

Acts 13:42

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.

Analysis

And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought (παρεκάλουν τὰ ἔθνη)—The Greek *parekáloun* means 'earnestly pleaded' or 'urgently requested,' revealing the Gentiles' spiritual hunger. This pivotal moment marks the turning point in Paul's first missionary journey where Gentile interest surpasses Jewish reception.

That these words might be preached to them the next sabbath—The Gentiles didn't ask for a different message but for these same words (τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα)—Paul's sermon about Jesus as the fulfillment of Israel's promises (13:16-41). Their request for the 'next sabbath' shows they understood this wasn't casual entertainment but life-transforming truth requiring the assembly of the whole community. This response fulfills Jesus's prophecy that the gospel would go 'to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8) and foreshadows Paul's pattern: 'to the Jew first, and also to the Greek' (Romans 1:16).

Historical Context

This occurred in Pisidian Antioch (modern Turkey) circa AD 47-48 during Paul's first missionary journey. The synagogue provided a ready audience for the gospel, as God-fearing Gentiles (σεβόμενοι) regularly attended to learn about the one true God. The 'next sabbath' request reflects Jewish worship patterns that structured the week around Sabbath gatherings.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the Gentiles' urgent request reveal about spiritual hunger versus religious familiarity—and which characterizes your own approach to Scripture?
2. How does this verse demonstrate God's sovereign plan to include all nations, and how should that shape our understanding of the church's mission today?

Interlinear Text

Ἐξιόντων	δὲ	ἐκ	τῆς	συναγωγῆς	τῶν	Ἰουδαίων,
were gone	And	out of	G3588	the synagogue	G3588	when the Jews
G1826	G1161	G1537		G4864		G2453
παρεκάλουν	τὰ	ἔθνη	εἰς	τὸ	μεταξὺ	σάββατον
besought	G3588	the Gentiles	G1519	G3588	the next	sabbath
G3870		G1484			G3342	G4521
λαληθῆναι	αὐτοῖς	τὰ	ῥήματα	ταῦτα		
might be preached	G846	G3588	words	that these		
G2980			G4487	G5023		

Additional Cross-References

Acts 28:28 (Parallel theme): Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.