**Sermon transcript**

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**Answers to the questions: "Have you been baptized with the Holy Spirit, and do you have the Spirit of Christ?"**

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As for political developments, we have all seen how the powers opposed to Israel have already made themselves known.

They have not yet been unleashed, but they have made themselves known.

Brother Kraemer handed me a magazine here yesterday evening, and here is a headline:

*50 fortune tellers at the court of Saddam Hussein.*

And then it lists where they all came from: Mali, Mauritania, Chad, Senegal, and so on.

He then interviewed these very people, these fetishists.

They are, after all, quite extraordinary individuals.

I actually saw one of them once in Ghana.

Once you've seen them, you've really seen enough to last a lifetime.

I do not wish to go into further detail about the description.

But we see what these people do.

They do not know themselves what they are to do.

They have no answer from God, so they turn to sorcerers, to fortune tellers and such people.

And it actually occurred to me that it was no different in Daniel's time.

I would like to read you two or three passages from the prophet Daniel.

Daniel chapter 2.

Daniel chapter 2, verses 27 and 28.

Daniel chapter 2, verses 27 and 28:

[27] ***Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king has demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king.***

That is a very good observation.

No sorcerer, no fortune teller, no interpreter of omens can reveal anything when it comes to the matters of God.

And then we read in verse 28:

[28] ***But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.***

So, not magicians, soothsayers and diviners, but the God of heaven, who knows all secrets, he is the one who reveals what must be revealed.

Then in Daniel chapter 5, I would like to read verse 7.

Daniel chapter 5, verse 7.

[7] ***The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.***

But there was no one who could fulfill this.

And now I shall read verse 11.

Daniel chapter 5, verse 11.

[11] ***There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him.***

And then it is stated of the soothsayers and so on, that they are powerless to help.

Here I would like to draw a connection between Daniel chapter 2 and Daniel chapter 5.

In Daniel chapter 2 we read, "***There is a God in heaven who reveals secrets.***"

And in Daniel chapter 5 we read, "***There is a man in thy kingdom...***"

Not just a God in heaven, but a prophet of God on earth, who has a connection to the God of heaven.

And God reveals his secret to his servants the prophets.

Of course, this pagan woman said, "***in whom the spirit of the holy gods dwells.***" [Dan 5:11]

She did not know the one God.

She knew only of gods.

We know that it was not the spirit of the gods that dwelt in Daniel, but the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the living God.

And I believe what we have read here is very important.

For it was with Nebuchadnezzar that the pagan kingdoms began their course.

And the firstst kingdom at that time was the Babylonian Empire as a world empire.

And the last is the Roman Empire.

And just as God was not only in heaven at that time as the all-knowing one, but had a man on earth at the time when it was necessary to reveal the mysteries, to read the Scriptures, to explain their meaning, and to inform the people on God's behalf, so too must it have been in our own day.

And that is why we are also grateful to the Lord that he sent his servant and prophet, to whom the mysteries were revealed and made known.

I also noticed what is written in the prophet Isaiah chapter 19, referring to the counsel given there by wise men, magicians, and so on.

In Isaiah chapter 19,

Isaiah chapter 19, verse 11, and then verse 23.

[11] ***Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counselors of Pharaoh is become brutish...***

That is not my vocabulary. It is written in the Bible.

The wisest of this world are fools, are fools before God, because they do not know divine wisdom, and do not know the divine counsel.

That is why they are fools.

I'll read it again:

[11] ***Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counselors of Pharaoh is become brutish; how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?***

And so on.

Then in verse 23:

[23] ***In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.***

We must see it this way.

It is not the masses who are to blame, but their leaders who have led them astray.

We experienced this in our own country during the 2nd World War.

All it takes is 1 leader, and a few who join in with seduction and fine words, and the whole people are swept along, and woe to him who doesn't join.

And so, we must simply forgive all these masses of people.

They do not know what they are doing.

It is the seducers who were at work and still are, and God will call them to account.

When we read here that the time will come when even Assyria, not just modern-day Syria, but Assyria, which extends as far as the Euphrates, that indeed the entire region which God had included in his original plan for Israel, that the whole area will serve the Lord after the final battle, after the final conflict.

Once everything has truly been cleared away, then all this will happen.

In the prophet Isaiah, I would like to mention another verse.

Perhaps just one more from Jeremiah.

Jeremiah chapter 50.

We do not wish to dwell on this topic for too long, merely to show how the prophets of the Old Testament had already foretold these things.

From Jeremiah 50, verses 35 and 36.

[35] ***A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men.***

[36] ***A sword is upon the liars; and they shall dote: a sword is upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed.***

We have witnessed all this in recent days.

The Special Guard, all of them, in the end they are cowards.

They had to leave because they were driven out.

But God will see to it.

I believe we all long for what is written in Romans 8, that this world, this earth, this cosmos, that everything may be delivered from corruption, that everything might breathe a sigh of relief and be restored to the divine order into fellowship with God, that all groaning may come to an end and we may truly rejoice in the Lord.

From Jeremiah 51, verses 35 and 36.

Jeremiah 51, 35 and 36.

[35] ***The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say.***

[36] ***Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.***

[37] ***And Babylon shall become heaps...***

And so forth.

We said it earlier, God has promised to fight for Israel.

And why?

Because he has chosen Israel as his people from among all peoples, tongues, and nations, because he has made a covenant with them and bestowed promises out of grace.

That is why he is called the God of Israel, not the God of Germany, not the God of America, not the God of Russia, but more than a 1000 times, the God of Israel.

God has chosen Israel.

God stands by Israel.

May Israel be blessed in the name of the Lord.

As I said, it gave me great joy to hear when the United States said, "Do not intervene, do nothing, We will do it for you."

Thus has God ordained it, and may the name of the Lord be highly praised and glorified.

We could read many Scriptures on this subject, but that is not why we are here today.

I would like to read from Ezekiel 34, following on the Scripture which Brother Schmidt has read from John chapter 10.

I would like to read Ezekiel 34, a passage familiar to us.

It speaks of the shepherds who have not tended the flock properly, who thought of themselves and not of the flock.

But then the following is said in verse 17: Ezekiel 34, verse 17.

[17] ***And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats.***

[18] ***Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and***

***to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet?***

[19] ***And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.***

[20] ***Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle.***

My main point here is this:

God is not speaking to strangers here.

He is speaking to sheep, to his own sheep.

And his sheep hear his voice, as we have read.

Now, however, he's uttering a rebuke.

He speaks here of two different groups of sheep.

At first, they all drank together and grazed together.

And then, there was progress.

And some went on, whilst others did not.

Some wanted only to eat and drink more, to be on fresh pasture, and the others trampled that underfoot.

What became and was precious to the one group, the others trampled underfoot.

And the fresh water that the 1st group would have gladly continued to drink, the others churned up with their feet, so that it was no longer fresh.

And that is the powerful lesson for our times.

There are sheep of God.

Yet, what is important to some of the sheep, valuable, precious, food for this time, and fresh water that the Lord allows to flow, they do not want it.

They trample it underfoot.

They churn up the water, and in so doing, destroy the water the sheep wish to drink, and the pasture where they would like to feed.

And God rebukes this.

Not I, and not a prophet, but God rebukes and says: "***You have had clear water to drink. You have had clear pasture to nourish yourselves.***"

And we do not deny anyone the status of a child of God.

There are many children of God, but not all walk the path with God to the very end.

And if we may also bring in the parable of the virgins here, then all ten were virgins.

And all ten had burning lamps.

All ten were pure.

All fell asleep.

All woke up.

All went out to meet the bridegroom.

At first, there was no difference.

It was only when the bridegroom came that it became clear that some still had reserve oil, and others did not.

Beloved, the great lesson in every revival that God has brought about on earth has been that some continued on with the Lord, whilst others stood still.

And those who continued on had the advantage with God, for God had led them further.

And the others trampled underfoot what was precious to them, instead of thanking God and continuing on as well.

So it has been in our own day, and so it will be until the end.

Those who do not press on will trample underfoot what is precious to others who do press on.

They will render it unpalatable, churning it up, so that it cannot be drunk with pleasure.

But thanks be to the Lord, there are sheep in his fold who listen to his voice and who simply press on until they come from faith to sight.

And there we have the Scriptures, in Corinthians in particular, where Paul writes to the believers in a truly admonishing tone.

1 Corinthians chapter 9.

1 Corinthians chapter 9, verse 24.

[24] ***Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.***

We must persevere in this contest, this race, to the very end, so that we may then be crowned.

And it is precisely in this context that Paul continues, writing in chapter 10, verse 1, that God was not pleased with the fathers.

They were indeed led out, but then verse 5 says:

[5] ***But with many of them God was not well pleased.***

Not the leading out, but the leading in.

Steadfastness, walking with God, keeping pace with the Lord, in accordance with the spiritual development of our days.

Not to stir things up, not to trample them underfoot, but to drink and eat, namely what God has prepared for us in these days.

And we have seen it time and again, especially when we refer to the prophetic ministry of these days, we are misunderstood.

Then the things that God has revealed directly to us and which have become dear to us are trampled underfoot.

We have experienced this time and again, and therein lies the danger.

I say it once more, we don't deny that anyone is a child of God.

Everyone who has experienced God and been born again is to be a sheep of the Lord.

But sheep must follow the Good Shepherd.

If they follow the other shepherds who feed themselves and influence them differently, how can things go well?

And what does God say?

"***I myself will tend my sheep. I myself will feed them.***"

And for that, we are grateful to God.

For look, when the shepherds feed themselves…

And when do they feed themselves? When they no longer lead God's people in harmony with the Good Shepherd to the fresh pasture now prepared by God.

If they lead the people back to a pasture long since grazed, how are they to feed there?

The Lord always sets a new table before us.

There is new food to eat, we can drink anew, and be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house. The shepherds who feed themselves wish to lead the flock back, wish to stand still. But the shepherds appointed by God are in harmony with the Great Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep. And their sole concern is

that the sheep may truly come to the fresh pasture and receive what the Lord has prepared.

Concerning the shepherds who feed themselves, God pronounces the following judgment in Ezekiel 34, verse 8:

[8] ***As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;***

[9] ***Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord;***

[10] ***Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.***

If we have spiritual understanding, then this Word really needs no further interpretation. May the Lord grant us the grace to recognize that he is the good Shepherd, and that he always leads his sheep to rest in green pastures by fresh waters.

God willed it so, he ordained it so. And we see it in the Old Testament, God always provided manna for one day, and then again for the next, and again the following day. And the people of Israel were not allowed to keep any from Monday to Tuesday, or from any one day to the next. Otherwise, it would immediately have been infested with worms. You can read about it, and it would no longer have been edible. Only on the last day, was there enough for two days, because the Sabbath fell on that day, but that is how God ordained it.

And so it is in the seven church ages, God had his messengers, God had his message, and God had his overcomers, who have heeded what the Spirit says to the churches. We have reached the point where we must seriously ask ourselves, who are we actually listening to?

To shepherds who want to hold us back from what God has prepared? It does not seem to be intended for them, they trample it under foot, they crush it. And what the Lord said to the scribes back then is coming to pass. ***"You yourselves have not entered in, and you have taken away the key of knowledge, and prevented others from entering."*** [Lk 11:52]

But God ensures that everyone is given the opportunity to break free from the mouths of men, and from what men say, and to return to God, to the "Thus Saith the Lord" of the Word of God, and thus be led by the Lord himself to green pastures.

I would like to read from Psalm 132, and then return to the New Testament. Psalm 132, a truly wonderful scripture. Here we read verses 13 to 18. Psalm 132, 13 to 18.

[13] ***For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his habitation.***

[14] ***This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it.***

[15] ***I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread.***

[16] ***I will also clothe her priests with salvation; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.***

[17] ***There will I make the horn of David to bud; I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.***

[18] ***His enemies will I clothe with shame; but upon himself shall his crown flourish.***

It is a truly wonderful passage. Here we find the thought expressed, ***"This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it."***

Even in the Old Testament, in the book of Leviticus we read, God says, ***"I will dwell among them, and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."*** [Lev 26:12]

We know it from the New Testament, from the words Paul addressed to the Corinthians. 2 Corinthians chapter 6, from verse 16, 2 Corinthians 6, verse 16.

[16] ***And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.***

Now if this is the will of God, and he has created the conditions for it, he wanted to dwell on earth. Look, God dwelt in Christ.

It is still written today, ***"A body has thou prepared for me."*** [Heb 10:5]

It was an earthly body in which the Spirit, who was and is God, took dwelling. And Scripture says, ***"In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."*** [Col 2:9]

Not just a part, the whole fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ bodily. The next verse reads, ***"And ye are complete in him."*** [Col 2:10]

But now Christ has died, has been crucified, has been buried. For what purpose? To redeem a church, to purchase a people for his own possession, to call into being sons and daughters of God, who according to his pattern, in his likeness, are born again through the Spirit of God unto a living hope, and thus become the temple of the Holy Spirit, bearing the divine life within them, and becoming places of revelation of the Most High here on earth.

And beloved, we must familiarize ourselves with this thought. God wants to dwell among us, he wants to walk among us, he wants to speak, he wants to reveal himself. All uncertainty must give way, every doubt must flee. Divine certainty, a divine absolute must enter our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

There are people who ask themselves, 'Have I received the Holy Spirit? Am I truly a child of God?' Beloved, as long as we are plagued by doubts, joy in the Lord cannot yet become our strength. Only when true certainty of faith, not from ourselves, but coming from God, is bestowed upon us, then can we say, ***'I know that my Redeemer liveth. '*** [Job 19:25] 'I know he has accepted me,' 'I know he has forgiven me,' 'I know I have become a child of God.' When we have this certainty within us, then we can move forward and receive God's further blessings.

Let us read this passage once more, in Psalm 132, from verse 13:

***"For the Lord has chosen Zion."***

Has he not also chosen you and me? Is it not written in Ephesians 1, ***"He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world"***?

Do we not have the promises, Romans 8, ***"Those whom he called, he also justified; those whom he justified, them he also glorified"***? And he has transformed them into the image of his Son.

These are not merely promises, with God, they are already realities.

We read on:

[13] ***For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his habitation.***

Is it not written, ***"What house will you build for me? Where is the place of my rest? Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What house will you build for me, that I might dwell there?"*** [Acts 7:49]

And here we read:

[13] ***For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his habitation.***

God does not dwell in a building of stone, made by human hands. God is alive, he needs a living body. And the body of the Lord has received new divine life. And as we have often said, in the body of the Lord, who is alive, there are no dead members.

But just as the vine and the branches are joined together, and share the same life, and fruit is produced, so Jesus says, ***"I am the vine, you are the branches."*** [Jn 15:5]

He is the head, and we are the members; he is the light, and we are the radiance; he the master, we the brothers; *He is ours, we are his*, as the song goes.

God has chosen us with a high calling, destined for a very special purpose on earth, namely, to be his temple now, the place where he can speak, work, and reveal himself.

Verse 14:

[14] ***This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it.***

God has willed it so, and therefore he has created the conditions necessary for it to be fulfilled. Has not God chosen you too? Has not God willed it so, that you and I might become children of God, and that he might take dwelling in us, entering our hearts through faith? And then we can say, ***"Christ in us, the hope of glory."*** [Col 1:27]

***"I will dwell among them, and will be their God and they shall be my people. I will walk among them,"*** [2 Cor 6:16] that is what God intends to do.

This is what he has desired, through Golgotha, through redemption, through the power of his blood, his Word, and his Spirit. He has created the conditions for this to become a reality. Now, we must accept it in faith, and allow God to work powerfully within us, and not think, 'Huh, how will God do it in me?'

Did not Saul, who became Paul, say, ***"To me, the worst of all, mercy has been shown"*** [1 Tim 1:15]?

God can after all transform you and me, and our faith, our whole existence in an instant. We are then no longer the old, but the new. For it is written, ***"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away; behold, everything has become new."*** [2 Cor 5:17]

I would like to read at least 2 or 3 scriptures on this subject, so that we may learn to distinguish here too, how God has ordered things, namely as set out in his Word. In Galatians 4, Galatians 4, I would like to read from verse 1. Galatians 4, verse 1.

[1] ***Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all.***

A very serious word. We can be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. [Rom 8:17] But if we have remained babes, and have not come unto manhood, have not experienced spiritual growth, as John writes in his letter, he says, ***"I'm writing to you, young men; I'm writing to you, fathers."*** [1 Jn 2:13–14] He has learned to distinguish according to the growth of those who are in Christ Jesus. When we take the word 'babes' here, it is connected with various teachings that blow like winds across the land, and that people who are infantile are tossed to and fro. We must become steadfast in God, steadfast in his Word, and not listen to this or that, but accept the Word as our absolute, and no longer remain babes. For what use is it to us, if we are to become heirs, if it cannot yet be revealed today, that God can place us in the position of sonship to which we belong?

Merely putting it off until the future is not enough for me. God has prepared much for us today, and what is for this time, let us have it in this time. What is destined for the millennium, let that come then; and what has been destined for eternity, let that come then in eternity. But everything that God has promised the church belongs to us.

And as brother Branham clearly stated, he put it this way:

**We are living below the dignity God has given us.**

**We have not yet taken up the position God intended for us as sons and daughters of God.**

That is why he preached the sermon, 'The Measure of the Stature of the Fullness of Christ.' And so it is also written in the Bible, that we are to grow up into the full measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. [Eph 4:13] And I believe, it cannot be because of lack of spiritual food. It can only be down to each individual being held back by the unbelief that controls them.

The Word of God has not held anyone back so far. On the contrary, the Word of God has already helped many, because it always accomplishes for what it has been sent to do. And it will be no different in our day. God sent his prophetic Word, his doctrinal Word, God sent the Word in all its fullness, so that we might be blessed, so that we might be introduced to the mysteries.

And through this, we simultaneously recognize what was said to the disciples in Matthew 13 at that time:

***"To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but not to the others."*** [Mat 13:11]

If God has entrusted to us the mysteries of his Word and his will, then we recognize from this that he has taken us out of the crowd, set us apart for himself, taken us with him, to let us know the things that were given to others in parables, so that we may recognize their meaning and significance.

And we have also understood what is written in Revelation 1, verse 1, that God intended the things he showed to his servant, here in the singular, to be revealed to his servants, in the plural, so that they might know what is to come.

I will read verse 1, so that it is clear to all. Revelation chapter 1, verse 1.

[1] ***The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants...*** [plural] ***…to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant...*** [singular] ***...his servant John.***

This is very important. God has always had one servant to whom he could reveal something. But this divine revelation was intended so that all God's servants appointed by the Lord might draw from this divine revelation and pass it on to the church. And so it continues to this very day.

Imagine, if we simply had to say, 'Huh, God revealed everything to John, but we are left out in the cold.' We say, 'Oh, how wonderful, God had a prophet on the island of Patmos, Hallelujah, praise be to the Lord.' What good does that do me, unless I am granted what God truly revealed to that one man? Otherwise, I gain nothing from it at all. I can be enthusiastic, I can sing a song in his honor.

I was once in Canada, in Prince Prince Albert, at a very large conference, there were really a great many people there. There, some pop singer who had been converted, he could sing very well. A style of music I like. In any case, he sang a song about brother Branham. Four stanzas, a song about brother Branham. And you can well imagine, I was the guest speaker there. But I was really just a guest. I had to clean up there, sparks were really flying. And I made it clear that God is a holy God, and does not share his glory with any man on earth, but that all glory and all praise belong to the Lord alone. And in that short address, the sermon came later, but there heads all bowed down, I tell you, their heads all bowed down. I simply asked whether it is recorded in the book of Acts, that a song was ever sung about John the Baptist, about Paul, or about anyone else.

Sing to the Lord a new song, and praise his holy name. [Psa 149:1] And all nations shall praise him, for he is faithful and just, and reveals himself to whom he will. But the glory that is due belongs not to any man, but to the Lord alone. Let every man give glory to the Lord alone.

I was just thinking of the following, it may not quite fit here, but God has permitted brother Branham to say different things on the same subject at various times. God has allowed it to be so. I translate the sermons, I know of a whole series of statements that differ here and there. And I'm grateful to God that we too, who value this man of God, and are grateful to the Lord that he was sent, may take things back to the Word and preach what we, contentedly, I use the word contentedly, can present contentedly before God, before ourselves, and before the church. Have I expressed that clearly enough? Only that with which we, with which I can stand before God and know 100% here nothing condemns you. Here you have got to the heart of the matter 100%. That is how it is and no other way. This is, Thus saith the Lord. Then one rests in God always and forever.

And the Lord has arranged it this way, so that we may search the Scriptures, and not just rush off and say 'the prophet has said'. For me, God must have said it. And then it is said once and for all, and then it is true, and then I even know where it is written, namely in the Bible. And that is the point where some do not understand us, and then think that we look down on a man of God. That is far from the truth.

Surely you don't believe that I would go to all that trouble. I believe we have about 200 sermons in German so far. Can you just think about it and work out, how much time has gone into translating, proofreading, how much time has been spent on that? Do you think I would do it, if I weren't convinced? I am 100% convinced, just as God had John on the island of Patmos, as his servant and prophet, to whom future things were shown in visions, so God had William Branham in our day, a great prophet whom he could send to set these mysteries upon the lampstand.

If a sermon lasts 2 hours, then even a prophet can sometimes weave things in and say, according to the Scripture, '***a good steward brings out of the treasure of his heart things both old and new***.' [Mt 13:52]

It doesn't always have to be new things flowing, there can be something old in there too. And if that is the case, then we set that aside, as he himself said:

**When we eat a cherry cake, we do not throw the cake away if we find a stone in it, rather we throw the stone away and eat the cake.**

That is how we've always done it, and that is how we'll continue to do it until the end. As I said, I don't want to go into detail, but it must be stated: We are not fools who now blindly follow a man, but we are people whose eyes have been anointed with the Holy anointing of the Holy Spirit. And we are grateful to the Lord for every revelation of his Word, which he has graciously bestowed upon us.

Coming back here to Galatians chapter 4, let us read on. Verse 2, regarding the comparison of heir with the slave if he is a babe, in verse 2:

[2] ***But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father.***

[3] ***Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.***

[4] ***But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, made under the law,***

[5] ***To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.***

This is not merely about becoming a son, but about being placed as a mature son into the position of responsibility determined by the Father. This is also what it is all about for us as believers. For through the new birth, we have become sons and daughters of God. But through baptism in the Holy Spirit, we are placed within the body of the Lord into a divinely appointed task that must be fulfilled in the church of the living God.

I shall continue reading from Galatians 4, verse 6:

[6] ***And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.***

People are often asked, 'Have you received the Holy Spirit?' And I believe that a word of clarification must be spoken on this matter, perhaps even this very morning. There are at least two things, if not more, but one of them is this: when Jesus had risen, he breathed on his disciples and said, '***Receive ye the Holy Ghost.***' [Jn 20:22]

And to those same disciples, at the end of the 40 days, Jesus said, '***Wait in Jerusalem until ye are endued with power from on high.***' [Lk 24:49] "***Then you will be my witnesses.***" [Act 1:8] Not, 'Then you will be my sons and my daughters.' They will become that through the new birth, and that is why it is written here, that "***he gave them the Spirit of his Son.***" This is about adoption,

about sonship. If we are children, then we are also heirs, [Rom 8:17] so that, as it is written here, we receive the Spirit of adoption. [Rom 8:15] This is not yet the equipping with power from on high. That happens when a person truly becomes a believer, receives the forgiveness of sins, experiences conversion, and is born again unto a living hope. Then comes the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Spirit of adoption, in which we can cry out, 'Abba, Father,' into our hearts, because Christ takes dwelling in our hearts through faith at the very moment we receive him. [Eph 3:17] And it is written in the Gospel of John chapter 1: '***And as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name.***' [Jn 1:12]

There is no child of God who has not received this Spirit of the Lord. This is the Spirit of adoption, and we receive him at the moment of our new birth through the Holy Spirit. I hope that this is clear enough.

Then of course, there are further outpourings and endowments of the Holy Spirit. Then there are gifts, then there are fruits, then there is the Spirit who guides into all truth, who teaches and so on, who convicts of sin, there is much more, but today's focus is on understanding that all who have become believers have received the Spirit of whom it is written here. If we are then waiting for a fullness of the Spirit, for a baptism in the Spirit, that is something else entirely, but I say this and emphasize it in this way for a very specific reason, because it is written: '***If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.***' [Rom 8:9]

It is not written, 'Whoever does not have the Holy Spirit is none of his.' One must read God's Word very carefully, and whoever does not read it carefully, falls in their own wisdom into the pits they have dug for themselves.

Let us quickly read on here once more, from Galatians 4, and then from Romans. Galatians 4, verse 6:

[6] ***And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.***

[7] ***Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.***

And now let us turn to Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8. Here we can read a few verses, say, verse 11, which is also very important, and then from verse 14. Actually, one ought to read quite a lot in chapter 8. Perhaps I shall begin with verse 15 after all:

[15] ***For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear...***

Do you see? Paul wanted to emphasize the difference between a servant and a son here. If the son is a babe and is the heir of all the wealth and assets, there is no difference between him and the servant unless he comes of age and the rightful heir is installed as a son in his inheritance.

And now let us read here in Roman 8, verse 15:

[15] ***For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.***

[15] ***…Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.***

[16] ***The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.***

Hallelujah, praise be to God.

And if I were to ask everyone here now, and I'm not doing so, for God knows my heart, to place a pillow under one's head, but if I were to ask now, and I mean all those who believe they have not yet been baptized in the Spirit, yet you can fully agree with these words, that you have received the Spirit of adoption, and can cry out, 'Abba, Father', you know God is our heavenly Father, is that true or not? So, you have experienced God, you have received the Spirit of adoption. I simply must say this, for doubts are going around, and they do not stay outside, they enter people's hearts and destroy us from within, and that must not be. We have become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. We have experienced justification and received the Spirit of adoption, in which we can cry out, 'Abba, Father.' And with this experience, with this certainty of faith, we can surely say, 'Lord, You are our Father.' And it is written, "***if an earthly father is able to give good gifts to his children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things and the Holy Spirit to those who ask him for him.***" [Lk 11:13] It is simply necessary, but I wanted to say this here, so that once and for all, every doubt may be removed from every heart, from every mind, from all thought and deliberation once and for all.

If you, dear brother and dear sister, believe that Jesus Christ as the Son of God died for you on the cross of Calvary, and that your reconciliation with God took place there, and that the iniquity of your sin has been forgiven and so on, then God has made a child of God out of a child of man, and you may rejoice as a child of God. Perhaps you are not yet mature, perhaps this or that is still lacking, but God has pardoned you and made you a child of God. Please never let this be disputed again.

Every person born of God is born again of water and the Spirit. There is no new birth without the Holy Spirit, and we become the temple of God, and the Lord takes up dwelling in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Christ in us, the hope of glory. [Col 1:27]

And then, as children, we have the right to expect that the Lord will continue to walk with us, that we will experience spiritual growth, that we will come of age, that we may be appointed as sons and daughters of God. This means after all, the manifestation of sonship, not merely that we are sons, but that we are manifested as sons of God.

So it was with our Lord. He was conceived by the Spirit, and from the Spirit, and then when he was to be set into the ministry, he was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to carry out his ministry.

It is exactly the same with us. Through the new birth, we are sons and daughters of God, and are then, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, baptized into the body of Christ, so as to fulfill and carry out a task in the church.

So if someone asks the question, 'Do you speak in tongues?' And then someone answers, 'No.' And if a third person then says, 'Then you do not have the Holy Spirit.' That is not true. So we must remain realistic, and call things as they are.

Here it is written, '***If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ...***' [Rom 8:9] And the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of adoption. Could it be made any clearer? This is what Holy Scripture teaches here, and this is how we must pass it on. And then we also know that as sons and daughters of God, we are waiting for more.

But if someone were to ask this question this way, 'Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit?' That's another way to put the question. That is quite a different matter altogether. Just as one might ask, 'Have you experienced a conversion?' Just as one might ask, 'Have you experienced being born again?' So one can ask a few questions, and then give the answer to these questions, and see whether one has truly experienced these things with God. It is very important, and we realize this now too, that we rightly divide the Word of truth. No one needs to bow their head, and no one needs to feel down, who has become a child of God, who has the Spirit of adoption, and who knows that they have become a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. They need not allow anyone to bring them down.

Let us walk our path with God together, until we are filled with the fullness of God, that we may be baptized in the Spirit, that we may be sealed with the Spirit of God, that we may be led by the Spirit of God, that the fruits of the Spirit, that the gifts of the Spirit, indeed, that Christ may be revealed in our lives, so that we too may be revealed with him in glory. [Col 3:4] But take comfort today. Be uplifted on this most holy foundation of faith, and give thanks to the Lord, who has bestowed great things upon us all by grace. I emphasize this once more: it is not written, 'Whoever does not have the Holy Spirit, or whoever has not received the baptism of the Spirit, has nothing,' but rather, '***Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ is not his.***' [Rom 8:9]

And every child of man, who has been redeemed by God in Christ and reconciled to him, receives and is granted new divine life, being born again as a son or daughter of God unto a living hope. [1 Pet 1:3] And the same Spirit, the same Holy Spirit, the same Spirit of sonship who was in Christ… And why is he called the Spirit of sonship? It is all about the sons and daughters of God. In Matthew 3, '***You are my beloved Son...***' [Mt 3:17] Not savior, not advocate.

The word, the right word was spoken: '***You are My beloved Son in whom I'm***

***well pleased.***' Matthew 17, '***This is my beloved Son...***' [Mt 17:5]

This is about sonship. It pleased God that Jesus Christ should be the firstborn among many brethren. [Rom 8:29] It pleased God that in the image of Jesus Christ, sons and daughters of God should be brought to new life through the seed of the Word and through the begetting of the Spirit by the power of the blood of the Lamb. And that is why it is also written, "***It does not yet appear what we shall be.***" We are now God's children, but what we shall one day be has not yet been revealed. ***"But when he shall appear, we shall be like him.***" [1 Jn 3:2]

Hallelujah, so it shall be, we shall be like him. Just as all bear the image of the first Adam, as Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 15, so too shall all bear the image of the second Adam. [1 Cor 15:49] So, we receive these things with gratitude, and wish to offer praise to our Lord, who has made children of God out of human beings. We do not merely sing, we bear witness, *I am redeemed, I may well boast, redeemed by the Savior's blood*, as the song goes. Perhaps these words from Romans may also be of help to some, where it is written, "***whoever confesses the Lord as Savior will be saved.***" [Rom 10:9] Romans chapter 10, verses 8 and 9:

[8] ***But what sayeth it?***

Romans chapter 10, verse 8:

[8] ***But what sayeth it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. That is, the word of faith which we preach.***

[9] ***That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.***

This is God's Holy Word, and we have all confessed it and we have been saved. We have received the Spirit of sonship, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and can cry out, Abba, Father. [Gal 4:6] We have the right to address God as our heavenly Father. We have the right to testify that we have become sons and daughters of God through faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In him he began, and of him it is written in Revelation chapter 3: '***He is the beginning of the creation of God.***' [Rev 3:14]

Which of God's creations? The new creation in Jesus Christ our Lord, not the creation since Adam, but God's new creation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

May these Scriptures and the brief explanations and remarks given here help us on the one hand, to find rest in God, namely in the fact and the thought that we have become children of God. But then secondly, to strive to bear the fullness of the Godhead within us, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to be anointed, to be equipped, to be sealed.

And now, as sons and daughters of God, we have the opportunity to say, "Faithful Father, you have given all these promises. We are your rightful heirs. We wish to share in them. You have given the promise, we believe it. Make us mature, bless

us, grant us spiritual growth, give us everything you have promised in your Word." And you will see, the Lord will continue to walk with us.

Then we will no longer quarrel with God. Be honest, how many of you have quarreled with God, fallen into distress, and experienced inner conflict? Find peace in God. He knows his own. You know yourselves whether you have experienced God, whether you have experienced conversion, whether God has drawn you out of the world and led you from destruction unto the narrow path. You know yourselves whether you have tasted the grace of God and whether Golgotha has any meaning for you. You know yourselves that you have passed from death into life. [1 Jn 3:14]

You have received peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord. [Rom 5:1]

And now, not with reproaches, not in any manner displeasing to the Lord, but simply as a child would speak to a father, let us say to him, "Lord, our God, you have become our Father through Jesus Christ, our Lord. You are Father to all who are called children." And you have said: ***"If we are children, then we are also heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."*** [Rom 8:17]

But you have also said: ***"If the son is a babe, then there is no difference between him and the servant..."*** [Gal 4:1]

Then both are in the same predicament. But when the son comes of age, when he can be set in his inheritance, then the difference becomes apparent. So, we can say to the Lord, "Make the difference clear yourself."

There is a word about this distinction in the Old Testament, in the prophet Malachi: ***"On that day you will see the difference between those who serve me and those who do not serve me."*** [Mal 3:18]

God has people who serve him. And in them, he will leave no work half done. In them, he will graciously and gloriously finish the work he has begun right up to the day of his coming. [Phil 1:6]

May the faithful God have strengthened, established, and grounded us in the faith, that we may praise and glorify him and know he will give all that he has promised, for he is faithful. Blessed and praised be our God. And I think that today everyone should say, "Amen." Truly, everyone. Blessed and praised be He, now and forever. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Amen.

Let us stand and give him the glory.

We bow our heads before the Almighty God, who has spoken to us again today through his word. He both spoke and acted. He breathed upon us and said, ***"Receive the Holy Spirit."*** [Jn 20:22]

He gave the promise, ***"Wait until you are endued with power from on high."*** [Lk 24:49]

One is the spirit of the Son, who cries out, ***"Abba, Father!"*** [Rom 8:15] and ***"bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."*** [Rom 8:16]

And then comes the fullness of that same Spirit. It is always one and the same Holy Spirit who works all things in all. [1 Cor 12:6]

The renewal, the new birth, the Holy Spirit brings about all these things. And then he fills the cleansed vessel so that it may be put to use in his service.

*Merely vessels, holy Master, yet filled with your power,* as the song goes. Beloved, God is faithful. He does not want any of his children to struggle in unbelief, to remain in pangs of conscience, or to live their lives in doubt. He wishes to bestow faith, to give confidence. He wishes to lift you up, strengthen you, and establish you.

Rejoice, you who have experienced God and become children of God, you who know of a day, of an experience when you surrendered your lives to God. You know that the peace of God came into your hearts, and you experienced it and received the certainty of having become children of God. The burden was lifted from you, your iniquity forgiven, your sin atoned for. You have become the Lord's possession, children of God, because you have come to believe in him and in the work of redemption he has accomplished.

Now even more awaits us, a full endowment with power from on high. Now we are children of God. We have become so through the new birth. And now we wish to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to be anointed, equipped for service, and sealed unto the day of our bodily redemption. [Eph 4:30]

God has prepared all this.

Let us pray for this together and give thanks to the Lord that he will do it. He must do it, for otherwise we could not experience completion. And he will do whatever is necessary so that we may be presented in his presence without spot or wrinkle. [Eph 5:27]

He will do it. Blessed and praised be His glorious name.

Let us sing, "Glorious Golgotha."

*My sin is forgiven,*

*my debt is paid,*

*glorious Golgotha.*

Lord, our God, together we thank you for your clear and true Word. You answer every question, provide insight, indeed shed light on all things, beloved Lord. As our redeemer, as the Son of God, you have given us your Spirit, we may bear your life, your very being. And in this Spirit of yours, the spirit of sonship that has been established, we may say, "Abba, Father!" [Rom 8:15]

And so, as the Son you were able to say, ***"I am ascending to my God and your God, to my Father and your Father."*** [Jn 20:17]

And you were not ashamed to call us your brethren. [Heb 2:11]

Beloved Lord, thank you for the redemption. We thank you for the finished work on Calvary, and also for the work of redemption accomplished within us. We are redeemed, we are your possession, we have become children of God. And we have received the spirit of Christ when we were born again unto a living hope.

Would you now grant us all the promise of the Father, [Acts 1:4] O God, an adoption as sons, an equipping with power from on high.

Lord, be with us all. Grant us clarity and assurance of faith, that the enemy cannot gain a foothold and bring about any distress. On the contrary, that distress may be brought to an end, and that we may sit here as believers who hear and believe your Word and are blessed by you.

Lord, Almighty God, have thine own way with your people, here and throughout the whole earth, and finish your work speedily and come soon.

May everything be committed to you. Be with us, O Lord. Go before us, Lift up thy countenance upon us, and grant us your peace and your blessing, in Jesus' name, Amen.