

***“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —  
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 8  
Paul Begins His First Missionary Journey”***

***Review: “The Transition Gains Substance as Saul is Received by Peter  
and then Sent Forth in Apostolic Ministry to the Gentiles”***

- ***Saul’s Salvation Signals the End of Israel’s Pentecostal Opportunity***
- ***Peter’s Approval of Saul Follows Visitations of the Lord with Signs Given***
- ***Paul Is Sent Forth in Apostolic Ministry (With Barnabas and John Mark)***
  
- ***After Stephen’s martyrdom, Saul, his chief accuser, seeking more believers to bring arrest traveled on the road to Damascus. But he was intersected on the road by the Lord himself. The risen and ascended Lord Jesus visited him from heaven’s glory bringing Saul’s life into a true focus as “the light of heaven now shone round about him.” This was a great miracle indeed but was largely personal and really known only to him as to its details. The others only heard an indistinct voice speaking.***
  
- ***The Lord Calls Saul to Salvation Through the Very Voice of Jesus***

***Acts 9:4-5***

***4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?***

***5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.***

- ***Paul’s Commission Revealed — “How Great Things He Must Suffer for My Name’s Sake”***
  - ***Saul’s humbling continues now in the hands of his loving savior Jesus. It will continue that he might be made an example for many in how through his weakness the Lord’s strength might be made manifest and that his grace might be seen to be always sufficient. For that is the mark of God’s abundant grace!***
  
  - ***As we shall see, Saul’s humbling will also see the manifest power of God in miracles such as described here and there are many others. For example, he was stoned several times, shipwrecked, but saved by the mighty hand of the Lord. And, his testimony became that he was “always delivered unto death for Jesus sake ...”. Amen.***

### **Acts 9:22-25**

22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

23 And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:

24 But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.

25 Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. **[He was delivered, but in a basket!]**

- ***Peter's Approval of Saul Follows Visitations of the Lord with Signs Given***
  - ***Peter is taught by a vision that God is now going to turn to the Gentiles, which Peter is not willing to do — until the vision is given. Consequently, Peter gives his seal of approval to Saul — and this was his last formal work! He appears only one more time in the book of the Acts, in chapter 15 at that great council, where he proclaims that God is now working among the Gentiles and that grace is the theme - verse 12 — the signs and wonders convinced Peter that this was the work of Almighty God. Though he was convinced earlier with those signs and wonders, these here with Cornelius sealed his convictions.***
  - ***But the other disciples were not yet convinced as they themselves had not seen the signs, for only Peter had. They were still afraid of Saul, it seems, but perhaps much more importantly was what Saul was doing. Peter had accepted Saul, but would he accept fully what Saul was preaching and his full intentions regarding the outreach to the Gentiles? This had great implications regarding the Law which prohibited close fellowship between Jews and Gentiles.***
  - ***The testimony of Peter continues and concludes with many being now finally convinced that Saul had been chosen by the Lord and that he had been given a distinctive ministry. The issue will continue to be, however, just how distinctive that ministry and message would be:***

### **Acts 11:13-18**

13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

**15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.**

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as [he did] unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

- *Take note again here of the Signs and Wonders. And, the preaching was to the Jews only! Why is this highlighted by Luke here, we might ask, late here as it were in chapter 11?*
- *But was it not now time to evangelize the Gentiles? The dispersed had been ministering to the Jews in Gentile lands but were still preaching to the Jews only (verse 19)! What about the Gentiles? Wasn't Cornelius and his family tokens concerning things to come?*
- ***Paul Is Sent Forth in Apostolic Ministry (With Barnabas and John Mark)***

**Acts 12:24-25**

24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

- *Peter and others of the original disciples will now no longer occur in the Acts history except in one verse in chapter 15 (Peter) and once in chapter 21 (James) where we read about the confrontation between Paul and the Twelve at the Jerusalem council.*

**Our Scripture for Today: Acts 13:1-52, Resurrection Sunday, 2021**

**Our Outline: Paul's First Missionary Journey Begins:**

- ***Sent Forth: Paul and Barnabas Are Sent From Antioch into Gentile Lands***
- ***Blinded or Enlightened: A Jew is Blinded But A Gentile Receives His Sight (and Faith)***
- ***The Invitation Is Delivered: Paul, Invited to Preach in the Synagogue, Summarizes Israel's History***
- ***Some Foundational Truth is Taught: Paul Lays the Foundation of the Gospel in the Prophets***
- ***He is Risen: Paul Preaches Christ's Glorious Resurrection from the Psalms***
- ***Salvation is Offered: Paul Preaches Redemption Through the Risen Christ***
- ***Their Response Goes Down in History: The Rulers of the Synagogue Reject Their Risen Messiah***

- ***The Judgment is Proclaimed: Paul Preaches Judgment Against the Jews and Turns to the Gentiles***

***I. Sent Forth: Paul and Barnabas Are Sent From Antioch into Gentile Lands:***

***Acts 13:1-4***

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, **the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.**

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

4 **So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.**

- ***Note: The Holy Spirit speaks! And, he sends them forth as apostles! This is notable indeed, the Holy Spirit speaking. Their are other examples of this here in this book but not many (see Acts 14:4, 14). Here we find Paul (still Saul at the beginning though here) and Barnabas and other believers gathered in Antioch. In prayer and fasting, they are open to the work of the Lord and here to his Holy Spirit.***
- ***So, Paul and Barnabas were sent out by the Spirit and they knew it. Or at least Luke did, and how would he have known if not from Paul's later teaching?***

***II. Blinded or Enlightened: A Jew is Blinded But A Gentile Receives His Sight (and Faith):***

***Acts 13:5-12***

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John to *their* minister.

6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

- *Note: A Jew, named Barjesus, a sorcerer and false prophet, tries to prevent a Gentile named Sergius Paulus from coming to faith in the risen Christ. He is blinded at the hand of Saul. But the Gentile has his blindness lifted and believes. Is this a signal that God turning away from the Jews but bringing light and salvation to the Gentiles?? It is indeed and we will see how this all develops as we proceed in this book.*
- *Quoted from the Numerical Bible: "This seems to connect morally with the account which is now given of the Jew at Paphos; scarcely a Jew indeed, one would say, so perverted, heathenized, demonized, is he. All the more, however, is he the true picture of the Jew, or of Judaism, fallen by opposition to Christ into the power of the enemy, and then becoming the most virulent of foes. Such is this Bar Jesus, with his fair name and his practice of occult arts, false prophet through and through. He is the worst hindrance to the Gentile inquirer, stout refuser of salvation on his own account."*

### **III. The Invitation is Delivered: Paul, Invited to Preach in the Synagogue, Summarizes Israel's History:**

#### **Acts 13:13-15**

13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.

15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men *and* brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on ...

- *Note: Perga and Antioch of Psidia are the next stops on this journey. Perga was near the sea coast where the port was and Antioch was far from the coast on a heavily traveled Roman road (which still exists today). Some have suggested that there were many Jews living on the towns along the way and that is why they may have traveled that way.*

#### **Acts 13:16-19**

**16** Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with *his* hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.

**17** The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it.

**18** And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness.

**19** And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot.

- *Note: Paul now speaks in the synagogue at Antioch of Psidia. He outlines Israel's history before their arrival at the river Jordan in three verses beginning with slavery in Egypt. Then in the next four verses he brings his audience all the way to David and then skips ahead over 1000 years to Christ's coming. His focus is mostly positive, emphasizing the blessings God poured out on his people and skipping past the judgments entirely.*
- *Also, that Paul does not (yet, at least) mention Moses here though they had earlier been reading from the Law must have been very much on the mind of these Jews and Gentile converts.*
- *As Paul proceeds, he now singles out David and his "seed" is emphasized. How relevant indeed this was to his next subject, our Lord Jesus Christ, seed of David the only possible key to the fulfillment of so many Kingdom promises:*

#### **Acts 13:20-23**

**20** And after that he gave *unto them* judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

**21** And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

**22** And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

**23 Of this man's seed hath God according to *his* promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:**

- *God promised so much to (and though) David, even the coming Messiah or Anointed One with His Kingdom. But Paul wants to underscore the Davidic promises with a reference back to Abraham and then forward to the prophets. Why? Because it seems the false teachers had taught the Jews false doctrine concerning the promises to Abraham and incorrect interpretations of the prophetic writings were embedded in the minds of these Jews just as they are today.*
- *Having done this, the apostle is now ready to preach the gospel of grace to these sinners:*

**IV. Some Foundational Truth is Taught: Paul Lays the Foundation of the Gospel in the Prophets:**

**Acts 13:24-25**

24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not *he*. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of *his* feet I am not worthy to loose.

**[READ ] Acts 13:26-29**

26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*.

28 And though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre.

- *Note: Paul's preaching now focuses on Israel's recent history referring to John's preaching in the wilderness for only a moment in passing. But immediately he then mentions Christ's death at Israel's hand.*
- *The context here is clear: Paul is blaming the rulers of Israel ... for "not knowing God nor the word of the prophets" ... so they fulfilled*

*the scripture in condemning their own Messiah to the death of the cross ... And, though they found no cause of death in him, they desired that the Romans crucify him. Then they buried him once he had died that cruel death thereby giving his life for their sins and glorious redemption.*

- *So here we have both Christ's death and his burial, the two foundational aspects of the gospel as Paul stated it in 1 Cor. 15:3-4. And now he reaches the central theme of his message, the glorious resurrection of our wonderful Lord Jesus which the prophets pointed forward to in their several prophecies. But all rests on the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ!*

*And so Paul adds these words so very necessary to be added: "But God ...":*

- *Now the apostle gets to the heart of the matter, the glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. To do this he will quote from several Psalms. I find this very interesting, because of its sheer simplicity but with profound teaching that might touch the hearts of these who heard.*
- *Remember, these hearing Paul's words were gathered to hear the Torah read, the Mosaic writings from Genesis to Deuteronomy with selections from the Prophets added. But they no doubt would not have heard read to them what Paul was now sharing from his heart I am sure. And I can just see the rulers of the synagogue scurrying about and rolling their scrolls back and forth to unfamiliar territory to find the very verses he is quoting...*

**V. He is Risen: Paul Preaches Christ's Glorious Resurrection from the Psalms:**

**[READ ] Acts 13:30-34**

**30 But God raised him from the dead:**

**31 And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.**

**32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,**

**33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.**



**34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.**

- ***What were “the sure mercies of David” and how did that relate to the second Psalm? Great questions indeed. Well, “the sure mercies of David” are literally “the holy things of David, the trustworthy things”, or the prophecies, the truths, he had revealed — and most of that about coming glories through Israel’s coming Messiah! This must have cut them to the roots, I would have thought. After all, their leaders had turned their Lord of glory over to the Romans for crucifixion. And it did...***
- ***But what were “the promises which were made unto the fathers ...”? Psalm 2 has the answer. Much is promised to David in this Psalm. But David died and is still in that tomb. Resurrection is therefore required if God’s promises are true and dependable ... But how? The Psalm, Paul preaches, is about the fulfillment of the promises made to the fathers all of which require the resurrection of the dead. And as we well know, they all depend on the most critical promises of all, those regarding “the seed of the woman”. Such is his preaching here and he quickly skips to another prophecy, THIS AMAZING REFERENCE TO THE PROPHET ISAIAH, CHAPTER 55:***

***[READ ] Is. 55:1-6***

**1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.**

**2 Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which* is not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which* is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.**

**3 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.**

**4 Behold, I have given him *for* a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.**

**5 Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.**

**6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:**

*I am amazed as I read this chapter. It is clear that Paul is entirely relying on the Holy Spirit to open the hearts of these Bible students, some who were hearing, perhaps the rulers of the synagogue, or more likely, perhaps those gathered there on this day. And he uses scripture that they were most likely not even familiar with knowing that the Holy Spirit was able to write these truths on the hearts that he was softening by this word. There are lessons here for us, are there not?*

**[READ ] Acts 13:35-37**

**35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. [see Ps. 16:10; 49:9]**

**36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:**

**37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.**

- *The apostle swiftly eliminates what Israel's false teachers had been teaching about the scripture and its fulfillment to conclude that those prophecies were not fulfilled in David at all but in their coming Messiah, God's Son. Only he had been raised again having in no way suffered the corruption of the body after death as David clearly had.*
- *Again, he relies entirely on the Holy Spirit here to remove the blindness that was on the hearts.*

**Ps. 16:9-11**

**9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.**

**10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.**

**11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.**

- *This is seemingly all about David, but not really. David was the forerunner of Israel's Messiah. These verses are really all about Him!*

*For David's tomb was still occupied! But these promises given to David must also in some day be fulfilled through the Promised One. Would these words touch the hearts on some, that is the question. And there were Gentiles in the congregation too. What about them?*

- *Now comes the final words of this preaching of the gospel and these words summarize his entire message:*

**VI. Salvation is Offered: Paul Preaches Redemption Through the Risen Christ:**

***[READ ] Acts 13:38-39***

**38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:**

**39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**

- *Oh, such blessed divine logic is found here in these statements of the apostle. For if Christ be risen and not having suffered corruption at all as all have who have gone before, then he must be the promised “Deliverer”, the savior of Israel. He must be God in the flesh, the very son of the living God.*
- *Now Moses HAS been included, and it is not what any there might have expected. For rather than Moses being lifted up as Israel’s redeemer and example in every way, Paul instead preaches here that what Moses brought to the nation was not enough. In fact, no one could be saved through Moses!! Paul surely expected that at this point there would be a great rebellion against him and Barnabas as they had seen before. His words must be so carefully chosen since they may very well be his last ...*

**VII. Their Response Goes Down in History: The Rulers of the Synagogue Reject Their Risen Messiah:**

- *And they were his last words nearly ...*

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

**40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;**

**41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.**

***[READ ] Acts 13:42-45***

**42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.**

**43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.**

**44 And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.**

**45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.**

- ***Surely Paul was thinking here of Is. 28:***

**Is. 28:10-18**

**10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:**

**11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.**

**12 To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.**

**13 But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.**

**14 Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.**

**15 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:**

**16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.**

**17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.**

**18 And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.**

- ***In Jerusalem that had already become history — now what about here in Antioch of Pisidia? They were also now rejecting Paul's clear presentation of the gospel: "when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were***

*spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.” So the consequence should be clear:*

**VIII. The Judgment is Proclaimed: Paul Preaches Against the Jews and Turns to the Gentiles:**

46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. [see *Is. 49:6*]

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

- *Key verses here are 46-48. Paul is preaching judgment on the Dispersion of Israel as they reject the risen Messiah. But for us, joy, joy, joy.*
- *With great mercy God has now reached out to Jews in foreign lands. He has sent forth Paul with the gospel of his grace. Many have believed although the rulers of Israel's dispersed children in Gentile lands have largely not believed.*
- *Paul has begun his ministry of the Great Transition. How will it end and what will be accomplished? We shall wait and see.*

**Overview and Conclusions:**

- ***Joy, Joy, Joy!***

***Acts 13:49-52***

49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.

52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.