

Here am I, Send Me: A Critical Hermeneutical Analysis of Isaiah 6: 1-13 and its Relevance to the Call to Become a Pastor of HKBP

Sukanto Limbong

Sekolah Tinggi Theologia HKBP Pematangsiantar, Indonesia

Abstract: The narrative of the sending in the book of Isaiah is often used as a basis for confirming the calling to become a servant. In this writing, the prophet Isaiah shows an attitude of readiness to be sent by the LORD, even though he is in the midst of chaotic social conditions. Through qualitative research methods supported by historical-critical interpretation, the interpretation of Isaiah 6:1-13 must be empirical and factual. This approach allows us to understand the context and deep meaning of Isaiah's experience. The results of the study show that Isaiah is a prophet who is not only ready to be sent, but also provides a relevant example for the calling of servants in the church today. In a world full of challenges and difficulties, Isaiah's attitude inspires servants to remain faithful in carrying out their duties. He shows that even though times change, the call to serve remains and must be answered with courage and commitment. This article aims for servants to emulate Isaiah as a role model in being willing to be sent to various places, regardless of location and situation. Thus, it is expected that every servant can respond to the call of the LORD with full obedience and enthusiasm, making their service a real manifestation of living faith.

Keywords: Critical Hermeneutics; Pastor; Sent; Isaiah 6:1-13.

INTRODUCTION

The prophet Isaiah functions as God's messenger to convey various messages, whether in the form of criticism, warning, or confirmation. Joseph Ponessa and Laurie Watson Manhardt explain that God sent prophets to remind His people to keep walking on the right path, so that they avoid danger and difficulties. When Isaiah was sent to speak about the conditions that Judah would experience, the nation was in a transitional situation. The reign passed from the deceased King Uzziah to King Jotham, a God-fearing king. In this context, Isaiah was tasked with making the hearts of the people of Judah hard, deaf, and unable to respond (Ponessa and Manhardt, 2004). In this sick state, Allah does not want them to turn around and recover. The text Isaiah 6:1-13 describes the punishment that will be imposed on the nation of Judah, which applies without exception to all levels of society, from ordinary people to kings, and from young to old. God sent Isaiah to carry out this commission. Furthermore, this punishment will not only be directed at individuals but will also affect the land itself (Brueggemann, 1988).

The land of Judah will be desolate, and its inhabitants will be exiled to distant places. The cities will be destroyed and abandoned. Even the Temple God in Jerusalem, which is considered as a symbol of God's throne, will also be destroyed. In the historical-critical analysis of Isaiah 6:1-13, it can be found that Isaiah's calling has a deep meaning in the context of the relationship between God and His people. The Hebrew phrase "hineni sh'lacheni" (הִנְנִי הֹלְכֵנִי) indicates a response of obedience and readiness to serve. This is not only

a call to church ministers, but also to all of God's people to be ready and willing to serve. Isaiah's call reflects God's holy and sovereign nature over creation. His. In this case, the call provides an absolute guarantee from Allah to strengthen and confirm the responsibility of His servants. This analysis also highlights how the depiction of the Israelites being wounded by their sin is a call for them to turn to God. Isaiah 6:1-13 describes a significant event in which God pronounces His judgment on the nation of Judah. This judgment is comprehensive and universal, encompasses all levels of society regardless of social status or age. The impact of this judgment is very broad, not only touching human life from the common people to the king, but also impacting the territorial aspect. The land will be desolate, the cities will be destroyed, and the inhabitants will be exiled to a distant place. Even the Temple in Jerusalem, which was a symbol of God's presence, was not spared from destruction (Childs, 2001).

In this context, Isaiah was chosen as God's messenger with a very special mission. He was given a seemingly paradoxical task - to harden the hearts of the people. As part of the nation that will be punished, Isaiah faces a serious personal dilemma. However, he remains faithful to his mission even though he realizes that the results of his ministry will not be significant. Isaiah's mission is not just to convey a message, but has a purpose that deeper. There is a spiritual longing to bring people back to holiness, which includes both physical and spiritual dimensions. Isaiah's story provides an interesting contrast when compared to

the story of the prophet Jonah in Nineveh. While Jonah's ministry resulted in mass conversion of the entire city's population, Isaiah's ministry was met with rejection and hardness of heart. This shows that the success of ministry is not always measured by the positive response received. As witnessed in the book of Jeremiah, God remained faithful to send His prophets to remind His people, regardless of how they responded.

This passage invites reflection profound questions about the nature of ministry and the role of a messenger of God. Is it enough for a messenger to simply deliver a message without expecting acceptance? How to deal with rejection in ministry? What is the true measure of success in ministry? How to balance personal desires with divine calling? Ultimately, the text This speaks not only of judgment, but also of faithfulness in service, the complexity of the prophetic role, and the dynamic relationship between God and His people. Even though the message conveyed feels heavy and seems hopeless, there is still a dimension of God's love that never tires of sending His prophets to remind His people to return to the right path.

Gerhard von Rad's thinking on Isaiah's ministry opens up a profound perspective on the complexity of the relationship between God, the prophet, and His people. In his view, God intentionally created a condition where Isaiah's preaching would encounter a barrier. This barrier was not a physical obstacle, but a spiritual and psychological condition that made the people of Judah unable to receive or understand the message being delivered. The uniqueness of this situation lies in the paradox of the ministry given to Isaiah. On the one hand, he was commanded to preach and deliver the word of God, but on the other hand, God Himself had determined that the message would not receive a positive response from his listeners. This creates a situation that seems to contradict human logic in general, where a message is delivered precisely with the intention of not being heard (von Rad, 1965). This phenomenon can be understood more deeply in the context of God's sovereignty and His greater plan. The inability of the people of Judah to hear and accept Isaiah's preaching was not merely the result of their own hardness of heart, but was part of a greater divine plan. God, in His sovereignty, used this situation to accomplish higher purposes in salvation history. Von Rad's view also highlights the unique prophetic nature of prophetic ministry. The success of a prophet is not measured by how many followers he gains or how

much influence he has, but by his faithfulness in carrying out the mission entrusted to him. In the case of Isaiah, this faithfulness was demonstrated through his persistence in preaching despite the expected rejection. The theological dimension of this understanding shows that God sometimes works in ways that are beyond human understanding. Rejection of the prophetic message does not mean the failure of the mission, but rather is an integral part of God's larger plan. It also provides a new perspective on the concept of God's judgment and grace, where even in His acts of judgment, there is still an element of the larger plan of salvation. Von Rad's thinking opens up insight into the nature of true prophetic ministry. Such ministry is not always marked by visible success or widespread acceptance, but by faithfulness in carrying out the divine mandate, regardless of the visible results. Isaiah's situation is an example of how God can use even rejection and unbelief to achieve His higher purposes in human salvation history.

RESEARCH METHOD

The application of qualitative research methods in this study will be deeply integrated with the historical-critical interpretation method, an approach that has become an important foundation in biblical studies. Qualitative methods are empirical and factual processes and are very close to the current situation. The historical-critical interpretation method provides an analytical framework that allows researchers to dig deeper into the meaning of the text by considering the historical, social, and cultural contexts that underlie the formation of the text (Riyanto, 2020). In collecting data, this study will utilize the latest literature sources, especially scientific journals published in the last five years, as well as competent reference books in the field of historical-critical interpretation. This approach allows researchers to analyze how biblical texts are understood and interpreted in their historical context, while still considering the development of contemporary understanding reflected in the latest literature. The historical-critical interpretation method in this qualitative study will help reveal various layers of meaning in the text, starting from linguistic and semantic analysis, tracing traditions and text transmission, to understanding *Sitz im Leben* or the context of life that underlies the formation of the text. This approach also allows researchers to identify the various literary forms and genres used in the text, and how these

influence the interpretation and understanding of the text.

In the context of data analysis, the integration of qualitative methods with historical-critical interpretation allows researchers to conduct a more in-depth and critical reading of the text. Researchers can examine how the various elements in the text relate to each other, how the historical context influences the formation of meaning, and how the text has been understood and interpreted throughout history (Creswell, 2013). This process involves careful analysis of the linguistic, historical, and theological aspects of the text. This methodological framework also allows researchers to consider how various interpretive traditions have developed over time. By analyzing current literature while still paying attention to the historical development of the understanding of the text, researchers can produce a more comprehensive and balanced interpretation. This helps in understanding how the meaning of the text develops and interacts with various contexts throughout history. The use of historical-critical interpretation methods in this qualitative research also helps researchers in identifying and analyzing the various layers of tradition in the text. This approach allows researchers to understand how the text is formed, transmitted, and interpreted in various historical contexts. This is important for producing a deeper understanding of the meaning of the text and its relevance in the contemporary context. By integrating qualitative methods and historical-critical interpretation, this research can produce an analysis that is not only academically in-depth, but also relevant to contemporary understanding. This approach allows researchers to build a bridge between the historical understanding of the text and its application in the current context, while maintaining academic integrity and analytical sharpness in the research process. Through this integrated methodological approach, research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of theological understanding, while maintaining academic rigor and historical awareness that are characteristic of the historical-critical interpretation method. This allows research to produce findings that are not only academic but also relevant to the contemporary context (Miles, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Interpretation

A. Verse 1 "Vision in the Year of King Uzziah's Death"

Isaiah 6 is not simply a record of the prophet's spiritual experience. It is a momentous occasion when he receives a divine vision, not in a dream or in a trance, but in full consciousness. The significance of this event is made clear by the emphasis on the context: "the year that King Uzziah died." King Uzziah, despite his successful 52-year reign over Judah, experiences a tragic spiritual downfall. Initially obedient to God, he becomes arrogant and oversteps his authority by performing a sacred duty that only priests were allowed to perform—burning incense. As a result, he is punished with leprosy, a visible sign of impurity in the eyes of God. Uzziah's death marks the end of an era and leaves the people of Judah anxious about the future (Utley, 2010). It is in the midst of this uncertain transition that Isaiah receives his vision. Although he is no stranger to spiritual visions, the vision in chapter six feels different, more vivid, and full of meaning. He "saw" God, not literally which is impossible for humans, but he experienced the majestic and glorious divine presence that filled the Temple (Calvin, 1950). The strategic placement of this vision at the beginning of the book of Isaiah has sparked debate among scholars. Does this show that Isaiah's enthusiasm is starting to fade in carrying out his prophetic duties, or is it the opposite? The depiction of God present in the Temple, a place that had been desecrated by Uzziah's actions, contains an undeniable message: God will not tolerate insults to the sanctity of His worship. In the midst of a leadership crisis and anxiety about an uncertain future, Isaiah's vision emerged as a turning point. It is a powerful affirmation of God's sovereignty, a call to repentance, and a promise of restoration for those willing to return to Him (Calvin, 1950).

B. Verses 2-3 "The Proclamation of the Holiness of the LORD by the Seraphim"

The image of the seraphim in the vision of Isaiah 6 paints a magnificent tableau of God's majesty and holiness. Their innumerable numbers, as described in Daniel 7:10, fill the heavenly chambers, continually ministering in the presence of the Most High. Their appearance, though difficult to imagine by human limitations, inspires awe and reverence. They cover their own faces, not God's, as a sign of profound reverence, recognizing their unworthiness before the divine holiness. The seraphim's six wings play a vital role in this heavenly liturgy. Two are used to cover the face, two to cover the rest of the body, while the other two hover, ready to carry out divine commands.

Their every movement is a perfect symphony of obedience and devotion. The depiction of the train of God's robe filling the Temple has profound theological significance. It reaffirms the truth that although His throne is in heaven, His power and glory extend throughout the earth, centered in Zion, His holy dwelling place. The voices of the seraphim are not a harmonious chorus, but a single cry that resonates with a tremendous force that shakes the entire Temple (Bucur, 2014). The doorposts sway, smoke billows, signifying the irresistible presence and power of God. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty," their cry echoes, emphasizing the absolute and perfect holiness of God, a divine attribute also affirmed in Revelation 4:8. The threefold repetition of the word "holy" is not merely an emphasis, but an affirmation of God's perfection. The number three, in the biblical tradition, often symbolizes wholeness and perfection. In this context, the repetition of "holy" expresses the essence of God that is completely separate from all that is mortal and sinful. The smoke that fills the Temple comes from the burning coals on the altar, which are taken with tongs by one of the seraphim. The altar, the center of sacrifice and encounter with God, becomes the source of the manifestation of divine glory that envelops the entire holy space. Isaiah's vision of the seraphim is not simply a breathtaking sight. It is a revelation of the majesty and holiness of God, a reminder of man's unworthiness before Him, and an invitation to live a life of holiness and obedience that glorifies His name.

C. Verses 4-5 "Awareness of Sin in the Presence of GOD"

Isaiah's experience in Isaiah 6 describes a stunning encounter between the human and the divine. The smoke that filled the temple was more than a visual effect; it became a powerful metaphor for the manifestation of God's invisible yet palpable presence. Like the smoke that guided Moses to his encounter with the Most High in the Tabernacle (Exodus 33:9), this smoke represented the holiness and majesty of God that transcended the limitations of human perception. The temple, traditionally understood as the center of worship and closeness to God, was now transformed into a space of mystery and authority. The overwhelming presence of God that even the priests could not approach challenged the understanding of how to approach the Holy One. This was a reminder that true worship is not about empty ritual or spiritual arrogance, but about humility and sincere submission to the greatness of God. Isaiah's cry,

"Woe is me!" was not simply an expression of spontaneous fear, but an honest and heartfelt recognition of human limitations in the face of divine perfection (Calvin, 1950). Isaiah recognizes that "the impurity of words," a metaphor for all forms of human imperfection and failure, has stained him and his people, reminiscent of their rebellion at Mount Sinai. Yet, in the midst of his terror and awareness of his unworthiness, Isaiah's confession is a step toward transformation. In his humility and sincere repentance, the door of hope and restoration is opened, for God's grace is always available to those who sincerely turn to Him. Isaiah is a prophet chosen by God who still feels the burden of his own guilt. This teaches that the spiritual journey is not a straight line to perfection, but rather a process of ongoing transformation. Each person is called to continually recognize his limitations and to open himself to God's restoring and perfecting grace. Isaiah's cry, "I die; I perish," reflects the natural human reaction when confronted with a majesty beyond comprehension. Yet encounters with the divine tend to be frightening because they have the potential to refine and shape into a new person. Isaiah, in his recognition of his vulnerability, sees his "tongue," his instrument of communication, as a representation of his whole being in need of purification. Being a prophet, in his view, is not about status or power, but about living in constant awareness of God's transforming and sanctifying presence.

D. Verses 6-7 "Sins Are Forgiven"

When God called Jeremiah to be a prophet, he responded with great doubt. Jeremiah, a young man, felt he did not have the ability to speak well and considered himself unworthy of such a difficult task. This feeling of inferiority is natural for someone who is faced with such a great responsibility as being God's spokesman. However, God did not allow Jeremiah's unbelief to hinder His plan. In this moment, God reached out His hand and touched Jeremiah's mouth, giving him His power and words to guide him in carrying out this calling. Jeremiah's experience was different from Isaiah's, who also experienced a moment of cleansing. In Isaiah's story, a seraph came to cleanse his lips with coals from the altar. This action shows that although Isaiah also felt unworthy, God provided a more direct way to cleanse and prepare him for his task. This reflects how God works through various means to touch the hearts of His people and prepare them for service. God's act of touching Jeremiah's mouth is

a clear example of His mercy. By giving Jeremiah the opportunity to speak on His behalf, God shows that He not only sees the potential in a person, but is also committed to shaping and preparing them. The removal and forgiveness of sins can only be obtained through confession to Yahweh and repentance. In the books of Ezekiel and Nehemiah, we see how God's people are called to confess their wrongdoings and return to Him with sincerity (Friesen, 2009). Confession of sin and repentance are essential first steps in the process of purification. This prompted the seraphim to take the coal from the altar and touch Isaiah's lips. Although seraphim are radiant heavenly beings with extraordinary powers, they carry out this sacred task with full responsibility and respect for God's command. This shows that even the most noble creatures are subject to God's will. After experiencing purification, a person will be able to hear God's voice more clearly. The Israelites were reminded of their sinful and wicked condition, so they needed to return to God with all their hearts. God is the source of forgiveness, and His people must realize that forgiveness is a gift from God that should not be misused. This grace is not a license to continue sinning; rather, it is an invitation to live in obedience. Worship of idols or other gods will only worsen the condition of God's people. This is a warning to the Israelites not to get caught up in practices that damage their relationship with God. They must realize that devotion to God must be done sincerely and wholeheartedly (Friesen, 2009).

The phrase "He touched it to my mouth" confirms that Yahweh Himself takes away sin and grants forgiveness; the seraphim act as messengers who deliver the message to Isaiah. In the context of true worship, the removal of sin and God's forgiveness are clearly stated, inviting everyone to come to God in repentance. The seraphim do not claim to be the ones doing the removing; they simply deliver the message after touching the coal from the altar. The statement "See, this has touched your lips" is intended to ensure that Isaiah understands what he is receiving. This event is designed to leave no doubt because the seraphim have made it clear that Isaiah's request has been granted by God. Thus, the uncleanness of his lips that could lead to his destruction has been resolved by God through His servants, the seraphim. Through the events of Jeremiah and Isaiah, Christians can learn about the importance of confession, cleansing by God, and the role of His messengers in this process. This is a reminder to

all of us of God's ever-present grace for those who come to Him with a sincere heart. We are called to listen to His voice and live according to His will, making these experiences a guide in our respective journeys of faith (Friesen, 2009).

E. Verses 8-9 "Here am I, send me"

When the voice of God, the Lord of hosts, resounded with the profound question: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for me?", Isaiah immediately agreed to undertake the mission. In this context, God was not speaking directly to Isaiah, but rather inviting him to participate in His greater plan. Isaiah's response reflects a courage and willingness that is rare, especially when many prophets before him had rejected similar calls. In Old Testament history, prophets often rejected God's call for various reasons. For example, Moses felt unable to speak well and was afraid of being rejected by the people of Israel. Jeremiah felt too young and inexperienced to speak God's word. Meanwhile, Jonah openly refused to go to Nineveh because he wanted to see the city's inhabitants punished by God. These reasons demonstrate the fear and doubt that often prevent people from responding to God's call. Unlike them, Isaiah showed a very different attitude. When he heard God's voice offering him this important mission, he did not get caught up in doubt or calculation. Instead, he immediately responded with readiness and courage, ready to carry out the task given to him. After Isaiah accepted the call, God commanded him to go and speak His word to the people of Judah. However, the state of the people of Judah at that time was very concerning. They had despised the word of the Lord; although they heard His voice, they did not understand the meaning behind it. They saw the signs and wonders performed by the Lord but still did not respond in the way they should have. Their ears were there, but they were not functioning as they should have; their eyes were open, but they could not see the truth. By delivering this message from God, Isaiah faced two possible outcomes: the people would repent or their hearts would become even harder. There was a risk that the teaching he delivered would be rejected as unpleasant or contrary to what they wanted to hear. This was a great challenge for a prophet who was sent to bring truth (Vine, 1997).

The situation in Judah was further exacerbated by the actions of previous kings who preferred idolatry to following God's command. They built altars to foreign gods and appointed priests to serve the god Baal in various cities in Judah. These

idolatrous practices were not only carried out by individuals; they were also facilitated by the kingdom, further worsening the spiritual condition of the nation of Judah. In this context, Isaiah was faced with a great challenge. He had to face a society that had fallen into sinful and unjust practices. With this historical background, Isaiah's mission became even more important because he was expected to remind the people of the importance of returning to God and moving away from idolatrous practices (Vine, 1997).

Delivering God's message was no easy task. Isaiah knew that many people would reject his message because they were already tied to bad habits and false beliefs. Even if he did deliver the truth, there was a chance that the people would become even more hard-hearted and reject God's teaching through him. This was a dilemma often faced by prophets: should they continue to speak the truth even though they knew it might not be accepted? Isaiah had to prepare for rejection and even persecution from those who were supposed to hear God's message. However, his commitment to his divine calling gave him the strength to press on despite the great challenges ahead. Isaiah's calling is an example of how a person should respond to God's invitation in their life. When we hear His voice calling us to serve or share His love with others, will we be as willing as Isaiah was? In today's world, where many people ignore God's voice, having the courage to answer His call is a very meaningful act. Being a channel of blessing to others is a noble goal even though challenges and rejection may be faced. Like Isaiah, let us answer: "Send me!" Commitment to bringing God's message of love and hope to the world around us is essential. By following Isaiah's example, we can learn that listening to God's call is the first step, but carrying it out wholeheartedly is a challenge in itself, a journey of faith that requires courage and perseverance. This journey can bring change not only to oneself but also to the surrounding community (Vine, 1997).

F. Verses 10-13 "Punishment of Sinful Man"

God reminded the prophet Isaiah of the stubbornness of the people he was ministering to, so the impact of his ministry was expected to be minimal. Isaiah was to face this challenge with steadfastness and confidence in God's mercy, even though it seemed that his every teaching would be rejected by the people. The hardness of heart that Isaiah faced was seen in the history of their ancestors, especially in the story of Pharaoh in Egypt. God sent ten plagues on Egypt because

Pharaoh refused to free the Israelites, as recorded in the book of Exodus (Exodus 5-14). A similar incident also happened to the people of Judah, who hardened their hearts even more with idolatry that was thought to provide relief. Kings such as Manasseh and Ahaz played an active role in idolatry, which further worsened the spiritual condition of the people of Judah.

Isaiah was sent by God to convey His word even though it made the hearts of the Israelites increasingly "hot" due to the thickness of the fat in their hearts, so that they could not feel anything. They show a lack of compassion, concern, and response to God's message. In this condition, they are like blind, deaf and dumb people who are on their way to perdition. However, the prophet must not be discouraged or stop preaching the salvation and repentance that God desires so that His people do not disappear. Even though their ears will be closed and their eyes will be closed to the truth, Isaiah still reveals the reality that they have fallen into a life that God hates. Their resistance to offers to turn around and heal becomes clear.

The stubbornness of the Jewish people was later quoted by John the Baptist and also the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans (Romans 11:8). The Apostle Paul indicated that their blindness was the result of the nation's iniquity and wickedness. This is not just a coincidence, but is part of a larger teaching. John states that Isaiah speaks of Christ (John 12), affirming that Christ is God who fills the whole earth with His glory. Christ is not separate from His Spirit, and communication with Him is through the Holy Spirit. Those who hear Isaiah's teaching do not suffer destruction like most of the nation of Judah; in contrast, those who remained received healing because they turned to God. Out of his amazement and zeal for service, Isaiah asked the Lord about how long the terrible judgment would last. He realized that during the time of judgment, the land would completely be destroyed. The first empire to destroy the land was Babylon, followed by the Roman Empire which attacked and destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem. The cities will be destroyed under the rule of Emperor Vespasian. God's Word states that only one-tenth of the remnant will remain in the land and grew back as before. During the reign of Emperor Hadrian, the land of Canaan became desolate as the word of the Lord had said. The land of Canaan experienced God's judgment with aridity due to Roman rule.

There is no doubt that Isaiah's question, "How long, O Lord?" arises from the awareness of the terrible judgment that awaits the unbelievers. They will be destroyed until the cities are desolate. This picture depicts a nation thrown into exile with houses deserted. A great slaughter will occur; every city and house will be destroyed, leaving the land in fear and desolation. However, this judgment is directed only at those who refuse to obey God and persist in going against His will. Isaiah emphasizes that God is in control of all things. The description of God as "the holy one" shows that He cannot be compared with the idols known to the nations around Canaan. God has the power to cast the people of Judah into Babylon. Although the judgment is being meted out to the people of Judah because of their disobedience, there is the promise of salvation for future generations. After the proclamation that the people of Israel would not repent and would be exiled to Babylon, there was hope for the future (heilgeschichte) of the people of Israel as summarized in Amos 8:2 (Rendtorff, 1996). In this context, the term "shoot" (זרע) describes the beginning of a new life after all the judgments that the people of Israel had experienced. This shoot held hope amidst the death that befell the people of Israel; a promise that the generations of Israel would not end during the ministry of the prophet Isaiah. The preaching of the word of the Lord by His servants would not be in vain even though the results seemed minimal (Vine, 1994). The judgment of the people of Judah had a time limit; there was a promise of salvation from God for the future generation who were faithful to Him. Although many people might fall into destruction because of their disobedience, there was still hope for those who listened to the word of the Lord with a sincere heart.

2. Theology of Mission

The prophet Isaiah's sending has strong relevance to the present context, where the call to repent and return to God remains at the heart of the spiritual message. Just as Isaiah spoke to the people of Judah, God also calls His people today to turn from their wrong ways. In the Bible, repentance is a central theme that calls individuals to acknowledge their wrongdoings and return to God. This concept is seen in various books, where the prophets call for repentance as a means of gaining forgiveness and restoration. This shows that even though the people often do evil, God still provides an opportunity for repentance through His messengers. Although Isaiah was sent on a mission

to preach repentance, many of his people rejected the message. This reflects the challenges faced by preachers today, where the message of truth is often not well received by the people. This failure is not due to a lack of ability on the part of the preacher, but rather the unwillingness of the listeners to accept the truth (Sabo, 2019). Despite the coming judgment, Isaiah also brings a message of hope. In the current context, although many people may fall into sin, there is still hope for those who will listen and repent. God never gives up on His people; He always provides a path to recovery for those who are willing to return to Him. The concept of a "remnant people" that appears in Isaiah's sending reminds us that even though many reject it, there is still a group of people who are loyal to God and willing to listen to His word. This is a reminder that in every generation, there are always individuals or groups who are committed to living according to God's will (Boda & Smith, 2006).

Isaiah's sending serves as an example for today's spiritual leaders to remain faithful in conveying God's message, even though the results may not always be visible. The call to repent and return to God is a timeless mission, and every effort to convey the truth has the potential to bring about change for individuals and society as a whole.

3. Implications for the Calling of Pastors at HKBP

Pastors in HKBP have a very central role in the life of the congregation. They are spiritual leaders who are called to preach the gospel, shepherd the congregation, and be role models for all believers. Their duties include teaching the Bible, counseling, and spiritual guidance. In addition, pastors are also responsible for maintaining unity and oneness in the congregation, as well as being a bridge between the congregation and God. As a pastor, they must have a strong commitment to their calling of service, and live according to the teachings of Christ. In carrying out their duties, pastors are guided by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, and supported by all members of the congregation. A pastor in the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) is a spiritual shepherd who is called to shepherd God's people. He not only acts as a giver of Bible teaching, but also as a counselor who is ready to listen and provide spiritual advice to the congregation (Agenda, 2007). With love and empathy, pastors accompany the congregation in joy and sorrow, help them overcome various life problems, and grow their faith in Jesus Christ. The pastoral care carried out by HKBP pastors aims to

build an intimate relationship between the congregation and God, as well as foster a spirit of brotherhood among fellow congregation members. HKBP pastors also have an important role in church leadership. They are responsible for directing and coordinating various church activities, such as worship, social services, and congregation development. In addition, pastors also act as teachers who transfer theological knowledge to prospective pastors and other congregation leaders. Thus, pastors become the main pillar in maintaining the survival and growth of the church. The relationship between pastors and congregations in HKBP is very personal. Pastors are not only religious leaders, but also part of the extended family of the congregation. They are involved in various aspects of the congregation's life, from celebrating births, weddings, to times of grief. Through close and supportive relationships, pastors and congregations together build a strong and solid community of faith. Being a pastor in this modern era is not without challenges. HKBP pastors must face various challenges, such as religious pluralism, rapid technological developments, and changes in societal values. However, in the midst of these challenges, pastors also have many opportunities to serve and have a positive impact on society. By utilizing technology and social media, pastors can reach more people and deliver the gospel message effectively. In the Batak cultural context, HKBP pastors not only act as spiritual leaders, but also as respected community figures. They often mediate in conflicts, provide wise advice, and become a source of inspiration for the community. The strong Batak traditions and values greatly influence the way pastors carry out their ministry. HKBP pastors not only deliver the gospel message, but also strive to integrate Christian values with Batak cultural values.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the moral and spiritual decline of the nation of Judah in the 8th century BC was the background for the sending of the Prophet Isaiah. Rampant idolatrous practices, social injustice, and disregard for God's laws have driven this nation away from God. This condition made God angry and sent Isaiah as a prophet to rebuke and call His people back to Him. Isaiah describes the spiritual condition of the people of Judah as blind and deaf, meaning they were unable to see their sins and insensitive to God's voice. Through his prophecies, Isaiah calls for repentance and a return to Yahweh as the one true God. Isaiah

offers hope of restoration and blessing if the people of Judah will abandon their old ways and turn to the Lord. Thus, Isaiah's message is very relevant today, reminding every believer of the importance of maintaining a right relationship with God and living according to His will. In facing these challenges, pastors can learn a lot from the example of the Prophet Isaiah, because pastors must remain faithful to God's Word. Just like Isaiah, pastors must always hold fast to the Word of God as the only source of truth. Pastors must have the courage to confront sin and unrighteousness, even when it is unpopular. Pastors must be examples of godly living and living with integrity. In the midst of difficulties and suffering, pastors must continue to convey a message of hope about God's love and salvation in Jesus Christ.

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