



This week, we are looking at the sermon on “**God of Suddenlies**” by Ps Louis Els.

Before reading on, please take a moment and read Acts 16:16-34

In Acts 16 we read of Paul and Silas preaching the good news of Jesus Christ in Phillipi. They are preaching of the freedom that is available for us from sin, through His grace. God is not angry with us but welcomes us with open arms as a loving Father. There they encountered a little slave girl possessed by the spirit of divination. She brought her masters much profit through fortune-telling. She was not operating from God’s Spirit and started to mock Paul. Paul drove out this spirit in the name of Jesus. Her masters were furious because they had lost their income. Paul and Silas got beaten up and thrown into prison.

At midnight Paul and Silas were praying and worshipping. Then **suddenly** there was a great earthquake and all the doors opened up and the chains broke off. The prison keeper asked Paul and Silas: “What must I do to be saved?”. They answered, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

If you are finding yourself in a “midnight” season, God wants you to know that He will come through for you “suddenly”. Our “midnight” seasons are our darkest times and a challenging place to be in yet that is often where things start to change. As Christians, we sometimes find ourselves in a place of resistance leaving us wondering where God is in our situation. Just as this girl was mocking Paul, we sometimes experience voices in our heads mocking us with unbelief, causing us to doubt what Jesus has said to us. God is calling us to turn around and to challenge those voices to be quiet in Jesus’ name, He has already dealt with them 2000 years ago.

Regardless of what you believe, “suddenlies” happen to us all but they take time. The events and choices in your life set you up for the kind of “suddenly” you are going to have.

Paul found himself at midnight, beaten up and in pain as a result of preaching the gospel. Paul and Silas started praising God. When things are working out and going well, it’s easy to praise God. How can we praise God at midnight? The only way that this is possible is by remembering the correct things. At midnight Paul didn’t remember everything that went wrong that year, but rather the goodness and the praises of God. Paul’s mouth played a key role in what his “suddenly” would look like. If it wasn’t for their mouths then other people wouldn’t have experienced freedom from prison. What you believe determines your “suddenly”.

Lastly, when the prison doors opened, nobody left. Sometimes we want a “suddenly” so that we can get a change of circumstances but Paul wasn’t trying to get out of prison, he was looking at getting the gospel into the prison.

Reflection:

We sometimes face circumstances that we can’t change but what we can change is our mouths, our beliefs, and what we focus on. Take a moment and ask God what His promises are that you should believe, proclaim them and focus on them in your life. You will get through this “midnight”. God knows the plans He has for you, and His favor is running after you.