



MIDWEEK FILLUP | THE STUDY OF ACTS

ACTS 13

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

1. To trace the route of Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journey.
2. To give special attention to their evangelistic methods and message.
3. To notice that people judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, not God; and that people ordained for eternal life are those with good and noble hearts, willing to listen and heed the gospel.

SUMMARY

With his attention now on the ministry of Paul, Luke narrates the beginning of Paul's first missionary journey. It started with the call of the Holy Spirit, who instructed the prophets and teachers at the church in Antioch of Syria to separate Barnabas and Saul for the work He has called them. With fasting, prayer, and the laying on of hands, the two men were sent out on their journey (1-3).

Sailing from Selucia, they arrived at the island of Cyprus, the home country of Barnabas (cf. 4:36). Assisting them was John Mark (Barnabas' cousin who had joined them earlier, and was later the companion of Peter and author of the gospel of Mark; cf. 12:25; Col. 4:10; 1 Peter 5:13). Here they began what Luke later describes as Paul's custom: preaching in the synagogues of the Jews (cf. 17:1-3). Starting in Salamis, they made their way to Paphos, where they met the sorcerer Elymas Bar-Jesus along with the proconsul Sergius Paulus. When Sergius wanted to hear the Word of God, Elymas tried to prevent Barnabas and Saul from speaking. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Saul rebuked the sorcerer and rendered him sightless. Astonished at the power behind the teaching of the Lord, Sergius believes. From this point forward, Saul is now called Paul and also became the more prominent member of the missionary team (4-12).

From Cyprus they sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John Mark left them to return to Jerusalem (later causing contention between Paul and Barnabas; cf. 15:36-40). Arriving in Antioch of Pisidia, they attended the synagogue of the Jews on the Sabbath. Invited to speak, Paul preached Jesus by first reviewing the history of Israel from the Exodus to the time of David. Noting God's promise concerning the seed of David, Paul summarized the ministry of John the Baptist and then introduced Jesus as the Savior who was crucified, buried and raised from the dead, and seen by eyewitnesses. Offering further evidence of the resurrection from Old Testament prophecy, Paul proclaimed forgiveness of sins through Jesus with a warning against unbelief (13-41).

The response was positive, especially among the Gentiles, and Paul and Barnabas were invited to speak the following Sabbath. When unbelieving Jews saw that the whole city came out to hear, they were filled with envy and opposed the things spoken by Paul. Declared themselves unworthy of eternal life, Paul turned his efforts toward the Gentiles who were much more receptive. The word of the Lord spread through the region, but eventually Paul and Barnabas were forced to leave and thus went to Iconium. Their work in Antioch was not in vain, for left behind were disciples filled with joy and the Holy Spirit (42-52).

OUTLINE

1. DEPARTURE FROM ANTIOCH OF SYRIA (1-3)

a. PROPHETS AND TEACHERS AT ANTIOCH (1)

- i. Barnabas, Simeon (called Niger), Lucius of Cyrene
- ii. Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod), Saul

b. BARNABAS AND SAUL SEPARATED AND SENT (2-3)

- i. As the prophets and teachers ministered to the Lord and fasted
- ii. The Holy Spirit commands that Barnabas and Saul be separated for His work
- iii. With fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands, Barnabas and Saul are sent away

2. MINISTRY ON THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS (4-12)

a. JOURNEY TO SALAMIS (4-5)

- i. Sent out by the Holy Spirit, Barnabas and Saul go down to Seleucia
- ii. From Seleucia they sail to Cyprus and arrive at Salamis
- iii. In Salamis they preach the Word in the Jewish synagogue, assisted by John Mark

b. CONFRONTATION AT PAPHOS (6-12)

- i. Crossing the island of Cyprus they arrive at Paphos
- ii. There they encounter Elymas Bar-Jesus, a sorcerer and false prophet
 1. The proconsul, Sergius Paulus, wanted to hear the Word of God
 2. Elymas sought to keep him from hearing Barnabas and Saul
- iii. Saul (who is also called Paul from this point forward) confronts and confounds Elymas
 1. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Paul looked at him intently and saw that he was full of deceit and fraud
 2. Calling him a son of the devil and enemy of righteousness, Paul charged him with perverting the ways of the Lord
 3. Paul then foretells his blindness by the hand of the Lord, which happens immediately

- iv. Seeing what happened, Sergius Paulus believes, astonished at the teaching of the Lord

3. **PREACHING IN ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA (13-52)**

a. FROM CYPRUS TO ANTIOCH, BY WAY OF PERGA (13-14)

- i. Setting sail from Paphos, they arrive in Perga of Pamphylia
- ii. At Perga, John Mark leaves them and returns to Jerusalem
- iii. From Perga, they come to Antioch of Pisidia

b. THE FIRST SABBATH IN ANTIOCH (14-43)

- i. Visiting the synagogue, they are invited to address the people
- ii. Paul's sermon to the men of Israel and those who fear God
 1. He reviews Israel's history from the Exodus to the time of David
 2. He proclaims Jesus as the seed of David who was introduced by John the Baptist
 3. He preaches the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus
 4. He offers evidence for the resurrection: eyewitnesses and messianic prophecies
 5. He announces forgiveness and justification available through Jesus Christ, not the law
 6. He warns them not to despise the wonderful work of God
- iii. The response and follow up to his sermon
 1. The Gentiles beg that he will preach the same to them on the next Sabbath
 2. Many Jews and devout proselytes follow Paul and Barnabas, who persuade them to continue in the grace of God

c. THE SECOND SABBATH IN ANTIOCH (44-49)

- i. Almost the whole city gathers to hear the Word of God
- ii. The Jews become envious, and begin contradicting and blaspheming Paul
- iii. Paul and Barnabas boldly rebuke the Jews for rejecting the Word, and turn to the Gentiles as commanded by the Lord
- iv. The Gentiles rejoice, many believe, and the Word of the Lord is spread throughout the region

d. PERSECUTION AND EXPULSION TO ICONIUM (50-52)

- i. The Jews stir up devout and prominent women and chief men to persecute and expel Paul and Barnabas from their region
- ii. Shaking the dust of their feet against them, Paul and Barnabas go to Iconium
- iii. The disciples, meanwhile, are filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit

