

SPEAKERS

February 6 - Ken Storm, Holy Communion

February 13 - Charles Korhonen

February 20 - Ken Storm

February 27 - Nathan Ruonavaara, Potluck Meal Following Service

CHURCH SCHEDULE

Sunday School/Adult Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Service: 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

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The Remnant

“Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved” - Romans 9:27

Apostle Paul is saying that while God calls all people in the world unto him only a remnant of us will be saved. Even most of the children of Israel, who are the chosen people of God and who are many *“as the sand of the sea”*, will reject the heavenly invitation to repent and believe the gospel. And further, Scripture says that this remnant of believers, made up from all nations, kindreds, people and tongues, will be dispersed around the world to be among unbelievers to deliver the message of salvation that comes through the blood of Christ. Therefore, we can expect believers to be few in number in the latter days and in the minority no matter where they are, even in the church itself.

There are a series of questions that arise from reading our subject text. The first question that might come to mind is why will not everyone be saved? After all God loves all people, doesn't He? The answer to the second question is yes. The first question has been asked throughout the ages: *“Lord, are there few that be saved? And he (Jesus) said unto them, strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able”* (Luke 13:23-24). It is not that many people do not want to go the heaven; many honestly do. It is that many people come close to the kingdom of God but refuse to enter through the narrow gate, trusting instead in their own understanding which is most often gleaned from the spiritual teachings of others. Jeremiah reminded the Israelites of their intimate encounter with God and of their eventual refusal to heed His call: *“I called you, but ye answered not”* (Jeremiah 7:13).

We might also wonder why God doesn't at least save all of Israel seeing that He had chosen them to be His people. For the same reason that He doesn't choose every Gentile to be saved, He doesn't choose every Israelite. Simply, people who God does not choose to come to heaven to be with him in eternity are they that reject Him, not the other way around. *“Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?”* (Ezekiel 33:11).

Because there is thought to be safety in numbers, would it be good for the remnant to gather together in groups for protection against the outside world? This group-think mentality tragically manifested itself during the tower of Babel when the whole earth was in one group. In this situation the people figured that they would build a city and a tower to become great in their own eyes and would not have to trust in God and would not have to *“be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth”* (Genesis 11:4). Jesus taught that those who trust in Him should love unbelievers and not just love their own kind: *“For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?”* (Matthew 5:46-47). Thus, believers should accept whatever opportunity God presents to them to reach out to all unbelievers rather than sequester in groups and refuse to salute others.

Perhaps the most important question arising from our text might be, “how does one become part of the remnant”? That is, how can I be saved? To answer that it is important to understand that sin separates us from God and that without the forgiveness of sins by God we have no hope of joining the remnant. We will never know that we are sinners unless God reveals our sins to us and God will answer our prayer for salvation if we pray to Him in truth: *“The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth”* (Psalm 145:18). Once God convicts a person, he becomes sorrowful over his sin. God then leads this penitent soul to the mercy seat where his sins can be proclaimed forgiven by a born-again believer because God has given the authority to His believers on earth to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins in the name and blood of Jesus: *“Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained”* (John 20:23).

God's Peace,
Charles Korhonen