

A Study in Acts

Chapter Thirteen – First Journey of Paul



ACTS 13:16-29:

In our previous lessons, we began the first journey of Paul. It began in **Antioch** of Syria and from there; Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark went down to **Seleucia**. From Seleucia, they caught a ship to **Cyprus** and landed at **Salamis**. They would share the Gospel of Jesus as Christ in the synagogues of the Jews.

As Barnabas and Saul came to **Paphos**, they crossed paths with the proconsul and a sorcerer who had been acting as his advisor. As the proconsul wanted to hear from Barnabas and Saul, the sorcerer withstood them.

Saul, who will now be called from this point forward, Paul, openly denounced the sorcerer and struck him blind by the power of the Lord. This would give cause for the proconsul to believe the words concerning the teaching of the Lord.

Paul and Barnabas left Cyprus and came to **Perga** in **Pamphylia** where John Mark would leave them and return to Jerusalem for unknown reasons. From Perga they would travel north inland to **Antioch** in **Pisidia**, where they would go into the synagogue of the Jews on the Sabbath. As the invitation is given to speak, Paul is going to preach the Gospel and this becomes Paul's first recorded sermon, as Luke reveals it to us. We will look at this sermon in detail in this lesson; please use this outline:

Outline:

16-22 – Introduction (History of Israel introduced).

23-25 – Jesus Proclaimed the Savior (Savior - “Participle”; in this case, not a title, but a noun with verb properties describing just what He will do!).

26-29 – Fulfilling prophecy.

30-37 – God vindicating His claim to be the Messiah by raising Him from the dead.

38-39 – Through Him, the remission of sins is preached.

40-41 – Summary warning issued.

Text #1:

Acts 13:16-22 - Introduction (History of Israel introduced).

“Then Paul stood up, and motioning with *his* hand said, “Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: ¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it. ¹⁸ Now for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness. ¹⁹ And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment.

²⁰ “After that He gave *them* judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. ²¹ And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. ²² And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, ‘I have found David the *son* of Jesse, a man after My *own* heart, who will do all My will.’” – 1 Samuel 13:14; Psalms 89:20

Men of Israel and You who fear God: As Paul gains the attention of those gathered, we also see that the audience is comprised of true Jews and proselytes as well (Gentiles converted to Judaism). This is something we will see with regularity outside of Palestine.

The God of this People Israel: Paul begins his sermon with a historical reminder, and we will find that this part of his sermon is reminiscent of Stephen's in **Acts 7**. He begins with Israel in

Egyptian bondage and then moves to how their fathers misbehaved in the wilderness as God led them (**17-18** will briefly encompass **Exodus** through **Deuteronomy's** history).

Paul reminds that God gave them the Promised Land after they destroyed the seven nations of the Canaanites (these are listed in **Deuteronomy 7:1**); so, **Verse 19** briefly encompasses the book of **Joshua**.

Next Paul moves to the time of the judges of Israel. This is a lengthy piece of history that Paul mentions in brevity; if you add the years of oppression, years of peace, and the years that some of the individuals judged (minus Samuel and counting Eli – **1 Samuel 4:18**), it is exactly 450, which encompasses briefly the book of **Judges (Verse 20)**.

Paul sums up this portion of Israel's history with the people clamoring for a king; so, God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. Saul disobeyed God and was removed. David replaced him. David was the one whom the promises made to Abraham would be advanced; Jesus would be his fleshly descendant. **Verses 21-22** cover briefly **1st** and **2nd** **Samuel**.

Text #2:

Acts 13:23-25 - Jesus Proclaimed the Savior.

“From this man’s seed, according to *the* promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior— Jesus— ²⁴after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. ²⁵And as John was finishing his course, he said, ‘Who do you think I am? I am not *He*. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.’”

A Savior: Whereas the opening of Paul's sermon was reminiscent of Stephen's, it is now going to follow much more closely to Peter's on the day of Pentecost (**Acts 2**). This first portion coincides with Peter's opening **“Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know” – Acts 2:22.**

Paul publicly identifies Jesus of Nazareth as the Savior of promise; from David's seed as the prophecy of Nathan to David spoke (**2 Samuel 7:12-17**). The term given the Lord is a participle instead of a title; it simply is attached to Him as the reality of what He will do (in addition, it also happens to be the meaning of the name Jesus)!

Paul includes here that John prepared the way of the Savior and His kingdom (**Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; Mark 1:2; John 1:23**); as another identifying sign of legitimacy.

Text #3:

Acts 13:26-29 - Fulfilling prophecy.

“Men *and* brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. ²⁷ For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*. ²⁸ And though they found no cause for death *in Him*, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. ²⁹ Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took *Him* down from the tree and laid *Him* in a tomb.”

The Word of this Salvation: The word of this salvation is the subject of Jesus as Savior from **Verse 23**. Paul does the same thing as Peter; even though He came with the testimony of miracles, wonders, signs, and of John’s testimony, you killed Him even though you read every Sabbath that this would be the identifying characteristics of legitimacy.

They, because they did not know Him through the hardness of their hearts, killed the very one sent to deliver them from sin, which would in turn, give the very ones who killed Him the opportunity to life!

Note Peter’s words:

Acts 3:15 “and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.”

Paul emphatically states that this fulfilled all that was written concerning Him. Note the words of the Lord to His chosen after His resurrection:

Luke 24:44 “Then He said to them, “These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.””

To those who would blasphemously state that the Lord failed because the Jews killed Him; they would be better served to comprehend that because of the righteousness of God, everything God planned concerning the coming of the Messiah had to transpire exactly as it did, and could not have happened any other way! Peter stated with this same assurance, that the Christ was on the throne promised in prophecy to the seed of David (**Acts 2:30**). This fulfilled that not only would the Great Servant of God suffer; but would through His suffering, be victorious and establish His kingdom!

See: **Isaiah 53**.

Verses 1-3: His Life – He would be acquainted with grief.

Verses 4-6: His Suffering – Smitten and afflicted to carry our grief.

Verses 7-9: His Submission – He did not resist what was set before Him.

Verses 10-12: His Reward – His sacrifice would appease God for us once and for always, God would then reward Him (spoken of earlier by the prophet in **9:6-7**).