

**Acts 13:1-5, 14:27-28, Missionaries and the Church**  
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**A. Overview**

From 11:19 through ch. 15, the structure of the book is dominated by Antioch.

1. 11:19-26, Founding of the Church; also gets Barnabas and Saul together.
2. 12-15, Three Characteristics of the Church, each bracketed by the departure and return of Barnabas and Paul:
  - a) 12, a Loving church
  - b) 13-14, a Missionary church
  - c) 15, a Disciplined churchObjective: a case study for the things the church should do.
3. Now, at the beginning of the first missionary journey, we see Paul's credentials established, by events that show him comparable to Peter in earlier chapters of Acts, and to Jeremiah in the OT.

**B. The Parallel with Peter**

Paul's contact with Elymas the Sorcerer in ch. 13 has marked parallels with Peter's encounter with Simon the Sorcerer in ch. 8.

1. The church sends out apostles (8:14; 13:1). These men are not acting on their own authority.
2. They encounter a sorcerer (8:9; 13:6).
3. In both cases, the sorcerer is closely associated with people who have a genuine interest in the gospel (8:5-8, 10-12; 13:7).
4. Superficially, one might think the sorcerer would be a friend. Simon seems to receive the message (8:18-19), and Elymas is a Jew (13:6).
5. The sorcerer commits a serious sin. Though the actions are quite different in the two cases, the motives are the same: the sorcerer is seeking to continue his influence with his public.
  - a) 8:18-19, Simon, having received baptism, wants to merge the new faith into his magic act, in order to continue his influence with the people in their new state as believers. Even when rebuked, he meekly asks for intercession (v.24). In later history, he becomes the leader of a heretical sect in the church.
  - b) 13:8, Elymas, fearing the loss of his influence with the proconsul should the latter become a believer, seeks to block the influence of the gospel.

c) *Application*: Satan opposes the gospel not only by open hostility, but also through the superficial interest of those who would compromise the message for their own gain. We need to be alert to both channels of attack.

6. The apostle rebukes the sorcerer directly.

7. *Application*: This is the first of many parallels we will see between Peter and Paul, emphasizing their comparable authority and the equal standing of gentiles (to whom Paul was sent) with Jews (Peter's focus) in the church.

### C. The Parallel with Jeremiah

As ch. 6 presents Stephen as Elijah, rebuking the murderer of Naboth; 8a presents Peter as Elisha, rebuking Gehazi; 8b presents Philip as Elisha, ministering to Naaman; so here Paul is portrayed as Jeremiah, rebuking the dreaming false prophets (Yaure's JBL article, in Acts binder).

Similarities:

1. They are all designated "dreamers," those who count on visions for their revelation.

a) Paul & Elymas: The name "Elymas" is a Greek reflex of Aramaic *xaloma* "dreamer," translated "sorcerer" because sorcerers were commonly involved in interpreting dreams.

b) Jer & Prophets: 23:25-28, contrast between dreams and the Word of the Lord.

c) Jer & Shelemiah: 29:24, "Nehelemite" may mean "the dreamer" (see margin). Certainly a false prophet, and the parallel of 23:25ff shows that this would be a good epithet.

*Technical note*: See Waltke's grammar for possible uses of the Niphal here: 23.4d (benefactive, "the one who dreams for his own good"); 23.6.1 (interchangeable with Qal).

*Joseph was a dreamer, Ezekiel had visions, Daniel had dreams, even Paul could receive direction through dreams. What's the problem with these folk?*

2. They are all described as false or lying.

a) Paul & Elymas: v.6, "false prophet."

b) Jer & Prophets: 23:25 (lies), 26 (deceit), 32 (false).

c) Jer & Shelemiah: 29:31 characterizes him as prophesying a lie.

*Consequences of their deception*:

3. They all mislead people.

- a) Paul & Elymas: seeking to turn the proconsul away from the gospel. v.10, "pervert the right ways of the Lord." Paul is seeking to show the proconsul the strait and narrow path, but Elymas is trying to get him off on a detour.
  - b) Jer & Prophets: 23:13, they lead God's people astray. cf. 32, 36.
  - c) Jer & Shelemiah: 29:32, he teaches rebellion against the Lord.  
*Their sins are similar; so will be their judgment.*
4. They all face darkness as punishment (irony for those who claim to be enlightened).
- a) Paul & Elymas: v.11, struck blind.
  - b) Jer & Prophets: 23:12, they are condemned to flee along "slippery ways in the darkness."
  - c) Jer & Shelemiah: 29:32, he will not see the good that God will do to his people in restoring them.
5. *Application*: Facing opposition from apostates who pretend to be of the same faith but oppose us.
- a) Their characteristics:
    - 1) Rely on their own experience rather than God's Word for guidance.
    - 2) They deceive those around them and lead them into error.
    - 3) Their rejection of the Word that they do have leads them into further blindness.
  - b) Principles in dealing with them:
    - 1) No compromise;
    - 2) Direct rebuke.

**Summary:**

- 1. Paul's Parity with Peter.
- 2. All that glitters is not gold; all that looks religious is not godly. Beware false teaching, not only that which directly opposes the gospel (Elymas), but also that which seems to go along with it, but for the wrong reasons (Simon).

**Hymn:** My Soul, Be On Thy Guard.

**Analysis**

13-14, A Missionary Church

- A. 13:1-5, Sending Out [previous message]
- B. 13:4-14:26, The First Journey
  - 1. 6-12, Paphos--Elymas the Sorcerer

- a) 6 dielqo/ntes de\ o(/lhn th\n nh^son a)/xri Pa/fou eu(^ron a)/ndra tina\ ma/gon yeudoprofh/thn )Ioudai^on w(^| o)/noma Barihsou^,
- b) 7 o(\s h)^n su\n tw^| a)nqupa/tw| Sergi/w| Pau/lw|, a)ndri\ sunetw^|.
- c) ou(^tos proskalesa/menos Barnaba^ kai\ Sau^lon e)pezh/thsen a)kou^sai to\n lo/gon tou^ qeou^:
- d) 8 a)nqi/stato de\ au)toi^s )Elu/mas o( ma/gos, ou(/tws ga\r meqermhneu/etai to\ o)/noma au)tou^, zhtw^ diastre/yai to\n a)nqu/paton a)po\ th^s pi/stews.
- e) quote p
  - 1) quote f: 9 Sau^los de/, o( kai\ Pau^los, plhsqei\s pneu/matos a(gi/ou a)teni/sas ei)s au)to\n 10 ei)^pen,
  - 2) quote
    - a> )^W plh/rhs panto\s do/lou kai\ pa/shs r(a|diourgi/as,
    - b> ui(e\ diabo/lou,
    - c> e)xqre\ pa/shs dikaios/nhs,
    - d> ou) pau/sh| diastre/fwn ta\s o(dou\s [tou^] kuri/ou ta\s eu)qei/as;
    - e> 11 kai\ nu^ i)dou\ xei\r kuri/ou e)pi\ se/,
    - f> kai\ e)/sh| tuflo\s mh\ ble/pwn to\n h(/lion a)/xri kairou^.
  - f) paraxrh^ma/ te e)/pesen e)p' au)to\n a)xlu\s kai\ sko/tos,
  - g) kai\ peria/gwn e)zh/tei xeiragwgou/s.
  - h) 12 to/te i)dw\n o( a)nqu/patos to\ gegono\s e)pi/steusen e)kplhssomenos e)pi\ th^| didaxh^| tou^ kuri/ou.

2. 13-52, Pisidian Antioch--Paul's sermon [Later message]

3. 14:1-4, Iconium--strong Jewish opposition [Later message]

4. 5-18, Lystra--Healing the lame man [Later message]

5. 19-26, Return Trip--confirmation and continuing evangelism [Later message]

C. 14:27-28, Reporting [previous message]