



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Hebrews 1:10–12

“Jehovah in Manifested Glory”

TRANSCRIPT

Let's turn to Hebrews chapter 1, and before we begin tonight, let's begin with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the privilege that is ours. We thank Thee for the word of God and we thank Thee for this epistle that we are looking at. We thank Thee for the marvelous way in which our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is set forth, and, especially, as our great High Priest, for we surely need such constantly. Day by day and moment by moment, what a comfort it is to know that our great High Priest is there making intercession for us; for our lives are never without the commission of sin it seems and we need for constant provision to be made for us. We thank Thee that he is an eternal priest for us and, therefore, we know that the issue will turn out for our good and for the blessing of those who belong to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We ask, Lord, that Thou wilt be with us and with each one here in the meeting this evening. May our study together build us up in our faith.

We pray, In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] I did want to make one announcement, I haven't been told to do this but, we should make it that you'll remember that Dr. Boice will be here Friday night, twice on Saturday and then again Sunday morning. And this is a great privilege for us to have the pastor of the Tenth

Presbyterian Church to be here, well-known for significant contributions to evangelical work, not only in this country but in other countries, as well. He is one of the successors to Donald Grey Barnhouse, to whom I owe in the human way, at least, my own salvation. And so I look forward to the meetings, myself, and I hope you will come out and give Dr. Boice the attention that he should have.

But now, let's turn to Hebrews chapter 1, verse 10 through verse 12. Our subject for tonight is “Jehovah in Manifested Glory.” And verse 10 through verse 12 of Hebrews chapter 1. And then we're going to turn to Psalm 102 in the Old Testament from which these verses are taken. Our author says.

“And you, Lord, in the beginning, laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will roll them up or fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.”

Now, I'd like for you to turn to Psalm 102, and I want to read this psalm because it is an important psalm. And it's one also that our author, evidently, thought was very important, too. Psalm 102 in verse 1, our author writes:

“Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come to You. Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my trouble; incline Your ear to me; in the day that I call, answer me speedily. For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned like a hearth. My heart is stricken and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread because of the sound of my groaning my bones cling to my skin; I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. I lie awake, and am like a sparrow alone on the housetop. My enemies reproach me all day long; those who deride me swear an oath against me. For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, because

of Your indignation and Your wrath; for You have lifted me up and cast me away. My days are like a shadow that lengthens, and I wither away like grass. But You, O Lord, shall endure forever, and the remembrance of Your name to all generations. You will arise and have mercy on Zion; for the time to favor her, yes, the set time has come. For Your servants take pleasure in her stones, and show favor to her dust. So the nations shall fear the name of the Lord and all the kings of the earth Your glory. For the Lord shall build up Zion; he shall appear in His glory. He shall regard the prayer of the destitute, and shall not despise their prayer. This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord. For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven the Lord viewed the earth to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to release those appointed to death, to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem, when the peoples are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord. He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. I said, ‘O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days; your years are throughout all generations. Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; yes, they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed, but You are the same, and Your years will have no end. The children of Your servants will continue, and their descendants will be established before You.’”

Now, those of you who have been here for our studies know that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews has told us in his opening statement that while the Old Testament prophets spoke to the fathers, when the Lord Jesus came, God’s message to us resided in him. God has spoken now in such a person as a Son. In other words, a Son-wise revelation, the Son, himself, in his activity, in his work, is God’s message to us.

Now, in order to prove this; that is, to prove that God has spoken to us in his Son and, therefore, his Son, because of who he is and what he has done, has a more excellent name than the angels. He has set forth a number of citations from Holy Scripture, itself. They are designed,

primarily, to explain why he says that the Son has a more excellent name than angelic beings. And we've been looking at them and spending a great deal of time upon them and, tonight, I want to spend our time on the sixth of these citations, which is taken from Psalm 102.

Psalm 102, which I want to look at for a few moments now, is a psalm of an afflicted sufferer, entitled by some, “My Days and Thy Years.” The sufferer is overwhelmed by his troubles but he finds hope in the omnipotence, in the eternity, and in the immutability of Yahweh.

John Owen has written a gigantic explanation of the Epistle to the Hebrews; seven great volumes on this one book. Now, you might think that a man like Owen would spend his lifetime doing that but his other works total at least sixteen volumes. As a matter of fact, there are others besides that, but his works are found in sixteen volumes. These volumes are not little volumes, the print is not real large, there are approximately six hundred pages in each one of the volumes. So he's written over four thousand pages on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Now, if you think reading through the Bible is difficult, reading through Owen would be almost impossible for most of us because not only has he spent over four thousand pages on the Epistle to the Hebrews, but he doesn't write like those that write on our comic strips. His writing is not the easiest writing to follow. In fact, many of you, if you read much of Owen, you would discover that what you are doing is reading what he says two or three times. So, in effect, to read through the four volumes or rather the seven volumes with the four thousand pages, probably, you would be reading twelve thousand pages, three times the four, because you would be reading what he says three times in order to get the sense of it.

Now, I'm going to give you the sense of something that he says in just a few words regarding this particular section. He has a few comments that, I think, are very good. Then we'll look at Psalm 102 in a little bit of detail. He says that, “An interest in the omnipotency,” that's his word, “the sovereignty, and the eternity of the Lord Christ will yield a relief and satisfaction in the condition of frailty in which we live.” And he asks, those who are listening to him or reading him, for what reasons? Well, he said in the first place, “What we have not in ourselves by an interest in

Christ, we have in another. And so in him we have stability, we have unchangeableness for what he is in himself he is unto us and for us. All our concerns are wrapped up and secured in him. He is ours and though we, in our own persons change, yet he does not change, nor does our interest in him, which is our life, our all.”

He says, “Furthermore, when our frailty and changeableness have had their utmost affect upon us, when they have done their worst upon us, they only bring us to the full enjoyment of what the Lord Christ is unto us; that is, an exceeding great reward and a full satisfaction unto eternity. Then we shall live forever in that, which we now live upon, being present with him, beholding his glory, and made partakers of it.”

And, finally, he says, “This should teach us the misery of those who have no interest in him; the unbelievers, the people of the world, many of our family and friends, the misery of those who have no interest in him. This should teach us to use earthly things for our present service and our present necessity, but without rest or satisfaction in them. Use the world,” he says, “but live on Christ.” That’s certainly true! “Use the world.” We have to go to Tom Thumb. We have to buy those groceries. We have to go about the daily duties of life. So we use the world, but live on Christ. So an interest in omnipotence, sovereignty, and immutability is very comforting to the believer in Christ.

Now, the one who wrote Psalm 102 was a man who was in a great deal of affliction. His sufferings are unexplained. In this sense, he is an excellent type of our Lord Jesus Christ, because his sufferings are not specific enough for us to say, “This is precisely what he suffered.” And so, consequently, he is a beautiful illustration in the manifold sufferings that he went through, as he expresses them here, because it enables us to realize that no matter what kind of afflictions we may be entering into or experiencing, there is provision for them in the revelation that is in the Lord Christ.

Now, the Psalmist then talks about his complaints in verse 1 and 2, and verse 3 through verse 11. Like most of us in trial, we cry unto the Lord. And then, frequently, we explain why we

are. That’s what he does. He says, “Hear my pray, O Lord, and let my cry come unto You. Don’t hide Your face from me in the day of my trouble; incline your ear to me; in the day that I call, answer me speedily.”

Now, notice his trials. We haven’t time to expound them but not the diversity of them. Now, you can be sure, I say, from the very diversity of them you, probably, can find your trial, also, in this list of them; or if you don’t, you know that since he suffered so many things, the fact that you may be suffering something different, you can lean on the same comfort and consolation that he found in the things of the Lord.

He suffers from what one commentator has called, “wasting” in verse 3, an old word. “For my days are consumed like smoke.” In verse 11, “My days are like a shadow that lengthens, and I wither away like grass.” He suffers from fever in verse 3, “My bones are burned like a hearth.” He suffers from melancholy in verse 4, “My heart is stricken and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread.” Loss of appetite; forget to eat his bread; I don’t know that I’ve experienced that except when I’m really sick. But, his trials are such that he doesn’t have an appetite. He has pain, in verse 5, “Because the sound of my groaning, my bones cling to my skin.” Loneliness, “I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert.” Two birds, two unclean birds, incidentally, according to the Mosaic Law and both expressive of loneliness because of their habits. Sleeplessness, well, we know about that, don’t we? Verse 7, “I lie awake and am like a sparrow alone on the housetop;” so sleeplessness. And then, as you might expect for someone, who is a true believer, in Yahweh, Jehovah, the Lord Christ, in verse 8, from the derision of his enemies, “My enemies reproach me all day long; those who deride me swear an oath against me. For I have eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping.”

He does mention wrath in verse 10, “Because of Your indignation and your wrath; for you have lifted me up and flung me away,” the Hebrew text says. Now, that might suggest that there is some specific thing which God is punishing him for, but the text does not explain what it is. It’s unexplained and in that sense, it permits this passage to be an effective illustration, typically, of the

sufferings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In other words, these sufferings it looks like, according to the text, are a-moral, that is, there is not some specific sin that the psalmist has committed that is mentioned.

Now, what makes this, also, so sad from the standpoint of the psalmist is that at the time in which this was written, as you know, the culture of the Old Testament was such that if an individual suffered ill health, it was a common opinion that he suffered ill health because he had done something wrong. We all know that that’s Lucy’s theology from the Peanuts comic. “Linus, if you are suffering, it’s because you’ve done something wrong. Now, what is it?” And so that was the kind of theology that they had.

Therefore, those that would see someone suffering would think that there was something that he had done wrong.

One of the things about this that’s very interesting and if a person read it, he might think of the sufferings of our Lord for the simple reason that he is the greatest sufferer of them all, and so the reading of a psalm like this might cause an individual who knew something about divine truth to reflect on the voluntary and vicarious sufferings of the Messiah. Sammy Rutherford used to like to say, “When I am in the cellar of affliction, I look out for the Lord’s choicest wines.”

Now, notice what he does. He’s going to talk about things, now, that are a source of consolation to him. And so in the 12th verse, having detailed these sufferings, he says, “But You, O Lord, shall endure forever, and the remembrance of Your name to all generations.” You can see he takes comfort in the eternity of Yahweh. “You, O Lord, shall endure forever.” The sense of transiuousness finds hope in God’s permanence and his covenantal promises. And this, “But you,” is the turning point. Let’s read these verses again.

“But You, O Lord, shall endure forever, and the remembrance of Your name to all generations. You will arise and have mercy on Zion; for the time to favor her, yes, the set time, has

come. For Your servants take pleasure in her stones, and show favor to her dust. So the nations shall fear the name of the Lord and all the kings of the earth Your glory.”

He looks into the future. He sees this magnificent picture of the nations turning to the Lord and fearing the Lord; glorious things happening. He explains, in verse 16, “For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory.” Those verbs, incidentally, in the Hebrew text, are perfect tenses. Perfect tense, generally, refers to action in past time. But, there is what grammarians called a “prophetic perfect.” These are prophetic perfects. So we translate them as my translation has translated it, “For the Lord shall build up Zion; and he shall appear in His glory.” He’s looking down into the future when these things will have taken place, “When the Lord has built up Zion, when He has appeared in His glory.”

Now, furthermore, after, well I should read verse 17, “He shall regard the prayer of the destitute, and shall not despise their prayer.” Verse 18, having spoken of the glory of his advent, he speaks of a creation of a people to come, “This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord. For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven the Lord viewed the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to release those appointed to death, to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem, when the peoples are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.”

Now, I want you to notice how important this is. The Psalmist, as he thinks of what is to take place in the future, finds his comfort in the coming of Yahweh and the building up of Zion. And, to spell it out further, for the declaration of the name in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem. In other words, the hope, as he thinks of the future, rests in what is going to take place when Yahweh comes and it’s connected with Zion and Jerusalem. Now, that’s very important because the covenantal promises given to Abraham and then the promises to David all converge on that in the Old Testament. He’s a believer in these promises and he sees them finding their culmination in Zion and Jerusalem.

You know where Jerusalem is. Jerusalem is in Israel. Sometimes Christians forget that because they are often exposed to a theology in which Jerusalem and Zion become typical and symbolic names, and the geographical location is lost in a theology that, to my mind, is not harmonious with the word of God. He finds his hope in the coming of the Lord, Yahweh, to Jerusalem. And, also, that at that time there will be created a people for the Lord. He mentions them, “A people yet to be created may praise the Lord.” Don’t have time to develop that but read Psalm 22 and you will see that the Psalmist there looks forward to the same kind of thing.

Now, of course, we don’t have any time calendar set up in Psalm 102. Alexander McLaren in one of his comments to the psalm makes reference to that, makes reference to the fact that this individual has the future in the Jerusalem as the centrality of his hope, but the perspective, the biblical perspective, is not his at this point. We are much more favored because we have the whole of the word of God, the sixty-six books of the Bible. And we are now much better able to say when these things that he looks forward to will take place, because the first coming of our Lord has come to pass and we look forward now to the second advent of our Lord.

Well, at that point, he renews his complaint a bit in verse 23, except there’s a slight difference I’ll comment upon, “He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. I said, ‘O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days; Your years are throughout all generations.’”

Now, I’m going to, because of the fact that we are not dealing technically with this epistle in the sense of reading the Hebrew text and the Septuagint, and the things that have to do with exegesis of these texts. I’m just going to have to give you what I think the text is talking about, except to say that there is another way to take verse 23 and 24. It’s generally rejected by the commentators and so we’ll just leave it at that, so that you know that I know what one has to decide in the interpretation of this text. But notice that his heart, as he comes to this place in the psalm, is resting in the eternity of his God.

Notice the last statement of verse 24, “Your years are throughout all generations.” So he has, in the development of his psalm after he’s spoken of his troubles, now we get an indication of what is going to be the source of his support in the midst of the trials, And that leads us into this eloquent prayer, verse 25 through verse 27, to Yahweh. And let me add a word, to Yahweh, “the Son.” Now, later on you’ll understand why I feel free to add that, “to Yahweh, the Son.”

Listen to what he says, “Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; yes, they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end. The children of Your servants will continue, and their descendants will be established before You.” The ground of his plea, for prolongation of life is his longing to see the end of the divine purposes, for He, Yahweh, is the creating Son.

Now, if you’ll remember, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says in chapter 1 in verse 2, “That he made the ages.” The idea of our Lord as creator and also as the Lord of history is in the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews mind, and so he finds something similar, right here, in Psalm 102.

Now, when he says here, “You are the same,” the Hebrew text says, simply, “You are He.” Now, that, of course, is the term that was used to express the eternal God, Yahweh. And when Moses had his first and fullest contact with the Lord God, God said to him, “I am who I am,” as he defined himself. In the Old Testament in the Book of Isaiah, particularly, Yahweh speaks of himself as the one who is, *aniy huw*, I am he, the one who is. Our Lord Jesus, you know, in the Gospel of John picks up this and we have those great “I am” statements of the Gospel of John, *egō eimi*, that’s the equivalent of the Hebrew, *aniy huw*. So our Lord was seeking to define himself every time he said, “I am the good shepherd,” “I am the door,” and so on. “I am the resurrection and the life,” he would say, “I am Yahweh.” So “You are the same,” he says.

Now, Luther made this expression more idiomatic by translating it, “You abide as you are.” *Du aber bleibst wie du bist.* But you remain as you are. You are. I am. This is the fundamental term for the deity.

Now, later on in this Epistle to the Hebrews, you’ll remember, the Lord Jesus will say, well I should say the author will say about the Lord Jesus, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever,” the text that, probably, relies upon this earlier statement, “You are the same and Your years will have no end.”

Now, let’s turn over to the Epistle to the Hebrews chapter 1, verse 10 through verse 12, because I don’t think that we can really appreciate what we have in Hebrews chapter 1, if we don’t know what he, himself, had in his mind as he constructed this marvelous defense of our Lord as “One who has a more excellent name than the angels.” There’ve been a lot of attacks on the exegesis of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The author, in the minds of some liberal theologians, is not regarded very highly. For example, T. W. Manson, who is the Rayland’s Professor of Biblical Criticism in Britain, wrote with reference to the Melchizedek analogy in chapter 7, “To support this proposition, our author brings forward all kinds of arguments and performs the most amazing feats of exegesis.” That’s interesting, isn’t it? “The most amazing feats of exegesis,” what he means is that they are not very credible, of course. “Far-fetched Old Testament exegesis and obscure Old Testament character, such as Melchizedek have little or no interest for us today,” William Neil said in a commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews a decade or two back. James Moffitt, one of the finer commentators, a Scottish commentator on the Epistle to the Hebrews says, “The exegetical methods that the author took over from the Alexandrian school are not ours.” Others say just frankly, “He uses the methods of follow but they are not methods that we can support.”

Why the problem? Well, partially, in the text itself here because you’ll notice in verse 10, he says, “And You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth.” But now, I’m going to read Psalm 102 again for you, you don’t have to turn back to it, verse 25 said, which he is citing here in

the Old Testament text says, “Of old You laid the foundation of the earth.” Our author quotes it here in verse 10, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth.”

Now, if you look at it carefully, you’ll see he’s added a word, “Lord.” Now, when I say he added, he didn’t make it up. He found it in the Greek translation of Psalm 102, in the Septuagint translation. So he wrote his epistle using that translation rather than a translation of the Hebrew text. And, consequently, some have objected and have suggested that that’s not a valid thing.

We have even John Calvin suggesting that this is not, strictly speaking, kosher, in the interpretation of the word. He says, “The author by pious deflection or moderation or modification, we might say, has turned the text and made it apply to the Lord Jesus, by virtue of the use of the term ‘Lord.’”

Others are not so appreciative of the author. Not willing to call him pious, they just simply say that he did like a lot of other people, he read the old Testament and whenever he found the word “Lord” since in Christian circles “Lord” was by this time a reference to Jesus Christ, he just referred whenever he ran across “Lord,” he referred it to Christ, Old Testament passages. Now, we would know, of course, that that’s not justified. We should look at the context and see to whom of the three Lords it refers.

Now, some of you have not been here every time and you have not heard me go into my little spiel about this, but when we say we believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, we believe in one God who subsists in three persons. And they are equal in power and deity and authority and all of the other things that have to do with deity; they each possess all of the attributes of deity because there is one God, three persons, but each of these persons may be called and is called, in the Scripture, Lord. And so, consequently, we must say, God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit. And so the term Yahweh, which refers to God in his being, in his deity, because it’s derived from the Hebrew word which means, I am or He is to be. We must look at the context to see which of the Yahweh’s, which of the Lord’s, the passage is referring to.

Now, we don't have time to talk about passages of the New Testament, but let me simply say this that what I'm going to talk about now is something I could illustrate from a number of passages in the New Testament.

Now, what our Lord, what our author, has done is to take that passage in Psalm 102, and refer it to the Lord Jesus Christ. What is his justification? Now, if we were to say, as some have said, “He took the Lord out of the Septuagint and just argued on the basis of what the Greek translation said,” I would immediately say, but wait a minute, have you studied the Psalm? Did you look at the preceding context? Do you not know that in the Hebrew text when the Hebrew text says “Of old you,” it's necessary for us to ask the question, regardless of what opinion we may have, “To whom does the ‘you’ refer?” Isn't that right? “Of old You laid the foundation of the earth.” So in order to study the context, we have to read it. And we've already read it. So we know that above we've had the name Yahweh translated “Lord” here more than once. As a matter of fact, we've had it seven times, at least. We had in the immediate preceding context, six times plus the word “Yah.” So when he says, “Of old You,” the Septuagint translators didn't do anything other than to interpret correctly the “You.” Yahweh. Yahweh.

Now, that doesn't solve our problem, of course, because there are three Yahweh's. What right does the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews have to say, “This is Yahweh the Son?” For he does. Notice in Hebrews chapter 1 in verse 8, he wrote, “But to the Son He says, ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.’” We're not surprised by this. We're not disturbed. We saw last week that this passage clearly said that Jesus Christ was God. We talked about it for an hour last week. You remember, I know.

Now, in verse 10, we read, “And.” Well, now, I think, we are justified to say since he said in verse 8, “But to the Son He says” this, “And You Lord,” that we may add “And to the Son he says,” “And You Lord,” so there is no question but that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews regards this passage from Psalm 102 as referring to the Lord, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. But can I say that that's the right interpretation? Yes, I can. Well, of course, I can say that. That doesn't

necessarily mean it is true, of course. To some of you, you may think that is what I say, therefore, it's true. Well then I must pray for you because that is not the right attitude that you should have to any Bible teacher, for that matter. You should search the Scripture, like the Bereans. But this is why I think that he was right. In fact, I know he was right. But this is why I think that he reasoned in such a way as to reach that conclusion.

Back in Psalm 102, we read in verse 16, “For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory.” Look at it again, “For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory.” Now, will the Holy Spirit, according to the word of God ever appear? Why, the Holy Spirit does not even have a body, does He? Not according to Scripture. He is the Holy Spirit. He's not going to appear. Is the Father going to appear? Well, as a matter of fact, we're told in the Old Testament more than once that if anyone looks upon the face of the Father or upon the face of Yahweh in His utter glory, he'll die.

How may we look upon the face of God? Only in the face of Jesus Christ, as Paul said. Who is the Yahweh, of the three Yahwehs?: Father, Son, and Spirit. Who's the Yahweh who appears to us? It's the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son. That's the whole point of the Christian Gospel. God has come to us in his Son. And, thus, we have an authoritative word concerning divine things. We could never have had it if Jesus Christ had not come. It's He who authenticated, ultimately, the prophets and the others who wrote the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament. If he had not come, there was no final evidence of a true message from the Lord God. That's why the incarnation is so important. That's why it's so necessary that the one who does come is God Himself. We have a message from God Himself in the coming of Yahweh the Son, God the Son.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, he wouldn't have found any truth at all in the theology that I've taught. In fact, the chances are, he would learn very little from reading our great theologies that we've written. Maybe he would find some interesting comments that theologians have made down through the years, but this man is one of the great students of the word of God.

Now, what I have suggested to you is simply this; that when he refers here to “You” the Lord and attributes creation to him, he’s talking about the Lord Jesus Christ or Yahweh the Son. His interpretation is absolutely harmonious with the teaching of the word of God.

Furthermore, if we had time, we could turn to a number of passages in which the other apostles and writers do the very same thing in their treatment of Old Testament passages. If you get a chance go home tonight and look at John chapter 12, verse 39 through verse 41, and then read Isaiah chapter 6, and you will discover that John does the same thing there. Read Philippians 2:10 and 11, and then read Isaiah 45:23 and you will see that he does the very same thing that this author does. In other words, they read the Old Testament from the standpoint of the knowledge of the divine Trinity and found Yahweh the Son in the Old Testament.

Now, let’s just in the few moments we have left, let’s note now what he affirms in this quotation because after all, he’s trying to prove that “He has a more excellent name than the angels.” Why is it more excellent? Well, in the first place, he tells us that God outlasts all mankind. He lives beyond men, all of us. He lives beyond all of us and he lives beyond the angels, too, for they are finite beings. The court, of course, says more than that because it affirms God’s omnipotence. Notice, what he says again, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, the heavens, the heavens, themselves, are the work of Your hands.” He is the omnipotent Son of God. He is the absolute and highest causality. Everything in this universe may be, ultimately, traced to the eternal God, our Lord Jesus, the second person of our Trinitarian God. Do you know what a comfort that is and what an explanation it is of the facts of the divine revelation and the truth that is contained within it?

Some time ago, I read a statement; I’m trying to find it here, about something A. J. Cronin said in a little book called, *Adventures in Two Worlds*. He tells of a working boy’s club to which he invited a distinguished zoologist to lecture. Choosing to speak on the beginning of our world, the zoologist gave a, frankly, atheistic picture of how the pounding prehistoric seas had generated by physio-chemical reaction of pulsating scum from which there had emerged the first protoplasmic

cell. He hadn't heard of the Big-Bang Theory at this time. This was about thirty years ago. But when he finished, a very average youngster jumped up in the class and very nervously said, “Excuse me, Sir. You've explained how those big waves beat upon the shore, but how did all the water get there in the first place?” [Laughter] Out of the mouths of babes often comes wisdom.

I read about the Big-Bang, and *Time* had a big article about it. I cut it out. I couldn't find it again. It's hidden in my files somewhere. But the same question I want to ask all the time is, what about that initial material? How has that come into being? How it has come into being out of nothing? Lots of theories, but that one thing I'm looking for. Our author says here that He made the foundation in the beginning; he laid the foundation of the earth. In other words, nature is at the mercy of the Son of God. The Son of God is not at the nature of mercy. What a comfort that is in our prayer life? I turn to one, to whom nature serves, also or renders service.

Secondly, this statement affirms God's eternity. The images of eternity that theologians use are frequently things like the sea, representing eternity, and the rivers, time. Well, we have here an individual who is eternal. “They will perish, You remain.” They will grow old like a garment. Everybody knows about this, at least, you in the audience. You wear your clothes and, finally, even your favorite garments begin to show the mark of age.

I have a suit I really love. I really love it. I cannot find other suits like it. I took it out the other day and looked at the pants pocket. Well, of course, looking at it, because it's now winter time, I happened to notice on my left back pocket, the inevitable signs of wear. I'm not going to walk around by my friends without my coat on. The reason it's worn there is, no doubt, because of this great big pocket book filled with so much money, that it's put a pressure on that pocket. But, anyway, the clothes are wearing out. That's what the creation is going to do. That's what he says. He says it waxes old like a garment, like a cloak, or pants. You will fold them up, and they will be changed.

Now, Moses said something in Psalm 90 that we can turn to for a moment. Psalm 90, verse 2 and verse 4 that bears on what we are talking about. You remember, this psalm that Moses wrote,

“Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, O ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.” Verse 4, “For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past.”

Now, the thing that Moses says about the Lord God here is very significant, I think. I’m trying to find something that came from my theological notes that I have used, with reference to it. I’m not sure I can really find it. Yes, I did find it. But, what Moses says here is that, I thought I could find it. Yes, I did. A lot of truths are couched in this verse, the 4th verse here. “For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night.” And then still more in, “Before the mountains were brought forth or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.” What he said is the world had a beginning, it was not from eternity. It was once nothing, he said. Secondly, the world owes its being to the creating power of God. “Thou hast formed it.” Thou that is God. It couldn’t spring into being of itself. In other words, God was in being or God existed before the world existed. The cause is before the effect.

And this being, who is responsible for the world is from eternity, from everlasting. And this being shall endure to eternity, to everlasting. There is, of course, only one God, and He is the everlasting God, and will endure. He has lived from eternity. He will endure to eternity. He will never cease being “I am” and when I’m committed into his hands, I have eternal assurance and assurance of eternal perseverance. Isn’t that marvelous? We, believers, believers in Yahweh the Son, have the ultimate support of the eternal God.

A. B. Davidson, the Scottish interpreter, who wrote like so many of the Scottish men did, because the Epistle to the Hebrews was required for many years in the exegetical study of the Scottish theological faculties said, “The Son stands apart from the world and above the world because He’s before it; for He laid its foundations and after it for He shall fold it up like a garment. “And,” I love this statement, “And while the world, the creation, waxes old, He stands over against it, unchanging.” So this world is produced by the mighty power of God and eternal God observes

and performs His work. And then when this passes out of existence, he still exists unchanging. He’s immutable. That’s our third point.

I should say this, if that’s really true, then Rubin Torrey was right when he said, “The God of the future is greater than the God of the past.” Now, Mr. Torrey knew the doctrine of the Trinity. What did he mean by that? Well, he meant this. That no matter what God has expended in divine energy in the support of his people and the accomplishment of all of his purposes, there is still more authority and power residing in him and will. And even ever after thousands and millions of years of the working of the eternal God, there will be even more that is to come because, my Christian friend, he is the infinite God, unbounded in his marvelous works to the children of men.

And, finally, it affirms God’s immutability; this issues from his eternity. He’s immutable in his essence. He doesn’t have new attributes. He doesn’t wake up in the morning and say, “Well look, I now have not only wisdom, I have power.” He has no new attributes. He’s never had any new attributes. Never. Never will have any new attributes. He’s perfect and complete in himself. He cannot be wiser. He cannot learn one thing. He never learned a single fact from everything that’s ever been taught at Dallas Theological Seminary. Point, case, you say, because you know the seminary, of course not. You can substitute any other theological seminary if you wish, Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Cambridge, Oxford, whatever, he’s never learned a thing from them, except, I guess, and even he knows this, how wicked and wrong men can be. He cannot be wiser. He has an immutable will. He doesn’t make error in his plans. If he were changeable, he would not be the most perfect being because if he has changed, there was a time when he was not perfect. And if he’s going to change then he’s not perfect now. So he is immutable.

James says this, Malachi says it, “I am the Lord. I change not.” His decrees are things that he carries out perfectly. He doesn’t make any mistakes. When he wills something, no one else can come along, no man can come along, and nil it. When he wills, he wills, and there is no nil-ling of his willing. He doesn’t change his opinion toward us. He doesn’t keep office hours, doesn’t change his moods, he’s always the same.

Now, I'll tell you, I'm not a Pentecostal, but when I think about this I am ready, almost, to shout, “What a great God we have. What a magnificent statement our author has written concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall appear in his glory.”

I close with just a comment from Spurgeon. He said, “The whole composition may be compared to a day, which opening with wind and rain, clears up by noon and is warm with the sun, continues fine, with intervening showers,” that's verse 23 and 24, “and finally closes with a brilliant sunset.” That's what it is.

Some of you in this audience may not really know our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I hope you've been attracted to him. Those of you that have no assurance of forgiveness of sins, no assurance of one to whom you can appeal in the experiences of life, put yourself in the place of the psalmist, with all of those afflictions that he had. What a comfort to be able to turn to Him. If you know your sin and know the guilt of it, bow your head, before him. Here, of course, is the best place, because it's now. But later, bow your head before him, acknowledge your need of him, and receive as a free gift, for he offers it in grace, eternal life.

Let's bow in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for these marvelous statements from Thy word, which the unknown author of this epistle has given to us. We thank Thee for the Spirit's inspiration that guided him, directed him, to give us this message from Thee concerning the Son, whose name is surely the most excellent of all names.

We pray in His name. Amen.