

## Acts 16:16-40

“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. 19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the marketplace unto the rulers, 20 and brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, 21 and teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. 22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*. 23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: 24 who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. 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. 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. 38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. 39 And they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, and desired *them* to depart out of the city. 40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of Lydia*: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.”**

### *Introduction*

[Audio version:

<https://resources.ccpilly.org/teachinglibrary.asp?Book=44>]

“Acts chapter 16, if you remember, and I hope you do, we’ve come as far as Philippi, we are all the way up here [see [https://www.bible-history.com/Pauls\\_Second\\_Mission\\_Map/](https://www.bible-history.com/Pauls_Second_Mission_Map/)], Paul came from Troas with a straight wind, this journey would take him five days on way back, it’s taken him two days to get there, great favour from God going across here, the Hellespont to Philippi, again, five days to get back. That’s where we’re at, we’re up here in Philippi. And Paul there in a Roman province, that means all the elected officials are from Rome, none of them are elected there, it is run as a Roman province. Coming there, the call, the Macedonian call to come, and ending up with this woman Lydia, this church being born in her home. Where verse 16 is as far as we had come...

### *God Doesn’t Need Any PR From The Dark Side*

It says **“It come 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)** we’re assuming that’s a Sabbath-day, because we’re hearing that they go by the side

of this river to pray. “a certain damsel” she’s a young girl. Now, “spirit of divination” ah, your translation might say “spirit of python” which is a strange idea. In the Greek pantheon there was outside of Athens a cave, about 80 miles outside of Athens, and it was the Oracle of Delphi, and there, supposedly, in Greek mythology, Apollo had slaughtered a huge snake there and killed it. And supposedly the spirit of that snake still inhabited that area, and people would go to this cave and enter into the cave, and there was a priestess there, her name was Pythia, after the spirit of Python, supposedly the spirit of that snake was still there under the control of Apollo, and supposedly this girl in Philippi is possessed with a spirit relative to that whole situation, so it might be called the spirit of python, just so you understand what that is. It’s no doubt a demonic spirit, and there is some moving, and her owners, it seems like she’s a slave to a group of men, she’s like a weejee board or a fortune teller. This demon inside her doesn’t know a whole lot about the future evidently, because he gets cast out a few verses after this, and if the spirit knew what was going on he wouldn’t have been hassling Paul, so he didn’t know everything again, about the future. I always remember about the psychic hotline in Florida that went out of business, and the headline said ‘*They never saw it coming.*’ We have Nostradamus and Edgar Case, always remember that in Scripture, any prophetic utterance had to come to pass 100 percent accurately, or the prophet or prophetess was put to death [in OT Israel], because when it gives the message we’re not grading on a curve, you’re not above other local prophetesses, it’s either 100 percent accurate or it’s not from God at all. So this young girl, with the spirit of divination, Luke says, ‘*she met us,*’ Luke is there on the scene, **“which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 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.” (verse 17) “And this she did many days”** now we’re not told what her voice was like, ah, this is a demon spirit, it seems to be a young girl this demon was in. Was it a human voice, or was it a loud and raspy demonic voice, was her head spinning around, no doubt there’s something eerie about the whole scene. And Paul doesn’t move to deal with it. You know, it’s funny, in the Church you’ve got all kinds of books on Satan and demons and deliverance, and you know some places where Christians run to this. I don’t want anything to do with this stuff. If you’ve been around to any degree, any reality of this realm, and I’ve been around it enough to know, I can serve Christ for the rest of my life without ever seeing it again, and get raptured and get out of here [and be happy to have

nothing ever to do with it, is what he's saying]. But there's a real spiritual presence here, no doubt. There's an orthodoxy to this demon's theology, Paul and his company were the servants of the most high God which show unto us the way of salvation. But God won't receive any PR work from the dark side. He doesn't need that, he doesn't choose to allow that to take place. **"this she did for many days."** that had to have been irritating, that would have bothered me for an hour, I don't know about you guys. You're trying to go somewhere, you're trying to go to prayer, and there's somebody, a little girl with a lion voice behind you crying out **'THESE MEN ARE THE SERVANTS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD, WHICH SHOW UNTO US THE WAY OF SALVATION,'** you know, *'Paul, give us some Tylenol or get rid of this girl.'* Imagine that going on for many days. That's a remarkable statement. And Paul, no doubt, refuses to involve himself until the Holy Spirit tells him to make that motion, to address the issue. Great wisdom for all of us. **"this she did for many days. But Paul being grieved, turned and said"** notice this **"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) which is an idiom which means "right then," it doesn't mean it took an hour, we're not given a description of the scene, is there ectoplasm? we're not told any of that, it's just that the spirit comes out, **"And when her masters"** plural **"saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,"** (verse 19) isn't that a shame, they don't care about the young girl, it's a young damsel, they could care less about her well-being, her life and her future. All they care about is the almighty dollar, their gains are gone. That's what they see, not that the girl is delivered.

### *Paul & Silas Brought Up On False Charges And Severely Beaten*

When they saw that **"they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,"** now "masters" must be a group of men, they caught Paul and Silas, **"and they drew them unto the marketplace unto the rulers, and brought them to the magistrates,"** (verse 20a) Now this only happens twice in the Book of Acts, where they're actually brought to the magistrates, the rulers, and the other place in chapter 19, both places are over money or

gain. There it's the little idols of Diana in Ephesus. **'They brought them to the magistrates saying, These men'** and please notice this, **'being Jews,'** again we know from chapter 18, verse 2, it says that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome, and because Philippi was a Roman colony, granted *'Jus Italicum'* it was considered just like Rome, no doubt Jews had been commanded also to leave Philippi, so they make this part of the accusation **'these men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,'** **"and they teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans."** (verse 21) because the mantra of *Caesar was Lord* was growing throughout the Roman empire, and they're here saying **'These guys are here teaching things that are unlawful for us Romans.'** They could have cared less about being Romans, all they cared about is that they were losing their money, so they're trumping up these false charges they know aren't real, but they know on these grounds they can get these guys in trouble. And it says **"And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them."** (verse 22) (not their own clothes, but off of Paul and Silas). Now the Greek word tells us this is with rods, they were beaten with rods. It's going to say here they were beaten with many stripes. Over in verse 37 when it talks of the beating it says, the Greek is, they were flayed, or they were skinned. This was a severe beating, it wasn't the first time for Paul the apostle to go through this, in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians he would say to us, talking about false teachers and so forth, **'Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool, I am more, in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death (at the threat of death) more often, of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, that's the scourge, save one,'** five times he said he was scourged, **'three times'** he says **'was I beaten with rods,'** this was one of them, **'once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I spent in the deep,'** this sounds like a fun missionary to travel with, doesn't it. [No wonder John Mark turned back at the beginning of Paul's first missionary journey, he could see the handwriting on the wall.] There was an extreme cost in that day, and nothing was holding Paul back, because Paul had been caught up into the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven. What's the worst that could happen to Paul? he could survive the next day, the best that could happen is he could go to where he had seen the Lord. So, you can't stop this guy, but here they're beaten with rods, evidently a severe beating. Typically in the culture there was a thumbs up and a thumbs down to decide when to stop the beating. One account I read of a beating

with rods, the man was beaten until he started to go unconscious, and then the man with the rod took the butt end and hit him across the face, gouged out one of his eyes, he fell down and he died there. So this was very severe treatment.

### *Next They're Thrown Into A Nasty Roman Prison*

They commanded, they ripped their clothes off their backs, they commanded to beat them, **“And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:” (verse 23) *safely or securely*, the idea is, **“who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.” (verse 24) ‘*thrust them, he threw them,*** there’s a sense of violence here. Now the Roman prison, and by the way they’ve excavated the prison in Philippi, and they believe they found the one that Paul and Silas were in. In the prison, there were three levels, the first level is the *communora*, and that was, there was light, there were bars upstairs, there was light, there was fresh air and so forth. Then then there was the *interoria*, you’re in the dark, you’re down a level, but there’s iron gates and so forth, there’s still fresh air but you’re in the dark. And then there’s the *tullianum*, which is the dungeon, there’s no fresh air, there’s no light, there’s human waste that’s been piled up for however long the prison’s been there, the one in Rome was famous where Peter was chained, but that’s where Paul and Silas were placed. And they’re placed there, it says, in stocks. Again, archeologists have found, the way the Romans would do this, is have these huge, they look like combs, like a comb you comb your hair with, about six foot long, they’re iron, but there’s space between the teeth of the comb that’s wide enough to slide your ankles in, and depending on how tall you were, they’d spread your legs as far as you could spread them and slide them between the teeth on this long six foot comb, and then slide a metal bar in there so you couldn’t get them out. So they’re placed in the stocks in the most uncomfortable position you could ever imagine. Now, you know, Paul and Silas have to be sitting there thinking *‘Why, Lord? You gave us favour, you told us not to go to Bithynia, you told us not to go to here, you directed us in this direction, you gave a vision of a man from Macedonia, you called us to Europe, you gave us a straight wind at our back and turned a five-day journey into a two-day journey, you***

*gave us favour with Lydia,*’ and now they’re put in this position, thinking *‘Will we be here a month, or two months?’* you know, we’re not told what’s in their minds, they’re in extreme pain, they’ve been beaten, they’re bound in this *tuiatom*, the dungeon of the prison that’s unimaginable for you and I, and you can just do that for any length of time, and in no time your legs are sore, your hamstrings are pulled, they said if you wanted to sit you had to fall back, but you’re falling into the filth of the prison floor, there was no way to sleep, you had to fall down and lay back, they’re in these huge stocks, their feet made fast in the stocks.

### *At Midnight Paul & Silas Do The Most Unimaginable Thing*

**“And at midnight”** it says, no doubt the darkest time, **“Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.” (verse 25)** You can imagine Paul saying *‘Come on Silas, let’s sing Praise the Lord, let’s sing in rounds, I’ll sing the first round, you sing the second round, let’s sing one of the songs of Zion, let’s sing one of the songs when they were in Babylonian captivity, let’s sing Beloved, Love One Another, no we can’t sing that, John didn’t write it yet.’* This is a remarkable scene to me. Job chapter 35, verse 10 talks about God who gives songs in the night. Psalm 42, verses 7 and 8 speak of the same things, **‘Speak of the God which giveth songs in the night,’** Job says **‘But none sayeth Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night.’** **Psalm 42** says **‘Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy waterspouts,’** David, so honest, **‘All thy waves and billows are gone over me, yet the LORD commends his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me in my prayer to the God of my life.’** That’s a remarkable, remarkable statement. And sometimes you and I, look, with the picture that’s given to us here is, these guys were in a situation they didn’t want to be in. They were forced to be in it by someone else’s will. It was unjust, and it was unfair. What do we do when we’re in similar circumstances? only way less, we’re probably, I imagine most of us are never going to be chained in a Roman *tuiatom*, but what do we do when our boss or our friend(s) or our spouse, or anybody in our family, when someone else’s will is being enforced on us unfairly? and we’re hurt, we’re wrongly judged about something [I’m in the midst of a situation like that right now as I type this], we’re angry,

we feel like we're pent up, we feel like the circumstances are beyond our control. The same God is there, and there is a wonderful place that we can find fellowship with him, alone. There, believe me, there have been many times in my life when I just thought *'There's no one, there is no one, there is no one that I can turn to but him.'* And then as you discover his presence of course you say *'Lord, there's no one I could actually turn to in the best of days, but you Lord. You are all I have, you are everything Lord, you're the one that gives songs in the night,'* because he wants to commune. They were not outside of his will, they were not in this circumstance because they had sinned, Paul and Silas didn't go out drink wine with the Philippians and get a load on, get in a fist fight and get thrown in the jail. That's not how it happened. They had worshipped, they had planted a church, they had prayed, they had sought the best, and finally at the leading of the Holy Spirit they had dealt with this young [demon possessed] girl and delivered some little girl and gave her her life back, and now they're thrown into this situation. And it says **"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."** (verse 25) it's an interesting phrase, it means **"they listened intently"** it's most often used in Classical Greek, of listening to music or listening to something enjoyable. They listened intently, *'Who are these guys?' they're down in the tulleatom underneath of us, listen to them! They're down there chained in the comb, they're down there, they're singing,'* we don't know if at first they said *'Ya right! how long is this gonna last?'* But evidently after awhile the other prisoners are listening intently to this, interesting picture,

### *A Strange Miraculous Earthquake Occurs*

**"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."** (verse 26) hey that is a great quake. Even if it's not big, it's great if all of your chains fall off and all the doors open up, that's a strange quake is what it is. One author, of course I read years ago said, *"Paul and Silas began to sing, and it says when we do that the Lord inhabits our praises, that God sat on his throne and he listened,"* the Bible says *"the joy of the Lord is our strength,"* and what you and I think that means is, [he starts singing off-key], and what that means is

when we try to be happy in bad circumstances, it makes us strong. That's dumb, I don't know how to be happy in bad circumstances. What it says, in the Hebrew, is what gives joy to God is when you and I are strong. The joy of the Lord, his joy, is our strength [i.e. when he sees us being strong in bad circumstances]. When our Father looks down from heaven and he sees us enduring, he sees us trusting him, it brings joy to his heart, the joy of the Lord. What is our Father's joy? What blesses him? He was blessed when he looked down and saw Paul and Silas, he sat on his throne, he listened, they were signing praises. He said to the angels *'I love this song.'* One author said, he started to tap his foot, it says the earth is his footstool, and the earthquake happened, and all the doors opened up in the prison, and all the chains fell off everybody's hands. That's a great quake, strange quake. **“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.” (verse 27)** because the magistrates told him...this is a Roman colony, and these magistrates were from Rome, they weren't local officials, and if this prison-keeper let anyone escape, he would serve the sentence of the prisoners that escaped. That meant if anybody was in there for a capital crime, they would crucify him, they would torture him, they would flog him or scourge him. It was bad enough that this prison keeper took out his sword and said *'rather than fall into the hands of the Romans, I'm going to do myself in,'* **“supposing that the prisoners had been fled.”** it says, he would have taken his own life. **“But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.” (verse 28)** now Paul, he's the head warden in the prison now. “We” he's in charge of everybody. You know, these other prisoners, listened to them singing, and listened to them praying, then the whole prison shakes, evidently they know this earthquake is strange enough, because the iron doors you needed to unlock just to open up, they all swing open, and everybody's chains fall off their hands, they're still locked but fall off their hands, so the prisoners must have looked at Paul and Silas and said *'What are we to do now?'* he said, *'Just stay where you are, now everybody remain calm,'* and the prison keeper's got his sword out, and Paul cries out loud and says **‘Do thyself no harm, we are here, we're all here.’** **“Then he 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?” (verses 29-30)** Now, take note of this too, Paul and Silas weren't singing because they knew it would cause the earthquake and free them.

Paul never read the chapter before. He wasn't saying to Silas *'This will blow your mind, this is one of the chapters I love in the Book of Acts, wait till you see what happens here.'* You and I might try that, in a desperate situation, you might say *'Remember Paul and Silas! let's sing! What do you want to sing? I don't know, just sing anything,'* then you might say to your friend, *'Stop singing, it's worthless...'* That's not why they were singing. It was very genuine, and they didn't know, because there were other times when Paul was in prison, and I'm sure he prayed and sung, and he wasn't freed. This was God's will, something was working here.

### *The Prison-Keeper & His Family Receive Salvation*

He fell down in front of Paul and Silas, the prison keeper, **“And he brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (verse 30)** speaking to both of them. Now, no doubt this prison guard had heard about this young demon possessed girl who for days was crying *'THESE ARE THE SERVANTS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD, COME TO SHOW US THE WAY OF SALVATION,'* and he got tired of hearing it. No doubt he fell asleep that night listening to these guys sing, might have sung him to sleep. He knows that his soul is not right with God. The message has been preached to him, by one means or another, and this night is miraculous enough, in the earthquake, in the singing of these men as they're in a torturous situation, in the fact that none of the prisoners have escaped and his life has been spared, this man's under conviction **‘OK Lord, I'm not right with you, it's obvious you're at work here. What do I have to do to be saved?’** he says. **“And they”** both talking to him **“said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they”** Paul and Silas **“spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.” (verses 31-32)** So Paul shared with the whole family. This is not a Biblical promise that if you're saved your entire house will be saved also. It's not what that is. It certainly is not a doctrine, that if you get saved your house gets saved, because sadly we have many folks in church, and it's hard, with family members that don't get saved. I would say this, on the other hand, if the Lord gives you this verse personally as a promise, never let go of it. God has the right to speak to your heart and to take you to a verse, I may not be able to teach it that way, but he has the right to give us a verse, personally, that makes

application to our lives, that we can hold onto and believe he's given to us. And there have been many that God has given this verse to, **'you will be saved, and so will your household.'** And many have taken hold of that and prayed over it and prayed over it, and seen God move. But what's happening here, is, **'you'll be saved and so will your house,'** the idea is, as they hear the message, then Paul and Silas speak to them, **"and to all that were in his house"** it says he spoke to all of them, and all must have responded, they were there listening, it says **'he speaks to them from the word of the Lord,'** Paul always uses the Word of God, and it's the Old Testament, always uses the Word of God. [Comment: and this study at this link has many, if not most of what Paul had to preach from in the Old Testament Word of God: <https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>] **'You will be saved, and so will your house.'** I'm sure in that process, this Philippian jailor must have said *'But I mistreated you, I was there approving of the beating,'* Paul said *'I stood by and watched Stephen stoned, and approved. I hauled men and women off to prison and made them blaspheme the name of Jesus at the point of a sword, I destroyed the lives of Christians. You're just a lightweight compared to what I have done, and God saved me, and washed me, and cleansed me, and found me faithful and worthy, and placed me in the ministry.'* He must have been a great encouragement to this jailor. **"And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."** (verse 33) Notice, here's this jailor, who had been crass, probably, and very cold before, and he washed their stripes, I'm sure tenderly, their backs are flayed, skinned, he washed their stripes, and then was baptized, he and all of his house straightway, isn't it interesting, **"And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."** (verse 34) That's much, much improvement over suicide, isn't it? a few verses before this he was going to kill himself. This is a way better side of that whole circumstance, rejoicing, sharing a meal with Paul and Silas, washing their wounds on their backs, feeding them, caring for them. And Paul at this point must be looking around saying *'Wow, Lord, you blow my mind. This wasn't actually as bad as getting stoned at Lystra, so I do appreciate that also.'* He's there at their house with them.

*The Magistrates Find Out Paul & Silas Are Romans, Try To  
Send Them Away Quietly*

**“And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.” (verse 35)** So, Paul is back in prison now, as not to get the jailor, his fellow brother in Christ in trouble, Paul and Silas evidently willingly went back that night, because we’re going to see several verses down, **verse 40, ‘when they went out of prison,’** so they go willingly back to this dungeon that they were in, and the magistrates must get word now that these are Roman citizens. Paul must have told them. It was against the law to kill Roman citizens, to crucify them, if a Roman citizen was going to be put to death, he was beheaded, that was fast, it was painless. It was against the law to flog a Roman citizen. So it says **“And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. 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.” (verses 35-36)** **“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.” (verse 37)**...and **“They have beaten us”** now there’s our word, “to skin, to flay,” **“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.” (verse 37b)** **‘You go tell them we’re Roman citizens, they beat us without a cause, which puts them in great jeopardy, the magistrates, and now they just want to brush us off.’** You ever hear anything like that before? [politics and politicians have not changed since Roman times, yup.] **‘and they just want to get rid of us.’** Now Paul is appealing to Roman Law, and the reason he’s doing that, is he knows he’s going to leave Philippi, Philippi may have made a commandment that there couldn’t be synagogues and Jewish worship, but at this time in the Roman empire there’s no law against Christianity, and there’s a church born in the house of Lydia there. And Paul now is taking a stand, that all of the magistrates and law in Philippi will take serious note of, not to mess with the Christians, it will set a precedent that will be helpful for this fledgling church. So he said **‘They beat us, we’re Roman citizens, they want us outa here, let them come and fetch us out.’** **“And the serjeants told these words unto the**

**magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.” (verse 38)** “feared” that word is “to be in terror.” So evidently Silas also had Roman citizenship. **“And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.” (verse 39)** now the magistrates who ordered them to be beaten are begging them. **“they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.”** out of sight, out of mind, you know, if you’d just go away we’ll be happy. Paul is making his point, he’s brought out. And Luke here, changes in **verse 40** to “they,” **“And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.”** the idea is, in the house of Lydia, where this new church was, **“they comforted them,”** we’re not told did they stay a day, two days, three days, and then finally, they departed. And when it says here “they departed” it seems very clear Paul and Silas were gone, but Timothy and doctor Luke stayed in Philippi to work in this new-born church, to teach the believers there and spend time with them. So, whenever we’re reading Luke saying “us and we” we know he’s on the journey, he’s with Paul. When he begins his dialogue and begins to say when “they” had seen the brethren, “they” comforted them and departed, “they” left, with himself and Timothy evidently staying with this new church. Now this church in Philippi becomes extremely dear to Paul. The Philippian letter is one of my favorite letters, and the whole concept of it is that “they are in Christ.” And Paul will write to them from a Roman prison, and as he writes to them, he will make mention of the fact that they blessed him in so many ways. He’ll make mention when he goes on now to Thessalonica, that the Philippian church sends support to him, no doubt Lydia was in the middle of that, this successful woman, this church cared for Paul. He says **‘when none other cared for our needs,’** he says, **‘the Philippian church did,’** this was a very dear church to him. Paul will end up in Rome, and look, Paul will identify himself in Ephesians 4:1, in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians, in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy chapter 1, he calls himself in both places **‘the prisoner of the Lord, I therefore the prisoner of the Lord.’** Paul was never the prisoner of Rome. You know after this circumstance, he realizes God can shake any prison, open any door, make any shackles fall off, I’m not Rome’s prisoner, I’ll never be Rome’s prisoner, I’m the Lord’s prisoner, he’s my Lord, he’s my Master, I’m his prisoner. [Peter discovered that too, when Herod locked him up shackled to two guards, with two others outside the cell guarding, in the depth of the prison in Jerusalem. An angel appeared, shackles fell off,

guards were in a trance, prison gates opened up on their own, he and the angel walk out, he thinking he's in a dream or something.] And he'll write to the Philippians and say **'Hey, I'm here, I'm in the palace, every time I think of you guys I pray, I'm filled with thanksgiving, it really lights up my heart.'** And he said **'It's funny, around the palace in Rome,'** where he's a prisoner, he says, **'Some preach out of contempt, some out of jealousy,'** he said **'I don't care, as long as the Gospel is being spread.'** And you know he was chained to two guards at a time, 24/7, and as far as Paul was concerned, Rome was chained to him, he was not chained to Rome. Rome could not get away from him. And every couple hours he got a new victim to share the Gospel with, and the guy couldn't escape. They must have been putting cotton in their ears before they took their shifts, you know. And Paul, when he writes to the Philippians, in the end of the Book of Philippians, it will say this **"All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesars household."** he said, **'It's good fishing here, lots of Caesar's household have come to the faith,'** **"the saints salute you, chiefly those of Caesars household."** So, this interesting man." [transcript of a connectively expository sermon on Acts 16:16-40, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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