

Acts 13:45

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

Analysis

They were filled with envy (ἐπλήσθησαν ζήλου)—the Jews' opposition to Paul stemmed not from theological conviction but from jealousy at seeing Gentile crowds flock to hear the gospel. The verb plēthoō (filled) indicates being completely dominated by this emotion.

Contradicting and blaspheming (ἀντιλέγοντες καὶ βλασφημοῦντες)—their response escalated from mere disagreement (antilegō, speaking against) to blasphemēō (blasphemy, slander). By rejecting God's Messiah and reviling His name, they committed the very blasphemy they accused Jesus of. This pattern—religious leaders opposing God's work out of envy—echoes the Sanhedrin's jealousy in Acts 5:17 and Pilate's recognition that envy motivated Jesus's crucifixion (Matthew 27:18). Their reaction fulfilled Jesus's warning that persecution would come from religious authorities (John 16:2).

Historical Context

This occurred during Paul's first missionary journey (c. AD 47-48) in Pisidian Antioch. The synagogue initially welcomed Paul (v.42), but when 'almost the whole city' gathered the next Sabbath (v.44), the Jewish leaders' jealousy erupted. This marked a pivotal moment: Paul announced he would turn to the Gentiles (v.46), establishing the pattern for his entire ministry.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How might envy disguise itself as theological concern in church conflicts today?
2. When have you witnessed spiritual leaders opposing God's work because it threatened their position or popularity?

Interlinear Text

ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τοὺς ὄχλους ἐπλήσθησαν
saw But G3588 when the Jews G3588 the multitudes they were filled
G1492 G1161 G2453 G3793 G4130

ζήλου καὶ ἀντιλέγοντες τοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ Παύλου
with envy and contradicting by Paul
G2205 G2532 G483 G3588 G5259 G3972

λεγομένοις καὶ βλασφημοῦντες
those things which were spoken contradicting and blaspheming
G3004 G483 G2532 G987

Additional Cross-References

Jude 1:10 (Parallel theme): But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

Acts 18:6 (Parallel theme): And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

Acts 19:9 (Parallel theme): But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

Acts 5:17 (Parallel theme): Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

1 Thessalonians 2:16 (Parallel theme): Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

1 Peter 4:4 (Parallel theme): Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: