

Paul's First Itinerary

We're into Paul's missionary journeys now. We've talked about his background; how he was raised up at the feet of Gamaliel, where he came from, what his religious background was, how he was converted. Then what followed in those days, where he went to Damascus, out into Arabia and then back to Damascus, preached the Word, went down to Jerusalem and a few other places.

I believe we left him in Acts chapter 12 having just gone back from Jerusalem, where he and Barnabas had been in the house of Mary with the mother of John Mark. This had been the time that Peter had gotten out from prison and came and knocked on the door. Whether or not Paul was in that house, at least he was in Jerusalem at the time. When Paul and Barnabas returned from Jerusalem they took John Mark with them.

Acts 12:25:

And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

“fulfilled *their* ministry” – in other words – when they had finished what they had come to Jerusalem to do. They went down to Jerusalem for the purpose of taking the abundant sharing to the headquarters of the time because of the needs of the ministry that were caused by a famine. When they had fulfilled that mission they went back taking with them John, whose surname was Mark.

Acts 13:1:

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

“church” – not a great big building with a steeple on top. They met in the homes. They always met in the homes with the twig fellowships or if they needed a big meeting they may rent something like a school of Tyrannus or they'd meet outside many times like in Jesus' ministry.

“Antioch” – Barnabas had been sent there earlier from Jerusalem and he went over to get Paul who was at Tarsus of Cilicia. Paul was in Tarsus because he had been sent out of Jerusalem after those fifteen days. Then Barnabas came up to Antioch and then he came over to Tarsus, got Saul, brought him back to Antioch and that's where they really started working the Word with the Gentiles. Then, when the famine came along they took the abundant sharing down to Jerusalem. Then, when there mission was done they took John Mark and went back up to Antioch. Antioch then becomes the second major headquarters of the Christian church of the first century.

The first headquarters was at Jerusalem. From Jerusalem it started reaching out among the Jews at Jerusalem and then throughout Judea. From there it went throughout Samaria and Galilee. Because of the persecution of Stephen it spread over to Cyprus and they spread over to Phenice and Antioch. At Antioch is where they really started reaching Gentiles for the first time. The house of Cornelius is the first record of Gentiles being converted. Peter was the one who had gone in to them to teach them the Word.

Paul and Barnabas were selected by the leaders of the church which was at Jerusalem. They weren't just elected by the people or it wasn't their local leaders that got together and said, "Well, now we think this is a good idea." They were selected by the men of God that were responsible for them. Paul, later on you read that he put Timothy in a position of leadership. It was the church at Jerusalem that put Paul and Barnabas in charge of the responsibility at Antioch.

So this becomes the second major headquarters for the outreach of the Christian church. Jerusalem was the major center for the outreach among the Jews whereas Antioch became the major center for the outreach among the Gentiles. Antioch was still responsible to headquarters, Jerusalem. The reason they put this headquarters in Antioch is because Antioch was a major Gentile territory. If you're going to reach New Yorkers where do you establish your headquarters, in California? No, you establish it in New York. That's why they set this second Headquarters here in Antioch.

Acts 13:1:

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

"prophets and teachers" – why prophets and teachers? Why weren't there pastors, evangelists and apostles? You have the ministries which are gifts from God to man and they become *dona* (benefit to others) as they're utilized. They bless the people. By *dona*, I mean gifts. If you haven't read the study on gifts lately, read it. [Demonstrating God's Power chapter 17, The Gifts of God] Whatever the need is in the area; that's what they had. Here, what they apparently really needed was prophets and teachers.

Prophets are those who say, "Get back on the Word. Let's get going before the Roman government moves in and cuts off our freedom. Or the Jews get the Romans to move in and cut off our freedom." The teachers were those who taught the Word. In an area where the Word is already taken root, two things you need are: people to teach the Word first of all, that you grow in understanding of the Word; teachers and secondly you need people who aren't afraid to say, "Stay on the Word. Watch out for the adversary. Get going." – Prophets.

They may have had some pastors, evangelists and apostles. I know they had at least two apostles there. The main thing they were concerned about were prophets and teachers because the area was established; it was a headquarters.

Acts 4:36:

And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, *and* of the country of Cyprus,

Barnabas came from Cyprus. He had been out in the Gentile world before. He was a Levite, meaning he was of the tribe of Levi which was the priestly tribe. It doesn't say he was of Aaron's line. Cyprus is an island out in the Mediterranean. Barnabas originally came from Cyprus and he had been in Jerusalem. That's apparently where he heard the Word. Now he's up in Antioch at the Gentile headquarters.

Lucius is a Latin name. Cyrene is in the northern part of Africa. It's sort of across from Italy and Greece on the north coast of Africa. Lucius was from Cyrene.

Simeon was called Niger which sort of indicates that he may have come from that area. Similar to what we call, today, Nigeria. Who was Simeon called Niger and Lucius of Cyrene? You know the general area they came from. It doesn't say really who they were. If that Simeon was a misspelling and his name was Simon, it's possible that he was the fellow that carried the cross but I'm not saying that he was. That was suggested by some of the critics. It's possible but you can't teach it for doctrine.

Then there was Manaen, which was brought up with Herod the tetrarch. Herod the tetrarch is mentioned in **Luke 3:1**, **Luke 3:19** and a few other places. Herod the tetrarch was also called Herod Antipas. Why was he called the tetrarch? He had a fourth part. Tetra means fourth. Originally Herod the great was the king of the Palestine area. When he died it was split up. Herod Antipas took a certain section. Philip took a certain section. Someone else had a certain section. They divided it up. Herod Antipas was the one who was in charge of the tetrarchy of Galilee. That's what it means; a fourth part but that doesn't mean that he just had a fourth. It became to be used of any division of a kingdom. When you divided up a territory, if it was a section, then it was a tetrarchy. It doesn't mean that he had one fourth of it.

He was the one that had John the Baptist beheaded. He was around in Galilee when Jesus was crucified. He was the one that came up to Jerusalem to see Pilot. Pilot sent Jesus over to see Herod and Herod, for a while thought that Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead. He had heard about all the miracles that Jesus had done. He was real curious and had the attitude of, "Why don't you show me a few?" He had his men beat him and put the robes on him etc. and sent him back to Pilot.

He lived through the apostolic period, this early part of the growth of the Christian church and was around Galilee as tetrarch until 39 A.D. That's when he went to Rome to get a raise in position. Herod Agrippa the first had sent a word against him so Herod

Antipas was removed and sent out to Lyons in Gaul. That was in 39 A.D. It was in 44 A.D. that Herod Agrippa I died. That happened in Acts chapter 12. We're just getting into chapter 13. So Herod Antipas, the tetrarch, had been gone from Galilee for about 5 years.

Acts 13:1:

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

This fellow Manaen, it says, was brought up with Herod the tetrarch. He was one of his peers in school. He was raised with this fellow. Herod the tetrarch was the son of Herod the Great. This Manaen fellow had been raised with him. Here he is, one of the heads of the church at Antioch. With him you have Barnabas who was a Levite of the priestly tribe. You've got these other fellows from northern Africa. And you've got Saul who was a very strict Pharisee. These men are the leaders heading up the work at Antioch, the Gentile headquarters. Would you do that sense knowledge wise? God knew what He was doing.

Acts 13:2:

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

“ministered” – *leitourgeō* – we get the English word “liturgy” from it – it's used in Attic Greek of one who rendered a public service at his own expense.

Romans 15:24-27:

Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.

But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor [needy] saints which are at Jerusalem.

It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

“minister” – is this word *leitourgeō* – to minister; to share out of their abundance.

Hebrews 10:11:

And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

“ministering” – *leitourgeō* – they performed a public service but this was done in the temple.

These are the only 3 places that word is used. The noun form and other forms are used other places that would help you to find out more about it.

Acts 13:2:

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

In Acts 13 they ministered to the Lord. They performed the work of the ministry. In what capacity, I don't know specifically, but whatever it to carry out the work in Antioch. Paul was a saddle maker and Paul would work when he would go into an area to support himself until that area was strong enough to really help. Being that this was the early time of the outreach of the Word at Antioch I surmise that they worked to help to support the work and then spent their off-hours teaching the Word. Pretty soon after the ministry supports them then they can start giving up the secular job.

“fasted” – means they did the work of the Lord; they did the will of the Lord. They didn't cut out food. I don't know how that came to be but sometimes you really get working, doing the work of the Lord and you might skip a meal or two or three. You're just going so hard you just don't even think about food; you just keep going steadily. Maybe that's where it came from. I don't know. That doesn't mean you go without food completely. The fast in Isaiah says to do the work of the Lord.

“the Holy Ghost” – is *to pneuma to hagion* – the Holy the Spirit – God. In other words God told them but God's spirit teaches our spirit which teaches our mind then we act. The Holy Spirit told them by way of holy spirit.

“the work whereunto I have called them” – remember what he called them to?

Acts 26:16-19:

But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

Delivering thee from the people [Jews], and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,

To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive [*lambanō*] forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

Acts 22:17-21:

And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem [3 years after his conversion], even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance [saw a vision];

And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

And he said unto me, Depart [from Jerusalem]: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

That was what God had called Paul to do and apparently Barnabas also back in chapter 13.

Acts 13:2:

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

They're going to go forth now and really move among the Gentiles. But they're also going to hit Jews in these areas. They're going to teach the Word wherever they go. Separate them; send them out.

Acts 13:3:

And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

“laid *their* hands on them” - The laying on of hands is either for revelation or ordination and in this case it's for ordination; to send them forth. But you have to have revelation to ordain. They set them apart to go forth to do what God had called them to do.

That was their commission; sent forth Antioch by the leaders of Antioch. They were ordained to go forth and teach the Word.

Acts 13:4:

So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

Seleucia is right on the coast. There's also a Seleucia up in Cilicia but I think it means they went to the Seleucia on the coast. From there they sailed to the island of Cyprus.

Acts 13:5:

And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to *their* minister.

Salamis is on one side of the island. Paphos is on the other side. Later on you see they go across the island over to Paphos. But they're starting on the island at Salamis.

“the word of God” – you ought to keep record of how many times this phrase occurs: “the word of God” or “the word of the Lord.” They preached the Word of God. They didn't preach man's word. They didn't preach what somebody thought or philosophy or traditions of men. They didn't preach the Talmud. They taught the Word of God.

“in the synagogues” – That's one place that Paul usually started. Not all the time. He'd go into a community and the one place he'd generally start would be the synagogue. Sometimes he'd start some other place but here and in a lot of the places he started at the synagogues because that's one place Paul was acquainted with. He knew the ins and outs; he had been a Pharisee, trained at the feet of Gamaliel. He had been trained for the Sanhedrin. He was on the inside circle so-to-speak of the Pharisaic tradition. Notice it doesn't say he went into a synagogue. He taught the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.

“John” - he's back in chapter 12 where Peter got out of jail because of that angel.

Acts 12:12:

And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

That was the John Mark that came up to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas and now they've got John Mark to their minister.

Acts 13:5:

And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to *their* minister.

“minister” – *hupēretēs* – You break that word down into *hupo* and *eretes* – *hupo* means “under” – *eretes* means “rower”; one who rows. Literally, when you break it down, it means an “under rower.” This word was used of one who would minister or serve a servant; one who serves those who serve others.

This word is used in **Acts 5:22 & 26**, **Acts 26:16** and **I Corinthians 4:1**. I know in **Acts 5:22 & 26**, is where they were a minister to a public official and he was a minister to the public. They were “under rowers.” The officers who took Paul were ministers to the minister of the people, supposedly. They were the under rowers; the ones who rowed underneath; the back-up men.

John was a servant or a minister. He’s the one who served Paul and Barnabas who were ministers to the people. John Mark was their under rower. He was their attendant; their assistant. He carried their suitcases etc.

Acts 13:6:

And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos [across the island], they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

“sorcerer...a Jew” – You mean to tell me that they had sorcerers in Judaism. That’s what it says. He was a Jew in the organized religious system of the time. But he was a false prophet, a sorcerer.

“Barjesus” – son of Joshua

Acts 13:7:

Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

This false prophet fellow was with the deputy of the country. Many times that’s where they are; with the high officials.

“deputy of the country” – means the proconsul

According to historical records, this territory had been an imperial province at one time. An imperial province was something that belonged to the Emperor because it was sort of a factious territory; newly acquired. They didn’t quite go along with the Roman system so they had a lot of troops in there. The senatorial provinces had a little more self-government. They were the ones who paid their taxes on time etc.

This was a proconsul; therefore it must have been a senatorial province at this time. They’ve found certain inscriptions that bear this out. Which again shows how authentic the Word is.

The one thing I want you to see was the one thing he desired to hear was the Word. You’re going to see that thing throughout this chapter and other chapters following. Wherever they went, they taught the Word; the Word of God. That’s the one thing they preached. That’s the one thing people wanted to hear.