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Topic: Isaiah 30:12: "Thus says the Holy One of Israel: "Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon...!"

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I, too, would like to extend a very warm welcome to you all, in the precious name of the Lord, especially the large group from Slovakia. May God bless you in a special way here amongst us. Soon you will be two nations and no longer one. Things are changing so quickly these days that it is hard to keep up. But one thing is certain, whoever is a believer belongs to God's offspring. Not of different nations and designations, but one people of God who belong to the Lord. Feel at home.

We also have many greetings to pass on. Brother Etienne Genton sends his regards to everyone. He is in charge of the Italian language. Then today, too, the brothers and sisters from Marseille send us their warm greetings. They rang a little while ago. They rang from Nice recently. We have friends in the Lord everywhere.

And I think I can see our sister here, who was healed last time. God bless you. Do stand up for a moment. Born blind in one eye and regained her sight after 26 years. Do turn round, so that everyone can see you, exactly 8 weeks ago. Was it 8 weeks ago? The Lord is faithful.

This weekend is once again intended to be a time for God to speak to us through his Word and for this, his holy Word, to accomplish in us, even in these gatherings, the purpose for which it was sent. [Isa 55:11]

There is just one more thing that moves me so much here, as far as publications are concerned. I haven't taken the time for over 30 years to read anything published by the Jehovah's Witnesses, but a 30-page pamphlet did come into my hands, posing the question, "Should one believe in the Trinity?" Owing to this misunderstanding stemming from the way the Roman Catholic Church has explained and portrayed the Godhead, these people have come to the conclusion that there is only one God, but that Jesus is in no way identical with this one God. He is, let me read it to you, "*Since Jesus was created by God, he ranks second in terms of age, power, and knowledge.*" Jesus, according to the entirety of these treatises, is a creature whom God made, just as he made Lucifer, just as he made Gabriel and Michael.

And this is what is presented to people, and the number of scriptures they have

gathered here is enormous, however they have misapplied them. And without revelation, let us emphasize this once again, there is absolutely no way to fathom or know God.

We believe the testimony of Holy Scripture, and I would like to say once more here, if Jesus Christ is not Immanuel, God manifest in the flesh, if he were someone else, then I still have no relationship with God as my Father. ***"No one comes to the Father except through me."*** [Joh 14:6]

If he were a creature like Michael or Gabriel, could a creature have redeemed me, who am also a creature? Huh, I believe certainly not. All the other creatures who fell with Lucifer ended up in the abyss. No, we believe the testimony of Holy Scripture. "***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***" [Joh 1:1]

"***And all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that has been made.***" [Joh 1:3]

There are some scriptures that are very striking and compelling. Romans chapter 9, Romans chapter 9, here we read verse 5, Romans 9, verse 5:

[5] ***Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.***

1 John chapter 5, verse 20, 1 John chapter 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.***

They did not quote this verse. They did indeed quote John 17, yet failed to see or chose not to see the continuation of this thought. John 17, verse 3:

[3] ***And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.***

And the Apostle Paul tells us in several places how this sending took place. Indeed it is often described in the New Testament. I shall read just this one passage from Galatians chapter 4, verse 4, Galatians chapter 4, verse 4:

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

So he did not send the Son down from heaven. He sent him through conception, overshadowing the Virgin Mary. And thus was fulfilled, ***"The child to be born of you is of the Holy Ghost."*** [Mat 1:20; Luk 1:35]

I shall also read from the prophet Isaiah, chapter 9, Isaiah chapter 9, verses 5 and 6:

[5] ***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.***

[6] ***Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.***

Thanks be to God, who has revealed himself to us, who came forth from his primordial fullness and took on form as the speaking and acting, self-revealing, personal God, who walked in the Garden of Eden, who spoke to the prophets, who was able to descend in the pillar of fire, just as he did in bodily form to Abraham in Genesis 18 and on other occasions. He was able and is able to reveal himself in bodily, visible form. He can descend in the cloud of glory, in light, in fire. He can reveal himself however, wherever, and whenever he wishes, and is under no obligation to account for how he does so.

It also came as a surprise to Saul of Tarsus, when suddenly, at midday, a bright light shone upon him outside the gates of Damascus, causing him to go blind and hear the voice, ***"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"*** [Act 9:3-4; Act 22:6-7; Act 26:13-14] This Saul had not after all had the privilege of hearing the Master's voice during his earthly ministry. It was new to him. If it had been Peter, James, or John to whom the Lord spoke there, they would have known immediately, "This is the Lord and Master." But Saul had after all spent years at the feet of Gamaliel, allowing himself to be stuffed full of old interpretations of the scribes, and had failed to recognize the time of God's gracious visitation. But now it happened: ***"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"*** [Act 9:4]

And then the question: ***"Who art thou, Lord?"*** He wanted to know; I want to know, too. When I am addressed, I want to know who is speaking to me. ***"Who art thou, Lord?"***

"Who are you, who are now speaking to me, who are surrounding me with this supernatural light?" "***Who art thou, Lord? I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."*** [Act 9:5]

But please, let us always make this one distinction and hold fast to it. One cannot say, "Jesus walked in the Garden of Eden" or "Jesus visited Abraham". That would be utter folly, for Jesus had not even been born at that time. We simply must make the distinction. In the Old Testament, it was Yahweh; that was the covenant name of God, the Lord. In the New Testament, it is Jesus, Yahshua, the Lord, "Yahweh is Saviour". At that time, he was not yet the Saviour; now he has become the Saviour. ***"Thou shalt call his name Yahshua, for he will save his people from their sins."*** [Mat 1:21]

And so it came to pass. And here we attach great importance to the absolute correct

wording and presentation of the Old and New Testament, as well as to the revelations of God and the terms used, including names, so that we do not get anything mixed up, not even when speaking with others, but can always say what is right, and so that no one can refute or correct us.

Now let us turn very briefly to the topic of this evening. God does indeed have a plan for His people, that is what we believe, even if it sometimes seems as though He has withdrawn, and as though people are simply doing what they can, without the Lord's work being heard or seen. Firstly, God is still at work. Many who have experienced the Lord over the years can bear witness to this. The biblical message has become a lived truth for many, and as Brother Goldner so beautifully put it, we carry Israel in our hearts, and that is true, but even more than that, we carry the God of Israel in our hearts. We carry the Word of our God as the most precious treasure in earthen vessels, and we know that heaven and earth will pass away, but the Word of the Lord remains forever. [Mat 24:35; 2Cor 4:7; 1Pet 1:25]

The crucial point at stake is, after all, recognizing God's way with the church in these days. We have no difficulty in understanding God's ways amongst the nations with all the signs of the times that are indeed being fulfilled before our very eyes. I believe Brother Russ already mentioned this on Wednesday evening, the Vatican and Israel are endeavoring to establish diplomatic relations, and we all know from Scripture that if this actually happens, there are still seven years left until the end of the present civilization. [Dan 9:27] And when one hears quite openly in the news, just how hard Israel is currently striving to be recognized by the Vatican, one might well shake one's head, but it must be so, that the Scriptures may be fulfilled.

The Vatican as the world power, there is no other world power on earth apart from the Vatican, because it is Satan's direct seat on earth. Just as God chose Jerusalem and designated Mount Zion as His dwelling place, so Satan has taken up residence in Rome, and there he will reign for as long as, I can demonstrate this here from the Bible, the seven-headed dragon, Satan, who was cast down from heaven, according to Revelation 12, is depicted in exactly the same way in Revelation 13 with the seven heads and ten horns, as the beast that rises out of the sea of nations, but we cannot and indeed do not wish to go into these matters in greater detail at present.

The focus is on the divine message for this age, and when we often mention Brother Branham, we do so only in connection with Holy Scripture, otherwise we would have no connection to his ministry or his name, just as we would have had no connection to Paul, Peter or John, had their ministries not been of significance in the plan of salvation. And God sends His servants at all times, and we believe that He is truly the same. And always remember, this is about a church of the living God, which the Lord has purchased with His own blood, and this church will soon experience its preparation and completion and be brought before the Lord, so that salvation and grace may then come fully and completely upon Israel, in accordance with the word from Hosea and from the book of Acts, that the Lord will then rebuild the tabernacle of David. [Hos 6:1-2; Act 15:16]

Now if we know, and I would like to say this once more, that even in our generation there was a divine calling and commission, confirmation and legitimation, the likes of which have rarely been recorded on earth. Moses was an extraordinary prophet. The Lord spoke to him, saying, ***"When there is a prophet amongst you, I, the Lord, speak to him through visions and reveal Myself to him in dreams, but with My servant Moses it is not so. I speak to him face to face."*** [Num 12:6-8]

There were indeed men of God on earth who had the privilege of seeing the form of the Lord, and look, one simply must distinguish between these things and not make the mistake of saying, "Moses saw God." Moses saw the Lord. For the Lord is the visible form of the invisible God. God is spirit, no one can see God, and no one has seen God. [Joh 1:18; Joh 4:24; 1Joh 4:12] When He was seen, He was always seen as the Lord, just so that this too is clear once and for all.

Here in a sermon, The Court Trial, or The Court's Verdict, Brother Branham mentions something very precious in the English sermon on page 21. We have of course already heard part of it, but now I would like to read it out here, just a few lines:

And when I looked, here come that same Pillar of Fire that led Israel through the wilderness. Thousands of eyes looking at it, coming right down over where I was standing, and said: As John the Baptist was sent forth to forerun the first coming of Christ, your message shall cover the earth and forerun the second coming of Christ.

I thought to myself, that is a very beautiful way of putting it. God does indeed take His servants, but leaves His Word with those who have received it as a living revelation. And here lies the great mystery. Whoever seeks to fathom divine matters with the intellect and only then wishes to believe, will never succeed. First you must believe and then it will be revealed to you. Man must come to God in faith and then all the mysteries that really matter will be made known to him.

Now should anyone take issue with the phrase "your message", let this also be made clear. This is not about the teaching of a human being, it is about the fact that God has used this man so that we may be brought back to the Word, to the original, and that this original message of God from the Old and New Testament with all the prophecy, all the promises that were given and their New Testament fulfillment may be placed on the lampstand, so that everyone is even compelled to believe, as the fulfillment of Bible prophecy can be demonstrated and proven facts can be believed without further ado, no matter who we may be.

Regarding the headline in that issue of Der Spiegel magazine, a thought from Psalm 14 came to my mind: ***"The foolish say in their hearts, There is no God."*** [Psa 14:1] Unfortunately, however, the fools think themselves very clever.

Just a few more scriptures on the subject of the way of the Lord. There are many ways, there is your way and my way, there are ways that lead astray and there is the

way that leads to life. There is only one who could say, ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life."*** [Joh 14:6] If we consider these three things together, then Jesus must never be omitted from our proclamation. Whether we proclaim the truth, point out the way, or speak of eternal life, Jesus is the center of our proclamation. He is the way, He is the truth, He is the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him. [Joh 14:6]

One more thought, which perhaps could have been mentioned earlier. Time and again, particularly in John 16 and 17, the Lord says, ***"Believe me that I have come forth from the Father."*** [Joh 16:27-28; Joh 17:8] We cannot even begin to imagine just how important this statement is. ***"That I have come forth from the Father,"*** that is of the same essence, He was no one else. He had come forth from God. And that is why all the sons and daughters of God are God's offspring here on this earth. And that is why our Redeemer was able to say to the redeemed, ***"I am ascending to My God and your God, to My Father and your Father."*** [Joh 20:17] He taught us to pray, ***"Our Father who art in heaven."*** [Mat 6:9] He did not merely say, "My Father," but "Our Father."

And all of us who have truly been born again through the Spirit of God from the seed of the Word unto a living hope have God as our Father, for we have come forth from Him.

Let us read from the prophet Isaiah 29, Isaiah 29, verses 18 and 19, Isaiah 29:18 and 19:

[18] ***And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.***

[19] ***The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.***

We believe that God has made His Word known, and that the ears of people who were previously deaf to spiritual matters will be opened, so that they too may hear God, understand God, and take in what He has said.

In the same chapter, Isaiah 29, from verse 22 we read:

[22] ***Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.***

[23] ***But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.***

[24] ***They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.***

It is true that in every nation there are people of corrupt minds. But when we see

the work of God in our midst, then our minds, our thinking are corrected, and we are brought into harmony with God.

Let us read a very important scripture from Isaiah 30, verse 12. Isaiah 30, verse 12:

[12] ***Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon…***

Have you heard? Despising the Word and walking in devious ways. There are paths that lead astray, and there is the way that leads to the Lord, and thus to eternal life.

Let me make a brief observation. Any person who wishes to bypass God and God's Word, whether consciously or unconsciously, is on the wrong path. They think they will get away with it, that they can sneak their way through. It will not work. One day that shortcut will come to an end. Our path must lead into God's path if we are to reach our destination.

Returning to the discussion here concerning these false witnesses, if one does not know the way, Jesus said, ***"You know the way, and whither I go ye know."*** [Joh 14:4] And it was Thomas, or was it Philip, who asked: "***Tell us the way.***" [Joh 14:5] "***You know the way.***" Shall we look it up? It is written in the Gospel of John, chapter 14. And I believe we must take these things to heart, so that we may accept both instruction and correction from the Lord.

Gospel of John, chapter 14, verse 4:

[4] ***And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.***

[5] ***Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?***

And then comes the answer.

[6] ***Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.***

[7] ***If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.***

[8] ***Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.***

[9] ***Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?***

Could it be written any more clearly? There is a marvellous word here, indeed, they are all marvellous, but the Godhead has truly become the greatest and dearest to us. 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, verse… yes, here one ought also to read from verse 4. 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, from verse 4:

[4] ***In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.***

Do you see, the very image of God, not anyone else, the image of God should shine unto them.

[5] ***For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.***

When it says Lord here, whether it would say Yahweh, Jesus, Adonai, or whatever else might be written there, it would make no difference to me personally, there is only one Lord from whom all things come, and to whom we belong, and only one God, from whom all things come. So it is written in 1 Corinthians chapter 8, the titles or names merely express in each case the capacity in which He acts, 1 Corinthians chapter 8, verse 6:

[6] ***But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.***

So here both are brought together, may the name of the Lord be praised and glorified. Let us quickly return to the path. In Isaiah 35 we find the words that are so very dear and familiar to us all. Isaiah 35, verses 8 and 9:

[8] ***And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.***

What a wonderful scripture! There will be a way, a well-trodden path, the highway of the redeemed. And here it is written, it is intended solely for His people. The unbelievers, the uncircumcised, those who have no connection or relationship with God, cannot walk on His path.

Dear friends, if there are still some amongst us this evening who have not yet set out on God's path, let me say this clearly. This is the beginning. The end of your own journey is the beginning of your journey with God. And most people would like to walk with God, but do you know what the agreement should be: "Lord, walk with me", and then one goes one's own way and wants the Lord to walk with you and with me on your path and mine. But that simply won't work. We are destined to walk with Him on His path.

Have we understood that? That I believe is the crux of what our lives are really about, walking with Him on His path, Enoch walked with God, not God with Enoch, Enoch with God. [Gen 5:22, 24] You and I too must walk with God, join Him. We must follow in the Lord's footsteps in this way and be under the same yoke with Him. [Mat 11:29; 1Pet 2:21]

As regards the path, I would like to read briefly the two passages, which are of course very important. One from the prophet Isaiah, chapter 53, we shall understand why here too there is a mention and account of the paths we ourselves have walked. Namely, in Isaiah 53 our Lord is described as the Son of Man, the Son of David, in His suffering, in total misunderstanding and humiliation, as He makes His way from Gethsemane to Golgotha, without form or comeliness, as once struck down and tormented by God, as people thought. But in verse 6 it is written, Isaiah 53, verse 6:

[6] ***All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.***

Did we hear that? Each one turned to his own way, not to pass judgment, for the judgment falls upon me and upon us all. But when we look out into the religious world, then truly all denominations somehow have a path they follow, but must it necessarily and absolutely be God's path, simply because one sings *Heart and heart united together*? That is lovely, but are we truly united heart to heart with God in this way? Have we experienced what is written in Amos 3? ***"How can two walk together unless they are in agreement?"*** [Amo 3:3]

And beloved, believe me, we are really all just human beings of flesh and blood, pitiful creatures, yet it is God who has placed within our hearts a longing to be in harmony with Him and His Word. We do not seek shortcuts, we seek God's way, which leads to the goal, this way on which even a fool cannot go astray, the way that comes from God and leads to God.

I shall read it once more, Isaiah 53, verse 6:

[6] ***All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

Let us take note, our iniquity was laid upon him that we might have peace with God, and by his stripes we are healed. [Isa 53:5-6]

Whenever I read such accounts or similar ones, as briefly mentioned earlier, I think of the day when the scripture from Philippians will be fulfilled, that "***every knee shall bow before God, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God.***" [Phi 2:10-11] All the mockers and all the know-it-alls of these days will suddenly look upon the One they have despised, and the people of Israel will look upon the One they have pierced. And all the nations of the earth will mourn for him. [Rev 1:7] It will be a day, a time, which we can scarcely imagine today. In any case, our Lord will then be recognized by the whole world as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

We were all going astray. [Isa 53:6; 1Pet 2:25] Let us only hope that, as it is written here, this is a thing of the past, so that we need not say even today, we are still going astray, but that we might say humbly and truthfully, "we once went astray like sheep." We truly went our own way, including our own church path and so on,

we went our own way. But then it pleased the Lord to put a stop to this and he has enabled us to recognize him as the way and has truly set us from the broad self-chosen way that leads to destruction unto the narrow way that leads to life, and we believe that he is this way. [Mat 7:13-14; Joh 14:6]

Let me read from Hebrews 10 to explain how this way came into being, how it was inaugurated and why it is described here as a new and living way, namely for those who have been born again, who have been made alive, who have died with Christ, been buried with him and risen with him to a new eternal life. Hebrews chapter 10 from verse 19:

[19] ***Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,***

[20] ***By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;***

[21] ***And having an high priest over the house of God;***

[22] ***Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.***

[23] ***Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)***

What a marvelous word! Here it was not merely spoken or written of a way in theoretical terms, but it was shown in practice how this way began, how it was consecrated and introduced, this new living way that leads to God. Here we are told that Jesus' body was like a veil, and that is true, the divine was hidden within this bodily shell. People said "***we know him, his brothers and his sisters.***" [Mat 13:55-56; Mar 6:3] Yes, they knew him outwardly, but not inwardly. He was and is the Lord. He has taken away the power of death and rose again on the third day. He said: ***"I live and ye shall live also."*** [Joh 14:19] A new living way consecrated by the act of redemption on the cross of Calvary. [Heb 10:20] Paul writes, "***to the Jews it is a stumbling block, to the Greeks it is folly, but to us it is the power of God, namely the message of the cross and of the one who was crucified.***" [1Cor 1:18, 23-24]

For we knew, after all, that death had passed to all people and that no one on this earth could die and take away death's power. [Rom 5:12] Death had swallowed them all up, and they were gone, and nothing more was heard or seen of them, and death made no distinction. It simply took them, except Enoch, the seventh after Adam. [Gen 5:24; Heb 11:5; Jud 1:14] Why the seventh? Why not the fifth or the sixth? The seventh after Adam was taken up, he had the testimony. And now, in the final seventh church age, it will happen once more, that those alive at the return of Jesus Christ, who walk with God and have the testimony of being well-pleasing to him,

that they too will be transformed in a twinkling of an eye and taken up to meet the Lord and be with him forever. [1The 4:15-17]

And then there is Elijah, who was also taken up in a whirlwind. [2Kin 2:11] We know that even the two prophets mentioned in Revelation 11, once they have completed their ministry in Jerusalem, will be killed after three and a half years. And then after three and a half days, the breath of life will enter them and they will be caught up. [Rev 11:11-12]

Here in this Word, we have insight into how the new and living way was opened up through Jesus Christ, our Lord, and anyone who expects salvation and God's grace by another means will not find salvation or God, neither one nor the other. Salvation and God, who bestowed salvation, can only be found where he himself, God, has revealed himself and his salvation, and there is no other salvation, amen, no other salvation. [Act 4:12] And beloved brother Goldner, for Israel too, He will be the only salvation that God has bestowed upon his beloved people by grace. He is the salvation of all mankind. He began with Israel, when he said: ***"Do not go amongst the Gentiles; go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*** [Mat 10:5-6; Mat 15:24] And then came the Gentiles.

Now the matter concerning the Gentiles is being brought to completion, and then Israel as a whole will be saved, as it is written: ***"Salvation will come from Sion."*** [Isa 59:20; Rom 11:25-26] Everything is so perfectly coordinated, so wonderfully ordered.

Please, let me impress this upon all of you, especially those who have not yet experienced God. If you are seeking God and salvation, then please do not bypass Jesus Christ. For in him God reconciled the world to himself. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. [2Cor 5:19]

When I hear devout people say: "I go out into nature, that's where I feel very close to God," well, perhaps to the Creator, but not to the Savior. We must draw near to the Savior, not just to the Creator. I too love to see beautiful mountains, certainly beautiful bodies of water. I would love a house by the water. And if I could see mountains behind it, ha, I would soon be completely well. Yes, but that's not the point.

What really matters is, that we recognize God's plan of salvation, the one he has purposed for humanity and is carrying out, that we should leave every other path behind and set out on this path of God, coming to the Lord, in whom we find all that is divine, "***for in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.***" [Col 2:9] What we need, forgiveness, grace, eternal life, everything that God has given us, we have received in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Please understand these words, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Anyone who merely says, I believe in God, may believe in him as the Creator. But what good is it, if you believe in him as the Creator? You need salvation. Believe in him as your Savior. "***You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people.***" [Mat 1:21]

It is he who will redeem Israel. He has done so. Leave the shortcuts, the detours, leave every other path. Let us return to the Lord together. With him, there is abundant forgiveness and grace. Whoever wishes to experience God, let them come to Jesus Christ. And in him and through him, we shall have God's grace, God's salvation, and all that God has given us, we shall have it all in him. Blessed and praised be his name, Amen.

Let us remain in prayer for a moment. Let me ask, whether there might be anyone here, who has still been trying to go their own way, relying on their own will and actions. And we suddenly realize, things keep going wrong. We do not reach our goal. We cannot come to God by our own ways. We must come to the One, who is himself the way, the life, the truth and the resurrection. He is everything, our beloved Lord. How shall God, not with him, also freely give us all things? [Rom 8:32]

Whilst we keep our heads bowed, I would like to ask, whether the Word of the Lord has perhaps spoken to a soul, and whether anyone would like to make their decision for the Lord. He is your life, you need him, you need him, believe it, you need him. You do not need a religious ritual, nor anyone to administer the sacraments. You need the Lord, who is your salvation, your forgiveness, who desires to be everything to you. You need him, the Savior, to have salvation, and the sick need him as the healer, to receive healing, and those in bondage need him as the deliverer, to experience deliverance.

Today we have heard the Word of the Lord. And as we have read, "***we all went astray like sheep, each one turned to his own way and passed God by.***" [Isa 53:6; 1Pet 2:25] But now the Lord has called us. We may come to him. O precious soul, do not go any longer on your own path, which you have chosen for yourself. Come to the Lord, take the narrow way that leads to life. [Mat 7:14]

It was consecrated on Golgotha, where through the shed blood of the Lamb of God, complete atonement was granted for all mankind. You too may come.

Whilst everyone's heads are still bowed, and we remain in silent prayer, may I ask that all those who wish to be included in the prayer, please raise their hands briefly. Are there any? Thank you. The Lord sees your hand. He sees your heart.

Faithful Lord, you said back then, and this still holds true today: ***"Whoever comes to me, I will never cast out."*** [Joh 6:37] Yes, you called: ***"Come unto me, all ye,"*** not to a preacher, not to an evangelist, not to a church, ***"Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest for your souls."*** [Mat 11:28-29]

Beloved Lord, we come today because you have called us, have spoken to us through the preaching of thy word. Today you wish to tear us away from our own way and set us on the new, living way to lead us to follow you, beloved Lord, so that we may begin a new life with God on his path, in his Word.

Lord, together we pray for all those who have raised their hands, O Lord, or who still have them raised. Faithful God, may something happen to each and every one of them at this very moment. May they feel that you are near to them, that the peace of God comes into their hearts, that they receive assurance of the forgiveness of their guilt and the covering of their sins, that they may grasp in faith that they too were redeemed when you, O Lord, died on the cross of Calvary. May they know today that your Word applies to them: ***"I have redeemed you and called you by name; you are mine."*** [Isa 43:1] Beloved Lord, make us all people who walk in your ways and in your Word, and who have fellowship with you and with one another.

Faithful God, we see that time is drawing to a close. The day of grace and salvation is drawing to a close. O Lord, it has become evening time. Stay with us, O Lord, for the midnight hour is soon to break. Your coming is near. Receive and accept all those who have heard your Word today and who have to come to faith in you. Once again we pray together, forgive them all, have mercy on them, and may your Spirit now come upon them, that they may receive the assurance that they have become your own.

Lord, we give you thanks together, for you are at work in our midst through your Word, through your Spirit, and through the power of your blood. And we thank you for this, and give glory to you alone, now and forever. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Amen. If you have all truly believed, then say Amen. Amen.