

GOD'S PROMISED ONE - JESUS!
ACTS CH13:13-41

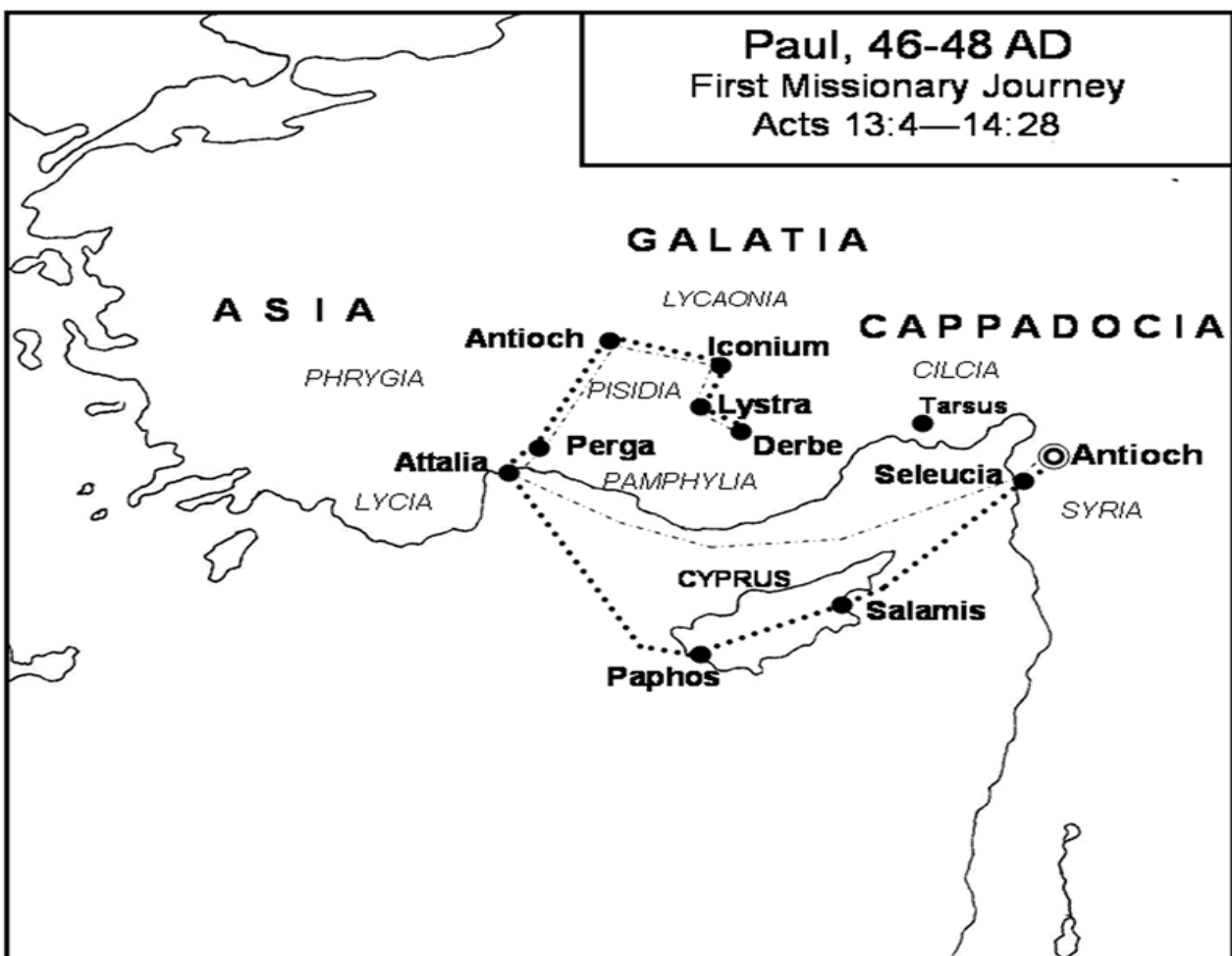
ILLUSTRATION

What is a sermon? What makes a good sermon? What should a sermon consist of? How should we respond to a sermon? Where should we look to help us understand the importance of sermon's? We should look to Jesus!

Jesus' best known sermon is what? The Sermon on the Mount (Matt Ch5-7; A similar sermon is found in Luke Ch6). You see the Bible is clear about a conviction that "Faith in Jesus", doesn't come just from reading, but from hearing God's Word (Romans Ch10:14-18)!

When Jesus sat on the side of the mountain, He did so to give a sermon to His followers, His disciples but the crowd were also there! Jesus engaged in such a way that believers (followers) could go deeper in their understanding of Jesus' teaching, but beginners (the crowd), first timers, could also understand what was being said if they engaged as hearers!

The sermon on the Mount (Matt Ch5-7:28-29) would probably have taken about 30 minutes, read the chapters yourself and time yourself! The sermon on the Mount is a perfect model for sermons!



PAUL'S STRATEGY! V13-15

V13 – Something really serious must have happened for John Mark to leave! As it was more than a thousand miles back to Jerusalem, from where they were in Asia Minor, modern Turkey! The team have reduced in size, going from 3 to 2! John Mark has left, leaving only Paul and Barnabas and we'll discover more about the reasons for this in Ch15:36-41, where Luke records for us that there “arose a sharp disagreement” between Paul and Barnabas over John Mark, which caused a separation on the Gospel workers!

Despite the team reducing in size by a third, Paul continues with his strategy for spreading the good news about Jesus!

Paul had a strategy of preaching in the Jewish synagogues first (where there were ones) before preaching to the Gentiles – Ch13:5; Ch13:14; Ch14:1; Ch17:1; Ch17:10; Ch17:17; Ch18:4; Ch18:19; + Ch19:8 (9 times). He knew that the synagogues would have both Jews and those gentiles who had converted to Judaism and he also knew that each Sabbath as was their custom the “Scriptures” (for us the Old Testament) would be opened up, read and explained!

But how should he start?

PAUL'S SERMON! V16-41

Luke records for us, what we shall call “Paul's first recorded sermon” (because we know that he had preached before in Ch9:20-22; Ch9:27 + Ch11:25-26) from v16-41 and it breaks down into three main parts, with each of the three parts beginning with an address to the people present, V16 “Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen”, V26 “Brothers sons of the family of Abraham and those among you who fear God”, and V38 “Let it be known to you therefore, Brothers”.

How does Paul start his sermon? By giving his hearers their own context. We see Paul give a brief summary of the history of Israel v17 - v25, from the point of their time in Egypt through the 40 years in the wilderness, the times of Judges, David's rule, the promise of Jesus and then the time of John the Baptist.

And what do we see through this history? That Paul makes it clear that the Nation of Israel and it's history are solely in the hands of the Lord. Look at how many times references to God are made in the context of God doing something:

V17 – God chose, made great, led them out!

V18 – God put up with them!

V 19 – God gave them the land!

V20 – God gave them judges and Samuel the Prophet!

V21 – God gave them a King!

V22 – God removed that King!

V22 – God raised up David!

V23 – God brought a Saviour, Jesus!

Paul demonstrates to his listeners his knowledge of the History of Israel. But he also shows how God has acted as the God of Israel! We also see Paul laying the foundations through the history of God's promise of Jesus the Saviour. Through v23 where he talks of the offspring of David being Jesus the Saviour. So we see a clearly laid out history of the nation of Israel and how God had worked his purposes through this nation!

PAUL'S SAVIOUR! V23-41

Having made clear God's role in the history of the Nation of Israel he moves on to His Son Jesus Christ and His story. How do we know it is about him? Depending on how you read it, at least 10 times in 8 verses we see references to Jesus:

V23 – A Saviour, Jesus!

V25 – After me one is coming!

V27 – Did not recognize Him!

V27 – Did not understand the read Scriptures every sabbath and condemned Him!

V28 – They found in Him no guilt They asked Pilate to have Him executed!

V29 – They carried out all that was written of Him... they took Him down.... And laid Him in a tomb!

V30 – But God raised Him from the dead!

V31 – He appeared to those who had come up with Him from Galilee!

V31 – Who are now His witnesses!

V34 – He raised Him from the dead!

So we see the story of Jesus told by Paul. But we don't just see the story. Paul wants to show the Jews and the God fearers who are listening to him why these things happened to Jesus:

V23 - Firstly that He was promised!

V26 - Secondly, that He is the one promised!

V27 – Thirdly, that they did not recognise Him as the promised one despite reading about Him each week on the Sabbath!

To further his points he then uses the very scriptures that they should be familiar with from those readings to prove who Jesus is, from Psalm 2:7 in verse 33, Isaiah Ch55:3 in verse 34 and in verse 35, Psalm 16:10. These verses come together to show that Jesus is the son of God, He is from the line of David and in raising Him from death, He did not see corruption.

V36 - He finishes this section by contrasting David who did fall asleep while Jesus v37, who was raised up, did not see corruption.

So Paul has clearly now made the link between the History of Israel and the story of Jesus. Showing how Jesus was treated by the Jews despite being the promised One! Even being condemned by them which fulfilled the very prophecies they would read. Lastly it's good to point out the reference in V31 that continues the journey we have seen Luke show through the book of Acts. You will remember in Acts Ch1:8 that Jesus says "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth". Luke shows this progression by referencing "who are now his witnesses to the people" in v31.

So where does that leave his hearers? Paul has summarised the history of Israel in our first section, then has shown who Jesus is, why he came and what He has done for us. And that leaves his hearers with a choice. What do they now do with this information they have been given? They have a choice, lets look at what that choice is:

V38 – "Through this man forgiveness of sins is been proclaimed to you", so Jesus' death and resurrection has enabled forgiveness to be accessed and that forgiveness frees us from sin and the need to fulfil the law that could not be fulfilled!

So the first part of the choice is seen. Believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus

Christ in order to receive forgiveness from sins.

And what is the alternative? Paul uses another quote from the Old Testament this time from Habakkuk Ch1:5. Paul uses it to show them that the way some people will respond has already been predicted. V41 a work that you will not believe even if one tells it to you. Again he is showing the audience that the response of not believing has already been prophesied. That people will either listen, repent and believe or not, even when they are told.

So really in this passage we have Paul's first recorded sermon that gives the people in the Synagogue in Pisidia Antioch a clear summary of the History of Israel, of God's providence and Sovereignty over that nation. And then details what Jesus went through how He was treated and why He came. Lastly we see the consequence of Him coming and also the consequence of our response to that coming.

APPLICATION

1. When Christians fall out, how should we respond?
2. The Jews were so focused on the Land that they missed out on why God had given the land, for the Messiah to be born there, in what ways can we sometimes miss out on the greater promise?
3. What was the mindset of the people in the synagogue, before Paul started preaching?
4. How can Paul revealing the mindset of the people he was trying to reach, help us understand the importance of the mindset we often come across in the people we are trying to meet?