

Acts 15:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;

Analysis

The 'contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder.' The Greek 'paroxysmos' (sharp disagreement) describes intense conflict. Even godly leaders can disagree strongly. Rather than force artificial unity, they separated into two missionary teams, doubling their gospel impact. God's sovereignty turns human conflict into kingdom advance.

Historical Context

This separation (circa AD 50) was painful but providential. Barnabas took Mark to Cyprus while Paul chose Silas for Asia Minor and Europe, effectively doubling the missionary enterprise.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How can God use even conflicts among believers for His purposes?
2. What does this teach about disagreements among godly people?

3. How should we respond when we cannot resolve differences with other Christians?

Interlinear Text

ἐγένετο οὖν παροξυσμὸς ὥστε ἀποχωρισθῆναι αὐτοὺς
was And so sharp between them that they departed asunder G846
G1096 G3767 G3948 G5620 G673

ἀπ' ἀλλήλων τόν τε Βαριναβᾶν παραλαβόντα
one from the other G240 G3588 and so Barnabas took G3880
G575 G5037 G921

τὸν Μᾶρκον ἐκπλεῦσαι εἰς Κύπρον
Mark and sailed unto Cyprus G2954
G3588 G3138 G1602 G1519

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 4:10 (Parallel theme): Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

James 3:2 (Parallel theme): For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

Acts 4:36 (Parallel theme): And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

Ecclesiastes 7:20 (Parallel theme): For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.