

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 (ὑψωσεν 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

Psalms 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	ὑψώσεν	ἐν	τῇ
fathers	our	and	G3588	people	exalted	in	G3588
G3962	G2257	G2532		G2992	G5312	G1722	
παροικία	ἐν	γῇ	Αἰγύπτῳ,	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			