

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (August 18, 2024)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

Today we return to the book of Acts with an account from Paul's second missionary journey. He has left Barnabas behind and joined with Silas, a Hellenistic Jew, to travel to Asia. But being forbidden by the Holy Spirit (Acts 16:6) they turn to Macedonia. There Paul has a vision of a man pleading with him to come to the region and preach the Gospel. As a result, Paul and Silas set off for the foremost city of Phillipi. Here is where the story takes a turn toward the miraculous. Meeting with Lydia at the river begins the spread of the Gospel to the people of Phillipi. But not all were happy about the "Good News". Join me today as the story picks up in Acts 16:16-40 displaying God's miraculous power in advancing the Gospel.

The Holy Spirit Working Through Cornelius (Acts 16:16-40) *ESV Please read the entire passage in your own Bible* (verses omitted below) ¹⁶ As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." ¹⁸ And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

¹⁹ But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. ²⁰ And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. ²¹ They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice." ²² The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. ²³ And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. ²⁴ Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

The Philippian Jailer Converted

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, ²⁶ and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. ²⁷ When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." ²⁹ And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ Then he brought

them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³² And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. ³⁴ Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

³⁵ But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those men go." ³⁶ And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore, come out now and go in peace." ³⁷ But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out." ³⁸ The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. ³⁹ So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. ⁴⁰ So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Read the entire passage Acts 16:16-40

1. What three defining miracles are recorded here?
2. Focusing first on the slave girl, Acts 16:16-19, how would you explain her ability in today's world?
3. Was her gift from God or Satan?
4. How was it used to further the Gospel?

Now read Acts.16:20-34

5. What were the dire circumstances Paul and Silas found themselves in?
6. How were they "delivered"?
7. Was it an act of God or natural disaster?
8. What kept them in the prison after the earthquake?
9. What was the results for the Gospel?

Finally finish this chapter Acts 16:35-40

10. How does Paul's Roman citizenship influence their departure from Phillipi?
11. What is the long-range result of this experience for the Gospel?

As you spend time praying, remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural part of your day. Prayer is a conversation: talking to God and listening to God. Ask God to bring to your mind a person He'd like you to be praying for. With thanks ask Him how He'd like you to pray for that person. God loves you, and He hears our prayers.