

Hebrews 1:1-2

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[0 : 00] Would you turn with me now to the second passage that we read, Hebrews chapter 1, and to look there especially at verses 1 and 2 in this chapter.

Hebrews 1, verses 1 and 2. In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways.

But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

I want us to think together about what the writer to the Hebrews says here about what we can call God's last word to us.

He spoke in the past at many times and in various ways through the prophets. But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son.

[1 : 32] And we have no further revelation than we have here in our Bibles.

We become very familiar with our Bibles. We have them maybe with you this evening.

We have them in the house. We read them, perhaps not as often as we should.

But I'm sure most of us here this evening do read the Scriptures on a regular basis. And this familiarity may make us lose sight of the fact that the Bible which we possess is God's last word to us.

There are many groups today, as there have been in all the ages of the Church, who will come up with claims to have new and special, fresh revelations from God.

[3 : 04] The sects and heretics are adept at telling us about this. They make many claims like this, often contradictory claims.

But these claims are false. God has spoken. And God has given us his last word for what the writer here says, for this last age, these last days.

And we have it in the Bible we possess. That is why we should always take what the Bible says very seriously.

There are many homes in which the Bible is locked away in the China cabinet, or maybe a large family Bible kept as a coffee table item, because there is a family tree inside, not because God's word is inside.

Such times the Bible is used only in emergencies, or special occasions. The Bible, however, is not just for emergencies, although it is for that too.

[4 : 46] But it's for everyday use, as I hope we'll see. And I would encourage all of us to use the Bible, God's word, so that we become very familiar with its contents, and be directed by the things it says.

Through behind me here in the vestry, there are photographs of the various ministers who have ministered here in the Free Church in Aberdeen, and one of these, many years ago, the Reverend Duncan Leach was the one who very directly pointed me to daily Bible reading through Scripture Union, when he was the minister of the congregation in King Yusi.

And that is a habit that we should all get into, reading God's word on a daily basis. Why? Well, first of all, because the Bible is God's, what we might call God's definitive word to us.

Notice how the writer to the Hebrews tells us the way in which God has made himself known. He has made known himself and his will to us in the past, in the Old Testament times, by prophets speaking at various times and in different ways to them, and we have God's messages to them recorded for us in what we call the Old Testament.

[7 : 03] But now, says the writer here, God has spoken to us by his Son.

And he goes out of way in this chapter to show us the divinity, the authority of Jesus Christ.

He is above all so that the word that he brings to us and, as we read in John's gospel, Christ has come as God's word to us.

That is a definitive word. In the gospel by John in chapter 14 and verse 6, Jesus himself says, I am the way, the truth, the life.

The definitive article is there each time, and Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.

[8 : 14] And in later Jewish thought, the word truth was often used as a synonym for God himself.

So, when Jesus refers to himself as the truth, he is telling us that he comes with divine authority and that he and he alone is the source, the channel of God's redemptive revelation to us.

The way of salvation is found in Christ and in him alone. Jesus is the one from whom you and from whom I receive God's message of salvation for this age.

age. And he refers to this age as the last days. That's the age in which we're living. The last days. The end time.

And God has spoken to us concerning that. If we choose to question the Bible as to its truthfulness, or to look for more so-called revelations outside of what is made known to us in Christ, then in a very real way we are denying or we are contradicting what Christ himself has said to us, making him out indeed to be a liar, we're denying his authority.

[10 : 17] People in our time often argue that truth is relative. You don't have a definitive truth.

It's all relative. What is true in one situation may not be true in another situation. what is right for me may not be right for you and so on.

And everyone does what he wants to do or what seems right in his own eyes as far as morality and ethics are concerned.

But Jesus says, I am the truth. He's the living word of God.

The revelation of God's truth to us. Contemporary with every generation all was the same.

[11 : 26] He is as up to date, we might say as tomorrow. And he's speaking God's message to us in the Bible that you have before us this evening.

Therefore, we need to give heed, and that is what this chapter is telling us. We need to give heed to what God has to say to us in Christ which is incorporated in the scriptures.

It is God's definitive word to us. We find also that the Bible is the Holy Spirit inspired word.

God is inspired or breathed out by the Holy Spirit.

We have said that Jesus is the truth. God has spoken to us by him. He is God's Son.

[12 : 49] God's Son. And we are told that he is the radiance, the outshining of God's glory, and the exact representation of God's being.

He is the Son who sustains everything by his powerful word. word. And the Lord has caused this word, this powerful, authoritative, authoritative and definitive word to be written down for you and for me.

The Bible that you have before us just now that you possess, we read here in verse 2, in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

And this Bible, in your hand, or in the pew, or in your home, is a unique book. It is unique in terms of its composition.

There is a marvelous range in the scriptures of poetry, of history, of evangelism, and of so many other wonderful ways in which God is speaking to us.

[14 : 38] There is no other book like it in that way. Unique in terms of the way that it is made up because it was written over a long, long period of years at different times, in various ways, as we read here in verse 1, when God spoke to the prophets.

words, but it's unique also in the way that God has preserved the scriptures for us. We know that while the earliest books of the Bible were written such a long, long time ago, what we read today, we can be quite sure, is what was written a long, long time ago.

The scriptures have been preserved throughout the ages and its message of course is unique also in the way in which God comes to people in every part of the world and they can relate to what he says to them when they hear him speaking in their own tongue the way of salvation through the one Savior, Jesus Christ.

And when we look up in Paul's letter, in the second letter to Timothy in chapter 3, at verse 16, Paul there says, gathering all this together, that all scripture is God breathed.

God breathed, that is the work of the Holy Spirit of God who is, so to speak, the breath of God. In the Old Testament, the Old Testament word for wind and spirit being the same, the ruach of God, breathing out from God into the lives and the minds of those to whom he give the visions and the words to say and so on, working through their minds, but breathed out by God.

[17 : 15] All scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness and so on.

Peter tells us in his own graphic way as a fisherman that men of God, holy men of God were used by God to write the scriptures and that they were carried along, a nautical term, like a boat being borne along by the waves of the sea, the wind and their sails.

They were born along by the Holy Spirit of God. And the Holy Spirit, as scripture reminds us time and again, is the Spirit of Christ.

And that same Spirit who has given us the Bible in such a way that ensures its infallibility, for we read that the scriptures cannot be broken, is the same Spirit who makes Jesus known to us, who opens our understanding to the truth.

The saintly Bishop Ryle wrote about the scriptures that whenever the scripture speaks plainly on any subject, there can be no question, no more question about it.

[18 : 57] The case is settled and decided. Every jot and tittle of scripture is true, he says, and must be received as conclusive.

The word is the Holy Spirit inspired word. and so God has given us the Bible, the Spirit has preserved this word for us because it is the truth God wants you to know.

His last word for the last days and it comes with God's guarantee, as it were, that it is altogether true because the Holy Spirit we are told is the Spirit of truth who inspired the word and it is for you.

It is definitive, it is God breathed and the Bible is also an educative book, it is an instructive book.

It is written as Paul reminds us in that verse that I read from 2 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 16 and verse 17 goes on in the same vein, it is written for our instruction.

[20 : 35] And the writer to the Hebrews begins his letter by telling us about the uniqueness of God's revelation to us in Christ and then he follows this with a whole series of therefores which take you right through the book.

Because it is God's authority authoritative word therefore. Therefore he says in the first verse of chapter 2 we must pay careful attention.

In the first verse of chapter 3 we read therefore we must fix our eyes upon Jesus who himself is the truth. In chapter 4 and verses 1 and 2 we read therefore we must apply ourselves to the gospel we have heard and preached.

Therefore again we read in chapter 6 we must build upon our faith that is our knowledge of God that is given to us in the Bible and our understanding of the truth that he's made known to us.

in chapter 10 we read in verses 2 and 3 therefore let us hold unswervingly to the faith that we profess the faith that is built upon what is taught in this book.

[22 : 17] And in chapter 12 we read therefore let us throw off the things that hinder us progressing in the Christian faith.

Now what all of this is impressing upon us is just how vital the Bible is for us if we're going to have a healthy spiritual life.

Don't keep your Bible in the China cabinet. It's not an ornament. It's for everyday use.

Store it up in your mind and in your memory and in your heart and then practice it in your daily life and the same spirit who inspired the word will help you to live it out.

Writing to Timothy the apostle Paul told him to do just that because not only do the scriptures make us wise unto salvation but they educate us they train us in the ways that we should go.

[23 : 42] Look back again to that verse in 2 Timothy 3 at 16 all scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching rebuking correcting and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

in that chapter Paul is speaking about being rebuked being corrected being trained in righteousness and the proper authority as it were for anyone doing this was to use the scripture itself.

So the end product of Bible instruction was a person who could be fitly called a person of God thoroughly equipped for every good work.

So again let me say the Bible you have is a unique book. Take it seriously and it will change your life into something useful and beautiful for God.

And friends this is so vitally important in our day when so many people do not have a Bible.

[25 : 23] So many people in our own country where the shops any bookshop could sell you a Bible I'm sure but so many people don't have Bibles they don't know the scriptures so many people sadly don't even know who Christ is so that if you profess to be a Christian your life is a Bible speaking to people God's message so that if your life is a Bible molded life the message that goes out from you will be a true godly message and will be used by the Spirit to bring the reality of God's love and life and grace to those who are ignorant of him as yet and finally and briefly let me stress again that the

Bible the Word of God is God's final Word when the writer here in Hebrews uses the phrase the last days he meant what he said we are living in the last days making for the end and the end is that great day of God's judgment and that's a very solemn thing to contemplate and the epistle to the Hebrews is very conscious of that great day the Bible is the epistle to the Hebrews rather is full of exhortations to take seriously the thought of the last day and how we're going to react to

God's judgment then and how God is going to react to your life and to mine so the Bible itself ends with a solemn declaration about our attitude to the Word of God if you look up the last chapter in the Bible Revelation 22 and verses 18 and 19 we are told that we must not add anything to what is given us or subtract anything from what has been given God has spoken this is his word it is for our day the last days and God has given it in order that we might know Jesus as our

Savior ignore the word and you perish take it seriously and it makes you as the apostle says wise and to salvation it brings you the eternal life which is in Christ the one who is the word who became flesh in order that having lived among people like you and me he went with a sinless life to be the bearer of our sin on the cross at Calvary receive him and you receive says John the right to become children of God and Jesus we are told and we are assured that he receives everyone who believingly comes to him so take your

Bible seriously believe it act on it and follow the one of whom it speaks so eloquently the son of God the word made flesh the one who calls you to himself today amen shall we pray together our dear Lord again we thank you for the Bible your word to us we pray that you would help us in our study of the scriptures and we pray that you would help us to apply the teaching of the scriptures in our daily walk and life that in our thinking in our speaking in all our activity it may permeate everything we are and do that others may see it written on our lives and may the message be true to what you have said to us help us to be truly

[31 : 15] Christ like so that we may win others to Christ for his name's sake amen now let us sing in closing in psalm 119 again but this time in the same psalms version at verse number 9 and we'll sing as far as verse 16 that's on page number 157 psalm number 119 at verse 9 singing as far as verse 16 to the tune proselyus how can the young keep their life pure by doing what your word demands I seek you with my heart and soul let me not stray from your commands we'll sing from verse 9 to verse 16 and we'll stand to sing and now may grace mercy and peace from God the Father

Son and Holy Spirit rest on and abide with us and with all whom we love this night and forever more Amen