

What did gospel mean in paul's world



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GOSPEL AND PAUL Modern Christianity always attribute the term Gospel as referring to a “ book about Jesus”. But during the time of Paul, the term Gospel not only implies or refers to a book about Jesus but that it also signifies or stands as “ a message proclaimed by word of mouth (Hogan 40).” In light of this, let us try to understand, what “ Gospel” means in Paul’s world.

Paul, the Apostle of the Gentile, has proffered us four points with which we can comprehend the connection of the term Gospel with his world, with his works.

The first point is that the “ Gospel” for Paul is the proclamation of the triumph of the crucifixion of Jesus, not only over sin but over death itself. The crucifixion is God’s way of showing to humanity that “ God has reversed the values of the world. He has done the impossible. He has turned shame into glory and glory into shame. His is the folly that outsmarts the wise, the weakness that overpowers the strong...the liberating victory of the one true God (Hogan 47).”

Second, that the resurrection of Jesus is the dawning of the New Age. That man is no longer bound by the shackles of death but that by the resurrection of Jesus, humanity is being invited and called by God to live in the “ spiritual body...(not) in the Platonic sense, i. e. non-material. He means a body (physical in some sense), which is constituted by the ‘ spirit’ (Hogan 50). Thus, Jesus’ resurrection is the Christian’s hope that at the end of all the pains and sufferings that they may encounter there is the resurrection.

Third, that Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament - of the promise Messiah. The crucified and risen Jesus is the King in the Davidic sense. And that Jesus is the embodiment of the Kingship of God in this world.

And lastly, Jesus is the King and God not only of the Jews but of the entire world. This shows us that God's kingship is not limited solely among the Jews but that his Lordship encompass all the peoples of the world for He is the One True God and that through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God's victory over all the evils, powers and death is " God's victory over all the world (Hogan 47)."

In the end, Gospel for Paul is a proclamation not only of the acts of Jesus - His life, death and resurrection - but that Jesus himself is the fulfilment of the Messianic promise(s) that resounds over and over again in the Old Testament. But more than that, Paul has presented to us that the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus opened the doors of heavens not only for the Jews but for all people - Jews and Gentiles - as Jesus' victory is over all the world. This is the meaning of the ' gospel' to Paul in his in his time. Truly a message of hope...

Bibliography:

Hogan, John G. Heralds of the King. Manchester: Ayer Co. Publishing, 1934.