

"The First Missionary Journey Continues"

Part 5

Acts 13:13-14:28

Introduction: In our study of Acts for the past 2 weeks we have looked at 2 different individuals. They were the first 2 kings of Israel. Saul was the first king and he committed 4 tragic sins, 3 of which caused him to lose the throne and kept anyone in his family from ever occupying the throne. The dynasty was taken from him and his family. Then there was David who was a man after God's own heart. He was not perfect but he loved the Lord. These 2 men were complete opposites. Now we are going to get back to Paul's message which he preached at Antioch and we shall see another interesting individual tonight.

➤ **Paul's Message**

Notice Acts 13:21-23

The people had rejected God when they cried out for a king and they received Saul. After Saul's rebellious heart was exposed God raised up David and it was from the seed of David that Jesus Christ was born. Israel certainly did not deserve a Savior. They had rebelled against God time after time throughout the years. But God had made a promise and He could not let the promise go unfulfilled.

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶ *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

⁷ *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

Isaiah 11:1-2

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

² *And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;*

Jeremiah 23:5-6

⁵ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

⁶ In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

God had promised that from the line of David the Messiah would come. Israel did not deserve a Savior but God was faithful to fulfill His promise.

Notice Acts 13:24-25

God was so gracious that He sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus Christ to come to the Jews and He had prophesied through Isaiah that he would be coming as the forerunner.

Isaiah 40:3

³ The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

John 1:15,23

¹⁵ John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

²³ He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

There is something said about John which separates him from the entire human race.

Luke 7:28

²⁸ For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

The statement that is underlined is what I want to focus on for a few thoughts. Jesus said John was greater than anyone born of a woman. That means he was greater than all the Old Testament saints. He was greater than Noah, Abraham, David, Daniel, Elijah, Nehemiah, Jeremiah, and anyone else we can think of in the Old Testament. What was it that made John so great?

John was truly a bright burning light in his day.

John 5:35

³⁵ He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

What made John really great was his humility. The Jews had not heard from God in over 400 years then all at once here comes John on the scene and he was very popular, but he did not seek any personal glory.

Mark 1:4-5

⁴ John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

⁵ And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

All the people of Judah and Jerusalem went to listen to John. But there was no pride in John. He was very quick to point all of them to Jesus Christ and that even included his own disciples.

John 1:19-27

¹⁹ And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

²⁰ And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

²¹ And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

²² Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

²³ He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

²⁴ And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

²⁵ And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

²⁶ John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

²⁷ *He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.*

John 3:30

³⁰ *He must increase, but I must decrease.*

John had weaknesses just as we do. When he was in prison he began to question if Jesus really was the Messiah.

Matthew 11:2-3

² *Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,*

³ *And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*

Why did John ask this question? Let us notice the message of John.

Matthew 3:1-2

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

² *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

John was expecting the Kingdom to come, but he was seeing no signs of the Kingdom being set up. Notice how Jesus answered his question.

Matthew 11:4-6

⁴ *Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:*

⁵ *The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

⁶ *And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.*

This was a quote from Isaiah that proved Jesus was the King of Israel.

Isaiah 35:1-6

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

² *It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.*

³ *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.*

⁴ *Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.*

⁵ *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.*

⁶ *Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.*

The miracles Jesus performed were all signs pointing to the Kingdom which confirmed He was the Messiah. John did not understand that because the Jews would reject Jesus that the Kingdom would be postponed and that there would be an interim age.

Notice Acts 13:25a

Here in the beginning of this verse we are told that John was "fulfilling his course." This means he was finishing his course. What John started he would continue until it was finished. Notice what the Apostle Paul said.

Acts 20:24-27

²⁴ *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might **finish my course** with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

²⁵ *And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.*

²⁶ *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.*

²⁷ *For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

Conclusion/Application:

Both John and Paul finished their course. For each the cost was very high for they were both beheaded. What task has God given to you? Are you staying true to the course? John and Paul are both examples for us to follow and to stay steadfast on the course. It will most likely prove to be costly, probably not martyrdom, but you can be sure it will cost you

something if you stay the course. But we must remember that the rewards that are waiting far outweigh the sacrifices here.

Notice the words of Andrews:

"Why do people give up on the work of the Lord? Why do people drop out in the service of the Lord? Distraction—Love for the world; Discouragement—see no fruit, no appreciation, no applause; Depleted—ministering for the Lord without being ministered to by the Lord."

2 Timothy 4:6-8

⁶ *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

⁷ *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*

⁸ *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*