

# PAUL'S EXHORTATION

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Acts 13:14-43

Here is recorded the first sermon of the Apostle Paul. It resembles the sermon of Peter at the Day of Pentecost, and the great apologetic sermon of Stephen who was stoned to death...

Two things are evident in this sermon.

(1) THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT. Note the emphasis on God's sovereignty in sacred history. Paul outlines the historical course of Jacob-Israel through the proceeding centuries. [The Old Testament story]. Facts are simply stated, not argued. But---the constant referral to the O.T. makes the whole record a homiletical argument and a doctrine.

(2) THE DIVINE GRACE. The goodness and longsuffering of Jehovah is traced in all of His gracious dealing with His people. The Message of Paul was: God is Jacob-Israel's governor and that government of the one God is the government of continual and overwhelming grace to "the everlasting people."

Several great facts are presented in this sermon.

## THE HISTORICAL FACT. Verses 17-26.

He speaks to the "men of Israel." Showing how God dealt with the people from the first...with their deliverance from Egypt. He traces their history "in the wilderness." He referred of them as coming into the land of promise, dealing with all their sojourn until the time of David. Then---he omits entirely their history from Solomon to Nehemiah and Malachi. But---he links the history of Israel to the Christian Revelation. Paul states: "Of this man's seed (King David), hath God according to promise brought unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus."

Thus, the long period of judgment, captivity, degeneracy, deterioration despair, and disaster...that dark gulf of Israel's failure between David and Jesus was over! The gulf was bridged by the pronoun "HE" which was a reference to God, (ie: JEHOVAH)

## God in Divine Government is the fundamental fact.

God chose, God exalted, God led forth a people. God suffered them, and bare them as a nursing Father "in the wilderness." God destroyed Nations for them, God gave them the "promised" land. God raised up judges in difficult times. God...even gave them King Saul when they cried for a human king. But---God in mercy removed Saul and gave them King David. "A man after his own heart. These and more were great mercies..."

After King David came the history of Solomon...Paul left all this out! Plus the great convulsive break-up of the Kingdom into two parts...Israel and Judah. Then Ten-tribed Israel's captivity into Assyria, and Judah's captivity into Babylon. No King, no Priest, no Prophet...400 silent years! a broken remnant of Judah lived under the Roman lash! Then---God brought forth Jesus and the New Testament story!