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By Dan Maines

## Acts 13

### Acts 13:1-3

Now there were prophets and teachers at Antioch, in the church that was there: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set Barnabas and Saul apart for Me for the work to which I have called them." Then, when they had fasted, prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

† Antioch was now the center of missionary activity. The Spirit Himself set apart Barnabas and Saul for the Gentile mission.  
† Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History 3.1) identifies Antioch as the first great Gentile church, confirming its importance.

### **Acts 13:4-5**

So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived in Salamis, they began to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John as their assistant.

† Their mission began in Cyprus, Barnabas' homeland (Acts 4:36). The gospel spread first to Jews, then to Gentiles.

### **Acts 13:6-8**

When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a magician, a Jewish false prophet whose name was Bar-Jesus, who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

† Opposition arose immediately through Elymas. Spiritual deception resisted the gospel, but the proconsul was seeking truth.

† Roman records confirm Sergius Paulus as a historical figure, aligning Acts with archaeology.

### **Acts 13:9-11**

But Saul, who was also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, stared at him, and said, "You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not stop making crooked the straight ways of the Lord? Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time." And immediately a mist

and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand.

† This is the first time Saul is called Paul. Elymas was struck with blindness, just as Saul had been earlier. The parallel showed God's judgment on falsehood and confirmation of the gospel's truth.

### **Acts 13:12**

Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened, being amazed at the teaching of the Lord.

† The miracle confirmed the message. Sergius Paulus' conversion showed the gospel's reach into Roman authority.

### **Acts 13:13**

Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem.

† John Mark's departure would later become a source of division (Acts 15:37-39). It also showed the difficulty of missionary work.

### **Acts 13:14-16**

But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. After the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue officials sent word to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it." Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen."

† Paul began his first recorded sermon by addressing both Jews and Gentile God-fearers. This inclusive audience mirrored Cornelius' household.

## **Acts 13:17-22**

"The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it. For a period of about forty years He put up with them in the wilderness. When He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land as an inheritance-all of which took about 450 years. After these things He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. After He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.'"

† Paul rehearsed Israel's history to show God's sovereignty in choosing leaders. David became the central figure of promise, leading to Christ.

† Josephus (Antiquities 6.5.6) also recounts Saul's kingship and replacement by David.

## **Acts 13:23-25**

"From the descendants of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, after John had proclaimed, before His coming, a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And while John was completing his course, he kept saying, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not He. But behold, one is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.'"

† John the Baptist pointed beyond himself to Christ. The promise to David was fulfilled in Jesus.

## **Acts 13:26-29**

"Brothers, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent. For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing

neither Him nor the declarations of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him. And though they found no grounds for putting Him to death, they asked Pilate that He be executed. When they had carried out everything that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb."

† Paul highlighted Israel's guilt in rejecting Christ, yet emphasized fulfillment of prophecy.

† Tacitus (Annals 15.44) affirms Christ's execution under Pilate.

### **Acts 13:30-33**

"But God raised Him from the dead; and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people. And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son; today I have fathered You.'"

† The resurrection fulfilled Scripture and confirmed Jesus as God's Son. Psalm 2 was applied directly to Christ's enthronement.

### **Acts 13:34-37**

"As for the fact that He raised Him from the dead, never again to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: 'I will give you the holy and faithful mercies of David.' Therefore, He also says in another Psalm: 'You will not allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.' For David, after he had served God's purpose in his own generation, fell asleep, and was buried with his fathers and underwent decay; but He whom God raised did not undergo decay."

† Unlike David, Jesus did not see corruption. His resurrection proved Him greater than all previous kings.

### **Acts 13:38-39**

"Therefore let it be known to you, brothers, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses."

† Paul declared justification by faith, not by the Law. The Law could never bring true freedom.

### **Acts 13:40-41**

"Therefore, see that the thing spoken of in the Prophets does not come upon you: 'Look, you scoffers, and be astonished, and perish; for I am accomplishing a work in your days, a work which you will never believe, though someone should describe it to you.'"

† Quoting Habakkuk 1:5, Paul warned them not to reject God's work in Christ.

### **Acts 13:42-43**

As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people repeatedly begged to have these things spoken to them the next Sabbath. Now when the meeting of the synagogue had broken up, many of the Jews and of the God-fearing proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who were speaking to them and urging them to continue in the grace of God.

† The gospel drew a strong response. Many Jews and God-fearers embraced the message.

### **Acts 13:44-46**

The next Sabbath nearly all the city assembled to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things said by Paul, and they were slandering him. Both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and consider

yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles."

† Jealousy fueled opposition. Paul and Barnabas boldly declared the Gentile mission, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy.

### **Acts 13:47-49**

"For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have appointed You as a light to the Gentiles, that You may bring salvation to the end of the earth.' When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and all who had been appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region."

† Quoting Isaiah 49:6, Paul and Barnabas revealed the mission was always to include Gentiles. The Gentiles rejoiced at their inclusion.

### **Acts 13:50-52**

But the Jews incited the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their region. But they shook off the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

† Opposition could not quench the Spirit's joy. The gospel advanced despite persecution.

### **How it applies to us today**

† God's plan of salvation through Christ was foretold in Israel's history and fulfilled in Jesus.

† The gospel is for Jew and Gentile alike, breaking all barriers.

† Rejection by some does not stop the spread of the word. God's mission continues unhindered.

# † This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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