

ROMANS

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"the power of God to salvation"

Paul's Letter to the Romans

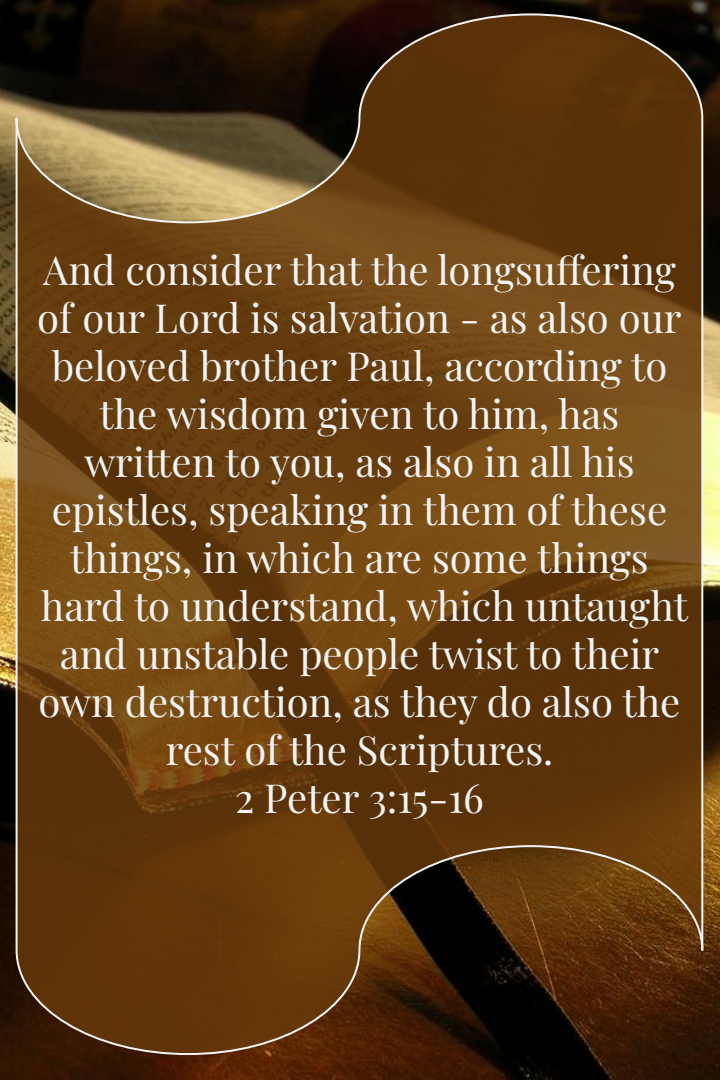
WINTER SESSION 2025

We will begin





Romans 9



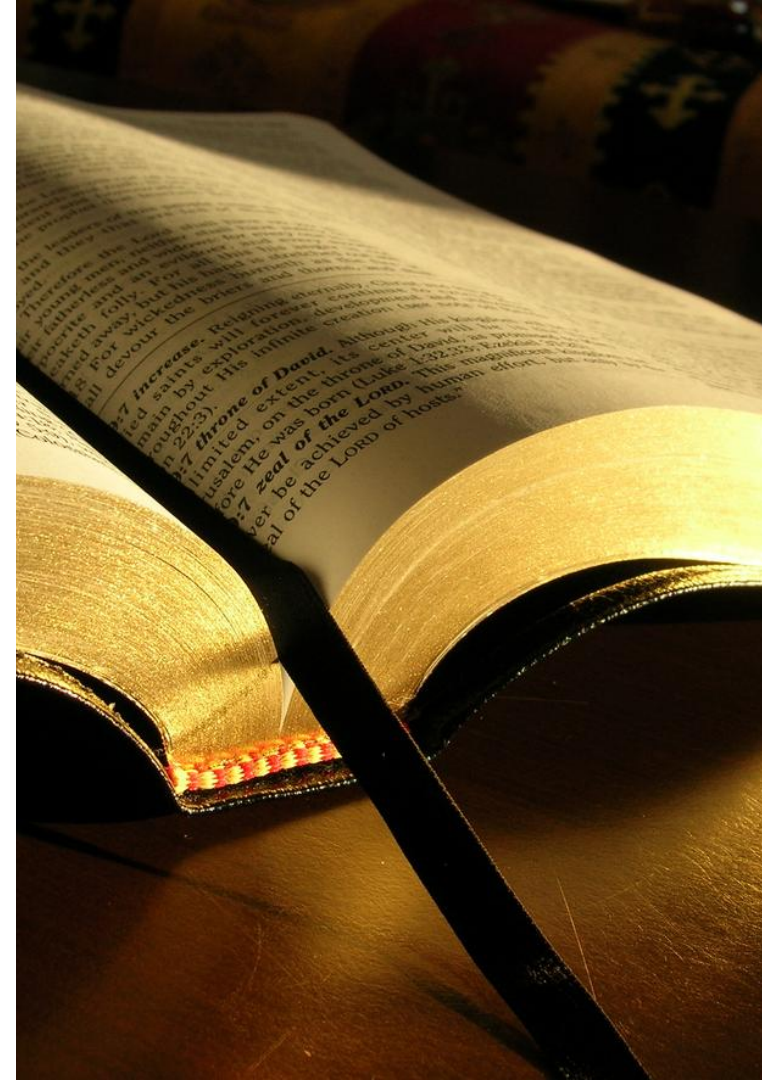
And consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation – as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

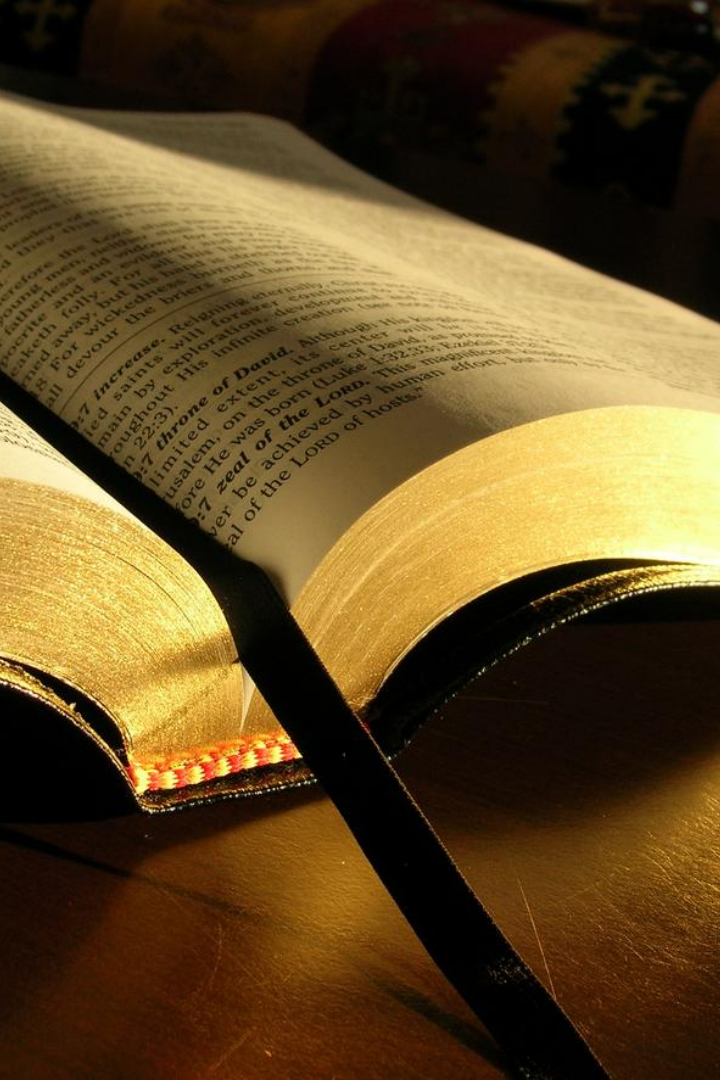
2 Peter 3:15-16

Romans 9 inaugurates the fourth major movement of Paul's epistle: God's Righteousness is Revealed in His Sovereignty (9:1–11:36). This portion follows Paul's earlier presentation of the Gospel: Condemnation due to sin (1:18–3:20), Justification by grace through faith (3:21–5:21), and Sanctification by the indwelling Spirit (6:1–8:39). The shift to chapter 9 is theologically profound, addressing the vexing question of Israel's rejection of the Messiah despite her exalted privileges.

Paul opens, not with abstract argumentation, but with heartfelt passion. With unfeigned sorrow, he grieves over his Jewish kinsmen, who, though heirs to the promises, remain estranged from Christ. Their privileges are indeed weighty: adoption, divine glory of His presence, covenants, recipients of the Law, privilege of temple service, promises, patriarchs and the lineage of Messiah *who is God over all, blessed forever*.

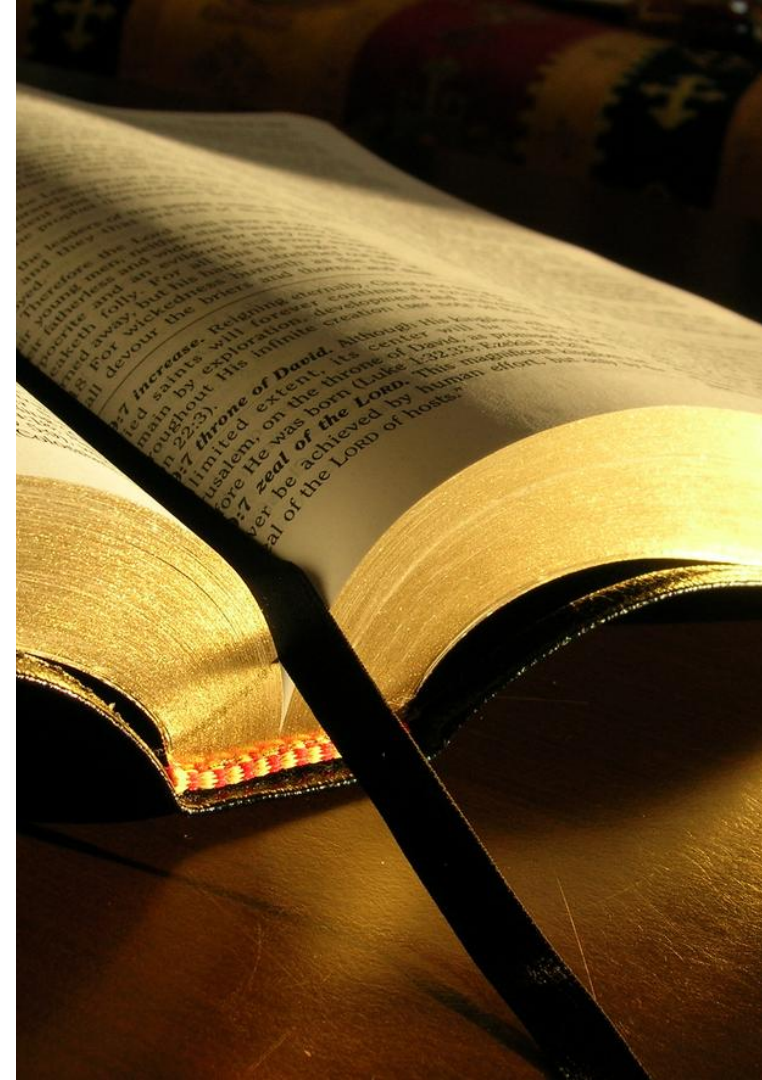
Yet, for all these advantages, most remain in unbelief and this begs the question: *Has God unfairly changed His mind about Israel?*

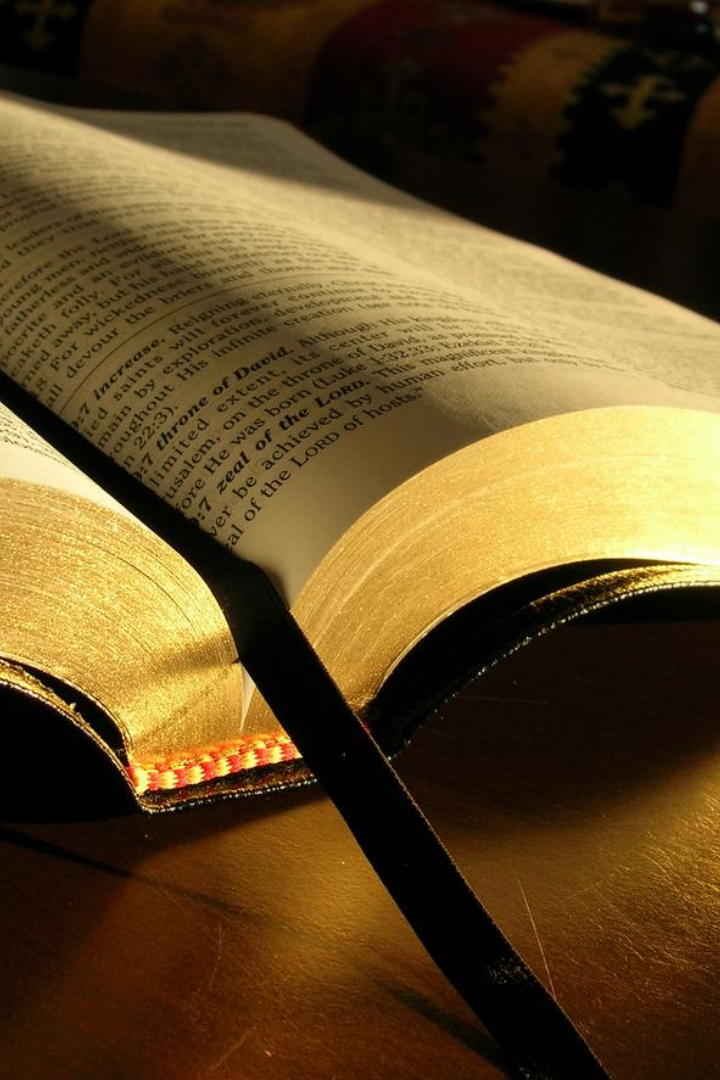




By no means, is Paul's emphatic response! Paul continues to explain that the true (adopted) children of God are not defined by ethnic descent or DNA, but by the grace of God through faith. He reminds his readers of the historical pattern that Isaac was chosen, not Ishmael; Jacob, not Esau. These (s)elections, made before birth and apart from human merit, serve to establish that God's redemptive purposes rest not on man's will or effort, but on His sovereign mercy.

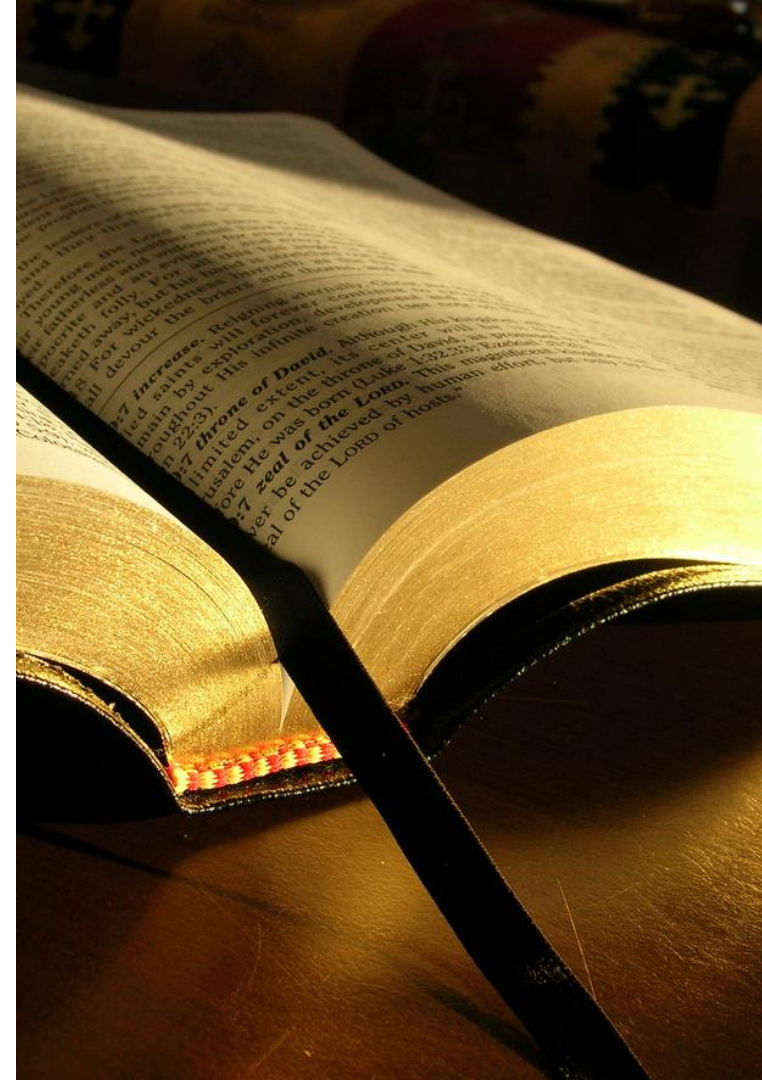
Yet Paul anticipates the objection: Does this render God unjust? He answers with characteristic clarity *Certainly not!* Divine mercy is never unjust; rather, it is gracious. The example of Pharaoh illustrates the sobering theological reality of *judicial hardening*, a solemn affirmation that those who repeatedly reject God may be confirmed in their obstinacy, not as victims, but as free moral agents under judgment due to their persistent rejection of their Creator.



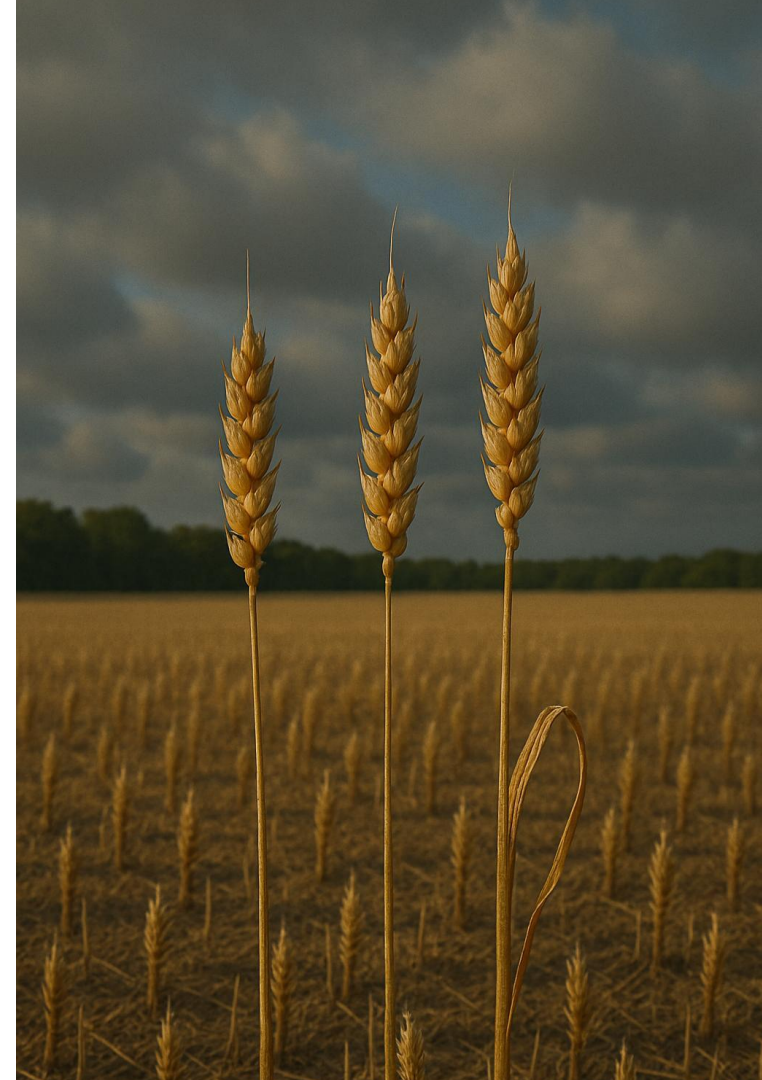


The potter & clay analogy further underscores God's divine prerogative. God, as Creator, has authority over His creation to mould vessels for honour or dishonour. Yet this sovereignty is never capricious. Scripture reveals that God is slow to anger, not willing that any should perish, and extends His mercy universally. The tension is thus preserved: God elects according to the counsel of His will, yet man remains responsible, possessing the dignity of choice and the weight of accountability on how they exercise that choice.

Romans 9 concludes with a return to the theme that threads the undergirds his entire epistle - faith. The Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, have attained it by faith. Israel, who pursued righteousness by effort, stumbled precisely because they did not receive Christ (their cornerstone) by faith.



The doctrine of the remnant is a deeply rooted biblical theme that underscores God's sovereign preservation of a faithful people within a broader context of apostasy and judgement. In Romans 9–11, Paul develops this doctrine with theological clarity and redemptive-historical depth, showing that God's purposes have not failed despite Israel's widespread unbelief.

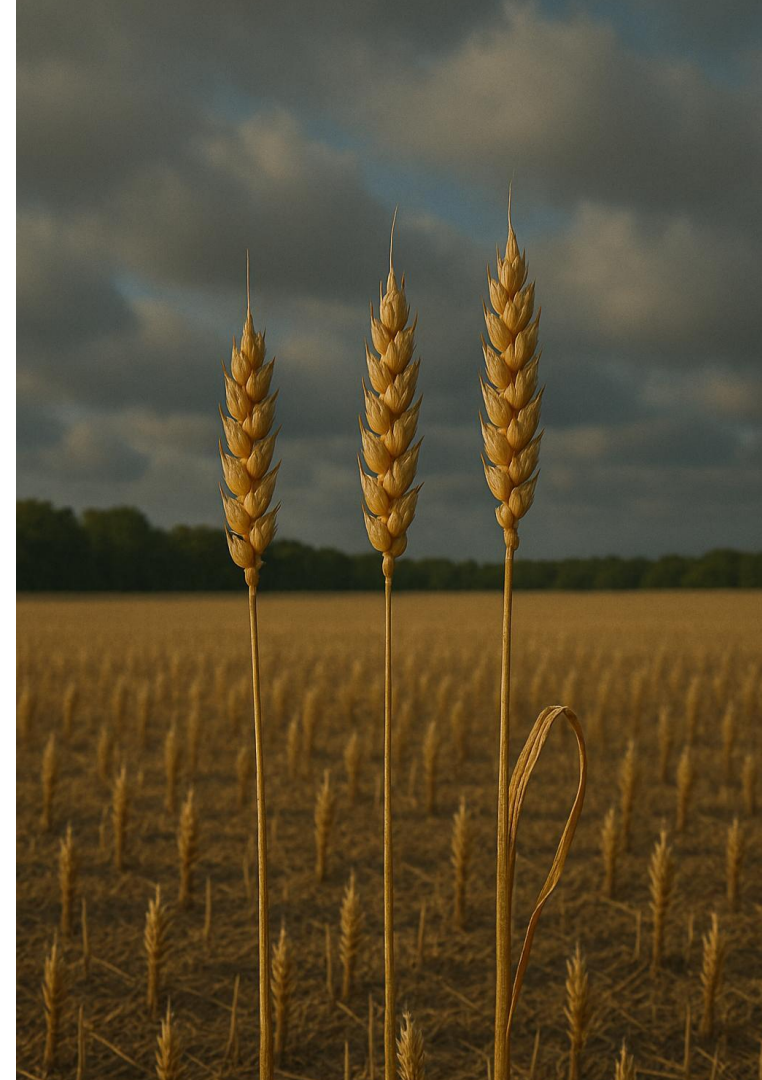




In Romans 9:27, Paul quotes Isaiah: “Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: ‘Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved.’” This quotation underscores a central truth: God’s redemptive promises were never meant for the entire ethnic nation in a blanket sense, but rather for a believing remnant. Paul’s point is not that God has failed Israel, but that God’s promises were always intended for a spiritually elect subset - those chosen by grace through faith (cf. Rom. 11:5).

The remnant is not merely a theological topic. In the Old Testament, the doctrine of the remnant arises consistently during times of apostasy and judgment. Following the exile, for instance, God speaks through prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah to promise that though judgment will come upon the nation for its idolatry and disobedience, a remnant shall return.

As Isaiah 10:20–22 declares: “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 them, 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, a remnant of them will return; The destruction decreed shall overflow with righteousness.”

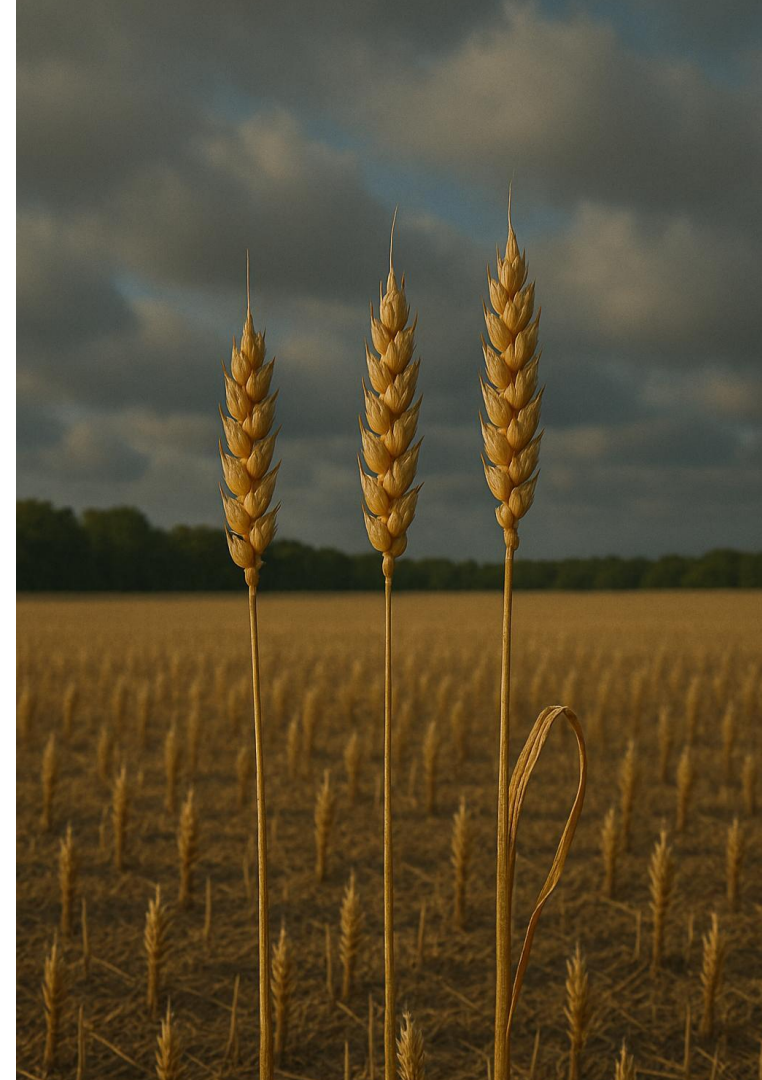




Similarly, in Jeremiah 23:3, the Lord declares: “But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.”

This remnant is preserved not because of their works, but because of God’s covenantal grace and the remnant’s faith.

Paul's use of this doctrine in Romans 9-11 further highlights the ongoing relevance of the remnant in redemptive history. He writes, "Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace" Romans 11:5. The existence of Jewish believers in Paul's own time, demonstrated that God's purposes for ethnic Israel remain intact, though fulfilled in a gracious yet discriminating way. The remnant, therefore, becomes a testimony to divine mercy and not to ethnic or moral superiority.

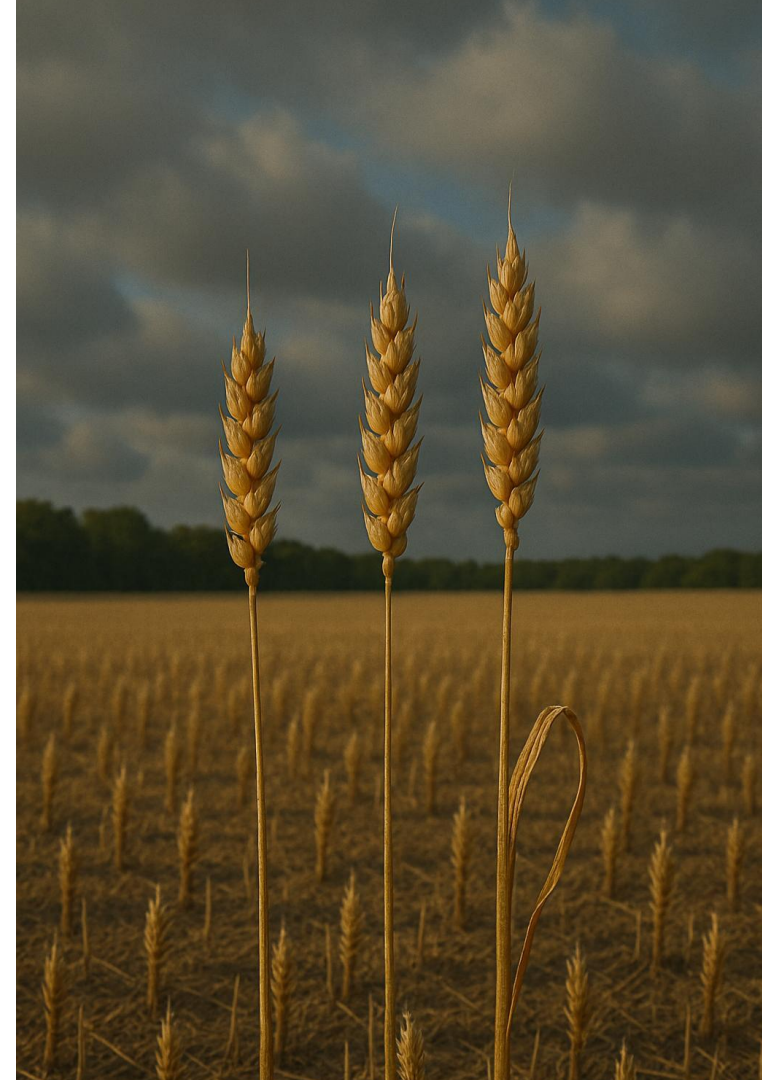




In Romans 9:6, Paul clarifies the theological basis for this distinction: “But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel.” Just as God once called disobedient Israelites “not My people,” yet later restored them, so He now calls and redeems people from among the Gentiles as part of His true people - both Jews and Gentiles.

In Romans 9:29, Paul quotes Isaiah 1:9: “And as Isaiah said before: ‘Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left us a seed {a very small remnant}, We would have become like Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah.’”

We are reminded of Abraham’s words: “Then he said, ‘Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?’ And He said, ‘I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.’” Genesis 18:32



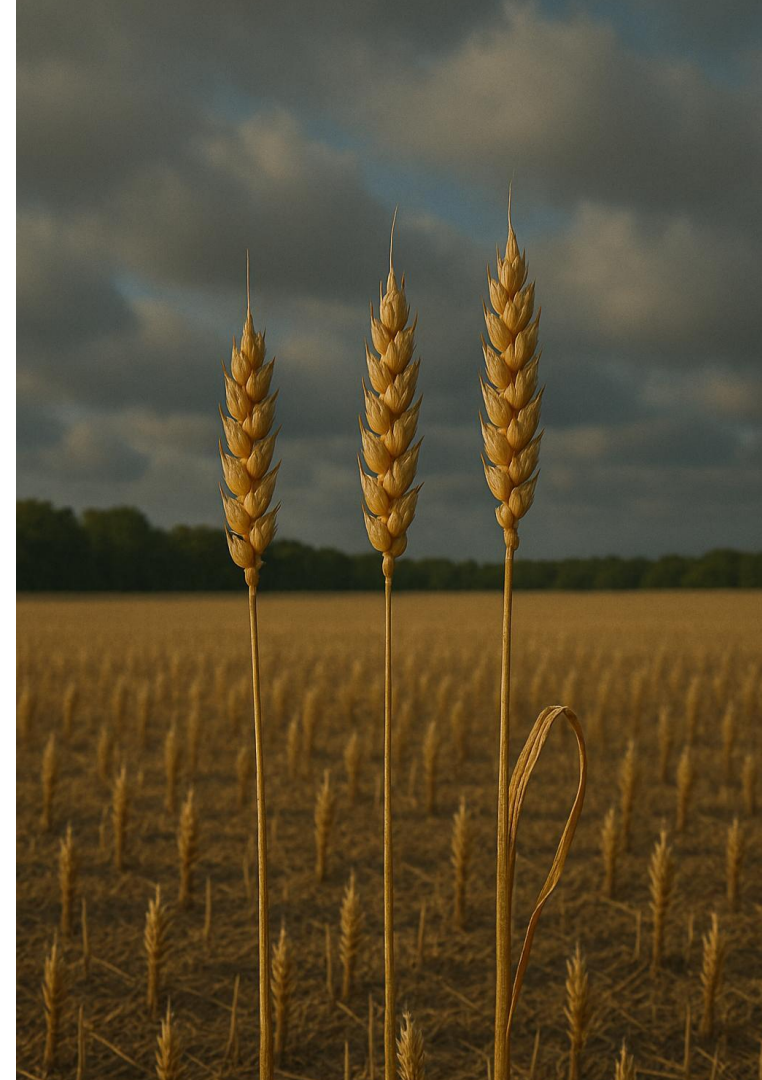


In the New Testament, the remnant finds its fuller expression in the Church, composed of believing Jews and Gentiles. The apostle Peter echoes this theme in 1 Peter 2:9–10, applying Old Testament remnant language to the church:

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

The faithful remnant is always a product of divine initiative and a response of faith, not human merit. Paul's warning in Romans 11:20–2 to the Gentile believers is striking: “Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.”

In sum, the remnant doctrine from Genesis through Revelation reveals a consistent biblical pattern: amid human rebellion, God preserves a people for Himself. In Romans 9–11, Paul integrates this Old Testament truth into the gospel narrative, affirming that salvation has always been by grace through faith - and that God's promises stand sure - God's sovereign promise of mercy and grace received by faith.





The *Doctrine of the Remnant* and *Replacement Theology* differ significantly. The Doctrine of the Remnant teaches that God has always preserved a faithful subset within ethnic Israel, and that His promises continue through this believing remnant, culminating in the one people of God - Jew and Gentile who are united in Christ. It affirms a future role for ethnic Israel (Rom. 11:26).

Replacement Theology, by contrast, holds that the Church has completely supplanted Israel, with no distinct future for the Jewish people. While the remnant view upholds covenant continuity and divine faithfulness, replacement theology risks undermining God's enduring promises to Abraham's descendants of promise.