

wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Later in the same letter Paul wrote unto Timothy about older widows, stating: 1 TIMOTHY 5:10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. Again Timothy would know what the Apostle Paul was talking about, having himself been one of the strangers lodged by Lydia. In HEBREWS 13:2 Paul writes: *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.* Later in HEBREWS 13 Paul also writes: 20 *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* (This hospitality shown by Lydia was one of the good works Paul referenced in the underlined scriptures above.)

We all can learn many things from Lydia, and one of the more important things she said was this phrase found in verse 15: *...come into my house, and abide there.* Is the gospel of the Apostle Paul allowed in your house, and allowed to abide there? In other words have the doctrines of Paul become a part of your household? Paul's gospel is found in the homes of all New Testament full overcomers!

We will find in ACTS 16:40 that the house of Lydia remained the home base of the Apostle Paul, and his group while at Philippi. ACTS 16:40 is the last time we read of Lydia in scripture, however she was very important behind the scenes there at Philippi. We have noted the many fine qualities of a full overcomer displayed by Lydia. When the Apostle Paul writes his epistle unto the PHILIPPIANS he has Lydia and her household in mind. PHILIPPIANS 1:1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* 3 *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, 5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;* (the first day included the day Lydia and her household first heard the gospel of Paul preached down by the riverside.) 6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:* 7 *Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.*

## Opposition at Philippi

We love examining the qualities found in a full overcomer, and have once again just examined many of these qualities associated with Lydia. However in order to be a full overcomer there are things ordained of God that must be placed on our race course for us to overcome, like obstacles, which are put before us to overcome in order for us to become the full overcomer God wants us to become. We can not overcome any of these ordained obstacles in our own power *...For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)* 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3 & 4. That is why the Holy Ghost inspired the Apostle Paul to write of the warfare of the believer in EPHESIANS 6:10-18. EPHESIANS 6:10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16*

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;... . Often time these obstacles to overcome on our race course are presented to us from the enemy himself, ...that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. {See REVELATION 12:9}. We know from GENESIS 3:1 that ...the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. We found in our meaning of the Bible numbers study that there were eighteen names mentioned in scripture referencing Satan, and that these eighteen names came in groups of six: 6+6+6, or six, six, six in other words. Some of these names of Satan are tempter, destroyer, devourer, serpent, wicked one, adversary, the Devil, and enemy. The Apostle Paul acknowledges in 2 CORINTHIANS 2:11 that the full overcomer must learn to recognize these obstacles placed on our race course: *Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.* Jesus Himself had told the future Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus about the darkness of Satan, and the power of Satan. We note this again in that familiar portion of scripture, ACTS 26:16-18, which reads: *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* Implied in this statement is the fact that there are things ordained of God that must be placed on the Apostle Paul's race course, like obstacles, which are to be put before him in order for him to become the full overcomer God wants him to become, and that Jesus Himself will be the One, the only One, who can deliver him from these often perilous obstacles.

The fact that there will be opposition from Satan at every turn along life's pathway is an underlying theme throughout all scripture, and this ever present opposition faces both sinner and Saint. The fact that there is a Deliverer from such opposition is also a bigger underlying theme throughout all scripture. David, a man after God's own heart, wrote in PSALMS 18:2 *The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.* David also wrote: PSALMS 34:19 *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.* Paul wrote: GALATIANS 1:3 *Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: 5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Paul also penned in 2 CORINTHIANS 1:9 *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: 10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;... .* This then is the heart attitude of a full overcomer, that is to trust in God. In his final parting words to Timothy, Paul wrote in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* So we see that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is our Deliverer. Thus Paul was able to write in ROMANS 8:37 *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.* The Apostle John addressing this same theme also wrote in 1 JOHN 4:4 *...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* Always keep these thoughts foremost in your mind as you run your God given obstacle filled race course.

Having said all of this, let's note the opposition that Paul and his company next faced at Philippi. ACTS 16:16 *And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. 18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.*

Let's now examine these verses a little closer. Verse 16 has two words in it that need explanation: "divination" and "soothsaying." "Divination" covers a broad spectrum of foretelling future events, or the discovering of things secret by the aid of so called superior beings, or other than human means apart from God. Here the word "divination" has a specific meaning, for it comes from the Greek word *pytho* translated *python* in English. Literally the meaning here is "the spirit of a Pythoness." In Greek mythology this *python* was the name of the *Python* serpent or dragon, dwelling in *Phtho*, at the foot of mount Parnassus, guarding the oracle of Delphi, famous for predicting future events, and who slain by the Greek god Apollo. Thence the name *pytho* was transferred to Apollo himself, who became celebrated as the foreteller of future events. What the word "*pytho*" meant among the Greeks was a prophetic spirit, *Pythias* being one of the names of Apollo, the god of prophecy. Later the word "*pytho*" was applied to diviners or soothsayers, regarded as inspired by Apollo, the so called foreteller of future events, or god of prophecy. Since demons are the agents inspiring idolatry, as noted in 1 CORINTHIANS 10:20, the damsel here in ACTS 16:16 was possessed by a demon instigating the cult of Apollo, and thus had ...a spirit of divination. 1 CORINTHIANS 10:20 reads: *But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.*

"Soothsaying" is defined as the art or practice of foretelling future events. Fortune telling in other words. "Soothsaying" is also called the art or gift of prophecy, (or the pretense of prophecy) by supernatural means. "Soothsaying" falls under the broader heading of divination. "Soothsaying" has many forms such as palm reading, or reading tea leaves. We are not specifically told by Luke in ACTS 16:16 what kind of "soothsaying" this damsel performed, but we do know that she was good at it, for she ...brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. Obviously this damsel was a slave girl who had many masters, all of them using her for their own profit. No wonder the Apostle Paul was later to able write Timothy a fact that they both knew: 1 TIMOTHY 6:10 *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

ACTS 16:17 *The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. Had we not been told that this damsel was ...possessed with a spirit of divination,... we wouldn't suspect anything amiss here. What she said was true: These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. Jesus too had similar experiences when He was on earth; that is there were those possessed with unclean spirits who spoke true statements concerning Jesus. The following are three scriptural examples of true statements spoken by those possessed with unclean spirits.*

MARK 1:23 *And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, 24 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. 25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. 26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. 27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. 28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.*

MARK 3:7 *But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judaea, 8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him. 9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. 10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues. 11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. 12 And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.*

LUKE 4:31 *And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. 32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.*

33 And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, 34 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. 35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not. 36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. 37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about. ...40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. 41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

So we note that the unclean spirits know who Jesus is, and some times even speak true statements. Thus what was spoken by the damsel in ACTS 16:17 shouldn't now be of any real surprise to us. ACTS 16:17 *The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.* Again this was a true statement.

The Apostle Paul being full of the Holy Ghost, and having himself been given the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit that Brother Hawkins talked about during the 2005 youth camp, had the gift of "discerning of spirits," which he spoke of in 1 CORINTHIANS 12:10. Thus the Holy Ghost had showed him that this damsel was ...possessed with a spirit of divination.

ACTS 16:16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. 18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

Back in LUKE 10 Jesus sent forth seventy disciples two by two. Then we read starting in LUKE 10:17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. 18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. 19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. 21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Recall (if you were there) how Brother Hawkins also noted at the 2005 youth camp that if one has been given a gift of the Holy Spirit, that they will manifest this gift over and over again, really without even thinking about it. Such was the case also with the Apostle Paul concerning the gift of "discerning of spirits." Back in ACTS 13:6-13 Paul and Barnabas were faced with Elymas the sorcerer, a Jew, and a false prophet. Elymas the sorcerer was with the governor of the island of Cyprus, to whom Paul and Barnabas were called so that he too could hear the word of God. (Satan being the prince of the power of the air, (EPHESIANS 2:2), has always closely associated himself with the men in power. Consider Pharaoh in Moses day, he had Jannes and Jambres the powerful sorcerers of his day with him.) At any rate back in ACTS 13 when Paul was faced with Elymas the sorcerer we read: ACTS 13:9 *Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, 10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.* That quickly the whole situation was diffused, and the governor of Cyprus became a believer. {Study ACTS 13:12.}

Here in ACTS 16:18 we find the Apostle Paul commanded the spirit ...in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. The word "commanded"

means to give a charge, or to give the word; to order in other words. Back in LUKE 8 Jesus also commanded an unclean spirit to come out of a man. LUKE 8:26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. 27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. 29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) 30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. 31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. 32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. 33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. 34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. 36 They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. 37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

One more example is found in MATTHEW 8. MATTHEW 8:28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. 29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? 30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. 31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. 32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. 33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. 34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts. Here we again note two facts mentioned above: (1) these devils often make true statements, for they acknowledged that He was ...Jesus, thou Son of God: And (2) Jesus had power and authority over these devils in that He was able to command them to Go, and they did so!

Here in ACTS 16:18 is a very important point to also note, which is the fact that Paul didn't command the spirit on his own accord to come out of the damsel, but rather he commanded the spirit by the power and authority that is in the name of Jesus to come out of her. ACTS 16:18 ...But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. Later in ACTS 19:13-16 we will read of some vagabond Jews, exorcists, who took upon themselves ...to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. ACTS 19:14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. Since they didn't know Jesus Christ themselves, they had no business trying to call out spirits in Jesus name.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. 3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 1 JOHN 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye



the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. 4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Brother Lloyd, who years ago went to be with the Lord, once told me of an similar experience he had. He had been studying these verse in 1 CORINTHIANS 12, and 1 JOHN 4, and was witnessing to a man about the Lord. Brother Lloyd perceived that the man didn't have a right spirit, and asked the man to say that "Jesus is the Lord." The man tried, but could only stutter when he got to these words. (Try as hard as I can, I can't remember if Brother Lloyd ever told me what happened next.)

One more point that Brother Copley brought out concerning what happened here in ACTS 16:16-18. ACTS 16:16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. 18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. Brother Copley notes that Paul had learned the lessons he wrote about in 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5, which reads: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Thus Paul waited until the Holy Ghost led him to say unto the spirit of divination: ...I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.

Let's focus our thoughts on the power and authority that is in the name of Jesus for a few moments. Earlier {see page 330} we read in LUKE 4:36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. 37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about. In LUKE 9:1 we read this of Jesus: Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. Paul writes in ROMAN 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Part of this "all things" is the power and authority that is in the name of Jesus. By the power and authority that is in the name of Jesus, Peter and John healed the lame man in ACTS 3. ACTS 3:6-8 reads: Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. 7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. Later in life Peter wrote this about Jesus in 1 PETER 3:22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. Jesus after His resurrection told His disciples this in MARK 16:17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. The Apostle Paul knew all of these facts that we have just reviewed, thus with great confidence in the name of Jesus Christ we again read what Paul said in ACTS 16:18 -- ...But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

Moving beyond ACTS 16:18 we foresee more opposition from Satan. The Apostle Paul acknowledges in EPHESIANS 2:2 that Satan is ...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Furthermore Paul acknowledges in EPHESIANS 6:12 that ...we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,

against spiritual wickedness in high places. The rulers of the darkness of this world includes those who are in places of power and authority. We mentioned earlier that Satan being the prince of the power of the air, has always closely associated himself with the men in power, like Pharaoh in Moses day, who had Jannes and Jambres the Satan inspired sorcerers of his day with him. This kind of opposition from Satan is even more prevalent today, for Satan knows his days are numbered. And so it was in Paul's day too.

Thus we read next in ACTS 16:19 *And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, 20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, 21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. 22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. 23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: 24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.*

In verse 20 we read this statement: *These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city.* The Greek word translated trouble here (1613 in the Strong's Greek Concordance) is only found this one time in scripture, and means: to agitate, to trouble exceedingly, or to throw into great trouble. Before Paul was saved and known as Saul of Tarsus, he exceedingly troubled the Christians in every city he visited, making havock against the church. This he did with the approval of the authorities. Now as the Apostle Paul, he was (in their words) exceedingly troubling the sinners, and faced the kind of opposition he once dished out himself.

Recall that on his first missionary journey Paul had faced similar opposition nearly everywhere he preached, and was even stoned at Lystra. {Review ACTS 13:46-14:19}. However this is the first time we read of him being in prison, though 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23 tells us that he was *"...in prisons more frequent,..."* and the more so as time went on. Paul's gospel message didn't end even though he was thrown in prison, in fact Paul's gospel message really spread because of the fact that as time went on he was *"...in prisons more frequent..."* Without Paul being put in prison we wouldn't have many of his epistles, nor would we have the exceeding riches of his gospel to feast upon. Paul even wrote in PHILIPPIANS 1:12 to these same Saints in Philippi that witnessed his trouble here at Philippi: *But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.*

Here are a few more scriptures that Paul wrote from prison, indicating he was a prisoner, and some of the priceless eternal work that was taking place there, even on our behalf. As we read these scriptures written from prison, let me also remind you that these very epistles were treasures to our Pastor Brother Hill. I have his last study Bible, and these very same epistles of Paul were nearly worn out by his much study of them.

EPHESIANS 3:1 *For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. ...4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ...6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; 19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

PHILIPPIANS 1:1 *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 Grace be unto you,*

and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, 5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; 6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: 7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. 8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; 10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; 11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. 12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; 13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; 14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. 15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: 16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: 17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

COLOSSIANS 4:2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; 3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: 4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. ...18 The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

2 TIMOTHY 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. ...2:8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: 9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

PHILEMON 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer, 2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house: 3 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ...8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, 9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. 10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: 11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me: 12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels: 13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel: 14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

Now returning to ACTS 16:19-24 we find Paul and Silas being put in prison. How did this happen? Perhaps you have heard of a kangaroo court? This was a kangaroo court, a lynch mob in other words. What we find in these verses is that the masters of this slave girl when they saw that any hope of ever profiting from her again was lost became violently enraged with especially Paul and Silas. Timothy and Luke not being mentioned here indicates that they were perceived more as followers than leaders at this point in time. These slave masters must have felt some difficulty in stating their grievance before the city authorities, for the Roman law had no remedy for property being depreciated by exorcism. So these slave masters made an accusation unto the authorities in the following form: "These men are throwing the whole city into confusion: moreover they are Jews: and they are attempting to introduce new religious



observances, which we, being Roman citizens, can not legally receive and adopt." This accusation was only partly true, and partly false. It was quite false that Paul and Silas were disturbing the colony, for nothing could have been more calm and orderly than their worship and teaching at the house of Lydia, or in the meeting place down by the riverside. However, I remember a time or two when the cops were called here at Living Waters Tabernacle, (across the street) because the neighbors complained of too much noise; prayer meeting noise. Brother Hill always used to say: "It wasn't the noise that was bother them, it was the kind of noise." The noise from DU stadium 3 miles away never seemed to disturb any of the neighbors. I don't think we have had any complaints from the neighbors about prayer meeting noise since we moved into this building in 1972. I know that we have gotten complaints about the chimes on Sunday morning. Here again it was the kind of noise that was bothering them. Back to Paul and Silas, it was partly true that the Roman law was opposed to the introduction of foreign religions, because such changes in worship were likely to unsettle the minds of the Roman citizens. The advice given to Augustus, which both he and his successors had followed was to check new religious innovations as soon as possible, lest in the end they should undermine the Monarchy. Consequently Paul and Silas had undoubtedly been doing things that in some degree exposed them to legal penalties, ....or did it? Not really, for Paul and Silas were Roman citizens (see verse 37) who had certain privileges that non-citizens didn't have. These privileges included (1) exemption from scourging, (2) freedom from arrest (except in extreme cases), and (3) the right to appeal from the magistrate up to the Emperor. In time during his life the Apostle Paul would use all of these privileges. Obviously here at Philippi the lynch mob mentality over ruled proper protocol, and Paul and Silas were hastily arrested, scourged, and put into prison.

Note in verses 22 and 23 how that Paul and Silas were beaten and received many stripes. This beating and receiving many stripes became a testimony of both Paul and Silas that followed them the rest of their lives. Paul even mentions it like this in his first epistle, which was written unto the church of the Thessalonians: 1 THESSALONIANS 2:1 *For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: 2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.* 1 THESSALONIANS 3:4 *For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.* Later in life to the church at Philippi Paul wrote the following words from a dungeon: PHILIPPIANS 3:8 *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, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.* Suffering with Christ Jesus became a pattern in the life of the Apostle Paul, and as we have many times noted before, this suffering with Christ Jesus is something that all full overcomers must face.

Back in ACTS 9:16 the Lord Jesus Himself appeared unto Ananias of Damascus and told him this concerning the future Apostle Paul: *...I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* The reality of this statement is the fact that suffering is part of bearing the name of Jesus. This is not a popular message, thus this doctrine is seldom preached in assemblies today, and is not mentioned by TV evangelists for fear of loosing their audience, but this is a necessary message to those who would be full overcomers. The full overcomers of this church age will be those found in the Bride of Christ. The whole church is not the Bride of Christ, and this fact remains a mystery to most assemblies today. One of the main facts Paul taught concerning the Bride of Christ comes from his different suffering experiences. Thank God we have been taught facts of suffering with Christ Jesus often here at Living Water Tabernacle, including here in Sunday School.

The last letter that the Apostle Paul wrote was to Timothy, and with all his years of experience as an Apostle now behind him, Paul wrote Timothy in 2 TIMOTHY 3:12 --*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* In 2 TIMOTHY Paul

wrote Timothy much about suffering, but not just suffering to be suffering, rather suffering with Christ Jesus so that he too, (we too), could reign with Him. Here is how Paul wrote this unto Timothy: 2 TIMOTHY 1:8 *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;* 9 *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,* 10 *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:* 11 *Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.* 12 *For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* 2 TIMOTHY 2:1 *Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* 2 *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.* 3 *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.* ...7 *Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.* 8 *Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:* 9 *Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.* 10 *Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.* 11 *It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:* 12 *If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, (the right to suffer with Him) he also will deny us (the right to rule and reign with Him):* 13 *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.*

As Brother Hill so often pointed out to us concerning this portion of scripture, the main topic here is suffering with Him. If we are not willing to suffer with Christ, then He has no other choice but to deny us the right to reign with Him. Those that are willing to suffer with Him will also reign with Him. Those that will be in the BRIDE of Christ are the very same ones who let Jesus Christ take them through some very tough suffering testing times; times of peril similar to what our example in the faith, the Apostle Paul seemed to face on a daily basis. Now I will be the first to tell you that I don't like to suffer, nor do I think any of us like to suffer. I don't like to see anyone suffer either. But I realize that it is through these suffering tests given us by the Lord in our life that brings us to the place where we make our choice, suffer with Him, or deny Him the right to give us His best. Name one example of the many we have in scripture of a full overcomer who didn't not allow the Lord to have His way in their lives. You can't find one example of those in HEBREWS 11 who didn't suffer with the Lord, and not allow the Lord to have His way in their lives. And a great part in allowing the Lord to have His way is to allow the Lord to take us through each and every trying test, and suffering event of our lives. After all we know that Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, (HEBREWS 12:2). In other words He is the one who designed and brought into our lives these testing events that often make us suffer with Him, to prove Himself faithful to us in all things. There are no accidents along our specially designed race course, only testing events of His choosing. Let Him who is the author and finisher of our divinely designed race course have His way in our life every day. PHILIPPIANS 1:29 *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;...* This suffering way according to ROMANS 8:17 is a key part in becoming *joint-heirs with Christ*; that is, we can be *...joint-heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together...* with Him. The only way a Son of God can become a *joint-heir with Christ*, is to be willing to *suffer with him*. All Christians are heirs of God, but not all Christians are joint-heirs with Christ, for not all Christians are willing to suffer with Christ Jesus, and this is what ROMANS 8:17 is pointing out. So to be a *...joint-heir with Christ...* means to be willing to *...suffer with him*. What did Jesus say to the overcoming Saints of the church of Smyrna? REVELATION 2:10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Those were full overcomers He was talking to; Bridal Saints.

ACTS 16:23 & 24: *And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: 24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.* Having received many stripes each, Paul and Silas were then cast into prison, and the jailor was charged to “keep them safely.” Obviously the Greek doesn’t translate into the English here with exactly the same meaning our minds might picture. Reading this in today’s so called politically correct world we might get the view that Paul and Silas were treated so as not to violate their “civil rights;” that they were gently put into the prison, making sure that they were not further harmed in any way. Nothing could be farther from the truth here. Essentially their “civil rights” had already been violated by being beaten in the first place, which wasn’t supposed to happen to Roman citizens, as we noted earlier. Having their “civil rights” violated, and having been severely beaten with many painful stripes, Paul and Silas were then “cast” into prison. The word “cast” here is number 906 in the Strong’s Greek Concordance, and means: to throw or let go of a thing without caring where it falls; to hurl; to give over to one’s care being uncertain about the result. There is no grace, mercy, or love in this word “cast.” There is no concern whether or not one’s “civil rights” are violated in this word “cast.” So why do we next read that the jailor was charged to keep them safely? The Greek word translated “safely” here is number 806 in the Strong’s Greek Concordance, and means: to make sure that these prisoners could not possibly escape; to keep them secure and well guarded so as to prevent escape. Verse 24 further explains that the jailor ...*Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.* Here we see how well guarded Paul and Silas were, for they were “thrust” into the inner prison. One commentator noted that the only fresh air to enter into the inner prison was when the door was briefly opened to exchange prisoners. Further the inner prison was the darkest, and most secure place in the prison.

We know a little of the cruelty that the Roman’s perfected in their torture of prisoners, and such like. The crucifixion of Jesus on the cross is one prime example of how cruel the Roman’s were, and how they had perfected torture. The treatment Paul and Silas received here at Philippi is just another example of Roman human cruelty. We note in verse 24 that after being violently thrust into the inner dark prison, Paul and Silas had their feet made fast in the stocks. The opinions vary from commentator to commentator as to what this actually meant, however all are in agreement that “the stocks” were two large pieces of wood, in which the feet were inserted, then locked in place probably after the legs were spread wide. One could not stand upright in such a position, thus it is most likely that Paul and Silas ended up sitting or lying in a most uncomfortable position, and if lying down they would be on a cold and dirty floor, getting dirt and filth in their many open wounds! Agony doesn’t begin to describe their pain. Nor could they really get any rest, or comfort in this condition.

## Midnight

We are going to read starting in ACTS 16:25 some of the things that happened here at the Philippian prison at midnight. Before we examine these next events at Philippi, I want to give a few thoughts concerning midnight.

The word “midnight” is found fourteen times in the Bible with two basic meanings. One expresses the thought that midnight occurs in the middle of the night, and the other expresses the darkness of gloom found at midnight. Let’s consider “midnight” as expressing the darkest hour of the night; half way between daylight and daylight if you will. “Midnight” can be expressed in literal terms, in figurative terms, and in spiritual terms. The full overcomer will face many “midnight’s” in spiritual terms throughout his or her life time. I know the Apostle Paul did. I know all the Old Testament worthies of faith did too.

It is no accident that the word “midnight” is found fourteen times in Scripture, for the number fourteen is the number that has to do with DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. The very first time we read the word “midnight” is in EXODUS 11. EXODUS 11:1 *And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you*