

ACTS 13

Acts 13 1-3 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

In this chapter we see the beginning of Paul's 1st missionary journey.

Missionary journey: It is awesome to be on the mission field..

We have many more states and districts, towns and villages to evangelise...

Some of my best part of life was being on the mission teams going to totally new places and evangelising and starting the church with complete dependence on God!

I am 43 with enough health challenges & have 3 kids but if God gives me opportunities to be on the mission field I am ready any day! (Jaffna)

One more thing to notice here is about a person Manaen..

Manaen who had been brought up with--or, the foster brother of (WEB etc.)

Herod the tetrarch--that is, Antipas, who was himself "brought up with a certain private person at Rome" [JOSEPHUS, the Jewish historian writes in his book - Antiquities, 17.1,3]. How differently did these two foster brothers turn out--the one, abandoned to a sinful life and stained with the blood of the most distinguished of God's prophets, though not without his fits of reformation and seasons of remorse; the other, a devoted disciple of the Lord Jesus and prophet of the Church at Antioch!

In the beginning part we see them reaching Paphos and converting the Roman Proconsul(Governor) Sergius Paulus. What a victory!

1. God's Word in History Acts 13:13-31

In the first part of his sermon, Paul – like Stephen in chapter 7 - recounts some of the history of the people of Israel.

èPeople of Israel –Jews wherever they lived were quite aware of their history! They are very proud of that history! So Paul started from their history to convince them about Jesus.

But he tells this history in an interesting way. Listen carefully. Who is the subject of almost every verb?

Verse 17: GOD chose our fathers; GOD made the people great; GOD led them out;

Verse 18: GOD put up with them;

Verse 19: GOD destroyed the seven nations; GOD gave them the land;

Verse 20: GOD gave them judges;

Verse 21: God gave them Saul after they asked for a king;

Verse 22: GOD removed him, and GOD raised up David; GOD testified that David was a man after His own heart, who would do His will;

Verse 23: GOD has brought from his offspring Jesus, the Savior whom HE promised.

The history of the people of Israel is the history of GOD acting powerfully to accomplish His purposes. And His purposes culminate in the long-promised offspring of David, Jesus Himself.

2. God's Word Incarnate

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
2He

was with God in the beginning. 3Through him all things were made; without him nothing was

made that has been made. 4In him was life, and that life was the light of all people. 5The light

shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Vs 14 Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Paul has already mentioned the coming of Jesus as the promised offspring of David in verse 23. Note that Jesus is promised in two senses: First, God promised David his offspring would reign forever. Second, ALL the promises of God to His people – including the promise of the land as an inheritance, and the promise that they will be His people and He will be their God – depend on the work of His Messiah.

Verses 27-31 elaborate on Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and show how He fulfilled the promises. Once again, ask yourself as you hear: Who is in control?

3. God's Word in Prophecy

In verses 32 – 33a, Paul summarizes and drives home what he has said so far.

32 "We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm:

"'You are my son; today I have become your father.'

34 God raised him from the dead so that he will never be subject to decay. As God has said,

"'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.'

35 So it is also stated elsewhere:

“You will not let your holy one see decay.’

36 “Now when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed. 37 But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.

38 “Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. 39 Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.

What Paul is saying is like this: “We preach to you this Good News: The promise to the fathers has come! That is, God has fulfilled this promise to their children – to us! – by raising Jesus!” Acts 13:32-33

This is the joyous news – what Luke earlier called the news of great joy for all peoples. Jesus is the point of all prophecy! All promises are now fulfilled! Jesus is risen!

Paul knows this conception of the Jewish Messiah is different from what most expected. Jesus

is not an earthly king, and He did not overthrow Rome. These Jews surely didn't expect their Messiah to be killed.

So Paul here shows the Old Testament justification for Jesus being the Son of God:

“You are my son; today I have become your father.’ **Psalm 2:7**

Isaiah 55:3 is quoted in vs34 God raised him from the dead so that he will never be subject to decay. As God has said,

“I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.’

35 So it is also stated elsewhere: (Psalm 16:10)

“You will not let your holy one see decay.’

Every event in Jesus's life was prophesied – even in our generation people (mere humans) claim to be gods! There are so many to worship them!

Jesus did not come like that! He came fulfilling every prophesy about him that was spoken and written across 1000s of years starting from the time in Garden of Eden to 450 years before his birth and also the prophesies of John the Baptist his contemporary!

If these prophecies about Jesus are perfectly fulfilled, what about the rest of the prophecies?

è1. Jesus will return and judge the world!

è2. There will be heaven for those who followed him and eternal tormentation in hell for those who reject Jesus.

4. God's Word Offered

Paul begins the offer of God's Word back in verse 26, before telling us of Jesus' life:

"Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to us has been sent the message of this salvation.

The offer continues in verses 38-39: This is now Paul's point of exhortation.

Therefore, this must be known to you, brothers! Through THIS RISEN ONE forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you! BY THIS RISEN ONE, everyone who believes is justified from everything from which the law of Moses could never justify you! Acts 13:38-39

In order to be justified before God – in order for God to declare you righteous – you must believe in the Risen One! THIS is the one and only way to forgiveness of sins.

So Paul says: “Come to Him! Believe! Trust Him! You know the Old Testament. You know that God created mankind for His glory, but we have all rejected Him. You know we deserve His just punishment. Jesus’ death on the cross is the only sacrifice that pays that just penalty. And the benefits of His death are YOURS – if you believe in the RISEN ONE. Then God declares you righteous before Him – He credits you with Jesus’ perfect life. So believe!”

This is the Word of God. This is the point of the entire Bible.

How do Paul’s listeners respond? In two very different ways:

5. God's Word Rejected – in accordance with God's Word

Paul ends his sermon by warning them that God's Word tells us that many will reject this free offer of forgiveness: **Acts 13:40** Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you:41 " 'Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish, for I am going to do something in your days that you would never believe, even if someone told you.'

He says, "Don't be like these scoffers! Accept this free offer! There's nothing you must do! There's nothing you must perform! Just believe! Trust! Turn! Don't be a stubborn fool and reject the Word of God!"

But despite his pleas, many do exactly that.

WORD OF GOD

This and nothing else tells us who God is.

This and nothing else tells us who we are.

This and nothing else tells us the way to joy.

This and nothing else tells us the way to life.

Acknowledge your temptations to thrust God's Word aside,

To ignore it,

To let it sit on the shelf,

To set yourself up as judge over it.

Submit to God's Word – and it will come alive for you.

Beg God for understanding according to His Word – and He will answer.

Believe God's Word – and so believe in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

He is risen! He reigns! And you can be with Him for all eternity.

Believe His Word – Believe the Gospel – and so treasure Him above all.

Acts 13:46-52 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: “We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. 47 For this is what the Lord has commanded us:

“I have made you[f] a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’

48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.

49 The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. 50 But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. 51 So they shook the dust off their feet as a warning to them and went to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

We see that there are many who will reject God’s word and yet there are some who will certainly accept and follow the word of God!

What happens to those who reject? Filled with jealousy and grow bitter and violent!

Vs.52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit

Reject Jesus – Ever Increasing wickedness –

Accept Jesus – Ever increasing glory

Romans 6:19 I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to **ever-increasing wickedness**, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness.

2 Cor 4:18 And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate a the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with **ever-increasing glory**, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit