

Acts Chapter 13 Continued

Acts 13:13 "Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem."

“Came to Perga in Pamphylia”:

Perga was a major city in the Roman province of Pamphylia, in Asia Minor, some 200 miles north across the Mediterranean from Cyprus.

“John departing from them”:

Whatever reason John Mark gave for leaving, Paul didn’t accept it (15:38).

While his desertion did not hamper the mission, it did later create dissension between Paul and Barnabas (15:36-40).

This was finally resolved (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11; see note on 12:12).

We find that Saul (Paul), left and went for the first time to Asia Minor.

Perga was the capitol of Pamphylia.

This area was inhabited by the Jewish people.

The worship of the false goddess Diana had been prevalent here.

There was even a temple built right out of town in Perga to this false goddess.

John went back to Jerusalem, instead of coming with them to Perga.

Acts 13:14 "But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down."

“Antioch in Pisidia”:

Not to be confused with Antioch in Syria, the location of the first Gentile church.

This Antioch was located in the mountains of Asia Minor (modern turkey).

This is not the Antioch in Syria where the followers of Jesus were first called Christians.

This was an area where desperate criminals roamed and robbed everyone that came through.

(2 Corinthians 11:26), is probably speaking of this trip when Saul was in danger of robbers.

They were not completely bad, because there was a synagogue there.

Acts 13:15 "And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, [Ye] men [and] brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."

“Reading of the law and the prophets”:

The reading of the Scriptures.

This occupied the third part in the liturgy of the synagogue, after the recitation of the Shema (Deut. 6:4), and further prayers, but before the teaching, which was usually based on what had been read from the Scriptures.

“Rulers of the synagogue”:

Those who had general oversight of the synagogue (see note on 6:9), including designating who would read from the Scriptures.

Whether they had heard rumors from other countries about Saul or not, it does not say.

It, perhaps, was a little unusual for strangers to come here, and even more strange for them to come to the synagogue.

Perhaps, these in authority in the synagogue thought they were probably prophets whom God had sent to them.

For whatever the reason, they opened the way for Saul and the others to speak freely.

Verses 16-41

In Paul’s first recorded message, he emphasizes that “Jesus” is the Christ.

Similarities can be seen between this sermon and Stephens’s (chapter 7), which may have been the first Christian sermon Paul ever heard.

Both Stephen and Paul narrate Israel’s history and prophecies, and warn their Jewish audiences not to reject God’s message as the “fathers” have done.

But there are also distinct differences within the two messages.

Whereas Stephen focuses on Joseph and Moses as prototypes of Christ’s rejection, Paul focuses on “David” as the “prophet” of Christ’s birth and resurrection.

Acts 13:16 "Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with [his] hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience."

“Ye that fear God”:

See note on 10:2.

This should cover everyone who was there worshipping in the temple.

A person would not be in the temple unless they feared God.

His beckoning with his hand was so that they would come close enough to hear what he said.

To put it simply he was saying, gather around, I have something to tell you.

Acts 13:17 "The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought he them out of it."

Saul starts with something that all Jews were familiar with.

This was something they remembered each year at Passover.

If you were a descendant of Israel, you were very familiar with this.

Acts 13:18 "And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness."

Also, the forty years in the wilderness was well known to these people.

Their unbelief had turned a journey of a few days into forty years.

Not only was this familiar to them, but to Saul too, since he was a Pharisee.

Acts 13:19 "And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot."

“Seven nations”:

See note on Deut. 7:1.

All of these statements Saul is making, is to reassure these Israelites that he was very familiar with what they believed.

Acts 13:20 "And after that he gave [unto them] judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet."

The “four hundred and fifty years” in the Greek text precedes the references to the “judges”.

This phrase therefore, chronologically covers the entire period mentioned (from verse 17 through verse 19).

That is, the Jews sojourned in Egypt for four hundred years, wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, and spent about a decade conquering Canaan.

So, verse 20 could be translated: “After these things [namely, the event spanning the 450 years in verses 17-19] God gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.”

Acts 13:21 "And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years."

“Saul”:

See note on 1 Sam. 9:2.

We remember that God did not want them to have an earthly king.

He was their King.

They insisted, and God gave them Saul to rule over them as an earthly king.

Saul reigned for forty years.

Acts 13:22 "And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the [son] of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will."

“A man after mine own heart”:

See note on 1 Sam. 13:14.

Some would question the reality of this designation for David since he proved to be such a sinner at times (1 Sam. 11:1-4; 12:9; 21:10 – 22:1).

No man after God’s own heart is perfect, yet he will recognize sin and repent of it, as did David (Psalms 32, 38, 51).

Paul quoted from (1 Sam. 13:14 and Psalm 89:20).

David also reigned forty years as king of Israel.

David was the beloved of God.

Jesus in the flesh was a descendant of David. In (Psalms 110:1), we see David speaking of his descendant Jesus.

Acts 13:23 "Of this man's seed hath God according to [his] promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus:"

“According to his promise”:

Old Testament prophecy points to Messiah as a descendant of David (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Psalm 132:11; Isa. 11:10; Jer. 23:5).

Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies of the coming Messiah (Matt. 1:1, 20-21; Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8).

Now Saul is making the connection here between David and his descendant Jesus Christ (the Savior of the world).

God had promised a Savior to the Israelites.

They called him Messiah, but they did not accept Jesus as this promised one.

Acts 13:24 "When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel."

“Baptism of repentance” (1:22; 10:37).

This is speaking of John the Baptist who went through the country crying, repent for the Lord is coming.

This message was preached to the house of Israel.

Acts 13:25 "And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not [he]. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of [his] feet I am not worthy to loose."

John the Baptist, who all of the Israelites had great respect for, told them that he was not the Messiah, but was proclaiming the coming of the Messiah.

It is strange to me, that they thought so much of John the Baptist (flocking to him to be baptized), and did not believe what he had told them about Jesus being the Christ (the Messiah).

Acts 13:26 "Men [and] brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent."

“Feareth God”:

See note on 10:2.

This includes everyone who believes in God.

God sent His Son to be the Savior of them all.

Paul reminds them here, that the message of salvation through Jesus Christ was sent to the physical house of Israel first.

Stock of Abraham means physical house of Israel.

Acts 13:27 "For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled [them] in condemning [him]."

“Rulers”:

All of the supposed experts in the Old Testament, including the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and the priests.

Paul now is reminding them here, of the prophets who prophesied that Jesus would be rejected by his own.

This was so true, because His own received Him not.

The prophets read the Scriptures every Saturday which told of this very thing.

Acts 13:28 "And though they found no cause of death [in him], yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain."

“Pilate”:

See notes on 3:13; Matt. 27:2.

We went into this in great detail in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Just to touch on it here, Pilate was against crucifying Jesus.

He washed his hands of the whole matter.

The temple rulers and most of the other Israelites wanted Him crucified.

They even told Pilate that they and their children would bear the blame.

Jesus had fulfilled all the prophecies, but they had scales over their eyes and would not accept the Truth.

Acts 13:29-30 "And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took [him] down from the tree, and laid [him] in a sepulcher." "But God raised him from the dead:"

“Tree ... sepulcher ... raised him”:

The Old Testament predicted the crucifixion of Christ on a cross (Psalm 22, Deut. 21), at the time when this particular form of execution was not used.

His burial in a “tomb” was also prophesied (Isaiah 53:9), yet victims of crucifixions were commonly tossed into mass graves.

The climax of Paul’s message was the resurrection of Christ, the ultimate proof that Jesus is the Messiah, and the fulfillment of 3 specific prophecies (see notes on verses 33-35).

Paul tells them here, that even though they thought they were rid of Jesus (by killing Him and putting Him in a tomb), He rose from the grave.

Acts 13:31 "And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people."

“Witnesses”:

More than 500 (1 Cor. 15:5-8).

Paul says here, that it was not just the eleven disciples that saw Jesus after He arose.

In another Scripture, we are told that Jesus was seen of over 500 people after his resurrection.

Paul is telling them that there were many eyewitnesses that they can check with.

These eyewitnesses are telling this everywhere.

It will not be difficult to find someone who saw Him.

Acts 13:32-33 "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers," "God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

This particular thing Paul mentioned here is (in Psalms 2:7), but the entire chapter is really all about Jesus.

I love the 12th verse the most, it says:

Psalms 2:12, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

You see, if we put our trust in Jesus, we are blessed.

Paul reminds them again, that it was prophesied that Jesus would rise from the grave.

Acts 13:34 "And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, [now] no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."

Quoted from (Isaiah 55:3).

Acts 13:35 "Wherefore he saith also in another [psalm], Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

(Psalms 16:10), is the Scripture Paul is speaking of here.

Jesus Christ (the Messiah), and (the Word), is an eternal being.

Death could not contain Him for He is Life.

John chapter 1, tells of the eternity of His being (see note on 2:27).

The body begins to decay on the fourth day.

Jesus rose from the grave on the third day, so even His body did not experience corruption.

Acts Chapter 13 Continued Questions

1. At what time did John leave Paul?
2. This was the first time Paul had come to _____.
3. The worship of what false goddess was prevalent here?
4. When they left Perga, where did they go?
5. Was this the same place the followers of Jesus were first called Christians?
6. After the reading of the law and prophets, what did the rulers say to them?
7. Who did Paul tell to give audience?
8. Paul reminded them that God brought their people out of Egypt, how?
9. How long were they in the wilderness?
10. How many nations in Canaan did God run out to make room for Israel?

11. How many years after, did Paul say God gave the judges until Samuel?
12. Who was the first king of Israel?
13. What tribe was he from?
14. How long did he reign?
15. Who took the place of Saul to rule?
16. Who was the father of David?
17. Of whose seed did God promise Jesus the Savior to be?
18. Who preached the baptism of repentance?
19. How had John compared himself to Jesus?
20. What does stock of Abraham mean?
21. Who all is included in verse 26 to hear the gospel?
22. What was read every Sabbath?
23. Who did the Israelites choose to carry out their evil wishes toward Jesus?
24. How was Jesus killed?
25. After they killed Him, what did they do?
26. What happened on the third day?
27. Who are Jesus' witnesses to the people?
28. What is written in second Psalms?
29. "...Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see _____."
30. In Psalms 2:12 who are blessed?