

# A Remnant

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the remnant in Christendom, which is a group of faithful people who are genuinely filled with the Holy Spirit and are preparing the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus.*

**Scripture:** Zephaniah 1:14, 1 Corinthians 10:11

**Topics:** "Spiritual Decline", "The Remnant"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the recurring themes found in the minor prophets, particularly the anger of God against sin, the certainty of judgment, and the existence of a faithful remnant amidst spiritual decline. He draws parallels between the historical decline of Israel and Judah and the current state of Christianity, highlighting that both mainline denominations and non-conformist groups are experiencing similar issues. Poonen points out that God is still gathering a remnant of true believers who are filled with the Holy Spirit and committed to honoring Him, despite the superficial revivals that often mislead many. He warns against being deceived by emotional revivals that lack true holiness and humility, urging believers to seek genuine spiritual restoration. Ultimately, the message is one of hope, as the remnant prepares the way for the coming of the Lord.

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## Transcript

When we study the "minor" prophets in the Old Testament, we notice certain themes recurring in many of them - the anger of God against sin, the certainty of judgment, the evils of pride and of exploitation of the poor, the love of money and the immorality found among the leaders, God using the heathen to chasten His people, the need for faith and patience if God does not answer immediately, not being deceived by external manifestations of revival, and promises to the remnant.

All the prophets spoke about a remnant among God's people. They spoke about how, in a time of declension among God's people, there would be a few who would be faithful to God.

The things written in the Old Testament have been written for our instruction(1 Cor.10:11). There is a decline among Christians today just like there was a decline in Israel in the past. The two kingdoms - Israel and Judah - are a picture of the two groups in Christendom. Israel, with 10 tribes, symbolizes the larger group of mainline denominations. And Judah, with 2 tribes, symbolizes the smaller non-conformist assemblies. But both these groups are in decline today. In the Old Testament, Judah did not learn from Israel's mistakes. And the non-conformist groups today have not learnt from the mistakes the mainline denominations have made - and they have made the same mistakes themselves. But ultimately, from both

groups, God has chosen a remnant today.

There is spiritual decline today - both among the ritualistic groups and among the independent groups. But in the midst of all this, God has a few who have a heart for Him. They are not all found in one denomination. They are found in all the denominations - men and women who love God and are seeking to honour Him in all things. They are genuinely filled with the Holy Spirit and do not get involved in controversies. They are very careful in the use of their tongues and are very faithful with money. God is gathering such people together in these days as His remnant.

The theme of the prophets was always restoration. The remnant prepared the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus. When the Lord was born, there was a small remnant - Simeon and Anna in the temple, John the Baptist, the shepherds, and a few wise men from the east. Today also there is a remnant in Christendom who are preparing the way for the coming of the Lord.

Zephaniah first speaks about the coming day of judgment. He speaks more about "the day of the Lord" than any other prophet. There was a revival in Judah in King Josiah's time, about 4 years before Nebuchadnezzar came and took them away as captives. But it was a superficial revival. The prophets like Zephaniah and Jeremiah saw through that and were not deceived. But most people in Israel were deceived. Many Christians today are also being deceived by so-called "revivals" and are unable to see through their hollowness and superficiality. Much of what is called "revival" today in Christendom is merely emotional excitement and psychological gimmicks imposed on a gullible public by clever, money-loving preachers. There is no revival there to holiness, or to humility, or to freedom from the love of money, or to poverty of spirit, etc. Any revival that does not lead God's people to obey the teachings in the sermon on the mount (Mt.5 to 7) is a counterfeit. Don't be deceived by what is called "revival" today! Most of it is not revival at all.

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