

Title: How Does God SPEak to Us.

Text: Hebrews 1:1-2 (Read 1-4)

I want to say! *Koshare*
 Take your Bibles please and turn to the most Co-sure B**o**ok in the Bible: ~~Turn, please, to,~~ the Book of Hebrews. It was written to the Jews. And it ~~is~~ a book which deals with Jewish problems. But they all effect us today. It is a book which exalts Jesus Christ. It is a book which uses "better than" more than 13 times. Telling you that Christ was [^] better than [^] so many things that are important and signifcant to the Jew. That ~~Christ~~ is better than them all and he ~~is~~ to be exalted ^{above} ~~about~~ all.

And if there is one thing ^{Christians} that ~~our nations~~ needs to come back to, it is the exaltation of Jesus as Lord, ^{The church is} ~~Our nation was~~ built upon that belief. Jesus Christ is the true liberator. He has set men free. And he continues to set men free wherever his gospel is preached. And it ~~is~~ is a joy for me to come, ^{To the Throne of Hebrews} ~~again,~~ to the PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST ~~in the book of Hebrews.~~ And I hope it will be as much of a blessing to you as it ~~has~~ has been to me in preparation.

ad Hebrews chapter 1 and ^{we} will look at just the first three verses.

(Read Hebsrews 1:1-3)

PRAYER

Father, I would pray this ~~morrow~~ that as we begin our study of Hebrews that you would teach us to love you more. I would pray that we would love Jesus more than we have every loved him before. That we would be committed ~~to~~ to him more so than we have ever been in our lives. And that those who stand on the side line and do not know ~~w~~or sure that Jesus is all that he claimed to be, might know so ^{tomorrow} today. And God I pray that ^{tomorrow} today they may make that important dicision to receive you as saviour. May they believe that Christ is the truth, the way, and the life and that no man comes unto the Father except through him. Thank you for our wonderful saviour. And it is in his name that we pray....Amen

Tonight, all I want to do is share some background information with you.

There are a few things we need to know about the book of Hebrews as we begin.

(A) (First)..The author. There has been so much debate and controversy about who wrote the book of Hebrews. Of course....I believe it is Paul...And I believe it is clearly indicated in the book. But other suggestions have included Apollas, Barnabas, Luke, Philip, John Mark, and the names go on and on.

But I believe that Paul clearly wrote this book. And I would like to share those reasons with you because I think they are important in ~~understanding~~ understanding how the book unfolds.

(1) I believe, first of all, that church history supports Paul as the author. (1) Way back at the time of ~~the~~ Clement of Alexandria who lived in 150 to 215 A.D. Just about 50 years following the completion of the N.T. he was born. He stated that the prefix, "Paul an Apostle" was not on this book because the Jews where continually ^{uncertain} ~~uncertain~~ of him. And that supports what Paul taught ~~us~~ ^{him} in other Epistles. But he said that Paul clearly wrote the book of Hebrews.

(2) At the ~~the~~ third council of Carthage in A.D. 397 it is stated clearly that Hebrews was written by Paul.

(3) At the Council of Hippo in A.D. 419 it was stated that there were 14 Epistles of Paul. And if you remove Hebrews you have only 13.

(4) In the earliest copy of the Book of Hebrews that we have in existence, which is called Papyrus 46, written around 200 A.D., the title on the book says "TO THE HEBREWS" and it is listed with Paul's epistles. And interestingly the book of Hebrews comes after the book of Romans.

So, you see, the early church considered ^{Hebrews} ~~that book~~ extremely important, A great book of doctrine, *written by the Apostle Paul.*

Today, we often do not pay attention to Hebrews as the early church apparently did. And I think we are the losers. Next to Romans we ought to understand the Book of Hebrews in the N.T. For tremendous teachings about Christ is found in Hebrews.

(2) ^{Second Reason}

The closing of Hebrews, I believe is Pauline. Would you turn, please, to Hebrews chapter 13. Hebrews chapter 13 and let's begin at Vs 22. The writer says, "But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly."

You might think it is more than that after studying the book, but he says a few words. (Read Vs 23-25)

That, friends, is language of the Apostle Paul. The same pattern is found in other Epistle of Paul.

I believe, also, the mention of Timothy in Vs 23 clearly points to Paul as the authority. I believe, also, that the reference to Italy in Vs 24 would point to Paul. The point would be: that he is writing to Jewish Christians in Rome, which I hope to show you in a moment, and he said to them: "Greet all of your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you." Which would mean the Roman believers outside of Italy, ^{Believe} ~~at the~~ ^{Paul knew who were} ~~time when Paul had been in~~ ^{to} ~~was~~ now sending their greetings back those who were in Italy. It was Paul that was in Rome. And I believe this indicates Paul's authorship.

(3) I believe, also, that Peter indicates that Paul wrote this book. Take your Bibles and turn to I Peter chapter 1. I Peter chapter 1 and Vs 1. And please follow the reasoning here and I hope to show you that Peter indicates that Paul wrote a book to the Jews.....

(Read I Peter 1:1)

Now, will you turn to 2 Peter 3:1...2 Peter 3:1.... Now Peter says that he wrote to Jews who were scattered abroad. He wrote to them and gave their locations. Then in 2 Peter 3:1 he says (Read)....

Peter wrote a second letter to those scattered abroad. Now, will you look at chapter 3:15-16 (Read).....

I believe Peter clearly indicates, here, that Paul wrote to the same group that Peter did. Namely ^{Christian} Jews. Those Jews who were scattered abroad. And he indicates a certain ^{letter} ~~book~~ because he says "as in all the other letters.".....The point being that there would be something ~~.....~~

special about the letter he sent to the same people that Peter sent two letters too. It would be special from the rest of his letters. And that friends is true of the book of Hebrews. Hebrews is special in reference to the rest of Paul's letters.

(B) Now, in addition to Paul writing the book there is an argument over who he is writing to . WHO ARE THE READERS?

You say, "Well, I am one of the readers." Well, I know that. But I mean "originally," Who are they? I want to share with you the problem because it effects the interpretation. Some of you, if you want to be good students in our series will want to write this down. Because in ~~certain~~ certain portions of scripture it makes all the difference in the world who you think he is writing to. Hebrews has ^{some} very difficult passages to interpret. As a matter of fact, there are five passages called passages of warning. They are warning passages and they sound like believers can lose quickly the salvation they have in Christ. And the answer to interpretation of these warning passages depends upon who you think Paul is writing to.

(1) For example, he may be writing only to non-believers. Some people have suggested that. That Hebrews is an evangelistic book and it is written only to non-believers.

(2) Other commentators says that he is writing to both non-believing Jews and believers...whether Jews or Gentiles....This is the way they get out-of several problems. That is in some texts where it appears difficult to translate it for believers they then say he is talking about non-believing Jews whom the christians were always contacting and who were always within their midst. And so they says that Paul is writing both ~~to~~ the church or believers as well as non-believing Jews....

(3) A third view is that Paul is writing only to Jews. Those who hold this view would emphases that the title of this book is "TO THE HEBREWS." They would also indicated that the word "Gentiles" often translated "nations" is not used once in this entire book. Yet, Paul uses it often in other

letters. But, he never uses it once in the book of Hebrews. They believe that it is Jews, only. And in that group it would include both believers as well as non-believers.

(4) There is a fourth view. And that is that its title is not authentic. This view is not very strong. But some hold to it. They believe that it was written to a certain church. And it is telling the Jews and Gentiles how to get along with one another in the light of Jewish problems. Some believe that is the view.

(5) Then there are others who are correct...who believe that this book was written primarily to Jewish christians. Jewish believers who were located in Rome; and who were tempted to return to Judaism because of persecution and lose of life which was being imposed upon the christians by Rome. Now, the Jews did suffer much by way of persecution. But they were not suffering martyrdom at the time of the writing of this book. But, the Christians were suffering death because of their stand for Jesus Christ. So, Paul is writing to Jewish Christians who are tempted to return to the safe heaven of Judaism and still try to maintain their belief in the Messiah. Thus, they could have the best of two camps. They would practice ~~Judaism~~ ~~as~~ a fulfillment in the Messiah. They would be called Jews and not Christians. Thus, they would not have to face persecution.

Now, if you follow this interpretation, you will have no problem in understanding this book. The book was written to Jewish christians.

People often say that the titles of books are not important. The titles were not inspired. They were not on the original documents. That is true. But, the title "TO THE HEBREWS" is on that third century text that we have. Which means that just a few years after the Bible was completed, the early church believed that it was written to christian Jews.

Now

I don't believe that it can refer to Jews in Jersulem because in this book it implies that they had not personally heard Jesus Christ themselves. And that would not be true of those in Jersulem and Palestine. I believe, therefore, it is written to Jews in Rome and not in Jersulem. Also, according to chapter 12:4, as I have already said, they have not suffered martyrdom yet.

When Was it Written

10/20

(C) Also, there is an absence in this book of mentioning the temple in Jersuelem. Now, when was the temple in Jersulem destroyed? It was destroyed in 70 A.D. by the Romans. So, I believe that Hebrews must have been written before 70 A.D. It has to be after 50 A.D because he mentions Timothy in the last chapter. Timothy joined Paul around 50 A.D. It has to, also, be before 64 A.D. because the Roman emperor Nero burned Rome in 64 A.D. And he blamed it on the Christians. And a tremendous persecution followed. The book was written before 64 A.D. And it was written after 50 A.D. I believe, along with a lot of other Bible Teachers, fortunately, that it was written some where in the early 60's. And Paul wrote to this group of people, people that he knew personally, many that he probably wone to the Lord during his first imprisonment in Rome. Because according to the last chapter of Acts Paul was ~~to~~ two years in his own hired hourse with freedom to receive all who would come to him and to shasre the gospel and many believed. Many Jews believe also. Therefore, I believe Paul wrote to those Jews about what he knew was coming. And about there problem of wanting to return to Judism.

Because in the church today, we have s/hort believe

And that is an important problem even today. So, the temple is still in Jersuelm. The sacrifice is still going on. And that is why the book of Hebrews was written to explain that problem.

Step II

Now, we come to chapter 1:1-3. All of that was introduction. The subject is how does God reveal himself to us. If there is a God with the intelligence that we know that God has, how does He communicate with us? That is just pure logic.

Now, the Bible's basic premise is: GOD HAS SPOKEN!!!! He has revealed Himself.

The main theme of the book of Hebrews is the Person and work of Jesus Christ. And the book begins with the fact that God has revealed himself to us in Jesus Christ.

(A) Now, let's ^{look} ~~look~~ at Vs 1.. In the past, how has God revealed himself.

(u) According to Vs 1, God used two methods. Vs 1 says, "After He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets"...Then he gives the two methods: "In many Portions" and in many ways"...

(u) The phrase "in Many portions" ~~or as the NAS says "in many times"~~ means... "in many parts"...God spoke in the past in "many parts." What does that mean? It means "piece meal"....Not all His revelation was made at one time or to any one person.

Moses received some.....Abraham received some....The Prophets received some....But no one person and no one moment of history received all of the revelation of God. It was given in "piece meal" fashion. That's the way God spoke in the past.

(u) The second method is in the phrases ^{"In Many Ways"} ~~"diverse manners"~~ or as ~~the NAS~~ translates ~~"in many ways"~~....Literally it means "much turning". That is, going from one thing to another. In other words, God never used the same way in which he revealed himself.

For example: He used visions....dreams....appearance....writtings... And many times in the O.T. he spoke orally and directly with some people. For example he spoke directly to Moses ~~in~~ in the burning bush.

Many times I have wished that God would do that today. You know.... you wake up one morning and God says....."BILL"....."YES".....

But, He has not chosen to do so....People ask: "Why not?" "If he is God, why doesn't he do that?" Because, do you know that that kind of communication and revelation would be inferior to the one we already have? That is the amazing message of these few verses. For God to speak directly to you and me today, would be inferior to the revelation He has given to us. That is the amazing truth of the N.T. So, God in many parts and in many different ways in times past God spoke that way.

But, my friends, it is different today.....

8

(2) Second, notice to whom God spoke in times past. The men to whom God revealed himself....To whom did God speak in many parts and in many ways?

(A) The text says "unto the fathers".....^{ok}Who are the "fathers?".... Well, he is talking about a definite relationship to Jews. The Jews speak of their fathers: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moes..all of them. God spoke to them. And they in turn told the people, *what God said*.
God's way today is different. But in that day he spoke to them, the fathers, and they in turn communicated the message to the people.

(B) Third, notice the means that God used.

According to the text, it says "unto the fathers in or by the prophets" Literally, it is in the prophets" And I believe that is important. WHY?.....God did not simple use the prophets as an instrument...like a dictating machine..

Many people think that.....Like.....God, called up Isaiah one day and said: "Isaiah, I want you to write down the following words." "Thus, saith the Lord,".....You got that?.....Want me to go blower?' Thus.....T...h...u...s.....No, that is not How he ~~did~~ did it.....
But, some people believe that. It is not simply by means of the prophets. It is in the prophets....And there is a point in the text that said, later, "God spoke through his son."

Well, God was in Christ speaking to the world. God was also in the prophets speaking to the world. It is a very definite point relating to the inspiration of the ~~West~~ Bible.

God's Holy Spirit was definitely controlling and effecting the minds and hearts and the ideas, and the thoughts of those prophets.

In 2 Peter chapter 1:20 and 21 we read that "no scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

God was in the prophets. And what they said, when they were under the control and inspiration of Holy Spirit was God's message, ever last word of it.....

It doesn't mean that the prophet couldn't, the next day, fail... It doesn't mean that when he did fail his words were false. It means when the Holy Spirit was controlling him, what he said was the truth.

And what we have here, is a miracle of God. The total idea of the inspiration of God's Word in the past..... That is also true about the N.T..... The Holy Spirit took different personalities with different styles of writing, different ways of expressing themselves, But what was finally written, was inspired of the Holy Spirit. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

It means the reliability of it was guaranteed....

So, that it is the truth. A human being speaking without the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit could never have guaranteed to us the reliability of His Words...

I don't care who you are or how well you speak, without the control of the Holy Spirit you can not guarantee the reliability and authority of your words.

So, In the past this is ^{How} God spoke.....

Well, what about Today?

(13) Let's look now at the present.

How Does God speak Today?

(14) In Verse 2 we read "in these last days"..... Literally "the last of these days."..... That little express in Greek "in the last days" is used

constantly in the Greek O.T. of those text dealing with the final Messianic days. "The Last Days." It is refering to ~~Messianic times~~

~~of the Messiah.~~ *for Dr Raphael - These are the Last Days! We are living in the last Day*

So, here is the point: In the past God spoke in many parts and ~~with in~~ many different ways. But, now, in the ~~Messianic times~~ *These last Days*, God has chosen to speak another way. Different from the past. What is that way??

Will ~~Paul~~ tells us very clearly..... Vs 2... "He has spoken to us in His Son." Notice, clearly, please, Vs 2, the definite articule "THE" is not in front of the word "son"..... It is simply "in son." Not in "the son"... But "in a" or "his son."

You see, when you leave the definite article out...it always refers to the nature or substance of that subject. I notice in Vs 1 in front of the word "prophets" there is the definite article "THE." He spoke to "the fathers" in "the prophets". When the definite article is there it sets apart or points to some individual *or some specific thing or act*

The point is: that the prophets are not in the same ball game as son...They were particular men God used to give his message. But, the truth here is that God spoke not in "the son" who then in turn spoke like "the prophets." Oh, no....but the son, himself, is...the...message....

Listen, friends, if you haven't got that, yet, by going to church, you had better learn it now....THE WHOLE MESSAGE IS JESUS.....It is not something that Jesus merely said. Although, that is important. But, the message of God, the way God has revealed himself, what He is saying to you and to me, what he wants us to know, IS...JESUS CHRIST, HIS ONLY SON.....Paul is dealing here with the very nature of Christ's relationship to Him. HE IS SON....Not simply one through whom he gives a message. BUT, JESUS IS THAT MESSAGE.....

And that is how God speaks to us today.....And God speaks to you in his word . The Word is Jesus. And as you studyd and as you read the Word, God reveals himself to you. He speaks to you through His word.

~~Shall we pray~~ -

(2) Now, to emphases this great truth(That Jesus is the message of God to us today)Paul makes six fantastic statements about the position of Jeus Christ
Six statements to show us that Jesus is God message to us today.

(1) Number one, in Vs 2, Paul talks about the wealth of His possessions.
Vs 2 says, "Whom He appointed heir of all things." The wealth of his possessions. God placed and appointed Jesus as the heir of all things.

In Psalms 2 verse 7 the Father says to the son: "ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as your possessions."

The Apostle John finally understood this principle. And thus many, many years later, very late in His life, when he wrote the Gospel of John, He was able to write with great understanding and insight: "In the beginning wass the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Do you get the point? Jesus is the Word. Jesus is God's finall love message to us.

HOW DOES GOD SPEAK TO US TODAY? In His Son...Jesus is the Word of Life. The living Word who dwelt amongst us. And now, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, recorded in this book we call the Bible. THIS IS GOD'S WORD TO US TODAY. Everything that God wants you to know and do is recorded here in this book. If you truely want to here God speak..... READ...STUDY.. MEDIATE...THINK UPON....LISTEN TO....THE WORD OF GOD.....

The Bible will never led you astray. It will always lead you into a deeper walk with God....It will reveal to you God's will and direction and purpose for your life....WHY?....Because God speaks through His Word. And anyother method would be inferory to . WHY?...Because in these last days God has spoken to us in His Son.....

Shall we pray