

Paul and Barnabas had been called by the Holy Spirit and set apart by the elders of the church in Antioch to go on a missionary journey. They first went to Cypress where they encountered some resistance from a false prophet but saw the conversion of the Roman proconsul Sergius Paulus. Then they sailed north to Pamphylia where Paul became ill. They went on to Antioch Pisidia and were invited to speak in the synagogue. The first half of the message, which we went over last week, reminded the Jews of their failings throughout their history. But then Paul reminded them of the predictions of the Messiah coming through the line of King David. He claimed it was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, reminding them that John the Baptist said the Messiah was coming after him. Paul said the Jewish rulers actually fulfilled the prophecies by having Jesus killed, but that God raised Jesus up according to the second Psalm. We continue the sermon with Paul preaching on the fact of resurrection and its connection with prophecy.

³⁴ And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way, "I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David."

³⁵ Therefore he says also in another psalm, "You will not let your Holy One see corruption." Acts 13:34-35 Paul combined two Scriptures, one from the prophets and one from the writings, the connection being the word "holy."⁴¹ The first is [Isaiah 55:3](#). It is a beautiful chapter in which all are exhorted to come and listen to God so that our soul might live. If we will listen, we will receive the blessings promised to David. The blessings promised to David come to us through Jesus in the new covenant. Though "you" is plural in the Isaiah passage, implying that it is to Israel, Paul applies it to Jesus. Jesus said He did nothing except what He heard from the Father ([John 8:28](#)). It has been said that where Israel failed, the new Israel, Jesus, succeeded. Remember Israel means one who prevails with God ([Genesis 32:28](#)). Because Jesus was the ultimate example of one who listens to the Father, the promises were for Him, especially the promise for the Holy One of Psalm 16.

Then Paul quoted the promise to David found in [Psalm sixteen](#). God would not let His Holy One see decay. We've already seen numerous prophetic promises that One from the line of David would reign forever and how that was not possible unless that One conquered death. Together, those promises set forth a prediction of which the fulfillment would have to be miraculous and unique. The Messiah would die, but His body would not decay, and then He would conquer death itself. We have legends and myths of immortals, but there is only one account that is backed by overwhelming historical evidence. That is the resurrection of Jesus ([1 Corinthians 15:6](#)).

³⁶ For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, ³⁷ but he whom God raised up did not see corruption. Acts 13:36-37 The prophecy was not for King David. He died, and as was preached by Peter in [Acts 2](#), his tomb was still with them. Jews believed the prophecy was divinely inspired, so who was it about? Paul was declaring it to be fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth who was from the lineage of David.

Commented [PW1]: A rabbinical practice called *gezerah shavah*

Commented [PW2]: [Isaiah 55:3 \(ESV\)](#)

³ Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

Commented [PW3]: [John 8:28 \(ESV\)](#)

²⁸ So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

Commented [PW4]: [Genesis 32:28 \(ESV\)](#)

²⁸ Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed."

Commented [PW5]: [Psalm 16:10 \(ESV\)](#)

¹⁰ For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.

Commented [PW6]: [1 Corinthians 15:6 \(ESV\)](#)

⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

Commented [PW7]: [Acts 2:29 \(ESV\)](#)

²⁹ "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

³⁸ *Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,* ³⁹ *and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.* Acts 13:38-39 This is the gospel message. The promised Messiah came and bore our sins and the punishment for those sins that we might have everlasting life with Him (1 Peter 2:24). The law of Moses had no sacrifice for intentional sin. It had no solution for man's sinful nature. It only provided temporary covering of unintentional sin through the sacrificial system. Every year Jews prayed that their name would be written in the Book of Life for the coming year because of their repentant hearts and the sacrifice offered by the High Priest. Then it would be repeated next year with the hope that God would answer but with no assurance. The guilt of our sin nature or any intentional sin would be with them no matter what was done. They could see a glimmer of hope in David's prayers of repentance (see Psalm 32 and 51). In those psalms, David looked to God for mercy and said God would favor a repentant and contrite heart. But he did not understand how it was possible (unless he understood the future fulfillment of Psalm 22). Jews could only hope in some future ultimate provision from God. Paul is declaring that the provision had come in Jesus the Messiah, the Lamb of God.

Paul declared the truth with convincing evidence of prophetic fulfillment. What would they do with it? What will we do with it? Paul goes on to warn them. ⁴⁰ *Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about:* ⁴¹ *"Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you."* Acts 13:40-41 Paul finished his sermon with one last Scripture, Habakkuk 1:5. He started his sermon by telling them to listen, and ended it warning them that they better look, be astounded, and believe it lest they end up fulfilling Habakkuk's prophecy. The entire sermon referred to Scripture and included at least six direct quotations, and this is probably a much abbreviated form of the whole message. This was not the typical Sabbath sermon by any means. It caused quite a stir as the whole city began talking about it. Had the Jewish Messiah come? Did He really make a way for everyone to be right with God so all could have the hope of eternal life?

In some of the synagogues of ancient times, rabbi would begin the reading of the Scriptures with a quotation. *"Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the day of provocation"* (Psalm 95:7-8) It was to remind those in attendance that the voice of God is spoken through the Word of God. The Jews who heard the word of God in the wilderness hardened their hearts and would not listen or trust in God. They died in the wilderness without entering the Promised Land. The implication of the quotation was to cause everyone to consider the seriousness of hearing the Scriptures that were about to be read and the consequences of hardening one's heart to the Word. Paul was preaching the same thought through a minor prophet. That is something we should have in mind every time we read God's Word.

⁴² *As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath.* Acts 13:42 Praise God for the hunger God put in the listeners' hearts. These hungry souls would make up the first church in the region of Galatia. Oh that God

Commented [PW8]: 1 Peter 2:24 (ESV)

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

Commented [PW9]: Psalm 32:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

² Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Commented [PW10]: Psalm 51:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

Commented [PW11]: Psalm 22:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet—

Commented [PW12]: Psalm 95:7-8 (ESV)

⁷ For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today, if you hear his voice,

⁸ do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

would make our nation hungry once again to hear the Word of the Lord, the message of salvation (Matthew 5:6). There is a curiosity about psychics and fortune tellers who rarely get any specific predictions correct, and yet in the Jewish Scriptures we have hundreds of prophecies by many different writers over a period of one thousand years that have the details of their prophecies fulfilled in Jesus. Nor are these prophecies some vague wording that might be fulfilled in a general way, but instead deal with specifics. They predicted the place of the Messiah's birth, the place of most of His ministry, that He would open the eyes of the blind and make the lame to walk, that He would be rejected by men, bear our sins, though innocent be convicted, be crucified, be buried in a rich man's tomb, and rise from death. There are many more detailed prophecies fulfilled in Jesus' three years of ministry, and yet people will ignore them and cling to vague obscure statements like those of Nostradamus.

Why is that? Why do so many fulfill the prophecy of Habakkuk? I always come back to the same conclusion. They want to remain the lord of their own little lives and can't imagine serving someone else, even their own Creator. We are prone to accept the ancient lie, "You shall be as gods" (Genesis 3:5).

⁴³ And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God. Acts 13:43 This is the preacher's hope, that instead of rushing off to lunch, people would want to hear more, asking for explanations, and sharing their joy and acceptance of what was heard.

Paul and Barnabas responded by encouraging them to continue in the grace of God. In other words, don't go back to trying to please God by obeying the laws of Moses (Galatians 3:10). Trust in that grace extended to us through what Jesus has done. Just as the Old Testament saints had looked forward in faith to some future provision of God for their sins to be removed once and for all, now we look back in faith on what God has provided for us in Jesus' sacrifice (Hebrews 9:15). Stop thinking you can be good enough for God and revel in the grace extended to you. That love and grace will cause you to want His life to be manifest in you (2 Corinthians 4:10). Obedience will be a joyful response instead of duty and obligation (Psalm 40:8).

⁴⁴ The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. Acts 13:44 The excited recipients of the gospel had spread the word about the Messiah and the grace offered to all. The synagogue probably never saw a crowd like that. I've preached in a slum in a foreign land where the people were standing outside looking in the windows and crowding around the door. There was not an unoccupied square inch on the floor in the building. I imagine the synagogue was something like that. People were hungry to hear the truth of the gospel and the hope that it gives us. May God stir that hunger up once again in our nation. Fifty years ago this sanctuary and the downstairs were filled for most services. The message hasn't changed but satisfaction with the things of this world is thriving. The world keeps offering alternatives, from drugs to games that offer another reality. Anything other than a personal relationship with Jesus will leave us empty (Ephesians 4:18-19).

Commented [PW13]: Matthew 5:6 (ESV)

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

Commented [PW14]: Genesis 3:5 (ESV)

⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Commented [PW15]: Galatians 3:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."

Commented [PW16]: Hebrews 9:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

Commented [PW17]: 2 Corinthians 4:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

Commented [PW18]: Psalm 40:8 (ESV)

⁸ I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."

Commented [PW19]: Ephesians 4:18-19 (ESV)

¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

⁴⁵ *But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him.* Acts 13:45 Jealousy was the motive of the Jewish leaders to kill Jesus (Matthew 27:18). It was Elymus' reason to resist Paul and Barnabas. It is often the reason for the persecution of those who share the gospel. It should be expected. **Jesus demands first place because that is the only right place for the One who has done so much for us, for One who is so holy and good.** That means that everyone and every religion that also demands first place will be in opposition to those who share the message of Jesus. It is an honor to be resisted for Jesus' sake. The synagogue leaders contradicted Paul's message and reviled Paul. Opposition will always make it personal. Jesus said that if they persecuted Him they will persecute you as well (John 15:20). Expect it. Rejoice in it (Matthew 5:12).

Commented [PW20]: Matthew 27:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up.

⁴⁶ *And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.* Acts 13:46 I have explained why the message went to the Jews first in a previous sermon. This is the first declaration by Paul and Barnabas of a clear change in direction of the ministry. Because the leaders of the synagogue chose to fulfill the Habakkuk prophecy and would not listen to the message of prophecy, the thrust of the mission movement would now be to Gentiles. This was predicted in the call of Paul on that road to Damascus when God told him he would be an apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15-16).

Commented [PW21]: John 15:20 (ESV)

²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

Commented [PW22]: Matthew 5:12 (ESV)

¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The expression "judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life" means that their decision to reject the gospel makes them unworthy. We are all unworthy of eternal life, but in Christ we receive His worth, His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). We judge, or decide, we will accept what He has done for us and receive that grace by faith.

Commented [PW23]: Acts 9:15-16 (ESV)

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

Commented [PW24]: 2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

⁴⁷ *For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."* Acts 13:47 This verse from Isaiah 49:6 is Paul's seventh quotation and completes his message. The good news of the gospel is for the whole world (Isaiah 42:6). It must have grieved Paul to say that, for in Romans 9:1-3 he tells us of the anguish in his heart for the Jewish people. On the other hand, there was a whole world waiting to hear this good news.

Commented [PW25]: Isaiah 42:6 (ESV)

⁶ "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,

Commented [PW26]: Romans 9:1-3 (ESV)

¹ I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—
² that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.
³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

⁴⁸ *And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.* Acts 13:48 Paul and Barnabas' words caused the Gentiles to rejoice. They wondered if they had to be circumcised and obey the food laws and all the other laws to be accepted by God. Now that they knew that is not mandatory, that Jesus fulfilled all the law for them, they were ready to accept by faith the salvation offered to them in Jesus.

Commented [PW27]: Luke 15:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

When a person believes there should be great rejoicing (Luke 15:10). If there isn't, I wonder if they understood the message. If they don't glorify the word of the Lord, if there is no hunger to hear more of the Word, I wonder if the person was truly born again. Joy and hunger for the Word are signs of new life in Christ. Some of us who have been in the Lord for a long time forget that. We focus on problems that are

insignificant compared to the wonder of our salvation. Our hunger for the Word has diminished because we haven't been digging deeper to see the treasures that are there for us (Psalm 119:72) or haven't been willing to hear God speak directly to us through the Word. Stir that hunger back up! Remember your first love (Revelation 2:4).

⁴⁹ And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. Acts 13:49
The new converts had to tell others. When merchants would travel or laborers would work in another area, they would tell those around them about the gospel they heard in the synagogue of Antioch and of the two men that brought them the good news of the Jew's Messiah coming to bring salvation to the whole world.

⁵⁰ But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. Acts 13:50
It wasn't enough for the jealous religious leaders to kick Paul and Barnabas out of the synagogue. They wanted them out of town. They instigated a disinformation campaign against them which incited the influential people to have them driven from the district. Greeks allowed women to be merchants and manage businesses. The word "devout" probably means these women were sympathetic to the synagogue. These women along with some of the Roman leaders of the city were the force behind Paul and Barnabas' expulsion from the region (1 Corinthians 1:26).

⁵¹ But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. ⁵² And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. Acts 13:51-52
Shaking the dust from their feet was a way of declaring that God will judge the Jewish leaders and those they stirred up against Paul and Barnabas. They would probably have liked to have stayed and helped the new believers to be taught. Instead, they were driven on to take the gospel further east to Iconium. They left behind disciples who were full of joy and the Holy Spirit. When you have those kind of people in a congregation, it is bound to attract more people to Jesus. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they will continue to grow in the Lord until Paul and Barnabas can return to encourage them in the faith.

Let us not be like those who fulfilled the prophecy of Habakkuk. Is the forgiveness of sins still your source of our great joy? Are we filled with joy and the Holy Spirit, hungry for more of the Word? Reading about new believers should help us remember the passion we had when we were first saved. May the Lord stir that first love in our hearts so that others might see the difference in us and be drawn to our Savior.

Questions:

- 1 Discuss how Paul combined verses that predicted Jesus' resurrection.
- 2 Is it possible for anyone else to fulfill those prophecies?
- 3 From what could the laws of Moses not free people?
- 4 How did Jews look for salvation before Jesus?
- 5 What was the warning to the listeners? Does it apply today?
- 6 Review the prophecies that predicted Messiah.
- 7 How did P&B respond to the eager recipients?
- 8 Why were so many eager to hear the message?
- 9 Why do people persecute those who share Jesus' love?
- 10 What was the final quotation? Implications?

Commented [PW28]: Psalm 119:72 (ESV)

⁷² The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Commented [PW29]: Revelation 2:4 (ESV)

⁴ But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

Commented [PW30]: 1 Corinthians 1:26 (ESV)

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.