

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY (1)

Acts 13

Introduction:

- 1. The church at Antioch was first in several things:**
 - a. It was first to evangelize among the Gentiles (11:19-21).**
 - b. It was where the disciples were first called Christians (11:26).**
 - c. It was the first to send out foreign missionaries (13:1-3).**

- 2. The church at Antioch had outstanding workers (13:1).**
 - a. Barnabas was “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith” (11:24).**
 - b. Simeon Niger may have been a Jewish proselyte from Africa.**
 - c. Lucius of Cyrene is thought by some to be Simon the Cyrenian who bore the cross of Jesus (Luke 23:26).**
 - d. Manaen came from a royal background.**
 - e. Saul, former persecutor, is soon to become Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.**

- 3. The Holy Spirit selected Barnabas and Saul as missionaries.**
 - a. The church “fasted and prayed and sent them away.”**
 - b. John Mark, a relative of Barnabas, went along as a helper (13:5; Col. 4:10).**

- 4. Thus begins a new chapter in Acts and a new chapter in the history of God’s church as the Gospel is taken to the whole world.**

Discussion:

- I. THE MISSIONARIES SAILED FOR CYPRUS (13:4-12).**
 - A. Cyprus is a large island one hundred miles from Antioch.**
 - 1. Barnabas was a native of Cyprus (4:36).**
 - 2. Some of the scattered saints had preached there (11:19).**
 - 3. There was a large population of Jews living in Cyprus.**
 - a. Synagogues provided a ready audience to preach to.**
 - b. The Gospel was for the Jew first (Rom. 1:16).**

 - B. At Paphos, Barnabas and Saul were opposed by a sorcerer.**
 - 1. He was a Jew named Bar-Jesus but also called Elymas.**
 - 2. Sergius Paulus, the Roman pro-consul, wanted to hear the Gospel, but Elymas opposed the missionaries.**
 - 3. Saul took the initiative in dealing with Elymas.**
 - a. From this point on, Saul will be known as Paul and will take the leadership.**

- b. Paul was “filled with the Holy Spirit” so what followed was from God.
- c. He denounced Elymas as “full of all deceit and fraud, an enemy of all righteousness, and a perverter of the ways of the Lord.”
- d. By the power of God, Paul struck this false prophet blind.
- e. Sergius Paulus became a believer.

II. THE MISSIONARIES NEXT SAILED FOR THE MAINLAND OF ASIA (13:13-41).

- A. They landed at Perga on the coast of Pamphylia.**
 - 1. John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem.
 - 2. No reason is given, but later it caused Paul and Barnabas to go their separate ways (15:36-41).
 - 3. The missionaries traveled through the Taurus Mountains to Antioch of Pisidia.

- B. Paul’s preaching in the synagogue is his first recorded sermon.**
 - 1. As visiting rabbis, the missionaries were invited to speak.
 - 2. Paul was the main speaker on this occasion.

- C. Paul’s sermon is a masterpiece of Scripture and psychology.**
 - 1. Jews loved their history so Paul used it to preach Christ.
 - 2. He courteously addressed his audience:
 - a. “Men of Israel” were the Jews by birth.
 - b. “You who fear God” were Gentiles who believed in the God of Israel.
 - 3. Paul began with the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.
 - a. God “put up with their ways in the wilderness.”
 - b. He gave Israel the land of Canaan.
 - c. He gave them judges until the time of Samuel.
 - d. He gave them Saul as king at their request.
 - e. When Saul disobeyed, God removed him and put David, a “man after His own heart” in his place.
 - 4. David was the best loved and most honored king of Israel.
 - a. Other kings were measured by his reign (2 Chron. 17:3; 29:1,2; 34:2,3).
 - b. The Christ was to come from David’s seed (2 Sam. 7:12,13; Psa. 89:19-29; 35-37; Matt. 22:41-46).
 - c. Jesus was the Savior from David’s seed.
 - 5. John the baptist denied he was the Christ, but said Christ was coming after him.

6. Paul next dealt with the crucifixion of Jesus.
 - a. “How could Jesus be the Christ if He was crucified?” was a difficulty in the mind of the Jews.
 - b. The rulers of the Jews rejected Christ because they did not know the prophets.
 - c. They knew Jesus was innocent, but demanded His death, thereby fulfilling what the prophets foretold.
 - d. Jesus was buried, but God raised Him from the dead.
 - e. Those who knew Him best were witnesses of His resurrection.
7. The resurrection of the Christ was a matter of prophecy (Psa. 2:7,8; 16:10).
 - a. David was not speaking of himself for he saw corruption.
 - b. Paul made the same argument Peter made on Pentecost (2:24-32).
8. Forgiveness from all sins, which the Law could not give, is available through Jesus Christ.

III. THE REACTION TO PAUL’S PREACHING WAS MIXED (13:42- 52).

- A. The Gentiles wanted to hear more the next sabbath.
 1. Almost the whole city turned out to hear the missionaries.
 2. The Jews were jealous and contradicted the missionaries.
 3. They thereby “judged themselves unworthy of eternal life.”
 4. The missionaries turned to the Gentiles.
 5. Those who were “disposed” toward eternal life believed.
 6. The Word of God spread throughout the region.
- B. The Jews stirred up the prominent people in the city to persecute Paul and Barnabas.
 1. The missionaries were expelled from the city.
 2. They “shook the dust off their feet” and went on to Iconium (Matt. 10:14).

Conclusion:

1. God has given us eternal life in His Son (1 John 5:11,12).
2. Many judge themselves unworthy of eternal life by rejecting God’s Son.
3. Will you not lay hold on eternal life by obeying Christ today?

