



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter 13

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Introduction

In This Chapter We Will :

- Trace the route of St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their missionary journey
- Study their evangelistic methods and message

Departure From Antioch of Syria (13:1-3)



- With his attention now on the ministry of St. Paul, St. Luke narrates the beginning of St. Paul's first missionary journey
- It started with the call of the Holy Spirit
- Prophets and teachers are gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Barnabas: Son of preaching
- Simeon ... Niger—of whom nothing is known
- Lucius of Cyrene: is mentioned in Rom 16:21, as one of St. Paul's kinsmen
- Manaen: was the son of the woman who nursed Herod Antipas
- Saul: The greatest of these men is named last
- His greatness was not yet demonstrated

Departure From Antioch of Syria (13:1-3)



- The prophets and teachers ministered to the Lord and fasted
- The Holy Spirit commands that Barnabas and Saul be separated for His work
- Separate: Consecrate
- Ministry is a call from God
- St. Paul with St. Barnabas are again the second time appointed apostle of the Gentiles, not of man, neither by man, but by an extraordinary commandment of the Holy Spirit
- With fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands is the ordination process

Ministry on the Island of Cyprus (13:4-12)



- Sent out by the Holy Spirit
- By His influence, authority, and under His continual direction
- Without the first, they were not qualified to go; without the second, they had no authority to go; and without the third, they could not know where to go
- Barnabas and Saul go down to Seleucia
- Seleucia is the first city on the coast of Syria, coming from Cilicia near the place where the river Orontes pours itself into the sea
- Cyprus is large island

Ministry on the Island of Cyprus (13:4-12)



- It was chosen as the first field, probably because it was the old home of Barnabas (Acts 4:36)
- It had a large Jewish population
- In Salamis they preach the Word in the Jewish synagogue, assisted by John Mark
- Salamis is the capital of the island of Cyprus; afterwards called Constantia, and now Salina, situated on the eastern part of the island

Confrontation at Paphos (13:4-12)



- Crossing the island of Cyprus they arrive at Paphos
- Paphos, next in importance to Salamis, was situated on the western part of the isle; and having gone from Salamis to this place is a proof that they had gone through the whole island from east to west
- A certain sorcerer - Greek: magus, or magician
- He pretended to have a Divine commission
- The Roman provinces at this time were divided into senatorial and imperial
- The senatorial were ruled by a proconsul

Confrontation at Paphos (13:4-12)



- Cyprus at this time was a senatorial province ruled by a proconsul
- Sergius Paulus: Nothing more is known of him than is here related
- He was anxious to hear Barnabas and Saul
- Elymas sought to keep him from hearing Barnabas and Saul
- This is the first time the name Paul occurs, and the last time in which this apostle is called Saul, as his common or general name
- The sorcerer, who was stricken by St. Paul with a physical punishment (although extraordinarily), shows an example to lawful magistrates how they ought to punish those who wickedly and obstinately hinder the course of the Gospel

Confrontation at Paphos (13:4-12)



- The sentence St. Paul pronounced was not from himself, but from God
- Every word here proves the immediate inspiration of St. Paul
- He was full of the Holy Spirit when he began this address: by the light of that Spirit he discerned the state of Elymas, and exposed his real character; and, by the prophetic influence of that same Spirit, he predicted the calamity that was about to fall upon him, while as yet there was no sign of his blindness
- He was fighting against the light
- Hence physical blindness for a season
- The deputy was convinced that Elymas was an impostor, and that the doctrine of Paul was true

From Cyprus to Antioch, by Way of Perga (13:13-14)



- St. Paul is now the leader
- From Paphos they sailed northward to Perga on the Asiatic mainland, an important city of Pamphylia
- John departing
- Why he left we do not know, but we know St. Paul did not approve of it (Acts 15:39)
- From Perga, they come to Antioch of Pisidia
- This place is mentioned thus to distinguish it from Antioch in Syria
- Though St. Paul was now on a special mission to the Gentiles, yet he availed himself of every opportunity, in every place, of making the first offer of salvation to the Jews

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- Visiting the synagogue, they are invited to address the people
- Invited to speak by the usual courtesy extended to visiting brethren, he arose, according to the Greek custom
- St. Paul's sermon to the men of Israel and those who fear God
- There were two classes present, Jews and the devout Gentiles
- The latter had given up heathenism, had learned to fear God, and were anxious to learn more about him; hence were wont to attend the synagogue

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- He reviews Israel's history from the Exodus to the time of David
- Even when they were strangers in the land, and greatly oppressed, God exalted them; made them a terror to their enemies, and multiplied them greatly
- He destroyed seven nations: The Canaanites, Hittites, Girgasites, Amorites, Hivites, Peresites, and Jebusites
- He divided ... - See an account of this in Joshua 14-15: The lot was often used among the Jews to determine important questions

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- Judges were rulers
- Samuel was the last Judge
- Era of kings started after that
- God was not pleased by their request
- St. Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin
- The Lord called the young shepherd to the throne
- David was not perfect, but he sought to do the Lord's will, instead of showing stubborn disobedience, like Saul

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- He proclaims Jesus as the seed of David who was introduced by John the Baptist
- Jesus Christ came in a direct and indisputable line from David, according to both promise and prophecy
- He proves by the witness of John that Jesus is the Savior who would come from David
- John, who preached before the Savior's coming, is named because he was well known to the Jews, and most of them regarded him a prophet

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- St. Paul now exhorts them to embrace the Lord Jesus as the Messiah
- He uses, therefore, the most respectful and fraternal language
- Having declared the coming of the Savior of the seed of David, he now shows to whom his salvation was offered, not only to children of the stock of Abraham, but to whosoever among you fear God, Gentiles as well as Jews
- They did not know that Jesus was the Christ, because they did not know the prophets
- A gentle excuse for the persecuting high priests
- In condemning Christ, they fulfilled those very Scriptures which were read every Sabbath day in their synagogues

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- The demand upon Pilate to slay him, when he had declared there was no cause of death
- The Scriptures fulfilled in his death
- Though the burial of Christ was an act of honor and love to Him by the disciples to whom the body was committed, yet since His enemies looked after it and obtained a guard of soldiers to keep watch over it as the remains of their own victim, the apostle regards this as the last manifestation on their part of enmity to the Savior

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- The resurrection is equally proved by the witnesses who saw it, and by the testimonies of the Prophets
- He offers evidence for the resurrection: eyewitnesses and messianic prophecies
- “We proclaim that Gospel to you which is the fulfillment of the promise made unto the fathers”
- St. Paul gives the thought in Rom 1:4: He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead.

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- The mercies promised to David, one of which was a descendant whose throne should be everlasting
- This quotation is made from Isaiah 55:3
- Quoted by St. Peter on the day of Pentecost
- This verse is designed to show that the passage in Psalm 16:1-11; could not refer to David
- David died, was buried, and never rose again
- As David had returned to corruption, and the Lord Jesus had not, it followed that this passage in Psalm 16:1-11 referred to the Messiah

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- St. Paul, having proved his resurrection, and shown that he was the Messiah, now states the benefits that were to be derived from his death
- He announces forgiveness and justification available through Jesus Christ, not the law
- Only through Christ does God offer pardon and forgiveness of sins
- He warns them not to despise the wonderful work of God
- He closes with a warning of the danger of rejecting Christ
- Quoted from Hab 1:5
- His words referred primarily to the invasion of the Chaldeans, but reached beyond to a greater punishment for the greater sin of rejecting Christ

The First Sabbath in Antioch (13:15-43)



- The Gentiles beg that he will preach the same to them on the next Sabbath
- When the services were over, many, both Jews and proselytes, followed them to learn more, and possibly yielded to Christ
- Many Jews and devout proselytes follow St. Paul and St. Barnabas, who were converted by this sermon, and believed in Christ, and cordially embraced the doctrines of the Gospel, that had been preached
- They should continue to credit the Gospel; to receive the spirit and influence of it; to bring forth the fruits of that spirit; and thus continue under the favor and approbation of God

The Second Sabbath in Antioch (13:44-49)



- Almost the whole city gathers to hear the Word of God
- The good news had spread far and wide, by means of the converted Jews and proselytes
- The Jews become envious, and begin contradicting and blaspheming St. Paul
- Contradicting the application of the prophecies to Jesus, which St. Paul made in his address; blaspheming by denying and speaking contemptuously of the Son of God
- St. Paul and St. Barnabas boldly rebuke the Jews for rejecting the Word, and turn to the Gentiles as commanded by the Lord

The Second Sabbath in Antioch (13:44-49)



- The preachers met this attitude of the Jews by boldly stating their purpose to turn from them to the Gentiles
- It was God's will that the Gospel should first be offered to the chosen people (Acts 1:8 3:26) (Rom 1:16)
- While the chosen people were to have the first opportunity, yet God had put no difference (Acts 15:9) between Jew and Greek
- As soon as the Jewish audiences manifested a self-willed, contradictory spirit, instead of engaging in idle disputation, the apostles were wont to turn to the Gentiles

The Second Sabbath in Antioch (13:44-49)



- It was not only the Lord's will that they should preach first to the Jews, but that they should then turn to the Gentiles
- So the Lord had shown in their own prophets
- Isa 49:6 is quoted, where Christ is declared to be a light of the Gentiles, and appointed for salvation to the ends of the earth; a world Savior
- The Gentiles rejoice, many believe, and the Word of the Lord is spread throughout the region
- Glad, not only that the gospel was offered to them, but that in sacred writings of the Jews, it was declared that the Gentiles should have the gospel
- They, too, had always been embraced in God's plan of redemption

Persecution and Expulsion to Iconium (13:49-52)



- Those who had come from different parts, and were converted, carried the glad tidings to their respective neighborhoods; and thus the doctrine was published throughout all the region of Pisidia, where they then were
- The Jews stir up devout and prominent women and chief men to persecute and expel St. Paul and St. Barnabas from their region
- Shaking the dust of their feet against them
- The Master's command was obeyed
- St. Paul and St. Barnabas go to Iconium

Persecution and Expulsion to Iconium (13:49-52)



- Iconium: In Lycaonia, about fifty miles east of the Pisidian Antioch
- At a later period, Iconium became celebrated as the capital of the Turks, before Constantinople fell into their hands
- The disciples, meanwhile, are filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit
- The happiness of a genuine Christian lies far beyond the reach of earthly disturbances, and is not affected by the changes and chances to which mortal things are exposed
- The martyrs were more happy in the flames than their persecutors could be on their beds of down



Conclusion

- Who were the prophets and teachers at the church in Antioch?
- Who separated Barnabus and Saul for the work of God's ministry?
- Fill in the blank in this passage: “Then, having fasted and prayed,
and _____, they sent them away.”
 - a. “Given them their commission.”
 - b. “Laid hands on them.”
 - c. “Agreed to their mission.”



Conclusion

- Who at Paphos desired to hear the word of God?
- Would you say St. Paul's judgment on the sorcerer was harsh?
- From where did John Mark depart?
- As St. Paul states from whose seed did God raise up Israel's Savior?
 - a. David
 - b. Saul
 - c. John



Conclusion

- What did St. John the Baptist preach?
 - a. The baptism of fire
 - b. The baptism of repentance
 - c. The baptism of forgiveness

- How did the people in Jerusalem fulfill the writings of the Prophets?
 - a. By building the Temple
 - b. By killing St. James
 - c. By condemning Christ



Conclusion

- What was the outcome of St. Paul's preaching ?
- What happened when St. Paul returned to the synagogue on the following Sabbath?
- Why do you think the synagogue leaders became jealous of St. Paul's message?
- How did St. Paul and St. Barnabas respond to the synagogue leaders' abusive remarks?
- Why were the Gentiles honored when St. Paul quoted Isaiah 49:6?