

THE HOLY SEED WILL BE THE STUMP IN THE LAND

Isaiah 6:1-13

Key verse 6:13

"And though the 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 for granting us GLEF 2021. In this pandemic season we are blessed to experience God's mighty work among the next generation, bible students and co-workers. May God work mightily through GLEF 2021 that the next generation co-workers may come to know Jesus' spiritual authority and mature as holy seeds for this generation like Isaiah.

In Isaiah chapter 6, the prophet Isaiah encounters the holy God personally in the temple. Isaiah recognizes that God is the sovereign and almighty ruler over the whole world. From his shepherd heart God appoints him as his messenger to his people. God carries out his work of salvation through a small remnant. These remnants are the holy stumps of God through whom God continues His history. Let us lift up our eyes to Almighty God, the sovereign ruler of the world, accept God's voice of calling. Let us live as holy stumps for this generation.

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

Let's look at verse 1, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, 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 his reign, Judah once again experienced a brief flourishing economically, militarily and politically. As long as Uzziah lived, peace and prosperity still reigned in Judah. His death now seemed to herald doom.

In chapters 1 to 5, we learn that the people were very corrupt inside. They enjoyed a high standard of living, but they had abandoned God in their hearts. Men lived irresponsibly and selfishly (5:22). Leaders were only interested in their personal gain (3:14). Women were proud and lustful and cared only about their appearance (3:16). Many intellectuals got drunk from early morning to forget their helplessness and despair (5:11). They had lost their moral standards and even boasted about their sins (3:9). God's heart was broken. God had carefully taken care of them like a winegrower and prepared the best environment for them. But instead of good fruit, they produced only bad fruit.

In such a godless time, Isaiah could despair because of the situation of his people. But he went to the temple to seek God. There he had a vision that changed his life. Isaiah saw the glory of God. Let's read verse 1 again, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple." Isaiah saw that God was seated on a high and lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Isaiah realized that God is the almighty and sovereign ruler who is above all and holds

everything in his hand. Isaiah realized that this God reigned as the King of kings over the whole world.

Let's look at verse 2: "Above him were seraphs, 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 and movement of the seraphs show the glory of God. Even the seraphs had to cover their shining 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.

Finally, the seraphs proclaimed that all lands are full of God's glory. Until now, Isaiah thought that the whole world was mad. He thought that the world was full of wicked men and immoral women. He thought that the world was very unjustly ruled by the lies of the zeitgeist and the power of money. But God opened his spiritual eyes that he could see that the whole world is full of the glory of God. When we stand in front of Cologne Cathedral, it is a huge building, but when we look out of an airplane, it is only as small as an USB stick. When we look at our society, there are many seemingly insurmountable problems and immoderate corruption. But from God's point of view, all the lands were full of God's glory. In other words, God is the sovereign and almighty God who is in control and rules over everything. He is the Lord Almighty who rules over and directs all human history.

Germany is full of the glory of God. We had earned only God's wrath because of the sin from two world wars. But there were people who prayed, and so God gave us peaceful reunification to use us as a royal priesthood for world mission. Sometimes we are shocked when we see how much humanism and genderism prevail and how the commandments of God are disregarded. But God is working mightily in all countries. God has changed many young people in the US, Turkey, Russia and Europe and around the world by the power of God's word into new creatures as servants of God's word. Now God is working mightily through them.

In recent years we have seen governments, superpowers, and outstanding scientists, but none of them was able to control the invisible little virus SARS-CoV-2. There was catastrophic flooding on an unknown scale here and all over the world, and it cost many lives.

We came to realize our own limitation and helplessness before an invisible small virus and before the natural disasters. When we listen to the news, it seems like all the countries are full of Corona viruses and full of destruction and disasters. But we may know and believe that God has everything under control. The heavenly hosts sang, "the whole earth is full of His glory!" When we come to the temple of God and hear His voice, we may see that all the lands are full of His glory even today. The Word of God opens our spiritual eyes to see the Almighty God and the Sovereign Ruler of the world. The Word of God helps us to overcome our helplessness and to have absolute trust in God that He has everything under control.

We do not need to fall into fear and unbelief. Just as Isaiah admonished King Ahaz, "If you do not believe, you will not abide," we may listen all the more to the Word of God and put our trust in God, the Almighty and Sovereign Ruler of the world, and move on to fulfill His counsel through us in this generation. He will surely bring about spiritual revival in Europe, America and worldwide through us, especially through our next generation, by preciousely using our one-to-one bible study. He will surely raise 100,000 missionaries by the year 2041 and send them out to every corner of the world. Amen!

What happened when Isaiah encountered the holy and almighty God in the temple? The thresholds shook and the house became full of smoke. Isaiah was deeply frightened and filled with holy fear of God. Let's 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 God's holiness, Isaiah realized what a terrible sinner he was. Above all, he was greatly troubled because of the uncleanness of his lips. These unclean lips refer to the unbelieving words and thoughts. God created man's mouth so that he could praise and glorify God. But he had not honored God, but murmured a lot with his mouth and habitually spoke unbelieving words. He realized that his people were also a people of unclean lips who had not honored God.

When Isaiah came to God with a repentant heart, God sent one of the seraphs to him. Look at verses 6 and 7: "Then one of the seraphs flew to me, having 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 touch of a red-hot coal must have been very painful. It was a painful penance. But through it, his sin was atoned for and his guilt was taken from him. God purified his lips to no longer speak unbelieving words, but to speak believing words of God. God desires for us to speak words of faith.

2. God calls 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!'" Isaiah heard the voice of God calling out, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" This call reflects 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 of wrath. They were like disobedient children, as Isaiah 1:5 says: they were already so full of wounds that God did not even know where else to strike them. But God did not give up on them. God invited them to be renewed through repentance, even though their sin was still red with blood (1:18). From His broken shepherd heart, God was looking for a person to send to them. God was looking for a person who would bring them God's message and lead them back to God.

How did Isaiah respond to God's calling? Isaiah answered, without much hesitation, "Here I am, send me." Isaiah was ready to accept God's assignment and let God send him. He was ready to accept God's calling and cooperate with God because he had personally met God and experienced His forgiveness. He was able and willing to do so because he understood God's heart for His sinful people. Isaiah saw God's glory and found in Him his vision for His 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.

As many already know, many Catholic priests in Germany blessed homosexual couples in church on May 11, 2021. Under the motto "Love Wins", many German Catholic priests celebrated blessing services in over 100 churches; for all couples - whether they are gay, lesbian or heterosexual. In doing so, they intended to set a sign of rebellion against God under the guise of reconciliation. People are even considering changing the Bible according to the thoughts of genderism by putting "people" for it instead of the words "man and woman." But Genesis 1:27 says, "And God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; and created them male and female." When Jesus was asked by the disciples what the sign of the end times is, he answered them in Mark 13:5, "Watch out that no one deceives you!" This "no one" can also be a spiritual leader who holds a spiritual office. Spiritual leaders relativize God's Word and misapply the gospel. (Mark 13:14) It is already

clear to us that we live in a time of false doctrine and the seduction of this false doctrine has become very prevalent in our society. What should we do in this tempting time? God is calling us from his broken shepherd heart, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

God also asks today and here: Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? I used to be shy and lived with an inferiority complex because my five siblings were all outstanding. My older brother had graduated from high school with an „A+“ (1.0) and became a well-known lawyer, while I had to struggle to get my high school diploma. Whenever I stood in front of the class, I got a red head and couldn't speak. But God visited me through Luke 5:10b: "Do not be afraid! From now on you will catch men." and raised me as a fisher of men, so that I could overcome my fear of man and preach His message at the campus in Bonn. Today God is still sending me to the students on campus. Through me, He wants to lead young students on campus in Germany and Europe to repentance and restore Germany once again as a shepherd nation.

Let's 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." Now God sent Isaiah to his people to proclaim to them the message of God's judgment of wrath. Isaiah was to admonish and rebuke them again and again to repent before God. He was to proclaim God's judgment on sin and at the same time God's grace for the future restoration of Jerusalem. The content of his message covered the time of the return from the Babylonian captivity, until the coming of the promised Messiah Jesus and beyond that until the future Kingdom of Peace of God. God made no false promises to Isaiah about his calling. Isaiah knew that his calling had nothing to do with increasing his personal human success or being recognized by people. Rather, Isaiah was to go to a people who would not hear and would not see and would not understand what Isaiah would proclaim. Isaiah was to go to the people who had deliberately hardened their hearts and rejected God's rule. God wanted to use Isaiah as his messenger in God's history of salvation in a very precious way. His life with the calling would be really hard and would only mean rejection. Isaiah's life with God's calling involved a life of suffering and persecution from the beginning to the end.

3. The holy stump (11-13)

Let's look at verses 11 to 13. It was not easy and in fact it was far too costly for Isaiah to go to such hardened people and preach God's message of salvation. Therefore, he asked God, "For how long, O Lord?" Isaiah was ready to fulfill God's task, but he wanted to set a limit. Isaiah wanted to see some concrete tangible fruit of his work. God's answer, however, turned out to be quite different from what he expected and surprised him even more. God's judgment was not over yet, but would come upon His hardened people more and more seriously, so that His people would be led far away, referring to the Babylonian captivity. God's judgment would even repeat itself until only a small remnant of the people would remain, less than 10%. God, in his hope and great mercy, that small remnant, like a stump of a great tree, would once again put forth new shoots.

Let us read verse 13: "And though the 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 big, strong tree is cut down, all that is left is a stump with the root in the ground. It looks like it is the end. But it isn't. The stump can sprout again and bring forth new shoots. This is exactly how God sees His people Israel with its hope. A small portion of the remnant would sprout anew, as with the stump of a great tree. These remnant

were holy stumps in the history of God's salvation, from which new shoots of the offspring for His work of salvation would come forth. God proclaimed to Isaiah His hope and restoration for His people. God's work is the work of the remnant. God's work is not the work of the great masses, but the work of the remnant minority. God finds His hope in the remnant stumps. They are the people who are willing to repent. They are the people who return to the Word of God.

Through the intensive study of the book of Nehemiah, we could see that Ezra and Nehemiah were such remnant and holy stumps for the salvation history of God, from which the new Israel emerged as new shoots. Ezra remembered the spiritual heritage of his family and set his heart on investigating the law of the Lord. God used him as one of the holy stumps who returned the Bible (the Old Testament) to His people. Nehemiah had a prominent position as cupbearer to the king of Persia. But he had a broken shepherd-heart for his people and prayed for the restoration of the city of Jerusalem. He mobilized the remaining Israelites to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, saying, "Come on, let's build!" He was also one of the holy stumps.

Forty-one years ago, making disciples in Germany looked impossible, especially for the missionaries who had just come from Korea. But God gave them the word from Mark 11:22, "Have faith in God." With this word they focused on the almighty God and the sovereign ruler of the world and challenged the impossibility through faith. God worked mightily through the one-to-one bible study of the missionaries in some young people that they meet Jesus and through the community of life mature as disciples of Jesus and as servants of the Word of God. Now God uses them as responsible leaders for the church. They and their mission co-workers were a small invisible seed like a mustard seed. They held fast to the Word of God and prayed persistently for the disciple-making work and spiritual revival of Europe up to this day. They are holy stumps of the work of God.

Last year our 5 baptized teenagers - Samuel Abraham, Joshua Elsholz, Sarah Schweitzer, Peter Joseph and Sarah Grace - decided to be among the holy seeds for their generation. A young man who, despite Satan's cunning temptation, first loved God with all his heart, soul and strength, and struggled resolutely with God's mission, is also God's holy seed. So God will continue His salvation history in Germany and Europe through these holy seeds.

America is characterized by various false teachings, such as materialism, individualism and moral transgressions. But the house churches and the co-workers of the N.G. in New Jersey UBF hold God's word from Mark 6:37 "You give them something to eat!" and thus devotedly lead a giving life. They devote themselves fully, according to God's calling. M. John and Grace Park adopted 6 children and cared for them as if they were their own children. They are a role model not only for the campus mission but also for the "Global Supporting Mission". The giving life of Dr. Paul and Sarah Chung's house church as silver missionaries is a great example for many senior missionaries. They are also holy stumps for God's salvation history in America. Because of such holy stumps, America is full of God's glory. God will once again use the US precious as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation through them.

Our God is the sovereign and almighty ruler of the world. All lands are full of His glory. This almighty God calls me and also you as His messengers. God's work is the work of the remnant. God works through the holy seeds who accept His grace and calling. Let us be holy stumps for His salvation history in this generation. God bless GLEF 2021, thereby raising up precious holy seeds that will mature into the holy stumps for His world salvation work in this generation.