

“Selected Studies in the Gospels”  
Introduction, Part 1

**What is the Gospel?**

1. εὐαγγέλιον (*euangélion*)—“good news.”
  - a. In classical literature the word designated the reward for good tidings. The word *also* indicated the message itself, originally the announcement of victory, but later applied to other messages bringing joy.
2. בָּשַׂר (*basar*)—“publish, bear (good) tidings, preach, show forth.”
  - a. This root and its derivative occur 36 times in the *Tenach*.
  - b. “To bring good news, to gladden with good tidings.”
    - 1) Jeremiah 20:15
    - 2) 1Samuel 31:9 (cf., 2Sam. 1:20)
  - c. “To bear tidings”—even of evil.
    - 1) 2Samuel 18:17-33
  - d. “To proclaim good news,” e.g., the salvation of God.
    - 1) 1Chronicles 16:23-26
    - 2) Psalms 96:2
    - 3) Isaiah 40:1ff
    - 4) Isaiah 41:1ff
    - 5) Isaiah 52:7 (cf., Nahum 1:14-15)
  - e. “To proclaim good news,” e.g., the praises of the LORD.
    - 1) Isaiah 60:6
  - f. “To proclaim good news,” e.g., the Lord’s righteousness in the great congregation.
    - 1) Psalms 68:1-11
  - g. The Messianic servant preaches good tidings to the meek.
    - 1) Isaiah 61:1-2
  - h. Summary:
    - 1) In the historical literature, the occurrences of בָּשַׂר cluster around two events;
      - a) The death of Saul (1Sam. 31:9; 2Sam. 1:20; 4:10).
      - b) The defeat of Absalom (2Sam. 18:19ff).
      - c) Although David received them differently, both were felt by the messenger to be good news.
    - 2) This concept of the messenger fresh from the field of battle is at the heart of the more theologically significant usages in Isaiah and the Psalms.
    - 3) Here—it is the LORD who is victorious over his enemies.
      - a) By virtue of this success, he now comes to deliver the captives.

- 4) The watchman waits eagerly for the messenger who will bring this good news first.
- 5) At first, only Zion knows the truth.
- 6) Eventually, all nations will tell the story.

**The use of εὐαγγέλιον (*euangélion*) in the NT.**

1. The word is used 76 times.
  - a. The gospel *is* the good news that God, through the Messiah, has fulfilled his promises to Israel, and that a way of salvation has been opened to all.
2. **The gospel is not to be set over against the *Tenach* as if God had changed his way of dealing with man, but is the fulfillment of Biblical promises.**
  - a. Matthew 11:2-5
  - b. 1Corinthians 15:54-56
    - 1) Isaiah 25:6-9
    - 2) Hosea 13:9-14:5
3. Yeshua himself saw in the prophecies of Isaiah a description of his own ministry.
  - a. Luke 4:16-21 (Isa 61:1-2)
    - 1) Isaiah 61:1-2
      - a) “good news to the poor”
        - 1) i.e. the poor in spirit (cf. Mat 5:3).
      - b) “bind up the brokenhearted.”
        - 1) *heal*—“heal, to cure, make whole”
        - 2) *brokenhearted*—“crushed, one with a shattered heart, thoughts or feelings.”
      - c) “freedom for the captives”
        - 1) *freedom*—“deliverance, pardon, forgiveness.”
        - 2) *captive*—“prisoner of war.”
      - d) “release from darkness for the prisoners”  
(LXX) “recovery of sight to the blind”  
(JPS) “opening of the eyes to them that are bound”
        - 1) *release*—“to open”
        - 2) *prisoner*—“one tied up, bound, captive, bondman”
    - b. Mark 1:14-25
      - 1) <sup>27</sup>*A new teaching—and with authority! ... (the) spirits ... obey him.*
        - a) Psalms 78:1
        - b) Matthew 9:35
        - c) Acts 13:5-12
        - d) Matthew 16:12
          - 1) Matthew 23:1-12