Sermon transcript

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Topic: "Before God is glorified, His people will still have to endure severe trials!"

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Now let us go into the Word. And perhaps also briefly touch upon the current situation, including the political situation, although you know that we only refer to such matters here when they are connected with Bible prophecy. We leave everything else to the politicians.

But first Psalm 34, which we have already read, or at least read in part.

"I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth." [Psa 34:1]

I have been thinking these past few days about the paths God's children sometimes have to walk; with how many trials and difficulties; indeed, how steep and thorny the paths can sometimes be. And then, now and then, the thought may arise, "Must it really be this way? Could it not be easier?" But when we look into Holy Scripture, we see that the paths of God's children have never been strewn with roses but with thorns. Trials, persecutions, and tribulations of every kind can be found time and again.

In verse 2 we read: ***"My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad."*** [Psa 34:2]

Why the humble? Because they have found grace before God and are to be found where people have experienced God and can bear witness to what God has done for them. The proud, after all, pass God by, along with the true sermon and what the Lord does. "***God grants grace to the humble but resists the proud."*** [Jam 4:6, 1Pe 5:5]

So wherever the Lord is experienced, there the humble are to be found in the land; they have bowed to the mighty hand of the Lord, submit to his will, and listen gladly when others have experienced God, for they can bear witness to the same.

[2] ***My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.***

[3] ***O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.*** [Psa 34:2-3]

You know, I was recently at a few charismatic gatherings, and I'm not here to judge or pass judgment, but it was so contrived and accompanied by music in such a way that everything was set in motion. The vibration brought about by the Holy Spirit does not come through some peculiar musical accompaniment, but is the effect of the Word of God which has entered our hearts through revelation.

Brother Branham explained it so beautifully: **a stimulation by the Holy Spirit, namely when the Word is brought to life and divine revelation becomes a light on our path.**

Then it goes on to say in verse 4:

[4] ***I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.***

Even believing people find themselves in various situations in life, and then we have the opportunity to look to the Lord. Sometimes, however, we get the impression that he has not answered us. But only when we fail to recognize his will at that moment can we somehow get the impression that God has not answered us.

God knows best what is good for us, and in the end, we will be able to say and bear witness, "He brought everything to a good end with all of us."

Verse 5 goes on to say:

[5] ***They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.***

It is not always easy to look to the Lord in certain circumstances and trials; yet it is precisely then that we must do so, for it is written: ***"Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."*** [Psa 50:15]

In verse 6 we read:

[6] ***This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.***

But sometimes the troubles can drag on a little, and we would have liked things to have been resolved more quickly. And so we must be patient and believe, persevere and not doubt, but believe that the Lord is not late, and believe that he has never made a mistake.

We simply must hold fast to this biblical faith, to this conviction in every situation, even when everything around us is in turmoil, so that we may still stand firm in our faith and give glory to the Lord through faith.

In verse 7 we read:

[7] The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

[8] Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.

Let us turn to Colossians chapter 1, verse 21.

[21] ***And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled***

[22] ***In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:***

[23] ***If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.***

Here we are reminded of what God has done in Christ. ***"Yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight."*** [Col 1:21-22]

How often have we said it; it was necessary for God to reveal himself in human form so that he might pay the price for humanity, and in Christ make atonement on our behalf, granting us forgiveness by grace. But not only forgiveness and reconciliation, but total salvation for eternity and perfection forever, ***"to present us as holy, blameless, unreproveable in his sight."*** [Col 1:22]

Golgotha is the actual guarantee of total salvation of soul, spirit, and body. And just as surely as the Lord Jesus overcame death and rose again on the third day, so surely is our resurrection already guaranteed in his resurrection.

And we need not worry, for we are dealing with the work of redemption that has been accomplished, completed before God and by God. It is only a matter of time before it comes to pass.

"Yet now hath he reconciled you in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight." [Col 1:21-22]

If we continue in the faith, and I would like to emphasize this term "faith" once again; ***"without faith it is impossible to please God."*** [Heb 11:6]

All the things God has given us are bestowed upon us through faith in Jesus Christ, and this ***"faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints"*** [Jud 1:3] is the faith we wish to hold fast to.

For this we will fight and stand up.

It is not human works that save us, but the blessed and only God has already saved us through what took place on Golgotha. We have not merely come to believe; we have come to believe in him, our Savior, who will also complete the work he has begun. [Php 1:6]

And here the call is made, "***If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard...***" [Col 1:23]

Perhaps this doesn't quite fit here, but there was someone close to me, a sister who had a revelation that I simply could not accept. She had a revelation that she would go to Africa as a missionary. And I had to tell her, "Dear sister, that revelation does not agree with the Word of God."

Then words came from her lips that I shall never forget; she said more or less verbatim, "If you take this revelation away from me, then you are taking away my faith in Jesus Christ." And my answer was very simple, I then said, "I leave you your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but as for the false revelation, I won't let that stand."

There are people who describe as revelations things they carry in their hearts, things they may have carried for long enough to dream about them later, and then describe as revelations. Every revelation that comes from God must and will be in accordance with the Word of God.

And here it says, "***If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel...***" [Col 1:23]

A hope that is not merely hope in general, but a hope that God has rightly placed within us; a hope that leads not to disappointment, but to the fulfillment of what God has promised. Yes, it must lead to this, because it is a hope that we rightly carry within us based on the promises God has given in his Word.

It goes on to say, "***which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.***" [Col 1:23]

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only message of salvation that exists. It is written, and Peter preached it, "***Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved***" [Act 4:12], except the name of Jesus, in whom God has revealed himself for our salvation.

Colossians 3, the first four verses.

[1] ***If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.***

[2] ***Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.***

[3] ***For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.***

[4] ***When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.***

We are all very familiar with these words, and we wish for one another that they may become a reality in our lives in their entirety; that we may be crucified with Christ, have died with him, been buried with him, and raised with him to a new life to seek what is above where Christ is.

Scripture says, "***For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.***" [Mat 6:21]

We are still on earth, we drive cars just like everyone else or fly in airplanes, whatever the case may be; believers and non-believers find themselves on the same earth, in the same circumstances and situations. We don't get a higher salary; everything is arranged in this way on earth.

But we are people who carry Christ in our hearts; we have realized that we have no lasting city here on earth but seek the one to come. [Heb 13:14] And we know that the Lord has gone before us to prepare a place for us, and that he will come again to take us to himself. [Joh 14:2-3]

[2] ***Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.***

[3] ***For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.***

A new divine life within us, wrought by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, which we have received as divine seed within us.

And then comes the verse that is the main focus here:

[4] ***When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.***

May it truly be the case that we have not merely become believers, but that Christ, the risen Lord, can already reveal his resurrection life through us here on earth; that we may be partakers of his divine nature and await only the transformation of our bodies, which will indeed take place at the Lord's return.

Coming back to what has already been said, namely that times become particularly difficult for believers precisely when God is doing something special on earth. I would like to read a few passages on this.

The first is from the book of Acts chapter 7, here we read from verse 17. Acts 7, from verse 17.

[17] ***But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,***

[18] ***Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.***

[19] ***The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.***

[20] ***In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:***

[21] ***And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.***

I won't read any further; you will soon realize what this is about.

Then, when Moses went to Egypt and God commanded him, "***Let my people go***" [Exo 5:1] the situation took a turn for the worse; in fact, it deteriorated so much for the Israelites that they were subjected to even greater oppression, and the time that followed became unbearable for them.

I would like to read Exodus chapter 4; please bear in mind that this was the time when God sent his prophet Moses to fulfill the promise he had made to Abraham, namely, "***after 400 years I will bring your descendants out of Egypt.***" [Gen 15:13-14]

Exodus 4 from verse 19.

Perhaps a verse here and there. Exodus 4 from verse 19.

Here we read as follows:

[19] ***And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.***

[20] ***And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.***

[21] ***And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.***

Did you notice?

[22] ***And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn:***

[23] ***And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn.***

You can read the story for yourselves. In any case, the situation deteriorated to such an extent that the brickmaking became much worse. Up until then, the materials had been delivered. From then on, they had to fetch them themselves and still do the work.

Anyone who reads the whole story gets the impression that the moment God began to fulfill His promise, the situation for God's people initially became so dire that it

was almost unbearable.

We might all think that when God begins to act, one good thing follows another, and especially when a prophet comes with a rod of God, with a Thus saith the Lord, then everything is sorted out in one fell swoop, all mysteries solved, all problems and so on answered.

It may be so, but it need not be so. Moses was the prophet sent by God. The four hundred years were over. The time had come to lead Israel out with a mighty hand. And God says here, "***I will harden Pharaoh's heart***." [Exo 4:21]

For us, it would have been the opposite, that God would have moved this Pharaoh in such a way that it would have been in accordance with the Word, so that the people could depart in blessing, without a fight, without all the accompanying circumstances, but simply singing beautiful psalms, songs of praise to our God. That would be the way we would go about it. God's way is somewhat different. I'll read you a passage from Romans. And in the epistle to the Romans, in particular, Paul elaborated on certain points with reference to the Old Testament. And here in Romans 9 from verse 17 the following is written. Romans 9 from verse 17:

[17] ***For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.***

We know that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Then came the signs and wonders that Moses performed on God's behalf. And each time Pharaoh's heart was hardened anew, until the 10th plague came and the day was proclaimed when a lamb was to be slaughtered and all were to eat the Passover, put on their shoes, fasten their belts, and then set out.

But first the situation for God's people worsened in a very dramatic way. I read this passage and asked, Lord, is there a parallel for our own day?

After all, this is a prophetic age. And we too, when we hear, for example, of Brother Branham, that he had the ministry of the spoken Word, that the things God wanted to do were revealed to him, and that he was then to speak them out, and as soon as they were spoken, they would and must come to pass. I believe this happened five times. And then we might well ask ourselves, why did God not continue in such a glorious manner?

To this it must be said that not even in the ministry of the blessed man of God did the continuation take place. Only a few times to let the bride know that this ministry would be at the end, that the connection with God will be so intimate and so direct that God's will is revealed to us, not only as regards the proclamation, but also as regards the ministry, and that what God wishes to have done is then revealed and spoken so that it may come to pass.

But as I said, God does indeed have a plan for us, for the church, for the bride, for

Israel, God has a plan for everything. And we must submit to this plan of God, but always expect that it will and can happen.

For the people of Israel did not know the exact day either, but there was one thing they knew for certain: with the appearance of the prophet, God began to make history, God began to fulfill the promise He had made, to make the pledge He had given a reality. That much they knew. But then came the lamentations. Things have got worse instead of better. Instead of being freed and led out in one fell swoop, trials upon trials, mistreatments, the elders of the Israelites had to come before Pharaoh, for they were being beaten because the people had not completed the day's quota.

Have you all read it? Even the overseers who were responsible for ensuring that Israel met a certain quota every day, today we would call it piecework, and they were beaten because the materials were not supplied but had to be gathered by the people themselves.

And they went to Pharaoh. Everywhere there was hardship and lamentation. But the worse the hardship became, the more urgent was the cry for deliverance from the situation into which they had been brought.

And I would like to make that very clear here today. Nothing bad enough can befall us. The worse things may become, the more urgent the cry within us becomes: Come quickly, Lord Jesus, and take us from this valley of tears to the hall of joy.

God knows exactly what He is doing. Sometimes it happens gently, but sometimes it does not. We cannot dictate to Him. If I were to ask every single person today, who is completely carefree, without a worry, and without having to bear any burden on earth, I do not know if a single hand would be raised to the heavens.

Everyone has some kind of hardship, be it personal, spiritual, earthly, in one's career, here or there, in marriage, in the family, in society; surely every single person. And sometimes they also are those who feel that things are not getting better but worse. Then we will have even greater certainty that God's intervention is all the closer.

God has not promised us a life that is nothing but sunshine. He has, however, given this promise: "***I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world***." [Mat 28:20]

And we have placed our trust in Him. Yes, things will get even worse. The prophet Isaiah also wrote about this, "when our brothers who hate us will come to us and say, let us now see the work of God, so that we may see your joy."

It is written in Isaiah 66 verse 5. Isaiah 66 verse 5.

[5] ***Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you...*** Nice brothers, who hate us, are they? ***Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified so that we may see your joy, but they shall be ashamed.***

It will come to pass that even those who cannot believe the revealed Word of the hour because it has not been revealed to them by the Spirit will nevertheless say: "well, we would still like to see God fulfill what you have believed, what has been preached and taught to you."

I'll read it again. "***Your brothers who hate you have said...***" [Isa 66:5]

So those are the others, these are not the true children of God, not those who belong to the bride, for in them is Jesus Christ, and there is no hatred there, but perfect love of God and unity in the Holy Spirit.

"***Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake…***"

Do you know of such brothers who have been cast out for the sake of Jesus' name?

I know many such brothers. We are the ones who have been cast out.

But then there's also Brother Branham, who held nature in high regard as well as parables. These things came easily to him. And then he said: **Better to be cast out here and get in there, than to stay in here and not get in there.**

Anyone who is cast out here for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ actually already carries a good distinguishing mark with them, that he is in good standing. For it is written that for His name's sake we will be misunderstood and hated by all. [Luk 21:17]

So the brothers who hate us and cast us out, yes, I heard of this again recently from the south of Germany: this teaching of Branham which Frank is passing on and so on. Oh, we must be very much warned against it. That is not Branham's doctrine nor that of anyone who passes it on. This is Bible doctrine of the apostles and prophets, the foundation and pattern laid down in the early church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and everyone must test themselves against this and adhere to it if they wish to stand before God.

By the way, I said this at the last gathering at that large Pentecostal meeting over in Poland, because I thought to myself: "on the last day not much more can happen to me, you will just be taken to the airport and then that's it."

But then I had to go into detail and said word for word that it is not enough just to have broken away from Rome since the Reformation and later. Everyone must examine whether what is taught in their own church comes from Rome or from Jerusalem, from early Christianity.

And then came the word from Isaiah chapter 2: "***the Word will go forth from Jerusalem and the teaching from Mount Zion***," [Isa 2:3] whilst all falsehood and perversion emanates from Rome.

And when we got down to business, the brothers were delighted. They realized it wasn't just a matter of arguments. They realized that God had spoken to them

through His precious and holy Word, and that these days are about divine decisions, not about whether or not we acknowledge a person.

A man sent by God is recognized by whether he carries and delivers the divine message. That has always been the distinguishing mark.

"***Your brothers have said…***" [Isa 66:5] they were our brothers, Cain and Abel were also brothers in some sense, "***who hate you, indeed, who cast you out for my name's sake: Let the Lord be glorified: so that we may see your joy.***" [Isa 66:5]

They know full well that this will not be their joy, but ours. On that day we shall rejoice. We shall thank God that we have persevered in faith as outcasts, as rejected ones, as misunderstood ones, as reviled people, but in God's grace, clothed in garments of salvation, believing every Word of God effortlessly from the heart.

That is indeed a gift that God has given us.

Here it is written that "***his glory may be revealed."***

There's also a word in the prophet Isaiah concerning this glory. It is found in chapter 60. Isaiah 60.

[1] ***Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.***

It simply must come to pass that the glory of the Lord becomes visible to His people, becomes something they can experience, so that we have not merely heard but have experienced what God has promised in His Word.

As for our present trials, we must endure them, each of us wherever we are, and I'm convinced that God will grant us grace so that we may persevere.

And we have been left a word by the apostle James which we can take to heart as an exhortation.

James chapter 5 from verse 7 speaks of the coming of the Lord and so on and then goes on to mention the early and latter rain. And in verse 8 it says:

[8] ***Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.***

And then from verse 10.

[10] ***Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.***

[11] ***Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.***

Who are our examples, our role models? The men sent by God who bore the Word in which we believe today.

But just as they suffered as bearers of the Word, precisely because they were bearers of the Word, so we must suffer who have taken to heart the Word that came from the mouth of God.

If we were to go in different doctrinal directions, the devil would not care about us, for then we would indeed have left the narrow and straight path. But because we remain in the Word and thus in God, that is why he must make these attempts, perhaps as he thinks, to shake us a little.

But thank God that the anchor for our souls, as Scripture says, reaches beyond the veil, that is into the very Holy of Holies. [Heb 6:19]

And it was not you who fixed it, nor was it I who fixed it; it has been fixed by God once and for all. Nothing can shake us, for we believe that God's promises remain, they are eternally true. As the song goes: *Heaven and earth will pass away, but what God has said will come to pass.*

[10] ***Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.*** [Jam 5:10]

In the prophet Isaiah we read that those who have cast us out have done so for the sake of the Lord's name.

They long to see the day when our joy will be complete, namely the joy that God will fulfill all the promises we have heard from the mouths of the prophets and apostles from the Old and New Testament and which we believe with all our hearts and for whose fulfillment we wait.

They have said, "we would like to see it, so that we may perceive your joy, that His glory may be revealed to us." [Isa 66:5]

Let us not worry about this, and certainly not those who have cast us out. God is a God of His Word and His people.

And just as in the days of Moses, the promise was fulfilled, yet more difficult times dawned the moment the prophet sent by God appeared and the situation of God's children, God's people, became almost unbearable.

God had ordained it thus so that the departure from the land might proceed even more smoothly.

Do not worry.

Our Lord cannot make a mistake. He is perfect and is God from everlasting to everlasting.

And when we go through trials, through misunderstandings of all kinds, through suspicions and do you know what else can happen?

It can happen that we are directly hurt in the very place, at the very point where we are most sensitive, right where it really hits us, everyone has certain areas like that. Perhaps certain traits and so on, we are hit where it hurts the most. For it is precisely in this way that we feel it most keenly, so that we may nevertheless believe that God fulfills His promise, that He does not send His prophet to make our plight even worse, but at the end of this divine mission, deliverance will come. And we shall then forget all that lies behind us, and the glory of the Lord will be revealed above us and among us. For as it is written: "***and the whole world shall see the glory of God.***" [Isa 40:5]

As we have often said, we do not look at the visible things that surround us or affect us. We look upon the invisible as though we were seeing Him. [Heb 11:27]

We believe in Him and trust Him and know that He will bring it to pass.

If we may briefly turn our attention to the events currently unfolding in the Gulf, the Persian Gulf, then there is only one thing to be said, or at least 5 scripture passages that spring to mind. It is a foretaste of what will then be done against Israel. Just as the world is now demanding that this man who has occupied a small country return the occupied territories and restore full sovereignty, so the day will come, and politicians have already hinted at this, that once the problem with Kuwait has been resolved, the problem with Israel must be resolved. And then they will say, "This man has returned the occupied territories; now you must return the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as well, now you must return them too." And you need only read the prophetic Word: what is happening now is happening simply so that we who read the prophetic Word may not only receive the information from the daily newspapers, but may recognize through spiritual understanding in what way all these things are already heralding the end and are in fact working towards it.

But we can certainly take heart. God has not brought the people of Israel back so that they might be devoured by their enemies, although a "***time of distress is yet to come upon Jacob***" [Jer 30:7]; that is what the Holy Scriptures teach.

But God will be with His people and will arrange and ordain all things so that His blessing may remain upon His people and His Word may indeed be fulfilled.

For the first time since the war, I myself am genuinely delighted that all borders are now open. And as for us, we are free to travel to any country in the East to carry God's message there. I've brought back a banner from Romania which was hung up outside on a huge square in front of the building where the meetings have taken place. If we were to do this here in Zurich or in other European cities, we too could hire large halls and they would all fill up. We will have to wait for the day when God gives us the courage to dare to do something in His name.

We have a message from God; it is not a man's message. Sometimes even there brothers, especially from America, have used the wrong wording when they say, "Brother Branham's message." There is no message from a human being; there is

a divine message spoken through the mouths of those whom God had called and appointed to pass on His Word. It is not the message of Paul or Peter, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, the Word of our God. And it applies just as much to our time. It is not the message of a man, but the divine message of the Word that we have indeed received by grace, and we wish to carry it forward courageously.

I too need fresh courage time and again, you know; everyone is only human. But then, as mentioned earlier, there are certain things that give us renewed courage and a sense of joy, knowing the work is not in vain. God blesses the seed sown among all peoples, tongues, and nations. And we are grateful to the Lord for all the opportunities He has given, so that in these days, in this generation, what was impossible in other generations can truly be done.

Just for your information in closing, you'll be delighted to hear this: there's now a computer where we can feed in a manuscript typed on, let's say, on a Romanian typewriter, and out comes a finished manuscript already typeset, ready for printing. There are now things that didn't exist before, and God has laid it on our hearts to make use of everything now and to give our very best. For we believe that the greatest and the best is yet to come.

God will reveal His glory to those who have believed His Word and accepted His promises. And we urge one another to remain faithful, to persevere, to hold fast, each in their own trials. Together we look to the Lord who has begun and who will finish unto the day of His glorious return. [Phi 1:6]

Our God is a faithful God; He will bring everything to a glorious conclusion.

And since the word "glory" has been mentioned, let me remind you of Luke 2, when the birth of the Lord was announced in Bethlehem. Heavenly light descended and the glory of the Lord was there, shining upon them. And it was proclaimed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. [Luk 2:9-11]

I would not be surprised if at the end God does something similar to what He did at the beginning. We too are sons and daughters of God, born again through the divine seed of the Word, bearing divine life within us. May the glory of the Lord be revealed in us, may His Word be confirmed, may His promises be fulfilled, and only then will the joy within us be complete.

Today joy is already partly present, but then the clouds return and we ask ourselves how much longer we must endure. Instead of things getting better they get worse. Think of Moses and that exodus. He appeared as a prophet sent to say: "***let my people go.***" [Exo 5:1]

And God decided to harden Pharaoh's heart [Exo 7:3] so that He might perform great signs and wonders.

At the same time the people were suffering and had reached a stage that was unbearable. But just imagine how grateful they were for the day the exodus took place.

And so may it be with us, that we may be filled with gratitude when that glorious day comes and the Lord takes us to be with Him in His glory. To Him, the Almighty God, be praise and honor, glory and worship, now and forever. Amen.

Perhaps there are still some here who have not yet dedicated their lives to God, who whilst listening to the sermon have not yet recognized their lost state, separated from God, forever condemned. Only those who are lost can be saved. He is the one who in the presence of God recognizes that he was born in sin, has lived in sin, separated from God, and cannot go to heaven through any pious religious act, but solely and exclusively on the basis of the work of redemption accomplished on the Cross of Calvary, namely through the precious and holy blood of the Lamb of God which was shed there for our redemption.

Friends, we must tell you the truth before God: there is no religion that saves, there is no pious act that brings salvation; there's only one God who has redeemed us in Christ and in Him we have the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him. [Joh 14:6]

So we call upon you to come to the Lord and may you, as you make this decision, come to realize: "I am separated from God, I am condemned, I have no living hope." And then this realization within you will turn into faith in Jesus Christ your Savior, and then you will feel that God in Christ has reconciled the world to Himself [2Co 5:19], including you, dear heart.

You feel your lostness, your condemnation, your separation from God and cry out from this distress: "Lord, save me, have mercy on me, forgive me all my guilt, all my sin, wipe it all away and wash me in your precious blood." Whoever wishes to come to the Lord in this way, recognizing that they are lost and desiring salvation, let them come now, whilst all heads are bowed, all eyes are closed, and all hearts are open before God.

I would like to pray for you, for all of you who wish to dedicate your lives to God. Would you please raise your hand briefly? Are there any such people among us? Then please raise your hand briefly. God bless you, young man. Is there anyone else here? God bless you there. God bless you here, dear lady. Is anyone else here? Thank you, God bless you. God bless you. Is there anyone else here? Thank you, God bless you, young man. Is there anyone else here?

Blessed is the person who hears God's call and recognizes that they are lost, cries out for salvation and then receives the assurance that God's Spirit can bear witness to our spirit that we have been saved. [Rom 8:16]

We are grateful to God for this hour. Are there perhaps other prayer requests amongst us that we can bring before the Lord? So simply raise your hands, God knows, everywhere there are concerns everywhere. God knows what we all need.

Lord our God, together we come before your throne of grace in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth by the blood of the Lamb that was shed. We now speak to you,

oh God, who has become our father through Jesus Christ our Lord. We pray for all those who have found their way to you for the first time today, whom you have called through your Word, who are answering your call, who realize that they are lost and at the same time look up to you, the Savior who died for us on the Cross, aware that you have called them today to forgive them, to draw them to you, to turn children of men into children of God.

Beloved Lord, let it be made manifest today in this place that the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the crucified one, is truly the power of God [Rom 1:16] as Paul wrote, which brings salvation to those who believe in the finished work of redemption.

Beloved Lord, we know that your Word does not return void but accomplishes what you send it to do. [Isa 55:11]

Faithful God, today too, at this hour, on this day, may your Word accomplish what you send it to do. You saw the other hands that were raised too; you know the various hardships, you know of the trials through which each one must pass. Faithful Lord, you have given us the promise: "***when you pass through the fire I will be with you and the waters will not overwhelm you***." [Isa 43:2]

Lord, you who have mercy on us, and then you say: "***let mountains move and hills fall, but my grace shall not depart from you nor shall the covenant of peace be broken, saith the Lord.***" [Isa 54:10]

Hallelujah. Lord, we thank you for such words in your Word which give us comfort and confidence at the right time. Beloved Savior, come with your Spirit upon each one of us. May the Word come alive and comfort us all. Oh Lord, may something have taken place during this service in each and every one of us; may fruit for eternity come forth. We also thank you for this, that in the end we shall behold your glory. Even if things become darker and more difficult in the meantime, we know that in the end you will restore all things, reveal yourself in glory, confirm your Word, fulfill your promises and bless your people in a mighty way right to the transformation of our bodies, the overcoming of death, and our being taken up into your glory.

Thank you that this day is drawing near. You have sent your servant and prophet with a message for our times and we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we spoke of the coming of Jesus Christ as Peter explains, but have been eyewitnesses of His glorious majesty. [2Pe 1:16]

Lord, our God, we have a more sure word of prophecy. [2Pe 1:19] Beloved Lord, we thank you for giving us light and that in your light we may see all things clearly and understand their fulfillment according to your Word.

Lord, Almighty God, today I would like to thank you for the privilege of being allowed to live now, to be on earth, to believe as the Scriptures say, so that I may also experience the rivers of living water". [Joh 7:38]

Beloved Lord, once again I thank you for all those who have raised their hands, who

have dedicated their lives to you and also for all the brothers and sisters who find themselves in various situations of distress facing trials that are almost beyond their strength. Beloved Lord, grant us also understanding and sensitivity towards one another, that we may be a blessing to one another, that we may bear one another's burdens to fulfill the law of Christ [Gal 6:2] as it is written in Galatians 6.

Lord, have mercy on us, make us a biblical fellowship that we may rightly be called the church of the living God.

Beloved Lord, have thine own way with us. Thy will be done, thy kingdom come, thy name be glorified now and forevermore. Hallelujah. Amen.