The Gospel in the Pentateuch Paper

Assignment 2-1 for BI5533 Old Testament History

Jarret Hutchison

The Gospel in the Pentateuch is a rather tough assignment I originally thought because I did not know how I would relate the good news of Jesus to Old Testament scripture, especially in just the first five books of the bible until I realized they lay out the gospel perfectly if you are just paying attention to detail. First we see the creation of man into a perfect sinless world, and then rather quickly we see sin enter in and leave man in a rather helpless state. After sin enters we see God’s plan play out in the need for redemption and how to go about with that redemption so we can be with him.

The first book of the bible and in the Pentateuch we see sin enter into man in Genesis 3 because of our disobedience to God’s commandment. We are not left hopeless though because then we see God make a promise in Genesis 12:2 to Abram “And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.”[[1]](#footnote-1) God is starting a covenant relationship here and promising to make Abram into a great nation while blessing and loving that nation. The Bible Knowledge Commentary states it well when they say “Genesis supplies the historical basis for God’s covenant with His people. This can be traced through the entire Pentateuch, for, as Moses Segal states, “The real theme of the Pentateuch is the selection of Israel from the nations and its consecration to the service of God and His Laws in a divinely appointed land. The central event in the development of this theme is the divine covenant with Abraham and its … promise to make his offspring into the people of God and to give them the land of Canaan as an everlasting inheritance” (The Pentateuch: Its Composition and Its Authorship and Other Biblical Studies, p. 23, italics his).”[[2]](#footnote-2)

Moving to the second book of the bible, which is Exodus, we see a need for God through the mosaic covenant. This need for God led to God’s plan for redemption and our need for it as well as the importance of being consecrated or set apart for God. God started dwelling among his people and preparing them for a relationship with him. Now we see the promise of God fulfilled as stated in The King in His Beauty “As Exodus concludes, the promise that Israel would become a mighty and large nation was answered. The covenant promises were becoming a reality. God’s Kingdom was coming on earth as it was in heaven.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

The third book in the Pentateuch is Leviticus and in this book we see God’s laws and requirements for his people. We saw in Exodus that God came down to dwell among his people above the tent but Leviticus takes it a step further and talks about Israel’s walk and worship before God now that he dwells among them and how they can deal with their sin through sacrifice. Leviticus gives the Israelites a way to apply themselves to following God by keeping his laws and commandments we see displayed here in this book. Much more than just asking them to follow them God demands that they practice them because he now dwells among them and cannot be around things that are sinful and profane.

The fourth book of the Pentateuch is Numbers, which deals largely as an “instruction manual” as stated by The Bible Knowledge Commentary. The main instructions we see in Numbers is God’s plan for the Israelites to enter into Canaan but they are disobedient. We see what comes from our disobedience because this generation is now stuck in the wilderness instead of entering the promise land that God had laid out for them. God did not break his promise though because he eventually did guide Israel to the promise land even after their disobedience.

The fifth and last book of the Pentateuch is Deuteronomy and in this book we see Moses plead with Israel to renew their covenant with the Lord. Moses wants to impress God word on people’s hearts so they can be obedient to God and inherent the land that is promised to them. Moses not only wants them to posses the land but also to abide in it as the Lord’s people. God continues to come after Israel and keep his covenant even though they reject him which brings me back to my original point that he is always working for our good and clearing laying out the gospel in these first five books for us to see.

The gospel or other wise known as good news is all over the place in the Pentateuch even though it starts with sin and looking bleak we quickly see God redirect things and come down to his people. God initiates contact and dwells among his people as well as teaching them and giving them a way of redemption so he can continue to dwell with them. We see Israel reject God quickly even after his many gifts and blessings but he still keeps his covenant and provides Israel a way to the promise land. Everything that I just summarized from the Pentateuch sounds strangely familiar and that’s because it is the gospel and it is how God has always worked reaching out to broken people to save them even though they didn’t do anything to deserve it, and when those people disobey/reject him he still stays faithful to his word. The Bible Knowledge Commentary says “only by unreservedly committing themselves to the Lord could the people hope to enter the Promised Land, conquer its inhabitants, and then live in prosperity and peace.”[[4]](#footnote-4) This quote definitely makes me think about the way God worked back in the Old Testament in a whole new light, I never thought that there was much connection to us now a days but I see after reading that the God of the OT that was calling Israel to unreservedly commit to him is in a very similar way calling us to unreservedly commit to him.

1. The MacArthur Study Bible, English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament and New Testament, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The King In His Beauty, Thomas R. Schreiner (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament and New Testament, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)