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GOD HAS SPOKEN AND STILL SPEAKS: *Hebrews 1:1-4: Oct 7*

Introduction:

I wonder if you've ever received a card or letter in the mail and you haven't the foggiest who it's from?! Either the signature is illegible or the sender has deliberately kept his or her identity secret.

The Letter to the Hebrews is like that. We know that it was probably written to Jewish Christians in Palestine or in Rome at a time when Christians were suffering persecution, perhaps in the late 60's. Maybe the suffering was so great that some were tempted to return to their Jewish faith.

As we have readings from Hebrews over the next few weeks, we'll see that one of the main emphases of the letter is that Christ is from God and is better than the angels, Moses, Joshua, any priest and his is the only complete and perfect sacrifice.

But as to the identity of the writer, we just don't know. Ultimately of course, God is the author who inspired the writer and his focus is on Jesus. As the letter begins, we see two claims:

1. God has spoken.

To the unbeliever, this is an extraordinary claim. They might believe that there's a God but it seems a bit far-fetched to say that He's communicated with human beings. But that's the claim: *In the past God spoke.*

Firstly, God spoke *to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways.* By the use of the word *forefathers*, the writer means mainly their Jewish ancestors. Our Old Testament is packed with God's communication through such people as Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah and a host of others. And *he spoke in various ways:* through dreams and

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visions, through people's minds, an audible voice and even through a donkey!

Secondly, *in the last days he has spoken to us by his Son*. The phrase *in the last days* refers to the period of 3 years or so in which the Lord Jesus, from the age of about 30, taught about the Kingdom of God calling people to repent and he performed miracles.

We know that God continues to speak to us today, chiefly through the pages of the Bible as well as through His creation. That's why the personal reading of the Bible and the reading of the Bible when we gather as the church is so important. That's why the sermon is important, the purpose of which is explain what God is saying through the pages of the Bible and to help people see that it is important for the everyday life of the Christian.

### 2. Who is this Son?

Those of us who have children and Grandchildren usually love talking about them. We show photos and give their latest news to anyone who's interested. Some even post these details on Facebook for the world to see. We leave others with no doubt who **our** children are!

The writer to the Hebrews leaves us in no doubt that the Son of God is Jesus. What does he say about him in these few verses?

- This Son has been *appointed by God as the heir of all things*.
- This Son is the one through whom God *made the universe*.

The Apostle John says at the beginning of his Gospel something similar: *Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made*.

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The Apostle Paul wrote *by him (Jesus) all things were created, by him and for him.*

- This Son *is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being.* Jesus is God come in human form.

The Apostle John writes: *The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.* Jesus didn't begin to exist at Bethlehem. He has always been. He came *from* the Father.

The Apostle Paul wrote: *He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God and in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.*

Jesus is not a God "look-alike" or a clone. He is God the Son.

We know what God is like by looking at Jesus.

- This Son sustains *all things by his powerful word.* Jesus was not only the agent of creation. He is not only the owner of all things. He also keeps it going!
- This Son *provided purification for sins.* Sin separates humans from God. Sin must be punished. On the cross, Jesus paid the punishment that our sins deserve. When we accept Jesus' death on our behalf, we are forgiven and made clean of all sin.
- This Son returned to the Father at the Ascension and is with Him now, waiting to come back as the judge of the living and the dead.
- This Son is superior to the angels. Chapter one goes on to talk about that at length.

### How do we respond to this information about God speaking and about His Son Jesus?

God has spoken and continues to speak today. We need to listen to God through the Bible, privately and as part of His Church.

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We need to be certain that we have responded to Him in repentance and faith by accepting Jesus as our Saviour and Lord.

We need to live our lives for Him in joyful obedience.

We need to keep growing in the faith.

We need to help others to come to know and love Him.