

First Gentile Missions: Pisidian Antioch, Pt. 2—Acts 13:38–43

By Pastor Jeff Alexander (07/08/2012)

Introduction

1. The background of Paul's sermon in the synagogue
 - a. Based on Paul's own understanding of the Jewish mind
 - b. Developed from Paul's new enlightenment from the Old Testament Scriptures
 - c. Aimed at Paul's hearers' faulty expectation of their Messiah
2. Paul's development of his message
 - a. Showing the process of God's calling Israel unto Himself as the people of God
 - b. Demonstrating that Messiah would come through the royal family of David
 - c. Developing the case that Messiah's rejection and suffering would be the means of bringing salvation to His people
3. The Jews rejected Messiah because they did not understand God's purpose in sending Him to them.
 - a. Jesus came to bring salvation, but the Jews did not see that they needed salvation.
 - b. They expected a Messiah who would affirm the Jews as the people of God, defend and restore them to their glorious status among the nations.
4. Paul's aim in his message is to convince the Jews that Jesus came, not for political reasons, but to bring the hope of salvation to the world.
 - a. The O. T. clearly pointed to the suffering of the Servant/Savior, and the Jews were the cause of that suffering.
 - b. The text before us is Paul's exhortation to the Jews that they not compound their guilt and fulfill the prophets' dire prediction (Hab. 1:5; Isa. 29:14)

I. Law Righteousness

- A. Paul's exhortation—its basis: *forgiveness offered*
 1. The relational norm of all men to God: *personal righteousness* (Psalm 7:8; Matt. 5:20)
 2. The standard of righteousness: *the Law of God* (Deut. 6:25; Rom. 2:13; 10:5)
 3. The condition of mankind: *none righteous* due to the guilt of *iniquity* or *lawlessness* (Rom. 3:6)
 4. The Jews' objective: to maintain the *appearance of righteousness* (Matt. 23:28; Rom. 10:1-3)
Objection: What about Paul's claim in Phil. 3:6?
- B. Paul's exhortation and the Mosaic Covenant
 1. Prescribed how God's people were to relate to Him as covenant sons—*identity*

2. Presented the standard of righteousness required—the Jews understood it
 3. Provided a sacrificial system
 - a. Practical: repaired and maintained the relationship
 - b. Prophetic: anticipated a permanent solution to sin and righteousness
 4. Proved insufficient (Hebrews 10:1–4)
 - a. Priests died
 - b. Priests had to offer for themselves
 - c. The sacrifices were inadequate
- C. Paul’s exhortation: *the solution presented*
1. Jesus Christ, the permanent solution to the problem of law righteousness (Gal. 3:24)
 2. Faith in Christ, not doing the law, the sole means of righteousness (Gal. 4:21)
 3. The Jews’ error in doing, not understanding the provision

II. Warning

- A. The prophet’s declaration (vv. 40, 41)
1. The consequence of rejecting Christ
 - a. Paul cites Hab. 1:5 (Isaiah 29:14).
 - b. Believe or be judged—excluded from the covenant community.
 - c. Hebrew: “look among the nations” vs. Paul’s “look, you scoffers”
 2. The issue: trust Jesus or fulfill prophecy
- B. The response
1. Some wanted to hear more about it.
 2. Others who were more serious followed Paul.

Implications

1. God’s law was given as a gracious and loving way to inform His creatures about what He expects of them in their relationship to Him. Sin’s entrance adds a dimension—demonstrates guilt.
2. Law-keeping is futile because the law has no power to enable obedience or to restore the breach when broken. Sincere willingness is wrongly held to be sufficient.
3. Only faith in Christ’s sacrifice will avail with God.