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That on that glorious morning everything old will truly have been left behind us and that we shall enter the New Jerusalem, not with long faces, not burdened with worries, but free and joyful, rejoicing and exulting forever. These hours, which the Lord grants us here, are after all hours of preparation for that glorious day, for that glorious morning, which God has prepared for us and which is indeed very near.

Anyone who has listened to the news from time to time over the last weeks will certainly have become familiar with the word "irreversible". I had never heard this Word before, I only know it from the English, because it is written in the epistle to the Hebrews, but in German we have the proverb "the wheel of history cannot be turned back". The entire course of events is irreversible. When we hear the British, who can look back on 350 years of democracy that was unique on earth, they must relinquish their rights so that the European Parliament may take precedence over all other rights. All resistance is futile, the wheel of history is firmly established and its course is simply irreversible.

On the one hand, we might say: "Oh God, must it really be this way?" And on the other hand, we know what the holy scriptures say about it. The prophet Daniel saw the four world empires succeed one another and he saw the fourth, which particularly caught his attention, as the Roman Empire, and it must now indeed arise again before our very eyes. All the other empires, the Third Reich, collapsed, the British Empire collapsed, the Soviet Union no longer exists. All those great empires have been reduced to insignificance so that this one world empire may arise, just as foretold in Bible prophecy.

And the Pope, who after all shapes world politics, has indeed said it was the Catholic faith that once shaped Europe, and it will be so again. He makes no secret of it whatsoever. Who and what shapes Europe should be left to the Lord and the course of history. For us in this place, the question is to discover who shapes us, and by what means we are shaped. We are not Europe, we are the Church of the Living God. We are not shaped by a Catholic spirit or by Catholic teachings, but by the Spirit of God within the teachings and boundaries of the Word of God.

As believers in these days, our situation is like that of the three men and the Prophet Daniel when they were in Babylonian captivity. They were in Babylon, but they did

not belong there. They bore the testimony of the Living God in their hearts. They did not defile themselves by partaking of the food of Babylon. [Dan 1:8] They were set apart and served their God with complete faithfulness.

We are truly grateful to the Lord, perhaps not grateful enough for the privileges we are allowed to enjoy, to be in the Lord's presence in these days and to hear His truly revealed original Word. And as we have already heard, that we need not, must not and do not wish to add anything to this Word, but can simply believe as Scripture says. And if we wish to give glory to God, then we must also respect and acknowledge what He does in accordance with His Word. Just as it was part of Christ's first coming that He sent a forerunner. And here one might ask, did the Lord really need a forerunner? Would He not have had the power to arrange and accomplish everything Himself? This is what He had foretold in His Word, and so it came to pass.

And whoever was not offended by this, or took it amiss, has submitted to what God was doing at that time.

We believe, unreservedly, that God also sent Brother Branham in accordance with His Word. And even if there were no promise of this in scripture, the divine confirmations are such a legitimization as has not been seen on earth since the days of Jesus Christ. And anyone who doubts this still has the opportunity after all to examine our words. They can after all experience the sermons and the services, and especially the healing services all over again.

Thank God for technology. Thank God that we have cassettes and audio tapes, so that we can play back the sermons that were preached and also have the entire sequence of events and what really took place through the gift of revelation, through the power of God, by people being told where they come from, who they are, what they have, how many testimonies there are. And when we then consider that people who have not the slightest proof of God sit in judgment over someone whom God has confirmed from heaven, such people are not of sound mind nor of sound heart. They lack the necessary respect and reverence for the Almighty God.

In the Kingdom of God, we are not dealing with Moses or Elijah, with Abraham or Joshua, not with Paul or Peter, not with Brother Branham or others, but with God Himself, who sent His servants at all times, who in all faithfulness, by divine calling, represented Him; holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. [2Pet 1:21] And we are grateful to the Lord that He has deemed us as the most wretched of all children of men, worthy to follow in the footsteps of these men of God, and by His grace to pass on what was revealed to them.

Anyone who had been with us in the office over the past few days, particularly on Friday, would have seen a large number of computers, two for the Romanian language, others for other Slavic languages, and they would have seen many other things. It's good that you don't know everything, for some of you have worries. You

know of course what worries most people have. How is all this to be paid for? That's not your concern, is it? It's already been paid for.

Have we ever said a word about money in this place? Never. And we won't do so until the very end. That is an agreement with the Lord, my God, that money will never be mentioned. And we can bear witness that He has provided wonderfully for everything. There has always been more than was needed and so it will remain until the very end.

So you can go ahead and do your Christmas shopping with confidence, continue to trust in the Lord without worry and simply give Him what belongs to Him anyway, right? And that will be enough, He will take care of the rest. Rejoice that it is being translated into various languages and published.

Why has God arranged it so that the German-speaking people come from the Soviet Union, from Poland, from Czechoslovakia, from Romania and from other countries? Why has it all been arranged this way so that God's message can be published in these languages? God has arranged it this way. This was not our plan. It was the all-wise God who planned everything in such a marvellous way and is bringing to pass in our day.

Did not God say through the same prophet Amos when he said "***He does nothing unless He reveals his secret to His servants the prophets***"? [Amo 3:7] Did he not say that "***He would send a famine, not a famine for water and bread, but a famine for hearing the Word of God***"? [Amo 8:11] And here in this place it is not stories that are proclaimed, but the precious everlasting Word of God. And may this morning's service also serve to ensure that God comes into his own and that we come to our right, that we may be drawn nearer to him and allowed to unite ourselves more intimately with him and that his counsel may become even clearer to us and that we may thus press on in faith with the Lord.

Last Saturday I was handed a note from a sermon I delivered on the 7th of September 1986. I shall read just a few lines: "The messenger has been taken, yet the message remains with us. This message foreruns the second coming of Christ. What is the nature of all this? Some new doctrine or religion? No and no again. The message that has come from God is meant to lead us back to God. To bring us into complete harmony with the Word, so that the Bridegroom and the Bride may truly be united in the Spirit. To be united in the Spirit even now, so that the Bridegroom through the Bride may do the final act and the work may be brought to completion."

Oh yes, we believe that we are not fools. We may perhaps be regarded as such by others. Forgive me for saying this now. It doesn't really quite fit here. Well, I shall spare myself the trouble. It belongs in the English-speaking world.

In any case, we have said it often enough here already.

Even if we are temporarily regarded and classified by others as followers of a man, as such running after a man, we believe that we do not follow a man, but say, as

Paul was able to say: ***"Follow me, just as I follow Christ."*** [1Cor 11:1]

He walked in the footsteps of the Lord and had the revealed Word of the hour. And so we believe that in these days we are not fools running after just any cause, but those favored by God, who have been permitted to recognize the day and the hour, the message and the messenger, so that we may thus be incorporated into God's irreversible work of redemption.

This sphere too is irreversible, just as the political sphere is irreversible. As you know, if I may briefly mention this, before we turn to our Word reflection, you know that politically speaking the focus is now increasingly on Israel. And I must honestly admit that when I heard the news that an Egyptian now holds the presidency of the UN, which is after all the most powerful organization on earth, a sense of melancholy came over me and I thought to myself: "How will things proceed from here? Who will still stand by Israel's side?" Even the United States, which has always taken a stand and defended its position, it's clear that Israel will ultimately be left on its own. But then when I read that this man is a Coptic Christian, the most widespread Christian denomination in the Middle East, that his wife is Jewish and that he is from Lebanon, and that he played a key role in shaping and contributing to the Camp David agreement alongside Carter and Sadat at the time, and that he is well disposed towards the people of Israel. And when Shamir then said: "We are well disposed towards this man," I rejoiced inwardly and thought: "May God's blessing rest upon everything in this instance too," for one thing is clear and the Pope said he will only make a journey to Jerusalem once the negotiations have been successful. Ha, he wants to see success. This man, you must understand me here, Christ within me, must oppose the Antichrist. That is not my decision; it is a divine decision, which no human being can change.

And so let us trust the Lord, for Scripture must also be fulfilled, that the covenant between the Vatican and Israel will be made. [Dan 9:27] And we said here, in one of the recent meetings, that the rapture of the church, the bride church, and the making of the covenant, that is the Vatican's political recognition of Israel, will occur at the same time. We shall write about this and make the details known in due course, but that is simply how it will be.

The course of history has been so clearly illuminated and set out in the Word of God, that once it has been revealed to us by God, even a fool cannot go astray. [Isa 35:8] Things are very clear in Scripture. One simply needs to have access to it. One must find them and then see in what way they are being fulfilled.

May I ask that we turn to John 3 and begin our study of the Word there. John 3, here the forerunner of our Lord bears witness, specifically in John 3, from verse 27:

[27] ***John answered and said: A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.***

[28] ***Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but***

that I am sent before him.

Important is here: as his forerunner. We do not proceed or follow just anything. Men of God and the message of God, as Brother Branham was also told on the 11th of June 1933: **"This message will forerun the second coming of Christ, just as the message of John the Baptist foreran the first coming of Christ."**

Here this man described himself as a forerunner, and that is indeed what he was. Now he gets to the point and writes in verse 29:

[29] ***He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.***

[30] ***He must increase, but I must decrease.***

[31] ***He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.***

[32] ***And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.***

If we were to stop here, we might as well close the Bible. Even John could have stopped. If no one accepts his testimony, what is the point of the sermon? But then comes the explanation in verse 33:

[33] ***He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.***

Do you see what this is all about? It is about the scriptural divine testimony that is brought forth at the appointed time in connection with the kingdom of God. And whoever accepts this, in turn confirms that God is true and that he fulfills his promised Word and carries out what he has set out to do.

Whoever in these days, and let this be said with the utmost certainty, whoever in these days cannot confirm and accept what God is now doing in accordance with his Word, has not yet confirmed God as true on their part. We all know that God is true, but his truthfulness must of course be affirmed by his people, in that we believe that he is the true God and eternal life, and that he has spoken in truth, and that we in the same truth receive his Word, and thereby confirm that he has not spoken in vain, but has spoken to us, and that we have understood and received what he said.

Let me read this verse once more: "***He that hath received his testimony...***" [Joh 3:33]

The verse before it reads: ***"And no man receiveth his testimony."*** [Joh 3:32]

By nature, of their own accord, no human being can do this; it must be granted to us by God.

[33] ***He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.***

In Romans Paul writes: ***"Let God be true, but every man a liar."*** [Rom 3:4]

The true God has spoken, and his Words are reliable, true, and certain. Blessed is the man who does not exalt himself above God.

And there in his preface to the book of Daniel, Martin Luther used one of the most powerful words in reference to 2 Thessalonians 2. He had after all always had the papacy in his sights, much as I do. There was scarcely a sermon in which he did not touch upon it to some extent. And then he actually writes there, that the man of sin, the son of perdition, could not exalt himself above God anywhere in heaven, so as to be somewhere above him there. [2The 2:3-4] He writes, this man of sin exalts himself above the revealed, written God, namely above the Word of God.

Have we understood that? What a revelation this man had, even back then. "***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***" [Joh 1:1]

So whoever places himself above God's Word and exalts himself, saying: "I determine and declare what it means," is rising up and exalting himself above God himself, who became flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory. [Joh 1:14]

In John 5 we read, John chapter 5, verse 32, John 5:32:

[32] ***There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.***

[33] ***Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.***

[34] ***But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.***

The Lord meant to say: "I do not actually need the testimony of a human being, but so that you may be saved, John was sent to bear witness to me." For he did indeed say: ***"Behold, this is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*** [Joh 1:29]

Verse 35 reads:

[35] ***He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.***

There are also those who speak and preach of the evening light, and they take pleasure in it without returning to the Word and coming into conformity with it.

Then it continues from verse 36:

[36] ***But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.***

It was not merely words, but the divine deeds, that is, what actually took place, likewise bore witness to the divine sending.

Verse 37 reads:

[37] ***And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.***

[38] ***And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.***

And then comes the important verse:

[39] ***Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.***

[40] ***And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.***

This too is a very important passage here and tells us a great deal. We can search the Scriptures, but with what aim do we search them? I believe Brother Russ has hit the nail on the head today. Most people read the Holy Scriptures to make them fit their own needs, their own views, their own teachings, in short to handle the Scriptures in such a way that they fit into their own framework. And that is precisely what we must not do. The opposite must happen.

We must submit ourselves to the Word of God and ensure that we fit into and are incorporated into the image and pattern of the Word by grace. But I believe that this is precisely why the entire correction has been carried out through the prophetic ministry in our generation, so that we may have the opportunity and be able to discern where the Word is being adapted to suit. Even the Pope quotes the passage from John 17, "***that they may all be one.***" [Joh 17:21] Yes, but do read the whole verse, do read the verses before and after it. This does not refer to a universal church or a political issue, it refers to the church of the living God. Have we understood that?

One can take Scriptures and twist them to suit, wherever and whenever one pleases. But true children of God submit to the Word, submit to correction, rebuke, and instruction, relinquishing all inner resistance, so that the Lord, by His grace, may have His way.

I would like to read a few more scriptures, mainly from Hebrews. For there the apostle has indeed set out something marvelous, and there is scarcely anything comparable in the whole Bible. When it comes to applying an Old Testament perspective to the New Testament, every chapter, every epistle has its place. And let us read from Hebrews chapter 2, Hebrews 2:1-4:

[1] ***Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.***

So let us hold fast to the true Word of God: come what may, the Word will remain forever. All gifts may cease when perfection comes, and so on, but the Word remains forever. [1Cor 13:8-10] Let us hold fast to what we have heard in truth from the Word of God.

Verse 2:

[2] ***For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;***

[3] ***How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;***

[4] ***God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?***

Beloved, dear brothers and sisters, we have no other choice. We trust that God will confirm His Word, just as He did in the beginning, so may He, by His grace, do so in the end. We are not among those who run after miracle workers, but we are among those who believe that God is God and still performs miracles today wherever He is believed and wherever His Word is taken at face value. God still performs miracles today, He confirms His Word.

In Hebrews chapter 4, we read verses 1 to 3, Hebrews chapter 4:1-3:

[1] ***Seeing therefore that the promise of entering into His rest*** —not in any rest, but into His rest— ***was still unfulfilled, so let us fear to make sure that none of you turns out to have been left behind.***

When I read these words, "***to be found to have been left behind***", there is the well-known passage in the Gospel of Matthew: ***"One will be taken, the other left behind."*** [Mat 24:40-41] Two in a field, one taken, one left behind. [Mat 24:40] Two on a mill, one is taken, one is left behind. [Mat 24:41] Two in one bed, one goes, one is left behind. [Luk 17:34] And here we are told that we must be anxious to ensure that none of us, none of you, turns out to have been left behind. Do you realize what this proclamation is all about?

It is not merely a matter of putting everything in order doctrinally, but of bringing those who have been called out into a right standing with God now, so that they are not left behind, but are taken up by His grace at the Lord's return to be with the Lord forever. The divine order which has been restored in the church and for the church through the proclamation is intended to have only this as its aim. This is not about arguing over what is right or wrong, correct or incorrect; that is not the point at all.

If people think that we proclaim the truths concerning the Godhead, baptism, or the Lord's Supper, that we proclaim these fundamental truths in their original form merely to provoke controversy, they are mistaken. They must be proclaimed so that the divine order may be established in the church. They must be placed upon the lampstand, so that Babylon remains where it belongs and does not continue to exist within the church of the living God.

We read on in Hebrews 4, verse 2:

[2] ***For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.***

And why not? Because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Do we realize what this is all about? The Bible truths that are proclaimed must be received and believed from the heart. Only then are they truly transfigured and revealed to us by the Spirit. Only then do we truly recognize their necessity.

Otherwise we might well think that Brother Branham too could have spared himself the trouble, as some say, of being different. After all, the other evangelists were all heading in the same direction. There was only one who went in the opposite direction. And why? He had to do it. As a forerunner, as a man of God, he had to bring the Word so that a bride church might be brought back to the Word in these last days, and thus become a true Word bride in complete harmony with the Lord.

Verse 3 states:

[3] ***For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said...***

So when we combine the Word we have heard, the divine message, with faith, firstly we thereby affirm that God is true, that He fulfills His promised Word before our very eyes, and that we believe it, so that we may be permeated by God's truthfulness, for it is written, "***and we are in the true One.***" [1Joh 5:20] Yes, how do we enter into the true One? With a bundle full of lies and full of traditions that have nothing to do with the true One or with the true Word? No, the sealing with the Holy Spirit can only take place where everything else is left outside and only the divine is present in a person's heart, so as to seal this divine content, this divine substance. And that is why it is also written that we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Have we not already gone through this several times here? The word of promise, the children of promise, the Spirit of promise, in other words, a complete harmony of the church with the Word of God, guided and led by the Holy Spirit in these days.

Let me read on from Hebrews 9, Hebrews chapter 9, here we read verse 14 and verse 28. Hebrews 9, verse 14 and verse 28:

[14] ***How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal***

Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Here we are told, "***through the power of the eternal Spirit***", we know that our Lord was both God and man. In spirit he was God, in the flesh he was man. He had to be able to die, and in order to die he had to become man, but he also had to swallow up death and defeat and overcome hell and Satan. And no human being could do that; for that he had to be the Lord, our God. He offered himself, "***through the eternal Spirit, without spot to God, to purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.***" [Heb 9:14]

Verse 28 states:

[28] ***So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.***

He came once to die for our sins and to offer himself as a sacrifice, and he will come again to take home into his glory those who have accepted this forgiveness, this grace, this salvation, and have been cleansed from sin. He did indeed say: ***"I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again to take you unto myself, so that you may be where I am."*** [Joh 14:2-3]

Just two or three more scriptures from Hebrews 11 concerning the heroes of faith. We have after all heard of faith. The word that is preached must be believed. ***"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"*** [Rom 10:17], thanks be to God. And as long as the preaching comes from the Word of God, God will watch over it and bring about in the believing listeners what was proclaimed in the Word.

Here, in Hebrews 11, we also have the only chapter in the entire Bible where the heroes of faith are listed along with all their great deeds. It begins after all with the very first person to offer a sacrifice to God, Abel. [Gen 4:4; Heb 11:4] It continues with Enoch, with Noah, with Abraham, Moses, it goes on and on. We are shown how faithful God was to those who professed their faith in him, no matter when or where it was. I would like to read verse 3 here and then a few verses further on:

[3] ***Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.***

The wise men of this world do indeed try to explain it, and we know what theories have been put forward, one after another, and all of them overlook God. We believe as it is written here, and we also recognize through faith that God spoke the world into existence out of nothing through his Almighty Word. "***God spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.***" [Psa 33:9] So we read in Holy Scripture, verse 5:

[5] ***By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him.***

There is a sermon in which Brother Branham says: **"Faith is a revelation."**

Have we read that? Have we thought about it? Faith is a revelation. Then we read, "***all men have not faith.***" [2The 3:2]

When we are talking here about truly living faith wrought by the Spirit, then we are talking about divine revelation. It is revealed to you personally by God. It is not a human being who reveals it to you. It is not a human being who convinces you or persuades you. You hear the Word, and as the Word is believed, revelation comes. Revelation about God, revelation about all the Bible truths, it all comes through revelation. ***"Flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven,"*** said Jesus to Peter in Matthew 16. [Mat 16:17] And then Paul writes that God wants to give us the Spirit of revelation and enlightened eyes of the heart, so that we may see what God wants to show us. [Eph 1:17-18]

We read on in Hebrews 11, verse 7:

[7] ***By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house...***

And now it comes:

[7] ***...by the which faith he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.***

When we do what God has commanded us in his Word, we are already passing judgment on this world. Paul writes to the Corinthians: ***"Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?"*** [1Cor 6:2] This generation too will appear before the judgment seat, and what has been proclaimed in our time will be held against them. As I said before, today people look down on us as outsiders who simply do not fit in anywhere. Brother Branham put it so beautifully: **"Better to be cast out of here and thrown in there than to stay in here and be out there."**

God leads his own out of everything, but he leads them into his own. Whether Abraham, Noah, or Moses, all the servants of God did what the Lord had commanded them. Here it says: ***"By faith Noah, being warned of God"*** [Heb 11:7] — not because he wanted to; when he was given the commission, when he received the instruction, that is when he began, and then he was concerned to do what God had commanded him, and through such active faith, he did not merely preach, he did what God had commanded him and made himself a laughingstock to everyone. But through such faith, which others mocked, he passed judgment on the mocking world.

And you know, we have already mentioned this here too, when our Lord Jesus died on the cross of Calvary, he did descend into the lower parts of the earth. [Eph 4:9] We read this in several scriptures, particularly in the epistle of Peter. [1Pet 3:19-20]

And there it says, "***he preached to those from the days of Noah.***" Why not to the others, but only to those from the days of Noah? Look it up for yourselves. Oh, how we have tried to put this upon the lampstand here.

Back then there was the great intermingling, the man of God was also abandoned by the sons of God. Not only the line of Cain, but also the line of Seth paid no heed to what this man of God did and preached. On the contrary, they intermarried amongst themselves. [Gen 6:2] And God said: ***"The end of all flesh has come before me."*** [Gen 6:13]

In these days, too, the man of God has been mocked. For back then God sent a prophet before judgment came at the time of that terrible intermingling. The same thing is happening again now, for our Lord said: ***"As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days when the Son of man is revealed."*** [Mat 24:37; Luk 17:26] Now everything is intermingling. Have we not noticed this? Yes, indeed. And who has become a laughingstock? But believe me, the judgment has not been pronounced by a human being, rather God pronounces the judgment by empowering the people he commissions to do, even when it seems impossible, what he has commanded them.

Then let us read another truly wonderful word from Moses, Hebrews 11, from verse 24:

[24] ***By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;***

[25] ***Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;***

[26] ***Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for his eyes were fixed on the reward.***

Hallelujah!

Beloved, yesterday evening we read that we are to look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are unseen, and here we are told that he had his eyes fixed on the heavenly reward. [2Cor 4:18] He remained at home for only three months, then he was abandoned. [Exo 2:2-3] At three months old he could not determine who would rescue him from the water or where he would end up, but when the time came to make a decision, he made the right one. Perhaps I should read the verse aloud for the sake of those who may not be so familiar with it. Hebrews 11, verse 23:

[23] ***By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.***

But then they did put him in a basket and set him upon the water. And lo and behold, he came to where he belonged, was instructed in all the wisdom of the

Egyptians, so that he might instruct others. But as the time of the promise drew near, that is how the man of God explains it in Acts chapter 7, verse 17, Acts 7, verse 17:

[17] ***But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham...***

You see, the time must come for everything, and we believe that the time has come.

[26] ***He regarded the reproach of Christ as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for his eyes were fixed on the reward.***

Beloved, we too must, as we look up to God, fix our eyes on the unseen and not think: "What will people say? What will they think of us?"

I would really like to say a big thank you to Brother Schmidt here today and present him with a bouquet of flowers. As I mentioned yesterday, we travelled through part of what was still the Soviet Union, but I simply must say that I was deeply moved when I saw and heard, whether at the airport, here or there, how he spoke to people left and right, how he shared with them what had become so important to him, the tract "Vision 7000" in Russian, which he carried with him and handed out, nor did he remain silent about what God has been doing in our days. Where I perhaps hadn't said enough, he filled in the gaps. And that was also one of the reasons why I said: "I have come to appreciate and love him even more."

Dear brothers and sisters, we are not ashamed of the things God has entrusted to us. Even if we have to endure contempt, one day all this will be over. And then we will no longer be the despised ones, but will be with the Lord on His throne, reigning and ruling with Him. After the marriage supper, we shall indeed return with Him so that we may then share in His reign.

May these examples, as we have considered them, be it from the Gospel of John concerning the testimony of John the Baptist, or God's testimony concerning Christ; we could now turn to the Book of Revelation, where John writes he now bears witness to what he has seen and heard. [Rev 1:2] The word "testimony" is found throughout the entire Testament. Even in the Old Testament, God said in Isaiah 43: ***"Ye are my witnesses."*** [Isa 43:12] Just as the Lord said in Acts 1, verse 8: ***"Ye are my witnesses."*** And Peter writes: ***"We have been eyewitnesses."*** [2Pet 1:16] John writes the same: ***"What we have seen and heard, this we bear witness to you."*** [1Joh 1:2-3] We too are witnesses to what God has done and what He is doing now. And if we find grace in His sight, we shall also share in what He will do by grace in bringing His work to completion.

Let us ensure that for our part we confirm the divine testimony, that we do not portray God as a liar and ignore His Word, but that we agree with God and say: "You have promised it, You have fulfilled it, we believe the testimony of Thy Word, we for our part affirm that You are true." How many scriptures could we read? Revelation 15: He is righteous and true in His ways and His judgments. [Rev 15:3]

God is true, and we have heard the true testimony of God. His Word, His promises, everything is just as true and trustworthy as He Himself.

Let us too do our part in these days to honor God through biblical faith, so that this faith may become a living revelation to us, not topics for debate, but being led in and transfigured by the Holy Spirit. And then we too shall have no need to worry, but shall trust in the Lord and look to the invisible as though we see Him, just as Abraham did, as Moses did, as all the servants of God did, and as the whole people of the Lord did in the Old and New Testament. We are incorporated, for our part, into the divine work of redemption. And as I probably said yesterday evening, we walk in the footsteps which the Lord has left for us.

We follow no man. We follow our beloved Lord, who has redeemed us, saved us, and reconciled us to Himself. We believe Him. We follow Him in these days. Blessed are all those who can now testify that God is true.

Let me conclude with this thought. In the days of Jesus, there were those who said: ***"We have Moses, we have Abraham."*** [Joh 8:33, 39; Joh 9:28] And the Lord said: ***"If that were so, you would love me, for these people, these men, have borne witness to me."*** [Joh 5:46; Joh 8:42] The point then is that in these days we for our part should affirm God in His truthfulness and say: "Lord, You have fulfilled Your Word in truth, You have granted us the grace to believe Your testimony, so that we are no longer found apart from You, but indeed in God's cause, in the kingdom of God, in the Word of God, yes, in the Lord Himself." And so that everyone may know that it is written, I would like to read it out loud to us.

From 1 John 5, verse 20. 1 John 5, verse 20:

[20] ***And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.***

As we said earlier, in the true one there can only be truth. And if we are in Him, then we are in His Word. We have left behind all traditions, human opinions, and statutes. We have been washed by the washing of water by the Word, so that we might be cleansed and sanctified in the Word of truth, and thus set apart and prepared for the glorious day. So we have read in Hebrews: ***"The message was of no benefit to them, because it was not mixed with faith."*** [Heb 4:2] God's greatest message will only help those who believe it and to whom it is revealed by the Spirit. That is the truth. These are the true words of God. The moment this divine revelation comes, it is done with us once and for all.

And I hope that God will also use this brief reflection on the Word to transfigure us through His Spirit, to lead us deeper into His counsel, and to grant us what we need to experience personally, the preparation and completion, so that on that day none of us may be found to have been left behind.

The disappointment at the rapture will not after all be amongst the unbelievers. It will be amongst the believers who are left behind. They will be disappointed. And that is why the apostle writes: ***"...so that none of you may be found to have been left behind."*** [Heb 4:1] If this message is to forerun the second coming of Christ and the bride is to be called out and prepared, then we believe that this is indeed what is happening, that we have not merely preached, but that we have preached for this ultimate purpose, namely, that the bride may be called out, prepared, and perfected under the sound of the Word of God, through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth, until we are wholly and completely in Him, the true One, who Himself is the true God and eternal life.

May God grant it, and I may say this in faith, He has already granted it to us all, by His grace. Praise be to His holy name. Amen.

Let us stand and give thanks to God.

Lord our God, we come to You, just as we are. To whom should we go? You alone, O Lord, have words of eternal life. Beloved Savior, we have heard Your Word, we believe the testimony of those whom You have sent, and we believe that You have confirmed Your Word. We believe that You are true, and that Your words are true. We receive everything that comes from You, O Lord, including the words of promise for our days, for this time, O Lord, for we are living now and wish for our part to confirm to You that we believe, believe as You have said in Scripture, believe that You are now bringing to completion what You have begun.

Beloved Lord, we see the fulfillment of the Word everywhere; may we also see this fulfillment within ourselves. Your kingdom will not come in us with observation, but it will be manifested within us. Beloved Lord, have Thine own way and will with us, O Lord. Crown us with mercy and lovingkindness; remove the veil from us all; grant us revelation through Your Spirit.

Lord, we thank You for the witnesses of faith who proved You right, who believed You, who bore Your reproach. Faithful God, bless us all. O Lord, lift up Thy countenance upon us and give us Your peace. May no one be left behind, O Lord, but may all be prepared for the glorious day of Your wonderful return. Take away everything that is not pleasing to You, everything that has no place in You, until You can reveal Yourself fully and completely.

Beloved Savior, we thank You for Your blood shed on the cross of Calvary, for reconciliation and redemption, for forgiveness, grace, and salvation. We thank You for eternal life. We thank You for Your precious and holy Word. O God, who are we, who are we that we have been deemed worthy to stand in Your holy presence, gathered together to hear Your holy Word. Faithful God, may we believe it, so that what You have promised to Your bride may come to pass in us.

Beloved Lord, we thank You that You are present, that You still speak to us, and that You Yourself will bring to completion the work You have begun. To You, the

living God, be praise and honor, glory and worship, now and forever. Hallelujah. Amen.