

Acts 13:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

Analysis

When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance (βάπτισμα μετανοίας, *baptisma metanoias*)—Paul's sermon in Pisidian Antioch anchors Jesus's ministry in John the Baptist's preparatory work. The verb κηρύσσω (*kēryssō*, 'to herald') emphasizes John's role as the forerunner who publicly proclaimed the need for metanoia—not mere remorse, but radical turning from sin toward God.

To all the people of Israel—John's baptism was not a sectarian ritual but a nationwide call to covenant renewal. Paul highlights continuity: God's plan for Israel finds fulfillment in Jesus, whom John announced. This prepares Paul's climactic point in verse 38-39—forgiveness and justification now come through Christ, not Mosaic law. John's entire ministry points beyond himself to the Coming One whose sandals he was unworthy to loose (v. 25).

Historical Context

Paul preached this sermon around AD 47-48 during his first missionary journey. John the Baptist's ministry (AD 28-29) was recent memory for Paul's audience. The phrase 'before his coming' (προ τῆς εἰσόδου, *pro tēs eisodou*) positions John temporally before Jesus's public ministry, echoing the Gospel narratives and Isaiah's prophecy of the voice crying in the wilderness.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does John's baptism of repentance prepare hearts for the gospel message Paul proclaims?
2. In what ways do you need to 'prepare the way' in your own life for deeper understanding of Christ's finished work?

Interlinear Text

προκηρύξαντος	Ἰωάννου	πρὸ	προσώπου	τῆς	εἰσόδου	
had first preached	When John	before	his coming	G3588	G1529	
G4296	G2491	G4253	G4383			
αὐτοῦ	βάπτισμα	μετανοίας	παντὶ	τῷ	λαῷ	Ἰσραήλ
G846	the baptism	of repentance	to all	G3588	the people	of Israel
	G908	G3341	G3956		G2992	G2474

Additional Cross-References

Acts 1:22 (Baptism): Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.