

# God's Word Made Flesh

## Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12

### Introduction

The book of Hebrews was written A.D. 68 by an unknown author – maybe the Apostle Paul – to a group of Jewish Christians. You probably deduced that from the name: Hebrews. These Christians had been scattered all across the known world. They were not localized in a single city, like with the letters to the Ephesians or the Corinthians. Hebrews is a general letter that would have been circulated to a number of cities.

The world in which these Jewish Christians lived was a mess. Everything seemed out of control. And while they believed that God was ultimately in charge, the circumstances of their current lives did not seem to verify that. The writer acknowledges as much in verse 8:

Yet at present we do not see everything subject to Him (Jesus). (Hebrews 2:8)

When they looked around, they saw a world where ...

- Faith and faith issues were not important to the general population
- Their neighbors did not hold the same values and morals they did.
- In fact, the things that people around them did were so bad another Biblical author described them as ...

“... the shameful deeds of darkness.” (Ephesians 5:11)

- There was some outright persecution too. The Hebrews had left Jerusalem to escape it, but it followed them to the new places they lived.
- In some places it was really bad. Hebrew Christians were dragged into the town square and ordered to deny their faith. If they refused, their throats would be slit for the gathered crowd to watch, a warning that they may be next.

As a result some of the recipients of this letter were asking ...

If my new faith in Jesus is true, why isn't God doing something about it?

Does God even know what is going on? Is what we are supposed to believe true? Is what we are seeing around us worth everything we have to endure because of it?

- I can relate to that. Can you?
- In the midst of the hard times of life ... as you see the chaos in the world around ... not just in the distance anymore, but in our own city...
- Isn't it tempting to ask: "Why isn't God doing something?"

Look around your life today. What do you see?

- The Ku Klux Klan is holding rallies in the center of our town and outside the home of our mayor.

- One whole section of our country is underwater with thousands of our citizens waiting for the return of electricity and water. Hundreds more are relying on helicopter drops in order to have basic supplies and medicines.
- The Russians are bombing the Ukrainians.
- Hezbollah and Israel are bent on annihilating one another.

We can add our own voices to the questions raised by these Hebrews, because if all we do is look at the problems that surround us, it doesn't FEEL like anyone – including God – is in charge.

There is a beautiful verse of Scripture in the last book of your Bible that describes the day Jesus will finally return like this:

Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him ... (Revelation 1:7)

Wouldn't it be great, these Hebrew Christians thought, if we could just see Jesus now. We could hang on if we could only see Jesus. But right now, seeing God at work is hard.

To Christians like this, whether in AD 68 or now, the writer sends these words of encouragement. Don't grow discouraged! Look around and see what God is already doing.

There are five words in this text which inspired this new sermon series that will take us through the end of November and right up to the season of Advent:

But we do see Jesus... (Hebrews 2:9)

We may not see exactly how He has things under control, but if we can see Him we have hope for the final victory.

So throughout this book, the writer tells us to look for Jesus. See Jesus! When the issues around us are fierce, and even when they are not, make sure you "see Jesus." The sermons in this series are designed to help us see Jesus. Today we focus on Jesus as 'God's Word Made Flesh.' It's a title I borrowed from John's Gospel, where in chapter 1 we read:

The Word (Jesus) became flesh and made his dwelling among us. (John 1:14)

Look at what today's says about that:

## **#1: GOD SPEAKS THROUGH JESUS**

Hebrews 1:1-2a reads:

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son ... (Hebrews 1:1-2a)

God has always been speaking. Except for maybe a period of time between the Old and New Testaments known to Bible scholars as "the silent years," God has always been communicating His truth with His people.

- As the text tells us, in the earliest days He spoke through the prophets ... people like Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Nathan.
- The text also tells us that He used a variety of communication methods. Like you and I can choose between phone calls, texts, or email, God tried everything to get His Word through to us:
  - He used the spoken word: "Thus saith the Lord!"
  - He used "signs and wonders," parting the Red Sea or making the sun stand still
  - He had one prophet lay on his left side for a whole year, and then had him roll over onto his right side for another year.
  - He even used a donkey!

But when Jesus came, all those other communication methods stopped.

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son ... (Hebrews 1:2a)

The only place to get the word of God is from Jesus. Unless your life brings you to Jesus you are not getting the word of God.

Scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer once said: "The best way to send an idea is to wrap it up in a person."

- The theological word for all of that is incarnation, meaning "in the flesh."
- Jesus is the incarnation of God.
- Jesus is the way that God sent His "idea" to humanity; there was and is no better way!

Like the little girl in Sunday School who said, "Some people couldn't hear God's inside whisper and so He sent Jesus to tell them out loud."

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. (John 1:1, 14)

To know what God has to say and what God is doing, you have to come to Jesus.

## **#2: JESUS CALLS US FAMILY**

Look at chapter 2, verse 11. When Jesus speaks, the text tells us:

Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. (Hebrews 2:11)

Who is the "them" in this verse? That first half of that same verse explains:

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Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. (Hebrews 2:11)

The one who makes people holy is Jesus. More on that in a minute.

- Those who are made holy are those people who put their faith in Jesus. Christians. You and me.

Every other religion in the world sees God as someone who is detached from them. Disconnected. Someone to be feared and avoided.

- For every other religion in this world, the chaos and trouble that surrounds us is of no concern to the god they worship.
- Their god leaves the mess to them to clean up and claims no control over the situation.

Our God, however, wants a relationship with us.

- In the beginning, He created us to be with Him.
- Throughout the Scriptures, He calls us to come to Him.
- In every moment of our lives, good or bad, He invites us to walk with Him.
- And in this text, He invites us into His family.

You see, God sent Jesus precisely because we were disconnected to Him. God sent Jesus to call us back into relationship with Him.

- We could not consistently hear God speak through the bloody sacrifices and the words of the Law.
- We could not consistently hear God through the parting of the Red Sea.
- Why else would the children of Israel be so on-again-off-again?

The ugly thing called sin so completely broke our relationship with God He had to communicate in a different way.

So in order to restore that relationship, God sent Jesus to extend to us the invitation to be reconnected, to restore the relationship, to help us become part of His family. It is this Jesus, the text says, who became the ...

... the pioneer of their salvation ... (Hebrews 2:10)

John 1, a chapter I have quoted several times already, includes this verse:

To all who did receive him (Jesus), to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God ... (John 1:12)

The Word of God who became flesh calls us into the family.

## APPLICATION

The famous baseball manager Leo Durocher once said:

I have never questioned the integrity of an umpire. Their eyesight, yes.

What we see makes a major difference! The call of this text is simple: See Jesus. No matter what, see Him.

But we do see Jesus... (Hebrews 2:9)

Amen.