

Acts 13:15-

15 The Mishnah describes a typical synagogue service. There is the recitation of the Shema and the Shemona Esreh (18 benedictions). There is a reading from the Torah and the also from the prophets. There is a blessing pronounced over the people. After the reading of the Scripture one of the learned ones "explains what is of great importance and use, lessons by which the whole of their lives may be improved." -Philo That teaching was called a word of encouragement. It is not surprising that they would call on Paul since he was taught under one of the two great rabbi of the time, Gamaliel.

16 The synagogue already had Gentiles who regularly came to hear the Scriptures and learn of YHWH.

17-20a Paul begins with God's call to the Patriarchs, moves quickly to the captivity, and then to the conquest of the Promised Land, a 450 year period. He is laying the common ground to bring them up to the Messianic promises given to David. The seven nations removed – Deut 7:1

20b-22 He mentions the period of the judges, which was about 400 years, and on to the people demanding a king. Saul was the first of the kings of Israel, ushering in the period of the kings. God is said to have found David, a man after His heart. The expression combines Psalm 89:20 and 1Samuel 13:14. This was the line through which the promised Messiah would come.

23 Paul introduces them the coming of the Savior. The promise is found in Isaiah 62:11

24-25 He used John the Baptist's testimony. News of John and his message must have spread throughout Asia Minor.

26–27 Paul is being generous to say the leaders did not recognize Jesus was the Messiah (John 3:2). In doing so, he is planting the thought that they should not make the same mistake.

28 –31 These verses are the heart of the Gospel message. The rulers wanted a painful public death for Jesus so they had to ask Pilate to crucify Him. The word "tree" instead of "cross" reminds people that Jesus took the curse from us onto Himself. Deuteronomy 21:22-23; Galatians 3:14 Witnesses were important to the Jews, and the Apostles had twelve witnesses of Jesus' resurrection.

32-35 Paul uses three proof texts to confirm his message. Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 55:3; Psalm 16:10

36-37 In case the people were used to interpreting the verse differently, Paul explained that it could not be about David as his body had decayed. It could only be true of Jesus.

38-39 This is the real focal point of Paul's message. The Mosaic Law did not provide any sacrifice for intentional sin. And what do you do between the times of sacrifice? Actually, the Law of Moses did not justify you of any sin. It merely pointed to the ultimate sacrifice. Looking forward in faith to God's lamb saved them then, just as looking back to His sacrifice saves us now. This is the doctrine of justification by faith. Romans 3:28, 5:1

40-41 He left them with a warning from Habakkuk 1:5. Habakkuk warned the people that Babylon was coming and to ignore it would be catastrophic. Paul implied rejecting the message of Jesus was that serious.

42-43 The message stirred the hearts of many Jews and Gentiles converts. Paul encouraged them to continue in grace, in other words, not to rely on keeping the Law but on what Christ had done for them. An invitation back is another chance to bring it home to the hearts.

44 –47 The Jews become jealous of the crowd, and zealous to guard the Law that kept them apart from the Gentiles, and so resisted the preaching of the Gospel. Paul declared that the word of God was being fulfilled even in their rejection. Isaiah 49:6 (you in this verse is singular) and Acts 1:8

48-49 The Gentiles are hungry to hear the Gospel and that the God of the Jews can accept them just as they are without the keeping of the ritual laws.

50 If the Jewish leaders couldn't win in a debate with Paul, they would go through the back door and turn the Roman Jewish sympathizers against him. They were successful and had Paul and Barnabas expelled from the city.

51 To shake the dust from your feet was to warn them they would be judged for their actions. It implied that you did not want the wickedness to cling to you. They had already warned them in 40-41, but now again in a prophetic manner (acting to bring home the point). Luke 9:5

52 A new church was born. Paul and Barnabas were rejected for the cause of Christ. Both are reasons for joy. And when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of God raises up a standard against him, thus the filling of the Holy Spirit. I pray that it be said of us, "They are full of joy and the Holy Spirit." I wonder how the city would change when Serjius Paullus moves back?