



Guided By The Holy Spirit

"So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus" (Acts 13:4).

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"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. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. 4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. 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. 6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: 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. 8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. 9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him. 10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. 13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem." (Acts 13:2-13).

The Holy Spirit guides and guides correctly in line with the will, plan, purpose and the word of God. In times like these, we need to discern and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit for greater effectiveness in life and realisation of God's purpose for us on earth. Note the following:

- 1) The Holy Spirit spoke when the church leaders prayed together in unity (vs 2). Unity among believers attracts the commanded blessings of God (Psalms 133), and guaranteed answer to prayers (Matthew 18:18-19).
- 2) Hearing the Holy Spirit led to more prayers with fasting and commissioning Paul and Barnabas, laying hands of them (vs 3).
- 3) Though sent on their mission by the leaders

"Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him" (Acts 13:9).

(vs 3), it was actually by the Holy Spirit (vs 4) who initiated it in the first place.

- 4) Their initial journey took them through Seleucia, Cyprus, Salamis and Paphos (vs 4-6). Whether these were natural routes or not, we need to remember Jeremiah 10:23 "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps". Knowingly or unknowingly, they were divinely guided. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way" (Psalm 37:23).
- 5) Their missionary journey was not a tourism. They seized opportunities to preach the word (vs 5).
- 6) There are no meaningless details in the Bible. We have this interesting interjection in verse 5 "... and they had also John to their minister". The Holy Spirit called Saul and Barnabas, but now John is mentioned in their company. We will come back to John in future studies. Meanwhile, it is noteworthy that he did not go through with them to the end of the missionary journey - an action that could potentially bring discouragement and distraction. When you are sent on a divine mission, be careful who you have as a companion.
- 7) At Paphos, they encountered their first recorded opposition by a manipulative false prophet but divine intervention turned it to the salvation of the town's Deputy (vs 6-12).
- 8) After Paphos they continued to Pamphylia. The Holy Spirit still guides today, and those who follow Him, will experience divine favour, miracles, blessings, fulfilment and achievement of divine purpose for your life.