Incarnation of Christ

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[0:00] The sheet to which I am referring now is one in connection with the incarnation of our Lord. And this was actually taken from a publication, Israel My Glory, which many of you are available.

And the opening paragraph, the article says, As this Christmas season approaches, men and women the world over will look back 2,000 years to the incarnation of the Son of God.
But for more than 4,000 years, men living on the other side of the incarnation looked forward to that same event. The birth of the eternal Son of God was no accident.
It was not the result of unforeseen or uncontrollable events. Jesus was the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. God does not respond to human events. He superintends them.
Nowhere is that more clearly seen or more profoundly delineated than in the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. And what we are talking about, connection with the incarnation, is something that is just so absolutely mind-boggling to us mere humans.
[1:15] We cannot begin to wrap our brain around it. If you can contemplate, and you can do this only to a point, and then if you are like I am, you have to mentally drop out because you just can't go any further with it.

But if you can contemplate the time, if we can use the word time, because we are talking about eternity, and you must remember that in eternity there is no time.
That time and space were both created in accordance with Genesis 1.1. And before time and space were created, there was no time, and there was no space.
There was just eternity. God is spoken of as one who inhabits eternity. So, contemplate, if you will, no planet, not only no planet Earth, but no planet of any kind.
No stars, no heavens, no substance, no materialism of any kind. All there was that existed was spirit, and this spirit is God.
[2:31] Spirit is immaterial, intangible, can't see it, taste it, touch it, or feel it, but it has objective reality. This is what Jesus was talking about when he addressed the woman at the well and said, God is spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

What in the world does that mean? God is spirit. It means that there is an unseen dimension to reality that we just cannot grasp, and that is that immaterial substance that we call spirit.
God, who is spirit, subsists in three spirit persons. The Father, the Son, the Spirit.
I do not understand the distinction between spirit and the Holy Spirit. It seems like all three are actually spirit. This means that even the Son of God was immaterial originally.
The Father is immaterial, the Son was immaterial, and the Spirit is immaterial. And this being, God, was all there was.
[3:55] He had not created anything, had not created any angels, had not created any earth, no planets, no stars, no nothing. Yet, this one who inhabits eternity, had this existence as one God subsisting in three persons.

We wonder, well, how long ago was that? Well, you can't say how long ago that was, because when you say how long ago, you're talking about time. And there was no time. There was just eternity.
Eternity is not time stacked on top of time. Eternity is timeless. There is no time associated with eternity.
So, there was this being God. And, why he determined to create anything, we are told, was solely because it pleased him to do so.
It is imperative that we note that God did not create anything out of a sense of need. Well, one of the things that makes God, God, is the fact that he is self-existing and self-sustaining.

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[5:22] He has no needs outside of himself. He doesn't have to go outside of himself to satisfy anything that he has or that he wants.

And, this is what God was conveying to Moses, way back in the book of Exodus, when Moses says, so you want me to go to the Pharaoh of Egypt and say, let my people go.
And, he's going to say, well, who is this God you're talking about? Who is it that sent you? And, he says, you tell him that the I am has sent you.
I am that I am. And, that is a curious expression in the Hebrew that doesn't translate very well in English. But, in essence, it means, I am the one who exists because of myself.
I am the self-existent one. He is the only one who exists because of himself. Everything else that has existence, whether it is biological life or inanimate, everything that has existence exists because something else was before it and brought it into existence.
[6:40] But, not so with this one called deity. This is, in the Hebrew, it's called the Tetragrammaton or the four letters. And, it's translated, a lot of times, Yahweh.

Probably, an English translation that we're most familiar with is Jehovah. And, it simply means that this is the one who is because of himself.
And, we just cannot imagine that. And, that's the description. And, that's all wrapped up in the I am that I am. And, by the way, as you go through John's gospel and look at a number of passages, I think you'll find about six or seven of them, where Christ uses that expression in regard to himself as being the I am.
And, it is very significant that he is making the claim, he is making the same claim for himself that God made for himself when he addressed Moses.
And, that leads us to believe, of course, that he is of the same party and of the same essence, character, nature, quality, and makeup as the Father.
[7:53] So, bear in mind, if you will, that this incarnation, the enfleshment of God, is something that took place within the spirit presence of these three personalities, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All of whom were spiritual entities without any physicality at all. And, this is kind of mind-boggling too, when you consider that that which is immaterial is responsible for the material.
We probably tend to think in terms of the material being superior, because we would call it hard evidence, physical.
But, the scriptures, I think, make it quite clear in addressing the idea that it is the spiritual that transcends and is superior to the physical.
And, in reality, we see this also translated in our personhood, because it is our human spirit that is superior to our physical body.
[9:17] And, yet, do we not often think of it and regard it as just the opposite? Don't we pay the greater attention and the greater devotion to our physical body than we do to our spirit?

Frankly, fellas, it's just one more indication of how warped man thinks in his fallenness. We take these bodies and we crimp them and we address them and we clothe them and we bathe them and we shampoo them and we do all kinds of things to care for these physical bodies.
And, nobody's denying that we should do that. We ought to take good care of our physical body.
But, it's just the idea that there is an imbalance created in that so much time and attention and effort and concern is given to these physical bodies as opposed to our spirit being.
And, our spirit being is dependent upon food in the same way that our physical body is. But, is that our greater concern? No! It's for our physical body.
Our diet, the dishes that we like, and everything that we put into these bodies. I wonder what kind of a world we would have if people would start giving half of the attention to their inner person that we give to our outer person.
[10:44] Wow! What a difference that would make. And, yet we find so many even denying the reality or the existence of an inner person. But, it's dependent upon food, too.

It's dependent upon nourishment, too. And, this brings us right back to the Word of God. So, we have this spirit being subsisting in three persons and one of them is designated and this is the word in the Hebrew Mashiach, which means Messiah.
One of them is designated to be the Anointed One. That's what the word Messiah means. The Anointed One. Well, who anointed Him?
His Father anointed Him. It's also the word that is used for the Chosen One. Christ is the Chosen One. It's the same word that is used in connection with Israel being the Chosen People.

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They are the Anointed People. It means the one who is specially designated and assigned a certain task.
[11:59] And, in the case of our Lord, it was the Incarnation. So, we have these three spirit beings engaged in what must have been some kind of a divine conference whereby the three devised this plan and it would be a plan of creation of angels.

That seems to have been the first step. And the angels were created also as spirit beings.
They were not given flesh and blood. They were not human. They were spirit beings. And Hebrews addresses them as saying, Are they not all ministering spirits sent to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?
So, angels apparently were created before God created anything else. And there is rank and order with the angels. There are seraphim. And there are cherubim.
And then there are those who are just referred to as angels. Obviously, having a structure and different orders of angels. We don't have any idea how many angels God created.
[13:21] How many spirit beings. We do know that there is apparently one who was designated as the supreme angel.

And he is referred to as the overarching or the overshadowing cherub. He was apparently the chief angel referred to as Lucifer.
This is found in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. We don't know exactly what it was that set him apart, but he appears to have been the chiefest of all the angels.
And we know that eventually he exercised a volition which God gave him, the power of choice. And he chose to go against the will of the Creator.
And he enticed a third of the other angels to do likewise. So, we are told that one third of the angels rebelled against him. And as far as we know, they became what is referred to in the New Testament, what our Lord dealt with as demons.
[14:36] And they are an entirely different created order. And out of all of this creation of angelic beings, a conflict was established.

I think it is safe to refer to this as the cosmic conflict of the ages. So, there is a struggle that began between good and evil.
These fallen and unfallen angels. And as best as we can determine, God was committed to resolving this conflict that began.
And I think this is referred to as the resolution of the angelic conflict. How is God going to resolve it? Apparently, he is going to use inferior beings to address the conflict between himself and beings superior to us.
And these inferior beings that he is going to use to address that conflict, it's you and me. We are made a little lower than the angels.
[15:47] We have qualities about us that angels do not have. one of which is a physical body. Now, we get the impression that angels are able to assume a physical life body and appear as humans because they do so a number of places in the Bible beginning as early as Genesis in chapter 19 when the angels came to Abraham while he was in Hebron in the cool of the day.

You'll recall that. And two of those angels were the destroying angels that went on to Sodom and had the incident there at Sodom with the men of Sodom.
And one of those angels was the angel of Jehovah. It was none other than a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ himself which we refer to as a Christophany. So, they are able to assume a human-like form and appear as men.
angels are described as having been at the tomb of Christ and yet they were taken to be men. We tend to think of angels as being all garbed in white and having a big pair of wings and maybe golden hair or whatever.
But angels are sexless. They are neither male nor female and they are spirit beings able to assume a human-like form.
[17:17] So, this cosmic conflict that God has on his hands he is committed to resolving and he is going to use what I call the B team.

I guess President Obama would call us the JVs. We are going to be the JVs and the angels are the first squad. So, he is going to use the JVs to resolve the angelic conflict which is quite an amazing thing and it presents the Bible from Genesis to Revelation as one huge continuous story that we would label the drama of redemption.

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So, God creates man and woman, male and female and the adversary on the other side of the angelic conflict is not going to take this lying down.
So, from the very get-go he begins conniving and scheming as to how he can disrupt God's plan for resolving the angelic conflict through these human beings.
And what is his plan? His plan is to corrupt the vehicle that God is going to use to resolve the conflict because it of course is in his best interest to do so.
[18:46] Now, the thing about Satan Lucifer who became Satan just absolutely boggles the mind because I cannot gather any other conclusion apart from the fact that strange as it sounds as weird as it seems to be I can reach no other conclusion than this Satan thinks he really has a shot he really can do it he actually can pull it off and what is that?

That is realizing his ambition set forth in Isaiah 14 of being like the most high of exalting his throne above the throne of God actually dethroning the almighty and taking his place as the supreme potentate or punto crator of the universe he actually thinks he can do it now we of course see things differently but Satan is about his business and he began with our first parents in the corruption of God's plan and program from the beginning never in his wildest imagination would he have understood or thought that God was well aware of that and he had already devised a plan to repair what Satan would corrupt and he's going to do that through redemption he's going to do that through the offspring of the very ones that he corrupted this is part of what Paul was referring to in Ephesians and Colossians when he talks about the mystery of Christ it means the secret of the Messiah or the secret regarding the Messiah how that he actually is going to be the instrument of redeeming that which Lucifer succeeded in corrupting and he's going to do that through this incarnation where one of those spirit beings the son the eternal son is actually going to step out of his role in the triune Godhead and become one of those human beings he is going to become the redeemer in the flesh God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself
John expresses it in his first chapter of his book when he said and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory this is all incarnational stuff and it is just absolutely mentally incomprehensible that this being should be willing to become one of us and take upon him the limitations of humanity and be equipped with a physical body that could go to a physical cross and die a physical death to be raised from the grave physically and therein lies our redemption and this is what Christmas of course is all about this is fellas this is everything this is everything and compared to this absolutely nothing else matters he is before all things and by him all things consist this is this this is the Christmas story and you know in the midst of all of the gift buying and gift giving and exchanges and everything that will be taking place even among a great many people who have no regard at all for what the season of the year really means for what it really stands for have little or no regard for
Christ yet they enter into the gift giving and everything and you ask many of them why they do it and they say well it's Christmas so well it's traditional well and a great many people do not realize that the whole essence of gift giving lies in the fact that Jesus Christ became God's indescribable gift for humanity that is just they completely lose track of that listening to the radio just this morning something like they took a poll of course they're always taking polls and I don't know how much stock can be placed in them but it said that there were 78% of the people who were polled favored recognizing and celebrating Christmas in the public schools just like we did when you and I were kids and in school and something like 7% were opposed to it and the few that were unaccounted for apparently couldn't make up their mind but can you imagine that now is that going to change anything probably not 78% in favor of it is that going to change anything in the schools probably not because of the political correctness and everything but take heart because
[24:47] December 25 rolls around and we know that in all likelihood that was not the actual date at all of Christ's birth but that's immaterial the fact is he was born he did come and the reason for his coming is known to all who know him and love him and despite the fact that the world doesn't understand and doesn't appreciate what is behind it we who do ought to do what we can to inform them of it because we who have found this most precious gift ought to be willing to share it with others whenever we have opportunity to do so so this is the incarnation and this is what Marv Rosenthal was talking about in this sheet he must Christ Christ must be the seed of Abraham he must be of the tribe of Judah he must be of the house of David he must have legal right to the throne of

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David he must be born of a virgin he must be born in Bethlehem and he must be God all seven of these requirements were indicated of the Messiah when he would come and they were all recorded hundreds of years before the Bethlehem event ever took place now I suppose by some stretch of imagination there are some who might look at that and say what an amazing coincidence but our position is the mathematical probabilities of Christ fulfilling all of these things just by coincidence involves a number that is so great you can't pronounce it that's what the odds would be so the facts are there the history is there the record is there and it is our privilege to be able to proclaim it have you any thoughts or questions Dan Satan can only do what
God permits him to do this is true this is true I've described Satan in times past as like a mad dog on the leash and God is at the other end of the leash and he can go no further than what God is willing to let him go and I don't have any rhyme or reason understanding for this why God did it this way you know in my search and estimation I could only find one verse in all of the Bible that even begins to explain the age old theological philosophical question which is why is there anything why is there something rather than nothing because there was a time when there was nothing I mean nothing except this uncaused first cause and revelation 4 11 tells us that the four and twenty elders ascribe worship to him that sat on the throne and they say worthy art thou
O Lord to receive honor and glory and dominion and power and majesty and so on for or because thou hast created all things and by thy good pleasure they were created and all that means is God was pleased to do it he didn't have to do it he chose to do it and he chose to do it because he wanted to and the supreme lord of the universe is fully capable and within his rights of ordering all things after the counsel of his own will and he knew full well what was going to come of the creation he knew in advance the angels were going to rebel a third of them would defect he knew in advance that Adam and Eve were going to disobey him and bring the whole untainted creation into chaos and he knew full well that there would be a plan of redemption that he would devise and that one of the beings of the triune godhead would be the instrumentality through which that which was lost would be regained and brought back to himself that's an amazing thing this is all wrapped up in what
Paul referred to as the mystery of Christ wow it's quite a concept in fact there's nothing in the universe to compare with this this is just this is this is amazing absolutely amazing any other thoughts or comments anybody yes Joe Paul had this ailment that God allowed to the devil essentially to implement like you talk about the dog on the least God doesn't do anything bad to us at all he loves us he doesn't do anything it's always safer he just allows him to do it but he did that because Paul had revelations of God he had revelations and there are certain things he was not to disclose that's true Paul was not to disclose a lot of the things he already knew like maybe he knew more about heaven and everything than we know and he was not allowed to disclose that and so [30:44] God allowed this to happen to him so he'd be reminded and that's in the scripture I can't think where I read it it was to remind him not to tell anything more about this he was only allowed to tell certain revelations he was only allowed to tell certain parts of this there's more mystery up there that we don't know about and Paul was not allowed he knew it but he was not allowed to tell it that's an excellent point Joe when Paul is describing his experience he said that he heard things and was told things that it was not lawful for him to utter he could not divulge it and we don't know what those things were but would you like a wise one opinion I'm going to give you one whether you want or not as you read particularly 2nd

Corinthians I think it's chapter 10 or 11 12 something or the older I get the more these passages move around where Paul was talking about the abundance of revelations given unto him and he also describes the things that he was called upon to endure and it's a lengthy list and every one of them is negative every one of them is painful extremely painful he's talking about being beaten receiving stripes from the Jews three different times 40 stripes actually it was 39 stripes 40 stripes save one he was given lashes with 13 lashes with that lash because each lash each whip had three strands in it and when you multiply those three times 13 you get 39 lashes and that was administered to him on multiple occasions in addition to beatings in addition to shipwreck in addition to imprisonment in addition to all kinds of hardships been in the deep been hungry been desperate been in prison mistreated lied against all the rest of it
I ask you what in God's name could keep a man like that going where did he get where did he get that kind of perseverance what kept him from saying enough I've had it with this I'm bailing out I'm not going to do this anymore but he kept on keeping on and I think that was an opinion I think that

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God let him in on what the payoff was and what the consequences would be and what the significance of it was and as a result of his knowing that that drove him on that impelled him to keep on keeping on to never give up and that's what enabled him to say time of my departure is at hand I have kept the faith I fought a good fight there is laid up for me a crown of rejoicing I think he knew some of those things and it fortified him and stabilized him and drove him on because he had just a glimpse of what the glory was going to be and it was more than worth it so now I don't know whether that's true or not but whatever it was that Paul witnessed or heard that he could not divulge was of some great significance you may be sure yeah Paul could have made himself a great person you know that people respected and said on the throne if he could go in to tell more of the revelation he could have made himself kind of like God if he wanted to if he divulged that but God of course didn't want that and that's why he put this quote called pain or disease or what it was that God allowed to happen to him the thorn in the flesh yeah lest he be exalted beyond measure yeah yeah and another excellent point and apparently the threat was there and apparently God recognized the threat because as great an individual as the apostle Paul was he was still what he was still a man he was still a human being he still had feet of clay just like us and he said lest I be exalted beyond measure in other words lest people make more of me than they should make there was given this thing to humble me yeah interesting interesting okay breakfast is here enjoy it and and and tabby thank you so much for the terrific service you give us all year and this is something that the guys want you to have okay thank you

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