



February 17, 2016
Acts 12:20-25
Acts 13:1-41
Pastor Gary Hamrick

Exegetical Study

1. **Acts 12:20-25** - *“Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there a while. He had been quarreling with the people of Tyre and Sidon; they now joined together and sought an audience with him. Having secured the support of Blastus, a trusted personal servant of the king, they asked for peace, because they depended on the king’s country for their food supply. On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. They shouted, ‘This is the voice of a god, not of a man.’ Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died. But the word of God continued to increase and spread. When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark.”*
 - a. Josephus,¹ a first century historian, wrote the following concerning Herod’s death: “He put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun’s rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him; and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another (though not for his good), that he was a god ... A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner ... when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life.”²
 - i. Herod died because he did not give glory to God when people declared he was a god and not a man.

¹ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/dictionary/viewtopic.cfm?topic=IT0005153>

² https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/archives/guzik_david/StudyGuide_Act/Act_12.cfm

- ii. [Isaiah 42:8](#) – *“I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.”*
 - iii. We can be guilty of stealing glory from God when one or both of these things happens:
 - 1. We steal God’s glory by what we say when we take credit for credit that really belongs to God.
 - a. [Deuteronomy 8:17-18](#) – *“You may say to yourself, ‘My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.’ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...”*
 - 2. We steal God’s glory by what we don’t say when we don’t correct people who praise us for something that God did through us or for us.
 - b. John Mark is the same person as the writer of the Gospel of Mark.³
 - i. Mark, who was about twelve years old at the time, was an eyewitness to Jesus’ arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.
 - 1. Mark wrote his account of Jesus’ life and ministry about twenty years later.
 - ii. When we come to [Acts 13](#), Mark was about 26 to 28 years old.
2. [Acts 13:1-12](#) – *“In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod⁴ the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper. They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, ‘You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun.’ Immediately, mist and darkness came over him,*

³ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/dictionary/viewtopic.cfm?topic=IT0005811>

⁴ Herod Antipas was responsible for having John the Baptist beheaded.
https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart/don_stewart_1312.cfm

and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.”

a. Paul’s First Missionary Journey – 48–49 A.D.

i. The Commission

1. **Acts 13:2** – “[T]he Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ ”
2. It’s possible that there was an audible voice, but it’s more likely that this message from the Holy Spirit was spoken by a prophet or teacher.
3. The Holy Spirit did not give any information or instruction about where they were supposed to go.
4. Pastor Gary said, “[If] you feel like you [have] a partial word or direction from the Lord, you don’t necessarily have to over-spiritualize it. ... It seems like what [happened] is that when [the Holy Spirit commissioned them], they resorted to something that was natural. [Since Barnabas was from Cyprus, they set out for Cyprus.]”

ii. The Journey and The Ministry

1. Paul, Barnabas and John Mark left Antioch of Syria and traveled about fifteen miles to the port city of Seleucia.
2. From Seleucia, they sailed about one hundred miles to Salamis, a city on the northeastern coast of Cyprus.
3. They shared the word of God in Jewish synagogues along the approximately seventy-five-mile route from Salamis to Paphos, which was on the southwestern coast.
4. Bar-Jesus
 - a. Bar means son of, so he called himself son of Jesus.
 - b. This man was under demonic influence.
 - c. He was an attendant of Sergius Paulus.
 - d. He was also known as Elymas.
5. Sergius Paulus
 - a. A proconsul was someone who ruled over an entire province, which in this case, was the island of Cyprus.
 - b. When Sergius Paulus heard the gospel message, his heart was turning toward the Lord, so Elymas, under evil influence, tried to dissuade him.
 - c. Paul spoke words of truth and judgment to Elymas.
 - d. Sergius Paulus believed because *“he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.”*
 - i. It’s important to note that he wasn’t amazed by what had happened to Elymas; he was amazed by

the Word of God!

- ii. Pastor Gary said, “It is the Word of God that is powerful and effective to change the human heart. ... [I] praise God that he still, as he chooses, will still reveal himself in powerful and wonderful ways... [The] Church better understand that the power is in the Word of God. It is faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. ... Some people are preoccupied with all of the display of power instead of understanding that the real power is in the Word of God, which changes the human heart.”

1. **Romans 10:17** - “... *faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*”

3. **Acts 13:13-41** - *“From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem. From Perga they went on to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down. After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, ‘Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak.’ Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: ‘Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me! The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; he made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt, with mighty power he led them out of that country, he endured their conduct for about forty years in the desert, he overthrew seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to his people as their inheritance. All this took about 450 years. After this, God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. Then the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: ‘I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.’ From this man’s descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised. Before the coming of Jesus, John [the Baptist] preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel. As John was completing his work, he said: ‘Who do you think I am? I am not that one. No, but he is coming after me, whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.’ Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead, and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him*

from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people. We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'⁵The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.'⁶So it is stated elsewhere: 'You will not let your Holy One see decay.'⁷For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed. But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay. Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses. Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you: 'Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish, for I am going to do something in your days that you would never believe, even if someone told you.'⁸

a. The Journey and The Ministry

- i. They sailed about one hundred and seventy-five miles from Paphos to Perga.
- ii. After they arrived in Perga, John Mark left Paul and Barnabas.
- iii. They traveled about one hundred miles to Pisidian Antioch.
- iv. In the Jewish synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, we see Paul's first recorded sermon. ([Acts 13:16-41](#))

1. In [Acts 13:33](#), we see that Paul quoted [Psalm 2:7](#).

- a. Pastor Gary spoke about Jehovah's Witnesses using this verse to promote their false teaching that Jesus is not God, but a created being.
- b. Pastor Gary said, "[They take this verse] completely out of context! [This isn't] about Jesus from the womb; it is Jesus from the tomb! The context is about the resurrection of Jesus. ... There was a moment in time, not when Jesus was created, because Jesus has always co-existed [and is] co-eternal with God the Father... [When] Jesus rose from the dead, God became the Father of the first of the resurrection from the dead. ... [Jesus] was the first of the glorified bodies to be resurrected from the dead. ... Just as Jesus rose from the dead, so too, we who have trusted Christ as our Savior will also rise from the dead and get a glorified body [imperishable body just like Jesus.] ... The truth is that we are all going to die unless the Lord comes back first. ... Otherwise we will all experience physical

⁵ [Psalm 2:7](#)

⁶ [Isaiah 55:3](#)

⁷ [Psalm 16:10](#)

⁸ [Habakkuk 1:5](#)

death, and our spirit will separate from our body, and our body will decompose. It will return to the same seventeen chemical elements of dirt... The Bible speaks of a day when our spirit will go to heaven. ... There will be a moment in time when every Christian... when their body will also become glorified, and [it] will rise imperishable. ... For the generation that doesn't experience [physical] death, having been taken up to heaven when the trumpet call of God has sounded, just before his Second Coming, [they] will get their glorified body instantaneously on the way up! But for everyone else [whose] spirit has gone to heaven, their bodies will become glorified and will rise to be reunited with their spirit."

- i. **1 Corinthians 15:20** - *"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."*
- ii. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** - *"Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever, Therefore encourage each other with these words."*
- iii. **1 Corinthians 15:51-54** - *"Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that*

is written will come true: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.' ”

2. The Bible teaches that we are justified by faith.
 - a. **Ephesians 2:8-9** - *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.”*
 - i. The Catholic Church teaches that works and penance justifies a person.
 - b. Pastor Gary said, “The Law is what exposes [our] sinfulness. The Law can’t save. The rules don’t save. ... [Our lives matched with the rules expose how wicked and sinful we are. We can’t keep all of the rules; no one can! ... Think of it like this: the Law is like a thermometer... it just points out that you are sick with a fever].”

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the 1984 New International Version (NIV)