Sermon transcript

Meeting start 1991-07-07 10:00
Broadcast date 2026-09-27 10:00
Location Krefeld, Germany

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preached on 07. 07. 1991, 10:00, Krefeld, Germany

Topic: Isaiah 8:16: "I will bind up the revelation; seal the instruction among my disciples!"

broadcast on 27. 09. 2026

Thanks be to the Lord for this day which he has made, and in connection with his Word, Psalm 118 says: "***This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.***" [Psa 118:24]

There is so much that could be said, that ought to be said. Not everything can be set out and expounded in a single sermon or over a weekend. In all our gatherings we always have, as one might say in earthly terms, newcomers and those who are further along in their faith, some are already more familiar with what God has done, whilst others are joining us for the first time. And a sermon should offer something for everyone, no one should leave empty-handed. But we cannot go into the fundamental truths in detail every single time.

We suggest this for those who wish to learn more about the doctrine. We have booklets on various topics, on the Godhead, on water baptism, on the Lord's Supper. We also have brochures concerning Brother Branham's ministry. For example "It is written", "Only Believe", "The Church in Prophecy". We do after all have a number of brochures in which matters are explained comprehensively and in detail and simply illuminated in the light of Scripture. We therefore ask for your understanding that we cannot go over every single topic in full detail here every time.

As I said to Brother Kupfer earlier, some will need to attend evening sessions or take remedial lessons to be brought up to date. You know, and I would like to say this especially for the sake of those who may be new here, no particular denomination is represented here, no denominational teachings are put upon the lampstand here. We endeavor to present a balanced, all-encompassing proclamation of the whole Word, so that everyone may be informed and gain an overview of God's plan for humanity, doctrinally, prophetically, and in terms of the plan of salvation. And it is essential to proclaim what is right and true, so that one may then recognize and distinguish what is wrong and untrue.

As you know, when one looks at Christianity today, Brother Russ has just read that wonderful passage from the prophet Isaiah, and there the Lord God speaks as the Savior, and when he subsequently came as the Savior, they thought it was someone else, but it was he himself, the first and the last, before him there was no one, and

after him there will be no one. [Isa 43:10-11] He can reveal himself in different ways, in heaven as the Father, on earth as the Son, and in believers through the Holy Spirit, but he always remains one and the same God, who works all things in all, until he will be all in all, for thus it is written. [1Cor 12:6; 1Cor 15:28] We therefore recognize that there has ever been and ever will be only one God.

In the same way we recognize that he already revealed himself in various ways in the Old Testament, as the Angel of the Covenant, he came to Abraham in a visible form, Genesis 18, sat down, ate and drank, and the two angels then went on to Sodom, Genesis 19. Then he revealed himself to Moses in the burning bush as the Lord God, as the God of Abraham. [Exo 3:2, 6] Jacob wrestled with him. [Gen 32:24] He put his arms round him and said, ***"I will not let you go unless you bless me."*** [Gen 32:26] There are traces of God's revelations throughout the Old Testament, not merely as a spirit and invisible, but as one who revealed himself, speaking to the prophets and foretelling what was to come in the New Testament.

The great difference, which people cannot grasp with their minds, is precisely that in the Old Testament, the Lord revealed himself as Yahweh, that is the covenant name of the Lord God in the Old Testament. That is why the Lord God said to Moses, ***"I revealed myself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the Almighty God, but I did not reveal myself to them by my name Yahweh"*** as the Eternal One, the One who exists in himself." [Exo 6:3] What happened? The making of the covenant with Israel was imminent, and so the Lord God revealed his covenant name precisely for the making of the Old Testament covenant, and this Lord of the Old Testament became flesh. He was the Logos, who came forth from the fullness of God in a visible form, acting and walking amongst us. [Joh 1:1, 14]

For no one has seen God at any time, nor can anyone see God, for he is Spirit and dwells in a light to which no one has access to, as it is written. [1Tim 6:16] But he came forth from this primordial fullness and revealed himself. We therefore see and recognize that Jesus Christ is Emmanuel, God with us. [Isa 7:14; Mat 1:23] Praise be to his glorious name.

Of course, we are familiar with all these scriptures. "***The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."*** [Psa 110:1; Mat 22:44] We are familiar with all these scriptures, but we also understand their meaning and their fulfillment by grace, through the revelation of the Holy Spirit. It is not enough simply to quote Bible verses. One must compare the Old and New Testament with one another, in order to know and recognize the way in which the fulfillment of what was given in the Old Testament is to be found in the New.

I can well remember the day when, during a trip to Israel, we read many scriptures from the Old Testament and also from the New, during an evening service. And our beloved brother Goldner, a true Israelite in whom there is no guile, was listening, and at the end, the group can bear witness to this, I asked him whether he could

believe that what had been foretold in the Old Testament had been confirmed in the New. And we can recall how bitterly he wept, and later said to me, "Brother Frank, I believe." God has his way with his people Israel. God has his way with the church.

Let us always go only as far as God has gone in his Word. What he has explained is explained. Where he remains silent, we too remain silent. In our preaching, we do not go beyond the Word, and we are not prepared to offer explanations that feed the intellect, for when it comes to revelation, it cannot be explained. It must be given to each person by God through the Spirit. And we know that what comes from God is after all founded on revelation. Jesus Christ was the mystery of God revealed, hidden from some, revealed to others. And so it remains to this very day. "***Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.***" [Mat 16:17]

And so we could read out a whole host of scriptures and recognize that it is indeed revelation. Take for instance the passage from Matthew 16, where the Lord said, ***"Upon this rock I will build my church."*** [Mat 16:18] How often is the Lord associated with the concept of a rock in the Old and New Testament? "***Look to the rock from which you were hewn, to the well from which you were drawn.***" [Isa 51:1] I believe it's in Isaiah 51. I am not entirely prepared for this, but it is surely a good idea for us to quote these scriptures and read it out aloud so that everyone knows what is written. Isaiah 51, from verse 1:

[1] ***Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.***

Do we understand this? Christ is the rock, and this divine revelation was bestowed upon Peter. [Mat 16:16-18] Afterwards, the Lord said, ***"Upon this rock"***, not on you, Peter. No, that would have been a very shaky affair with Peter. How could God, the infallible God, build his church upon a human being? Common sense tells us that is not possible. God has founded the church on the revelation of Jesus Christ, on this rock of salvation, which remains unshakable.

By the way, Christ is already described as the rock that accompanied the people of Israel in the Old Testament, from which water gushed forth. I shall read it to you from 1 Corinthians 10. 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 1:

[1] ***Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;***

[2] ***And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;***

[3] ***And did all eat the same spiritual meat;***

[4] ***And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.***

We read of Moses, the Lord God commanded him, ***"Take the rod and strike the rock."*** [Exo 17:5-6] And then the people think, "Well…", there wasn't just sand in the desert, there was also somehow a rock there, and then it was struck once, and that was it.

That rock was Christ, hallelujah! And the spring is open to us. "***Let anyone who is thirsty come and drink of the water of life freely.***" [Rev 22:17]

But we can see just how the Roman church has twisted the verse from Matthew 16 for its own ends and for millions, indeed to this day for billions of people. And they say it was Peter upon whom the church was founded, it was he to whom the keys were given, it was he who received all authority, and even if he had received it, a pope would still be a long way from having it. But there's only one who could say: ***"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth"*** — that is the risen Lord, the victor of Golgotha, and he holds the keys of death and hell. [Mat 28:18; Rev 1:18] If there is anyone walking about with keys hanging from his long robe, it is ridiculous to a believer. Our Lord is the overcomer, and he holds the keys

We see then that one must always consider the Old and New Testament together in order to recognize what has truly come to pass on the basis of the promises God has given. A number of scriptures could be cited which the enemy has covered up and obscured from people's views. Take for example Matthew 28:19: ***"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them…"*** People have failed to realize that this command is about the name. People have turned it into a formula and forgotten the name entirely, and so they act in their own name using a formula. And lo and behold, the apostles had no formula. They had the revelation of the name in which God revealed himself in the New Testament as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In the name which is above every name: ***"Thou shalt call his name Jesus"*** — Yahshua, the Hebrew form — ***"for he will save his people"*** — which people? — ***"he will save his people from all their sins."*** [Mat 1:21; Phi 2:9]

We see and recognize from all this that it is revelation. And anyone who wishes to receive a revelation from God must first have established a connection with him, in order to receive the revelation through the Spirit from this connection with God. This is not about the mind being instructed. It is about gaining, through revelation, access to all that God has graciously bestowed upon us, and for this the fear of God comes first.

There is the verse in Proverbs chapter 1, verse 7, Proverbs 1:7, familiar to all:

[7] ***The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.***

Fools have their own wisdom, and it never stops. They could instruct prophets and apostles, instead of becoming still and allowing themselves to be taught by the Word and the Spirit, in the light of the Word that was granted to prophets and apostles.

In Proverbs chapter 4 there is a very important verse, Proverbs chapter 4, verse 18:

[18] ***But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.***

We now think of 2 Peter chapter 1, where it is written: ***"Until the day star arise in your hearts."*** [2Pet 1:19] God's way with the church proceeds from clarity to clarity, from knowledge to knowledge, from revelation to revelation, until we reach the perfection that is drawing near.

I would like to read a few more scriptures to show us from the Word of God how important it is that we have the fear of the Lord and with it reverence for the Word of God, and that we realize that God has made his will known in his Word, and anyone who sets any teaching alongside the teaching of Scripture creates an idol for themselves, which they then worship and which becomes particularly precious to them. As we have already heard in the opening word, people have set about shaping certain things with their hands; today they are shaped with the mouth. I shall never forget it. At the Hilton Hotel in Manila, in the Philippines, there is a chapel, and it is a Catholic chapel, and there they have the statue of Christ with a great deal of sunlight surrounding him — I don't know if it was made of copper — in any case it was withered beyond recognition, disfigured beyond recognition, and I thought to myself: "What a tragedy!"

And then you see people coming in, making the sign of the cross, falling to their knees. And our Lord says in John 4: "***not on the holy mountain nor in Jerusalem, but the true worshippers will worship God in spirit and in truth.***" [Joh 4:21-24] They need nothing fashioned by human hands.

By the way, it was the same at the airport in Manila. There were also many images of saints there. It is, after all, a Catholic country, and one watched as people, before their flight, lit their candles and paid homage to the saints who were all displayed there. For us there is only one who is holy, and that is God. And he says: ***"I will not give my glory to another, nor my praise to idols."*** [Isa 42:8] Everything that people formulate and that lies outside the Word is an idol, and the whole thing is no longer worship, the whole thing is idolatry.

Anyone who has ever been to a place of pilgrimage will have got the right impression. Anyone who is in Bavaria can go to Altötting, and anyone in Switzerland can go to Einsiedeln, others can go to Fatima and Lourdes, but you can go here to Kevelaer, just a few kilometers away. I was there many years ago: nothing but a realm of idols, absolutely nothing, not a trace of God Almighty, and humanity is thus kept in error.

By the way, for us as German citizens — everyone is, after all, a citizen of a particular nation, and I heard this today — Konrad Adenauer's grandson has resigned from the CDU because he fears that Germany is now becoming Protestant as the seat of government is being moved to Berlin. One really must give that some thought.

Politics and religion are already in cahoots, and anyone who has looked into the matter a little, especially regarding Opus Dei — recently, when the chairpersons were replaced, there was an official interview on Deutschlandfunk on the radio, I heard it myself — the question was asked as to why all the key positions in the civil service and everywhere are being filled by the Roman Catholic Church through Opus Dei, and this man said without hesitation: "The day is coming when we will need them there."

We as people who know the Word of God, not from ourselves, but on the basis of Bible prophecy, we know, of course, what is happening now: all empires must be shattered and brought to ruin so that, as the prophet Daniel foresaw, the final world empire under Roman rule can arise. And behold, the Treaties of Rome were signed in 1957, and now we can see that everything is falling into place. Some wonder why the Soviet Union, once a great empire, is growing ever smaller. We see it in Yugoslavia, we see it everywhere. What is it? All this unrest is bound to happen. Everyone wants to throw off the yoke. What is it? There will be a great union, and none of these empires will be able to throw off Rome's yoke.

Under Rome's yoke they will all be united. This is Bible prophecy, and so it is coming to pass in our own day.

But let us return to our subject. You know, these things are part of it. They are part of the end-time prophecy, and we would do well to have a biblical perspective and focus.

In Isaiah 28, verse 9, it is written, Isaiah 28, verse 9:

[9] ***Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.***

What does the man of God write to the Hebrews? "***Shall I keep on starting all over again with the principles of biblical teachings? Shall I keep on giving milk, or can we move on to perfection?***" [Heb 6:1] So it is written in Hebrews chapter 6.

Beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord and dear friends, the day of salvation is drawing to a close, it has turned into evening. We are approaching the hour of midnight, it is late on the world's clock, and the Lord's return is imminent. We no longer have time to discuss certain matters. We must say, as Paul said: ***"If anyone is still of a different opinion"*** — that is, has not yet received the revelation of God — ***"let the Lord reveal it to them."*** [Phi 3:15] So writes Paul to the Philippians.

It is not that we are here to give private lessons or even to engage in debates in order to convince anyone. Faith does not come from debate; faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. [Rom 10:17] And the Holy Spirit works and acts through the preaching, revealing to each individual what it is all about. Praise be

to the name of the Lord! And then no one will teach another, but all will be taught by God.

In the prophet Habakkuk there is a beautiful scripture that enlightens us as to how we ought to conduct ourselves, Habakkuk chapter 2, verses 3 and 4, Habakkuk 2, verse 3 and 4:

[3] ***For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.***

Amen. Everything that God has said in his Word is yes and is amen. [2Cor 1:20] And when it seems impossible to people, God says: ***"Is anything too hard for me?"*** [Gen 18:14; Jer 32:27] God, the Creator of heaven and earth, speaks a word and it comes to pass. Everything He has said in His Word will come to pass. Then in verse 4:

[4] ***Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.***

There are various translations here. There are words in the original text that are translated as "faithfulness", as "faith", and sometimes even as "faithfulness". It has not been possible to find a word that is 100% accurate in every language and in every instance, but we understand what is meant. Three references are given here: Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38, where one can look up that men of God in the New Covenant referred to this Old Testament scripture. The one justified by God, the one justified by faith, will have life as a result of his faithful holding fast to this faith.

In the book of Isaiah chapter 8, I would like to read verse 16, Isaiah chapter 8 verse 16. Here we gain insight into who receives the revelation and what happens once one has received it. Isaiah chapter 8, verse 16.

[16] ***I will bind up the revelation and seal the instruction in my disciples.***

Not everyone, but the true followers of the Lord. Whether one says a pupil or a disciple, it is always the same concept. Someone who has set out to follow the Lord, but has not set off on their own initiative, rather sits at the Lord's feet, listens as a disciple should, accepts instruction, and thus follows the Lord, not of their own accord, but within the bounds of God's Word. So the revelation was to be kept under lock and key, and the instruction that God gives was to be sealed within His disciples.

This is very important, for anyone who reads a few verses earlier will notice that the Lord brings about two different things: one thing for some and another for others. Perhaps we should read it, for this remains true to this very day. From Isaiah chapter 8 we then read, say from verse 13:

[13] ***Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.***

[14] ***And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.***

[15] ***And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.***

Have we all consciously heard or read this? Only the first part applies to true believers. He will be our sanctification. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he has been made for us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; all in all he has become all things to us; we are to sanctify him. [1Cor 1:30] He is to be our awe, not fear, but reverence, a holy awe; and then he will become for us a means of sanctification. To others he will be a stumbling block; they become entangled, they are caught in their own snares, which they have woven together, because they approach divine things without authorization, without revelation.

Why does Paul write: ***"To me this mystery was made known by revelation, the mystery which in former ages was not made known unto the sons of men"***? [Eph 3:3, 5] In the kingdom of God there is a certain order, and the church is built upon "***the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone***" [Eph 2:20], not on what priests or preachers, evangelists or any other denomination says, but founded on the holy foundation of the apostles and prophets, where Jesus Christ himself is the chief cornerstone. And to this we must return at the end of days.

We must come out from spiritual Babylonian captivity, from all this confusion, and be cleansed by the washing of water by the Word, taking care not to carry over the old Roman leaven with us. Let what comes from Rome remain in Rome, and may the church contain what God placed within it in Jerusalem at the very beginning, so that nothing foreign may be found in the church of the living God, but that it may be said: ***"My Spirit dwells amongst you."*** [Hag 2:5]

Then there is the glorious word in the prophet Jeremiah, chapter 7, Jeremiah chapter 7, verses 22 and 23:

[22] ***For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices:***

[23] ***But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.***

And then there is a scripture somewhere that says we should look back and search for the paths of old. [Jer 6:16] Here at this place we are searching the scriptures just

as those in Berea did. [Act 17:11] We did not automatically accept what Brother Branham preached just because he said it. We have searched the Holy Scriptures day and night to gain certainty before the face of God as to whether it was so. And we are not people here who merely parrot what others say. We preach the pure Bible truths based on the Word of God. And all who are of the truth will listen to it and accept it. [Joh 18:37] That is why John writes: ***"Whoever is of God heareth us."*** [1Joh 4:6]

Beloved, I am not referring to myself personally at this moment, but I say this to you with complete conviction. I know that in my preaching I am in full agreement with all the prophets and apostles, in full agreement with the Old and New Testament. And as I have often said, in the preaching that takes place at this site, all the apostles and all the prophets may take their seats and listen to what we have to say.

I would like to go one step further. We stand and find ourselves at this site in the presence of God. What is preached here must stand before God on the day of eternity. That is what matters. And if it is in accordance with His Word, then it will stand before Him.

I am thinking of the experience Brother Branham had whilst he was still on earth. You know, he was truly a man of God, much like Moses, with a direct divine calling. For the pillar of fire did indeed hover over him in the little hut on the day of his birth. His mother, his grandmother, and everyone else who was there saw it. And on that day of his birth, when the pillar of fire entered the room and hovered over this child, people wondered what would become of him. And later, God confirmed in so many ways that this was not merely a matter of making claims or raising possibilities, but that God was behind it all.

In any case, regarding this experience, he was taken out of his body. It was early in the morning. He said: **"I looked back. I saw my wife lying on the bed. I saw my body lying on the bed and was taken up into Paradise."**

He saw the glory of God. He said:

"Millions came to meet me, all dressed in white, all young. The sisters had their hair hanging loose down the back. The brothers had a smart haircut, none of them had a beard."

I must say this rather carefully now. I see our brother has a beard. Well, everyone on earth can wear whatever they like. If he wants to let nature take its course, that's his business. But there we'll all be young. You know, I've seen that too, but I won't go into that now. We'll all be young, and the beard won't have time to grow. And we won't need it there either. No one will be pulling us by the beard there.

Well, in any case, Brother Branham saw those millions. He said: **"A multitude, too vast to count."**

And they all came joyfully towards him, crying out: "Our beloved brother, how glad

we are that you are here now!" And you know the whole story, of course.

Then he was told: "**You will be judged according to what you have preached.**" And as you know, preachers mostly proclaim to everyone else that they will one day be judged. They then raise a warning finger and threaten, saying: "Listen, judgment is coming!" But we, too, will be judged. According to the words of Paul, "***we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.***" [Rom 14:10; 2Cor 5:10] Not at the white throne, not at the last judgment, no, but before the judgment seat of Christ, when the crowns are being handed out in glory. That is where we will be.

And Brother Branham was startled and asked: "**Did Paul and Peter also have to face judgment?**" And the angel of the Lord said: "**Yes, they, too, must be judged.**" And then Brother Branham said, **"I have preached what Paul preached, taught what he taught, and baptized as he baptized. If he is to stand his ground with those to whom he preached, then I, too, shall stand my ground with those to whom I have preached."**

And then the whole crowd cried out, "We are resting on that!"

It all comes down to the true proclamation. And believe me, the enemy always wants to mix things up. The mixing began in the Garden of Eden, when two seeds were mixed together. And if you go through the whole of the Old Testament, in the days of the flood, what happened? [Gen 6:1-2] The line of Seth, which had remained pure, intermingled with a mixed line of Cain. One was the children of God, the other the daughters of men. And when these two lines, namely the divine line and the other, intermingled—and whoever does not believe in the seed of the serpent, let them explain to me here and now why these two lineages existed in the days of Noah. Here and now, not tomorrow, have you understood?

There are so-called experts who go about saying, "Huh, he said this and that." Not him, God revealed it, and thanks be to the Lord that he has revealed these hidden mysteries. And this is what I want to tell you: Whoever is of the pure divine line will see through this intermingling, and will thank God that this matter has truly been revealed. And whoever refuses to acknowledge it, is themselves a hybrid and lives in this intermingling. Shall I add here: "Thus saith the Lord"? That is unnecessary; it is according to the Word.

Beloved, we do not live in the days of knowledge. We live in the days in which all the mysteries of the Word have been revealed. And blessed is the person who has awe and respect for the Almighty God. Blessed is the person who can take this reverence into their heart, so that they may then truly receive divine wisdom and not contradict God.

There is a passage in the book of Job. As you know, Job was a rare case, a unique case. But God rebuked him before he revealed himself to him. And God must do the same with all of us. Before he can truly reveal himself to us, he must rebuke us.

And I shall read from Job 38 from verse 1, Job 38 from verse 1:

[1] ***Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,***

[2] ***Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?***

There are more who obscure God's plan of salvation than there are who shed light on it. Anyone who has no light through divine revelation is groping in the dark and is blind to the spiritual things that God has revealed. And if one blind person leads another blind person, will they not both fall into the ditch? [Mat 15:14; Luk 6:39] Beloved, we do not say this merely to set ourselves apart from others. We say it for the sake of God's truth, which dwells within us.

We are living in the last days. Amidst all this confusion, we have needed clear guidance from God; amidst all this knowledges, we have needed revelation, in order to know and understand at all what this is all about. And the word comes to the prophets; here it is said: ***"Who is this that darkeneth God's counsel by words without knowledge?"*** [Job 38:2] As I just said, when one reads Holy Scripture, one will discover time and again that God has never failed to give us an answer; the Spirit reveals all things, even the deep things of God. [1Cor 2:10]

Once more the remark about the fall in the Garden of Eden. Satan hates nothing more than being exposed. Do you understand that? This is the very thing he wishes to cover up at any cost, so that his actions are not seen through, and he may retain his claim over the people. If the fall had not taken place in the flesh, why did redemption have to come about in the flesh as a result of the fall? Please tell me.

Beloved, God is a God who has arranged all things in a marvelous way. That is why there is redemption through the blood. That's why the Word became flesh, so that mankind, who were delivered over in the flesh to Satan's power, might be set free and redeemed from it. [Joh 1:14] That is why Christ, on the cross of Calvary, not only brought about our forgiveness, but also disarmed the powers and principalities, put them to shame and triumphed over them, so as to transfer us from the power of Satan into the kingdom of the Son of his love. [Col 1:13; Col 2:15] Oh, there are marvelous scriptures that could be brought up in connection with this.

"Who is this..."—that is the great question which God asks each and every one of us. ***"Who is this that darkeneth God's counsel?"*** [Job 38:2] Huh, you say that is not possible. They have twisted the Word. They have spoken of salvation where there is no salvation at all. "***They want to heal the wound of my people superficially.***" [Jer 8:11] Just read in the prophet Jeremiah and other passages. God has healed nothing superficially. "***He was wounded for our transgressions, the punishment was laid upon him so that we might have peace, and by his stripes we are healed.***" [Isa 53:5]

From the prophet Daniel, another scripture—from the prophet Daniel, well-known to us all, and yet I would like to read it, Daniel chapter 8. They are all such marvelous scriptures: Daniel chapter 8, verse 16b and verse 17:

[16] ***Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.***

[17] ***So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision.***

The reason I have read this scripture is as follows: We know that God spoke to the prophets through visions and images. However, it was necessary to understand these images seen in visions correctly through divine revelation. Anyone who sees a vision, but does not receive through revelation the meaning or the message intended to be conveyed by the image, might even interpret a vision in all directions. Here God kept his hand over the prophet. This matter was too important for anyone to form their own opinions. Here God sent the angel Gabriel and said, ***"Make this man to understand the vision."*** [Dan 8:16]

Look, the same thing happened in the book of Revelation. In the first and the last chapter, we are told that God sent his angel. And then there are those who darken God's counsel and say, "We have Christ; the angels can stay in heaven where they are." Why did God send an angel to Zechariah? [Luk 1:11-13] Why did he send him to Mary? [Luk 1:26-28] Why did he also reveal himself in a supernatural way in the New Testament? Because he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. [Heb 13:8] God does not change his ways or his dealings with his people. As we have heard, he is the one, and before him there was no one, and after him there will be no one. [Isa 43:10]

Here it is written in Revelation 1, in verse 1, second part:

[1] ***And he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:***

[2] ***Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.***

Here we see it. These were not merely visions, not merely images. The angel was there to confirm what John saw. For you know, after all, how much he saw: He saw the seven candlesticks; he saw the Son of man walking amongst the seven golden candlesticks; he saw the seven stars in the Lord's right hand; he saw the seven vials of wrath, seven trumpets, seven seals; he saw the Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes; he saw many things. But a lamb does not have seven horns; a billy goat might have two. What was symbolized by this? And then it says, these seven eyes and seven horns are the seven Spirits of God. [Rev 5:6] But God does not have seven spirits; God has only one Holy Spirit.

However, this served to illustrate that the Holy Spirit would be at work in the seven ages of the one New Testament church.

And then there are those people who obscure the counsel of God with words without knowledge. They say, "Huh, the message in the church age addressed to Ephesus

was directed at that church, the other to Pergamos, the other to Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia, and so on."

I ask you, if all these messages had been of significance only to those local churches, what use would they be to me today? Here we have been shown the prophetic course of the New Testament church. And if I were to say to someone today what Paul wrote to the Corinthians applied only to them, then they would say, "No, no, not that!" And if I were to say what Peter wrote back then applied only to those he addressed, oh, they would say, "No, no, all that applies forever; this is always valid."

But—and then comes the "but"—"but as for the seven church-age messages, I beg you, only back then did it have any significance, only back then." No, and no again! Everything written here has significance for the church of the living God until it passes from faith to sight.

And blessed is the one who has recognized that we are now living in the final church age, and that God has indeed sent a corrective message into the age in which it was said: ***"We are rich, we need nothing at all."*** [Rev 3:17] And speak to people today: They have been baptized in water, they have been baptized in the Spirit, they have everything. And when someone comes, wanting to bring them something from the Lord, they reject it. They already have everything, have known everything, know everything—for over 100 years, for over 50, for over 30, they know everything.

There are some things we have known and other things we have not known. God has revealed it to us over time. And we are grateful to Him that time has not stood still, but that it marches on until the full day dawns, and the morning star can rise in our hearts. [2Pet 1:19]

We have understood this very well from Revelation 1. And in Revelation 22, it is confirmed once again. I believe it was also confirmed in chapter 19, when John wanted to pay homage to the angel. And the angel said: ***"Don't do that."*** [Rev 19:10] In any case, it is written in chapter 22. In the second part of verse 8 and then verse 9: "***I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.***" [Rev 22:8]

Look, it wasn't just his imagination, the angel was there. And Brother Branham said that every time the angel entered the room, he was just as overwhelmed as he was the first time."

He said: "You cannot describe what happens at the very moment the angel of the Lord enters the room."

And it was always the same. The light comes first, and then the angel of the Lord appears.

Here we have it. John and Daniel, all these men of God, received heavenly visitors here on this earth. Very important matters were at stake. And I believe that today it is about the finishing of God's entire plan of salvation. And if ever we need to

know precisely what God wants, and what He has promised, and how His Word has been given to us, and the mysteries revealed, it is in these days.

And it is not my knowledge or yours that is required, but the final, all-encompassing, light-bringing, divine revelation coming from God, in order to re-establish the altar of the Lord, and to remove everything that is unbiblical, so that the church of God may once again become the foundation and pillar of the truth, as it is written in 1 Timothy 3, verse 15. And then Paul writes: "***Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached in the world, received up into glory.***" [1Tim 3:16]

And we believe that this has taken place in Jesus Christ our Lord. Otherwise, we would have to ask, as John did whilst in prison: "***Go and ask him: Are you the one who was to come, or must we wait for another?"*** [Mat 11:3; Luk 7:19] You all know the answer. "***Go and tell John: The blind see, the lame walk, the crippled leap…"*** and so on, "…***and the Gospel is preached to the poor.***" [Luk 7:22]

John knew what is written in Isaiah 35: "***The Lord God is coming. Then the blind shall see, the lame shall walk, the mute shall speak, and the crippled shall leap like a deer.***" [Isa 35:4-6]

All this came to pass. And John knew: "Here is the fulfilment of the Word. Here is the Messiah. Here is our Saviour, for whom we have been waiting." And just as we heard in the opening word, He is the King of Israel. He is the Saviour.

I shall conclude by reading once more the Word, that glorious Word from Isaiah 44. Isaiah 44, verse 6: "***Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel,***" King, "***and his redeemer,***" number two, the King is also the Saviour, "***the LORD of hosts;***" Amen, that too He is. "***I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.***"

Blessed and praised be His marvellous and glorious name. And as I said earlier, we acknowledge that this one true God has revealed Himself in heaven as Father. That is why we pray: ***"Our Father who art in heaven."*** [Mat 6:9; Luk 11:2] No one prays: "Our Son who art in heaven." No one prays: "Our Spirit who art in heaven." That would be even greater folly added to the rest. No, we all pray: ***"Our Father who art in heaven."*** On earth, God revealed Himself as Emmanuel in the Son. [Mat 1:23]

I must still read it, and I make no apology for it. It has even been suggested that only one service should take place today. I don't know what you think of that. Let me read from Psalm 2, verse 7 and 8. Psalm 2, verses 7 and 8:

[7] ***I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.***

When did this begetting take place? Not in eternity, but as it is recounted to us in the Gospel of Matthew and Luke. For this is what the prophet Isaiah said: "***For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."*** [Isa 9:6]

But you see, in verse 8 we are given light concerning the nations:

[8] ***Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance…***

God already knew back then that it would not be only the people of Israel. God began with them as the chosen people, and God will finish with them as the chosen people. In between lies the time for the church from the nations. Romans 11 and other scriptures bear witness to this.

Psalm 2, verse 8:

[8] ***Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.***

And then this to supplement that in the Word itself, verses 11 and 12:

[11] ***Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.***

Do you see? It is about holy reverence for the Holy God. No one can treat God the way a priest treats Sunday. God deserves respect and reverence from us all.

[11] ***Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.***

"***Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling***", not out of fear, but in holy reverence for the Almighty God. [Phi 2:12]

Verse 12:

[12] ***Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way…***

Why does it not say here, "Kiss the Father," or "Kiss the Holy Spirit"? ***"Kiss the Son,"*** because as the Son in the flesh, He died here for us, who were to become sons and daughters of God. He was the Son of God, and we are the sons and daughters of God. Faith in the Son of God is essential for salvation, for Holy Scripture says in 1 John: "***Whoever has the Son of God has eternal life, and whoever does not have the Son does not have life.***" [1Jo 5:12]

Muslims all believe in the one God, and they spit on the ground if anyone mentions anything about a Trinity to them, just as the Jews, of course, can only believe in one God. Muhammad said—one mustn't put it quite so officially—but he really did use very harsh language against those who attributed a son to God in heaven. He asked word for word: "Who then was God's wife in heaven, if God in heaven is said to have had a son?" And that's how it is.

4000 years passed from Adam to Christ, and there was not a single conversation between Father and Son, because the Son did not yet exist. ***"Thou art my Son, today I have begotten you."*** [Psa 2:7] Psalm 2.

"I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son." [2Sam 7:14]

We could also quote many scriptures on this subject and show from the Word of God why God's revelation had to take place in the flesh from a spiritual body, why the Lord of lords and the King of kings had to become a servant and take on the form of a servant and had to become like all of us, namely to become a faithful high priest, so that He might represent us all well. [Heb 2:17] Now He is still our High Priest. He entered the heavenly sanctuary with His own blood to obtain an eternal redemption. [Heb 9:12] This is what we read in Hebrews.

You see, all these scriptures must not be played off against one another. They must be harmonized, interwoven, and interconnected, forming a complete revelation which God is bringing to fulfillment in Christ according to His plan conceived from eternity. And I believe with all my heart that we are living in the days of completion. God is bringing everything to a conclusion. He purifies, He sanctifies, He leads us back to the beginning, for He is the first and the last. As He was in the beginning, so must He be in the end. Just as baptism took place in the beginning, so must it take place in the end. And if there are people amongst us today, brothers and sisters in Christ, who have not yet been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the Bible, then there is certainly a good opportunity today to enter into a covenant of a good conscience with God. [1Pet 3:21]

It is still on my heart to say to all those who have special prayer requests or wish to be prayed for: God is here, the Lord is present, a meeting has a purpose so that God may serve us, so that we may come to Him in prayer and faith, not only to receive instruction and deepen our understanding of Scripture, but also to personally receive from God what we have prayed for. And if there are such people here, whether during the general prayer, or if prayer is requested afterwards, we are at your disposal, and I am convinced that God has blessed us, God has spoken to us through His Holy Word.

I did remark here recently that I would prefer to hear an echo from the congregation, but when I sense how deeply the preaching penetrates, it is not the spontaneous response that matters, but how deeply the preached Word, the written and revealed Word, has fallen into our hearts, and with what faith it has been received, so that it may accomplish for which it was sent. [Isa 55:11] And I firmly believe it has been received. Hallelujah! Blessed and praised be the marvelous name of the Lord. Let us all say together: Amen, Amen, and again Amen, to Him who is the Amen. In the last Church Age message it says: ***"Thus says He who is the Amen."*** [Rev 3:14] Hallelujah! He is the Amen. In the very end, He is the Yes and the Amen. All the promises of God are Yes and Amen through Jesus Christ, our Lord. [2Kor 1:20]

Rejoice in God and give him the glory. He has graciously visited us through the

revelation of the Holy Spirit. He has made known the mysteries of the Word, and the same anointing that rested upon the prophets and apostles rests upon us today. And we may see what they saw, hear what they heard, receive and understand what was given to them.

The Lord God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel, our God, bless us all in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Let us rise to pray.

Lord, our God, by the authority of your Word, we now come before your holy presence in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. We come with all those who today wish to receive you as their Savior and experience salvation personally, the forgiveness of their sins and reconciliation with you, the Almighty God. As it took place in Christ on the cross of Calvary, you yourself have proclaimed, O Lord: ***"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest for your souls."*** [Mat 11:28-29]

Beloved Lord, you have invited us, you have called us, we come, we come together before your presence, pass through the strait gate and walk on the narrow way that leads to life. [Mat 7:13-14] Beloved Lord, accept us all, forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.

Beloved Lord, we also bring all the sick to you. O God, we are living below our potential; you have prepared more for us than we have received so far. Beloved Lord, have mercy on us, work once more amongst your people through the power of your blood, through the power of your Word, through the power of your Spirit, and confirm your Word now with signs and wonders following. Grant healings, O Lord, that your Word may be fulfilled: ***"By your stripes we were healed."*** [Isa 53:5; 1Pet 2:24]

We give you the glory, and we believe with all our hearts that it has come to pass. It is finished. [Joh 19:30] "***The righteous shall live by faith.***" [Rom 1:17] He shall receive forgiveness and healing and be blessed by God.

Lord, we thank you, for your Word has penetrated very deeply into our hearts during this service. You have given us nourishment for the whole day and for the weeks to come. We thank you for this and praise your glorious name. Hallelujah. Amen. Amen.

Believe that you have received it, and it will be yours, as it is written in Mark 11:22 to 24. Amen.