

ACTS 9

1. What did many of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem believe about the Gentiles?

-That the Gentiles were unclean.

-That God did not want the Jews to be with Gentiles.

-That God would not save the Gentiles, but only the Jews.

2. What did the Jews “of the circumcision” believe?

-They believed that if the Gentiles did not become circumcised and follow the ways of the Jews, then God would not save them.

3. The majority of Jewish believers scattered by persecution only taught other Jews, but who did some of the Jews from Cyprus and Cyrene teach?

-The Gentiles in Antioch.

4. What was the result of the Jewish believers teaching these Gentiles in Antioch?

-Many Gentiles believed, and a church began.

5. Where did the first large group of Gentiles believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?

-In Antioch.

6. Why did the believers in Jerusalem send Barnabas to Antioch?

-Because they wanted to make sure that these Gentile

believers were following the teachings of Christ.

7. Why did Barnabas go to Tarsus?

-To ask Saul to help him teach God’s Word in Antioch.

8. Why did God send His angel to rescue Peter, but allow Stephen and James to be killed?

-Although we are not told, we do know that God loves us and always does what is right for His children.

9. Should we ask God to help just like the Christians did when they prayed for Peter?

-Yes. We should pray to our God about everything.

-The prayers of God’s children are very important.

-Before Jesus returned to Heaven, He promised that the Holy Spirit would come to help His disciples to be witnesses for Him.

-Where did Jesus tell His disciples to go and be His witnesses?

-In Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, to the ends of the earth.

-We have learned how the Holy Spirit helped the believers to be witnesses for Jesus in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Damascus, Galilee, and Antioch.

-Now, we will begin the story of how the Holy Spirit helped Saul and others be witnesses for Jesus in many

other countries around Israel.

-The story begins at Antioch, where Saul, Barnabas, and other men were teaching in the new church.

Let's read Acts 13:1

1-In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.

-Some of these men were prophets, and some were teachers.

-Who were the prophets in the early Church?

-They were men and women who were specially chosen by God.

-What did these prophets do?

-They taught new truths of God given directly to them by God the Holy Spirit.

-When the prophets spoke, the Holy Spirit guided their words so that they said exactly what God wanted them to say.

-God also used these prophets to write God's Word in the remaining books of the Bible.

-Who were the teachers in the early Church?

-The teachers taught that which was already written in the Bible which we call the Old Testament.

-The teachers also taught of Christ, and the new teachings which God gave to the apostles and prophets.

-How are teachers different from prophets?

-Teachers can misunderstand God's Word.

-Teachers can make mistakes when teaching God's Word.

-Teachers did not write God's Word which would become part of the Bible.

-Teachers were not without error as the prophets were.

-Are there prophets today?

-Not like the prophets of the early Church.

-Why are there no prophets today like the prophets of the early Church?

-Because God has completed His Bible.

-Any prophet today can only give a message directly from the Holy Spirit which must agree with God's Word in the Bible.

-God wants you to learn His Word so that you can teach others like the teachers in Antioch.

-The teaching of God's Word is one of the most important works in the church.

-God wants all men, women, and children to learn His Word so that they can teach others.

-Men should teach both in the church and at home.

-Women should also teach, teaching other women as well as children.

-Now, we will read how God called Saul and Barnabas to take God's Word to those who had never heard about Jesus.

Let's read Acts 13:2-3

2-While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

3-So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

-Before Jesus returned to heaven, He commanded His apostles to teach the Gospel to all people.

-Was it only to His apostles that Jesus gave the command to teach the Gospel to all people?

-No. God wants all believers to go and teach the Gospel to all people.

-What were Saul and Barnabas doing in Antioch before God called them to go and teach about Christ?

-Saul and Barnabas were already teaching and working in their home church.

-Just like Saul and Barnabas, God wants us to be teaching and working in our home church.

-If we are teaching and working in our home church, then God will help us to teach His Word in other places.

-Therefore, God helped Saul and Barnabas to obey Jesus' command to go and teach about Christ.

-Just like God helped Saul and Barnabas, God will also help us to go and teach about Christ.

-What did the church in Antioch do to show they were in agreement with Saul and Barnabas going to teach people who had never heard of Jesus?

-The church gathered together.

-The church leaders placed their hands on them.

-The church would also pray for and help them.

-Was this work only the work of Saul and Barnabas?

- No. This was the work of God with the entire church.
- God called Saul and Barnabas to represent the church.
- The church recognized, confirmed, and cooperated with the work of the Holy Spirit.
- All who go and teach about Jesus should understand that it is not their work, but the work of God and the work of their church who sends them out.
- God was sending Saul and Barnabas for their first missionary journey.

Let's read Acts 13:4-5

4-The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.

5-When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.

- To where did God first send Saul and Barnabas?
- To the town of Salamis on the island of Cyprus.
- Cyprus was where Barnabas had lived and grown up.
- Where did Saul and Barnabas first teach about God?
- In the Jewish synagogues.

-Although Saul and Barnabas taught the Gentiles, they first taught the Jews in their synagogues.

-Why did Saul and Barnabas first teach the Jews in their synagogues?

-Because the Jews knew the Old Testament.

-Because the Jews knew the promises of the Savior.

-The Jews knew of God's promise to send the Savior through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.

-But these Jews did not know that the Savior had already come.

-These Jews did not know that Jesus was the Savior.

-Perhaps the Jews in Cyprus had heard that Jesus was crucified.

-But they did not know that Jesus had risen from the dead, that He was sitting at God's right hand, and that He is, therefore, the Savior whom God promised.

-How did Saul and Barnabas prove that Jesus was the Savior?

-They reminded the Jews of the promises in the Old Testament for God to send the Savior.

-They told them how Jesus fulfilled all of the prophecies

about the Savior.

-They told of the resurrection of Jesus, and how Saul had seen Christ after He had been raised from the dead.

-In the synagogues were also circumcised Gentiles who accepted the Jewish religion.

-The circumcised Gentiles were called proselytes.

-Also in the synagogues were Gentiles who were not circumcised, but they came to hear the teachings of the Old Testament.

-These uncircumcised Gentiles were called God-fearers.

-Even though these Gentiles had not been circumcised, they knew about the promises of the Savior, and feared and worshiped God.

-So there were three groups who went to the synagogues:

- 1) Jews
- 2) Gentiles who were circumcised & called proselytes.
- 3) Gentiles who were not circumcised & called God-fearers.

-Of these three groups, the God-fearers were the most open to believing that Jesus was the Savior.

-Who went with Saul and Barnabas to Cyprus?

-His name was John or Mark or John Mark.

-This John was not the apostle John.

-This John was a relative of Barnabas.

-At that time, many Jews had two names.

-One name was Jewish and the other was Roman.

-John was his Jewish name, and Mark was his Roman name.

-This is the Mark whom God used to write the book of Mark, one of the four books of the life of Jesus.

-When Saul, Barnabas, and Mark left Salamis, they traveled through Cyprus, and finally came to the town of Paphos.

-It was at Paphos that they left Cyprus, and took a boat to Perga.

Let's read Acts 13:13

13-From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem.

-It is this verse that Luke begins to use Saul's Roman name which is Paul.

-And when Paul and Barnabas arrived at Perga, John

Mark left them, and returned to his home.

-From Perga, Paul and Barnabas traveled north to a city which was called Pisidian Antioch.

Let's read Acts 13:14

14-From Perga they went on to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down.

-In keeping with their custom, where did Paul and Barnabas go on the Sabbath?
-To the synagogue.

Let's read Acts 13:15-16

15-After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak."

16-Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: "Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me!"

-In the synagogue, Paul was invited to speak.

-Here is some of that which Paul said:

Let's read Acts 13:32-33 & 38-39

32-[Paul said] "We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers,

33-he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

38-"Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.

39-Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

-Paul taught from the Old Testament, reminding the people that the Savior would be a descendant of David.

-Paul also taught them:

-That God fulfilled His promise by sending Jesus.

-That the Jews and their leaders crucified Jesus.

-That Jesus was buried.

-That God raised Jesus from the dead.

-That all who believe in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and accepted by God.

-Could the Jews be accepted by God by keeping the law of Moses?

-No.

-Why can no one be accepted by God by keeping the law

of Moses?

- Because no one can completely obey the law of Moses.
- Because all people were born into sin and have sinned.

-Paul then taught that we are forgiven of our sin and accepted by God only by believing in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

-Let's read what happened after Paul's teaching:

Let's read Acts 13:42-47

42-As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath.

43-When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

44-On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.

45-When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying.

46-Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.

47-For this is what the Lord has commanded us:

"I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."

-Before Jesus came to Israel, God knew that only a few of the Israelites would believe in Him.

-Yet, God also wanted the Gentiles to hear about Jesus so that He could also save the Gentiles.

-What did the Gentiles think when Paul said this?

Let's read Acts 13:48-52

48-When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.

49-The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.

50-But the Jews incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region.

51-So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium.

52-And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

-Most of the Jews rejected Jesus as their Savior.

-They thought that God would accept them as they tried to keep the law of Moses.

-Yet many Gentiles understood that they were sinners, that they could do nothing to be saved, and that they needed a Savior.

-Therefore, they believed in Jesus as their Savior.

-From Pisidian Antioch, Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium.

Let's read Acts 14:1-5

1-At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed.

2-But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.

3-So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.

4-The people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles.

5-There was a plot afoot among the Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them.

-Because the people of Iconium were going to stone Paul and Barnabas, they left the town.

Let's read Acts 14:6-13

6-But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding country,

7-where they continued to preach the good news.

8-In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked.

9-He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed

10-and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

11-When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!"

12-Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker.

13-The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

-Why did Paul and Barnabas not go to the synagogue in Lystra or Derbe?

-Because they were Gentile cities, and there were no synagogues.

-These people worshiped idols, and demons which they called gods.

- These people did not know the one, true God.
- When the people saw the miracle, what did they think?
- That their demons or gods had come to visit them.
- What did Paul and Barnabas do as soon as they understood what was happening?

Let's read Acts 14:14

14-But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting:

- Why did Paul and Barnabas rip their clothes?
- This was a sign by the Jews of a blasphemous act against God.
- Do you remember when the High Priest ripped his clothes when Jesus said He was the Son of God?
- The High Priest was wrong to accuse Jesus of blasphemy because Jesus is the Son of God.
- But Paul and Barnabas were disturbed because the people wanted to sacrifice to them as gods.
- Listen to what Paul cried out to these people:

Let's read Acts 14:15-18

15-[Paul cried out] "Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

16-In the past, he let all nations go their own way.

17-Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy."

18-Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

- Paul told the people to turn from worthless idols.
- Paul told them to turn to the living God.
- Was Satan happy that Paul and Barnabas were teaching the people about God?
- No.
- Satan tried to stop them.

Let's read Acts 14:19-20

19-Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead.

20-But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

-God healed Paul so he could continue to teach.

Let's read Acts 14:21-22

21-They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch,

22-strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

-Satan will also try to keep you from serving God, but you should continue even when it is difficult.

-As Paul and Barnabas returned to the towns where they had taught, what else did they do?

Let's read Acts 14:23

23-Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

-Paul and Barnabas appointed elders to teach, guide, and encourage the believers.

-Elders have a very important work, but it is also very difficult.

-Therefore, elders must be well prepared, trained, and

have a strong belief in God.

-After more teaching, Paul and Barnabas returned to their home church in Antioch.

Let's read Acts 14:24-28

24-After going through Pisidia, they came into Pamphylia,

25-and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

26-From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed.

27-On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

28-And they stayed there a long time with the disciples.

-What did Paul and Barnabas do when they returned to their home church in Antioch?

-They told of all that God had done.

-This was the end of Paul's first missionary journey.