

Acts 13:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it.

Analysis

The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers—Paul begins his synagogue address at Pisidian Antioch by grounding Israel's identity in divine election (ἐξελέξατο, exelexato). This verb emphasizes God's sovereign choice, not human merit—the same election theology Paul develops in Romans 9-11.

Exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers (ὕψωσεν τὸν λαὸν ἐν τῇ παροικίᾳ, hypsōsen ton laon en tē paroikia)—God elevated Israel during their Egyptian oppression, multiplying them despite Pharaoh's genocidal policies (Exodus 1:7-12). **With an high arm** (μετὰ βραχίονος ὑψηλοῦ, meta brachionos hypselou) recalls the Exodus imagery of God's outstretched arm—divine power overcoming human tyranny. Paul's rehearsal of salvation history will climax in verses 38-39, showing Jesus as the ultimate fulfillment of God's covenant promises to the fathers.

Historical Context

Paul delivered this sermon around AD 47-48 during his first missionary journey. Speaking in a diaspora synagogue, he follows the synagogue homily pattern: recite salvation history, then apply it christologically. His Gentile audience ("those who fear God," v. 16) needed this redemptive-historical framework to understand Jesus as Israel's promised Messiah and Savior of the world.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's emphasis on God's sovereign election in Israel's history challenge works-based religion?
2. In what ways does your own spiritual journey reflect God exalting you 'when you dwelt as a stranger' in bondage to sin?

Interlinear Text

ὁ θεὸς τοῦ λαὸν τούτου Ἰσραὴλ ἐξελέξατο τοὺς
G3588 The God G3588 people of this of Israel chose G3588
G2316 G2992 G5127 G2474 G1586

πατέρας ἡμῶν καὶ τὸν λαὸν ὑψωσεν ἐν τῇ
fathers our and G3588 people exalted in G3588
G3962 G2257 G2532 G2992 G5312 G1722

παροικίᾳ ἐν γῇ Αἴγυπτῳ, καὶ μετὰ βραχίονος
they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt and with arm
G3940 G1722 G1093 G125 G2532 G3326 G1023

ὑψηλοῦ ἐξήγαγεν αὐτῆς ἐξ αὐτῆς
an high brought he it out of it
G5308 G1806 G846 G1537 G846