

Slide 1

## God's Powerful Word

**Hebrews 4:12-13**

Even though we will look at only 2 verses from the letter to the Hebrews today, they speak about something very important.

We will see that as we will read these verses.

So, let's start with them.

## Hebrews 4:12

- For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
- Want het Woord van God is levend en krachtig en scherper dan enig tweesnijdend zwaard, en het dringt door tot op de scheiding van ziel en geest, van gewrichten en merg, en het oordeelt de overleggingen en gedachten van het hart.

As we speak about God's Word, we need to realize that this relates to two things:

- The Word of God as it has come to us in written form
- The Word of God as it has come to us in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this sermon we will look at both aspects.

But first let's look at the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse from Hebrews.

### Hebrews 4:13

- **And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.**
- **En er is geen schepsel onzichtbaar voor Hem, maar alles ligt naakt en ontbloot voor de ogen van Hem aan Wie wij rekenschap hebben af te leggen.**

While we may be able to hide things from our fellow human beings, we cannot do that from God! He knows and sees everything!

And even though as disciples of Christ we are saved from our sins, we still must give an account of our lives to Him. We see that for instance in Romans 14:12 and in 1 Peter 4:5.

How powerful the Word of God is we can see already in the first chapter of the Bible in Genesis 1.

Let's look at one example of it.

### Genesis 1:3

- **Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.**
- **En God zei: Laat er licht zijn! En er was licht.**

Throughout the story of the creation we see that God said something and then it was there.

Only God can do that, and it makes it clear to us from the very beginning of creation and the beginning of the Bible how powerful the Word of God is.

That is also true for that part of the Bible that we call the Law.

Let's look at what Psalm 19 says about it.

### Psalm 19:7-8 (Ned. 8-9)

- The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul;  
The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple;
- The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart;  
The commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes;
- De wet van de HEERE is volmaakt, zij bekeert de ziel;  
de getuigenis van de HEERE is betrouwbaar, zij geeft de eenvoudige wijsheid.
- De bevelen van de HEERE zijn recht, zij verblijden het hart; het gebod van de HEERE is zuiver, het verlicht de ogen.

The law is part of the Word of God and as we see in these 2 verses it is quite powerful also.

Just to clarify an important thing: the law was not given to condemn us, but to guide us in the way we should live as the people of God.

But the law also makes clear which things are evil in the eyes of God, or, as we would say it, are sin in the eyes of God.

And it is sin that condemns us, and sin is the reason why death came into the world, as we see for instance in Romans 6:23 (the wages of sin is death) and in Ezekiel 18:4, 20.

Let's also look at several Scriptures from Psalm 119.

### Psalm 119:1-2

- **Blessed *are* the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the LORD!**
- **Blessed *are* those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!**
- **Welzalgig zijn de oprechten van wandel, die in de wet van de HEERE gaan.**
- **Welzalgig wie Zijn getuigenissen in acht nemen, die Hem met heel hun hart zoeken,**

We're going to look at quite some verses from this Psalm and I will not comment too much on them because I believe they are quite clear in what they say.

The Psalm start by saying when you will be blessed.

Let's go to the next verses.

### Psalm 119:3-4

- They also do no iniquity; They walk in His ways.
- You have commanded *us* To keep Your precepts diligently.
- Die ook geen onrecht bedrijven, maar in Zijn wegen gaan.
- HEERE, Ú hebt geboden om Uw bevelen ten zeerste in acht te nemen.

You want to know how to live a holy life?

These verses tell you how to do that, isn't it?

### Psalm 119:5-6

- Oh, that my ways were directed To keep Your statutes!
- Then I would not be ashamed, When I look into all Your commandments.
- Och, waren mijn wegen zo vast om Uw verordeningen in acht te nemen!
- Dan zou ik niet beschaamd worden, als ik oog zou hebben voor al Uw geboden.

Apparently, the writer of this psalm also realized he didn't keep all the commandments of God. Paul mentions the same kind of struggle in Romans chapter 7.

### Psalm 119:7-8

- I will praise You with uprightness of heart,  
When I learn Your righteous judgments.
- I will keep Your statutes; Oh, do not forsake  
me utterly!
- Ik zal U loven met een oprecht hart,  
wanneer ik Uw rechtvaardige bepalingen  
geleerd heb.
- Ik zal Uw verordeningen in acht nemen,  
verlaat mij niet geheel en al.

Expressing the desire of his heart and a plea for mercy.

### Psalm 119:9-10

- **How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.**
- **With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!**
- **Waarmee houdt een jongeman zijn pad zuiver? Als hij dat bewaart overeenkomstig Uw woord.**
- **Ik zoek U met heel mijn hart, laat mij van Uw geboden niet afdwalen.**

This is the reason why we must instruct our children in the Scriptures from their young age on and why we ourselves need to read and study the Word of God continuously.

### Psalm 119:11-12

- **Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!**
- **Blessed *are* You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes!**
- **Ik heb Uw belofte in mijn hart opgeborgen, opdat ik tegen U niet zondig.**
- **Geloofd zij U, HEERE, leer mij Uw verordeningen.**

This shows the importance of memorizing Scripture and Bible Study.

**Psalm 119:13-14**

- **With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth.**
- **I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As *much as* in all riches.**
- **Ik heb met mijn lippen verteld al de bepalingen van Uw mond.**
- **In de weg van Uw getuigenissen verblijd ik mij meer dan in alle bezit.**

The value of the Word of God expressed!

**Psalm 119:15-16**

- **I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways.**
- **I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.**
- **Ik overdenk Uw bevelen en heb oog voor Uw paden.**
- **Ik verblijd mij in Uw verordeningen, Uw woord vergeet ik niet.**

Is this the attitude with which we study the Word of God, including what we call the Law?

I could have gone on with the remaining part of this Psalm, but we still need to look at some other aspect of the Word of God.

We see that at the beginning of the Gospel of John.

## John 1:1-3

- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- He was in the beginning with God.
- All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
- In het begin was het Woord en het Woord was bij God en het Woord was God.
- Dit was in het begin bij God.
- Alle dingen zijn door het Woord gemaakt, en zonder dit Woord is geen ding gemaakt dat gemaakt is.

The apostle John is speaking here about the Lord Jesus Christ and he gives us important information regarding Him.

And he continues to give us even more information in the next verses of this chapter.

### John 1:4-5

- In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
- In het Woord was het leven en het leven was het licht van de mensen.
- En het licht schijnt in de duisternis, en de duisternis heeft het niet begrepen.

The Lord Jesus came to bring light into this dark world.

But the prince of darkness didn't like that and did all he could to turn away souls from seeing the light.

This was the spiritual battle the Lord Jesus came to fight and win.

Let's look at some more verses from this chapter.

### John 1:9-10

- **That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.**
- **He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.**
- **Dit was het waarachtige licht, dat in de wereld komt en ieder mens verlicht.**
- **Hij was in de wereld en de wereld is door Hem ontstaan en de wereld heeft Hem niet gekend.**

The world didn't know its maker and basically even doesn't want to know its maker.

That's the problem of mankind: we want to be independent from God even though we can't exist independent from Him.

But let's go on to the next verses in this chapter.

### John 1:11-13

- He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- Hij kwam tot het Zijne, maar de Zijnen hebben Hem niet aangenomen. Maar allen die Hem aangenomen hebben, hun heeft Hij macht gegeven kinderen van God te worden, namelijk die in Zijn Naam geloven; die niet uit bloed, niet uit de wil van vlees en ook niet uit de wil van een man, maar uit God geboren zijn.

When we are born again, that is an act from God, not from us.

So often we hear people say that they accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, although quite often they only refer to accepting Him as their Savior.

But the Lord Jesus Christ told us very clearly that nobody can come to Him unless the Father draws him (John 6:44).

Our salvation is a gift from God out of grace. It never is something we get because we did something to deserve it.

Let's look at several things the Lord Jesus Christ said about himself.

### John 6:35

- **And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.**
- **En Jezus zei tegen hen: Ik ben het Brood des levens; wie tot Mij komt, zal beslist geen honger hebben, en wie in Mij gelooft, zal nooit meer dorst hebben.**

This of course is not speaking about physical hunger, but about spiritual hunger.

When we have the Lord Jesus Christ in our heart and life, we have all we need in the spiritual sense.

When we let Him live His life in and through us, He will guide us in all our ways and give us all we need to continue to do that, even when our old sinful nature tries to keep us from it.

Also in the next verses Christ compares Himself to being bread.

### John 6:51

- **“I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”**
- **Ik ben het levende brood, dat uit de hemel neergedaald is; als iemand van dit brood eet, zal hij leven in eeuwigheid. En het brood dat Ik geven zal, is Mijn vlees, dat Ik geven zal voor het leven van de wereld.**

Here we see a clear indication of the purpose for which the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world.

And it is on Calgary that He indeed did that, something we will remember later on when we participate in the Lord’s Supper.

But let’s continue.

### John 8:12

- Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”
- Jezus dan sprak opnieuw tot hen en zei: Ik ben het Licht der wereld; wie Mij volgt, zal beslist niet in de duisternis wandelen, maar zal het licht van het leven hebben.

While the written Word of God already can guide us in the way we should go, the Lord Jesus Christ is our great example.

Listen to what we read in Romans 8:29

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

The Lord Jesus Christ is to be our example for the way we should live our lives. And that high standard can only be reached by dying to ourselves and let Christ live His life through us, just as the apostle Paul said:

it is no longer I who lives, but Christ that lives in me (Galatians 2:20)

## John 10:7, 9

- Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.
- “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.
- Jezus dan zei opnieuw tegen hen: Voorwaar, voorwaar, ik zeg u: Ik ben de Deur voor de schapen.
- Ik ben de Deur; als iemand door Mij naar binnen gaat, zal hij behouden worden; en hij zal ingaan en uitgaan en weide vinden.

Christ is our doorway into life eternal, as we also read in Acts 4:12  
“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

And not only is Christ the door through which we must enter the Kingdom of God, but He also tells us that He is our shepherd, looking after us, as we see in the next verses.

John 10:11, 14

- “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.
- “I am the good shepherd; and I know My *sheep*, and am known by My own.
- Ik ben de goede Herder; de goede herder geeft zijn leven voor de schapen.
- k ben de goede Herder en Ik ken de Mijnen en word door de Mijnen gekend,

As a shepherd Christ also looks after us and cares for us.

Not only gave He His life, so that we can have eternal life, but He is also pleading for us with the father, as we see in Hebrews 7:25  
Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Do we realize that Christ Himself is interceding for us, His disciples?

But let's see what He is even more for us.

### John 11:25-26

- Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.
- "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"
- Jezus zei tegen haar: Ik ben de Opstanding en het Leven; wie in Mij gelooft, zal leven, ook al was hij gestorven, en ieder die leeft en in Mij gelooft, zal niet sterven in eeuwigheid. Geloof u dat?

Again a very powerful statement from our Lord Jesus Christ.

These are the words our Lord spoke to Martha after the death of Lazarus. And He surely raised Lazarus from the death, as we also can read in that same chapter.

But let's continue.

John 14:6

- **Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**
- **Jezus zei tegen hem: Ik ben de Weg, de Waarheid en het Leven. Niemand komt tot de Vader dan door Mij.**

These words the Lord Jesus Christ spoke to Thomas during the last Supper, as He was explaining to them that He wouldn't be with them in physical form much longer anymore.

Many people do not want to hear this as they want to establish their own way to come to God. But Jesus is indeed the only way for reconciliation with God.

Let's continue.

John 15:5

- **“I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.**
- **Ik ben de Wijnstok, u de ranken; wie in Mij blijft, en Ik in hem, die draagt veel vrucht, want zonder Mij kunt u niets doen.**

Here Christ explains that we only can bear fruit by abiding in Him, by continuing in a very intimate relationship with Him.

And again it says that, apart from Him, we cannot do anything. We don't depend on Him for our salvation only, but also for living the true life as His disciple.

Let's go to the last verse for today.

Psalm 119:105

- **Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.**
- **Uw woord is een lamp voor mijn voet en een licht op mijn pad.**

This is true both for the written Word of God as well as for the living Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:4 tells us the following:

For Christ *is* the **end** of the **law** for righteousness to everyone who believes.

The Law is pointing us to Christ for salvation.

The Law cannot save us, not because it was a bad law, but because it cannot help us cure the problem inside us. That's one of the big lessons we learn from the Old Testament.

Only the living Word of God can indeed do that. He is our hope!

Let's pray.