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Let us come to our word reflection. We are all waiting for a revival. We are all waiting for what is written in the Bible to be read from our lives, that we may become an open letter written with a pen of the Spirit, read by everyone and also understood. [2Co 3:2-3]

That in fact it is not merely things we testify to or promises we believe in, but promises we have experienced. And what God has promised, he shall and will do.

I have a few scriptures to read. The first is from Isaiah 38, a passage actually very familiar to all of us. And yet I think we should consider it. After all the Holy Scriptures contain both events in the plan of salvation and also personal experiences with God. Both are attested to in the Old and New Testament: how individuals experienced God and how the entire people of Israel experienced God; how individuals in the New Testament experienced God and how the entire church experienced him in his power. Both are attested to us and both are meant to be repeated in our individual lives and collectively in the entire church.

From Isaiah 38, verse 1:

[1] ***In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.***

A very clear statement, a "Thus saith the Lord." But this man of God was somehow not quite ready; he wanted to live on and serve the Lord. He was among those who served God with all their heart and all their soul. And for people who can be described this way, their lives can certainly be extended; why not? If they live for God, then by all means let it be done in the name of the Lord.

Verse 2 says:

[2] ***Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and said,***

[3] ***I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in***

thy sight.

That was his argument and it is very good. "***Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.***"

That was the length of his prayer, actually very short, very short. And then came only the weeping. It is written in the last part of verse 3: "***And Hezekiah wept sore.***"

A very short prayer, but formulated very concretely, and as we see here, spoken in accordance with God's will. He did not pray haphazardly here and there, but presented his request to the Lord in accordance with God's will.

And look, verse 4 says:

[4] ***Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying,***

[5] ***Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears...***

Both: the prayer heard and tears seen.

[6] ***And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria."***

What a wonderful testimony, twice "Thus saith the Lord." Prayer can change things when indeed it is in accordance with God's will. Every person must die, we all know that, don't we? ***"It is appointed for man to die once and after that comes judgment,"*** as it says in Hebrews 9:27.

But here death was announced and low and behold, life was extended. Something else entirely moves me here, let me continue reading from verse 7, or perhaps finish verse 5 first.

[5] ***Behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.***

Then verse 7:

[7] ***And this shall be a sign unto thee from the Lord, that the Lord will fulfill the promise he has made.***

So God has added to it; he gave the promise, "Thus saith the Lord," and then a sign by which this man could see how the matter would unfold.

Verse 8:

[8] ***Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.***

Did you read along? I'll read verse 8 again.

[8] ***Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.***

That the sun can stand still, we read from the days of Joshua: "***Sun, stand thou still***, ***Moon, stay still.***" [Jos 10:12]

But that it goes backward, that has also happened. With God all things are possible, God is indeed the Almighty.

Here it continues in verse 8:

[8] ***So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.***

The most beautiful sun dial I've ever seen is in Geneva and it's really fascinating to watch how the sun casts its shadows and indicates what time it is. But here we actually have an example of God making the impossible, the unthinkable, the unimaginable possible in the life of a person who serves him, trusts him, and walks in his ways. He even sends a sign from heaven. It's truly amazing when something like this happens; it is well known that the sun sets, but for it to move backwards 10 degrees, that has probably only happened this one time. But as I just mentioned, we can read about it in Joshua 10, verse 12. Or I'd rather read it aloud, it will be better, it's more convincing even though everyone knows the Holy Scriptures.

Joshua chapter 10, verse 12, second part:

[12] ***Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.***

[13] ***And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.*** [Jos 10:12-13]

What an event, as I just said, with God all things are possible. In the case of Hezekiah, it was a promise from the mouth of the prophet coming from God. Here it was a man of God who having to secure victory over the enemies alongside the entire people of God, he needed more time; darkness would have been detrimental, so he was granted the time necessary to bring the battle to a victorious conclusion. That is what our God can do.

If we return briefly to Hezekiah, a truly wonderful testimony about him is written in 2 Kings 20. What did I just say? 2 Kings 20. But first I will read from 2 Kings 18, verse 2:

[2] ***Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah.***

[3] ***And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did.***

[4] ***He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.***

We see from this passage that God himself bore witness to him. It was therefore worth extending his life by fifteen years, as it is written here, so that he could continue to serve God. Whether that is always true is a completely different question; today we are concerned with just one thought, namely that God has given personal promises as well as promises in general, that God can intervene in our lives as well as in the life of the church and reveal his power therein. If we can take this lesson home with us today, then we have already been helped. If we consider the promises God gave in the Old Testament, for example regarding the return of the people of Israel and the rebuilding of the temple, we read about this here some time ago. That is why I would like to read just a portion of the first verse from Ezra chapter 1, verse 1, last part: "***...that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled.***" [Ezr 1:1]

So it is always a matter of God's Word being confirmed as true and the promises God has given being fulfilled among his people.

In Ezra 5, we then read how it happened and what the circumstances were in which this work was done according to God's will. Ezra chapter 5, verses 1 and 2, and then verse 15.

[1] ***Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, whose spirit was upon them.***

[2] ***Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them.***

A very good and useful support, nothing is better for supporting the church and its edification than the prophetic Word. It simply shines like a bright light in a dark place even in this day and age and reminds us again and again that Scripture is being fulfilled and that we, just as our Lord did back then, can repeatedly proclaim: this day this Scripture has been fulfilled before our eyes. So the prophets of God upon whom the Spirit of God rested provided support for this building.

When the church has come out from the Babylonian captivity about which Martin Luther wrote, then we need the support of the prophetic Word to receive the exact direction and orientation so that we may act in God's will and also build according to his Word.

In Ezra 5, verse 15 it says:

[15] ***And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple***

that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place.

We've also spoken about this and I don't know if you've read about it in the press. This famous Rabbi in Jerusalem has found out that the temple stood 600 or a few hundred meters away from the current mosque. And simply because he claims to have measured it that way, there would be a possibility for orthodox Jews to build the temple without tearing down the other two Islamic holy sites. It's not about what people measure or think, but rather you have to find the original foundation and only then do you know whether you measured correctly or whether you just had a tape measure with you or walked the distance. Do you understand that? Only when you have found the original foundations, only then can you be sure that this is the place where rebuilding can take place.

Beloved, this must be clearly highlighted and emphasized right from the start for the building up of the New Testament church: not whoever holds the Bible in their hand and thinks they can set the standard there, but only where the apostolic foundations have truly been found. The foundation of which Paul said: "***no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ***" [1Co 3:11], built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. [Eph 2:20]

Once again we can say, Lord how grateful we are for the Bible. Not what some school or someone might say, but what God has said in his Word is what counts. And how wonderful that the prophets were present during the rebuilding and offered their support. Do you now realize how important the prophetic aspect is for us today, which God, let's be frank, has granted us anew through Brother Branham's ministry, just as he did through Paul back then. God simply uses certain instruments, namely those he can use exclusively according to his will. And these are for the most part those who are not overly educated, not that there is anything wrong with education; we need highly educated people in high positions, all of that is necessary. But in the kingdom of God, human intelligence or the level of our education does not count; in the kingdom of God only one thing counts, namely that God himself can have his right fulfilled in his church, whether divine standards are applied in the kingdom of God and his Word is proclaimed in holiness and truth. Everything else, and that I was able to glean this from the conversation with a priest now in Ljubljana when we finally had a few hours to talk together; he spoke about his eight years of study as a Roman Catholic priest, and then came a sentence and he said, "imagine in these eight years we haven't gone through the book of Acts even once."

And one can well imagine why the book of Acts isn't covered at a Roman seminary. Nevertheless people are kept in the belief that they are doing the right thing. As I just said, what people label as right and true is not necessarily right and true; rather only what is confirmed as right and true in the Word of God is right and true. And that is how it remains, it is unshakable and will withstand any storm that may yet come.

In Ezra 6 there is a similar passage regarding the foundation. In Ezra 6, verse 7:

[7] ***Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place.***

That was the emphasis: not just to build, but to build in the original place, to build according to original measurements, everything exactly as it was originally.

And this is what we must consider and take to heart as a lesson for our own day regarding the building up and completion of the church of the living God. Building cannot be done according to human thinking but according to God's Word, God's plan, and God's will.

So that it is not built in vain, for where building is not done on the original foundation and according to God's Word, there indeed is building in vain.

Let us briefly open the book of Acts. And I believe that we all carry a longing within us not merely to speak of these things but to experience them, to be strengthened anew, and this in the awareness that just as back then, when the people returned and had to rebuild the house of God, prophets were sent to them, it was ensured that the matter was 100% correct in the presence of God.

And the prophets are after all the eyes in the body. I could read to you from the prophet Isaiah about the seers whom God sent, to whom he could reveal what was at stake.

Earlier, I already hinted that God, for the most part, chose simple people who served him and obeyed him.

In Acts chapter 4, the apostles were questioned about the healing of the sick man. And they testified truthfully that this happened in the power of the name of Jesus.

I will read from Acts chapter 4, verse 10.

[10] ***Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.***

But the testimony does not end there. Now the builders are addressed, those who have been working diligently. We are after all speaking of building. I continue reading Acts 4, namely verse 11.

Yes. Acts 4, verse 11:

[11] ***This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.***

[12] ***Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.***

So back then there were builders who rejected the cornerstone, who paid no attention at all to the foundation, let alone to the apostles appointed by God. They ignored everything as if it had nothing to say to them.

But listen to who these people were whom God used. From verse 13.

[13] ***Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.***

When humility is paired with discipleship, with a true following of the Lord—and we know after all, pupil and disciple are the same word and imply following.

So here were disciples of Jesus, uneducated. What was John, who was Peter? Simple people.

But it is precisely through simplicity that God can reveal his greatness and his power.

Imagine if someone were to come dressed in a white robe, adorned with ornaments here and perhaps a large cross there, and so on, something would happen. The people would glorify this person. But the apostles were beaten and put in prison because of what happened.

Do you see what this is about? God knows exactly how to do things, and he does not give his glory to any other. He takes and uses whomever he wills.

So they have noticed that these were people without special training or higher education, but at the same time, they had to admit: these are the ones who walked with this Jesus of Nazareth.

Oh, that we might fare similarly, that both of these things might be said of us. First, that we belong to the lowest class in the land, but second, to those who follow Jesus.

To those whom one simply recognizes as having been with Jesus.

I wish for it. I must honestly admit, this will certainly still be lacking in me as well.

One does not always… just yesterday, I had a two-hour conversation, a very difficult conversation, and at one point, I also failed to conduct myself quite as I would have liked.

We have not yet reached this goal of perhaps being fully where the Lord would have us be.

But one thing is certain: the longer we follow Jesus, the more we are shaped in his image.

There can be no one who walks with Jesus without being shaped by his nature and by all that he is. And only those who have become one with him can walk with him. Amos 3: "***how can two walk together, except they be agreed?***" [Amo 3:3]

And then they can walk together.

Here is just one more thought. Those religious leaders of that time, who made life difficult for the apostles whom the Lord God blessed and used, were among the builders who had rejected the cornerstone.

Beloved, we must expect that we too will face difficulties from religious quarters, but only from those who reject the capstone.

For he is both… who has read it in the prophet Zechariah chapter 4? It says there that the capstone, or in some translations the headstone, will also be in the hand of Zerubbabel.

The Lord is both, the beginning and the end, the cornerstone and the capstone, the first and the last.

Everything must be founded on him. And as Paul writes to the Ephesians, "***in him the building grows, firmly joined together, unto an habitation of God in the spirit.***" [Eph 2:21-22]

Just one more passage from Acts chapter 2, which will equally overwhelm us. Acts chapter 2, verses 6 to 8.

[6] ***Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.***

And now comes the verse.

[7] ***And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?***

[8] ***And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?***

What a wonderful thing. I mentioned earlier that the man there knows and speaks several languages.

Here they were the simplest: "***aren't these all Galilaeans?***" Don't they all come from Galilee, those who are speaking? And how is it possible? They don't have any other language at their disposal. They've never been to Cappadocia. You can list these 17 or 18 nations mentioned here: Cretes and Arabians and so on.

And these people from Galilee, they'd only ever been in Galilee. They didn't know these other languages. And the crowd was amazed and said: "***look, aren't these all people from Galilee? And how is it that we hear, you in yours, I in mine, and everyone hears them speaking in their own language?***"

And it says in verse 7: "***and they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another…***" [Act 2:7]

Something had indeed happened. The matter had somehow caught their attention. First, the simplicity of these people, and second, what was now coming from their lips.

But here's the point: it wasn't these people from Galilee who had acquired a language, but it was the Holy Spirit who spoke through their mouths.

There came a mighty rushing wind from heaven and filled the entire house where they were, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. [Acts 2:2-4]

The roaring must therefore have been so immense that the crowd gathered and was then able to share in the blessing that God had bestowed upon this early church in their simplicity, yet in a way that was exceedingly mighty.

The early church, the 120 on the upper room, they were simple people, but what God did there was exceedingly mighty.

God speaks every language that exists, and it was a small thing for him to convey the various languages and the message through the mouths of these Galilaeans to the people.

Beloved, we believe this must happen again. You know, we are convinced that the Lord has begun this work and that he will also bring it to completion.

We are convinced that by God's grace we have returned to the original foundation.

We believe that the prophetic Word has been given to us as a guideline in every direction, and that the divine blueprint thus lies in our hands.

Blessed are we if we build or if we let God build; both are true. Our Lord says: "***I will build my church***." [Mat 16:18]

And then the Lord says that he has placed the ministries for the edification of the church within it. [Eph 4:11–12]

Both are true. The Lord saves, he speaks through his Word, he blesses and he gathers the church together under the proclamation of the Word of God.

For "***faith always comes by hearing,"*** and hearing must come from God's Word [Rom 10:17], if it is to stand before God.

Let us summarize. God had the people of Israel in the Old Testament, gave promises and fulfilled them, gave instructions which they were to follow, and each time he confirmed the Word he had given at the right time and fulfilled the promises again and again by his grace.

As we now enter the final part of the plan of salvation, we too must believe as the Scripture says and agree with God and take his side.

As we saw with Hezekiah, God is able to do all things.

He will answer prayers, he will help, he will intervene. Whether it is always on the same day or at a time we expect, that is up to God.

But one thing we know: in his time he will do what he has promised and confirm his Word as true to those who believe it.

For God is faithful, he stands by his Word, he keeps his promises.

Truly, "***heaven and earth may pass away, but God's word remains forever.***" [Mat 24:35]

Let us be among those who have the courage to stand wholly on God's side.

We want to put an end to all spiritual mixing and not to carry over anything that belongs to Rome.

I had to say this very clearly at every meeting: many have left the Roman church but have taken many of its teachings and so on with them.

Both must happen: we must come out and what is within us must come out of us so that only divine content may enter us and we may thus come into fellowship with God, become bearers of his Word and his promises and thereby experience the fulfillment of what he has promised by grace.

To him the Almighty God, who can make the sun stand still, who can make it go backward, who ordains and guides all things through his almighty Word, may he have his way with us and with those who love him, believe him and trust him, until we truly pass from believing unto seeing.

To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Let us stand and give thanks to the Lord together. I ask brother Russ to come forward to give thanks to the Lord.

Heavenly Father, we give you heartfelt and united thanks, O Lord, from the depths of our hearts for your great grace, for your great love.

And we read in the opening Word, you hear prayers, Lord, and you have left ample testimony in your Scripture, indeed, where you have heard and answered your own and where you have helped, Lord.

And therefore we worship you and glorify and praise your name. Lord, you will continue to hear your own who call upon you day and night, Lord.

You will not pass them by; no, Lord. To your name be the glory.

We thank you, Lord, that you have not passed us by either, Lord, but that you have come into our midst, Lord.

You have opened your word to us, have given us understanding of your Word, as in those days to your disciples, Lord, who were on the road to Emmaus.

So also to us, Lord, you have shown grace, Lord, and have revealed yourself as the same, O Lord.

We thank you from the bottom of our heart that we are not built upon human fables but upon the foundation of your Word, upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Jesus Christ is the cornerstone.

We worship you, we praise and extol your glorious name.

We thank you this evening for the Word that was read, for all that we have heard, Lord, and we give glory to you alone, Lord.

We don't want to carry old leaven with us, Lord; we wish to put everything aside, Lord, and become an unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Grant this to us all by your grace.

Lord, I ask that you bless your people, bless our brothers, our sisters, all who have come from all peoples, tongues and nations.

Be with everyone, Lord, and bless them and call out your own from all denominations, from all churches, O Lord, and prepare them, Lord, as you have already begun, so may you finish your work, O Lord.

This is our heartfelt prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.