

THE HOLY SEED WILL BE THE STUMP IN THE LAND

Isaiah 6:1-13

Key verse 6:13

„And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.”

Thanks be to the Lord that we may celebrate the 40th anniversary service of Bonn UBF. At this time we want to remember the gracious and mighty work of God. God has done a great work of God through the devoted house church of M. Peter and M. Sarah. We also want to lift up our eyes and see the hope and vision of God for the next 40 years.

In Isaiah chapter 6, the prophet Isaiah meets the holy God personally, so that he realizes that he is the sovereign and almighty ruler over the whole world. God cleans Isaiah's unclean lips and calls him as his messenger from the shepherd's heart for his people. Although the people would be very stubborn and would not accept his message, God will leave a small remnant who will accept God's Word. These remnants are the holy seed of God, through which God continues his story. Let us lift up our eyes to almighty God, accept God's calling voice, and be used as His messengers and holy seeds.

1. The Lord sat on His throne (1-7)

Let us look at verse 1: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple." King Uzziah, who reigned in Judah from 787 to 735 B.C., had been one of the few God-fearing kings under whose reign Judah once again experienced

a brief flowering. In the beginning Uzziah was humble and God-fearing, because he listened to his shepherd. Israel flourished economically, militarily and politically. Later, however, Uzziah became haughty and wanted to offer the sacrifice in the temple himself, which was actually reserved for the priests. As a result, he was punished by God with leprosy and spent the rest of his life in isolation in his own house, while his son Jotham reigned as king. As long as Uzziah lived, peace and prosperity reigned in Judah. His death now seemed to herald the end.

In chapters 1 to 5 we learn that the people were already corrupt inwardly. Although they enjoyed a high standard of living, they had left God in their hearts. The men were irresponsible and selfish (5:22). The leaders were only interested in their personal gain (3:14). The women were proud and lustful and cared only about their appearance (3:16). Many intellectuals got drunk from early morning to forget their despair (5:11). They had lost their moral standards, so they even bragged about their sins (3:9). God's heart was broken. Like a vine-grower, God had carefully taken care of them and prepared the best environment, but instead of good fruit they produced bad fruit.

We too live in a time of prosperity and peace. At the same time we experience that the inner corruption of people is increasing more and more. Already from kindergarten on,

godless teachings such as the theory of evolution and gender ideology are spread. Even worse is that even theologians have relativized the Word of God and no longer proclaim the truth. Because they do not have the Word of God, young people cannot find the meaning and significance of life and live without orientation.

In such godless times, Isaiah could despair because of the situation of his people. But he went to the temple to seek God. There he had an apparition that changed his life. Isaiah saw the glory of God. Let us read verse 1 again: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple." God sat on a high and exalted throne so great that the hem of his garment filled the temple. In this way he realized that God is the almighty and sovereign ruler who is above everything and holds everything in his hands. He is the king of kings, who rules over the whole world.

In the following Isaiah describes the environment of God. Verse 2: "Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying." The presence of the seraphim shows the glory of God. But even the seraphim had to cover their beautiful faces and their dirty feet before the holy God. Let us look at verse 3: "And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." God is holy. Holiness is the most important attribute of God that distinguishes him from sinful men. All people long for the holiness of God. The name Zebaoth means "Lord of hosts."

Finally, the seraphim proclaimed that all lands are also full of the glory of God. Until now, Isaiah had thought that the whole world was mad. He thought that the world was full of evil men and immoral women. But God opened his spiritual eyes so that he could see that the whole world is full of the glory of God. If we look at the world from God's point of view, it is truly true. When we stand in front

of the Cologne Cathedral, it is a huge building, but when we look out of an airplane, it is only as big as a matchbox. When we look at our society, there are many seemingly insurmountable problems, but from God's perspective it looks very different.

When we read the book of Isaiah, chaos and godlessness prevailed in many countries at that time. Because of their injustice, they deserved God's judgment of wrath. But from God's perspective, all countries were full of the glory of God. In other words, God is the sovereign and almighty God who has everything under control. He is the Lord over all the earth.

Germany is full of the glory of God. We had only deserved God's wrath because of the sin from two world wars. But there were people who prayed, and so God gave us the peaceful reunion to use us as a royal priesthood for world mission. Sometimes we are frightened when we see how humanism and genderism prevail and God's commandments are disregarded. But God works mightily by establishing young people through GLEF as global spiritual leaders who study and obey God's Word. We have also seen that God has established young people in USA, Turkey, Russia as servants of God's Word. All countries are full of the glory of God.

This year we have learned that neither the governments, nor the superpowers, nor the scientists have anything under control. When the Corona virus spread, everyone was helpless and worried about how to limit the pandemic. Sometimes we have seen scenes that we usually only know from science fiction or end time movies. Above all, we experienced our own limitation and helplessness in the face of the power of death, even a small virus. We do not know exactly why God sent this pandemic. But because of this word we may know that God has everything under control. All countries are full of His glory today as well. He Himself uses a pandemic to reveal His glory in all countries.

We need not be afraid. Just as Isaiah exhorted King Ahaz: "If you do not believe, you will not stay", we too should put our trust in God and move on to fulfill his work of salvation in this generation. He will do His work and bring about the spiritual revival in Europe through one-to-one Bible study, even setting up three bases for the Muslim mission through us. All countries are full of His glory!

How then can we see God and meet Him personally? In the news we only learn about the countless problems and all the evil in this world. Instagram & Co can at best satisfy our addiction to fun. But through the Word of God, God can open our spiritual eyes to see the almighty God.

40 years ago discipleship training in Germany looked impossible, especially for missionaries who had just come from Korea. But God gave our missionaries Mark 11:22 "Have faith in God". There they were allowed to look at the almighty God and challenge the impossibility. God worked through one-to-one Bible study in some young people, so that they were able to meet Jesus and grow as disciples of Jesus. When missionary Peter dedicated himself primarily to the Word of God and explored the Bible, we were allowed to see the glory of God.

Attracting the next generation of employees seemed almost impossible. But as we focused on studying the Word of God, we were allowed to see God's glory. We studied 5 books of Moses and history books and the prophets of the Old Testament. We were allowed to see God's glory because our next generation came to God and were mobilized to live as global spiritual leaders and Bible teachers.

What was the immediate consequence of Isaiah's encounter with the holy and almighty God when the thresholds shook and the house became full of smoke? Isaiah was deeply shocked and filled with holy fear of God. Let us look at verse 5: "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean

lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."

In the light of the holiness of God, Isaiah recognized what a terrible sinner he was. Above all, he was greatly troubled by the impurity of his lips. These unclean lips refer to the unbelieving words and unbelieving thoughts. God created man's mouth so that he could praise and glorify him with it. But he had not honored God, but grumbled much with his mouth and habitually spoke unbelieving words. He recognized that his people, too, were a people of unclean lips who had not honored God.

When Isaiah came to God with a penitent heart, God sent one of the seraphim to him. Let us consider verses 6 and 7: "Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." The lips of a man are very sensitive. The contact with a glowing coal must have been very painful, perhaps even left a permanent burn. It was a painful penance. But through it, his sin was atoned for and his guilt was taken away from him. God purified his lips to no longer speak unbelieving words, but to speak believing words of God so that he could bring God's message to his people.

In the past, the words of our Gideon team and Ezekiel team were often full of unbelief with worldly sentiments. But by writing the testimony of faith they were allowed to come to God and receive His forgiveness. They were allowed to gain spiritual insight for God's guidance and God's hope for their lives. God cleansed their unclean lips so that they were allowed to witness God's work, accept Jesus' lordship for their lives and make a decision for baptism.

God wants us to speak words of faith. Through our 40th Jubilee service, we may remember and give thanks for so many of God's good deeds and give glory to Almighty God. We may witness how God has worked mightily, starting with a small house church

in Villemombler Street, and how he has established many determined disciples of Jesus and spiritual leaders. We can testify how God has led and used each of our house churches for His pioneering work. We can testify how God works in the next generation, how he even uses us for spiritual revival in Europe and the mobilization of the next generation all over the world. Now we are allowed to see that God is sitting on the throne and that this almighty God wants to use us also for the M-mission.

2. God sent Isaiah (8-10)

Let us read verse 8 together: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" After Isaiah had received forgiveness of sin by the grace of God, and his unclean lips had been burned by the hot coals of repentance, he heard the voice of God calling out, "Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?" This call reflected God's broken heart for His people. God's heart was broken because of the unbelief and rebellion of his people. Because of their sins, they had to experience God's judgment. They were like disobedient children who were already so full of wounds that God did not know where to strike them anymore (1:5). But God did not give them up. God invited them to be renewed through repentance. Out of his broken shepherd's heart, God looked for a man whom he could send to them. God was looking for a man who would bring them the message of God and lead them back to God.

How did Isaiah respond to God's calling? Isaiah answered without hesitation: "Here I am, send me." Isaiah was ready to accept the task of God and to be sent by God. He could accept God's calling because he had met God personally and experienced His forgiveness. He could do it because he understood God's heart for his sinful people. He was ready to fulfill God's mission as God's messenger. He was ready to obey

God's calling, no matter when or where God wanted to send him.

God sent Isaiah from the broken shepherd's heart to his people to preach the message of judgment to them. He was to admonish them again and again to repent to God and not to put their trust in worldly or military power, but in the Lord. He should proclaim God's judgment on sin and at the same time God's grace for the future work of salvation and the restoration of Jerusalem. His message went so far as to include the time of return from the Babylonian captivity, the coming of the Messiah Jesus and the future Kingdom of Peace of God. So God wanted to use him as his messenger in the history of salvation.

God also asks today: Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? In the past, I was a cold-hearted egoist who did not even care about a friend who almost died of anorexia. With my unclean lips full of otter venom I could only hurt many people around me. God visited me at the end of my first semester through Luke 5:10b: "Don't be afraid! From now on you will catch men." After I received Jesus' forgiveness through John 5:6, He cleansed my unclean lips so that I could pass on His word. He helped me with 2 Timothy 1:7 to overcome my fear of man and to feed the sheep on the campus through one-to-one Bible study. He has also trained me over the past 20 years to grow as a righteous worker of the Word of God. God is still sending me to the students so that Germany and Europe can be spiritually awakened and set up as a Bible-believing country.

Let us look at verses 9 and 10: "He said, "Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." God did not make false promises to Isaiah about life with vocation. He would not achieve great success or receive human recognition. Rather, God sent Isaiah to a people who did not want to hear and see and

understand. They were people who had deliberately hardened their hearts because they did not want to convert and recover.

Although Isaiah preached to them for about 40 years, they would continue to close their hearts to the Word of God. His life with vocation would be hard. Some kings, like Hezekiah, sought his help. But others persecuted him. It is said that King Manasseh had Isaiah cut up after he had fled into a hollow tree trunk. Despite all the suffering and persecution, Isaiah fulfilled God's calling to the end. He held fast to his calling, no matter what the cost.

3. The holy seed (11-13)

Let us look at verses 11 to 13. It was not easy for Isaiah to preach to such hardened people. So he asked God, "Lord, how long?" Isaiah was ready to fulfill God's task, but he wanted to have some kind of timetable, to see some concrete tangible fruit. But God's answer was first of all the message of judgment. God's judgment would come upon his hardened people, so that people would be led far away, which refers to the Babylonian captivity. God's judgment would even repeat itself until only a small remnant of the people would remain, less than 10%. But then God testified to His hope that this small remnant would be like the stump of a tree that would bud once again.

Let us read verse 13: "And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land." When a large, strong tree is felled, only a stump with its root in the earth remains. It looks as if it is the end. But it is not true. The stump can bud once more and produce new shoots.

In the same way God sees God's hope for his people Israel, namely in the stumps. They will experience God's judgment. They will be led into the Babylonian captivity. They will have to suffer and weep. But then they will

strike out again. From the stumps new life will emerge. If they repent and convert, God will give them a new beginning.

God's work is the work of the remnant. It is not the work of the great masses. God purifies his people through judgment. But he finds hope in the stumps who repent, who return to the Word of God and then bring forth new shoots and fruits.

As we have studied, Ezra and Nehemiah were such remnants of God through which Israel was restored. Ezra could have led an elegant life with a good career in Babylon. But he remembered the spiritual heritage of his family and turned his heart to study the law of the Lord. He became a Bible teacher for his people. He gathered a group of exiles and led them to Judah. God used him as a holy seed who returned the Bible (the Old Testament) to his people and helped them to live as a holy people of God and obey the Word of God.

Nehemiah had a prominent position as cupbearer of the King of Persia. But he prayed for Jerusalem with a broken heart. As a leader, he mobilized the Israelites, who were completely depressed and powerless, to rebuild the city walls: "Come, let us rebuild!" So God used him as a holy seed so that the walls could be restored and they could renew their identity as God's royal priesthood.

We have also heard of Esther, who courageously risked her own life to save her people from the threat of annihilation. Ezekiel lived in exile, but like Isaiah, he accepted God's calling and proclaimed to his people the message of judgment, repentance and hope for restoration.

When M. Peter and M. Sarah came to Bonn 40 years ago, they were a holy seed to teach the students the word of God and to establish the obedience of faith. They overcame the various cunning attacks of Satan, who tried again and again to destroy the work of God,

by sticking to the Word of God and teaching God's Word. In this way, God was able to establish our shepherds and next generation as Bible teachers and spiritual leaders.

A house church overcame the negative statements of some so-called experts who wanted to declare their children incapable. Through faith in Almighty God, they educate their children as servants of God. Thus God uses them as a holy seed to overcome the humanistic spirit of the times and to live as a holy people of God. A young man who did not worry about his career, but much rather worked with God's people as a Bible teacher, is God's holy seed. A house church that fights by faith for the pioneering of a university and faithfully serves the lacking sheep is a holy seed of God. A young man who, despite the cunning temptation of Satan, first loves God with all his heart, soul and strength, and fights resolutely with God's mission, is God's holy seed. S. Noah, Samuel, Joshua, Sarah and our next generation are holy seeds of God. God will use these holy seeds so that Germany and Europe will be spiritually awakened, once again used as a shepherd nation for world mission.

Through today's lesson we have seen that our God is the sovereign and almighty ruler. He has everything under control. All lands are full of his glory. This almighty God calls us as his messengers. God's work is not the work of the masses, but the work of the remnant. God works through the holy seeds that accept his grace and calling. Let us renew God's calling and, like Isaiah as God's messengers, preach God's word with all our hearts in the coming 40 years through one-to-one Bible study, discipleship, and GLEF.