and power; this was declared to encourage these two men that they would not need might or power—God would perform the work. The voices for the remnant will give encouragement that it is not the big churches, the big schools, the big ministries, and a lot of money. But it will be solely by the Spirit of God; if that Spirit is not the power, then that ministry is working through the "impressive" power of the flesh. Zechariah goes on to state in 4:7 that the mountains of opposition will be brought down. Yes, the true Body of Christ will be completed without the powers of the organizations of the Church. Only Christ Himself is building the true Church.

The sixth vision is found in 5:1–4: the presentation of the flying scroll. The first five visions were visions of comfort. These next three are visions of judgment. The flying scroll was thirty feet by fifteen feet. On one side of the scroll was the word *stealeth* and on the other *sweareth*. This was

the commentary of unbelieving Israel. The Jews have always, since the time of their early apostasy, been known for their stealing and deception with commercial goods and with money. (How often we have heard the phrase “Try to *Jew* him down.”) The word *swareth* is from the perspective of laying aside reverence for God. Today, we are in the unbelieving church age, the Christless Church, where He is standing outside knocking for any man within to open to Him, the remnant. The Church is “stealing” truth and the Word of God from the people, the sheep of God. They are “swearing” that everybody is saved, eternally so, and there is no need to change and live right. They have professions of Christ and salvation, yet they do not know that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked (Rev. 3:17b).

The seventh vision is found in 5:5–11: the ephah, the Jewish measure representing commerce. The eyes of all the earth are upon it. James 5:3 speaks that in the last days they will heap up treasures. The Jews will be deeply involved in commerce at the End Time of the last days. Whereas, Revelation 17 presents Mystery Babylon, that woman of wickedness, the apostate church, Revelation 18 presents Babylon the Great, located in the land of Shinar where all the wealth will be brought during the days of Antichrist. The Church in the last days will be rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. It believes that its bigness and prosperity

are signs of God’s presence.

The eighth vision is found in 6:1–8: the coming of the great Tribulation Period and the effect of the four horsemen. But there is the coming judgment of the Church that must be seen from the New Testament. God’s judgment must begin at the House of God (1 Pet. 4:17). Christ Himself will “spew” this Church age out of His mouth (Rev. 3:16). What will that spewing be? How will it come about? Are we in the spewing now? Is Fundamentalism experiencing this spewing at this time of its history?

The man of God must see these things of his age and of the institutional Church and must preach and declare them. But the visions of Christ must also come to his heart. This too must be part of his preaching, for it is in these visions that an awakening and revival will come, and must come to the remnant. There will be spiritual blessings through insights of the life in Christ.

The first vision concerning the coming of Christ is seen in 3:8: “I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH,” as well as in 3:9b, “I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” There must be the preaching hope of removing iniquity through Christ, both the guilt of sins and the breaking of the power and dominion of sin in the human heart and life.

The second vision of Christ is seen in 6:12: “Behold the man whose name is the Branch,” along with 6:13, “And

he shall be a priest upon his throne.” Oh, the need of a High Priest in my life, interceding moment by moment to keep and sustain my spiritual walk; oh, the ongoing cleansing of His blood from sin (1 John 1:7).

The third vision of Christ is presented in 9:9: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” I must truly believe in the first coming of Christ and what it means to my full salvation and the breaking of my will—my stubborn ass will (the ass is redeemed by a lamb, Exod. 13:13).

The fourth vision is seen in 11:12. This vision presents the rejecting of the staff of “beauty,” the Christ, and selling Him for thirty pieces of silver. O how the Church today is selling the Christ of Scripture over to the Liberals, the Modernists, the Agnostics, the Atheists, and the world itself! The remnant dares not do so!

The fifth vision is in 12:10, in the hope of Christ’s second coming. Though this prophecy refers to the remnant of Israel turning to the Lord at His coming, it becomes a cry to the remnant of the saints today for that Blessed Hope of His secret coming. The remnant are purified as they meditate upon His coming day and night.

The sixth vision is found in 13:6:

*What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow; saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.*

Oh, the days of persecution that are coming upon the remnant! Our Beloved Shepherd is going to be smitten even by His friends, the Church, and it is going to affect the remnant. Historically, the greater the hatred of Christ, the deeper was the persecution of the Christians. Every day the powers of hatred are intensifying against God, His Son, and against His own remnant.

The seventh vision is found in 14:4. Thank God! One day Christ will come and set up His Kingdom; truth will reign and God’s true saints will be part of that rulership of the Kingdom. All the governments will be brought to naught, and Christ will be the King and Lord of all.

## Conclusion

We must earnestly pray in these difficult days, when many preachers have become a major part of the problem of the falling away, that God will raise up voices of His Word for the remnant. Note Amos 8:11, 12:

*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east,*

*they shall run to and fro to seek the word  
of the LORD, and shall not find it.*

This is where we are today when it comes to the true Word of God! We have so many versions of the Bible, so many churches, missionaries, schools, publications, etc. But amidst all of the voices, it is very rare to hear a true voice from heaven, anointed of the

Lord to give clarity to the Word of God and to call to the remnant, “This is the way, walk ye in it!”

Where are God’s men who have not sold their soul and voice to this age? Pray, dear reader, for God to give and to preserve a voice of His Word through men and women for the remnant’s sake. S

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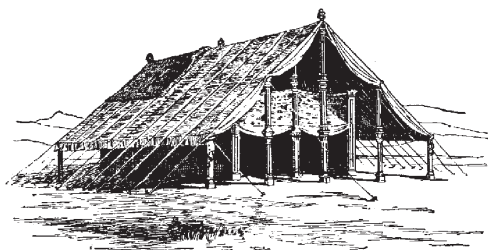
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