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This is a special day. Brother Russ has already said it. It is the day of salvation, the day of grace. But this day has a beginning. This day takes its course. And this day comes to an end. And we might cry out, as they did back then: ***"Lord, stay with us, for it is toward evening and the midnight hour is drawing in."*** [Luk 24:29]

The Scripture from Hebrews is also so powerful. When you think about it, back then the Lord came down upon the mountain in fire, a cloud surrounded Him, and the people heard His mighty voice like loud thunder. [Exo 19:16-19; Heb 12:18-19] There are people in this day who speak of seven thunders, which God is said to have revealed somewhere. Let me say this in love. When God speaks, and when the seven thunders truly resound, then all those thunder brothers will have nothing more to say, then God will speak and then He will act. Then all will be silent and stand at attention before the Almighty God.

This is also expressed in Hebrews 12, specifically in the thought: ***"See to it that you do not reject Him who speaks to you from heaven."*** [Heb 12:25] Back then the Lord came to earth, revealed Himself, and spoke. Then He came in the flesh, became man, and accomplished salvation. And through the proclamation of the glorious gospel, He still speaks today from heaven. And blessed are all who have realized that the Word is not being spoken here today from this platform, but has come down from heaven. And we are merely passing it on, hence the warning: ***"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh."*** [Heb 12:25] It is not man, as has already been said, but the God who speaks. And the Lord said at that time: ***"Just as the Father hath sent me, so I send you."*** [Joh 20:21] ***"And whoever hears you, hears me."*** [Luk 10:16] ***"And whoever receives you, receives me."*** [Mat 10:40]

There is still divine commission, divine proclamation, there is still the possibility that God speaks to us. He does so in simplicity, yet with great power. And blessed is the person who takes the Word of the Lord into their heart and allows it to take effect.

We have here a special prayer request from our beloved brother and sister. It reads: "For my niece," we can omit names, "I ask the whole church to pray." Let us do so

now whilst we listen to God's Word. It need not always be in a loud prayer, but in connection with this desire to bring this intercession before God. I have been reminded that there are certainly hardships and illnesses amongst us too, that there are many things we can bring before the face of God.

Something will only happen if we combine prayer with faith, namely believing that it has already happened, so that it may come to pass. [Mar 11:24] The secret of the prayer of all believers truly lies in their belief that God has already done it, and not merely that He will do it. Whoever believes that He will do it will continue to believe so for all time to come, but whoever believes that He has accomplished and done it may take it with them at once. And I believe that through the proclamation of the Word of God, we have the privilege of applying this faith wrought by the Spirit of God and of experiencing God anew today in this very place. Just as our beloved brothers and sisters have sung, *I pray for a new experience.*

Who would like to experience God today, His presence, His power, so that we feel that He has turned His face towards us?

I would like to read from the Word of God concerning the name of the Lord and the effect of the power of His name, specifically the well-known word from the Book of Acts 3. Acts 3, verse 16: Acts 3, verse 16:

[16] ***And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.***

No verse could express it more succinctly or powerfully. The apostles, Peter and John, experienced the effect of God's power which lies in the name of Jesus. And we are here today, we, to whom the name of the Lord has been revealed in its divine significance, we are here today to experience the power of this name. ***"Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."*** [Mat 1:21] In those days, the name of the Lord was preached, and the effect of this power of God which lies in the Word and in the name of the Lord was experienced. If we believe that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever [Heb 13:8], then let us count on it, indeed expect, that God will reveal His power here today.

I shall read the verse again. Acts 3, verse 16: "***And through faith in His name.***"

We note what the point of reference is.

[16] ***And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.***

Before he was sick, now he was made well, through the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. And through the faith wrought, as it says here, "***through the faith in His name***", may it come to pass today that we do not merely have a general faith, but the faith that is necessary, so that God's miracle may take place

today in you, in your soul, in your spirit, in your body, right now. So that we too may bear witness to the same thing, not tomorrow, but now. Now. Here the present tense is used. It had happened.

We experienced this in Brother Branham's ministry, in comparison with the other evangelists. I have, after all, seen and heard most of them, and also translated some of their messages, and I am very well placed to judge the difference. All the others were always able to say: "The Lord is faithful. You can rely on Him to confirm His Word," and then send the people on their way after the prayer. With Brother Branham it was different. It happened on the spot, through the faith, in the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, wrought by God. People were not put off until tomorrow or some distant future, but received their healing right there and then.

When you have witnessed this personally, often enough in Europe and the USA, seeing and hearing it for yourself, it really is a wonderful thing. I have watched as people born blind received their sight in an instant. I have watched as God performed great signs and wonders right there and then, in an instant.

We believe that the Lord takes His servants, but He Himself remains with us all the days until the end of the world. [Mat 28:20] He can call messengers, He can call prophets, He can call apostles to Himself. They have all fulfilled their commission and were then taken into glory. But the Word, all the testimonies of what God has done, has remained with us, so that we too might know in what way God works supernaturally in the Church.

And since, at the end of time, we may expect the Lord to bestow a full restoration by His grace, we also know that the proclamation must precede the event itself. But what has been announced must come to pass, must follow, because God has said so. And in this we have an unshakable faith, anchored in the promises of the Word. If a human being had held out the prospect of certain things to us, that would be one thing, but if it is written in the Word of God and has been promised therein, then we may say, as Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1: ***"All God's promises are 'Yes' and 'Amen' through Jesus Christ our Lord."*** [2Cor 1:20] The promises given for this age and for the calling out, the preparation and the completion of the bride of the Lamb will all be fulfilled.

If Paul was able to write in Ephesians 5 that the Lord will present to himself a church which has no spot, nor wrinkle, nor any blemish, but is as blameless as the Lamb of God, so we who were, and perhaps still are, burdened with so many faults, will by the grace of God, through the blood of the Lamb, and through the Word of God, be presented before the face of God as blameless, unrebukable, without spot or wrinkle. [Eph 5:27] And this by grace. If one simply reflects on this, one can begin to grasp what grace means. And the Lord did indeed say: ***"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."*** [Exo 33:19; Rom 9:15]

When Brother Russ read the passage from Hebrews 12, another thought occurred

to me. How often is it prayed in the full Gospel circles: "Lord, speak, reveal your Word fresh from the throne." And when God then reveals His Word fresh from the throne, and when the Word proclaimed on earth is illuminated and revealed from heaven through the Holy Spirit, then, what then? Then those who previously asked for it turn a deaf ear, because it does not come as they expected.

And we can all bear this in mind. None of us is God's secret counsellor. None of us can tell Him what to do or how to do it. He is God. Let the work of His hands be entrusted to Him. He knows what He is doing, even in these days. Blessed is everyone who shares in His work.

Here is another passage concerning the name of the Lord, from Luke 24:47, well known to you all. Perhaps I shall read it out after all, as usual, so that everyone has the exact text, Luke 24, verse 47. Here it says:

[47] ***And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.***

[48] ***And ye are witnesses of these things.***

God has witnesses on earth. In the prophet Isaiah, the Lord God says: ***"Ye are my witnesses, and my servant whom I have chosen."*** [Isa 43:10] In the New Testament, the Lord says: ***"Ye are my witnesses."*** [Act 1:8] Beloved, we bear witness to the Word of life, to what we have seen and heard. [1Joh 1:1] As John wrote in his letter at that time: Even today the forgiveness of sins is not conferred through any religious ritual, but is preached in the name of the Lord. And all who through faith in the finished work of redemption accept what God has given them, may thank him for it and experience what he has accomplished and bestowed.

Thinking back to last night, I return to the two scriptures that our beloved brother Graf read. It makes no difference who reads them. What matters is that we hear it, hear it properly, and that we understand that it is not the preachers standing up here who are saying something, but as I already put it last night, the connection is not preacher-congregation-congregation-preacher. The connection is established with God through the sermon, and we sense that the Lord speaks from heaven through his Word which is preached on earth, and at that moment awe and the fear of God come upon us. And as the prophet Isaiah says in one passage, "***those who tremble at the thought of your word***", not fear of punishment, but awe of the living God. [Isa 66:2]

The scripture from Micah 4, we have all read it together. I would like to read it once more, Micah 4, verse 5:

[5] ***For all people will walk everyone in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.***

This is a decision of far-reaching significance, whatever anyone else may decide for themselves, the people of God know only one decision, and that is this one. Let all

peoples, let all nations and denominations, let them all walk in their own name or in the name of their gods, let them walk as they please. We who have become God's own, we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.

If this comes to pass, then we too will experience the power of this name more and more. It must come to pass for all of us that the proclamation of the Word and our lives draw ever closer together until complete harmony is achieved. And we believe that God in his faithfulness is still at work today to bring about this desire within us, so that he may then bring it to fulfilment. And as I have said often enough, if God is to bring something to completion in a person, then he must first be allowed to begin. At some point a start must be made if completion is to come. And if there are people amongst us today with whom God has not yet been able to begin, may it be granted by his grace today, that each one may seek and find a connection with God and then consecrate themselves to the Lord and place themselves at his disposal.

Let us also read the scripture from Joshua chapter 24 and then turn our attention to the times in which we live. [Jos 24] Joshua 24, I believe it was verse 15, that was read. I shall read it again now:

[15] ***And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.***

If we apply this to our own time, back then it was still the case that the father was the head of the household; the decision he made applied to the whole household. There was no talk yet of self-determination or any of the things one hears about today. Back then the wife had her place, the husband his, and the children theirs as well. The divine order, as I said recently, still held true until almost 10, 15, or 20 years ago. Back then the family was still a family. If a marriage wasn't working out perfectly, matters were sorted out within the marriage itself. People didn't air everything in public. The children stayed at home. The family was still a family.

When we look at the world today, who is better placed to judge than us who belong to a previous generation? What has happened to the current generation? Children want to be independent. Daughters rent their own flats. They no longer want to stay at home under their parents' care and supervision. I personally know families where daughters have set up their own households. Others move out so they can be left to their own devices.

Somehow, the order that prevailed for almost 6,000 years has been thrown out the window. Children want to fulfill their own potential. Women no longer want to be dependent on men. They want careers. They want a life of their own. They demand. And you don't even realize that families, that marriages, that society as a whole is going down the drain.

And then, one might add, as Brother Branham saw it in 1933, that women would give up their place and that this would also be a direct sign of the end times. The divine order no longer applies to the masses today, but it does apply to every believer. As we touched upon yesterday evening, whatever may happen in this world, if we consider 1 Timothy 4, 2 Timothy 3 and 4 and all the passages that speak of the end times, then this cannot refer to the called out church, but to the unbelieving world. Perhaps we shall read these scriptures very briefly, namely 1 Timothy chapter 4, verse 1:

[1] ***Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.***

But specifically 2 Timothy chapter 3, from verse 1:

[1] ***This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.***

[2] ***For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,***

[3] ***Without natural affection...***

And so on.

The whole list goes on and on. Let it be said once more, this is the state of the world, not that of believing families, nor that of the church of the living God. What are we to make of treacherous and all the things listed here? [2Tim 3:4] We believe that the Lord has called us out, drawn us out, and pardoned us, so that we might be His own. And as the Lord said: ***"Ye are not of this world, just as I am not of this world."*** [Joh 17:14, 16]

It is, I believe, in Galatians 4, there Paul writes: ***"The Jerusalem above is the mother of us all."*** [Gal 4:26] In the opening word we read: ***"Ye have not come to a mountain from which smoke rises, where the sound of thunder is heard, but to Mount Zion."*** [Heb 12:18, 22] If we take this term, Mount Zion, "***the law will go out from Jerusalem, and instruction from Mount Zion***", this is already written in the prophet Isaiah. [Isa 2:3] God has a place on earth, and that is His church, in which He can reveal His name, His Word and His will. And we must take to heart and understand that we must now submit to and conform to this divine order.

The Lord might put the question to all of us that He once put to Job. I would like to read it, Job 38, as you know, there was a back and forth between Job and his friends who made life difficult for him, but then in chapter 38, the Lord calls him to account, here we read, verse 33:

[33] ***Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?***

We have read that we must not reject the one who speaks to us from heaven [Heb 12:25]. Here a man of God, a tried and tested man of God, from whom everyone turned away, and whose friends criticized him, whose wife said to him: ***"Curse God and die,"*** [Job 2:9] and so on, this man is asked: ***"Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven?"*** [Job 38:33] People have their own rules, there are rules everywhere, in road traffic rules can be found everywhere on earth, then within churches and denominations there are certain rules regarding what is to be believed and taught. Here is the question: ***"Do you know the laws that apply in heaven?"*** [Job 38:33]

When I read the word "apply" here, I think of Revelation 14, verse 6, where it is written that "***the everlasting gospel will be preached to all nations and tongues.***" What is the everlasting gospel? That what was preached at the very beginning, at the birth of the New Testament church, this applies for all eternity, and it must remain so from beginning to end. This then is a point on which we will not compromise, because God has spoken and has left His word as binding through the apostles and prophets.

In Job 42, the first two verses. Job 42, verses 1 and 2:

[1] ***I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.***

A magnificent testimony. This man of God recognizes the Lord as the Almighty, for whom nothing he has set out to do is beyond his power. If he wishes to lead his people through the Red Sea, then he is able to part it, so that the water stands on the right and left, as if cemented, like a wall, like a barrier. [Exo 14:21-22] Let the unbelievers mock us about this, and say: "You are foolish enough to believe that." As I have said on several occasions, today the true believers are the fools in the eyes of the unbelievers. But then the tide will turn, and those who are fools today will then be the wise ones, who will be allowed to enter into the presence of the Lord and will be with Him forever.

We have the faith within us that God has wrought through His Word and through His Spirit. Should the Almighty God, who created heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, should He not be able to divide it? God is Almighty, blessed and praised be His holy name. He accomplishes what He has set out to do and needs not ask anyone's permission.

I would like to continue reading from Deuteronomy 29, Deuteronomy 29. Here in the last verse are the words, and then on to chapter 30, Deuteronomy 29, verse 29, and then from verse 1 in chapter 30:

[29] ***The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.***

Chapter 30 verse 1 then brings the lesson for Israel, but at the same time for us as

well. I don't usually read much from the Bible, after all everyone can read it in their own Bible, but let me read a few verses here. Deuteronomy 30, verse 1:

[1] ***And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,***

[2] ***And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.***

This is not just about hearing the words, it is not just about faith, but also about obedience, namely doing what God has said in His Word, and thus becoming doers of the Word. [Jam 1:22] In connection with this, the Lord has given a promise, which is found in verse 3:

[3] ***That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.***

We live in a time, in a generation, in which two things are indeed unfolding in parallel, as we have also emphasized on several occasions, the gathering of the people of Israel from all peoples, tongues, and nations, and their return to the land of their fathers, to the promised land, a Bible prophecy being fulfilled before our very eyes. In the same way, the church of the living God is being gathered from all peoples, tongues, and nations, from all denominations and faith traditions, to the Lord, back to the Word of God, to receive true instruction, and then to submit to God in obedience, so that He may turn the tide of events, bestow fresh blessings, and confirm His Word.

In verse 4 we read:

[4] ***If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee.***

They may be at the ends of the earth, some were in Zurich, others have heard, as brother Goldner told us, how Operation Solomon took place, and some fifteen thousand Jews were flown out of Ethiopia. What is happening in our own day? God has said: ***"O East, give them up, and North, do not hold them back, let My sons return home."*** [Isa 43:6] And they are returning home. God uses earthly governments, God can use diplomacy, but God does everything so that Scripture may be fulfilled. How He does this, as we have read, is His own business. Job said: ***"Nothing is too hard for You."*** [Job 42:2] Whether He uses jets, whether He uses diplomats, whatever, our hearts rejoice and exult, for we know, once the time of grace for the New Testament church has come to an end, God will turn His full attention to His people Israel.

And the two prophets will not preach in Moscow, nor in Washington, nor in Beijing, nor anywhere else. [Rev 11:3] They will prophesy in Jerusalem for three and a half years. And where God speaks, there must be the people to whom he wishes to speak.

It is exactly the same in these days. If we wish to hear the Word of God revealed from heaven in these days, then we must go to where it is proclaimed. And I would like to emphasize that no one should now refer to any particular person. Forget all the prophets and apostles, as we have said, but remember the Word of the Lord. And if, by grace, we have been deemed worthy to believe and proclaim his revealed Word given from heaven in this place, then we need not apologize for it, but must thank God from the bottom of our hearts, for he has done great things for us by his grace.

What fault was it of the prophets that they became God's mouthpieces? Did not one of them say: ***"The Lord took me from tending the sheep"***? Another said: ***"I am no prophet at all. I grow mulberries and figs"*** [Am 7:14-15] and so on. Do read it for yourselves. But the Lord called them, spoke to them, and sent them, and they proclaimed his Word. The same thing happened in our days.

God adheres to the order he has established for the Kingdom of God. He does nothing without first revealing his secret to his servants, the prophets. [Am 3:7] And someone might say very humbly: "But all that has already happened." Interesting. If everything has already happened, why do we still come together?

For some, everything has already taken place in the New Testament or the Old Testament. Without them realizing that God's work on earth continues until its completion in the same way as he has always carried it out on earth. He has never chosen a particular group, never a denomination. And when some gathered together, they were still possessed by a lying spirit, although they said: "Thus saith the Lord," God had not spoken.

Then the one whom the Lord had called was called. And he said: ***"I have seen Israel scattered like sheep that have no shepherd."*** But he was able to say: ***"I have seen the Lord on his throne with the heavenly host, at his right hand and at his left."*** [1Kin 22:17, 19] The prophet was on earth and heard the conversation in heaven. He saw the glory of God. He had certainty, not imagination, not conjecture. He had the "Thus saith the Lord."

I am grateful to God for Brother Branham's ministry in our day. And anyone who has heard the Word of God in this place over all these years knows full well that we preach neither Moses nor Abraham, neither Peter nor Paul, let alone Brother Branham, but that we preach Jesus Christ as the crucified one who died for us, arose again, ascended into heaven, and will return, our Lord and Savior. But we are destined to receive the Word freshly revealed from heaven, this ancient Word, nothing outside the Bible, everything within the Bible, just as it has been revealed, and to believe it with all our hearts. And I dare to say, whoever is favored by God in these days will have the spiritual ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches,

not what preachers object to, but what the Spirit says to the churches. [Rev 2, Rev 3]

Now we must briefly turn to the subject of baptism. Yesterday evening Brother Russ announced that there would be a baptism today, and the point was made that all those who have not yet been baptized biblically in the name of the Lord will thus have an opportunity to be baptized biblically. Beloved, even if someone says: "God has blessed me, God has been with me," millions can say that God has blessed them.

If we consider the Pentecostal movement alone across the whole world, there are on the west coast of America, in the area stretching from Los Angeles up to San Francisco and down to San Diego, there are between 6 and 8 million people of the full gospel. Outwardly they are all baptized in the Spirit, they all speak in tongues, and yet they all go their own ways, and pay no heed to biblical teaching or to baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. Indeed, they even say it is, well, I'd rather not use that expression right now. In any case, some go so far as to attribute it to the devil.

Beloved, we are living in days when the Spirit of God is at work, and that is not disputed here, it is fully acknowledged and endorsed. The Spirit of God is at work throughout the whole earth, the Spirit of God is at work. And this charismatic work, as you know, has in recent years, particularly over the last 20 years, moved directly from the Pentecostal movement into the Roman Catholic Church. Not as might usually have been the case, while the Baptists, the Methodists, the Salvation Army, all these denominations, and indeed, to a large extent, churches that adhere closely to the Bible, but directly from the Pentecostal movement, through the man whose hand I have shaken personally on several occasions, David du Plessis, a man originally from South Africa, who was there in 1951, when Brother Branham filled the huge stadium in Durban. That is to say, God filled the stadium.

In any case, there were, what was it, 300,000 or 400,000 people listening to the Word of God, and Brother Branham did say that some 30,000 people dedicated their lives to God in a single evening, after those vast crowds saw the confirmation of the Word on the platform. But the thing is, David du Plessis' brother was at times Brother Branham's translator, from English into Afrikaans, and so there was a connection there. David du Plessis left South Africa, followed Brother Branham to the United States, thereby gaining access to all the renowned full gospel preachers, and then became, as the whole world and the history books call him, Mr. Pentecost.

The word Pentecost actually means "the 50th day." It refers to Pentecost, to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and it was this man with whom I held meetings in 1964 at MacTernan's in Rome, in a large evangelical congregation. I believe we know him, some of us know MacTernan, and there was du Plessis, and although I was the youngest, I had nevertheless been chosen as the main speaker at the main service to preach the Word, and it was David du Plessis who came up to me and said: "God bless you. He has entrusted his Word to you." But this David Du Plessis wanted to take me with him to the Vatican, because at the time he had an interview with

Cardinal Bea, then the highest-ranking German cardinal in the Vatican, and I could not yet have imagined what consequences all this would have.

Back in 1964, I hadn't yet seen or known the things that I see and know today. But this is actually how it all began.

Du Plessis had a special gift for praying for people that they might be baptized in the Holy Spirit, and it made no difference whether he went to a seminary or a convent. Everyone upon whom he laid his hands spoke in tongues, without exception. He simply had this faith and this gift from God.

But now comes this very big question: Where is the Word? The Word and the Spirit must be in harmony. Worship must take place in spirit and in truth. [Joh 4:24] But if there is no truth, only deception, what then?

And so let it be briefly noted that God has his way through all movements, whether it was the Methodists or the Baptists or the Pentecostal movement. Wherever there was a movement, God had his way. But at all times it was about the elect, not the masses, not the movement within the masses, but the little flock that was prepared to follow the Lord in obedience and faith.

It is exactly the same these days. God has his people in all movements right up to the Charismatic movement. This movement had to come. A wake-up call had to take place. Attention had to be drawn to the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit.

And I am not promising you too much here, for it is indeed written, Brother Russ read it out, "***God will once again shake heaven and earth.***" [Heb 12:26] God will bless once again. God will send the latter rain. [Joe 2:23] It will happen just before the harvest. This final outpouring of the Spirit will then come upon the true bride, upon the called-out multitude.

At present there are movements everywhere. Then it will become clear who truly follows the Lamb, so that they may receive the full blessing by grace, as I was actually about to say. This charismatic movement has run its course directly from the Pentecostal movement to the Roman Catholic Church, and in its wake all other churches have been drawn in. Not a single one has been left out. All churches and denominations.

Did you know that in our country, years ago in Lutheran seminaries, David du Plessis was already praying for Lutheran pastors to receive the baptism of the Spirit, and praying for Baptists to receive the baptism of the Spirit? Every now and then one needs a little information to know what is happening in this country, in other countries and throughout the world.

Today every journalist knows, every editor knows and the general public knows what Pentecost means, what is associated with it and so on. Everyone is well informed about everything these days.

What the world does not know is the part that God has destined for the Bride Church. They are aware of all the other movements and go along with them. But what God has promised to the Bride Church, they do not know, and that is precisely where the great difference lies.

Forgive me, but we really must now read one or two scriptures concerning baptism. There is one thing I would like to emphasize today as I have probably never done before in this place. That baptism, biblical baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is not performed to forgive sins. I would like to emphasize this very clearly.

There is a single Bible verse which the oneness people have taken and which they have not considered in conjunction with all the other verses that speak of baptism in the Bible, but have viewed in isolation. There is a teaching associated with baptism that only those who are baptized receive the forgiveness of sins through baptism. There are several million people in the USA known as the United Pentecostal Church who believe this. And anyone who is not baptized does not have forgiveness of sins. This is not a biblically grounded teaching.

The forgiveness of our sins took place when Jesus Christ, the Son of God, shed his holy blood on the cross at Golgotha. Since that time repentance and the forgiveness of sins have been proclaimed in his name to all nations, and those who have received the forgiveness of sins are baptized as a sign of that forgiveness. So that they may demonstrate, "I believe that my sins are forgiven, and in this way I enter into a covenant of a good conscience with God."

I read the scripture from Acts 22, verse 16. Acts 22, verse 16:

[16] ***And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.***

It does not say here, "and wash away thy sins, through baptism." That is read into it, but it is not actually there. One must read it as it is written.

"***And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized.***"

Amen.

[16] ***Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.***

Quite clearly and plainly, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, shall receive forgiveness; and whoever has received forgiveness in his name, by virtue of the sacrifice of Calvary, is then baptized into his name. [Rom 10:13] Whoever has died with Christ is then buried with him, as Paul explains in his letter to the Romans. Romans, chapter 6, Romans 6, verse 3:

[3] ***Know ye not that so many of us, as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?***

[4] ***Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.***

[5] ***For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.***

[6] ***Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.***

[7] ***For he that is dead is freed from sin.***

So the sequence is fixed and so are the experiences. Repent, that is turn back, be converted, turn to God and come to him, all ye ends of the earth.

[38] ***Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.***

It could not be stated more clearly in Holy Scripture.

I mean, as far as baptism is concerned, it is clear, anyone who has not been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ has not yet been baptized according to the Bible. And no matter how much someone twists and turns the matter, they may say, "It is written in Matthew 28:19." It is written, and thank God for that. One need only say, "It is written again," and one must compare what is written with what is written again and with what has been explained, and bring them into harmony.

One cannot use one scripture against another. One can only harmoniously connect the scriptures with one another. That is how the apostles did it, and that is how we do it today.

They understood Matthew 28 well, understood the name by which God revealed Himself in the New Testament as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and knew that it is the name Jesus. Father is what one is. Son is also a title, and so is Holy Spirit. It is about the name, and baptize them into the name, or in the name.

The Greek word "eis", which appears there, can mean in, and can mean into. It can mean both. Some people argue about this. I have no time for such arguments.

We are baptized into the name of the Lord, baptized upon the name of the Lord. We do know what this is all about, not merely the wording of words, but having died with Christ, being buried with him. Immersion is meant to symbolize being buried with him. Being raised out of the water is meant to illustrate that the old self has died and been buried with Christ, and that now a new self has been raised with Christ, so that it may be said, ***"It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."*** [Gal 2:20]

May God grant us all the grace, even to us who were baptized long ago, to experience this anew, to see anew that we have died with Christ and been buried with him, so that from now on we may no longer live for ourselves, but for him who died for us.

May God bestow his blessing upon his Word, and may each of us say from the heart, "Let everyone else walk as they please, but I wish to serve and follow the Lord my God, regardless of what everyone else does." Blessed are all those who can still say, ***"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*** [Jos 24:15] I too would like to do so. We all would like to do so. And may God grant us the grace to do so. Praise be to his holy name. Amen.