

W192_The_Being_And_Nature_Of_God.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the chapel of the opened book Christian Fundamentals. And the subject before us is the being and nature of God. This is number seven of that particular series. It is our custom at this meeting to read a portion of scripture around together. And those of you who are listening to this recording, if you care to join us, will you read with us the prophecy of Isaiah Chapter 45. August is coming to my mind as a sort of little word. It's not for you. For me? And that is found in Paul writing to Timothy when he was approaching what is called in the Scriptures, The Mystery of Godliness. And he puts two words in front of it. He says, without controversy. Is the mystery of godliness. You know, we could have a controversy about the things to do with ourselves and then be wrong because we do not know the hearts. We do not know all the circumstances. We do not know all that goes on within one another. Well, how much more, then, should we be on our guard that we do not introduce controversy into a subject which has to do with the being and nature of God? Who do you say to be? Well, you're all right. You're up there. You're going to tell us. Well, friends, if I do my duty, I shall tell you what God has said. Whether I should understand all that I tell you is another thing.

[00:01:42] Whether I can correctly interpret it is another thing. But you and I are in that same boat. We are standing in the presence of that which is infinite beyond the reach and scope of the greatest intellects the world has ever known. Do you know that Aristotle, one of the greatest minds of the Greek philosophers in the pursuit of this very subject as written and come to the conclusion that God is an unknowable thing? That's the that's the highest form of human intellect that has been produced in those ancient sages that God is an unknowable. Couldn't say a person. And he was right. Because if God is here and in the Milky Way and every other part of the universe, it's beyond our ability to encompass him. So I say to myself, and I say to you, don't forget, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. What God has told us is the legitimate basis of our teaching. Where he's left off. Well, I hope to goodness I leave off, but I'm proud like you are. They overshoot it. But if I do, I should have to confess and be forgiven. So there's that point. Well, now, this evening, I'm particularly wanting to ask your request, your consideration about one title that we find in the Old Testament and that we find in the new. I'm going to read, first of all, from Deuteronomy chapter six.

We've had this before, of course. But here is the key thought for our subject this evening.

[00:03:27] Deuteronomy Chapter six, verse four. Hear O Israel. The Lord, Our God is one Lord. One. Lord, what do you say? We believe that with all our hearts? Yes. Now I am a member, I believe, of the body of Christ. I have come under the marvelous blessing of the dispensation of the mystery. And I have an obligation, not merely privilege. I have an obligation to keep the unity of the spirit and the central member of the unity of the Spirit that stands alone with three members on either side of it which are connected with it is one Lord. Now, here's my problem. Have I got to believe there's one Lord in the Old Testament and then another one, Lord in the New Testament. I'm asking the question. So far as I'm concerned, there's only one possible answer that is absolutely impossible if the Scripture is true. Well, if that's the case, the one Lord of the Old Testament must be the one Lord of the New Testament, then. And this I'm going to entertain two conflicting ones. Everybody's. Well, then finish. Say, well, that's the end of the story. Because then the God of the Old Testament is the one that was manifest in the flesh and he carries from the Old Testament into the new, the self-same title one Lord. Just to assure you the name Jehovah in the Old Testament, Hebrew is translated in the Septuagint version every time by the Greek word kyrios and the Greek word Kurios is the word that is used always in the New Testament when referring to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[00:05:25] So again, for 300 years before Christ came, everybody who said the word curious meant Jehovah. And when they said, Jesus Christ is curious, if you lived in those days, there'd be no possibility of arguing. That's the word we use the name of God. When I quote from Isaiah 42, just by way of going further with this subject. Isaiah 42, verse eight. I am the Lord. That is my name. And my glory will I not give to another. Well, here we are again, you see. Because if the New Testament says that Jesus Christ is Lord. Then we're going to say that the glory of the Old Testament God has been given to another. Oh, yes. The God of Israel has stooped down lower still and become the savior of the church. Would you say this is impossible? Is that so? Friends, I thought we weren't going to have controversy. What is impossible with the living God? If he. As to. Condescend to lay aside the insignia of deity. And come down and live among men. Who's to say it's impossible? We may say, could hardly believe it to be true. But that's

the revelation of Scripture. God was manifest in the flesh. And now we see there's that challenge in Isaiah 42. He will not give his glory to another.

[00:07:14] Yet in the New Testament, this is what is written. That all men should honor the son even as notice that even as they honor the father with the added rider, that if you do not honor the son, you can't honor the father that sent him. You've got a face that you see that's in your Bible as well as mine. Now we come to Isaiah 46:45. The passage we read, let's just be sure who this Lord is that's mentioned over and over again in this chapter. In verse three of the last sentence He's the God of Israel. The one Lord of Deuteronomy 6:6. Israel is the God of Israel. Hear O Israel, the Lord. Our God is one Lord. So He's the God of Israel. He says in verse five, I am the Lord and there is none else. There is no God beside me. You know, some people have got three gods. A great God and two lesser ones. The Scripture emphasizes that God is one. And when we read that God is called Elohim or Jehovah or El Shaddai or father or son or Spirit, it is the one God who is manifesting himself under those titles because every single title of God is only an accommodation. You don't need to tell me that before Heaven and Earth was created, God was called. He knew Him. Who called him below him? Isn't that a label is put upon himself? All our things. Every title is only just a label to give you some aspect only of that which is infinite and beyond the possibility of description.

[00:09:08] All right, let's look further. Verse six that I may know from the rising of the sun and from the West. And that is a way of speaking in Scripture everywhere. From the morning till evening. There is none beside me. I am the Lord. There is none else. He creates all these things. Then in verse 11, he is called the Holy One of Israel and the Maker. If I come to the New Testament, ask who is the maker? I've got the answer. In the beginning was the word. The word was with God. The word was God. All things were made by him. So is the baker. And they are going to have two makers and two creators. And then you have a title at the end of verse 13. This same one is The Lord of Hosts. Again, you have in verse 15, that is the God of Israel with the added title, The Savior. And we have further down in verse 21. He's a just God and a savior. There's none beside me. And then we have verse 23. What do you say? What about verse 23? Well, we'll read it, shall we? I have sworn by myself. Who is speaking? What if it's not missed by Mark? You know that it's the God of Israel who is speaking. The Lord of hosts. Who is speaking? The maker of heaven and earth.

[00:10:46] Who is speaking. I have sworn by myself the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return that unto me. Unto whom. Unto me. The God of Israel. Jehovah. Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear or confess. Would you say, What's the trouble with you? You'd expect that, wouldn't you? That if God is the infinite God, the maker of heaven and earth, the One Lord, that every knee should bow and every tongue should confess. And besides, he says he will not give his glory to another. So it cannot possibly be that they confess and bow to anybody else except the infinite God. Of course. You know what? I'm going to get urgent. The Apostle Paul was a Pharisee by upbringing and a Hebrew of the Hebrews. And if you've ever met an Orthodox Jew to this very day, you know that it will be almost impossible to make him pronounce the name of God, the Jehovah name of God. We use it glibly, but he wouldn't. It's the Incommunicable sacred name. He never uses it. Yet that man who was brought up rigidly in the traditions of his fathers wrote Philippians chapter two. Well, you say, why? What's there about that? Well, I think we'd better look there. Philippians chapter two. He is a man who had no two thoughts about the fact that God was one. And here he says. Verse six, He's speaking about our savior, Jesus Christ, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

[00:12:40] But let a strange thing for a Hebrew to say that we are knowing. Isaiah says, that there is no one that can compare with him. He has no equal. There's no one like him. But made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. So he was in the form of God. Now he's in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given him a name which is above every name that in the name of Jesus. Now comes the quotation from Isaiah, which we've just read that in the name of Jesus, every knee should bare. And he adds to it are things in heaven and things in us and things under the earth. He makes it wider and deeper and richer by those added words, and that every tongue should confess. That Jesus Christ is Lord. It's utterly impossible for us if we believe the Bible. To divorce Philippians two from Isaiah 45. And this we are going to believe an inconsistency. Jesus who is going to sit upon the pinnacle of glory one day and he will fulfill what he said. I have sworn by myself that unto me said the God of Israel, whose name is Jehovah.

[00:14:14] Unto me, every knee shall bow that will be fulfilled when they bow in the name of Jesus. I said without controversy, I can't explain it. I already know that this book is a consistent revelation of God, and there is the fact and it becomes increasingly clear that the God of the Old Testament and the Savior of the New Testament is one and the same person in two different manifestations. He was originally in the status, not form the status of God. He became the form of a servant, not the form, because a servant hasn't got a, what do we call it, vital statistics or something. You don't engage them because they're so much around the middle, do you know? You see, it's a status of a servant so you can exchange one status from another, according to Philippians. And that's what he did. God bowed down and humbled himself to come into the realm of sensation and touch and visibility and create. And then he took another step down at Bethlehem and came into the world that he created for John says the world was made by him and the world knew him not. But these words are simply arrogant nonsense unless they mean what they say and they do. One Lord in the Old Testament, one Lord in the New Testament, both one and the same. Most glorious being. But manifesting himself differently. In the Old Testament.

[00:15:48] No one could look on the face of Jehovah and live in the New Testament. I spit in his face and I didn't die. That's the condescension of God who stooped to bear the sin of me. I mean, from another aspect, that face, we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He has come to us in human terms. Added to the humanity of Christ that we begin to approach the invisible and the intangible and the inaudible. The immensity of God is beyond our comprehension. What? I want to turn to the prophecy of Zechariah. I had to do some elimination and I found there were 1 or 2 passages in the Prophet Zechariah that would be useful. So we'll have one prophecy in front of us for a little time. Did I say Zechariah? Chapter nine? I'm perfectly certain I should have everyone with me over this ninth verse. Rejoice greatly. O Daughter of Zion. Shout O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold thy king cometh unto thee. He is just And having salvation lowly and riding upon an ass. And upon the colt the foal of an ass. And in order to make sure. No guesswork. Our quote from Matthew, the 21st chapter, verse five. Although perhaps you may think it hardly necessary. Matthew 21, verse five. Kaylee, the daughter of Zion. Behold thy king cometh unto thee meek and sitting upon an ass and a colt the foal of an ass. There's no possibility of doubting that our Lord was fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy when he rode into Jerusalem.

[00:17:49] Now we come to Chapter 11. Verse 12. And this. And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price. And if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price. 30 pieces of silver. Matthew 27. Matthew 27. Verse nine and ten. I'll read it as it stands, first of all. A then was fulfilled. That which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet saying. And they took the 30 pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued whom they of the children of Israel did value and gave them for the potter's field as the Lord appointed me. There's a problem there because he speaks of Jeremiah the prophet. It's solved by realizing that slipped into brackets. Although the brackets are not printed, is the extract from Zechariah. Now we have two passages in this Prophet Zechariah speaking concerning Christ in these passages. Let's go on again because there's some more. Chapter 14. Chapter 14, verse four. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof, toward the east, toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley, and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north and half toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains. For the valley of the mountains shall reach unto azal.

[00:19:44] Ye ye shall flee like as ye fled from before the earthquake. In the days of Isaiah King of Judah. And the Lord, my God shall come. And all the saints with thee. Will you turn to one Thessalonians Chapter three, verse 13. One Thessalonians Chapter three, verse 13. To the end of establish your hearts unlivable in holiness before God. Even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. That is a partial quotation of this coming. The Lord, my God shall come and all the saints with thee. Now, if we turn back to Chapter 12. Zechariah Chapter 12. Verse ten or in verse nine, and it shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. This, again, you see, is the Lord. Verse one. The Lord which stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundation of the earth. That's the Lord that's speaking. And I will pour upon the House of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication. And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced. Me refers to the Lord. It's a pronoun. Me referring to the one that's been speaking all the time. Would you turn to John's Gospel Chapter 1937? Here we are taken to Calvary. So the crucifixion. This is. 1937 years. I just read before. Verse 33, When they came to Jesus, they saw that he was dead already.

[00:22:03] They break not his legs, but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bear record. And his record is true. And he knoweth that he saith true that ye might believe for these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled. A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another Scripture saith they shall look on him whom they pierced. Now, John knew the Prophet Zechariah was speaking of the Lord who stretched forth the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth. He knew Zechariah as well as you do. Anyhow, yet he doesn't hesitate to say that Crucified Man was fulfilling a statement that the Lord said, They shall look upon me whom they pierced. I said they fulfilled it there. And you go to the first chapter of the Prophet, of the book, of the Revelation. You'll find it's written again. Revelation Chapter one. Verse seven. Behold, he cometh with clouds. And every eye shall see him. And they also. Which pierced him. And all our version, says Kindreds of the Earth. This, again, is a quotation from the Old Testament. And the word kindred is the word tribe. And the word Earth is the word land. So we put it back as it's in the Old Testament. Behold, he cometh with clouds and every eye shall see him. And they also, which pierced him. And all the tribes of the land shall wail because of him.

[00:23:55] So if I'd read on in the Prophet Zechariah, it says they shall mourn every family apart. So there's no possibility of denying that the one who's coming with clouds and every eye shall see him is Jehovah of the Old Testament, the God of Israel, who says in prophecy they shall look upon me whom they pierced. They say in actual literality they did. And one day those people are going to fulfill the prophecy. They're going to look upon him. They're going to recognize that at last he. That after all, he was their savior and mourn for him. Every house, every tribe, every family apart. If I go on and read a bit further. Verse eight. He speaks this one. I am Alpha and Omega. Well, that's a claim, isn't it? You know, of course, that's the beginning of the end of the Greek alphabet. Whatever you do, don't tell people that Omega means Z, will you? The something, Richard, that because you see in the ordinary way you do without actual vowels in the Hebrew language, you speak them, but you don't write them. They had a lot of dots and dashes invented afterwards to help poor people like you and me. And they make it 10,000 times more difficult. But you get a Hebrew word. And it can have all the difference in the world as to whether you put A or O or I or U in it.

[00:25:29] You see. Christ is. I fill out all the Hebrew words and give them their static meaning. I am the vowels as well as the beginning and the ending. As he says, he is saith the Lord, which is. And which was and which is to come. Now, we've already touched upon the. Composition of the name Jehovah when it comes in the book of Exodus. It is a composite word made up of parts of the verb to become. I will become whatever will be necessary for me to become to bring about the purpose of the ages. So if it was necessary for him to become man, he will become man. That's what Jehovah says. And when John writes, he gives it in exchange and he says, this is the meaning of the Hebrew word Jehovah. He which is and which was and is to come. And then he adds these words, the Almighty. Now, later on in the book with the revelation, it says the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Who reigns in the New Testament. Who is King of kings and Lord of Lords in the Book of the Revelation. Who comes with many crowns? Why, of course, the same Jesus that was born king of the Jews and was rejected. And he is given the title The Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth. And is given the title unreservedly here, the Almighty. But you may say to me all but the name Almighty could never be used of any one except God in the fullest sense.

[00:27:22] Well, if that's so, we better. Not have controversy, but we might as well get a chapter and verse, mightn't we? You won't mind that, will you? All right. We'll go back to Isaiah. He says a lot about these things. Chapter nine. Chapter nine, verse six. Here it is for unto us. A child is born. Don't forget it's a child. And it has come into this world by birth unto us. A son is given. That's looking at the gift of that child that was born. And the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name shall be called Wonderful. Councillor. Oh, wait a minute. In the same verse, he is a Hebrew who believes that God is one and would die rather than admit otherwise. He says a child that is born is going to be called El Gibor, the mighty God, and there's no possibility of translating it otherwise. So he is an Old Testament statement anticipating Christ before he comes into this world, that although he's a child born at Bethlehem. Nevertheless, in the very same selfsame description, he could be called a mighty God. How can you explain that? I can't explain it as I remind myself without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh. There's the child born. There is titled The Mighty God. If I turn the page back to chapter seven, you know what I'm going to discover.

[00:29:19] Verse 14. Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and his name and shall call his name. Emmanuel.

Emmanuel was happy. God with us. Well, of course you may say, Oh, we could use that in a very loose way. Oh, of course you could. But by the time you get all these passages together, you can't use them in a very loose way. This is his distinct title. A child now is born of a virgin. And yet his name is God with us. Will you turn to Matthew the first chapter and see you begin with that is introduced each obviously without possibility of doubt. Oh 13 verse 21, and she shall bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus. For he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet saying, See, Mary didn't call him Emmanuel. She called him Jesus. But he goes on to tell you that this is fulfilling what he said in the Old Testament, that this Jesus, this child born in an infant in a manger. This Jesus. He's forfeiting what was spoken. Behold, a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son. And they shall call his name Emmanuel. And in case you don't know what it means, Matthew says, I'll interpret it for you, which being interpreted is God with us.

[00:31:14] So you see, the more you look into this, the more the Marvel grows that the Scripture commits itself to the possibility. Not only to the possibility, but to the historic fact that a child was born, who bore the name Emmanuel, who was given the name the Mighty God. And in that name that he received. At his birth at Bethlehem in that name. Not the name of the mighty God. In that name, every knee shall bow. Now, I as I as I told you, he didn't enlarge upon it. He simply says every knee shall bow like that. But the Apostle Paul enlarges it. He says, whether in heaven or earth or under the earth. And so you can start another controversy. Who are under the earth and what are they? Well, let's say we don't know. We don't know. But it does say this, that there isn't a corner of God's universe where there not be one who will not at long last recognize what so many will not recognize that Jesus Christ is Lord. I wonder how much we've got to do before we can get folks to just say, Well, I believe you must be right. Is it humanly possible to believe this book and believe there's one Lord in the Old Testament and a separate and distinct one Lord in the New Testament? Then of course, you could begin to look at other passages. Take, for instance, in the prophecy of Matthew, just the the way in which the writer assumes that everyone will acknowledge.

[00:33:02] This fact. Chapter three Matthew. In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah saying the voice of one

crying in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of who? He's quoting Old Testament scripture. At all. Prepare ye the way of Jehovah. That's what whatever. So this John the Baptist was going in front of Jesus, fulfilling the scripture that says he was going in front of Jehovah. You know, I think sometimes our logic's gone wrong. Of course it is. It's influenced by our feelings. But if only we could remember this. I had it drilled into been over 60 or whatever over two years ago. I didn't know much about it then. I don't know much about it now, but this is what I learned. The things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another. At Euclid. And here we are getting that emphasized all the time in these scriptures that that says of him and that says of him, and therefore they speak of the same person. If we haven't got an ax to grind, if we haven't got any objections, we say, well, why? It's proof enough without you indulging on it. But you see, we got prejudice, we've got upbringing, we've got the inability to grasp these things.

[00:34:41] And that's why we have to stress. Perhaps. Ideally. Now, will you look at Matthew? 22nd chapter. Matthew the 22nd chapter. Now in this chapter, you discover that in verse 15, the Pharisees. They took counsel together, how they might entangle our savior in his talk. That that you need to realize that unless they could do something about it. Their rule was done. So they're definitely set out to try to get him to commit himself to say something. And this is how they did it. They sent unto in their disciples with the herodians saying, Master. We know that there are true. Now, I don't put myself on any pedestal friends. I know too much about myself. But when anybody comes up to me and starts in this way, Oh, we know that thou. Oh, here it comes, Here it comes. I know what's going to happen. They're going to get me to say something. And then. Put me into a corner or someone you see. Well, I've got this to guide me, you see. Master. We know that there are true and teach us the way of God. In truth, neither care is there for any man, for thou regard ist not the person of men. Oh, isn't that a lovely smooth down, you see. Shocking, isn't it? Tell us therefore. What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not? Do you say? Surely that's a legitimate question. But wait. You see, they said, Look, you see what we can do? If he says, Oh, yes, oh, yes, give tribute to Caesar.

[00:36:46] They say no. He calls himself a messiah of Israel and he's telling you to give tribute to a heathen emperor. Down with him, is he? And if he said, Oh, no, you mustn't give tribute to Caesar. They say, Pilot, He's telling people not to give tribute. They say we've got him, haven't we? We've got him. Jesus perceived their wickedness and said,

Why tempt me? Ye hypocrites. Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. He said unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? Hey, Sarah Green sees us. Or I suppose they saw it coming. Then saith he unto them render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. And when I heard these words, they marveled and left him and went their way. Well, then the Sadducees, they invented one. Now the Sadducees. Now, this is not the meaning of the Hebrew word. But they were sad, you see, because they didn't believe the resurrection. They well might be. So they invented a little bit based upon the law of Israel, that if a man died who was married and had no children, then his next of kin or his brother must marry the widow. So they go to enlarge it until there's a woman that had seven husbands. And in the resurrection again, he disposes of it, you see.

[00:38:24] Well, then one more comes and asks, What is the greatest commandment in the law? And that man got very, very near to the truth. And then when they were all beaten, were turning to the Lord says, Wait a minute, you've asked me questions. I'm going to ask you one. Now, this is his question. Verse 41. While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What Think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? Oh, that's start. The son of David. About this. I realized as I said it. He's caught us in our own gin. He's caught us in the snare that we put for him. We've said that he's the son of David. He said unto them, How then, does David, in spirit, call him Lord saying. Now he quotes Psalm 110. And in Psalm 110, the Lord said unto my Lord. Sit there on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool. If David then called him Lord, how is he a son? And no man was able to answer him a word. Neither Durst any man from that day forth. Ask him any more questions. Well, the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Herodians couldn't face that question. I don't know how you feel. Perhaps you're cleverer than they are, but so far as I'm concerned. I've only got one attitude that's left to me. I must adopt the attitude of a man who goes down to posterity as Doubting Thomas.

[00:40:20] Doubting, Thomas said, I will not believe unless I see the print of the nails and the sword thrust the spear thrust in his side. And then it comes into the presence of the Lord. And he went down before him and unreservedly that Hebrew. State. My Lord. And by God. And if you can allow anyone to stuff you up with the idea that in the presence of that risen Savior, that Hebrew just really made an ejaculation saying, Oh my good God, well, I pity you. So that is absolutely contrary to the whole tenor of the

passage. Here is David's son, who is David's lord, and I'm going to read now one verse from the last chapter of the last book in the Bible, so that you see on the very last page, it's still going to meet you. Revelation 22, verse 16. Do I, Jesus, have sent mine, Angel, to testify unto these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David. Now, if you could explain that. You've got more knowledge than I have, but I can find chapter and verse in the scripture that says both of those statements are true. He was someone who descended from David who said that he was the root of David. Now, unless this is an enigma that's never intended to mean truth. It's expressing such a mighty truth. We do well, bow our heads. And take to ourselves again the words with which I started. Without controversy. Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh.