

THE WORDS OF THE FATHER

—AS SPOKEN TO US BY THE SON—



I will raise up a prophet from among their brothers like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

(Deuteronomy 18:18 LSB)

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS ...

Author: We don't know who wrote Hebrews. Neither the author nor recipients are identified directly. There is no introductory greeting such as Paul gives in his letter to the Ephesians.

- (Ephesians 1:1 LSB) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus.

Or as Peter ...

- (1 Peter 1:1 LSB) Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as exiles, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen.

Conclusion? God didn't tell us so it is not necessary to our study.

Date: Written in the first century and probably before a.d. 70.

Recipients: Probably the best way to describe them would be as those who were true believers and those who thought of themselves as believers—the second group having *a faith in a Christ* but not saving faith in Jesus the Son of God as revealed in Hebrews and throughout the Bible.

The most dominant **theme** is the superiority of Christ the Son with the author's **purpose** being to show the great divide and the dramatic contrast between Christ and every other rival for his love, allegiance and offer of salvation.

We will find **dire warnings** of impending doom throughout Hebrews for those foolish enough to allow any variance or compromise to undermine their belief in Christ in all of his glory and superiority. Any and every lesser approach to Christ will lead to an abandonment of the faith.



1. In the days long ago God spoke through the many and varied voices of the prophets, 1:1.

- (Hebrews 1:1 LSB) **God, having spoken long ago to the fathers in the prophets** in many portions and in many ways.

A. God has spoken.

Raymond Brown ... The letter to the Hebrews begins by asserting the greatest single fact of the Christian revelation: God has spoken to man through his word in the Bible and through his Son, Jesus. In Christ God has closed the greatest communication gap of all time, that which exists between a holy God and sinful mankind. [Brown, R. (1988). *The message of Hebrews: Christ above all* (p. 27). InterVarsity Press.]

B. In days long ago he spoke in/through the prophets.

Ray Stedman ... First, there were the prophets, God's ancient spokesmen (1:1-3); then the angels, Israel's guardians (1:4-2:18); then Israel's great leader, Moses (3:1-4:7); Israel's godly general, Joshua (4:8-13); and finally the founder of Israel's priesthood, Aaron (4:14-7:28). Each was a voice from Israel's past that needed to be heard but that was woefully inadequate if followed alone. It was clearly a case of the good being the enemy of the best. Eclipsing all these, as the rising sun eclipses the light of the stars, is the figure of Jesus, God's Son, creator and heir of all things. The abrupt beginning here marks the intensity with which the author writes. It parallels, in that respect, Paul's letter to the Galatians. The writer sees clearly that any slippage in the view of Jesus as supreme is fraught with the gravest danger and must be dealt with forthrightly and thoroughly. Since the same danger is present today, Christians must take special care that no obscuring mists of doubt or unbelief should diminish the stature of Jesus in their eyes. [Stedman, R. C. (1992). *Hebrews (Heb 1:1-3)*. IVP Academic.]



2. In the last days God spoke with a singular voice in/through his Son, 1:2a.

- (Hebrews 1:2a LSB) **In these last days spoke to us in His Son.**

Raymond Brown ... Jesus is God's prophetic voice. It is naturally important in these circumstances for the author to emphasize the continuity of the Old and New Testaments. Christ does not break with the great Jewish past. He comes to bring it to fulfillment. Without him the Old Testament revelation is partial, fragmentary, preparatory and incomplete. God spoke at different times by different means. He used many and various

ways. But in Christ he spoke fully, decisively, finally and perfectly. [ibid. (p. 28).]

A. Christ is the eternal Word of God and was God from the beginning.

- (John 1:1-5 LSB) In the beginning was **the Word**, and **the Word** was with God, and **the Word** was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5 And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

B. God gave the law through Moses but gave us the revelation of grace and truth through the God-Man Jesus Christ.

- (John 1:14-17 LSB) **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**. 15 John bore witness about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has been ahead of me, for He existed before me.'" 16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. 17 **For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

C. Christ—in a body that could be touched with hands and seen with the eyes—was the Word of Life.

- (1 John 1:1-3 LSB) What was from the beginning, what we have heard, **what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life**— 2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— 3 what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you may also have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.



To hear God speak through the Son we must understand fully and hold firmly to the superiority of the Son, 1:2b-4.

- (Hebrews 1:2-4 LSB) **In these last days spoke to us in His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all

things, through whom also He made the worlds, 3 who is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power; who, having accomplished cleansing for sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

- A. We are living in the last days.
- B. In the last days God speaks to us in/through his Son.
- C. To hear God speak to us in/through his Son we must understand, fully accept and receive biblical instruction as to the superior role of the Son in revelation.
- D. We hear what God has to say—his full, decisive, final and perfect message—when we hear his Son.
- E. We then must persevere in upholding Christ as the supreme, singular, lone voice of God in the last days.

Philip Hughes ... The comprehensive theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews is that of the absolute supremacy of Christ—a supremacy which allows no challenge, whether from human or angelic beings. As this is not an essay in academic speculation, it is apparent that those whom the writer is addressing, attracted by the teachings of some contemporary movement, are being tempted to assign to certain personages a prominence which would detract from the unique authority of Christ and thus have the effect of subverting the gospel of their salvation. It is of vital importance, for their eternal destiny is at stake, that they should not lose hold of this salvation which they have professed to receive, and to this end they must see clearly that Christ is without rival or equal. [Hughes, P. E. (1977). *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (pp. 2-3). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.]



4. Scripture clearly, plainly, powerfully teaches us that Christ spoke the Father's words.

- A. Christ is the “prophesied prophet” to whom we must listen.

- **Christ the appointed Prophet ...** (Acts 3:19–23 LSB) Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; 20 **and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you**, 21 whom heaven must

receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. 22 “Moses said, **THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BROTHERS; TO HIM YOU SHALL LISTEN to everything He says to you.** 23 **‘AND IT WILL BE THAT EVERY SOUL THAT DOES NOT HEED THAT PROPHET SHALL BE UTTERLY DESTROYED FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE.’**

- (Deuteronomy 18:15–19 LSB) **Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you**, from your brothers; **you shall listen to him.** 16 “This is according to all that you asked of Yahweh your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of Yahweh my God; let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.’ 17 “And Yahweh said to me, ‘They have spoken well. 18 **I will raise up a prophet from among their brothers like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.** 19 ‘And it will be that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.

- B. Christ spoke the things that he had heard from the Father.

- (John 8:23–30 LSB) And He was saying to them, “You are from below, I am from above. You are of this world, I am not of this world. 24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins. For unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.” 25 So they were saying to Him, “Who are You?” Jesus said to them, “What have I been saying to you from the beginning? 26 I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; **and the things which I heard from Him, these I am saying to the world.**” 27 **They did not know that He had been speaking to them about the Father.** 28 So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing from Myself, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. 29 “And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are

pleasing to Him.” 30 As He was speaking these things, many believed in Him.

C. Christ contrasted his actions—speaking the things he had seen with his Father—with their actions which they heard from their father.

- (John 8:38–42 LSB) “**I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.**” 39 They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you are Abraham’s children, you would do the deeds of Abraham. 40 But now you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God. This Abraham did not do. 41 **You are doing the deeds of your father.**” They said to Him, “We were not born of sexual immorality; we have one Father: God.” 42 Jesus said to them, “**If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come of Myself, but He sent Me.**”

D. The scribes and Pharisees could not understand what Christ was saying because they could not hear his word.

- (John 8:43–45 LSB) **Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word.** 44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. **Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.** 45 But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

E. Christ spoke by commandment of the Father who sent him.

- (John 12:47–50 LSB) And if anyone hears My words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the

world. 48 **He who rejects Me and does not receive My words, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him on the last day.** 49 **For I did not speak from Myself, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.** 50 And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.

F. Christ told the disciples that they had seen the Father because it was the Father speaking and working through him.

- (John 14:9–11 LSB) Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all so long and have you not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? **The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.** 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.”

G. Christ clearly told them that the words he spoke were not his own but were his Father’s words who lives in him.

- (John 14:10 NLT) Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? **The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me.**