

Acts 13

Introduction to witchcraft

Read 1 Sam. 28.7-14 – Saul and the Witch of Endor

Read Eph. 6.11-13 – the spiritual battles that we have to fight

How had Paul been prepared for his missionary journeys?

1. A Roman citizen
2. A Jew, from the tribe of Benjamin
3. The son of a Pharisee

Read Acts 21.39, 22.3, 23.6, and Romans 9.1-2

4. Highly educated (spoke with the philosophers on Mars Hill)
5. Widely known among Jews
6. Three years of collecting his thoughts – *Gal. 1.15-18* – went to Arabia

What were Paul and Barnabas doing in Jerusalem? See *Acts 11.22* – The church leaders sent Barnabas to Antioch to check on things; Barnabas went to Tarsus and found Paul

The Beginning of the First Missionary Journey

Acts 13.1-3

V 1-2 – Significance of the church at Antioch?

- 1st Gentile church
- The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch
- A strong congregation; had sent aid to the Jerusalem church
- Lucius – 2nd man mentioned from Cyrene
- Saul – mentioned last

V 3 – Like ordaining elders and deacons today? No – we don't have the laying on of hands today, and the other two items are optional

Acts 13.4-12

V 4 – Who began on the First Missionary Journey? Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark (*v 13*)

- Why start at Cyprus?** Because Barnabas was from there (*Acts 4.36*), and Paul was from just north of there (Tarsus). Also, there were some Christians there already (*Acts 11.19*)
- Selucia – at the mouth of the Orontes River (12 miles)

V 5 – Where did they preach first? In synagogues

Why? Because the gospel was to first be delivered to the Jews - **Read Romans 1.16**

-Who was their helper? John Mark (author of the second gospel of the New Testament; he was also the cousin of Barnabas and was from Jerusalem – *Acts 12.12*)

V 6 – Whom did they find? A man named Bar-Jesus (literally: Son of Jesus)

V 7 - Describe Bar-Jesus: He was with Sergius Paulus, who was the proconsul (represented the

Roman Empire in Cyprus)

-**What did Sergius Paulus do?** Asked Paul and Barnabas to come and explain the gospel to him

-**How did Luke describe the intelligence of Sergius Paulus?** Very intelligent

-**Magicians today?** Astrologers, psychics, tarot card readers, palm readers, etc.

V 8 – The other name for Bar-Jesus? Elymas

-**What was he trying to do?** Turn Sergius Paulus away from the gospel of Christ

-**Why?** Probably because he was making money off of his magic tricks with Sergius Paulus

V 9 – What did Saul change his name to? Paul

-**Why?** The Bible doesn't say, but...

1. Maybe in honor of his first convert

2. Paul was a Roman name; Saul referred back to King Saul in the Old Testament

V 10 – How did Paul describe Bar-Jesus (Elymas)? An absolute false teacher

V 11 – What punishment did Paul inflict on the magician? Blindness (for a time)

-**Why was it just for a time?** To give him the opportunity to repent (always God's way)

V 12 – The reaction of Sergius Paulus? Believed the message of Paul and Barnabas

Acts 13.13-16a

V 13 – Why did John Mark desert the missionary group? Maybe homesick, maybe just immature

-Notice it was no longer "Barnabas and Saul," but "*Paul and companions*" – a sign of spiritual growth on the part of Paul

-Desertion of John Mark – **Read Acts 15.37-40** – A sharp disagreement

V 14 – Why did Paul and Barnabas visit the synagogue on the Sabbath? To preach the gospel to the Jews (this is not an endorsement of Seventh Day Adventism)

-We should take an opportunity on any day of the week to preach the gospel to potential converts

-Remember the famous American bank robber Willie Sutton (1901-1980)

-He was once asked why he robbed banks, and he allegedly said, "Because that's where the money is"

-In the same way, Paul did not preach on the Sabbath to endorse that day as our day of worship, but to be able to speak to people who has assembled on that day

V 15 – Traditional Jewish service

-The Jews probably wanted news from Jerusalem from Paul and Barnabas

V 16a – Paul motioned with his hand

-We see this gesture several times in the book of *Acts* (for example, *Acts 26.1*), and it must have been one of the mannerisms of Paul when he was starting to speak in public

Acts 13.16b-31 – Paul's first recorded sermon!

-**How is Paul's sermon very similar to Stephen's sermon?** It is based on the history of the

Jewish nation (he surely had heard Stephen's sermon, since he had voted for the death of Stephen)

V 16b – How did he address the crowd? Men of Israel and you who fear God (proselytes)

V 17 – How did Paul begin in a positive way with the Jewish audience? Referring to how God had watched over the Jews in Egypt and had brought them out of slavery

Events in the speech:

V 18 - The stay in Egypt

V 19 – Wilderness wondering (accounting for 400 years)

V 20 - Period of the Judges

V 21 – Kings – Saul (from the tribe of Benjamin)

-Why would Paul especially mention that King Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin?

Because Paul was from that tribe (a very small tribe; it was a mark of distinction to be from Benjamin)

V 22 – David and the lineage of Jesus

V 23 – Who was the descendant of David that Paul was speaking of here? Jesus Christ

V 24 – John the Baptist came as the forerunner of Christ, as prophesied in the Old Testament

V 25 – John the Baptist was pointing the way to Christ

V 26-29 – How was Paul tactful and delicate in this section?

1. V 26 - Children of Abraham's family (those who fear God – the proselytes)

2. V 27 – Jesus was killed by the Jerusalem Jews (because they didn't recognize him)

3. V 28 – Merely fulfilling a prophecy – they asked (notice his tact)

-Why was Paul so tactful and tolerant? He had been in the same boat at one time (at Stephen's death)

-Read 1 Cor. 10.32-33

V 30 – Paul referred to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead

V 31 – There were many witnesses of the resurrected Christ

Acts 13.32-41

V 32 – Why was it good news? The Old Testament prophecies had been fulfilled

V 33 – Old Testament prophecy? The Messiah came from the father in heaven (*Psalm 2.7*)

V 34 – David died, and his body decayed, but the Messiah would be given a body that would never decay

V 35 – A quote from *Psalms 16.10*, and also quoted by Peter in *Acts 2.27*

V 36 – **What had happened to David at the end of his life?** His life had served God's purpose, and his body was buried and began to decay

V 37 – But the prophecies of the Old Testament said that the Messiah would not undergo decay

V 38 – **What was the result of the life of Christ that Paul was proclaiming to these Jews?**
Forgiveness of sins

V 39 – **In what sense are we more free under the New Testament than they were under the Old Testament?** Our sins have been forgiven (See *1 John 1.7*)

V 40 – Paul urged them not to reject the message and have the curses of God come upon them

V 41 – **What is this quote saying?** *Habakkuk 1.5* – God was telling Habakkuk that the plans of God were far above human understanding
-Therefore, the Jews should not work against the plans of God

Acts 13.42-43

V 42 - **What reaction did Paul receive from his first sermon?** Much interest – they asked him to return the next Sabbath

V 43 – Overall, it was a very positive response, at least at the end of this first sermon

Acts 13.44-52

V 44 – **What had happened during the week?** They had been doing personal evangelism
-Remember the nickname for Barnabas? "Son of Encouragement"

V 45 – Jealousy – "You can speak – just don't cause trouble"
-So the Jews started speaking against Paul and Barnabas and were lying and blaspheming God

V 46 – *Romans 11.12-14* – **The failure of the Jews equaled what?** Riches for the Gentiles
-**Who condemned these Jews?** They condemned themselves (they "judged" themselves)
-The Bible does not teach the doctrine of predestination – People themselves decide their eternal destiny (of their own free will)

V 47 – Quote from *Isaiah 49.6* – Paul quotes from one of their own prophets
-*Matthew 5.11-12* – The prophets were persecuted also

V 48 - **Why does this verse not teach predestination?** – Anyone who repents and is baptized is appointed for eternal life
-See v 46 again – they judged themselves unworthy of salvation

V 49 – Another progress report – The gospel was spreading throughout the area

V 50 – **Whom did the Jews lead astray and turn against Paul and Barnabas?** Devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city
(See *2 Timothy 3.11*)

V 51 – *Luke 9.5* – the fulfillment of the commandment of Jesus (*Matt. 10.14*)

V 52 – **What effect did this persecution have on the faithful Christians?** They were encouraged by what had happened

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