

## THE SONG IN THE PRISON

Acts 16:8-40.

### LESSON 132 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: "At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang" (Acts 16:25).

#### BIBLE TEXT

#### Acts 16:8-40.

8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

### **Another Journey**

In the previous lesson we studied about two missionaries and their first trip. We learned that Paul was a brave worker for Jesus. In this lesson we shall learn about Paul's second missionary journey.

One night Paul saw a vision, which is something like having a dream while one is awake. Paul saw a man stand by him who asked him to come into Macedonia and preach the Gospel to the people there. Paul felt sure that the Lord wanted him to go at once, so he took with him as helpers Luke, Timothy, and Silas, and started for Macedonia.

### **By the River**

When they reached the city of Philippi in Macedonia, far from home and friends, no doubt Paul and his helpers wished to find other friends of Jesus. On the Sabbath Day they wanted to sing songs and talk to God in prayer with those who also knew God, just as every Christian loves to do on God's holy day. Outside the city gates by a riverside were some people who had met to worship God. Paul and the others went there and told about Jesus to all who would listen.

A woman, named Lydia, had brought her family to the riverside that day, not for a picnic but to worship God. She spent her time in prayer and listening to every word spoken by Paul. She and her family were baptized in the river that day.

### **Lydia's Kindness**

How happy she was now! She wished to do something for the missionaries who were so far from home. She was so grateful to the strangers who had told her more about Jesus that she wanted to show her love and thanks to them. We can almost see her as she asks them to

come to her house and stay while in this city. The missionaries are thankful for her kindness, and make their home with Lydia for a time.

Her heart was full of love for Jesus and she proved her love by showing kindness to the followers of Jesus. After all, when we say we love Jesus we must do something to show that we mean what we say. Jesus says in His Word that when we do something for others because we love Jesus, we do it for Him.

### **An Unfortunate Girl**

But just as everything was going nicely for Paul and the others, something unpleasant happened. As they were praying, a girl came along who had an evil spirit upon her. Satan, the wicked one, had given her power to tell people what might happen in the future. Sometimes the devil gives wicked people power to do strange things, but God's Word teaches us that it is wrong to listen to fortune-tellers. Some cruel men were making this girl earn money for them. For many days she followed the preachers and cried out, "These men are the servants of the most high God which shew unto us the way of salvation."

### **The Deliverance**

Paul became troubled because she was following them, and one day he turned toward the girl and commanded the evil spirit to come out of her. God's power was greater than the evil power, which had her bound, and at once she was set free. We can almost hear her say, "Thank you." In our imagination, we see this girl as she runs down the road toward home. Now she can live with her family like other children. She is no longer a slave girl, bound by the power of Satan.

### **Paul and Silas Mistreated**

However, the men who had received money from this girl's fortune-telling, became angry when she no longer worked for them. They took Paul and Silas before the rulers and said that the preachers were causing trouble in their city. The officers commanded these men of God to be beaten. How cruel to treat the preachers so badly for having done a good deed!

Soon we find Paul and Silas cast into prison. The jailer was told to keep them safe. In order to make sure that they did not escape, he locked these men in the inner prison, which was the place used for the worst criminals. If they escaped, no doubt it would mean the jailer would lose his life, so he probably thought, I will make certain that the prisoners shall be safe, and then go to bed and have my rest. So he put their feet into the stocks, which was a wooden frame with holes through which the feet were tightly fastened.

### **Prayer Meeting in Prison**

Let us now look in on these two good men in the dark, dreary prison. It is midnight. Listen! They are talking to their Heavenly Father. Now they are singing. All through the prison may be heard their songs of praise unto God. The other prisoners hear them, but the jailer is fast asleep.

What do Paul and Silas have for which to praise God? Are they not in prison, and their feet fastened in the stocks? We believe they rejoiced to think that God had found them worthy to suffer for Him. Probably they prayed for the jailer and his family and for the cruel men who had beaten their backs.

### **Prison Doors Opened**

God saw these brave men in the prison; He heard the prayers and songs. "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."

But what about the jailer – the man who is responsible for the safekeeping of the prisoners? The songs of praise coming from Paul and Silas had not awakened him; he had not heard the prayers of the two men suffering for Jesus. But when God sent the earthquake, he awoke with a start! When he found the doors of the prison open, it meant only one thing – the prisoners had escaped and he must lose his life. So he took his sword and would have killed himself. But listen! From the inner prison we hear a voice which we recognize as that of Paul: “Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.”

### **The Jailer and His Family**

The keeper of the prison asked for a light to be brought. Trembling, he came in where Paul and Silas were, and fell down before them saying, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” He was sorry for his sins, and wanted Jesus to give him the love that these two preachers had in their hearts. They said to the jailer, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” The two men of God told the Gospel story to the jailer and his family, and they believed every word. Jesus saved every one in the family that very night. The first thing the jailer did was to wash the bleeding backs of the men of God. He took them to his own house and gave them some food. There was much joy in the home of the jailer, for he and his family were saved from their sins and then baptized in water. A sinful home was change into a Christian home because two men prayed and sang praises unto God in a dark prison at midnight.

### **Praises to God**

Let us learn a lesson from Paul and Silas. No matter how great our trouble may seem to be, we have much, very much, for which to be thankful. We should never be ashamed of being heard singing a song of praise to God. If we pray and sing praises instead of murmuring and complaining when things go wrong, we, too, may help someone to be saved, as Paul and Silas did.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What did Lydia do for the men of God? Acts 16:15.
2. What did Paul do for a girl who was possessed with an evil spirit? Acts 16:18.
3. What happened when Paul and Silas prayed and sang in the prison? Acts 16:26.
4. Who was saved because Paul and Silas prayed and sang? Acts 16:33, 34.
5. What did he then do for Paul and Silas? Acts 16:33, 34.

## LESSON RESOURCES

### TOPIC

# THE SONG IN THE PRISON

Lesson 132

Acts 16:8-40

## MUSIC

# Paul And Silas

## Paul' On Sila

d':-s.l.s:-:

s:l: (f:r:)

l:t: (s:m:)

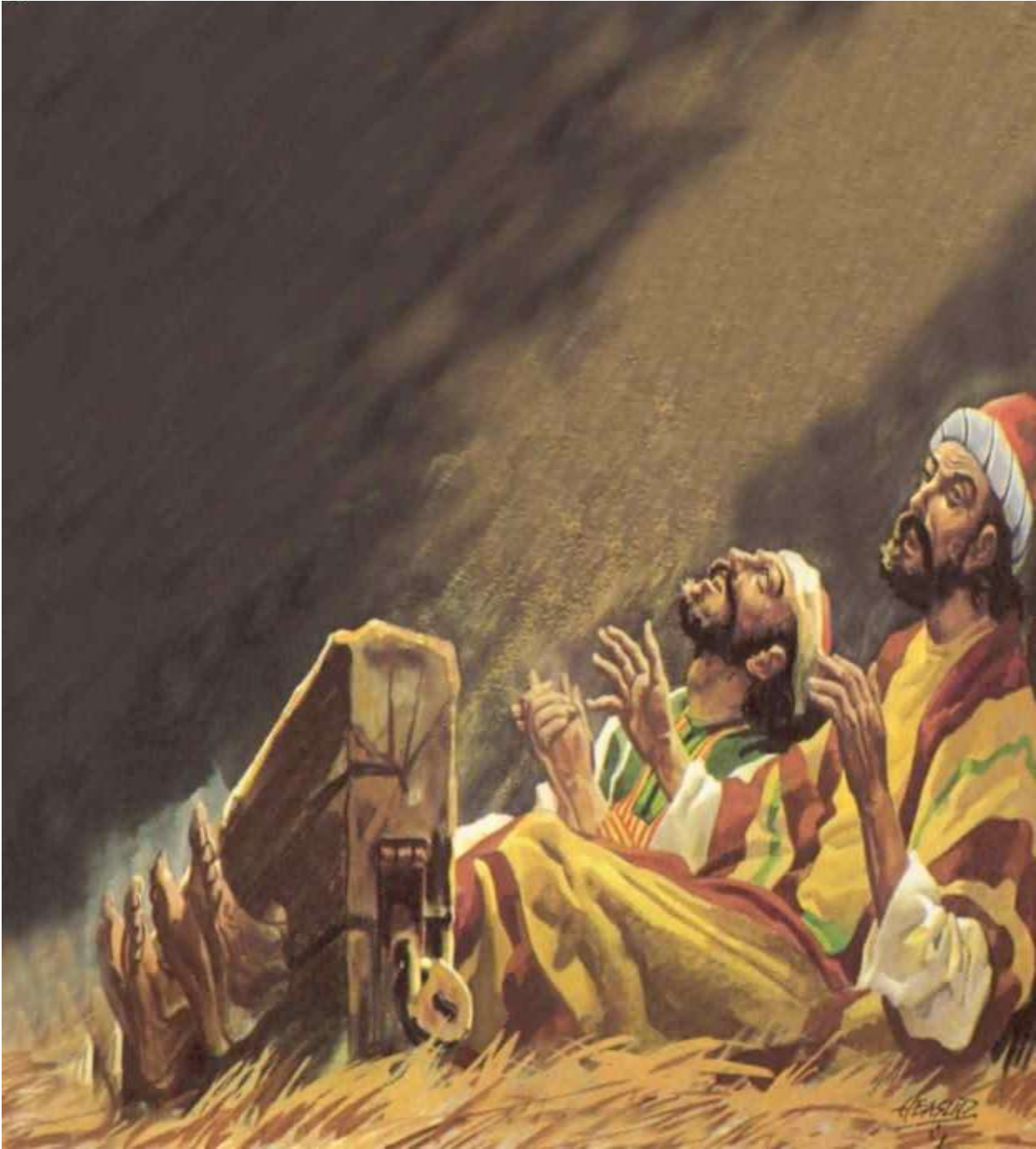
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**SONG**

## **Paul And Silas**

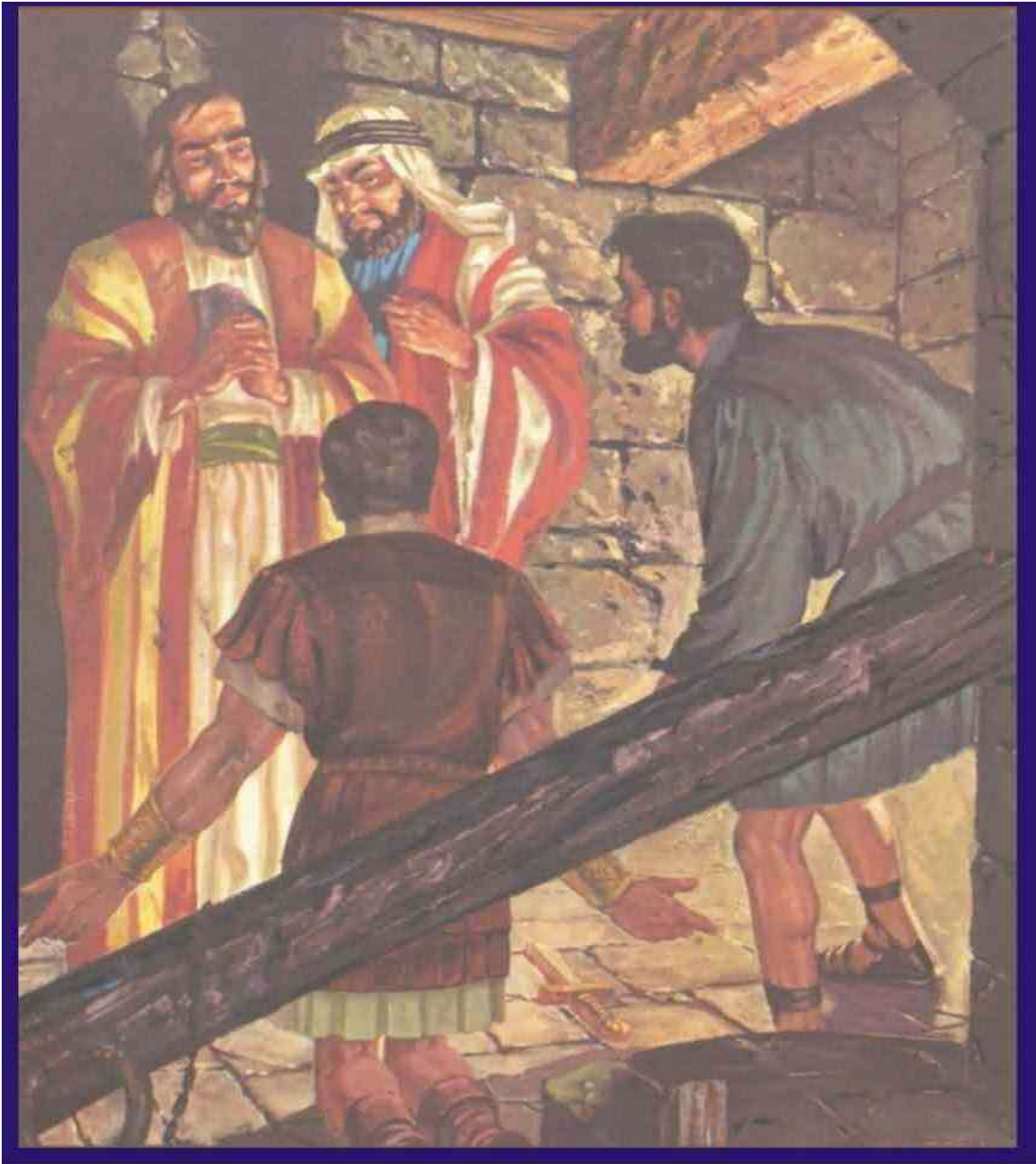
Paul and Silas,  
They prayed(they prayed)  
They sang(they sang),  
The Holy Ghost came down

**PICTURE 1**





**PICTURE 2**



**PICTURE 3**



PICTURE 4

