

Chapter Thirteen

Chapter 13

- In verse 1, we are introduced to the "prophets and teachers" in the assembly in Antioch, apparently from many regions.
- In verse 2, as they were fasting, what happened?
- In verse 3, we see the ordination of Barnabas and Saul, involving fasting, praying and laying on of hands.
 - The word Apostle refers to a sent one based on the Hebrew word "shaliach".
 - The root for this word is "shalach" which means "to send".
- According to verse 4, who was the authority behind the decision to send these men out on a mission trip?
 - Is it important today to have such an authoritative

direction in ministry?

- What do you make of ministries today that apparently "wing it on their own power"?
- According to verse 5, what was their target audience for their message?
 - Does this support Paul's later phrase in Romans 1:16, "for the Jew first, and also for the Greek"?
- The text also indicates that Yochanan Mark was with them.
 - How important do you think it was for them to take along someone who had been an eyewitness of the history of Yeshua and his teachings?
- The Apostles travel to Paphos, the capital of Cyprus and meet a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet "whose name was Bar-Yeshua" which literally means "son of Yeshua", not an uncommon name at that time.
 - Would a Jewish false prophet who practiced sorcery be in violation of the Torah?
 - As some kind of court official, how much influence

do you think he had with the proconsul Sergius Paulus.

- According to verse 7, this proconsul was "a man of understanding" and "summoned Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God."
 - Do you think he was genuinely seeking the truth in his wishing to hear their message?
- In verse 8, what was the action of the false prophet, also named Elymas the sorcerer?
 - Spiritual opposition to the gospel message has always been a challenge for ministries.
 - How is this still a real issue in today's world?
 - Is resistance and opposition to the gospel less or more in today's society?
 - According to verse 9, what was the source of Saul's power?
- As an aside, consider the text in verse 9 that states, "Saul, who is also called Paul".
 - As stated previously, Paul had always had two names

given at birth, His Hebrew name Shaul and his Roman name Paulus.

- How does this refute the idea that God "changed his name on the road to Damascus"?
- In verse 10, how did Saul name this false prophet/sorcerer?
 - What did Saul then proclaim upon him?
 - In Saul's words, what was the source of this judgment, from Saul, himself, or from God?
- According to verse 11, what happened to the false prophet?
 - How appropriate and ironic is it for a supposed "prophet" to lose his vision?
- According to verse 12, what was the result of this miracle?
- In verses 13-15, we see Saul and Barnabas traveling to Antioch.
 - Where did they visit?

- What day of the week was it?
- After the customary reading of the Torah and the Prophets, the Apostles were asked to share any word of exhortation.
 - If Saul and Barnabas would have been teaching an anti-Torah message, as is often claimed today, would their teaching have been received by the synagogue leadership?
 - Would they have even offered it?
- Paul shares an in-depth historical review of his Torah-based faith.
 - Do you see any similarities between his historical foundation-based approach with the one he likely heard from Stephen in chapter 7?
 - Paul squarely bases his entire message on the covenant promises God made to the patriarchs. How important is this foundation to our understanding of the gospel message today?
 - Why do you suppose many current preachers tend to ignore this foundation?

- Paul links the offspring of King David to the promised Messiah.
 - In verse 23, when Paul mentions "God has brought salvation", how important is it to realize that the Messiah's actual Hebrew name, Yeshua, means salvation? Does the transliterated form of "Jesus" make the same connection? If not, why continue in that "tradition of men" by ignoring his actual name?
- According to verse 26, who is this word of salvation sent out to?
- Verse 29 refers to the death of Yeshua where it states, "When they had fulfilled all things that were written about him".
 - What was the source of these writings that prophesied about Messiah's death, burial and resurrection?
 - Did the people of that time frame have sufficient Biblical knowledge for them to place faith in Messiah and to experience the new birth? Consider Paul's later examples of the faith of Abraham and the faith of King David in Romans chapter 4.
- According to verse 30, who raised Yeshua up from the

dead?

- Was the proof of His resurrection witnessed by anyone or was it just a story?
- In verse 32, this promise of the "good news" or "gospel" was made to whom?
- According to verse 38, remission of sins is through whom?
- According to verse 39, justification of all things is available to whom?
- Why was justification never available through the rituals of the tabernacle system?
 - They were a necessary part of a temporary cleansing or covering (kaphar/atonement) that allowed the worshipper to stand in the presence of God without being killed but they never imparted complete forgiveness and eternal life.
 - The sacrifices and the priesthood did demonstrate God's method of forgiveness by highlighting the transference of the sinner's identity to an innocent victim to provide atonement. This allows God to

remain just while forgiving.

- It is the ultimate identity of Messiah as the innocent, substitutionary atonement that makes possible such forgiveness and justification as Hebrews 10:4 spells out.
- In verses 42-43, what was the response of the hearers in the synagogue?
 - Do you find that surprising?
 - Do you think a covenant-based, Messiah-centered message of salvation would be so warmly received in non-Messianic Jewish congregations today? Why or why not?
- According to verse 44, what was the overall response to their message in this city?
 - Was everyone happy?
 - Why or why not?
- Remember that these congregations included Jews, converts and seeking gentiles.
 - Why do you think the ethnic gentile element was so

eager to hear more of Paul's message?

- Why do you think the ethnic Jewish element were jealous of the success of Paul?
- What was the response of some of the ethnic Jewish element to Paul's message?
- Since Paul never delineated a "separate path for gentiles" which would support the Rabbinic invention of "ritual conversion" for them, do you think this was viewed as a threat to the ethnic Jewish element's theology of control and domination?
 - It does not appear that the ethnic Jewish component of the synagogues was offended by the gospel message of Yeshua as the resurrected Messiah.
 - It does appear that their objections to Paul's message was seen as a threat to their Jewish "exclusivity" and their theology of ritual conversion of gentiles.
 - Later, in his epistle to the Galatians, Paul again deals with this "Galatian heresy" of requiring ritual conversion of gentiles as a requirement to salvation. Apparently, some theologians can be quite stubborn and recalcitrant in refusing correction.

- Do you see any parallels between these legalistic teachers and Bible teachers and theologians of today who are equally stubborn and resistant to the clear teaching of the word of God?
- According to verse 46, what was the response of Paul and Barnabas?
 - Paul cites Isaiah 49:6 in which God speaks to Messiah in setting the wider field of His mission to include gentiles.
- According to verses 48-49, what was the outcome of their ministry in the region of Galatia?
- According to verse 50, what did the ethnic Jewish element do and what effect did that have on the ministry of Paul and Barnabas?
- How does verse 52 describe the resultant experience of the disciples?