

# OpenTheo

## Acts 13:1 - 13:41



### Acts - Steve Gregg

In Acts 13, the leadership team of Antioch, including Simeon called Niger and Lucius Cyrene, directs Paul and Barnabas for missionary work. Prioritizing preaching to Jews before Gentiles, Paul begins his evangelistic efforts in synagogues and encounters a sorcerer named Bar Jesus. Paul's longest sermon takes place in Perga where he asserts that Jesus, who is of the line of David, is the promised Savior that God had raised from the dead. The main theme of Paul's preaching is justification by faith, which means that whoever believes in Christ is acquitted of their sins and justified before God.

### Transcript

Let's turn to Acts chapter 13 and we're going to find the beginning of Paul's travels as a missionary, as a team missionary. Of course, Paul has traveled prior to this. He got saved in Damascus.

He went into Arabia for a while, went back to Damascus, went to Jerusalem for a couple weeks, then he went into Cilicia and Syria, and especially Tarsus for about 10 years. And then Barnabas brought him to Antioch, which is now his home church. He and Barnabas are among the leaders of that church at this point.

They've been there about a year. And we read in chapter 13, now in the church that was in Antioch, there were certain prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon, who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, and Menaen, who had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. There are five men mentioned here.

Barnabas is mentioned first probably because he was undoubtedly the senior leader in the church, just in terms of age and experience. He had been with Christ during Christ's lifetime. He's probably the only one there who had been a disciple of Jesus when Jesus was on earth.

He was certainly the senior member of the leadership team. This group is said to be teachers and prophets. We're not told which of these names were teachers and which were prophets.

We know that Barnabas and Saul, who are on the list, mostly were teachers and they were apostles, but they also did a lot of teaching. We don't know if they prophesied. So the prophets must include some of the ones in the middle of the group.

But the five probably made up the main leadership team in the church. We will find before the end of chapter 14 that it was commonplace for the apostles to appoint, in every church, a group of men called elders to lead the church. And this group might have been the eldership of the Church of Antioch.

They certainly do seem to be a leadership group. Saul is mentioned last very possibly simply to focus upon him. After the elders are mentioned, he becomes sort of the focus of the story very quickly.

Now the names in between don't mean too much to us, perhaps. Simeon, who is called Niger. Simeon is another form of the name Simon.

And Niger is a word that means black or dark-complected. Now this man may have been an African Christian, and the man who's mentioned after him is Lucius of Cyrene. Cyrene was an African country, and some scholars think that both of these men, Simeon and Lucius, came from North Africa and were black men who were leaders in the church in Antioch early on.

If, in fact, Simeon was from Cyrene, which is not stated but could be the case since he is black, he might be the very man who carried the cross for Jesus. In Luke 23, 26, there's a man named Simon from Cyrene who carried Jesus' cross. Not much is said about him in the Gospels except for that.

However, in Romans chapter 16 and verse 13, Paul, writing to the church in Rome, in Romans 16, 13, says, Now, there was somebody in the church of Rome named Rufus. And if you look at Mark chapter 15 and verse 21, it says, Now, they compelled a certain man, Simon, a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as they were coming out of the country to bear his cross. Now, Simon the Cyrenian had two sons named Alexander and Rufus.

Mark mentions this. Now, Mark is writing in Rome, almost certainly. And why would he say this guy was the father of Rufus unless his readers were supposed to know who Rufus was? Alexander and Rufus are mentioned as reference points for this man, Simon.

They are his sons. It is assumed that these men in Rome who are reading Mark, the original readers, did not necessarily know Simon, but they knew Alexander and Rufus. So, he's the father of those two guys.

Which means there was a Christian in Rome named Rufus who was the son of Simon the Cyrenian. And that would be probably the Rufus that Paul greets when he writes to Rome. In Romans 16, 13.

The point being that although we don't read much of Simon the Cyrenian after he carries Jesus' cross, we do know that at least his family, at least his sons, were parts of the church in Rome at a later date. Almost certainly, he himself was a Christian as well. And Paul refers to Rufus and his mother as like a mother to Paul himself.

So, Paul apparently was quite acquainted with the family. And, you know, apparently the wife of Simon the Cyrenian was like a mother to Paul. Paul was a younger man than Simon and his wife and was perhaps contemporary with the two sons Alexander and Rufus.

In any case, we find that this man who carried Jesus' cross was, his family was in the church. His sons were in the church of Rome. He himself might have been in the church of Antioch.

And if he's the man who carried Jesus' cross, he'd be one of the early Christians like Barnabas. One of the ones who actually dates back from the lifetime of Jesus. It's only a speculation, but it's not impossible that Simeon, called Niger, is Simon the Cyrenian.

The next man named is a Cyrenian. He's called Lucius of Cyrene. Nothing is known about him except that Lucius is the Latin form of the name Luke.

And there are some who believe that this might be a reference to Luke himself. Now, Luke, when he refers to himself in the book, never gives his name really. He says, we went here and we went there.

He includes himself in a plural first person pronoun, but he doesn't ever name himself. The name Luke, as we know it, is not found in the book of Acts, though he's the author. But it may be that he has listed himself here as one of the leaders in Antioch.

There's not much to go on here because Lucius was a pretty common name in the Roman world. So although Luke, the author's name was Lucius in Latin, there were lots of other people named Lucius. And so there's no reason that this man had to be him.

There is, however, a very strong church tradition going back at least to the second century, if not before, that Luke was in the church in Antioch. Now, in the book of Acts, the author never mentions that he's in the church in Antioch. We don't read of him at all traveling with Paul until the second missionary journey, and he joins him at Troas instead of at Antioch.

But it's not impossible that Luke was one of the leaders of the church in Antioch. And that this is where he gives us that clue. He doesn't make it obvious that he's the author, if that is.

And there's no reason that we would have to think so. But it's intriguing to think that Luke, who wrote this book, about whom we know so little, might have been in that

leadership group with Paul and Barnabas, and later traveled with Paul and Silas. Whatever, we do know who Barnabas is, we know who Saul is, and they're the ones who become significant in the verses that follow.

It says in verse 2, as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, now separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I've called them. Now, Barnabas and Saul, I mentioned, eventually you're going to be reading about Saul and Barnabas, or Paul and Barnabas. But we know that in chapter 11, excuse me, yeah, there it is.

Should have been easy to find the last line in chapter 11. It says, they also took an offering and sent it by the elders, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. Barnabas is mentioned first.

Again, he has seniority, he's been around longer than Paul. When these two are together, originally Barnabas is mentioned as the prominent one, Barnabas and Saul. Likewise, when the Holy Spirit speaks, he says separate to me Barnabas and Saul.

But very early on in this missionary journey, Paul becomes the main speaker for the group and the miracle worker. We don't know if Barnabas did miracles at this point, but Paul did. And it becomes clear that it's now, if you look at chapter 13, verse 13, at that point it becomes Paul and his party.

Now, it's still Barnabas and Saul, but it's now called Paul and his party. And we're going to see repeatedly that the expression is used after this, Barnabas, Paul and Barnabas. If you look at chapter 13, verse 43, it says that many Jews and devout prostitutes followed Paul and Barnabas.

You see it again in verse 46, and Paul and Barnabas grew bold. And then in verse 50, at the end, they raise up persecution against Paul and Barnabas. And yet in chapter 14, verse 14, we read again of Barnabas and Paul.

So, you know, it's kind of interesting that at a certain point it changes from Barnabas and Saul to Paul and Barnabas or Paul and his company. Though it's not unheard of to still speak of Barnabas as in the first position named. In any case, the Holy Spirit speaks to them.

Apparently, these five men, as they prayed, it could be the whole church gathered, could be at a church meeting. It's not clear who it was that was fasting and ministering to the Lord when the Holy Spirit spoke. Could be the leadership group or it could have been a gathering of the church.

And it says that the Holy Spirit spoke to them as they ministered and fasted and said, separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I've called them. Then having fasted and prayed, they laid hands on them and sent them away. Fasting and praying in connection with appointing leaders is also mentioned in Acts 14 and verse 23 when Paul

and Barnabas are appointing elders in every church.

It says they fast and pray about it, making sure that they're getting the right men for the job. Now, they laid hands on them and sent them away. When the people of the church of Jerusalem, including Philip, fled from Jerusalem and planted churches, none of them were sent out.

None of them were, you know, commissioned to go and do that. It's true that Philip had had hands laid on him earlier, but not to be a missionary, but to be a distributor of food to the poor. But when he went out as a missionary, he did not go out commissioned as a missionary.

The laying on of hands had never occurred prior to this. This is the first time any church in the book of Acts sends out missionaries deliberately. And the laying on of hands is a means of indicating partnership.

It's a way of indicating you are an extension of us. We're going to remain here in Antioch, but you're going to go out and you are our fingertips on you make you an extension of our fingertips. What you do, we are doing.

You are our hands out into that realm. And that's kind of what those signified by the laying on of hands, like, okay, we're connected here and we're sending you as our representatives, our agents. The laying on of hands also was used for healing.

It was also used for filling of the Holy Spirit. And in this case, and another case for commissioning to be either missionaries or leaders of the church. Those are the means by which laying on of hands are found used in the book of Acts.

And Paul, of course, talks about the laying on of hands in this connection where he writes to Timothy. He says, lay hands suddenly on no one. And he's talking to Timothy about appointing elders in the church of Ephesus.

He's basically saying don't be too presumptuous, don't be too abrupt in appointing people. He says, don't lay hands suddenly on everyone. He means don't be too quick to put someone in a position of leadership in the church.

All right, so they laid hands on them and sent them away. And now they're on their way. This is their first missionary journey.

It says, so being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, which was about 16 miles from Antioch. Antioch was about 16 miles inland from the sea, and the nearest seaport was Seleucia. So they went to Seleucia to catch a ship.

And from there they sailed to Cyprus. There's about a 60-mile stretch of water between the coast and the island of Cyprus. And that was where Barnabas was from.

He was actually a native of Cyprus. And that might be why they went there first. It's hard to say.

Maybe because Barnabas had connections there, had places they could speak, friends they could speak in their homes or whatever. In any case, they went to Barnabas's home region. And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.

They also had John as their assistant. Now this John is a reference to John Mark, as we shall see. They had taken John Mark with them from Jerusalem back to Antioch, as we saw in the previous chapter.

In chapter 12 and verse 25, when they returned to their home church in Antioch, when they left Jerusalem, they took that Jerusalem Christian Mark with them, John Mark. And now they're taking him on this journey. Now the Holy Spirit didn't say, separate for me Barnabas and Saul and John Mark.

They took him along apparently on their own initiative. Perhaps Barnabas, who we happen to know was cousin of John Mark. Now the only reason we know that is because Paul happens to mention that in Colossians chapter 4, that Mark was Barnabas's cousin.

And it may be a younger cousin who, you know, maybe Barnabas wanted to groom him for ministry. We know that on the second missionary journey, Paul didn't feel like taking Mark along, but Barnabas still wanted to and took him with him. So Barnabas and Mark became a missionary team at a later date together.

And it may be that Barnabas saw promise in Mark and just wanted his cousin to go along, but it didn't work out. Mark was apparently not called at this time by the Holy Spirit and didn't have what it takes. And that's why Paul was reluctant to take him along on the second missionary journey.

We'll see in chapter 13, verse 13, at the end of that verse, John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem. So he went partway on the trip with them, then he decided to bail. Now Luke doesn't state it with any judgmental, you know, condemnation of Mark.

He just says Mark went home. Why he went home, we're not told. But we do know that when Barnabas wanted to take Mark on the second missionary journey, it is stated that Paul felt that Mark had deserted them.

So this was not on good terms as far as Paul was concerned. Now Barnabas may have seen every good reason for Mark to go home and felt nothing bad about it. And Luke doesn't say that it was a bad thing, but Paul didn't like it and thought that Mark should have stayed with them.

But that's another story. Now they're traveling to Cyprus. They cross the sea 60 miles to

the island and they land at Salamis, which is a Greek city on the eastern shore of Cyprus.

If you have the map that I gave out, or if you have one in your Bible, you can see their journey from Seleucus to Salamis. They cross the water there to Cyprus. They preach there.

We don't know. They started in the synagogues, which is what they always did, by the way. If there was a synagogue in a city, they'd preach there before they preached to the Gentiles.

Paul felt that the gospel should first go to the Jews and secondly to the Greeks or the Gentiles. He actually says that later in this chapter when he's preaching in Antioch, the city in Antioch. But they would go to the synagogues because there they would find people, unlike the Gentiles, people who knew about the real God and people who had, they knew about the law of God, people who knew something about the prophets.

And so in the synagogue they could appeal to this prior knowledge of their audience and build on that foundation the message that God had fulfilled these prophecies and sent the Messiah in Jesus. Now when they went to the Gentiles and there were no synagogues or they didn't speak to Jewish audiences, they didn't bring up the idea of the law and the prophets because their audiences among the Gentiles had no background in that. Instead, they always spoke about God being the creator of everything and the sustainer of everything.

We see this in chapter 14 when he's in Lystra preaching and also in the Areopagus in Athens in chapter 17. Paul preaches to entirely Gentile audiences there and he makes no reference to the law of the prophets or anything that the Jews would have familiarity with but that the Gentiles would not. Instead he talks about God as the creator and the sustainer.

But he always liked to talk to the Jews because they already had a foundation for understanding the Messiah. They didn't know who Jesus was but they knew about the Messiah that was supposed to come and they knew about the true God. He didn't have to build so much foundation to speak to them because they already had most of that under their belt.

So he would always go to the synagogues. Now every city in the Roman world that had 10 or more adult male Jews had a the policy of the Jews. If they had less than 10 male adult Jews in a town they didn't have a synagogue.

They would meet on the Sabbath somewhere usually down by a river or someplace like that but they wouldn't have a synagogue. But if there were 10 adult male Jews or more they built a synagogue and met every Sabbath there. We come in some cases Paul comes to towns that don't seem to have synagogues.

We don't read of a synagogue in Philippi for example. Instead Paul goes down by a river and meets a few Jewish women there and evangelizes them in Philippi. Apparently there weren't as many as 10 adult male Jews.

A very small Jewish population in Philippi and some other places but almost every major city had a lot of Jews and they never had a synagogue and Paul would always go to the synagogue first as we read here. He did in Salamis and there he preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews and they also had John as their assistant. Verse 6 Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos.

Now where's Paphos? So you look on your map you go around down the southern edge of the island you find Paphos further over toward the western side of the island. And so they moved across the island of Cyprus and got to Paphos. They found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus.

Bar-Jesus simply means son of Jesus or son of Joshua. Jesus is the Greek form of the name Joshua and there were many Jews named Jesus or Joshua. This man's father was named Joshua.

So Bar-Jesus means son of Joshua. He's also given the name Elimus shortly after this. So he he's known as Elimus in verse 8 and son of Joshua in verse 6. What's interesting is this guy's called a false prophet and a sorcerer but he was Jewish.

Now sorcery was strictly forbidden in the Jewish religion so this man was not an observant Jew. He was Jew by birth but not an observant Jew. He was a defector and he was involved in the occult and sorcery.

And he was trying to influence the leader of the Roman leader of the island who's the proconsul Sergius Paulus. Verse 7 says he was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus who was an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

Now Bar-Jesus or Elimus was somehow had ingratiated himself to this proconsul so that even when Barnabas and Saul talked to the proconsul that Elimus had access to try to contradict them. The fact that this man's called a proconsul is significant because at this point in time the Roman leader of the island was called a proconsul but not at all times. We know this from Roman history and Luke again regularly gives the right titles for officers in various regions where titles differed from time to time and what is now known of Roman history was that the leader of the island of Cyprus at this time was called a proconsul.

Sergius Paulus would be like Paul's name Paul. This man's name was Paul and actually there's been an inscription that was discovered in recent years in north Cyprus that has the name of this man on it. So we have separate historical or archaeological confirmation



of this man's existence.

In this story he appears to become a Christian though we don't read we don't read of him being baptized. He does become a believer. He may have been baptized as well.

It says that he called for Barnabas and Saul to come and preach to him in verse 8 but Elimus the sorcerer for his name is so translated withstood them seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. Then Saul who is also called Paul filled with the Holy Spirit looked intently at him and said oh full of all deceit and all fraud you son of the devil you enemy of all righteousness will you not cease to pervert the straight ways of the Lord and now indeed the hand of the Lord is upon you and you shall be blind not seeing the sun for a time and immediately a dark mist fell on him and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. So the proconsul believed when he saw what had been done being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Now here we see Paul taking the the lead. Barnabas and Saul were invited to come and speak to this man but Paul and his company left and it's no doubt because Paul felt inclined to step forward and rebuke this man. Now it may well be that Barnabas had been doing most of the talking to the proconsul but Elimus was trying to resist him and Barnabas indignant I mean Paul indignant just steps up and rebukes him.

Now it says Saul who is also called Paul and from this point on he's called Paul he's never called Saul again in the book of Acts and he was never called Paul previous to this. Both names belong to the same man but in the Gentile world which he was now officially evangelizing he assumed his Gentile name Paul. And it may also be partly as I said earlier due to the fact that the man he was evangelizing was named Paul.

Maybe they had that he wanted to make that kind of a connection but that's probably not as important as the fact that he's simply now using his Latin name because he's in the Latin world in the Roman world. Paul was when he spoke filled with the Holy Spirit although his words were very severe that's a spiritual prophetic rebuke apparently of this man. He says he called him son of the devil among other things.

Jesus had spoken to the Pharisees and called them sons of the devil and John 8 44 he said you are of your father the devil and the will of your father you will do you want to do. In first John chapter 3 in verse 10 it says in this we know the children of God and the children of the devil whoever does righteousness is of God and whoever does not righteousness is not of the devil is of the devil and is not of God. So basically John in his gospel quotes Jesus as using a term like this son of the devil children of the devil of the Jews who were not faithful.

Now this man was a Jew and he was definitely not faithful even before he was resisting the gospel he had rejected even Moses and the Jewish faith by becoming a sorcerer. And so when Saul says will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord he might not

only be referring to what the man was doing there in that audience with Proconsul. He may be pointing out that this Jew had been perverting the right ways of the Lord as a career.

When are you going to stop doing that? You know you're a sorcerer you're a false prophet you're a Jew you know the Lord you're perverting them. When are you going to stop doing that? Even as you oppose our message you're continuing to pervert the right ways of the Lord. He says you're going to be blind for a while.

It's interesting that he struck him blind briefly he said only for a while you won't see the sun and the man went away looking for someone to lead him by the hand. What's what's interesting is that when Saul himself was a resistor of the gospel God Jesus on the road to Damascus struck him blind and we're told that he was led by the hand as a blind man for a little while only for about three days in his case. How long this blindness remained on Elymas we aren't told but it made a profound impression on the Proconsul and he became a believer.

And then we read nothing more they may have stayed there long enough to baptize Sergius Paulus we we don't really know if that happened I would suspect it would and they may have discipled him a little bit we're not told how much time elapsed in each place they stayed but we would assume he didn't just do this and then walk away and never see the guy again in all likelihood he spent enough time to orient him toward the gospel. Now Sergius Paulus was a complete heathen in fact we might say he's the first complete heathen to to be recorded here in the gospel because all the heathens previously all the gentiles we converted had been associated with the synagogue in some way they had been either god fearers or proselytes or at least in a territory where the gospel was spreading among the Jews and reaching out beyond that to the heathen. The heathen in Antioch for example and other places in on the mainland had contact with Judaism we have no evidence that Judaism had ever been made known to this man there was a Jew but he was a false prophet not promoting Judaism so this man was no doubt entirely pagan in all of his thinking without any familiarity with the true god until Paul and Barnabas had their interview with him in time with him and and they probably had to spend a little time with him after he believed to orient him toward the things of god and the gospel before they left but when they did leave verse 13 says now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos which is where they had this encounter they came to Perga in Pamphylia and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

Now you can see that they they came to the mainland the southern coast of what was called Asia minor this region today is the country of Turkey so all their activities we're going to read about now for the remainder of this journey are going to take place in parts of what is now called Turkey and they would have landed their ship probably at Atalaya or Italia I'm not sure where the accent falls on that particular word Italia was the seaport it doesn't say they landed there but it does later in chapter 14 say they set sail

from there on their way home as they were retracing their steps and they came to Perga you can see if you look at the map that was given where that is now we don't read of them doing anything in Perga all we read there is that John left them there he may have traveled over land to get back home to Antioch or even back to Jerusalem probably Antioch since he was there when Barnabas took him on the second missionary journey but why he left we don't know some feel that John might have been John Mark might have been offended because Paul was now the leader of the team instead of his cousin Barnabas who clearly had been the appointed leader at the beginning he may have been a little offended by Paul's being so taking such a leadership role he may also have noticed that they have to climb some really high mountains to go to the next place they're going and not wanting to go there he might just felt like he'd bitten off more than he could chew and wanted to go home he might have just been missing the comforts of home I would have thought that after seeing the striking of Elymas blind by Paul this would make the journey that they were on seem particularly intriguing I would if I were John Mark be more interested at that point than I was before wow that was interesting seeing that happen I wonder what else is up ahead but for whatever reason John Mark decided not to continue went home and it was just Paul and Barnabas at this point from then on now we don't read that they ministered in Perga some believe that it's because Paul was sick and they had this high mountain pass to get over the Taurus mountains are pretty high like 3,500 feet high and that Paul's sickness may have been getting worse he may have had a recurring illness some scholars think he might have had malaria but there's some indication that he had some kind of problem with his eyes it may have there may have been other symptoms too but the visible effect on his eyes was apparently quite disgusting because he later wrote to these people he's coming to in this Galatian region southern Galatia the Roman province of Galatia Paul wrote to the Galatians later about this very first missionary journey and his coming to them and it's kind of interesting how he speaks of himself in that place in Galatians chapter 4 verses 13 and 14 he says you know that because he's writing to the Galatians now the Galatians are the Christians that he's going to evangelize shortly after the point we've read he's coming into Galatia to evangelize he later wrote this letter back to them and said you know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at first and my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject but you received me as an angel of God even as Christ Jesus what then was the blessing you enjoyed for I bear you witness that if possible you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me now the fact that he says you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me suggests that there was something wrong with his eyes why would anyone want to give him his eye their eyes if he had a good pair of his own why consider that and there are other times in in the bible when Paul refers to his apparently his eyesight he talks about the large letters with which he wrote possibly a reference to the fact that his eyes were not good he does speak of a thorn in his flesh in second Corinthians 12 he doesn't say what it was but he calls it an infirmity in his flesh that was quite a nuisance to him and he prayed three times that he'd be healed of it and Jesus said no my grace is sufficient

for you my strength is made perfect in your weakness and Paul said okay then I'll just rejoice in my infirmities Paul was not a well man it may be that he wasn't well enough in the time he was in purgah to do much ministry and then uh perhaps to avoid winter uh coming in in those mountains or whatever he and bartosz may have felt they were in a hurry to get over those mountains and couldn't stop there on their way back home they did minister in purgah but they didn't on their way outward now we're going to find that they make their way inland up to next pacifian antioch and then they're going to go to iconium and lystra and derby all of which are on your map they're penetrating the interior of the galatian region and then they make their way back and visit the same places in reverse order from derby they go to lystra from there to iconium from iconium to pacifian antioch and then back to purgah and then to uh italian they they sail back to antioch there so this is their first year it's going to go out as far as uh derby and then come back the same route and revisit the same places as i said they do preach in derby on their way home excuse me purgah in purgah they preach on the way home but they they do not do so on their outbound leg of their trip it says in verse 14 but when they departed from purgah they came to antioch and pasidia and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day and sat down now antioch this there's lots of antiochs obviously the city in syria that they left where their home church was was called antioch that was syrian antioch this is called pasidian antioch because it's actually antioch toward pasidia it was not technically in pasidia but there were other antiochs and this was more toward the city and so they call it the city in antioch it was about 100 miles inland from uh from purgah so they had to travel from purgah over those mountains and 100 miles to get to this city it's a very important city though and we have in this city the longest sermon paul preached on record he may have preached longer sermons but they're not on record paul's longest sermon on record is this one and and it's clear that he's preaching and not barnabas they come to the synagogue and it says they went into the synagogue and on the sabbath day they sat down and after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent to them saying men and brethren if you have any word of exhortation for the people say on now i don't know if paul and barnabas look to each other and they said do you want to speak no why don't you do it you know i mean they're both invited to speak but paul ends up getting up there to speak and he's obviously become the spokesman for the for the team and paul stood up and motioned with his hand and said men of israel and you who fear god so jews and god fearing gentiles the god of this people israel chose our fathers and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of egypt and with an uplifted arm he brought them out of it now for a time of about 40 years he put up with their ways in the wilderness and when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of canaan he distributed their land to them by allotment after that he gave them judges for about 450 years until samuel the prophet now this takes us from the exodus to the time of samuel that means through the the book of exodus leviticus numbers deuteronomy we've got the book of joshua when he conquered the seven nations of the canaanites and then uh the judges and samuel was the last of the judges so we've gone through a lot of books he the way it's worded

here it looks like the period of judges lasted for about 450 years now it probably didn't last that long it probably was more in the 300s and this has caused some questions to arise as to what is meant by this 450 years it turns out in the alexandrian text which is the older manuscripts of the new testament which are not used by the new king james but are used by most modern translations and if you're not reading the king james or the new king james you're reading a newer translation and it will read differently than this in the text that the new king james reads it says he gave them judges for about 450 years which makes it sound like the period of the judges was that long however in the alexandrian text it reads differently so that it sounds like the 450 years bring us up to the point of the judges it's just a different way it reads in the older text and that being so he may be saying that the whole period of the captivity in egypt and the 40 years in the wilderness and the conquest of canaan under joshua that was about 450 years and then came the period of the judges which lasted until the time of samuel so there's some ambiguity because the textual difference is the 450 years here sounds like it's the period of the judges but in the alexandrian text it sounds like it's the period leading up to the period of the judges and the period of judges is not included in the 450 years but the 400 years they're in captivity the 40 years wandering and perhaps about 10 years mentioned of the conquest of the land under joshua then came the judges will not worry too much about it but it is one of those things that reads differently in different manuscripts verse 22 and when he had removed him oh no i'm sorry verse 21 and afterward they asked for a king this was in the days of samuel in first samuel chapter 8 the period of the judges being at its end the people asked for a king and he gave them saul the son of kish a man of the tribe of benjamin for 40 years now the old testament never tells us that saul reigned for 40 years however there was a jewish tradition that that was so we know that david reigned for 40 years and solomon reigned for 40 years if saul did also then the first three kings of israel saul david and solomon all reigned for exactly 40 years which interestingly is the same period of time they wandered in the wilderness before they came into the land and then in the period of the judges most of the judges not all judges were for 40 years one gets the impression that 40 years might be simply a shorthand way of saying a generation not necessarily exactly 40 years frankly if it was exactly 40 years and saul reigned for 40 years than david 40 years solomon in his 39th year might start getting nervous i'm seeing a pattern here you know because he also reigned only 40 years and died in any case there is a jewish tradition that saul reigned for 40 years but in that case the bible doesn't have any statements about it josephus however does mention that he reigned for 40 years now in first saying the chapter 13 it mentions uh saul's reign but the text has become corrupt and it does not it's not likely to be correct there are there are cases where the manuscripts as they come down to us have been damaged and it says in first samuel 13 1 talking about the length of saul's reign first samuel 13 1 says saul reigned one year and when he had reigned two years over israel blah blah blah it talks about only two years of his reign and uh no scholars believe that those are the right numbers they believe that the manuscripts have been somehow corrupted and so we don't know how long he reigned but josephus said it was 40 years

and josephus might have had older manuscripts of samuel which had that number in them so paul paul is at least speaking from a jewish tradition about the length of saul's reign but it may also be that he had older manuscripts of the hebrew that said that our more modern the ones we have now are not as not as accurate perhaps and when he had removed him that is saul he raised up for them david as king to me uh he also gave testimony and said i have found david the son of jesse a man after my own heart who will do all my will now this particular um quotation is kind of a mixture of two different statements in the old testament paul has conflated two statements about david one of them from first samuel 3 14 and the other is from psalm 89 21 then it says in verse 23 from this man's seed meaning david's according to his promise god raised up for israel a savior jesus now all the jews in the synagogue knew that the messiah would come from the line of david that was absolutely orthodox to all jewish thinking the messiah had to be a son of david you might remember that jesus once asked the pharisees what do you say about the messiah whose son is he and they said immediately david's david's son and likewise in romans chapter one the opening verses paul says that jesus was of the seed of david according to the flesh but declared to be the son of god by the power of the holy spirit by the resurrection of the dead but david was the one to whom god had spoken in second samuel uh seven and told him that the messiah would come from him and that so the jews all expected someone to come from david's royal line now when david died solomon his son reigned then rehoboam and then the rest of the kings of judah they were all descended from david and jesus legal status in israel was also from that line because if you read matthew chapter one there's a genealogy of joseph the husband of mary now joseph was not actually jesus biological father but he was his legal father and gave him legal status and standing in society so jesus was technically joseph's son as far as legal status is concerned joseph you'll see in matthew one is descended directly through the kingly line all the kings of david were in the line of joseph so jesus came down legally as a descendant of joseph now luke gives the descendants of jesus uh differently and apparently is giving mary's line and that also goes through david though not not through not through solomon in the kingly line but through another son of david nathan so if mary's genealogy is given in luke chapter three which some say it is not but i think it is then jesus was biologically related to david as well as legally but his legal standing was out of the kingly line through his father joseph and he was thus qualified to be the messiah and that's what paul says from this man david's seed according to the promise god raised up for israel a savior jesus after john had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the of israel now he mentions john as if these people know about it these people are very far from the region where john was baptizing but john's reputation had spread to the jew through the jewish synagogue system through the whole roman world you'll find in on paul's third missionary journey he comes to some ephesians who know about john the baptist they don't know about jesus they know what john the baptist in chapter 19 verses one through seven of acts so it would appear that john the baptist because he was a prophet in israel his message and his ministry were described among the jews throughout the

whole world uh and so john paul can refer to john as if he's a known character you know john had come baptizing calling people to repent and after that jesus came he says verse 25 and as john was finishing his course he said who do you think i am i'm not he but behold there comes one after me the sandals of whose feet i am not worthy to lose men and brethren sons of the family of abraham and those among you who fear god to you the word of this salvation has been sent for those who dwell in jerusalem and their rulers because they did not know him nor even the voices of the prophets which are read every day every sabbath they have fulfilled them in condemning him now he says you know the prophet said that the messiah would be condemned and the jews inadvertently fulfilled these prophecies that they didn't understand the prophets and they inadvertently fulfilled them by condemning jesus to death and though they found no cause for death in him they asked pilate that he should be put to death now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning him they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb but god raised him from the dead he was seen for many days by those who came up with him from galilee to jerusalem who are his witnesses to the people and we declare to you the glad tidings now glad tidings is the word gospel the gospel is good tidings so here's the gospel that the promise which was made to the fathers god has fulfilled this for us their children and that he has raised up jesus as it is also written in the second psalm he quotes psalm 2 7 today you you're my son today i've begotten you and that he raised him from the dead no more to return to corruption he has spoken thus and the quotation comes from isaiah 55 3 i will give you the sure mercies of david therefore he also says in another psalm this is psalm 16 10 which peter also quoted on the day of pentecost you will not allow your holy one to see corruption so paul quotes three old testament passages which he says are fulfilled in the resurrection of jesus the first one is psalm 2 7 which says you are my son today i've begotten you he says that has to do with god raising jesus up from the dead begotten therefore means in this case begotten from the dead in colossians 2 18 paul refers to jesus as the firstborn from the dead and in revelation 1 5 jesus refers to himself as the first begotten from the dead so the resurrection of jesus from the dead is seen as being born from death and when god says to david and through him to the messiah you are my son this day i've begotten you he means from the dead apparently he's referring to the resurrection now some people think this refers to jesus being begotten in eternity past but it's not eternal this is this day there's a historic moment at this day i've begotten you and it's the day of the resurrection paul identifies it as such because he introduces the quote as it is all he says he raised up jesus as it is also written in the second psalm you're my son today begotten so that this was talking about him raising up jesus and verse 34 he introduces isaiah 55 3 that he raised him from the dead no more to return to corruption he's spoken thus i will give you the sure mercies of david now in the passage the u seems to be israel and giving them the sure mercies of david the sure mercies of david is an expression not used anywhere else in scripture but i think all agree all scholars would agree that it's referring to the merciful things that god promised to david namely that the messiah would come from him and that god is giving to israel in raising jesus from the dead god

is giving to israel the fulfillment of those promises the sure mercies of david now it's interesting that he said that the promises made to david are fulfilled in jesus being raised from the dead the promise is that god would set one of david's sons on his throne and when jesus rose from the dead he then ascended to heaven and sat down on the throne at the right hand of god so paul saw this as fulfillment of the promise made to david and he also quotes as i said psalm 16 10 you will not allow your holy one to see corruption in acts 2 peter had quoted this passage too to point out that jesus didn't decay corruption means decay his body was dead and most bodies decay but his didn't he rose from the dead and therefore didn't have opportunity to decay his body did not see corruption did not see decay so all these passages paul sees as confirming that jesus would rise from the dead and he says he did verse 36 for david after he had served his own generation by the will of god fell asleep he means he died and was buried with his fathers and saw corruption unlike the prophecy said you will not let your holy one see corruption david did see corruption his body is decayed but he whom god raised up meaning jesus did not see corruption therefore let it be known to you brethren that through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins and by him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of moses so paul preaches justification by faith here which is one of his main themes in his epistles also whoever believes can be justified that means acquitted of all crimes on their record before god forgiven sins as he calls it peter also mentioned forgiveness of sins in his first sermon in acts 238 he said be said repent therefore be baptized everyone you for for the remission of sins and so he also said that in chapter 10 when he's preaching to cornelius that the gospel was the remission of sins or forgiveness of sins the fact that we are in danger before god because of our sins is a key part of the gospel that god alleviates that danger he forgives our sins justifies us by faith now in this case in verse 39 paul says you can be justified by faith in christ from everything that you could not be justified in the law of moses there were certain sins in the law of moses you could not offer a sacrifice for that sacrificial system it says in leviticus was for the sins offered in ignorance but there were sins that you could not offer any sacrifice for you could never be forgiven murder being one of them adultery another one idolatry another one and several others there's about 30 approximately 30 sins in the law that people instead of offering a sacrifice for had to be put to death for there's no forgiveness for those but paul said through christ you can be justified from everything including those things that you couldn't be justified for in the law of moses so even murder and adultery and idolatry people can be forgiven for in the gospel they could not under the law beware therefore lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you and he quotes habakkuk 1 5 behold you despisers marvel and perish for i work a work in your days a work which you will by no means believe though one word to declare it to you now in the original in habakkuk 1 5 which he's quoting the work that god was going to do that they would not believe if told was actually the work of judging judah and the nations through the babylonians that's the context paul is applying it to another work of god the work of salvation the work of fulfilling the promises made to the fathers a blessing all



nations through the seat of abram but you may not believe that that work is taking place make sure you don't fail to believe it he says now that's the end of his sermon at this point we need to take another break and we'll come back to see the results of his sermon and i could rush through it but that'd be a very very tragic thing to do because there's some very important points to make with the remainder of chapter 13 so we'll stop here at verse 41 where paul ends the sermon and we'll come back in 15 minutes and see what the reaction to the sermon was