

In this vision Paul saw a man dressed as a man from Macedonia would dress, and Paul recognized him as a man from Macedonia, though not a specific individual, but a collective "us." This man requested with a sense of urgency, help, aid and assistance in the time of dire need: ...*Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* Interestingly this Greek word (number 997 in the Strong's Greek Concordance) translated "help" here is only used eight times in scripture. {MATTHEW 15:25; MARK 9:22 & 24; ACTS 16:9 & 21:28; 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2; HEBREWS 2:18 and REVELATION 12:16}. Eight is such an important number with several meanings, which we have covered many times in lessons past, all of which can closely be associated with Jesus. Eight has a meaning of NEW CREATION, and 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 tells us that born again believers are a NEW CREATION in Christ Jesus. Eight has a meaning of NEW BIRTH. JOHN 3:7 tells us in part: *Ye must be born again.* 1 JOHN 5:1 tells us: *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...* . Eight also has a meaning of NEW BEGINNING. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 reads: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* Eight also has a meaning of RESURRECTION. Jesus said in JOHN 11:25 *...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:...* . Eight is also the number that points to the BRIDE OF CHRIST. JOHN 3:29 in part tells us: *He that hath the bride is the bridegroom:...* . Jesus is the bridegroom. So we see that all these meanings of the number eight also witnesses of the true Light Christ Jesus. When this Macedonian man requests "help" in Paul's vision, he is requesting that Paul come over into Macedonia and witness of the true Light Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul understood the urgency of this vision's request for help, and he later quoted ISAIAH 49:8 when he penned 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2 expressing the kind of help requested here. 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2 (*For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*)

ACTS 16:10 *And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.* This verse emphasizes the fact that assuredly the Lord had called Paul and his company to preach the gospel unto them of Macedonia. Note the phrase "assuredly gathering" here. It comes from the Greek word *sumbibazo* (number 4822 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), and is only used in six New Testament scriptures. {ACTS 9:22 (proving) & 16:10; 1 CORINTHIANS 2:16 (instruct); EPHESIANS 4:16 (compact); COLOSSIANS 2:2 & 2:19 (knit together)}. The thought conveyed here is to be joined together, or be knit together, or united together with the same opinion or conclusion, which in this particular case was to know for a fact that the Lord had called Paul and his small group of travelers into Macedonia for the express purpose of preaching the gospel unto the hungry needy souls there.

Luke joins Paul

Here in ACTS 16:10 we find the words "we" and "us" used for the first time in reference to the author Luke. This brings up a lot of questions, like how was it that Luke was in Troas at this time? Was this pre planned? How long did Luke know the Apostle Paul before this time? These kinds of questions are not answered for us in scripture. Obviously Luke knew Paul before this time, and became a believer before this time. Luke wrote the gospel record of LUKE, and the book of ACTS. Both of these books are addressed to Theophilus, another man we know even less about, but who is thought to be one of the main men from the church at Antioch, Syria. It is thought that Luke may have become acquainted with the Apostle Paul during one of his many lengthy stays in Antioch before this time.

Read the gospel of Luke, or the book of ACTS and you will see what a man of faith Luke really was. he couldn't have written the things he did without full assurance of faith that these things were so. In the natural many of the things Luke wrote about were far fetched. For example who would really believe that an old man like Zacharias and his old wife Elisabeth could have children, having tried all of their married life to have children? Furthermore who would believe that an angel appeared unto Zacharias and told him he was going to be a father? Who would believe that this same angel would

appear unto a virgin girl and tell her she would become the Mother of Jesus? All of this is found in the first chapter of LUKE. In the first chapter of ACTS Luke writes right away about Jesus disappearing into the clouds in front of many witnesses. Who would believe such things? And who would write such things? Obviously it took a man of great faith and great courage to write such things, for he knew the things he wrote about were indeed true, having witnessed himself many impossible things that the Lord did in the life of the Apostles, especially in the life of the Apostle Paul.

Paul wrote about Luke in three different places. In COLOSSIANS 4:7-17 Paul list two different groups of people, the circumcision (Jews) , and the uncircumcision (Gentiles). If you closely study that particular portion of scripture carefully, you will find Luke mentioned with the Gentiles. In COLOSSIANS 4:14 Paul writes: *Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.* From this one portion of scripture we see that Luke was still traveling with Paul; that those of Colosse were familiar with Luke; and that Luke was known by Paul as *...the beloved physician.* When Paul wrote COLOSSIANS, Paul had suffered the many things recorded in 2 CORINTHIANS 11, plus many additional things recorded in ACTS after the time frame in which 2 CORINTHIANS 11 was written. No doubt Paul was a hurting man, and to have a beloved friend who was also a physician brought much comfort to the Apostle Paul. So Luke was without a doubt a real blessing unto the Apostle Paul. And the hours of one on one fellowship they must have shared, where Luke learned first hand the gospel of the Apostle Paul.

In PHILEMON verse 24 Paul writes of: *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.* Marcus we learned above is another name for John Mark, the author of the gospel of MARK. Here in PHILEMON verse 24 we find Marcus in association with Lucas as being fellowlabourers with the Apostle Paul. Lucas is contracted from Latin Lucanus, and is another name for Luke. Luke and Lucas means "light-giving". This is very appropriate, for Luke shed light on many thoughts and themes and lives that we otherwise would know nothing about.

One other time in his final epistle Paul mentions Luke. 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.* So Luke was with the Apostle Paul until the end of Paul's life it seems.

Here in ACTS 16:10 the "we" and "us" indicate that Luke has joined the Apostle Paul, and Silas, and Timothy on this second missionary journey of Paul's. The narrative in ACTS progresses with "we" and "us" until ACTS 16:40 and 17:1 when once again "they" is used in reference to the Apostle Paul and those who were then traveling with him. Obviously Luke was not a part of the "they," having stayed behind at Philippi. Luke again joins up with the Apostle Paul in ACTS 20:5 & 6, which reads: *These going before tarried for us at Troas. 6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.* Note the "we" and "us" once again in these verses indicating once again that Luke had joined the Apostle Paul in his travels, and stays with him for the rest of his life, which was probably ten years beyond this point in time. This means that Luke was with Paul during the time of his arrest in Jerusalem, during the two years at Caesarea, during the ship wreck on the way to Rome in ACTS 27, and even with Paul at Rome in ACTS 28, and the time beyond the book of ACTS.

True we don't know the answers to why Luke joined the Apostle Paul here at Troas, but we know from scripture that Luke was an important part of the life of the Apostle Paul from this point forward. From his writings we know that Luke stayed focused upon the Lord, and wrote the two books he wrote with inspiration from the Holy Ghost. Luke didn't like to draw any attention unto himself. This is another characteristic of a full overcomer. Obviously traveling with the Apostle Paul, Luke had many things to overcome. From the Apostle Paul's perspective, it would be nice if we all could have such a close friend as Luke.

Having now introduced Luke into the travels of the Apostle Paul, let's return to ACTS 16, and note their progress on this second missionary journey of Paul's. ACTS 16:11 *Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; 12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.*

Once again a tremendous amount of information is contained in these two verses. Recall that in the travels between Lystra and Troas much time has expired without so much as a mention to anyone getting saved, nor has there been any mention of even one church being established. Several months have come and gone, and the record we have from ACTS 16:6-8 tells us that Paul was forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Roman Asia, because the Spirit suffered them not to go to certain places there at that time. Now in one verse, (ACTS 16:11) Paul and company travel a distance of approximately 150 miles in two days, and actually in parts of two days! Under normal circumstances the trip from Troas to Neapolis (Philippi's sea port) would have taken a week or longer. However Paul and his company caught an unusual southeasterly wind on the ship they were on, and covered the 150 miles distance in two days. The opposite journey with prevailing winds took five days in ACTS 20:6! So we note how unusual this trip of ACTS 16:11 was. It just goes to show us that when God has a plan, nothing can stop Him in expediting the thing. Time, speed and distance mean nothing with God. Recall Philip was caught away from the eunuch in ACTS 8:39 by the Spirit of the Lord, and was next found in Azotus some forty miles away! With God nothing is impossible. Recall these scriptures: GENESIS 18:14 *Is any thing too hard for the LORD?* JEREMIAH 32:27 *Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?* MARK 10:27 *And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.* LUKE 1:37 *For with God nothing shall be impossible.*

The journey of 150 miles described in ACTS 16:11 & 12 took them from Troas, across the Aegean unto the Island of Samothracia, a conspicuous landmark to sailors. Samothracia means: "a sign of rags," obviously a place of poverty and great need. History records that this small 20 mile wide island was settled by Greeks, who in time built monuments to Greek gods. On the Northwest side of the island is a small seaport, which would have afforded the ship Paul and his company were on relief from the strong southeasterly wind that had endured all day long.

The next day Paul's ship sets sail and comes to the sea port of Neapolis, which means: "new city." Neapolis had a good sea port. Neapolis was ten miles from Philippi. The reason we don't read of the Apostle Paul stopping and preaching at Samothracia or Neapolis was because in the vision Paul was called to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called him to preach the gospel unto them of Macedonia, not them of Samothracia or Neapolis. {See again ACTS 16:10}.

ACTS 16:12 tells us that Paul and company went from Neapolis *...to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.* Philippi means: "lover of horses," or "lovers of the race horse," which carries with it the meaning to us of "lovers of the race course." This portion of ACTS lays the foundation upon which the church at Philippi was built, and that foundation being Paul's gospel. Paul himself notes in 1 CORINTHIANS 3 how a wise masterbuilder builds, stating in 1 CORINTHIANS 3:10 & 11: *According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* So we see that the Apostle Paul laid the foundation there at Philippi building upon the chief corner stone Jesus Christ. {Study ISAIAH 28:16 and EPHESIANS 2:20. ISAIAH 28:16 *Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.* EPHESIANS 2:20 *And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,*}. Some years later Paul will write from an awful dungeon-prison cell an epistle to the PHILIPPIANS, known to us as the joy book of the Bible. Brother Hill did a Bible study on PHILIPPIANS several years ago, which was put in print as a study book on PHILIPPIANS. Hopefully this study book is one of the treasures in your library. Brother Hill noted in his study that the book of PHILIPPIANS has no doctrines to expound, nor any errors to refute. Rather the book of PHILIPPIANS was written to encourage the heart of every potential full overcomer, and "lover of the race course," who individually wants God's best in their own life! People who agree with the Apostle Paul when he writes in PHILIPPIANS 3:8-14: *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him,*