interviewed John Mark at that time, but as we have just mentioned, by then they both knew each other.

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

ACTS 15:40 *And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.*

Recall from ACTS 15:36 that Paul had said to Barnabas *...Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.* Apparently they were in agreement on this point, they just weren't in agreement on taking John Mark along on this quest. So as ACTS 15:39 tells us: *...Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus,...* which was Barnabas' home country, and the first place Paul and Barnabas visited on their missionary journey. Thus Barnabas fulfilled Paul's request as far as Cyprus is concerned.

The narrative Luke left us in scripture from this point forward focuses upon the Apostle Paul, and his future missionary journeys, and we find in ACTS 15:40 and 41 that Paul takes with him Silas. This is the fifth time we find Silas mentioned here in ACTS 15. So far we know from ACTS 15:22 that Silas was considered one of the chief men from the church at Jerusalem. ACTS 15:32 told us that Silas was also a prophet, in other words he had the gift of prophecy. Silas is found by two names in scripture, Silas and Silvanus. Luke calls him Silas, and Paul and Peter address him as Silvanus. Silvanus is the Latin for Silas, and Silas is the name we have for him 13 times in ACTS. Four times we find Silas in scripture as Silvanus, which means his name is found in scripture 17 times. 17 is the number that has to do with VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS, and certainly Silas many times demonstrated that fact in his life. (You don't sing praises unto God at midnight while wrongly strung up as a prisoner without having complete VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS, which is exactly what Silas did in ACTS 16:25.) Silas, and the Latin Silvanus derives a meaning of "a wood" or "woody," coming from the Latin sylva. ACTS 16:37 indicates that Silas was a Roman citizen, just like Paul. When Judas surnamed Barsabas went back to Jerusalem from Antioch, Syria, Silas remained in Antioch, and as we now see Silas has decided to follow Paul! We further learn here in ACTS 15:40 that both Paul and Silas were *...recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.*

According to Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words "recommended" means: to give or deliver over, or commending, or committing servants of God to Him. This same word is also used in ACTS 14:26 at the end of Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey, where we find them returning *...to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the **grace of God** for the work which they fulfilled.* Brother Copley notes that this *...being recommended by the brethren unto the **grace of God**...* was no small item either. The **grace of God** is emphasized mainly in Paul's gospel. The phrase "**grace of God**" is found mentioned by three authors of scripture: Luke, Paul and Peter. Luke mentions the "**grace of God**" six times, Peter two times, and Paul sixteen (LOVE) times. Brother Franklin Sr. years ago made this statement in reference to the Apostle Paul's account of ACTS 20:24: "in this verse we find the spirit of the overcomer." ACTS 20:24 *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the **grace of God**.* It was Paul who testified the gospel of the **grace of God**. It is Paul and his gospel whom we are to follow. 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16 *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.* 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* 2 CORINTHIANS 4:5 *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.* PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* Silas is an outstanding example of one who followed Paul as he followed Christ. Luke also has this testimony. It is interesting that Peter also noted the same thing about Silas, writing in 1 PETER 5:12 *By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true **grace of God** wherein ye stand.*

ACTS 15:40 *And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.* Why did Paul

start this second missionary journey of his passing first through Syria, and Cilicia, places he did not visit on his first missionary journey with Barnabas? One reason can be found in ACTS 15:23 where the Apostles and elders of Jerusalem made this request: 23 *And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.* The second reason is that Paul here was confirming the churches he had already established prior to his first missionary journey. Recall that Paul was born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia according to ACTS 22:3, and after being saved was found back in Tarsus by Barnabas in ACTS 11:25, who then brought him to the assembly at Antioch, Syria in ACTS 11:26. By this point in time Paul, (still called Saul of Tarsus) had been living in Tarsus, Cilicia, or there about, for around five years, during which time he very well may have established so small churches.

The Greek word translated "confirming" here in ACTS 15:41 is number 1991 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, a verb meaning: to establish besides; to make to lean upon; to strengthen as in to strengthen upon by use of a prop or support, the result being to strengthen more; to render more firm; to confirm. The thought of "confirming" here then is to give additional spiritual strength to the Saints, and this additional spiritual strength came by Paul and Silas in the form of additional instruction in the truth and faith of the gospel. Implied in this confirmation process is the fact that the Holy Ghost was very much necessary in the lives of these various Saints, and in their assemblies, for He is the agency of the trinity left to us for the purpose of teaching us all things pertaining to a spiritual nature; to guide us into all the truth, and to shew the truth to us. {Study JOHN 14:26 and 16:13-15}. Part of this "confirming" process would be to read the epistle written at the conference in Jerusalem unto the brethren which are Gentiles in Syria and Cilicia as noted in ACTS 15:23. This is where Silas would be introduced by Paul unto the Gentiles of these assemblies, and it is quiet probable that Silas would then read the epistle, after which Paul would explain the reason for it. Paul would then make sure the Saints of these cities got aquatinted with Silas, and that Silas got aquatinted with Paul's old friends also. No doubt there would be many memories brought up concerning Paul's preaching, and Silas would begin to further appreciate the teaching of the Apostle Paul, and get more and more familiar with his doctrine. Thus begins Paul's second missionary journey.

ACTS 16

I want to give a brief introduction to the remaining 13 chapters of ACTS, which all revolve around the ministry of our beloved Apostle Paul. Chapters 16 through 18:21 concerns Paul's second missionary journey, and ACTS 19:1 through 21:18 is about Paul's third missionary journey. At this point seven more years have elapsed. From ACTS 21:33 until the end of the book of ACTS, the Apostle Paul is held prisoner, a period of time that covers the next five plus years of Paul's life.

Since we are primarily studying what Luke wrote us in scripture, what does all of this have to do with our brother in the Lord, Luke, who wrote the book of ACTS? What we will find starting in the 16th chapter of ACTS is that Luke begins documenting some of the events we are about to read from the perspective of an eyewitness, or a participant. We will find Luke joining Paul several months into this second missionary journey of Paul's as he rather casually mentions that he was traveling with Paul by using the words "we," and "us" in his writing ACTS from this point forward. Luke never focuses the attention upon himself in his writing.

We are not told how it was that Luke all of sudden shows up in Troas in ACTS 16:10, joining Paul several months into this second missionary journey. There must have been some communication back to Antioch, Syria indicating where Paul was, but we are not told this in scripture. Why Luke joined this second missionary journey of Paul's at this point in time isn't revealed in scripture, but once we get to ACTS 16:10 Luke becomes a part of Paul's second missionary journey. When we get to ACTS 17 through ACTS 19, Luke drops the words "we," and "us" in his writing ACTS, and doesn't using "we," and "us" again until ACTS 20:6! ACTS 16 concludes with Paul and Silas leaving Philippi, but we know by studying ACTS 16 that Luke had travelled with Paul and Silas, and Timothy to Philippi.

So what happened to Luke between ACTS 17:1 until ACTS 20:6 some six plus years later? In ACTS 20:6 we find Paul sailing from Philippi, and Luke was again with him. We have to conclude that Luke had stayed behind in Philippi when the rest of Paul's group departed in ACTS 17! Let that sink in for a minute. Luke remained in Philippi for six plus years, thus after Paul departed Philippi, our beloved brother in the Lord, Luke would have been the only one of Paul's company left there to teach, and preach Paul's gospel to them! Yet Paul himself never mentions Luke being there at Philippi during this time in any of his future epistles. Later on in life when Paul does write the Saints at Philippi an epistle, he still doesn't mention Luke! The letter to the PHILIPPIANS has no errors to refute, no corrections to be made, no doctrines to further expound. Why? Because they were well instructed. Paul had established the church there at Philippi, and by the end of ACTS 16, however long that was, the church at Philippi had a good doctrinal foundation laid. And we learn from studying Paul's epistles of 1 and 2 CORINTHIANS, and ROMANS 15:26 that Paul had revisited Philippi at least once. Meanwhile Luke was there all this time in Philippi, for we do not read of Luke leaving Philippi once he arrived in ACTS 16:12.

So how can we say that Luke was in Philippi these six plus years teaching Paul's gospel message? I think Luke himself answers this question ACTS 16:9 & 10. ACTS 16:9 *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 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.*** When Luke here writes *...that* ***the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them,...*** who is the "**us**" that would preach unto them? The answer is Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke! Luke quits writing "we," and "us" in ACTS 16:17, but quietly behind the scenes remains at Philippi when Paul Silas, and Timothy leave, and there Luke continues ministering the word, and expounds upon Paul's gospel, which it seems Luke had learned from the Apostle Paul himself during the many times Paul taught, and preached there in Antioch, Syria, perhaps even as early as Paul first arriving there with Barnabas in ACTS 11:26 in about 44 A.D.!

ACTS 15:40 *And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.* Scripture doesn't tell us how long Paul and Silas were in this region of Syria and Cilicia before continuing on west to the other churches Paul had visited on his first missionary journey.

ACTS 16:1 *Then came he* (Paul) *to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.*

This is our introduction to Timothy, and his mother and father in scripture. Timothy is called Timothy seven (SPIRITUAL PERFECTION or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION) times in scripture, and called Timotheus seventeen (VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS) times in scripture. Timothy means: "honoring God." Timothy is one of the blessings, and one of the fruit of Paul and Barnabas first missionary journey; one of the ones that Paul desired to visit when he made this statement to Barnabas in ACTS 15:36 *....Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.* When Paul made this statement to Barnabas he had no idea that Timothy had really taken hold of the gospel like he had, but the Holy Ghost knew this, and drew Paul's heart to desire a return visit to Derbe and Lystra to first hand for himself see how these brethren were doing. When Paul and Silas make this second missionary journey of Paul's, and visit again Derbe and Lystra, Timothy is found there already a disciple, that is: a learner, a pupil, a follower of the teachings of the Apostle Paul, and Jesus. Disciple Timothy is further well reported of by the brethren of Lystra and Iconium.

Let's put two and two together here for a moment. Paul and Silas had come to the cities of Derbe, and Lystra. Lystra was where Paul got stoned in ACTS 14:19. In ACTS 14:20 we find the disciples standing round about Paul, whom they supposed was dead from this stoning, which he probably was. As these disciples stood around Paul, no doubt, fervently praying, Paul rose up, and

returned again into Lystra. These same disciples of Lystra were part of this group in ACTS 16:1 & 2 who were giving this good report on Timothy. As we progress with what Luke wrote us in scripture, we will learn more about Timothy, and as we sometimes reference what Paul wrote about Timothy, we will learn even more about him. Obviously from what we have already noted here in ACTS 16, Luke and Timothy first got to know each other here in ACTS 16 when Paul and company were first at Troas.

We learn from scripture that Timothy had a believing Mother, and being a proper Jewish Mother familiar with Old Testament scripture and teachings, she encouraged Timothy in the ways of the Lord, and in the knowledge of the grace of God which Paul preached. It is suggested by some authors that Timothy's father probably died in Timothy's early years, because we read nothing more about him other than the fact that he was a Greek. If Timothy's natural father had died, like some suppose, when Timothy was very young, then his Mother would be the parent solely responsible for raising Timothy. We do later read of Timothy's mother and grandmother, who both probably raised him. Paul writes in 2 TIMOTHY 1:5 *...of thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice...* referring to Timothy's grandmother and mother. Further in that verse Paul notes the *...unfeigned faith...* displayed by Timothy's grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice. They then raised young Timothy to be a man of faith also. So we see that the Lord worked in these churches at Derbe, and Lystra after Paul and Barnabas left. What a joy this must have been to the heart of the Apostle Paul, to see fruit from his earlier ministry. Truly it was *...God that giveth the increase...* 1 CORINTHIANS 3:7. No wonder that Paul was fought so hard there when he first visited Lystra.

Luke then writes this about Timothy in ACTS 16:3 *Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.*

We just covered in ACTS 15 that there was a conference in Jerusalem where the question was addressed about whether it was necessary, or not for a man to be circumcised in order to be saved. The conclusion of that conference was that it was not, because circumcision has nothing to do with one's salvation. Now almost immediately as Luke writes ACTS 16 we find that Paul circumcised this young man, Timothy. Why? Paul circumcised Timothy because of the Jews. An explanation of what Paul was trying to accomplish in his ministry is found in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23, which also helps explain a little of why he circumcised Timothy at this point in time. 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19 *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.* Brother Copley notes that by circumcising Timothy this "shadowy rite would not affect Timothy's standing with God, but it would give him more freedom among the Jews who were still weak in the faith." {End of quoting Brother Copley.} The decrees of ACTS 15:23-29 were written unto the Gentiles, and not to the Jews, thus in an effort to "save some" Paul had Timothy circumcised. This act also shows Timothy's deep love of the Apostle Paul, and his willingness to leave his Mother and Grandmother, and join the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

Without saying anything else here, our brother in the Lord, Luke, gives a glimpse into the heart of the Apostle Paul. Remember up to this point in time Paul has not written one word of scripture to us, but later on Paul wrote in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:28 of *...that which cometh upon me daily, <u>the care of all the churches</u>.* Ponder the depth of this statement for a moment: *...<u>the care of all the churches</u>.* None of us can fully appreciate what it would be to have the burden of *...<u>the care of all the churches,</u>...* but Paul did. That is why Paul later wrote in ROMANS 8:26 *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* A huge part of Paul's daily burden of *...<u>the care of all the churches,</u>...* was to pray for each of these assemblies he had

established. When Paul gets around to writing his first epistle, which is 1 THESSALONIANS, Paul writes in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:25 *Brethren, pray for us*. Realize that Paul lived two-thousand years ago, but still as he requested, we can pray for Paul, and his gospel message, that it continue to be preached with love, grace, and full assurance of understanding of the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Paul in his second epistle that he wrote, which is 2 THESSALONIANS, requested again in 2 THESSALONIANS 3:1 *Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.* Certainly none of us, like Paul, has the burden of ...*the care of all the churches,*... but we can pray that Paul's gospel message continues to be preached in our own assembly.

So back here in ACTS 16:3 we find that Paul loved Timothy, and would have him to go forth with him on this second missionary, where Timothy would learn Paul's gospel from the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself. Furthermore the Apostle Paul knew, by the leading of the Holy Ghost, that Timothy, down the road of life a short distance, would be used of the Holy Ghost to spread Paul's gospel message, even to those who never heard Paul preach. In essence here in ACTS 16:3 Luke is telling how Paul adopted Timothy. Later Paul himself even acknowledges this, writing: 1 TIMOTHY 1:2 *Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.* 1 TIMOTHY 1:18 *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.* 2 TIMOTHY 1:2 *To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.* 2 TIMOTHY 2:1 *Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* In PHILIPPIANS 2 Paul also wrote his thoughts concerning Timothy when he wrote: 10 *But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.* Finally in his last epistle also written to Timothy Paul wrote: 2 TIMOTHY 3:10 *But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, 11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch,* (in Pisidia) *at Iconium, at Lystra;* (during Paul's first missionary journey) *what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. 14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

ACTS 16:4 *And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. 5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.*

This word translated "established" in verse 5 comes from a Greek word rarely used in scripture. It is number 4732 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and means: to make solid, make firm, strengthen, make strong. The same word is used in ACTS 3:7 and 16 in reference to the lame man who was healed when his ankles received strength, and he was able to walk on his own for the first time in his life. Similarly the churches Paul and Silas and Timothy were receiving strength from Paul's gospel message, and were able to better walk with the Lord having received this spiritual strength. Note that the churches visited were ...*established in the faith, and increased in number daily.* The word "increased" also carries with it the thought of being above a certain measure. Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think? {EPHESIANS 3:20}. Is it not Jesus? Back in ACTS 2:47 we read that ...*the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* The same thing can even be said today, for the Lord continues to add to the church daily such as should be saved. The reason for this is stated in HEBREWS 13:8, which reads: *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* What a joy this must have been to the heart of the Apostle Paul, to see fruit from his earlier ministry. 1 CORINTHIANS 3:7 tells us that God ...*giveth the*

increase. No wonder that Paul was fought so hard there when he first visited Lystra. It seems that everywhere the Apostle Paul went up to this point on this second missionary journey that the number of disciples increased in number daily. This was because Paul had revisited friendly territory. All of this would change in the next few verses.

ACTS 16:6 *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.*

It takes a good map of Paul's day to discern the magnitude of this second missionary journey of Paul's. The distance from Antioch, Syria to Antioch in Pisidia would be about 350 miles. The region from Derbe to Antioch in Pisidia would be in the general regions of Phrygia and Galatia located just east of Paul's Asia. Galatia would include the cities of Derbe, Lystra and Iconium. The region of Phrygia would be west of Galatia, and South East of Paul's Asia.

Conyebare and Howson have Paul starting this second missionary journey in 51 A.D., and not arriving in Troas until 52 A.D. Examining all the places Paul visited on this second missionary journey so far, and realizing that he spent some time in each of the assemblies he had established previously, we can safely note that several months pass before arriving at Troas in ACTS 16:8. ACTS 16:6 shows that Paul, Silas, and Timothy went northward out of Antioch in Pisidia towards Mysia, and Bithynia, which was another 300 plus mile long journey in unfamiliar territory to Paul.

At first reading it seems like nothing happened during this part of the journey. Here Paul, Silas, and young Timothy first visit Phrygia. Phrygia means: "dry, barren, parched." Within the boundaries of Phrygia are the cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse. This is the first time Paul has visited this region. Luke records nothing about the events that took place on this missionary journey ... *throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia,...* however we know that Paul and his group were able to lead some to the Lord here on this first trip to these parts. How do we know this? Because ACTS 18:23 records that on the beginning of his third missionary journey some years later, Paul ...*went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.* "All the disciples" here at Phrygia, and this part of Galatia means those that became believers on Paul's first visit to these parts, which took place here in ACTS 16:6. So we see that something did happen on this part of Paul's second missionary journey, but Luke doesn't record this information at this point in time.

Next we read in ACTS 16:6 & 7 that Paul and his company ...*were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.* This particular Asia is Roman Asia, which corresponds closely to the regions of western Turkey today. They ...*were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia.* Consequently nothing happened there at that point in time. Next they came to Mysia. Mysia is a region north of Roman Asia, which included the cities of Pergamos, Troas, and Assos. Again nothing is recorded of happening at Mysia either. From Mysia, ...*they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.* Bithynia is the region just South of the Black Sea.

This all may seem strange to us especially considering that we are talking about the Apostle Paul here, and his being on a second missionary journey, whose purpose it was to spread the gospel of the grace of God, and in the process establish churches. What is going on here? Brother Copley wrote a good commentary on this portion of scripture, stating: "...God has a certain time for each plan and person; for He is calling out a people for His Name, and He knows when the people are ready for the truth. These may seem like strange words, "...*forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach,...*" "...*but the Spirit suffered them not.*" Happy for us to be so well aquatinted with the Spirit's voice and be so yielded to Him that He can make us know His will. Because of this lack, many a fruitless word has been spoken, many a vain trip made. It is not enough to say, "Well, He knows my heart." We get no reward for that. We should know God's heart concerning us. If Paul knew it, we may know it. Let there be in us the perfect will of the Lord, no matter what the cost to us, or to others, and He will see that we have it. Then, too, we shall prove that it is exceedingly beyond all that we could have asked,

or even thought. "Limit not the Holy One" by your own meager conception of His will." {End of quote from Brother Copley}.

Brother Hill used to like to have us sing the chorus – "Let the Lord have His way, in your heart every day. There's no peace, there's no rest, till the Lord has His way. Put your hand in His hand. Rest securely in His plan. There's no peace, there's no rest, till the Lord has His way." Obviously Paul had learned that lesson, the question is have we too learned this same lesson?

Even though it may seem like nothing of real value has happened during this portion of Paul's second missionary journey, I can assure you that a gold mine full of eternal, and internal things were happening. Paul was learning patience. Silas and Timothy were learning Paul's gospel one-on-one, being taught daily from the Apostle Paul himself as they traveled slowly along, and in this process eternal riches were being acquired by all three. A closer bond was taking place between each of them, and the Lord. We may never know the value of what took place in their hearts and lives during this time, but we do know that they were in the will of the Lord, and this valuable time was not wasted. There may have not been much preaching going on since they were "*...forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach,...*" during this time frame found in ACTS 16:6-8, but two future Church Apostles were receiving their degree as Church Apostles! Let that thought sink in for a moment. At this point in time there was not one word of Paul's fourteen epistles yet penned, yet Silas and Timothy were learning Paul's gospel message from the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself, much the same has Barnabas had been taught Paul's gospel on his previous missionary journey. By the time they arrive at Troas in ACTS 16:8 Silas would have traveled more than 800 miles with Paul, and Timothy would have traveled about 500 miles distance. Obviously their hearts were *...being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge...* as Paul later wrote in COLOSSIANS 2:2 & 3. Paul, Silas, and Timothy were truly having good gospel fellowship during this time. Later in life Paul would write this in a letter to Timothy: *But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,...* 2 TIMOTHY 3:10. Timothy got to fully know Paul's doctrine, Paul's manner of life, Paul's purpose, Paul's faith, Paul's longsuffering, and Paul's patience during this lengthy portion of Paul's second missionary journey when it seemed that nothing was really going on mile after endless mile. It was times like this that also later inspired Paul, and Silas, and Timothy to add their thoughts to the Thessalonians that we read in 2 THESSALONIANS 3:5 -- *And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.* This not only means the patient waiting for Christ's soon coming, but also the patient waiting for Christ's leading in everyday life! Also recall from your own studies that both epistles addressed to the Thessalonians were written from these three: Paul, Silvanus, (Silas) and Timothy, all who were by this time Church Apostles, who were letting their own hearts and lives to be directed *...into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.*

ACTS 16:8 *And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.* Troas was the chief seaport between Paul's Roman Asia, and Macedonia. The scripture isn't real clear on this, but it seems that the Apostle Paul will visit Troas four or five times again in his life. This will be Paul's first visit to Troas, but too short in time for him to establish a church. (About five years later in 2 CORINTHIANS 2:12, written during the time frame of Paul's third missionary journey, we find indications that Paul then preached his gospel message at Troas, where he stayed briefly at that time. 2 CORINTHIANS 2:12 reads: *Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, 13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.* About a year later we find Paul again in Troas in ACTS 20:6-12 where Luke writes of a weeks visit to the disciples at Troas. That is the time when Eutychus fell asleep during Paul's being long in preaching, and fell from the third loft being taken up dead. If the Lord tarries we will study that story when we get to ACTS 20. The last time we read of Troas is in Paul's final epistle of 2 TIMOTHY 4:13 where we learn of him

leaving books and parchments there. We mention all of this now as an introduction to what happens next during this first visit of Paul's to Troas, and we read of this in ACTS 16:9.)

ACTS 16:9 *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.*

This is such an important verse of scripture for several reasons. First, in ACTS 16:9 we find our first mention of the word "Macedonia" in scripture, where it is mentioned twice. Macedonia is always mentioned in scripture in some kind of connection with the Apostle Paul. Macedonia means: "extended land," and it lies just north of Greece, thus it is in eastern Europe. Macedonia is found mentioned twenty-six times in scripture. Twenty-six is the number that has to do with GOOD NEWS, or the GOSPEL. It was the Apostle Paul who first preached the GOOD NEWS of the GOSPEL unto the Macedonians. There are seven cities mentioned in ACTS 16 & 17 associated with Macedonia: (1) Philippi, (2) Thessalonicia, (3) Berea, (4) Amphipolis, (5) Apollonia, (6) Neapolis, and (7) Nicopolis mentioned in TITUS 3:12 & 15.

Secondly we find here in ACTS 16:9, and again in ACTS 16:10, the mention of the first of three visions that Luke records of Paul's. Luke in writing ACTS records visions of Ananias of Damascus in ACTS 9, of Peter in ACTS 10, and of Paul in ACTS 16, ACTS 18, and ACTS 26. Each of these recorded visions changed the course of church history. Ananias of Damascus vision led him to Saul of Tarsus, where his eye sight was restored, and he was filled with the Holy Ghost. Peter's vision of ACTS 10 took him to the house of Cornelius, where Gentiles for the first time were filled with the Holy Ghost. Paul's vision of ACTS 16 led him to Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea where churches were established, and later epistles written unto, which we also greatly benefit from. Paul's heavenly vision recorded in ACTS 18 caused him to remain in Corinth for eighteen months, and later write two more epistles unto, which again we still benefit from. Paul's vision mentioned in ACTS 26:19 is the vision Paul had on the road to Damascus that led him on the path to be the Apostle sent unto the Gentiles, and of course we know he wrote us fourteen epistles that tell us how to achieve God's best, and be the Bride of Christ!

This vision recorded in ACTS 16:9 was for the purpose to ...*Come over into Macedonia, and help us:*... including you and me some two-thousand years later; to help us know Paul's high-calling gospel message. There are seven "help us" statements found in scripture, and the last one is here in ACTS 16:9.

The third point to notice here in ACTS 16:9 revolves around this statement: ...*There stood a man of Macedonia,*... . Have you ever wondered how Paul knew it was a man of Macedonia? Obviously the Lord made this plain to Paul in this vision that this man was from Macedonia. Perhaps the Macedonians dressed a little differently, or had a certain dialect of speech that gave them away as being from Macedonia. Maybe they had certain quirks, or habits that gave them a distinction of being a Macedonian. We are not told here in scripture how Paul recognized in his vision that this man was from Macedonia, but we do know that the Lord made it very obvious to Paul that this man was from Macedonia.

The fourth and final point that we will note in this verse is the specific request that this Macedonia man made: ...*Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* Note that this Macedonian man in Paul vision didn't say "come over and help me" individually, but rather this request was for a collective group of Macedonian spiritually needy people, who all needed to hear the good news gospel message. Again note that there are seven "help us" statements found in scripture, and the last one is here in ACTS 16:9. Seven is the number pointing to SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION, and certainly the Bride of Christ will be in this rank of the New Testament worthies of faith. Brother Hill made this statement: "There is one book in the Old Testament, and one book in the New Testament written to the Bride of Christ. The Old Testament book is THE SONG OF SOLOMON, and the New Testament book is PHILIPPIANS." {End of quoting/paraphrasing Brother Hill.} Realize that we wouldn't even have the book of PHILIPPIANS had not Paul followed this vision of ACTS 16:9 and ...*Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* Yes

indeed ACTS 16:9 is an extremely important verse of scripture, and a turning point on Paul's second missionary journey.

Realize here as we move on in this second missionary journey of Paul's that his initial intention as he began this journey was to *...go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do...* ACTS 15:36, which he has now done. And along the way Paul and Silas have added Timothy as a travel companion, and have now travelled about 800 plus miles on this initial 350 mile journey. Since leaving Phrygia and the region of Galatia in ACTS 16:6 Paul has travelled several months without having founded any new assemblies, and as we pointed out earlier, these last few hundred miles were not wasted miles, and wasted time, for Silas and Timothy got one-on-one teaching of Paul's gospel message from the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself. This missionary journey was Paul's, and his traveling companions have been Silas and Timothy up to this point in time. Even though Luke records of no more churches have been established so far on this missionary journey, two more Church Apostles have now been added. As we leave ACTS 16:9 we find the leading of the Lord, and the power of the Holy Ghost, moving Paul and company into the eastern regions of Europe for the first time, an area called in ACTS 1:8 *...the uttermost part of the earth.*

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.*

Notice again that the vision was Paul's vision given him of the Lord. Paul was no longer without direction on this second missionary journey of his, for he knew from the vision that he was to *...Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* ACTS 16:10 emphasizes the fact that assuredly the Lord had called Paul, and his company to preach the gospel unto them of Macedonia. Note that the response to Paul's vision by Silas, and Timothy was to immediately go into Macedonia. Furthermore we find the writer of ACTS, our brother in the Lord, Luke, for the first time here in ACTS 16:10 uses the words "**we**," and "**us**" since he began documenting church history in chronological order from LUKE 1:1. Thus with little fan fare, and no prior warning, we find that Luke has joined up with Paul, Silas, and Timothy here at Troas! We have previously noted in this lengthy study on Luke, and what he wrote us in scripture, that Luke never had the narrative be about himself. Thus we can not answer the questions we are curious to know the answers to. Questions like how was it that Luke was in Troas at this time? How long had he been here at Troas before Paul and company arrived? Was this preplanned by Paul to have Luke be at Troas at this time? And the list of questions concerning Luke meeting Paul here at Troas goes on, and on. Obviously the Lord in His mysterious ways that He works in our hearts, and lives, preplanned from the eternities past this visit of Luke to Troas that was to coincide with Paul's arrival there. Furthermore Luke was included in this vision Paul had in ACTS 16:9, so Luke has now joined Silas and Timothy on this journey before Paul had this vision.

As we have also noted before in this study, God's plan for Luke on this second missionary journey of Paul's was for Luke to be the one left at Philippi with the knowledge of Paul's gospel for the purpose of further establishing the Philippian Saints in Paul's gospel! Let that fact sink in for a moment. Read verse 10 again until you see it, *...that the Lord had called* ***us*** (Luke included) *for to preach the gospel unto them.* Who of the "**us**" were called *... for to preach the gospel unto them...* ? Paul certainlywas; Silas too, yes Silas also. Timothy, was he one of the "**us**" called *... for to preach the gospel unto them...* of Macedonia? Yes indeed Timothy was one of the four now on this journey with Paul called unto Macedonia to preach Paul's gospel unto them. And our brother Luke was the fourth *...that the Lord had called... ...for to preach the gospel unto them.* Luke wasn't going to Philippi as a tourist. Furthermore it seems from what Luke wrote us here in ACTS, Luke was in Philippi for six years before leaving, and he didn't leave until the time frame of ACTS 20:6! Years later when Paul wrote his epistle unto the PHILIPPIANS, we know that there were no further doctrines to expound, nor no errors to refute in that assembly. In other words they were well instructed, first by the Apostle Paul, and Silas, and then by Timothy, and last of all by Luke himself for several years. Luke remains a mystery man to us except for what he wrote us in his 52 chapters of New Testament scripture. And think about this for a moment, of the 52 chapters Luke writes in

chronological order, what chapter are we now in? ACTS 16 is the 40th chapter Luke was written. Forty is the number of PERFECT TESTING. Certainly Luke was PERFECTLY TESTED as a follower of Christ, and of the Apostle Paul before becoming a part of this convoy now called into Macedonia. Silently almost Luke leaves us an example of himself as to what a New Testament full overcomer looks like; that is one who follows Paul as Paul followed Christ. Luke had literally followed Paul to Philippi, the very same place Paul preached *...of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* PHILIPPIANS 3:14. Furthermore we note that Luke certainly wasn't braggadocious. We could say much more of the qualities we find in the man named Luke, but for now note that Luke was with the Apostle Paul in the remaining verses of ACTS 16, the chapter that explains the founding of the church at Philippi.

Again ACTS 16:10 *And after he had seen the vision, immediately* ***we*** (Luke including himself here) *endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called* ***us*** (Luke included) *for to preach the gospel unto them.* The Greek word translated "endeavoured" here is zeteo {dzay-teh'-o}, number 2212 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, which here simply means they were seeking the quickest way to get over to Macedonia from Troas.

Next here in verse 10 notice the phrase "assuredly gathering." This 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 & 16:10 (proving); 1 CORINTHIANS 2:16 (instruct); EPHESIANS 4:16 (compacted); 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 hungry needy souls. They were certainly convinced that the Lord had called all of them into Macedonia, and they (Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke) "immediately endeavored" to go there as soon, and as quick as possible, *...assuredly gathering that the Lord had called...* them unto this "extended land" called Macedonia!

If the Lord calls truly calls someone, or in this case four someone's, to go into a new place *...for to preach the gospel unto them,...* then isn't it the Lord's responsibility to also provide the means to get them there? And of course the answer is yes. Furthermore as we will now see there is also an urgency involved in response to all these visions the Lord gives.

Back in ACTS 9:10 when the Lord appeared unto Ananias of Damascus in a vision, how long was Ananias to wait before he went to Saul of Tarsus? One day? Two days? Three days? Or did he go immediately? Study again ACTS 9:10-17 and realize as soon as the Lord was finished giving Ananias of Damascus the vision that Ananias went and found Saul of Tarsus where he was told he would be in the vision. And Ananias of Damascus did as he was told in the vision, and laid hands on Saul of Tarsus so that Saul would again receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost!

Recall also in ACTS 10:10-16 when Peter had his vision of the great sheet let down to earth from heaven, and was told three times in this vision to "kill and eat," that immediately afterwards three Gentile men sent from Cornelius' house came to where Peter was staying looking for Peter. The Holy Spirit told Peter to go with them *...nothing doubting, for I have sent them...* ACTS 10:20. Peter then went with them, and when he came to the house of Cornelius and briefly preached a sermon unto the Gentiles in Cornelius' house, *...the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word,...* ...and they spake *...with tongues and magnified God...* ACTS 10:44-46. Peter had never before preached unto the Gentiles, nor did he preach to the Gentiles after this, but the point of reviewing this here is to note that if the Lord goes to the trouble to give one a vision on what he must do, then the Lord will provide the means by which to do it! I hope that make sense.

Here in ACTS 16:9 Paul was given a vision to *...Come over into Macedonia, and help us,...* and in ACTS 16:10 after telling his vision to Silas, Timothy, and Luke *...immediately* ***we*** *endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.* Note that it was immediately that Paul and company sought a way to go into Macedonia, which was about 150 miles to the west by way of the Aegean Sea. Furthermore the Lord

had already arranged there at Troas to be a ship already loaded, and ready to go into Macedonia. This journey would normally take a week or longer to accomplish, since the prevailing winds commonly would be from west to east, and they were traveling east to west, against the wind in other words. Now carefully note what is said in the next sentence Luke writes here in ACTS 16.

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.* 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 wind that had expedited their journey. The next day with this strong wind still pushing them, they came to Neapolis. Neapolis, means: "new city." Neapolis had a good sea port. Neapolis was ten miles from Philippi.

In one verse, (ACTS 16:11) Paul and company travel a distance of approximately 150 miles in two days! Again 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 over thirty miles away! With God nothing is impossible.

In two days Paul and company have travelled from Troas to Philippi, ...*which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia,*... and the place where Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke will remain for the remainder of ACTS 16. 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." Keep in mind as we study this, that the church at Philippi had not yet been established. ACTS 16 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 master builder 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.*

We will see here in ACTS 16 how the Apostle Paul laid the foundation of a church here at Philippi building upon the chief corner stone Jesus Christ. 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 his Roman prison an epistle to the PHILIPPIANS, known to us as the joy book of the Bible. The epistle to the 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, 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. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

Philippi was one of the chief cities of Macedonia, and is noted in ACTS 16:12 to be a colony. This means Philippi was a Roman colony, designed to be a miniature resemblance of Rome. The law and politics of Rome were also in effect here at Philippi, which Paul learned and experienced first hand by the end of ACTS 16. Paul and Silas both were abused in Philippi contrary to Roman law. The fact that Philippi was a Roman colony further means it afforded Roman citizens certain privileges, which will become a factor for the Apostle Paul later in this chapter. Some of the privileges of Roman citizens were: the exemption from scourging, and except in extreme cases, the freedom from arrest, and the right of appeal from the magistrate to the Emperor. Eventually in life the Apostle Paul would use all of these privileges, for Paul was a Roman citizen himself as is note in ACTS 16:37 & 38, and ACTS 22:25-29. We find Paul and company in Philippi the rest of the time frame of ACTS 16. So think of it like this: Paul and Silas traveled about one thousand miles in ACTS 16:1-12, and zero miles in the rest of the chapter!

As we noted above the trip from Troas to Philippi was expedited by God, and the last part of ACTS 16:12 reads: *...and we were in that city abiding certain days*. The word "abiding" means to spend, or to pass time. Why did God have them rush from Troas to Philippi in two days just to pass time? This doesn't make any sense does it? ISAIAH 55:8 & 9 perhaps best answers our question by noting: *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts*. One thing we should note is that while waiting here at Philippi for the further leading of the Lord, Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke were also getting acquainted with the city of Philippi, and the manner, and habits of the Macedonian people. Remember that they were now in a foreign country; in unfamiliar territory and perhaps dealing a little with unfamiliar customs, and habits. So we observe that while Paul, and company *...were in that city abiding certain days...* they also were learning valuable lessons on **patience**. No other author of scripture writes as much about **patience** as does the Apostle Paul. And he couldn't have written what he did about **patience** without first experiencing Godly **patience** himself. Listen again to the 2026 camp study on godliness, where we also read in 1 TIMOTHY 6:11 *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, **patience**, meekness*. Note here that **patience** is listed among six qualities of godliness found in the full overcomer.

Here is some of what Paul wrote on the subject of **patience**. ROMANS 5:1 *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh **patience**; 4 And **patience**, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us*. Note here how Paul explains that trials and tribulation worketh **patience**. ROMANS 8:25 *But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with **patience** wait for it*. 2 THESSALONIANS 3:5 *And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the **patient** waiting for Christ*. And this also means **patiently** waiting for the working of the Lord Jesus Christ in all aspects of our life! HEBREWS 12:1 *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with **patience** the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*. We spent a lot of time studying this eighty-word sentence in previous Sunday School lessons. What we learn from these few scriptures is that **patience** is something that is necessary in the life of a full overcomer. We find this thought further amplified in what Jesus states to the full overcomers found in the church of Philadelphia in REVELATION 3:10 *Because thou hast kept the word of my **patience**, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth*. Of course we know that Jesus was the ultimate full overcomer having waited **patiently** thirty years here on earth for the time that He was to begin His ministry. During those thirty years of **patiently** waiting for the time that He was to begin His ministry, how many needy souls did He

observe; how many sick did He see; how many blind; how many deaf? Yet He **patiently** waited until the time ordained before the foundation of the earth was laid for His ministry to begin, and then He, being full of the Holy Ghost, began His ministry, dealt with the needy souls, healed the sick, restored hearing to the deaf, seeing to the blind, taught with authority, and for three plus years fulfilled His ministry, which ended as He **patiently** *...endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God...* HEBREWS 12:2. We said all of this about **patience** to note here in ACTS 16:12 that these days of abiding in Philippi were working there eternal purpose in God's plan for the life of the Apostle Paul, and his traveling companions. Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke all had equal opportunity here to become full overcomers, and all full overcomers will possess this quality called **patience**.

The Old Testament worthies of faith, the examples that went before us, all possessed this same quality called **patience**. How **patient** was Noah in building the ark? Scripture indicates that it took him a hundred and twenty years to build the ark. {Study again GENESIS 6:3 to see this.} Yes, Noah was a **patient** man. How about Abraham, how **patient** was he? The Lord had told him that he would multiply him exceedingly in GENESIS 17:2, and that he would be a father of many nations in GENESIS 17:4, and that Sarah would be a mother of nations in GENESIS 17:16, yet Abraham was a hundred years old, and Sarah ninety when the promised son Isaac was born, through whose seed these promises came! Yes, Abraham was a **patient** man. Old Testament worthy of faith David wrote in PSALMS 27:14 *Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.* We could say much more about the **patience** of the Old Testament overcomers listed in HEBREWS 11, and how they all possessed this same quality called **patience**. The same will be true of The New Testament overcomers, who will be the Bride of Christ.

In ACTS 16:12 we find Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke **patiently** waiting on the Lord after their arrival at Philippi, *...abiding certain days,...* and also recall from verse 10 that they already had assuredly gathered that the Lord had called them *...for to preach the gospel unto them.* They were now **patiently** *...abiding certain days...* waiting for the Lord to show them where, when, and to whom they were *...to preach the gospel unto.* They get their answer in ACTS 16:13.

ACTS 16:13 *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.*

When we studied the life of the Apostle Paul we found that his manner upon reaching a new unfamiliar city was to attend a Sabbath's day service at a synagogue, that is if there was a synagogue in that city. In ACTS 13:14 in Antioch, Pisidia Paul and Barnabas on their first Sabbath day there went unto the synagogue, and so it was the pattern everywhere Paul went because, according to Jewish tradition, the Sabbath day was a day of worship. There are several scriptures in the book of ACTS that verify this behavior of Paul's of attending Sabbath day services in synagogues. ACTS 17:1 & 2 notes: *Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,...* . ACTS 18:4 notes: *And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.* In ACTS 18:19 we read of this same thing happenings at Ephesus: *And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.* However here in Philippi Paul has come to a region where there is no synagogue.

Remember that they had been now abiding several days here at Philippi, and had the time to explore the city long enough to learn that there was not a synagogue here. Apparently they had not found many, if any, Jews here in Philippi either. So let's ask the question, who meets on the Sabbath day to worship? In Paul's world it would be the Jews of course, but where did the Jews meet if there was no synagogue? More importantly, where did the Lord lead Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke to go worship on the Sabbath day, the day when the Jews meet to worship? And as we answer this question consider this, that our brethren Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke have already discovered that at this point in time the boundaries of Philippi hold no room for Jesus. Paul and company have to go outside the gate, outside the camp of Philippi, so to speak, in order to find the place where close

fellowship with Jesus was to be found. ACTS 16:13 *And on the sabbath we went out of the city... .* In THE SONG OF SOLOMON chapter 3 and verse 4 we read: *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth:...* meaning the bride found her love outside the city limits, beyond the bounds of popularity, beyond the things of the world, and that is where she found close fellowship with her bridegroom. Abraham's servant sought out a bride for Isaac beyond the land of Canaan in GENESIS 24, and the Holy Ghost today is still searching among believers for those who have an ear for His Voice, and those who will seek Him even without the camp. We read in HEBREWS 13:12 & 13 -- *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify* {to separate from profane things and dedicate to God} *the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. 13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.*

My Mother wrote a short commentary on this portion of scripture, which reads: "The important thing here then is not just going without the camp, but why? We are to go forth unto Him bearing His reproach. To walk with Him no matter what. To separate yourself from anything or anyone who would hinder your fellowship and relationship with the Lord. To learn the lessons which Paul has instructed us, and to follow him as he followed Christ. There are things which are not necessarily sinful or wrong which we might do, but would take your time and attention away from the Lord. Things which would hinder your full communion with Him, and would keep you from being a full overcomer. To go without the camp unto Him then is putting Him first in every way, fully surrendered, learning His word, walking in the light of it, and making yourself available to do His will. Following His leading alone, not what someone says, but what the Word says, and more than this, what the Word says to you alone -- you are a unique individual with unique problems, trials and test designed by a loving Father just for you with a set of guide lines designed to help you to be an overcomer and win Christ the prize as bridegroom. Millions of people have been saved, but few have gone without the camp unto Him so they could be prepared for that special place." {End of quote from Phyllis Robinson.} And may I add that this was her personal testimony, for she truly lived her life in accordance with what she here wrote.

ACTS 16:13 *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.* We find in ACTS 16:13 that this was one of the places where the church of Philippi was founded, by a riverside. The word "wont" points to a custom, and here in Philippi the custom of where prayer took place references a "proseucha" meaning to pray; thus here a Philippi the place of prayer, or the place used for worship was called a "proseucha" when there was no synagogue. It probably was an amphitheater type affair, with seats, like in an uncovered building, where there seemed to be a gathering place of prayer, and worship on a Sabbath day at Philippi.

There are well over five-hundred verses in the Bible that address the subject of prayer. Prayer is such an important part in the lives of all full overcomers. This is why the Holy Ghost is so important in the life of a believer, for ROMANS 8:26 tells us: *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* Furthermore the Apostle Paul encourages us to *...Pray without ceasing...* in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17. ROMANS 12:12 tells us in part: *...continuing instant in prayer.* PHILIPPIANS 4:6 reads: *Be careful* (anxious) *for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* COLOSSIANS 4:2 *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;... .* JAMES 5:16-18 reads: *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.* And 1 PETER 3:12 in part tells us: *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers:... .*

Having now located the place at Philippi *...where prayer was wont to be made;...* Luke next writes in ACTS 16:13 *...and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.* The phrase "sat down" is found forty times in scripture. Forty is the number of PERFECT TESTING.

Sitting down often times requires perfect testing patience. In ACTS 13:14 Paul and Barnabas went unto the synagogue in Antioch, Pisidia for the first time and "sat down." There they waited for the Holy Ghost to open unto them the door of opportunity to once again stand up, and speak the words of truth for Jesus. In this case they didn't have to wait very long. All Bridal Saints must first learn to "sit down." Ruth could not become the bride of Boaz (a type of Christ) before until she learned to "sit still." We read Naomi's words to Ruth in RUTH 3:18 -- ...***Sit still***, *my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.* Rebekah couldn't become bride to Isaac until she learned how to sit down and patiently ride the camel for several weeks. In the SONG OF SOLOMON 2:3 we read: ...*I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

ACTS 16:13 ...*and* ***we*** *sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.* "Resorted thither" means that there was an assembly of women who came to the river side on the Sabbath for the purpose of worship in the form of a prayer meeting: ...*by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made.* Note it was the women who at the first had a heart for the Lord at Philippi. God made women to think with their heart, and men to think with their head, so it is not a strange thing to first find that it was the women who had a heart for the Lord at Philippi. All full overcomers will have a heart in tune with their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. All full overcomers will be well versed in prayer and worship also, just like these women of Philippi. Notice next however how quickly the focus of what the Holy Ghost inspired Luke to write turns to what was found in the heart of one of these ...*women which resorted thither.*

ACTS 16:14 *And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.*

In scripture we find the phrase "**a certain woman**" eight times! Recall that the number eight has five meanings, one of which is BRIDE. Five is the number of GRACE, so we must also see here that the Bride of Christ will also be a GRACE Saint, one just like Jesus, who is full of GRACE and truth. JOHN 1:17 tells us that ...***grace*** *and* ***truth*** *came by Jesus.* As we examine these two verses of ACTS 16:14 & 15 recall what Jesus said in JOHN 4:23 & 24, and see how they apply here at Philippi. JOHN 4:23 *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in* ***truth****: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in* ***truth****.* Here in ACTS 16:14 & 15 Luke points out "**a certain woman**" ...*which worshipped God,...* and as we will see as we continue to study these verses, she ...*worshipped God... ...in spirit and in* ***truth****.* Her name was Lydia.

ACTS 16:14 & 15 focuses upon Lydia, the first one from Paul's vision who ...*prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* Help has arrived. Her prayer is answered. Lydia shows qualities that all full overcomers must have. We find in Lydia qualities also found in the virtuous woman of PROVERBS 31. First of all note that she already was a believer, for she ...*worshipped God...* . She was one of the regulars at Philippi who ...*resorted thither...,* that is came down to the river on the Sabbath for the purpose to worship God.

Secondly, Lydia is noted to have open ears to hear the truth, for Luke informs the reader that she ...*heard* ***us****...* . What exactly did Lydia hear? We read in ACTS 16:13 ...*and* ***we*** *sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.* So Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke were all there, but who was the chief speaker here? ACTS 14:12 informs us that Paul was the "chief speaker" when he was at Lystra, and as you study closely ACTS 16:14 we find Paul was still the chief speaker still, for Lydia closely ...*attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.* What Lydia heard for the first time was Paul's gospel message passionately proclaimed with the power of the Holy Ghost from the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself!

Thirdly, we find that ...*the Lord opened...* her heart to receive the truth she was hearing. Ponder these words of ACTS 16:14 ...*whose heart the Lord opened...* . The race course runners, who

go on to have God's best, will do so because they are among those ...*whose heart the Lord opened...* . Be thankful if you too are one ...*whose heart* (the fountain of your soul) *the Lord opened*! Remember the two Emmaus disciples that Jesus appeared to on the day of His resurrection in LUKE 24? They had quite a lengthy, and most wonderful discussion with Jesus that day as they walked back to Emmaus. At evening during a meal Jesus then revealed Himself unto them, and vanished out of their sight. LUKE 24:32 records their words: *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?* Jesus had opened unto them the scriptures, expounding the things in scripture concerning Himself. Lydia here in ACTS 16:14 had the same kind of heart, ...*whose heart the Lord opened...* . Since the event of LUKE 24:32 the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has sent us the Holy Ghost, who job it is to guide us into all truth, and show us the important things of the Lord, this according to JOHN 16:12-15. Additionally when Jesus appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, our Apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus, Jesus told him that He would make him a minister, and a witness of the things the Lord Himself would reveal unto him, and send him forth as an Apostle unto the Gentiles ...*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...* ACTS 26:18. This all happened as the Lord said it would, and the Apostle Paul remains the Apostle of the Gentiles as is recorded in ROMANS 11:13. When Paul and company went down to the riverside in ACTS 16:13 & 14, and found Lydia, there hadn't yet been written one word of Paul's epistles, so the only way she was going to learn Paul's gospel message was by hearing Paul expound his gospel message by word of mouth, which she did, and ...*whose heart* (the fountain of her soul) *the Lord opened...* to receive this gospel message. Today we have one hundred chapters of Paul's gospel message written down in the Word of God left for us to study and know. Really it is more than that, it ...*is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory...* 1 TIMOTHY 3:16. That was our subject of study in this years (2026) church camp. So the question we each must answer for ourselves is has the Lord opened my heart, the fountain of my soul, to receive the fulness found in Paul's gospel message like Lydia did? One doesn't learn Paul's gospel message in one day, but there is a day in the heart of all full overcomers when ...*the Lord opened...* their heart, your heart, to begin to receive the deeper truths found in Paul's gospel!

Fourth, and just as important, it is specifically noted ...*that* ***she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.*** She didn't fall asleep as Paul spoke. Any full overcomer from this Church Age will only be a full overcomer because they **attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul**. Two portions of scripture from ROMANS that were written by Paul emphasize this very point. ROMANS 2:16 tells us: *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.* We see here that Paul's gospel is the message that ...*God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ...* by, so it must be important. Secondly we read this in ROMANS 16:25 *Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: 27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.* Sister Bodie in her ROMANS study book summarizes this by writing: "...the revelation of the heavenly glory was given to Paul. It is the wheel within the wheel, the deeper depths, the higher heights of the glorious, matchless marvel of God's unfathomable love in Jesus Christ. That revelation "the far more and exceeding and eternal weight of glory" that God had purposed for His people that are called out in this age." {End of quoting Sister Bodie, who here also reference 2 CORINTHIANS 4:17.}

In these two portions of ROMANS one of the encouragements here is to be established in Paul's gospel. We read in HEBREWS 13:9 this statement: "...*For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace...* ." The grace of God is fully expounded in Paul's gospel. Think about this for a moment, on the road to Damascus who arrested Saul of Tarsus? It was our lovely Lord and

Saviour Jesus Christ shinning brighter than the noonday sun, who being full of GRACE and TRUTH, arrested Saul, stopped him in his tracks, and spoke to him these gracious words: *...I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 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; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 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...* ACTS 26:15-18. With these words Saul of Tarsus was given his life sentence, and appointed to be the Apostle unto the Gentiles. Of course this calling wasn't accomplished all at once, but took the revelation of Jesus Christ explained in GALATIANS 1 to work the good pleasure of His will into the heart and life of our beloved Apostle Paul, the former Saul of Tarsus! That is why years later the Apostle Paul could write in HEBREWS 13:9 this statement: "*...For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace...* ."

Back here in ACTS 16:14 again we read this of Lydia of Thyatira, *...that **she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.*** The word "**attended**" here in ACTS 16:14 means to be attentive, or pay close attention to. The thought here is that Lydia was apprehending, and drinking in every word spoken by the Apostle Paul, having her whole mind engrossed with what he was saying, and teaching, words of GRACE and TRUTH spoken in love. We find here then that Lydia was showing herself to be a woman of faith, for ROMANS 10:17 informs us: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Fifth, we find in verse 15 that Lydia, and her household received, and believed Paul's doctrine on water baptism, which subject we have discussed several times already in this study. So briefly, again remember that after the resurrection of Jesus water baptism to a Jew was an outward expression of an inward belief that they had accepted Jesus as their own personal Saviour, His forgiveness of their sins, and that they had died unto the law of Moses and were to be counted among those who believed in the resurrected Jesus Christ. Brother Copley noted that a fellow Jew will not believe that a Jew is saved if they are not willing to be baptized in water, thus when a Jew is baptized in water the unbelieving Jews denounce the baptized Jew from Judaism, and even from their family. They are referred to by other Jews as "the blotted out," having denounced Judaism and accepted the message of the Saviour. Recall in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:22 that Paul writes: *For the Jews require a sign,.. .* Water baptism was a definite sign unto the Jews that one had accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. We are not told if Lydia was a Jew or not, but if not, why did she come down by the river to worship on the Sabbath? Thus we find in ACTS 16:14 & 15 that Lydia had open ears to hear, and receive with her open heart, the things of Paul's doctrine that were spoken by Paul, qualities that all full overcomers must have.

We have just mentioned five qualities found in Lydia; qualities that all grace Saints possess. (1) she worshipped God; (2) she listened to the Word of God; (3) her heart was opened to receive the Word of God; (4) she paid close attention to the things spoken by Paul; and (5) she believed Paul's gospel message, and acted upon it.

ACTS 16:14 explains that Lydia was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira. The city of Thyatira's history records that there was a corporate guild of dyers in Thyatira during the time of the Roman Empire. One historical account mentions that the waters of Thyatira were so suited for dying that nowhere else was the scarlet of fezzes (purple) thought to be so brilliant, and permanent as that made in Thyatira. Lydia made a good living selling the purple of Thyatira.

One of the qualities of a full overcomer that is pictured by Lydia concerns her being a seller of purple, so let's see how this is. Purple in scripture pictures royalty. We find the word purple 48 times in scripture. The Bride of Christ will be a part of the royalty in heaven, part of the aristocracy of heaven that Brother Hill so often mentioned. The Apostle John notes this of Jesus in REVELATION 1. REVELATION 1:5 *...Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to*

him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. This then is your aristocracy of heaven; heaven's royalty.

ACTS 16:15 *And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought* ***us****, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained* ***us****.* The word "besought" here is the same Greek word translated "prayed" in ACTS 16:9 *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* "Besought" here means to urge, or to earnestly appeal. In other words Lydia was not going to take "no" for an answer, and she earnestly entreated saying, ...*If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained* ***us****.* The Greek word translated "constrained" is only found twice in New Testament scripture, and it simply means: she insisted. Lydia was a good sales person, a seller of the royal color purple, and here she insisted that this royal party of traveling Saints stay in her spacious house while at Philippi. LUKE 24:29 is the other place we find this word "constrained," and in this scripture we find the two men traveling on the road to Emmaus listening to the risen Saviour speak the scriptures unto them. As evening was coming on they "constrained" Jesus to tarry with them for the night. As they begin to eat dinner, Jesus revealed Himself unto them, and then vanished out of their sight. This is when they said one to the other as we noted above: *Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*...LUKE 24:32. Lydia's heart felt the same way after hearing the words of the Apostle Paul, for his gospel had pricked her heart, causing her heart to also compassionately burn within for more of the gospel of Jesus to be spoken of, and for more of the scriptures to be opened unto her. Since she couldn't seem to get enough of this good gospel message, and was not willing to let the day end with a simple good-bye, ...*she besought* ***us****, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained* ***us****.*

This is called hospitality. This kind of behavior also spoke volumes to the heart of the Apostle Paul. In ROMANS 12 the Apostle Paul wrote the following, and especially note the 13th verse. ROMANS 12:9 *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; 13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.* Years later the Apostle Paul would write to Timothy about the office of a bishop, and he noted the qualifications of a bishop. Lydia displayed many of these same qualifications, and here in ACTS 16 Timothy enjoyed her hospitality also, so he knew what Paul was saying when he wrote: 1 TIMOTHY 3:1 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to 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 5:9 *Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, 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.* The hospitality shown by Lydia in ACTS 16:15 was one of the good works Paul referenced in the above scriptures that was wellpleasing in the Lord's sight!

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 also allowed to abide in your house? If so it is because Paul's gospel has shined in your hearts, and has taken root there like the tree discussed in JEREMIAH 17:8. JEREMIAH 17:8 *For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.* The tree of JEREMIAH 17:8 pictures all those race course runners who become full overcomers because they have taken root, deep roots, ever spreading out their roots in an ever forward progression of deeper and deeper growth in Christ Jesus, feeding daily upon the Word of God, the river of living water, thus growing in grace and knowledge of their first love, the Lord Jesus Christ. Her leaf is green because it has taken in light. Jesus said in JOHN 8:12 *...I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* Again in JOHN 9:5 Jesus states: *As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.* If the leaf in the natural doesn't see light, then it isn't going to be green very long. Cover the green leaf, and it doesn't take long before it turns yellow, and looks anemic. The full overcomer takes in as much available light as they can; the anemic Christian does not. The full overcomer has an upward gaze, and like this tree of JEREMIAH 17:8 her branches reach out and up, and her leaves takes in all the light they can, and reach out for more. Paul wrote in 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6 *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* This treasure we have in our earthen vessel is Christ that **liveth in me**. GALATIANS 2:20 tells us: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ* ***liveth in me****: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* When Lydia said in ACTS 16:15 *...come into my house, and abide there...* she was really requesting to learn more of the Word of God, the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, as Paul's gospel also teaches; that the doctrines of Paul would reign in her heart. {Study ACTS 20:32.} Lydia wanted the doctrines of Paul to become a part of her household. Have the doctrines of the Apostle Paul become a part of your household? Paul's gospel has found a home in the heart 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 here at Philippi. We have already noted 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.* So what we have found in ACTS 16:13-15 is the initial establishment of the church at Philippi. This was just the beginning here at Philippi.

Our focus in this study is on what Luke wrote us in scripture in his chronological documentation of the events before the birth of John the Baptist in LUKE 1 until the time when the Apostle Paul had been held prisoner in Rome for two years in ACTS 28. Fifty-two chapters of New Testament scripture packed with actual historic events, some not recorded elsewhere in scripture. To help us put all of this in perspective consider this, at the point in time of our study here in ACTS 16, which covers events that happened in 51 & 52 A.D., Luke has not yet written one word that he left us

in scripture! His chronological documentation of the events recorded in LUKE and ACTS has not yet happened at this time when Luke has joined the Apostle Paul on this so-called second missionary journey of Paul's. Neither has the Apostle Paul in this time frame of 51 & 52 A.D. written any letters, or epistles that we now have in the New Testament. And I can explain why it is that 16 books of New Testament scripture have not yet been written by these two authors. The reason is explained in 2 TIMOTHY 3:16, which starts out... *All scripture is given by inspiration of God,...* . The agency of the trinity that gives the inspiration is the Holy Ghost, so we can safely say that the Holy Ghost has not yet in 52 A.D. inspired either Luke or Paul to write what we now have as scripture from these two brothers in the Lord. Obviously by 52 A.D. both Paul, and Luke have followed the leading of the Holy Spirit to be where they are, together at Philippi on this part of Paul's second missionary journey. Both men have been reunited by the guidance of the Holy Ghost to be a part of the establishing of the church at Philippi, a first class assembly that will soon learn about the high calling of God in Christ Jesus! It remains a mystery to us how it was that Luke was led to Troas to hook up with the Apostle Paul, Silas, and Timothy just prior to sailing over to Philippi. Obviously the Lord wanted all of them to be a part of the founding of this church at Philippi, and only the Lord could make this happen. These men were moved by the power of the Holy Ghost, and had yielded their lives to His moving them. More importantly we should note that the Lord wasn't yet finished working in in them both, Luke and Paul, to will and to do of His good pleasure. Where is that thought found? PHILIPPIANS 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* For us, it is *...your Father's good pleasure...* to move in you *...both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* Furthermore it is *...your Father's good pleasure to give you...* the kind of manifold tests, and trials so that if we suffer with Him, we may reign with Him as a joint-heir wife, according to ROMANS 8:17 & 18, and 2 TIMOTHY 2:12! *It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom...* ...LUKE 12:32. These words were not yet written in 52 A.D., but were being worked into the hearts, and lives of these beloved brethren! Luke has only recently joined the Apostle Paul on this second missionary journey, so what he records in ACTS 16 from verse 10 on, Luke has personally witnessed here at Philippi. Ponder that for a while, and appreciate how vivid this experience was. In a way it seems that later on in his life when the Holy Ghost inspired Luke to write his two New Testament documents that we know as The Gospel According to LUKE, and THE ACTS, that Luke must have felt an obligation to write it down; to share what he had witnessed as well as what he had first hand learned from the mouth of the different eyewitnesses he spoke of in LUKE 1:1-4. Eyewitnesses like Mary the mother of Jesus, and the Apostle Peter as a couple of prominient examples. One key eyewitness that aided Luke in his writing ACTS was the Apostle Paul himself, who had a Christian life-time of testimonies to share with his good friend Luke. And the Lord saw to it in future days that Luke and Paul had much time to spend with each other. Recall that Luke was with Paul until the end of his life as we are told in 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 (*Only Luke is with me*)! And Luke added his own experiences in these stories he wrote in scripture starting here in ACTS 16:10. In other words Luke verified here in what we are currently studying in ACTS 16, that he witnessed these things happening. He knew Lydia. Luke also experienced this "certain damsel" that we will read about in ACTS 16:16. Luke himself was one of these eye witnesses he wrote about! Thank God for the inspiration of God found in all scripture. 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

Every once in a while we come across unique words, or phrases that only Luke wrote, and have pointed these out as we move through this study. In ACTS 16:16 we find the phrase "**it came to pass**." Luke writes this phrase fifty-four times in both LUKE and ACTS. Forty times in LUKE, fourteen in ACTS. This phrase is not unique to Luke, but rather seems to be used by him as kind of a time stamp between other important events. So when we read next in ACTS 16:16 *And **it came to pass**, as we went to prayer,...* Luke is moving the narrative from one event to the next, without giving us an exact time frame. When Luke writes *...And **it came to pass**, as we went to prayer,...* he is making the reader aware that they went to prayer frequently, perhaps daily, and even more than once

daily. We are to see here that this was a pattern that was followed by the Apostle Paul, and company here at Philippi, and perhaps everywhere he spent an extended period of time. Here is a good memory verse that the Apostle Paul later wrote us: 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17 *Pray without ceasing.* Paul didn't do anything without praying about it first. This pattern was also followed by Silas, by Timothy, and by our brother in the Lord, Luke, who all were taught this principle by the Apostle Paul, who learned this from following the Lord. This is the warrior's resource that the Apostle Paul would later write about in EPHESIANS 6. 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.* As you study ACTS 16 you will notice that we are not told how long Paul stayed at Philippi. It seems that Paul and company were there several days already, maybe even several weeks when the following took place.

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.*

Again in this study we are highlighting what Luke wrote us in scripture. Here in ACTS 16 our brother Luke is documenting some events that he was directly involved with, and eyewitness to as he tells of the ministry of the Apostle Paul in the early days at Philippi. It seems each chapter of ACTS has several stories encapsulated in it. Verses 16-18 here in ACTS 16 is our introduction as to what happened next on this second missionary journey of Paul's. What we find introduced here is some more opposition from Satan directed at our beloved Apostle Paul, and his traveling companions of Silas, Timothy, and Luke.

Recall for a moment what the Lord told Ananias of Damascus in a vision in ACTS 9:16, how that the Lord Himself would show Paul *...how many things he must suffer for my name's sake.* We mention this to point out that the Apostle Paul already knew he would face opposition everywhere he went preaching the gospel of Christ. And recall also on his first missionary journey in ACTS 13 that very first thing Luke records happening to Paul on that trip was opposition from Satan in the form of one Elymas the sorcerer, a false prophet, who attempted to turn the governor of the island of Cyprus away from the faith of God, which Paul preached. The Apostle Paul, full of the Holy Ghost, declared unto Elymas in ACTS 13:10 & 11 -- *...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 event, that opposition from Satan, set the tone of the kind of things that would happen nearly in every city Paul visited. Philippi was no exception.

Let's take a closer look at these scriptures in ACTS 16. 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**:...* . Verse 16 has three words in it that need explanation: "**possessed**," "**divination**," and "**soothsaying**." "**Possessed**" here simply means she had, or was **possessed** of a demon, and acted under the control of a demon. "**Divination**" covers a broad spectrum of foretelling future events apart from God. "**Soothsaying**" is defined at 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 a palm reading, or reading tealeaves. 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. Perhaps they too were **possessed** by demons, but the scripture doesn't specifically address this. Their motive was money. 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.*

Next observe in verse 16 that this ...*damsel **possessed** with a spirit of **divination** **met us***... . The Greek word translated here "**met us**" indicates a hostile encounter, thus the words this **possessed** slave girl spoke in verse 17 were not spoken in love to say the least, and probably spoken in a mocking, vindictive way: ...*These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.* This encounter didn't happen just once for we read in verse 18: *And this did she many days*. As this continued for many days we must realize that the actions of this damsel attracted a lot of extra attention to herself, and in turn to the Apostle Paul, and those with him. Furthermore we must also realize that the Apostle Paul also attracted a larger crowd every time he, and those with him assembled down by the riverside for prayer, and the preaching of the gospel. The church at Philippi was being established, and growing little by little every day. Obviously Satan didn't like this, and sent his maidservant ...***possessed** with a spirit of **divination***... in an attempt to hinder the spreading of Paul's gospel. Many commentators of scripture spend paragraphs trying to explain what this "spirit of **divination**" was. Always remember, and have etched in your mind what the Apostle John wrote us in 1 JOHN 4:4 ...*greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* Also constantly be aware that as racecourse runners we are encouraged to be constantly "*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith,...*" as HEBREWS 12:2 instructs us; thus we are not to be hindered by the obstacles He placed on our racecourse. We are to expect obstacles, tests, and trials as you run this race to win Christ as Bridegroom. The Bride of Christ will be a victorious, well tested full overcomer. Again 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5 tells us: *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.*

After many days the actions of this damsel became more and more annoying to the Apostle Paul. Paul being full of the Holy Ghost, and having himself been given the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit he wrote about in 1 CORINTHIANS 12:7-11, he obviously 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***. Paul, no doubt, had also observed that this damsel brought her masters much financial gain by soothsaying. ACTS 16:18 continues: *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.* Note two things here. First, Paul did not speak to the damsel, but rather spoke to the spirit of **divination** that **possessed** her. Secondly observe here that the Apostle 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 Christ to come out of her. 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. And he came out the same hour.*

Jesus too had similar experiences when He was on earth, confronting those possessed with unclean spirits who spoke true statements concerning Jesus. One example that Luke records is found in LUKE 4. 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 <u>his word was with **power**</u>.* (The Greek word used here for "**power**" is exousia {ex-oo-see'-ah}, number 1849 in The Strong's Greek Concordance. which is the same word translated "**authority**" in verse 36, which we will read in a

minute. The Amplified Bible says it like this: "*...His word was with **authority** and ability and weight and **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*** (exousia {ex-oo-see'-ah}, number 1849 in The Strong's Greek Concordance) *and **power*** (dunamis {doo'-nam-is}, number 1411 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, the same dynamite power of the Holy Ghost mentioned in ACTS 1:8) *he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.* (Note here that Jesus word was with **power** as also noted in verse 32, and with **authority** as noted here in verse 36. Take the time to look up the word "**authority**" in the King James version of the Bible, and you will see for yourself that the word "**authority**" is found thirty-seven times, the number associated with THE WORD OF GOD, who is Jesus according to REVELATION 19:13!) *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.*

Our second example of what Luke wrote concerning Jesus confronting those possessed with unclean spirits, who spoke true statements concerning Him, is found in LUKE 8.

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.* (This was the demon's speaking.) *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.* (The devils knew Jesus had **authority** over them. They knew He is THE WORD OF GOD!) *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:* (Note three things here: (1) the man was now clothed, which speaks of the righteousness of Christ; (2) the man was now in his right mind, meaning he had now been given the mind of Christ; and (3) the man was now sitting at the feet of Jesus, showing he was learning more of the revelation of Jesus Christ!) *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. 38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.* Note the end result recorded here in scripture of this man delivered of the legion of devils was that he became a great testimony, and a witness of *...how great things Jesus had done unto him,* and went about spreading the good news *...throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.*

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.* Verse 18 is one of the more important verses in this chapter as it defines the turning point here at Philippi, highlighting the very moment when things really changed here at Philippi. We tend to view things from the natural point of view, that is what we can see with our natural eyes. But from the spiritual perspective what we find here is spiritual boundaries being defined. We just pointed out that the Lord Jesus Christ is the ultimate **Authority**, and in the name of Jesus Christ this spirit of divination was delivered out of this damsel. She was free from this demonic power! Stated another way, the boundaries that had confined this slave girl had been removed in the name of the ultimate **Authority**, Jesus Christ. As we move on in this chapter we will find more barriers, more boundaries removed. Those citizens of Philippi thought that they were under the authority and power of Caesar, and in ACTS 16 they were are introduced to a greater **Authority**, that being our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose power is Supreme. They were just beginning to see His power manifest before their very eyes in verse 18. They didn't like it. The whole city would feel His mighty power at midnight in the form of an earthquake, but we are getting ahead of the narrative Luke wrote us here. For now realize that the Apostle Paul, and his traveling companions operated under the power of the Holy Ghost, and the ultimate **Authority** of Jesus Christ, and were not bound by boundaries, and barriers set by Caesar, or Roman law. This does not mean that they didn't follow Roman law, because they did. Luke will point out later in ACTS 22 and 23 that Paul himself was a Roman citizen, and as such he was afforded certain privileges that non-Roman citizens were not. Conyebare and Howson also point out in their book on the Life and Epistles of St. Paul that there was not a Roman law preventing exorcism. They also point out that Roman law was opposed to the introduction of foreign religions, but the Jews were exempted from this part of Roman law because of their belief in only one God, thus Jewish Synagogue worship was not to be interfered with by the Romans. So we find that our beloved Apostle Paul operated within the limits of Roman law, and moved under the ultimate **Authority** of Jesus Christ as he was led of the Holy Ghost, and was not bound by boundaries, and barriers set by Caesar. This will make more sense as we move on because the slave-masters of this damsel set free from this demonic spirit hastily caught Paul and Silas, mistreated them, and in a rage brought them before the magistrates here at Philippi without following Roman law themselves. It was the slave-masters, and the Philippian magistrates who violated Roman law here in ACTS 16, but it will take Luke several more verses before he explains this fact! We will get into that as we proceed.

In ACTS 16:18 after the demon came out of this damsel, what became of this girl? Wouldn't we like to know the answer to this question? But the scripture doesn't specifically address this question. We do however get a good clue ten chapters later in ACTS 26:18 of the potential available to this damsel. ACTS 26:18 is part of that ninety-nine word sentence spoken unto Paul by the Lord Jesus Christ on the day he was saved on the road to Damascus. ACTS 26:18 says this after Paul was told he was being sent as an Apostle unto the Gentiles: *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*. Back here in ACTS 16:18 the Lord Jesus Christ, the ultimate **Authority**, had delivered this damsel from the spirit that possessed her, thus she was turned from darkness to light, and from the Power of Satan unto God. Did this damsel of ACTS 16 receive the forgiveness of sins that was now available unto her? Only God knows the answer to this question. We do not read of this damsel again. She was now really of no value to her slave-masters, so after Jesus Christ set her free from the demon who possessed her, did her masters also release her? We will learn the answers to these questions when we get to heaven.

Another burning question arises here, that being was this damsel, who was delivered from this evil spirit in the name of Jesus Christ, the ultimate **Authority**, was she thankful? We have no way of

knowing the answer to this question either for the scripture doesn't give us the answer. Let's think about this for a moment. Are we truly thankful for what the Lord does for us every moment of every day? One of the Old Testament worthies of faith can help us answer this question for ourselves. Perhaps it was David who wrote in PSALMS 116:12 *What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?* We could spend several hours discussing the answer to this question, but for a few moments let's read how David himself answers this question in some PSALMS we know he wrote, and we will be brief. PSALMS 18:46 *The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted. 47 It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me. 48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. 49* ***Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD,*** *among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name. 50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.* PSALMS 30:4 *Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and* ***give thanks*** *at the remembrance of his holiness. ...12 ...O LORD my God, I will* ***give thanks*** *unto thee for ever.* PSALMS 69:30 ***I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.*** PSALMS 140:13 *Surely the righteous shall* ***give thanks*** *unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence.*

We know the Apostle Paul knew the PSALMS, Israel's song book, and memorized many of these verses we just referenced. When we get to verse 25 here in ACTS 16 we will find Paul and Silas singing praises unto God, at midnight, and their situation had changed since the demonic spirit had been cast out of the damsel earlier in the day. But they were singing praises unto God because they were thankful unto God, and ...***magnify him with thanksgiving***... as we just read in PSALMS 69:30. Down the road in not the to distant future the Apostle Paul would write in his very first epistle ...***In every thing give thanks****: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you...* 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18. Being thankful, as Paul was, as David was, has no boundaries, no limits, and looks forward, as well as backwards; looks up, as well as looking down. In other words true heart felt thankfulness in every thing is really a statement of full overcoming faith.

As we move forward in here in ACTS 16 realize that the events that began with the spirit of divination being cast out of this damsel in the name of Jesus Christ, the ultimate **Authority**, in verse 18, until the midnight earthquake in verse 26 all happened the same day. Whether or not the damsel ever expressed her thankfulness unto God for her deliverance, we know that Paul and Silas did.

The Holy Ghost inspires Luke to next mention a few words about the slave masters of this slave girl, who has just been delivered in the name of Jesus Christ from the "spirit ot divination" that possessed her. As believers, we are happy for this deliverance, and the goodness of the Lord, and that Luke recorded this story for us. But the slave girls masters, who verse 16 tells us realized much profit from her soothsaying, had just lost their major source of income. They were the opposite of thankful, and they were beyond furious. Conybeare and Howson note that violent rage was the immediate result displayed by these slave-masters. We will see irrational exuberance on display in the next verses. Also, as we will now read, these slave masters also were very influential here at Philippi. 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.*

Verse 19 informs us that the girls' slave masters realized that they had just lost their source of income, and they felt very comfortable in vigorously taking Paul and Silas into custody, the Greek word helko {hel'-ko}, number 1670 in The Strong's Greek Concordance is used indicating that they dragged Paul and Silas by the feet to bring them before the rulers of Philippi, whom they apparently knew. In verse 20 they announce to the magistrates at Philippi: *These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city.* In our world we would define this as a racist statement. Was it the fact that they were Jews that was troubling them? Or was it the fact that Paul and Silas invoked the name of Jesus Christ that troubled them? Let's read this again in verse 20 ...*These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city*! Paul always dressed in his Pharisee clothing, for his being a Pharisee

from his youth was what The Holy Ghost used to open the door of opportunity for Paul to preach about Jesus Christ, and everlasting life unto both Jews and Gentiles everywhere he went. The point being Paul never attempted to hide the fact that he was a Jew. But the slave masters of the damsel, who was delivered from the evil spirit that possessed her by the Lord Jesus Christ at Paul's command, were furious over their loss of income. And they expressed their displeasure to the Philippian magistrates with an indignant tone of prejudice against the Jews. Let's spend a moment discussing this.

The scripture tells us exactly why many in the world always have had prejudice against the Jew. Perhaps DEUTERONOMY 7 explains it best where Moses was explaining to the children of Israel, who were all Jews, why they were a chosen, and special people unto God. There wasn't an expiration date on what we are about to read. Moses says in DEUTERONOMY 7:6 *For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. 7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: 8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers,* (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) *hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;* (approximately 20,000 years) *10 And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face. ...14 Thou shalt be blessed above all people:... .*

How do you view God's chosen people, the Jew? I can answer this like the Apostle Paul answered this in ROMANS 10:1. ROMANS 10:1 *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they* ***might be saved.*** One can argue that of course our Apostle Paul, a Jew himself, a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee, would want his fellow brethren, the Jews, to be saved. Not only did the Apostle Paul want his fellow Jews to be saved, but Paul, as the Apostle sent unto the Gentiles, wanted all the Gentiles to be saved also! Everybody! This goes right along with what Jesus Himself told Nicodemus in JOHN 3:17. We will start reading Jesus words in JOHN 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world* (everybody) *through him* ***might be saved.*** *18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* Now let's go back to ROMANS 10 and finish this thought by reading some more of what the Apostle Paul wrote in this chapter. ROMANS 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* These words were written to both Jew and Gentile, for "whosoever" expresses no prejudice.

Prejudice against anyone is not a good thing, and furthermore prejudice will not be found in the heart of a full overcomer. Jesus was not prejudice against anyone was He? Again we repeat what is said in 1 TIMOTHY 1:15 *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.* Furthermore ROMANS 3:23 tells us: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* ROMANS 5:6 adds: *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* And ROMANS 5:8 goes on to state: *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* None of us can ever be saved without accepting Jesus Christ as our own personal Saviour, and Jesus came into this world as a Jew.

Back to our lesson in ACTS 16:20 we find the slave-masters of the girl, who was delivered from the evil spirit that possessed her, expressing their prejudice against Paul and Silas when they

say: *...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.* Here we find another unique Greek word used by Luke translated "exceedingly trouble." The Greek word is ektarasso {ek-tar-as'-so}, Strong's Greek Concordance number 1613 means; to throw into great trouble, to agitate, and to "exceedingly trouble," as it reads in our King James Version.

What was exceedingly troubling these slave masters the most is revealed in verse 21, that Paul and Silas were teaching *...customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans*. These agitated 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. Thus 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 Roman colony Philippi, for nothing could have been more calm and orderly than their worship and teaching at the house of Lydia, or in their meeting place down by the riverside. It was true that Paul especially here taught the sound, and good doctrine of the Lord, which teaching did indeed show the way of salvation by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. 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. However Rome back in Paul's day, permitted people to keep their religion as long as they worshipped the emperor and Roman gods. The Jews were the ones exempted from this part of Roman law because of their belief in only one God, thus Jewish Synagogue worship was not to be interfered with by the Romans. We must also point out here that the Jews did not have a synagogue at Philippi, thus the populace of Philippi would probably not have been familiar with that part of Roman law that gave Jews exemption in their synagogue worship services. There was another event that happened about that same time period recorded in ACTS 18:2, and that being Roman Emperor Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome. So there was some tension between the Roman government, and the Jews at that time in history. Back here in Philippi it is pretty evident that these slave masters, who were accusing Paul and Silas, cared little for either the religion of the Romans, or of the Jews.

Let's further note here that Paul never went about to unsettle the minds of the Roman citizens. In fact Paul even wrote in his letter unto the ROMANS in chapter 13 verse 1: *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* In Jesus day the question was asked of some Pharisees trying to entrap Jesus in MARK 12:14 when they asked: *Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?* Jesus gave them this answer in MARK 12:17 *And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.* The point of mentioning this here is to point out that neither Jesus, nor the Apostle Paul were in the business of offending the Romans, but rather their focus was upon the things of God. That is why Paul also made sure in his teaching that when the topic of subjection to Roman law came up, it was to be recognized by believers that the magistrates of the Roman Empire were put in place ultimately by the will of God. The last part of DANIEL 4:17 informs us: *...that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.* DANIEL 4:25 & 32, DANIEL 5:21 basically repeat this same theme. That's why Paul wrote in ROMANS 13:1 *...the powers that be are ordained of God.* And Paul continues in ROMANS 13:7 repeating the same thought Jesus expressed above: *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

Back in ACTS 16:19-21, neither the magistrates, nor the slave masters considered the possibility that Paul and Silas may have been Roman citizens themselves, which we learn a little later in this chapter that indeed they were. We read this in ACTS 16:37 *But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans,...* . Later in ACTS 22:28 Paul reveals that he was a free born Roman citizen. As a Roman citizen do you think Paul knew, and followed Roman

law? Obviously the answer to this question is yes, and Paul knew his rights as a Jewish Roman citizen much better than the Philippian magistrates, and the slave masters, who dragged Paul and Silas by the feet before them. Roman citizens 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 all the way up to the Emperor. All three of these points were violated by the Philippian magistrates in the very next verses of ACTS 16.

ACTS 16:22 *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.* Thus we find Paul and Silas were unjustly arrested according to Roman law; unjustly scourged, unjustly whipped, and unjustly beaten with rods contrary to Roman law. And to add insult to injury they were unjustly thrown into the Philippian jail contrary to Roman law. Since it was illegal to torture a Roman citizen, and a heinous crime to bind a Roman citizen, the Roman magistrates of Philippi themselves were in violation of the laws of the Roman Empire! The penalty for those who violated the law of the Roman Empire was death, and the confiscation of their property! All Paul and Silas now needed was a good lawyer, and these magistrates could be put to death!

Let's examine this kind of thinking for a moment. Certainly Paul and Silas were unjustly treated here at Philippi, and a legal remedy could have been pursued by them where the end result would have been the death of the Philippian Roman magistrates, but that is not to be the remedy to be found in the heart attitude of the full overcomer. Obstacles are placed on the full overcomers path for a reason, and that reason boils down to this: *The just shall live by faith,...* ROMANS 1:17; GALATIANS 3:11; and HEBREWS 10:38. Our Apostle Paul actually expounds further on the heart attitude of the full overcomer in ROMANS 12 as we will see in the following verses. ROMANS 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. 3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. ...9 Let love be without dissimulation.* (perfectly sincere, without deceit or hypocrisy) *Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. ...14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. 15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. 17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath:* (allow room for God's anger) *for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. ...21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* Thus we note that Paul and Silas in ACTS 16 were being tested as potential full overcomers, and ambassadors for Christ here at Philippi, and were still confident that God had called them to this basically God forsaken place, and had allowed them to be beaten and thrown into the inner prison! This is how the gospel message at Philippi advanced!

Note in ACTS 16:22 *And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.* Those that laid the stripes on Paul, and Silas during this visit to Philippi were Romans, so many historians think that this particular occasion may have been one of the three times Paul was beaten with rods as noted in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:25 where Paul writes: *Thrice was I beaten with rods,...* .

The vision Paul had in ACTS 16:9 was in still full effect: *...Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* Again we repeat an earlier statement we made: help has arrived. Who is the next beneficiary of this help that has now arrived in Macedonia? The correct answer is the Philippian jailor, and all his house! Praise the Lord!!! Also remember this verse from ISAIAH 55:8 & 9 *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher*

than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. We are going to see this now in action, how the higher ways of the Lord worked this night in the events that that took place in, of all places, the Philippian jail. Verses 23-29 take place in the jail at Philippi, and verses 23-36 all involve the Philippian jailor, one of the subjects of Paul's vision of ACTS 16:9 who was found crying out ...*Come over into Macedonia, and help us.*

Let's notice something else Luke wrote us before we move too much further here. Luke here in ACTS 16, and only in ACTS 16 uses the Greek noun desmophulax {des-mof-oo'-lax}, number 1200 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and he writes it three times. Desmophulax {des-mof-oo'-lax} is translated one time as "jailor," and twice as "the keeper of the prison." Luke doesn't mention the jailor's name, but realize in your heart that Luke probably got to meet this man, and I dare say Luke also got to teach this man, and if Luke were an artist, he could have painted a picture of this Philippian jailor. Luke didn't get to meet this jailor that night recorded in ACTS 16, but in the days following after Paul and Silas had left town. We will have to wait until we get to heaven to verify this. So if you don't see how this was possible, yet, just enjoy the story of how this jailor at Philippi, and his house got saved. Then ponder how Luke learned of the details he wrote here in the next verses of ACTS 16.

One more thing to point out here in ACTS 16 is how the Holy Ghost inspired Luke to write the word "prison" eight times in this chapter! As a quick refresher recall that the number eight has five (GRACE) meanings: (1) **NEW CREATION** -- [2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature* (NEW CREATION): *old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*]; (2) **NEW BIRTH** -- [JOHN 3:3 ...*Except a man be born again,* (NEW BIRTH) *he cannot see the kingdom of God.*]; (3) **NEW BEGINNING** -- [again 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*]; (4) **RESURRECTION** -- [JOHN 11:25 *Jesus said unto her, I am the* ***resurrection****, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:*]; Jesus arose from the dead on the eighth day, which also is the first day of the week. [MARK 16:9 *Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week,...* and (5) **BRIDE** -- [JOHN 3:29 *He that hath the* ***bride*** *is the bridegroom:..* (Jesus)]. Realize that all of these topics potentially will be introduced to the Philippian jailor, and his house before sunrise the next day.

ACTS 16:22 *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.*

This most eventful, and memorable day reaches sunset with Paul and Silas in the care of the Philippian jailor, who according to ACTS 16:24 ...*thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.* This is the first time Luke writes of our beloved Apostle Paul being in prison. It won't be his last time. By the time 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23 is written Paul notes that he was ...*in prisons more frequent,...* . What we find Luke recording here for the first time in ACTS 16 is the fact that our beloved Apostle Paul had one of the first prison ministries, and led many souls to the Lord while in prison. Years later, after Paul's arrest in ACTS 21, we will find the Apostle Paul spending most of the rest of his life as a prisoner. Being in prison didn't stop the Apostle Paul from preaching, or from being the Apostle sent unto the Gentiles, or from writing epistles. As a prisoner the Apostle Paul wrote the following 5 Epistles: PHILEMON, COLOSSIANS, EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, and 2 TIMOTHY. In each of these Epistles Paul wrote something's about being a prisoner. EPHESIANS 3:1 *For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,...* . EPHESIANS 4:1 *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,...* . PHILIPPIANS 1:13 *So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;...* . {See also PHILIPPIANS 1:7, 14, and 16.} COLOSSIANS 4:3 *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:...* . ...4:10 *Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you,...* . ...4:18 *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;...* . PHILEMON 1:1 *Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer, ...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. ...23 There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus;...* .

As a side-note here, how aggravating do you think it was to Satan to hear these statements from Paul, that he was the prisoner of Jesus Christ? Paul knew who it was that allowed him to be thrown in prison, and it was the Lord Jesus Christ who put him there! Paul knew it, and wrote some of his treasured epistles from the confines of a Roman prison. Satan had Paul and Silas put in prison to shut them up. God had Paul and Silas put in prison to broadcast His grace, and to establish the church at Philippi! The joy book of the Bible, PHILIPPIANS, had it's genesis here in ACTS 16 in the prison of Philippi! Wow, think how amazing that is! Remember again what we have read many times in this study, that ISAIAH 46:10 tells us that the Lord knows the end from the beginning. We are studying the beginning of how Paul was later able to record: *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* PHILIPPIANS 3:14, an epistle written from prison!

Note here in ACTS 16:24 that Paul and Silas were "*...thrust into the inner prison,...*" meaning put into the darkest, most secure part of the prison, probably a dungeon, without regard as to their well being. 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 also 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, be comfortable, or experience any physical relief in this condition... *...but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it...* Paul later wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13. Paul wrote this about five years after our ACTS 16 time frame. Perhaps Paul recalled his Philippi prison experience as he wrote this. Possibly some other verses not yet written were also introduced to his thinking that most memorable night, and we will touch on some of them here in a moment.

In my Bible there is a large space between verses 24 and 25 with a headline inserted. There is some hard hours that pass between verses 24 & 25. ACTS 16:24 ends with the Philippian jailor thrusting Paul and Silas *...into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks*. ACTS 16:25 begins at midnight, where Luke writes: *...And at midnight Paul and Silas...* . I made a statement in class last week (not in these notes until now) that verses 16-25 really is the love of God on display, however we don't tend to view these verse that way. And the reason we don't think these verses as the love of God on display is because of what we read earlier in ISAIAH 55:8 & 9 *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Let me explain it like this: when you see someone wearing a cross, you think of Jesus, and you also think of the love of God. Yet the cross upon which Christ died for our sins was a bloody scene, but also that is where the love of God was on display. JOHN 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he*

gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ROMANS 5:8 *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* Christ died upon the cross of Calvary, which is where He manifested His love for us! Truly His *...ways...* are *...higher than your ways.* How does this correlate to the loved of God on display here in ACTS 16 in the events that have taken place between verses 16 & 25? We will see the answer to this question as we continue, for truly God's *...ways...* are *...higher than your ways,...* and His *...thoughts than your thoughts.*

Between ACTS 16:16-25 we not only see the love of God on display, but we find that this is where the Lord gave Paul and Silas the keys to the city of Philippi! God's thoughts, and God's ways are way beyond our kind of thinking, so it hard for us to realize that this was the day that God opened the city of Philippi unto Paul and Silas, but it was. Go back and re-read verses 19-22 and see the following people, and groups of people, who had now observed Paul and Silas being present in Philippi: The slave-masters of the girls delivered of the spirit of divination; those in the market place; the Philippian rulers; the Philippian magistrates; and the subsequent multitude that rose up against them. Before being brought before the magistrates at Philippi, the majority at Philippi didn't even know Paul and Silas existed. Now nearly the whole town knew they were there, many new that they taught *...the way of salvation,...* (verse 17) and now the whole town thought they had gotten rid of Paul and Silas having learned nothing of Paul's gospel message, with the exception of Lydia, and her household. Now here in ACTS 16:25 it's midnight.

When we did our "Midnight" Bible study series we defined midnight as being the darkest hour of the night. I have an old note written above HEBREWS 11 in my old Bible quoting what Brother Hill said during one of his Bible studies, and this note reads; "the darkest of times brought forth the heroes of faith." Many Old Testament heroes of faith are mentioned in HEBREWS 11, and these worthies of faith all had faced dark midnight trials in their lives; tests that proved them to be icons of faith. The tests from the darkest of times will bring forth the Bride of Christ also.

Paul and Silas certainly were being tested with this kind of midnight trial here at Philippi. Brother Joe Rogers pointed out something to me a while back that he came across in his studies, and it had to do with the phrase "the apple of his eye," which is first found in DEUTERONOMY 32:10 where the Moses was speaking to the children of Israel the words of the song of Moses. And DEUTERONOMY 32:10 references God's thoughts about the children of Israel here when Moses says: *He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.* The meaning in DEUTERONOMY 32:10 of "the apple of his eye" references the pupil of the eye, in other words the dark center part of the eye. The Hebrew word translated "apple" here also has another meaning, and that is the middle of the night (that is the deepest blackness part of the night), and this meaning is found in PROVERBS 7:9 *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.* Our Bible study series entitled Midnight Bible Stories highlighted the darkest of times when a test or a trial has reached its seemingly darkest, most hopeless point. Old Testament worthy of faith David wrote in PSALMS 17:8 *Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,...* so we see that the phrase "the apple of his eye" can be also applied to the individual. Brother Hill used to point out that God looks at us as "the apple of His eye," and would not allow anything to penetrate "the apple of His eye." I found it interesting that the word "apple" is only found in eight scriptures, three times in reference to an apple tree, and five times in reference to "the apple of his eye." Yes indeed, you are "the apple of His eye."

Back here in ACTS 16:25 we come the middle of the night, a sleepless night for Paul and Silas. Let our sanctified imagination hear the possible following conversation as Paul speaks to Silas in this dark, dank Philippi prison. As we listen in, realize this conversation has been going on for some time. "Silas, do you realize our steps are ordered by the Lord? PSALMS 37:23 tells us this: *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.* Silas you know the Lord guided, and directed us, and assisted us in coming here to Philippi, Macedonia, for the purpose to help these people get to know our lovely Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Add to this the knowledge I have often shared with you, how that *...we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus*

unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." {EPHESIANS 2:10.} "Think how He ordered our steps to this place, and this particular night in prison! I am confident of this very fact, that Christ Jesus is working a mighty work in our lives this very night according to the working of His mighty power." {See EPHESIANS 1:19 along with HEBREWS 13:21.} "Silas there is no test or trial that He has brought us to that He doesn't know about, and be assured that our loving Lord in this test is going to make a way to escape, that we may be able to endure it. He knows the end from the beginning." {See 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13 and ISAIAH 46:10.} "Furthermore Silas, I have been realizing something else very important I am about to share with you. Silas, ...*unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.*" {PHILIPPIANS 1:29.} "Realize, dear brother, ...*our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*" {2 CORINTHIANS 4:17.} "I realize right now this doesn't seem like a light affliction, but in the light of eternity, this truly is but for a moment. Furthermore, know this precious brother, that if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." {2 TIMOTHY 2:12.} "Additionally Silas, and we have discussed this many times on our journey here, ...*we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*. Whether you see this or not Silas, this is working for our good! Silas we see this by faith, for HABAKKUK 2:4 in essence instructs ...*The just shall live by faith.*" {ROMANS 1:17; GALATIANS 3:11; & HEBREWS 10:38.} "We also know, Silas, that we were called to this place by the vision I had in Troas, and by the foreknowledge of God, to help these people of Macedonia. Silas, we also know this about God: ...*whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* So then, Silas, ...*What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 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?* Silas, ...*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*. Silas, Jesus is at the right hand of God the Father making intercession for us right now! Silas, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*. Silas, ...*I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" {ROMANS 8:28-39.} "Silas, I know it's been a long rough day, and a long rough night, so far, but realize this, because this is important, nothing ...*shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* And, another thing, Silas, and I also know you know this, because we have talked about this often, ...*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" {1 THESSALONIANS 5:18.} "Silas, are you with me? Are you ready to get out of here? It's time for a good old Holy Ghost worship service: ...*Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.*" {PSALMS 95:1.} "Silas, know this also, the Holy ...*Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*" {ROMANS 8:26.} "Silas, we may be unable to move with our feet held fast in these stocks, but we can pray; Let us pray."

ACTS 16:25 *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed,...* . After the severe beating that Paul and Silas had experienced, and the uncomfortable pain that they were in, we would expect them to seek any relief that they could by moaning and groaning, but not by praying. You have no doubt heard the saying: "gloom, despair, pain and agony, if it weren't for bad luck I'd have no luck at all." But Paul and Silas didn't focus their attention on their pain and agony like all of the other prisoners before them were doing, rather they sought relief from their situation like any full overcomer does, by focusing upon the Lord, and praying unto Him for relief. Paul and Silas were now found praising

God, and thanking God! Keep in mind it was midnight, the darkest hour of the night, and the darkest hour they have faced so far on this particular missionary journey, and yet we find Paul and Silas praying at midnight as prisoners with their feet held uncomfortably fast in the stocks. And they weren't quiet about praying either for the prisoners heard them, and they didn't care if the prisoners heard them, for they knew they were called into Macedonia to help them! Even though it was midnight, Paul and Silas were not overcome with the midnight darkness. Paul later wrote in EPHESIANS 5:8 *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:...* . Again in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:5 Paul writes: *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.* To these very same Saint's at Philippi Paul some years later wrote: PHILIPPIANS 4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. 5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* Memorize these verses. One more scripture that the Apostle Paul wrote in EPHESIANS 6:18 tells is to be *...Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;...* . It's easy to be thankful, and rejoicing when things are going good, but how about when the opposite is taking place, and your whole world seems to be falling apart? HEBREWS 13:8 is still true: *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Jesus Christ is still the same Lord over all, who is rich unto all who call upon Him according to ROMANS 10:12. So we learn here a secret to overcoming in our quest to have God's best, and that is to: *Pray without ceasing...* 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17, *...and be ye thankful...* COLOSSIANS 3:15.

ACTS 16:25 *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed,...* . Close your eyes and envision Paul loudly crying out to the Lord in prayer words similar to this. "Lord, I thank you for saving me that day on the road to Damascus, and telling me you were sending me unto the Gentiles, to open their eyes to your salvation. Thank you for the gospel message you gave me that explains how that Christ died for our sins according to the scripture. What a marvel, your immeasurable love, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. And that He was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scriptures, and how whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Thank you for your great salvation." {See ACTS 26:18; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3 & 5; and ROMANS 5:8; and 10:13.} "Furthermore, Lord, I want to thank you for sending me to this Philippian prison in Macedonia for the purpose of helping these people of Macedonia. Thank you for bringing with me Silas to assist in this ministry. We pray for all in this prison this night within the sound of my voice that you would give them open ears to hear your powerful gospel message. Thank you Lord in Jesus name. Amen."

ACTS 16:25 *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.* Here we find that not only did Paul and Silas pray at midnight, they went one remarkable step further, *...and sang praises unto God:...* . Note they didn't sing to entertain the captive audience that was also in prison that night. They *...sang praises unto God...* . This kind of worship in such a dark time of midnight trial has to come from the bottom of ones sincere heart that is overflowing with the love of God. The word "midnight" is found fourteen times in our King James Version of the Bible, and that fourteen is the number pointing to DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. Paul and Silas didn't know this, but you and I do, so we should expect this midnight trial that they were facing to end with their DELIVERANCE from this inner prison, and SALVATION for the Philippian jailor and his house! In the meantime Paul and Silas *...sang praises unto God:...* . These were songs of faith and hope, for at the present time Paul and Silas were not yet delivered from this seemingly hopeless, and helpless, and seemingly endless midnight situation! Circumstances dictated that Paul and Silas were here hopeless and helpless, yet the songs of praise just kept flowing out of their mouth as if they had been set free. The fact was in their spirit they were set free. Jesus Himself

said in JOHN 8:36 *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* So at midnight *...Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God.*

We are not told in ACTS 16:25 the songs Paul and Silas sang, we are only told that Paul and Silas *...sang praises unto God,...* and they weren't quiet about it either for we are also told that *...the prisoners heard them.* We have all heard Holy Ghost filled singers sing Holy Ghost inspired songs, and when the power of the Holy Ghost anoints the singer, we never forget the sweetness of that song, and the power of it's message. Such songs echo in our heart for years to come, and in our heart we can still hear the singer. (I can close my eyes, and her dear old Sister Miller singing "I'm a Child of the King," and she has been home with the Lord for decades.) This was the case this midnight when Paul and Silas from their dungeon *...sang praises unto God.* These songs that Paul and Silas caroled were uplifting, and upward looking songs; songs of hope and faith; songs of rejoicing; songs directed to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is our Hope. {See 1 TIMOTHY 1:1.} These songs were new to the prisoners who all heard these words for the first time in their life. These songs flowed from the Holy Spirit filled hearts of both Paul, and Silas. These songs of praise unto God lifted the spirits of both Paul and Silas, giving them relief, and a peace that passeth all understanding despite their pain and suffering, which we just read about in PHILIPPIANS 4:7 *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* It would be easy to loose one's mind in the torturous situation Paul and Silas were in, yet their hearts and minds were fixed upon Jesus Christ, who in turn gave them a peace which passeth all understanding, and hope for their deliverance.

In JOB 35:10 we read that it is God *...who giveth songs in the night.* In PSALMS 42:8 we read another portion of scripture that Paul and Silas were familiar with: *Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.* Our two Apostles were now living the reality of these two scriptures. Furthermore Paul and Silas must have realized, by faith, that they were indeed were given by the Lord the charge of this prison, much as Joseph was back in GENESIS 39. GENESIS 39:20 *And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison. 21 But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. 23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.* Paul's second missionary journey was beginning to prosper at this midnight hour of ACTS 16:25; a fact that Paul and Silas could only see by faith. It becomes apparent as we read on that Paul, and Silas were indeed ministering, and being a witness unto their fellow prisoners. Recall also what we read in COLOSSIANS 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.* There is no time limit as to when one may teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, so such singing at a midnight hour was totally in order, and certainly was uplifting to our two Apostles. The word "admonishing" here has to do with the imparting of positive truth according to Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. So who were Paul and Silas imparting positive truths to? Certainly they were teaching and admonishing each other this midnight hour with their praying and singing praises unto God, but as we just noted they were also being witnesses unto their fellow prisoners, the kind of men Paul saw in his vision of ACTS 16:9 who had "*...prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.*" There was no other way Paul and Silas would have ever got to minister unto these prisoners, or the jailor and his family, had they themselves not been taken prisoner! And now at this dark midnight hour the Lord has given Paul and Silas the charge of this prison! Marvel at this thought!

The Prisoners

ACTS 16:25 *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.* This is the first of four successive verses that addresses the fellow prisoners of Paul and Silas here at Philippi. In this third part of ACTS 16:25 we find that the prisoners heard the praying and singing of Paul and Silas. Keep in mind that Paul and Silas were violently thrust into the "inner prison" (ACTS 16:24), away from, (it seems), the rest of the prison population. Yet their praying and singing praises was loud enough to be heard by the other prisoners. This tells us that there was conviction in Paul and Silas' voices, which could only be there by the power that is found in the Holy Ghost. These weren't timid words of prayer, and softly spoken songs, but rather Paul and Silas were loud in praying, and singing praises unto the Lord. Their prayers, and their songs carried a sweet tone to it that these prisoners had never heard before. The prisoners had heard cursing, and moaning and groaning at midnight before, but never had they heard a midnight worship service complete with the singing of praises unto the Lord, who never sleeps nor slumbers. No doubt it got real quiet in the prison that midnight, and the prisoners listened intently to what Paul and Silas were saying, and singing.

The last part of ACTS 16:25 emphasizes this point noting that *...the prisoners heard them.* The Greek word translated "heard" here in verse 25 is only used this one time in scripture. It is number 1874 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and means to listen attentively; in other words to pay close attention to what is being said. One commentator notes that this word "heard" here means to listen with pleasure as to a recitation, or music, which would be a wondrously attractive entertainment to the prisoners, even though it was midnight. Paul and Silas loudly praying, and heartily singing these midnight praises carried a powerful gospel message that these very same prisoners had never heard before either. The reality was that the fellow prisoners of Paul and Silas here at Philippi were held spell bound by the southing message they were hearing from our Apostles at this midnight hour. So as we move forward from verse 25 keep in mind that the prisoners heard Paul and Silas loud and clear, and the Apostles songs, and prayers, and heart felt worship pricked the prisoners hearts with soul saving conviction. What was said in jest by the possessed damsel in ACTS 16:17 was here at midnight proven to be true: *...These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.*

There is a lot of action that Luke records at this midnight hour in ACTS 16:25-28. Let's read these verses so as to be familiar with all the events that suddenly happened at midnight, and we will comment about each event individually as we proceed. ACTS 16:25 *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard 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 every one's bands were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.*

We are going to spend a few moments finishing our thoughts concerning the prisoners, who listened intently to what Paul and Silas were saying, and singing, when suddenly the earthquake happened. The prisoners were seemingly enjoying this midnight concert of Paul and Silas, intently hearing, and listening to every word that was both spoken in prayer, and in song as we just mentioned. In verse 26 there is a "great earthquake." Have you ever been in a great earthquake? I have been through a couple of minor earthquakes, and they are very startling the say the least. This earthquake was strong enough for the following three things to happen: *...the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed...* ACTS 16:26. That is indeed a "great earthquake!" Furthermore that wasn't all that was shaken, for everyone's emotions were also shaken at that dark midnight hour, and I am talking about everyone who was there in the city of Philippi, for as we read the rest of the chapter it is evident that this "great earthquake" had rattled the emotions of the magistrates also.

Back to focusing upon the prisoners: we find in verse 26 that they were all set free, for their bands were loosed. We read this so fast we miss it: *...every one's bands were loosed...* ACTS 16:26. Did the earthquake loosen the chains that bound the prisoners, or was there some other unseen force at work here? As you ponder this question the answer here is clear, an earthquake itself cannot loosen chains, or whatever bonds bound these prisoners. Only the power of the Lord could set them free. In JOHN 8:36 Jesus Himself says: *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* It was the Lord who loosed the prisoners' bands that night, and the truth of the gospel that set them free. Paul and Silas were done praying and singing after the earthquake happened, so before the earthquake these prisoners had heard the good news gospel message Paul preached. The Lord caused the earthquake that set all the prisoners free including Paul and Silas. ISAIAH 42:6 &7 reads: *I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; 7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.* Indeed this literally happened here that midnight in ACTS 16.

I found it interesting in my studies concerning the prisoners here in ACTS 16, that the word "prisoners" is found twenty times in scripture, twice here in ACTS 16. The number twenty is the number pointing to REDEMPTION. Webster defines REDEMPTION as "a buying back," or "a release from sin." All believers in Christ Jesus are "*...bought with a price...*" 1 CORINTHIANS 6:20 and 7:23 both tell us this. That price was "*...the precious blood of Christ...*" spoken of in 1 PETER 1:19. 1 PETER 1:18 *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, 21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.* Since the number two is the number of SUFFICIENT WITNESS or SUFFICIENT TESTIMONY, and since the Holy Spirit inspired our brother Luke to write the word "prisoners" twice in ACTS 16, I believe that we have SUFFICIENT WITNESS or SUFFICIENT TESTIMONY that these prisoners here in ACTS 16 learned that Jesus Christ indeed was their redeemer, and the fact that the Lord loosed all the prisoners bands that night speaks to that very point.

ACTS 16:26 also informs us that all the prison doors were opened after this earthquake, thus the prisoners were free to escape, yet verse 28 informs us that they all stayed there in prison. Luke doesn't tell us why no prisoners escaped that night, or does he?

In studying ACTS 16 we have made some seemingly bizarre statements, one of which was "that verses 16-25 really is the love of God on display." Well now we can add verses 26-28 to that comment, for during this midnight hour the prisoners at Philippi all got to hear Paul's gospel message, that explains the love of God, in his prayers, and in his singing. The Lord here this night has seen to it that all who came in contact with the Apostle Paul, and company, got to know why he was in Philippi, which was to show all who would hear it the love of God, and the way of salvation, just as the possessed slave girl had announced back in verse 17. Luke also, in verse 25, explained that the prisoners "heard them;" that is the prisoners intently listened to Paul and Silas pray, and sing the powerful gospel message that these very same prisoners had never heard before. Without a doubt Paul and Silas had explained the way of salvation that night, "*...and the prisoners heard them.*" In verses 26-28 a "great earthquake" suddenly interrupted Paul and Silas loud praying and singing. We find the word "earthquake" sixteen times in scripture, the number associated with LOVE, and the term "great earthquake" is found in five scriptures; five being the number pointing to GRACE. Remarkably this otherwise startling "great earthquake" harmed no one, underlining the point that this "great earthquake" displayed both the LOVE of God, and the GRACE of God! Truly we find the facts of TITUS 2:11 present in Paul, and Silas' prison this midnight. TITUS 2:11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.* The phrase "grace of God" is also found sixteen times in scriptures that Paul wrote, emphasizing to us the LOVE of God also. We find this point underlined by the Apostle Paul in 2 THESSALONIANS 3:5 *And the Lord direct your hearts*

into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. We truly find the Lord directing the hearts of Paul and Silas into the love of God at this midnight hour as they also patiently waited for Christ.

The Lord manifest His presence when ...*suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed*... ACTS 16:26. Although all the prisoners bands were loosed, and the prison doors opened, none of the prisoners escaped, and verse 28 informs us that Paul knew it, for he loudly cries: ...*we are all here*. How did the Apostle Paul know that all the prisoners were still there, for it was a dark midnight hour? Another bizarre statement we made earlier is that the Lord had given the charge of this prison that night to Paul, much like Joseph was in charge of his prison back in GENESIS 39. When Paul cried with a loud voice ...*we are all here*... in verse 28, he is really proving that the Lord had given him the charge of the prison that night, and he knew ...*we are all here*! Paul was confident of this fact.

So how did Paul know none of the prisoners had escaped, and that ...*we are all here*? Most probably the Lord showed Paul that dark midnight that no one had escaped. All the prisoners were so startled, and terrified by the sudden earthquake, that they didn't even notice their bands were loosed, so they made no effort to leave. Paul also knew this because the Lord made him aware of that fact. Luke doesn't tell us here any more than what Paul said: ...*we are all here*. That is a bold, confident statement Paul made here. Obviously Paul knew, by faith, that ...*we are all here*. Had Paul, and Silas that evening got to know all the prisoners in the jail at Philippi that night? I am going to say that they did even though Luke doesn't mention this. Perhaps Paul and Silas got to explain why they were there in the first place. If so Paul would have explained that they were there in Macedonia because of a vision that Paul had a few days earlier at another midnight hour, where a man from Macedonia beseeched him to come over to Macedonia, and help us. {ACTS 16:9.} Furthermore the Apostle Paul could have told how that on the day of his salvation the Lord Jesus Christ had appeared unto him, and told him that he was being sent unto the Gentiles, 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*... ACTS 26:18. No doubt Paul, in telling this testimony, asked each one of the prisoners if they knew how ...*to obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus*... 2 TIMOTHY 2:10. Whether Paul got to ask this, or not, Luke does inform us in verse 25 that ...*the prisoners heard them.* I doubt if Paul did a "roll call" before announcing ...*we are all here*... in verse 28. Obviously Paul knew ...*we are all here.*

Luke summarizes a large amount of information in ACTS 16:25-28 where he talks about what Paul and Silas did while in prison; talks about what the other prisoners did at that same midnight hour; talks about the "great earthquake" that set the captives free, but harmed no one; and last of all Luke tells in these verses the panic that was found in the Philippian jailor after the "great earthquake." We are now going to spend some time now discussing the Philippian jailor, and how Luke came to write fourteen verses that puts into words the salvation of the Philippian jailor, and his house!

The Philippian Jailor

Fourteen again is the number of DELIVERANCE, or SALVATION, and the Holy Ghost inspires Luke to write fourteen verses that tell all about the DELIVERANCE, and SALVATION of the Philippian jailor, and his house. And as we study these verses realize that this family here in these verses becomes a foundational part of the church the Apostle Paul founded here at Philippi, Macedonia.

We first find the Philippian jailor mentioned in ACTS 16:23 as the Philippian magistrates charge the jailor to "...*keep them* (Paul and Silas) *safely.*" The midnight "great earthquake" nullified the jailors ability to "...*keep them safely;*..." at least that is the way the jailor saw it. The "midnight

earthquake" turns out to be the best thing that ever happened to the Philippian jailor, and his house. Here is how Luke recorded the story of the Philippian jailor in fourteen verses.

ACTS 16:23 *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. 25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard 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 every one's bands were loosed. 27 And* ***the keeper of the prison*** *awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. 35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. 36 And* ***the keeper of the prison*** *told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.*

In this study we are focusing on what Luke wrote us in scripture, and most of what Luke wrote came from eyewitness that Luke interviewed, and some came from events that Luke himself participated in. So we must ask, who informed Luke that the jailor supposed the prisoners had escaped? Who informed Luke that the jailor would have killed himself with the sword? Who informed Luke that prior to the earthquake the jailor was asleep? The original source where this information was revealed was the Philippian jailor. There are two possibilities where Luke learned this information; one of course would be the Philippian jailor himself. The other person(s) who could have told Luke this information would be Paul and/or Silas after the Philippian jailor told them his reaction to this midnight earthquake. Since we won't learn the answer to these questions until we get to heaven, let's for now realize that the Holy Ghost wanted us to know how the Philippian jailor reacted to these midnight events.

The jailor in ACTS 16:23 was given the charge of keeping Paul and Silas safely in prison, meaning to keep them secure, and safe from escaping. In verse 24 we read that the Philippian jailor "thrust" Paul and Silas into the inner prison. Was the keeper of the prison kind and gentle with our beloved Apostles as he "thrust" them into the inner prison? One of the meanings of "thrust" here is to throw, indicating anything other than kind and tender care. Furthermore we note that, no doubt, the jailor was informed on the supposed crime Paul and Silas had committed, and why they had been beaten, and had so many stripes laid upon them. The Philippian Jailor was told to put Paul and Silas into the inner prison, indicating that they were to be treated as hardened criminals! It seems the Philippian jailor was also informed that Paul and Silas were accused of being "*...the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.*" {ACTS 16:17.} Why else would the jailor after the "great earthquake" ask Paul and Silas in verse 30 *...Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* So we note that the Philippian jailor knew this much about Paul and Silas.

Luke records in verses 26 & 27 that the "great earthquake" awakened the jailor out of his sleep. Thus the jailor did not hear Paul and Silas loudly praying, and singing at the midnight hour as did the prisoners. ACTS 16:27 tells us: *And* ***the keeper of the prison*** *awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.* Luke wrote this information to O Theophilus back in Antioch, Syria, who was familiar with Roman law, and customs. We are not as familiar with Roman law, so some explanation is required as to why the jailor was about to kill himself. Roman law required the same punishment for the jailor that was due the prisoners whom he allowed to escape. If the prisoners were subject to death, then the jailor was due that same punishment should his death row inmate(s)

escape. Recall back in ACTS 12 after Peter's escape from prison, that Herod commanded all sixteen Roman soldiers, who were in charge of keeping Peter secure in prison, killed! The Philippian jailor here in ACTS 16:27 knew he was doomed to death if any of his prisoners escaped. The Apostle Paul full of the Holy Ghost on this dark midnight perceived that the jailor was about to take his own life, and cried out *...with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here...* ACTS 16:28. Here again we see the love of God on display here. Our beloved Apostle Paul could have very well let fester in his heart how the Philippian jailor had "thrust" him into the inner prison earlier in the day. But Paul, and Silas, had since that time been praying, and sing praises unto God, who in turn flooded their hearts with the love of God. Truly Paul and Silas recognized, and well knew that the Lord *...is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance...* 2 PETER 3:9. Thus we find Paul being very compassionate to the very excited Philippian jailor, who was about to take his own life, which is why Paul cried out *...with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here...* ACTS 16:28. The Apostle Paul knew that no prisoners had escaped by only one way; the Lord, through the Holy Ghost, had told him all were still there in the prison. Imagine the adrenaline that was flowing in the veins of the jailor having been startled out of a deep sleep at midnight by a "great earthquake" so powerful that it shook the very foundations of the prison, and caused all the prison doors to open. Then to make the assumption that all the prisoners had escaped. The elements present here for the jailor was, midnight darkness, an adrenaline rush, and fear. He was ready to kill himself, and go to a Christ-less eternity! Thank God for the loud cry of the Apostle Paul: *...Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.*

All sinners sit in darkness, and need to cry out for the true Light to save them. JOHN 1:9 informs us that Jesus is *...the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* JOHN 1:7 further reveals this of the true Light (Jesus): *...that all men through him might believe.* LUKE 1:79 tells us that Jesus came to earth *...To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.* And ISAIAH 42:5-7 reads: *Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: 6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; 7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*

The Philippian jailor, shaking and trembling, *...called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* {ACTS 16:29 & 30.} The Greek word here translated "trembling" is entromos, number 1790 in The Strong's Greek Concordance; a word found only three times in New Testament scripture. In our text of ACTS 16:29 entromos means: trembling with fear. Someone gave the jailor a light, then Paul and Silas told him about the True Light, Jesus Christ. Notice that the jailor was now very respectful to his newest prisoners, and had fallen down before them. Another reason the jailor fell down before Paul and Silas was to show them now a token of civil respect, as was the custom of the eastern people of Paul's day. The jailor knew that these special prisoners, Paul and Silas, were different, and for he perceived that they could help him out of this his darkest midnight situation. So now with great respect, and trembling in his voice, and perhaps even tears in his eyes, the jailor asks the most important question of his life: "*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*" Already we see a change in heart concerning the jailor, for what jailor calls the very same prisoners he earlier that day "thrust" like refuse violently into the inner prison, and now addresses them as "Sirs?" This "great earthquake" had really got the jailors attention, and for him, he knew the earthquake announced the impending presence of the Lord. The jailor realized at this dark midnight hour a Superior presence manifested in these two Apostles had just prevented him from taking his own life!

The question the Philippian jailor asked *...Sirs, what must I do to be saved?...* is the first question asked in ACTS 16, and certainly one of the most important questions asked in all scripture. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* You could have probably heard a pin drop as the jailor, and all the other prisoners waited for Paul and Silas' response. Never was a more important question asked.

And note the jailors question was personal: *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?...* not "what must we do to be saved?" Paul and Silas immediately knew the answer to this question, ...do you? In todays fast paced world many who wish to know the answer to a question ask their smart phone, or computer, or Ai. Ask Google "what must I do to be saved," and you will get about 484 million different results, and many of these responses give the correct answer. Paul and Silas immediately answered the Philippian jailors question with these words in ACTS 16:31 *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* Conybeare writes here that Paul and Silas said: "Believe, not in us, but in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved; and not only thou, but the like faith shall bring salvation to all thy house." We can only wonder how many were now awake in the jailors house that heard Paul and Silas conversation with this most excited jailor. Luke doesn't give us a number, but be assured that all in the jailors home were awake, and heard Paul and Silas response!

Google also has links to about 14.5 million sermons on these two verses of ACTS 16:30 & 31. So there is no telling as to how many sermons have been preached over the centuries since ACTS 16:30 & 31 was put into print. Nor is there any way of knowing how many souls were snatched from the bonds of the prison of hell because of the Philippian jailors question, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* And Paul and Silas' simple answer, *...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

This phrase *...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house...* has fourteen words in it. Fourteen, again, just happens to be the number that is associated with DELIVERANCE or SALVATION! Furthermore the phrase "**believe on**" is found in fourteen verses of scripture.

What a great and simple question the Philippian jailor asked that dark midnight hour in ACTS 16:30 *...Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* And what a profoundly true short answer was given in ACTS 16:31 by our beloved Apostles: *...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and* ***thou shalt be saved.*** ROMANS 10:9 also records the other "**thou shalt be saved**" statement found in scripture, saying: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead,* ***thou shalt be saved.***

The Philippian jailor, and all that were in his house got saved that night of the "great earthquake" in Philippi as we will read here in a moment. That "great earthquake" from the Lord that midnight set captives free in more ways than one, and harmed no one.

ACTS 16:32 tells that Paul and Silas *...spake unto him* (the jailor) *the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.* Paul and Silas were expounding unto the jailor, and to all that were in his house, what it means to believe on the Lord Jesus, and what it meant to be saved, which facts we just examined in the scriptures we looked at above. The phrase in verse 32 "*...the word of the Lord...*" is found in 255 verses of scripture. "*The word of the Lord*" that Paul preached is summed up in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3 & 4, which reads: *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.* The Philippian jailor and all those in his house believed "*...the word of the Lord...*" that night, and they were all saved. Praise the Lord!

In ACTS 16:33 the Philippian jailor then took Paul and Silas *...the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.* Remember back in ACTS 16:23 that the Philippian magistrates instructed the jailor to keep Paul and Silas safely, meaning to keep them securely, which he did. After the great earthquake was the jailor still keeping Paul and Silas safely, and securely? You can answer that question for yourself. We read here in verse 33 that the jailor, who now was saved, administered tender, sympathetic care to his newest prisoners, who had had many stripes laid upon them the previous day. The same hour of the night when he was saved, the Philippian jailor *...washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.* Somewhere close near the confines of the prison, and the jailors house was a well, or a fountain, or perhaps a stream where Paul and Silas had their wounds washed. At the same time Paul, and Silas baptized everyone in the jailors household that same hour, for all had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

For a moment turn to 1 CORINTHIANS 1, and read something the Apostle Paul wrote concerning water baptism. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:14 *I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.* (Paul always baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, as is also told in ACTS 19:5.) *16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.* The reason Paul wrote this was to note, as he did in verse 17 here, that Christ Jesus didn't send him to baptize with water, but to preach the gospel. But as we see here in ACTS 16, and later in ACTS 19:5, that there were times when the Apostle Paul did baptize. However water baptism was not the Apostle Paul's primary calling, or ministry. When the need arose, as was the case that midnight in Philippi, Paul did avail himself of the opportunity to baptize the Philippian jailor, and all his household, knowing that it was the correct thing to do that night. Paul also knew he wouldn't have that same opportunity at a later time. Go back and re-read ACTS 16:15 and see that Lydia and her household were all also baptized, and the indication is that it was Paul who did so.

The story about the Philippian jailor continues in verse 34, and there is a lot of information contained in this verse, which we will spend some time examining. ACTS 16:34 *And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced,* ***believing in*** *God with all his house.* There is only one "**believing in**" phrase in all of scripture, and it is right here in ACTS 16:34, where the Philippian jailor, and all his house were saved. Interestingly the word "**believing**" is only found eight times in our King James Version of the Bible. Recall the number eight again has five (GRACE) meanings: NEW CREATION; NEW BIRTH; NEW BEGINNING; RESURRECTION; and BRIDE. I am sure the Apostle Paul touched upon each of these five topics that night in the jailors house! All five of these meanings also point us to Christ Jesus in one way or another. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 tells us that we are a NEW CREATION in Christ Jesus. In JOHN 3:1-16 we find the word "born" used eight times as Jesus told Nicodemus "*...ye must be born again...*" ...JOHN 3:7. This was the NEW BIRTH Jesus told Nicodemus about. This also was the NEW BIRTH experience by all the household of the Philippian jailor. The eighth day of the week is the same as the first day of the week, and on the first day of the week Jesus arose from the dead, thus eight is also a number of RESURRECTION. Also the first day of the week is a NEW BEGINNING of a new week. Each member of the jailors household received a NEW BEGINNING that night also after they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and were born again! We also learned in our meaning of the Bible numbers study that the number eight is also a number associated with the BRIDE, and often times points us to the BRIDE of Christ, a subject that also may have been introduced to the Philippian jailor and his family that same night!

All of what is recorded from ACTS 16:25 through ACTS 16:34 happened from midnight to the wee hours before daylight. Realize here also that Paul and Silas were still in the custody of the Philippian jailor, thus they were still his prisoners. Actually the Philippian jailor didn't have the authority to release Paul, and Silas, but God did, and as we noted in ACTS 16:26, for after the "great earthquake" that harmed no one, the Lord had loosed all of the prisoners bands, and opened all the prison doors, thus setting all of them free. Just the hour before Paul and Silas were singing midnight praises though facing the darkest midnight time of their life. And now the Lord had delivered them from their midnight crisis. The Philippian jailor had also faced his darkest midnight crisis too, supposing all of the prisoners had escaped after the midnight earthquake, which had also awakened all those of Philippi! But our gracious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had also delivered the Philippian jailor from his midnight crisis also! And this midnight turned out to be the best day/best night of the Philippian jailors life, so far. For the first time he had heard the good news of Jesus saving grace in Paul's gospel message, and he and his house had all gotten saved! None of them wanted this midnight to end, so we find in ACTS 16:34 that the Philippian jailor took Paul and Silas, and *...brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and* ***rejoiced****, believing in God with all his house.* All involved here could now *...Rejoice evermore...* as 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16 tells us to do. All here that midnight were grateful unto God! In simple gratitude the jailor had washed Paul

and Silas' stripes. ISAIAH 53:5 tells us this concerning Jesus: *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.* That midnight the Philippian jailor and his house were healed (forgiven) from their sins, and they had never felt better in their lives. Paul and Silas felt nearly as good themselves. The prisoners, Paul and Silas, couldn't have been treated better if the were staying in a five star hotel! Neither could the Philippian jailor, for now he was treated with more of the good old gospel message preached from the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself. Thus the Philippian jailor and his household became a foundational part of the Philippian assembly. Let that statement sink in for a moment. It is kind of ironic once again to find that the foundation of the Philippian prison was shaken on the same night that the foundation of the Philippian church was laid. 1 CORINTHIANS 3:11 *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Paul and Silas established the Philippian jailor, and his house that midnight on the solid foundation of Jesus Christ. Also that midnight the town of Philippi got a new jailor, for again 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 tells us: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* The dark hours of this now famous midnight concluded with the Philippian jailor *...believing in God with all his house...* ACTS 16:34. Praise God.

Note again what was said of the Philippian jailor in ACTS 16:34 *And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.* There are really four deeper points of interest found in this verse, each separated by a comma, which we will now look further into. First after hearing, and believing, and receiving the word of the Lord as spoken by both Paul and Silas, the jailor, and his whole household believed, and were baptized that very midnight as was told in ACTS 16:32 & 33. We next read in verse 34 that the jailor *...brought them into his house...* . Think about this for a moment, the Philippian jailor brought two convicts into his own home. What was he thinking? Can you imagine the trouble such actions would bring a jailor today? But God had a much deeper plan here, and a purpose that went beyond all of their life-times. And the Philippian jailor never had any reservations about bringing Paul and Silas into his house. Meanwhile what about the other prisoners who were still under the custody of the Philippian jailor, where were they, and were they too brought into the jailors house? We are not told one way or the other are we? We are told in ACTS 16:25 that the prisoners heard Paul and Silas as they prayed, and sang praises unto God at midnight. We are further told in verse 28 that the Apostle Paul knew that all of the prisoners were still present after the midnight earthquake. We must note also that the other prisoners no doubt heard the jailor cry out in verse 30...*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* Certainly the other prisoners also heard Paul and Silas as they answered in verse 31 ...*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* Was the whole prison saved that midnight? That is a real possibility, but we will have to wait until we get to heaven to find the answer to these questions. Remember as you ponder this, that the Lord had given the Apostle Paul the charge of the Philippian prison that midnight, and no prisoner escaped.

ACTS 16:34 *And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.* The second point of interest in verse 34 revolves around this statement: *...he set meat before them...* . This simply means that the jailor placed upon the table of his house food for the hungry Apostles to eat. Now think about this for a moment; this kind of hospitality was given in appreciation for what had just taken place this midnight. The jailors whole household had just got saved, and perhaps so had the other prisoners as we indicated earlier! The jailors table now becomes the focal point of our midnight Bible story. May I point you to the fifth verse of the 23rd PSALM for a moment, and quote a little from Brother Hill's book "The Shepherds Psalm." PSALMS 23:5 reads: *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.* In this midnight Bible story of ACTS 16:34 there was a table prepared for Paul and Silas by the Philippian jailor. Even though the two tables reflect different circumstance, the purposes of both tables are similar. Here is a little of what Brother Hill wrote about this table. "God furnishes a table that sustains people forever. It holds the richest, the best, the greatest and the most satisfying food there is - there are not words to tell the meaning of

this table. Some Christians search for excitement everywhere but this table. Here is a feast that is personally prepared by God who loves us like we could never imagine. He is the chef of all chefs - the one who put the honey in the honeysuckle for the hummingbird. He is the one who prepared the moss-covered cups in the beautiful cool stream to slake the thirst of the panting stag. And He is the one who has prepared for our souls the very sweetest meal that there can ever be. There is nothing that can keep us from enjoying the fatness of this table except our unbelief. There are no requirements for coming to this table - it is for whosoever will. Most of the 'brilliant' minds in this world know nothing about this table because this knowledge comes by revelation, not by education." {End of quoting Brother Hill for a moment.} The jailors' midnight table in ACTS 16:34 was prepared for Paul and Silas by the Philippian jailor not only to provide them substance, but for the purpose of Godly fellowship. What do you think was said that midnight at the jailors table? Life sustaining spiritual food of Paul's gospel message was feasted upon that midnight. It was the words of the Apostle Paul concerning Jesus that the jailor, and his family feasted upon. It was Paul's gospel about Christ that was introduced that now famous midnight, and that is how the Philippian assembly began. Let me reference a couple more quotes from Brother Hill's book "The Shepherds Psalm" that emphasize the importance of God's table.

"If we are not tried we will not go to the table. Our trials are necessary and when temptation overtakes us, we can know the meaning of the table; for if the devil is there, the great Chief Shepherd of the desert is there also. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard before him. When Israel was out in the waste-howling wilderness, it was the Shepherd who took care of them. It was necessary for Israel to go through the wilderness to come into possession of the land of Canaan, and we too will find that the things God takes us through are absolutely necessary for our lives if we are to have the best He has for us."

"Mephibosheth's crippled condition was hidden when he sat at David's table and ate. Our imperfections are hidden as well, as we feast at the table of God. God is love and He sees us as perfect under the blood of His son. Paul said, "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?" (ROMANS 8:32) It is God's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. If we have children we want them to succeed, but how much more, God wants His children to succeed. When God gave His son, He gave us everything He had to give - Jesus in the manger, Jesus on the cross, Jesus in the grave and Jesus resurrected. All of this is sufficient proof that He is for us, and if He be for us, who can be against us? (ROMANS 8:31.) God is able to make all grace abound toward us and to supply our every need as He lives within us. Paul said, "....*Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*" (GALATIANS 2:20.) That is the sufficiency. Our lives can be filled with far more than we desire for ourselves. God never intended for any of His children to have second best - He wants every one of us to have the best."

"The value of this table must not be measured by its material and temporal abundance, but by its spiritual abundance. Some sit at a rich table but they are spiritually starving to death. Some are poor in this world yet rich in faith, and they are growing up in Christ like stall-fed calves. "*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil. My cup runneth over.*" The only prerequisite for coming to the table of God is that we must have a need. It makes no difference who we are because in God's eyes one soul is potentially as valuable as another. His workings in lives may be different but the quality of each life can be equally rich. God will provide exactly what we need in our lives as we live by faith. It is our nature to enjoy dining in beautiful and elegant surroundings, but God serves this meal in the presence of our enemies. This is so we will learn to trust Him. We may look at this table and dread what we see and draw back from it, but the distasteful thing that He has placed on the table before us is something that is given in love. The enemy can be so close, yet the Lord is our shield. He is with us from the moment we give our hearts to Him and will never leave us or forsake us. We may fail Him but He will never fail us. From the day we took Christ as our personal Saviour throughout the history of our Christian experience, to suggest that God should love us as much as He does and yet deny us anything for our good, is utterly impossible. And to suppose that Christ would have suffered for us as He did, yet deny

the needful grace and strength to bear life's burdens, is to swear that He died in vain. That is the table in the presence of our enemies. Are we going to eat or are we going to starve? Are we going to say God isn't good to us or are we going to accept His generous love and grace?" {End of quoting Brother Hill.}

In our text of ACTS 16:34 *And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and **rejoiced**, believing in God with all his house...* we have discussed the first two of four points of interest in this verse. The rich fellowship that our two Apostles Paul, and Silas brought into the house of the Philippian jailor that midnight caused all in the house to rejoice. This is our third point of interest in this verse on how they **rejoiced**! The word "**rejoiced**" here is agalliao {ag-al-lee-ah'-o}, number 21 in The Strong's Greek Concordance; a word only used eleven times in New Testament scripture, and it means: to **rejoice** greatly; to **rejoice** with exceeding joy; to be exceedingly glad!!! It's the same word found in REVELATION 19:7, which we are most familiar with: *Let us be glad and **rejoice**, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* Now try to define that exuberant **rejoicing**!! You can't really put it in words, nor could the Philippian jailor, and his household as they, for the very first time, heard the words of everlasting life! And they **rejoiced** because they were exceedingly glad. Yes all in the Philippian jailors house that night **rejoiced** with exceeding gladness having now experienced the joy of eternal salvation after being born again!

Let's connect some more dots. What book of the Bible is called the joy book of the Bible? The answer is PHILIPPIANS. The word "rejoice," or "joy" is found eighteen times in PHILIPPIANS. Pastor O'Dorisio has recently been teaching lessons on Wednesday nigh Bible Studies on the joys of the joy book, PHILIPPIANS. Brother Hill taught us that in PHILIPPIANS there are no doctrines to expound, nor are there any errors to refute. The rejoicing highlighted in PHILIPPIANS revolves around rejoicing in Christ Jesus. Brother Hill noted that Job spoke of God 54 times in the 42 chapters of JOB, and in those same 42 chapters Job referenced himself over 700 times! Paul in PHILIPPIANS references Jesus 70 times in 4 chapters! PHILIPPIANS is full of high watermark scriptures. For example PHILIPPIANS 3:14 *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* The phrase "in Christ" is found seven times in PHILIPPIANS. PHILIPPIANS 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* PHILIPPIANS 4:19 (the one hundredth verse of PHILIPPIANS) *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.* Let that verse soak into you soul for a while! One of the things Paul always remembered was his first days in Philippi, and they were memorable, as we have learned from our studies in ACTS 16. Note once again what Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 1:3 *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.* Simple stated, the rejoicing that began during a midnight setting in ACTS 16 continued way beyond this time frame. And the Apostle Paul reminded these Philippian Saints of this very thing in PHILIPPIANS 4:4 with a double shot of rejoicing: *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.* If you stop and really think about it, back in ACTS 16:25 it was the Apostles Paul and Silas praying, and singing rejoicing praises unto God at midnight that got everyone's attention down at the prison in Philippi in the first place. And now we find in ACTS 16:34 the Philippian jailor, and his household, also entering in to the rejoicing in the Lord as they now, this midnight, felt for the first time the joy of the Lord themselves! There was no way any of them were going to get any more sleep that night, nor did they want too!

The fourth point of interest found in ACTS 16:34 *And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house...* causes us to focus upon their focal point of rejoicing. The jailor and all of his household rejoiced because they had believed in God, and believed in God's only begotten Son Jesus Christ, who died for their sins, and is risen again, and is now sitting down at the right hand of God ever making intercession for them, and us too!!! When the jailor asked in ACTS 16:30 ...*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* Paul and Silas'

answer was immediate, and without hesitation ...*And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house*... ACTS 16:31. Please note here that Paul and Silas didn't say "Believe in God." There are a lot of people who claim they believe in God, but how many who say this also confess Jesus Christ to be their Saviour? In JOHN 14:1 Jesus told his disciples, whom He had constantly been with for three plus years, and instructing them daily; Jesus said unto them at that last supper "...*ye believe in God, believe also in me.*" Think again about those twenty-five words you have all memorized in JOHN 3:16; what does it say? Does JOHN 3:16 say: "Believe in God?" JOHN 3:16 actually answers what it really means to "Believe in God." The twenty-five words of JOHN 3:16 states: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* The next verse explains further what it means to ...*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*... . JOHN 3:17 *For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.* The significance of mentioning that there are twenty-five words in JOHN 3:16 is to once again point out that twenty-five is the number pointing to THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. JOHN 3:16 is about THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. JOHN 3:16 also answers the Philippian jailors question of ACTS 16:30 ...*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* Again Paul and Silas answered his question in ACTS 16:31 by stating: ...*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* ACTS 16:32 continues: *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.* And the jailor, and his entire household believed on the Lord Jesus Christ that very night, and afterward were also baptized that very midnight. Please recall that water baptism is an outward expression of an inward belief that one believes in the death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Apostles Paul and Silas had the faith to believe that the jailor, and all his house would be saved that midnight, and they were, and in verse 33 we read that the whole house hold of the Philippian jailor was baptized. What an eternally memorable, and profitable night that was, and this fact truly filled all present in the jailors house that midnight with joy unspeakable, and full of glory because of the precious love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who was now the center point of their lives! On top of that imagine what a comfort it was for each of them in the jailors family to know their brothers, and sisters, and mom, and dad were born again! And the scripture here in ACTS 16:34 leaves us with this midnight scene, that they all were rejoicing, and believing in God! Note that the end result was that they all truly believed in God because they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and had now experienced and felt His inexpressible Divine agape Love, and the immeasurable joy that goes along with believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

How many times have you read this phrase in ACTS 16:34 ...*believing in God with all his house*...? We have probably all read this many times without realizing that the phrase "believing in God" is only found this one time in scripture! Of course "believing in God" happened throughout scripture, so the jailors' household was not the first to be found "believing in God." Using the King James Version of the Bible I looked up the word "believing" and was surprised to find it mentioned only eight times in scripture. We have covered the meaning of the number eight many times in this study, but as a refresher the number eight is the number with five meanings: NEW CREATION; NEW BIRTH; NEW BEGINNING; RESURRECTION; and BRIDE. In Paul and Silas one-on-one meeting this early midnight morning with the Philippian jailor, and his house, all of whom now were found "believing in God," which of these five subjects did they not further instruct about? The Apostles Paul and Silas were the prisoners here, but this early morning midnight they had a captive audience, the Philippian jailor, and his house, and Paul and Silas knew that they probably would never have this same opportunity again to introduce, and explain all of these subjects NEW CREATION; NEW BIRTH; NEW BEGINNING; RESURRECTION; and BRIDE to this believing family again, so I believe they did.

One more thought to finish our examination of ACTS 16:34. Paul and Silas have been fellowshipping with the Philippian jailor, and his family, who had just got saved in the wee hours of the morning after the "great earthquake" that happened around midnight. Did Paul and Silas lay hands on these new believers praying that they receive the Holy Ghost since they had believed?

Scripture doesn't answer this question one way or the other, however Paul does acknowledge in PHILIPPIANS 1:3 *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.* The power behind *...he which hath begun a good work in you...* would be the Holy Ghost would it not? It would be hard to imagine that Paul and Silas did not lay hands upon, and pray for these new born again believers to receive the Holy Ghost since they had now believed. Perhaps that was part of their rejoicing that we read about here in ACTS 16:34.

Concluding thoughts concerning Philippi

We just spent four pages of notes covering one verse, ACTS 16:34. Between the verses of ACTS 16:34 and ACTS 16:35 something of eternal importance has happened here at Philippi, and it can be summed up with the following statement: the Holy Ghost has now used our beloved Apostle Paul to finish establishing the church at Philippi! The solid Rock foundation of Jesus Christ has been laid here at Philippi. We saw it happen between ACTS 16:9 and ACTS 16:34. In these verses the Holy Ghost inspired our brother Luke to give us glimpses into the two totally different families; families of entirely different backgrounds; families that became the nucleus of what would become the church at Philippi. The first family that was mentioned as being converted here at Philippi was the family of Lydia, who we learned in ACTS 16:14 worshipped God. We learned another important thing in ACTS 16:14 about Lydia, and that being *...whose heart the Lord **opened**.* We mentioned that the Lord directed Paul to expound his gospel message by word of mouth unto Lydia, *...whose heart* (the fountain of her soul) *the Lord **opened**...* to receive this gospel message. Note the word "**opened**" here, which is dianoigo {dee-an-oy'-go}, number 1272 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, which means: to open up completely; to open up a channel to cause the understanding of a thing. It is used of the eyes and ears being **opened**, and also the mind of one being **opened** as to the proper understanding of a thing. Interestingly dianoigo {dee-an-oy'-go} is found eight times in scripture, and ACTS 16:14 is the seventh time we find dianoigo {dee-an-oy'-go} used. The Holy Ghost **opened** Lydia spiritual eyes and ears to receive Paul's gospel message, and ACTS 16:15 indicates that her whole household also had **opened** their hearts and ears to receive Paul's gospel message.

We find the word "**opened**" again in the story of the conversion of the Philippian jailor, and his house. This word "**opened**" found in ACTS 16:26 has to do with prison doors being "**opened**" by the great earthquake. This Greek word translated "**opened**" in ACTS 16:26 is anoigo {an-oy'-go}, basically the same Greek word used in ACTS 16:14 without the prefix "dia." "Dia" expresses an act, such as an act of the Holy Ghost to "**open**" ones heart, or eyes to something. The Greek word translated "**opened**" in ACTS 16:26 tells how literal prison doors were **opened**. Again it was the Lord who caused the earthquake by which the prison doors were "**opened**." Because the Lord "**opened**" the prison doors, the opportunity was presented for the Apostle Paul to once again to expound his gospel message by word of mouth unto the Philippian jailor, and his household. In both Lydia's case, and in the Philippian jailor's case, it was the Lord, the power of the Holy Ghost, that "**opened**" their hearts to receive Paul's gospel message. By these two families heeding Paul's gospel message, the foundation of Jesus Christ was laid here at Philippi, upon which the church at Philippi was established. Of course many others were added to this assembly in time, and jumping ahead in time for a moment, our brother Luke was the one whom the Lord chose to stay behind for six years to minister unto these Saints at Philippi, and tell them about the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!

Also between ACTS 16:34 & 35 a couple of other important things happened; prayer meetings. Praying to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Ghost, and with thanksgiving is how mighty things of eternal value are accomplished. In PHILIPPIANS 4:6 Paul would later write to this church at Philippi: *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* Paul taught this doctrine everywhere he went. Luke already recorded in the book of ACTS several important prayer

meetings, and the results from such gatherings. For example, ACTS chapters 1 & 2 were the result of prayer meetings! Signs and wonders were done by the Apostles as a result of prayer meetings! Cornelius and his house were all saved, and filled with the Holy Ghost in response to prayer meetings. Peter was released from Herod's prison in ACTS 12 because of another mighty prayer meeting. Here in ACTS 16 certainly Paul and Silas had a prayer meeting with the Philippian jailor and his family. Across town Timothy and Luke were at the household of Lydia, all who had been praying since Paul and Silas arrest the day before. Certainly they were praying for the safe keeping of Paul and Silas, and for their quick release if this was God's will. And the Lord also heard their prayers, and began to answer their requests as soon as it was day. We see their prayers answered in ACTS 16:35 *And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.*

Again in ACTS 16:35 we find considerable information revealed in these few words of scripture. (Even though Luke wrote us 52 chapters of scripture, we have found that he could express much information in a few Holy Ghost inspired words.) There is a significant amount of change in heart of the Philippian magistrates that is recorded here from the previous evening to the next morning. We are told in PROVERBS 27:1 *Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.* We know that none of us know what a day will bring forth, but a "great earthquake" in the middle of the night certainly changed the Philippian magistrates' perspective. Of course we know the truth of PROVERBS 21:1 *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*

We see by verse 35 that God indeed had given the key to the city of Philippi to our Apostle Paul, and this key unlocked eternal treasures, which we are still learning, and benefiting from! Here in ACTS 16:35 we read first the words "*...when it was day,..*" a phrase found five times in scripture, and by now we should all know that five is the number of GRACE. There isn't a day that goes by that we are not shown the GRACE of God, nor is there a day that goes by that we don't need the GRACE of God. GRACE then should point us to a five letter word, JESUS, and we cannot, and should not think of GRACE without thinking of JESUS. GRACE is a five-letter word that describes, and begins to reveal JESUS unto us, who came to earth *...full of grace and truth,...* which is another five-word statement from JOHN 1:14. TRUTH is another five-letter word that is used in scripture to describe JESUS found in JOHN 1:17 *...grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* ACTS 16:35 *And when it was day,...* the sun rose upon a new happy Christian family in Philippi, who had just experienced the GRACE of God after having accepted JESUS as their Saviour!

Another thing happened in ACTS 16:35 *And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.* After the "great earthquake" there at Philippi the perspective of the rulers at Philippi had changed. The magistrates here at Philippi had a serious high opinion of themselves, so much so, that they themselves didn't dare go down to the prison at that time, but rather they sent the serjeants to deliver their message. The "serjeants" were also authorities, like policemen, who received their orders from the magistrates. We must also note that the magistrates themselves never intended to see Paul and Silas again. We can see that the Philippian magistrates, who commanded respect from all of the citizens they ruled over, didn't themselves respect anyone, much less the likes of these Jewish strangers, Paul and Silas. They were contemptuous toward Paul and Silas to say the least. But after the "great earthquake" got everyone's attention there at Philippi, the magistrates also had their hearts shaken by the Lord.

This 35th verse raises some questions that cannot really be answered in this verse. Why did the magistrates, who the day before had rushed to beat Paul and Silas, all of a sudden decide to let Paul and Silas go? Did the earthquake alarm the superstitious magistrates into thinking that the gods were upset with them? One commentator noted that among the Romans an earthquake was regarded as an omen of the anger of the gods, so the "great earthquake" at midnight certainly alarmed the magistrates. Was the magistrates conscience then convicted of the wrongful treatment that they had ordered upon Paul and Silas? Certainly their hasty recommendation that Paul and Silas be beaten and imprisoned was contrary to Roman law, and they had all night to ponder their wrong doing. Did someone convince the magistrates that they were wrong? None of these questions are answered

specifically for us here in scripture, but the indication is their collective consciences were troubled all that night. Furthermore we do know that a mighty movement of the power of the Holy Ghost took place at Philippi in the preceding midnight hours before it was day. Souls that were lost were now saved. True LIGHT had come to many that night at Philippi, specifically to those prisoners in jail, and to those of the Philippian jailors household. And now "*...when it was day...*" we find that for reasons unexplained, the Philippian magistrates had a change of heart concerning Paul and Silas. Truly the Lord has His way as we read earlier in PROVERBS 21:1 *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*

In ISAIAH 46:9 & 10 we read: *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:...* . Applying this statement to Paul and Silas' situation, we can clearly see that God can, at anytime, by any means, declare the end of their imprisonment, for He knows the end from the beginning. God can harden the heart of Pharaoh so he would not let the children of Israel go, as noted in EXODUS 9:12; 10:20; 10:27; 11:10 and 14:8. Or God can soften the heart of the Philippian magistrates to let Paul and Silas go free. Experiences like this Philippian jail experience enabled the Apostle Paul to later write with confidence statements like this familiar one found in HEBREWS 13:5 & 6: *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

So for reasons only known to God we find in ACTS 16:35 that *...when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.* Remember the Lord in verse 26 had already loosed everyone of the prisoners bands, and set them free. Paul and Silas had spent the night after the "great earthquake" fellowshipping with the Philippian jailor, and all those of his house! They had been fed a meal, and in return had introduced spiritual food for the jailor and his household to feed upon; the spiritual food of Paul's gospel. However after this most wonderful session, as daylight approached, it was only proper that the Philippian jailor put Paul and Silas back into the prison, since he did not have the authority to release them anyway. The magistrates were the ones who commanded the jailor to keep Paul and Silas safely in ACTS 16:23, and it would be the magistrates that would command their release. But it was still the Lord who was in charge here, and it was the Lord, who had handed the keys to the city of Philippi over to the Apostle Paul! Thus it was no surprise that *...when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.* The prayers of the Saints at Philippi had been answered!

The magistrates here at Philippi had a serious high opinion of themselves, so much so, that they themselves didn't dare go down to the prison at that time, but rather they sent the serjeants to deliver their message. ACTS 16:36 *And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.* The keeper of the prison is the jailor of verse 23, who was also called the keeper of the prison in verse 27. But the keeper of the prison here in verse 36 is a different man than the verse 23 & 27 version of the Philippian jailor. Since the midnight earthquake the keeper of the Philippian prison is a new man in Christ Jesus. We noted this before, but it is worthwhile to mention this again: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* Our Philippian jailor now being justified by faith, has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, as is stated in ROMANS 5:1. The treatment of Paul and Silas by the keeper of the Philippian prison has been first class since the "great earthquake" set them free, and we must realize that this Philippian jailor and his family had been treated just as highly by the Apostles Paul and Silas as they revealed unto this household Jesus Christ. This new born again family has also had a few short hours of one-on-one teaching of Paul's gospel message from the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself. Imagine that for a moment, what it would have been like to have the Apostle Paul visit your home, and teach you one-on-one lesson like what is written in 2 CORINTHIANS 4 concerning Paul's gospel message. 2 CORINTHIANS 4:3 *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In*

whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Paul's gospel message is the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, the LIGHT of the world!

So when the serjeants were sent by the Philippian magistrates to the Philippian jailor telling him to "*...let those men go...*" in ACTS 16:35, how do you suppose the Philippian jailor felt? We find our answer here in ACTS 16:36 with the Philippian jailors words to Paul: *...The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.* We find with these words the jailor's relief, and pleasure of mind, and joy of heart in this announcement as he also request that Paul and Silas go in peace. We must also realize that this may have been the very first time that the Philippian keeper of the prison used these words "*...go in peace...*" as he released one of his prisoners. And we must also realize as the jailor said "*...go in peace...*" unto Paul and Silas, that he himself was still experiencing for the very first time the joy and peace of God that can only be found in the heart of a believer. Jesus had told His disciples in JOHN 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* Since midnight this very same Philippian jailor had found this peace that only Jesus can give. We all know by now that before being saved this very same Philippian jailor had no peace in his heart, and was about to kill himself when he heard the urgent cry of the Apostle Paul to *"...Do thyself no harm..."* in ACTS 16:28. However now, as a born again believer, the Philippian jailor can with all confidence in Christ Jesus say to Paul and Silas, "*...go in peace,...*" meaning: go in the peace of our mutual friend, and Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has not only set me free, but has set you free too. As free men Paul and Silas could visit their new found Philippian friends any time that they wanted to when they would visit again Philippi. Years later the Apostle Paul would, from another prison, address this very same Philippian jailor, and the other Saints of Philippi, and write the following words, which would have deep rich meaning especially for this Philippian jailor: PHILIPPIANS 4:6 *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

Paul and Silas certainly were also excited to be officially released from prison here, but Paul also knew that his rights as a Roman citizen had been greatly, and grossly violated, and was determined that these Philippian magistrates should, in the least, be humbled for their illegal proceedings, so that the people of Philippi might also see that they had been unjustly condemned, and that they should also see that the majesty of the Roman people was insulted by the treatment he and Silas had received. So we read in ACTS 16:37 *But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.* The Holy Ghost inspired, and embolden our beloved Apostle Paul to speak these words. The Apostle Paul under the unction of the Holy Spirit tells the Philippian serjeants to go back to the magistrates, and tell them to come fetch us out of this prison themselves in person! Paul wasn't trying to stir up any more trouble here at Philippi, but rather he was teaching those at Philippi a lesson here, and that lesson was it is the Lord who is in charge, not the magistrates. 1 CHRONICLES 29:11 tells us: *Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.* Paul and Silas had indeed gotten the victory that midnight at the Philippian prison, and that victory came through our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul later wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:57 *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

When the Apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost *...said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out,...* Paul was doing this as a

demonstration of at least two things. First Paul wanted to show the magistrates the love of God, and he could only do this in person. Think about it for a moment; do you really think that Paul, and Silas ever wanted to see these magistrates again? Paul and Silas would show these sinful magistrates grace, and forgiveness as they also announced that they were also Roman citizens, a point we will further address momentarily. Secondly Paul and Silas called for the magistrates of Philippi to come "fetch us out" because they were also standing up for the rights of all Christians. Paul and Silas didn't want these new born again believers at Philippi to be persecuted, and treated like they themselves had just been treated. Of course we know such assaults of Christians continued, and still continue to this day in certain parts of the world, but Paul put the Philippian magistrates on notice that this kind of unjust acts against Christians was not proper either.

Realize something else here as we examine another point found in ACTS 16:37, and that is as an Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul was also a teacher, and truly a master teacher getting his guidance from the Holy Ghost. And the Holy Ghost had here taught our Apostle Paul a lesson that stuck with him the rest of his life, and then Paul was able to pass these lessons on to us. Probably one of the biggest lessons Paul learned here at Philippi was his rights as a Roman citizen. Had he expressed these rights the afternoon before, both Paul and Silas would have been spared their beatings, and imprisonment. But then on the other hand we wouldn't have the story of the Philippian jailor, and his household getting saved either. So we see a lot of different lessons were learned here by our Apostle Paul; lessons that he passed on to us, and lessons that spared him from future beatings. Here in ACTS 16:37 ...*Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans,...* and we have talked a little about this before. As Roman citizens themselves Paul and Silas were unjustly arrested according to Roman law; unjustly scourged, unjustly whipped, and unjustly beaten with rods contrary to Roman law. And to add insult to injury they were unjustly thrown into the Philippian jail contrary to Roman law. Since it was illegal to torture a Roman citizen, and a heinous crime to bind a Roman citizen, the Roman magistrates of Philippi themselves were in violation of the laws of the Roman Empire! The penalty for those who violated the law of the Roman Empire was death, and the confiscation of their property! All Paul and Silas now needed was a good lawyer, and these magistrates could be put to death! Paul and Silas already knew they had a good just, and righteous lawyer, and advocate, who is Jesus Christ, who is currently sitting at the right hand of God the Father ever making intercession for us as is noted in ROMANS 8. ROMANS 8:31 *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 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? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* So we see that we another lesson that Paul already knew, and passed on to these Philippian Saints is one he later wrote to them in PHILIPPIAN 4:6, which we mentioned twice before in this chapter: *Be careful* (anxious) *for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

Paul and Silas didn't have any intention of having the Philippian magistrates put to death, but Paul did want to speak to them face-to-face partly because of what Ananias of Damascus was told by the Lord in ACTS 9:15, and this fact was then told to our Apostle Paul. The Lord told Ananias of Damascus in ACTS 9:15 that Paul ...*is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings,...* and even though the Philippian magistrates were not kings, they were the authorities of Philippi unto whom Paul was also sent as an ambassador for Christ. Obviously Paul was not to be intimidated by the Roman authorities as he learned from Ananias of Damascus. Later in life Paul would present his case, and be a witness, and a testimony of Jesus Christ before governors Felix, and Festus, and then King Agrippa, and finally Caesar himself. In the meanwhile Paul was a minister and a witness to all he came in contact with along his God give racecourse. From his Roman prison quarters Paul later also wrote the letter unto these same Philippian Saints, and made this statement in PHILIPPIANS 4:22 *All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.* So in bearing the name of the Lord Jesus Christ before Roman authorities, Paul was also a witness, and a

testimony to those closely associated with them, and many of them became believers because of Paul's witness of Jesus Christ. Thus we find here in ACTS 16:37 Paul teaching this same kind of lesson to the Philippian jailor as he said unto the serjeants of Philippi in ACTS 16:37 *But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.* In other words Paul was stating that the magistrates had illegally publicly oppressed two innocent, and uncondemned citizens of Rome, and treated them as guilty, so in all fairness let the magistrates now come and publicly declare Paul and Silas innocent. Furthermore the Apostle Paul well knew the Old Testament scripture, and recalled that last part of DANIEL 4:17 tells us: *...that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.* DANIEL 4:25 & 32, DANIEL 5:21 basically repeat this same theme. Thank God for this fact recorded in DANIEL 5:21 *...that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.* Knowing these scriptures Paul also knew who was in charge, so he wrote in ROMANS 13:1 *...For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.*

As we finish ACTS 16 let's review several points the Apostle Paul was making known here that Luke recorded for us. First of all Paul was a Christian, and he wasn't ashamed that this was his testimony. Secondly, Paul was a Roman citizen, and had been punished contrary to Roman law because he was a Christian. Thirdly, Paul and Silas punishment had been administered before the multitude in Philippi, without a trial, also contrary to Roman law, thus their release should be made know unto the multitude, which would also show their unjust treatment, and announce their innocence publicly. Forth, this would also strengthen the new converts at Philippi, and show them that God was indeed in control of all situations, and that they shouldn't fear what man could do to them. And a fifth most important point that was being emphasized here by Paul was that he put his **trust in the Lord**.

Let's discuss for a moment the importance of putting one's **trust in the Lord**. This is a key theme in the life of our Apostle Paul, that he put his **trust in the Lord**. The phrase "**trust in the Lord**" is found exactly nineteen times in scripture. The importance of noting this is to bring to our attention that the number nineteen is the number point to FAITH. How did Paul live his life? Paul lived his life "**by faith**!" We find the phrase "**by faith**" a total of thirty-seven times in scripture, and thirty-seven is the number associated with THE WORD OF GOD. According to REVELATION 19:13 THE WORD OF GOD is another name for Jesus! REVELATION 19:13 *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.* The first time that legal Pharisee Saul of Tarsus ever heard the term "**by faith**" was when Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour arrested him on the road to Damascus, and told him in ACTS 26:16-18 that he was being sent unto the Gentiles *...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...* ACTS 26:18. Our Apostle Paul latched onto that phrase "**by faith**," and wrote this phrase thirty-four times in his letters to us. The large majority of the "**by faith**" statements Paul made are found in HEBREWS 11, the chapter about the heroes of faith. Again we repeat that it was our Apostle Paul who wrote: *...The just shall live **by faith**,...* in ROMANS 1:17; GALATIANS 3:11; and HEBREWS 10:38. To live "**by faith**" means to put ones "**trust in the Lord**." Paul wrote the phrase "**trust in the Lord**" twice in his writings, both in PHILIPPIANS 2, which we will now read. PHILIPPIANS 2:19 *But I **trust in the Lord** Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.* PHILIPPIANS 2:24 *But I **trust in the Lord** that I also myself shall come shortly.* We should see here that the phrase "**trust in the Lord**" was part of Paul's vocabulary. As a side note, we also see here in PHILIPPIANS 2:19, and 2:24 the little phrase "**I trust**." The phrase "**I trust**" is also found nineteen times in scripture; eight times in Paul's epistles. This is further proof that the Apostle Paul both put his **trust in the Lord**, and lived his life "**by faith**!" Seventeen (VICTORY IN JESUS CHRSIT) of the "**trust in the Lord**" statements in scripture are found in the Old Testament, for example: PSALMS 118:8 *It is better to*

trust in the LORD *than to put confidence in man. 9 It is better to* ***trust in the LORD*** *than to put confidence in princes.* PROVERBS 3:5 ***Trust in the LORD*** *with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

ACTS 16:*37 But Paul said unto them,* (the serjeants) *They* (the magistrates) *have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. 38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.* So we find the Philippian serjeants returning unto the magistrates, and informing them that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, which again is why the magistrates feared. The Philippian magistrates didn't fear God, but rather they feared Roman law, and they had just found out that they had violated Roman law the day before when they unjustly commanded the beating of Paul and Silas, whom they just learned were Roman citizens. We have already discussed the penalty for their violation of Roman law was death, and the confiscation of their property!

As requested by Paul and Silas the magistrates then went down to the prison. ACTS 16:39 *And they* (the magistrates) *came and besought them,* (Paul and Silas) *and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.* It was very humiliating for the Philippian magistrates to go back down to the prison, and admit to Paul and Silas that they were wrong in having them beaten, and thrown into jail. Actually the magistrates never really ever wanted to see Paul and Silas again. The word "besought" here means these magistrates were begging and pleading with Paul and Silas. A more proper response would have been for them to ask, like the jailor did, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The magistrates now saw Paul and Silas as a threat unto them, and their own immediate future, for if the word reached the multitude at Philippi that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, not only would the lives of the magistrates be in jeopardy, but so would those among the multitude who assaulted them the day before! So the magistrates begged Paul and Silas to leave Philippi. There was no public apology by the magistrates. The magistrates now urgent request was for Paul and Silas to leave town without further once again stirring up the citizens of Philippi. In the end here the magistrates did bring Paul and Silas out of the prison themselves, and set them free in front of all who were there to witness this event.

Before we read ACTS 16:40 let's consider here the big picture of what just place here at Philippi. We already discussed the glorious time in the Lord Paul and Silas had since the great midnight earthquake. Words cannot express the Holy Spirit high that they had experienced since leading the Philippian jailor, and his house to the Lord during the early morning hours! That euphoria would still be with Paul and Silas even when the magistrates came early after sunrise to let them go. The Lord had already set Paul and Silas free at midnight, so the magistrates couldn't take credit for their freedom. And Paul, as an Apostle unto the Gentiles, and our example of whom to follow as he followed Christ, had a great responsibility here in his actions before the magistrates. We have shown in this story of ACTS 16 how the Lord had now given Paul and Silas the keys to the city of Philippi! The magistrates could no longer keep them in prison, nor could they stop them from spreading the good news gospel message of Jesus Christ. And with this freedom came the opportunity that Paul saw in his vision of ACTS 16:9 where ...*There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* Paul and Silas were now free to help more those of Macedonia learn about Christ Jesus. Macedonia was an area much larger than just Philippi. The magistrates did want Paul and Silas to leave Philippi, and since Paul and Silas weren't there to stir up trouble, as a good testimony to the magistrates, who had been sufficiently humbled by the Apostles, Paul and Silas honored their request to depart out of the city. Recall what Paul later wrote in ROMANS 12:18 -- *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* Paul and Silas here demonstrated some of what it takes to be a full overcomer. The Apostle Paul may have left Philippi for the present time, however Paul's gospel message didn't leave town, and Paul would later return to Philippi as is noted in both 1st and 2nd CORINTHIANS. When Paul did return, if the same magistrates were still in charge, they would be powerless to do any further harm to our beloved Apostle. And Paul and Silas still retained the keys to the city of Philippi because it was the

Lord who had given them Philippi in the first place. We must also realize because of Paul and Silas having preached Christ unto them, the Saints at Philippi were shown some respect at Philippi.

One more thought concerning Paul and Silas testimony here at Philippi. We Bible students, and followers of the Apostle Paul as he followed Christ, view the events of ACTS 16 through the lens of overcoming Christians, thus we view the mighty work of the Lord, and the Holy Ghost, that was accomplished here at Philippi. But there is another view point expressed by those unbelievers in the world that is found seven verses later in ACTS 17:6 where we read this about Paul and Silas now in Thessalonica: *...These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also...* . Lord willing we will discuss this further when we get to what Luke wrote us in ACTS 17, but for now realize that word of what happened in Philippi because of the ministry of the Apostle Paul and Silas had spread South from Philippi into the regions of Macedonia known as Thessalonica, which ministry was perceived by unbelievers as having turned their world upside down. The implication being that they were now worse off because of Paul's ministry preaching Jesus Christ unto them. The reality however was that because the Apostles Paul, and Silas, and Timothy had come preaching Jesus Christ unto them in Thessalonica their world was turned up right. Putting ourselves now back in Philippi at the end of ACTS 16 we see then that the word on the street there was that Paul and Silas had turned their world upside down. However Lydia and her household, and the Philippian jail keeper, and his household now held just the opposite viewpoint. Their world had just been turned right side up, and they now knew their citizenship is in heaven, and their trust and hope was now in the Lord Jesus Christ from whence cometh their help. In short, they were indeed glad that *...These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also...* . In ACTS 16:40 they would be sad to see Paul and Silas go.

ACTS 16:40 *And they* (Paul and Silas) *went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.* We find in ACTS 16:40 Paul and Silas heeded the magistrates request to depart out of the city after a fashion. Paul and Silas left Philippi in a leisurely manner at their own convenience. They made a stop at the house of Lydia where they had been staying. There they comforted the brethren, meaning Lydia and her household, and whatever other believers were now there, along with Timothy and Luke. Obviously this collective group of people had been praying for Paul and Silas safe release. The word "comforted" here means to exhort, that is to pursue a course of conduct always looking forward, and upward, and pressing toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, as Paul later wrote them in PHILIPPIANS 3:14. Paul wanted them to rejoice in the Lord always as he later also wrote them in PHILIPPIANS 4:4. Having now laid the foundation of Christ at Philippi, Paul and Silas, along with Timothy departed Philippi as ACTS 16:40 states. ACTS 16:40 doesn't mention Timothy as being with Paul and Silas as they departed, but we find in ACTS 17:14 & 15 that Timothy was still with Paul and Silas at that time.

As for our precious brother Luke, it seems he stayed at Philippi, for we do not read his first hand accounts of "we," and "us" again until ACTS 20:6, which occurred about six years later, and at that time he was still in Philippi! In PHILEMON 1:24 Luke (Lucas) is noted to be a fellowlabourer of the Apostle Paul. We have seen here in ACTS 16 the time-frame when Luke began assisting the Apostle Paul in his ministry, and he would at this time be considered a fellowlabourer. Perhaps Luke was also a fellowlabourer to Paul back in Antioch, Syria, but we are not told this in scripture. We have also found here in ACTS 16 that our brother in the Lord, Luke, did join up with the Apostle Paul in Troas, and journey with him to Philippi. Luke doesn't write about how it was that he came to Troas, but we do know that it was by the leading of the Holy Ghost. Note again what ACTS 16:10 says: *And after he* (Paul) *had seen the vision, immediately* ***we*** (Luke including himself here) *endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called* ***us*** (Luke included) *for to preach the gospel unto them.* Particularly zero in on the fact recorded here that the Lord had called even Luke *...for to preach the gospel unto them.* Furthermore we should note that after Paul, Silas and Timothy left Philippi in ACTS 16:40, there would be no one else there to further teach these new Saints at Philippi Paul's gospel message, except Luke, and again from verse 10 we see that the

Lord called Luke *...for to preach the gospel unto them.* Thus our Gentile brother in the Lord, Luke, continued to answer the call of the Lord, and stayed behind at Philippi as a teacher of the word of God, and Paul's gospel message, which teaching he had learned from the mouth of the Apostle Paul himself back in Antioch, Syria maybe even as early as the ACTS 11:26 time-frame when they were first called Christians in Antioch! So the Apostle Paul had no reservations about leaving Philippi knowing that the Saints there were in the tender loving good hands of the Lord, and would be further encouraged, taught, and ministered unto by the very capable teacher, a man full of the Holy Ghost, named Luke, whom they all also knew and loved.

Paul and Silas, in heeding the request of the magistrates in ACTS 16:39 to depart Philippi, were themselves showing the heart attitude of full overcomers, much the same as Stephen had shown at his death when he cried out in ACTS 7:60 *...Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* Such an overcoming attitude must have spoken volumes to the Saints at Philippi, and have even reached down to even the lowest of sinners, (figuratively speaking), which may have been the magistrates themselves.

Obviously God's work at here Philippi was just beginning, and in the next six years the Apostle Paul would again visit the brethren here at least a couple of times as his letters to the Corinthians show. Approximately ten or so years later the Apostle Paul would write the Saints of Philippi the letter we know as PHILIPPIANS, the joy book of the Bible. Let us thank the Lord how the Holy Ghost inspired our brother in the Lord, Luke, to write us in ACTS 16 how the church at Philippi was founded. Truly Luke was a part of this ministry at Philippi from the beginning, and an eyewitness of how the church at Philippi was founded! Luke himself never writes anything else of his stay here at Philippi other than what we have already noted. The Apostle Paul in his letters never mentions Luke as being here at Philippi the next approximate six years either. So we gather from all that isn't further written of Luke here, that he was definitely a low profile kind of guy; that is not one to draw attention to himself. Furthermore we see that Luke obviously followed the leading of the Lord, the leading of the Holy Ghost, in order to catch up with the Apostle Paul at this point in time of his second missionary journey. Certainly the Apostle Paul had already taught Luke to *...Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ...* as is written in 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1. Luke literally did this! When Paul, Silas, and Timothy left Luke behind at Philippi, Luke was given the responsibility by the Lord, and no doubt especially encouraged by the Apostle Paul, to continue following the leading of the Holy Ghost as he further instructed these Philippian Saints in Paul's gospel message. Luke was left here at Philippi as their instructor, their teacher, their minister *...for to preach the gospel unto them...* as ACTS 16:10 stated. The bottom line concerning Luke, he was an educator, which facts are further brought forth by the Holy Ghost in the fifty-two chapters Luke was inspired to write us in scripture; one fifth of the New Testament chapters!

We must also note that Luke had no idea as Paul and company left Philippi the he would be at Philippi for six more years! Like us, and like the Apostle Paul taught us, Luke was looking for the Lord to return at any time. Now at Philippi as their teacher we find Luke also being taught by the Holy Ghost. The way this worked would be as follows. Certainly these new born again Saints at Philippi had many doctrinal questions, which they asked Luke about. As Luke taught about Christ dying for our sins according to the scripture, and how He was buried, and rose again according to the scriptures, and how he was seen alive by many after His resurrection, to whom He showed many infallible proofs that He was indeed alive. And how upon the day of Pentecost fifty days after His resurrection He sent the Holy Ghost, who then manifest His power through the lives of all who were filled with the Holy Ghost, and the church grew, and expanded, and by the hands of the Apostles signs, and wonders were wrought among the people, and believers were added to the Lord on a daily basis. As Luke expounded upon these facts, and taught what he had already learned, and witnessed of Paul's gospel message, questions would be asked of him concerning these topics. The Holy Ghost gave Luke the answers to their questions, which answers, in turn enabled Luke to also grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What we are noting is that Luke himself learned much by teaching here at Philippi. We know there was great teaching presented there at

Philippi, for when the Apostle Paul later wrote them his epistle of PHILIPPIANS ten year later, there were no doctrines to expound, and no errors to refute.

Praise the Lord for sending us on the day of Pentecost the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, to guide us into all truth, to show us things to come, and to make us ready to be the Bride of Christ! Thank the Lord that our brother in the Lord, Luke documented the story of Pentecost, and the subsequent ACTS of the Holy Ghost!