Paul and Silas at Philippi: Songs at Midnight

Bible Stories Anthology — Acts 16

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> **Romans 15:4** *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

Why These Stories Were Written — Romans 15:4

Paul had just quoted a thousand-year-old psalm and applied it to Christ (Romans 15:3, quoting Psalm 69:9), and then he explained why he could: *whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning*. **Written aforetime** — the scriptures that already stood before this present age of grace opened at Pentecost: the record God gave through Moses, the prophets and the writings, along with the Gospel accounts of Christ's earthly ministry, which belong to that same time before Pentecost. (When Paul wrote these words, the scriptures he had in hand were the Hebrew scriptures; the Gospels had not yet been written down.) **Written for our learning** — "learning" is the Greek word for *teaching*, the very word rendered "doctrine" in 2 Timothy 3:16. These are not quaint tales; they are doctrine in narrative form. Adam, Ruth and David never knew us, but God did, and He had their lives recorded with us in mind — written *for* us, though not all of it written *to* us, which is why we read Israel's history as our instruction and not as our marching orders. **Through patience and comfort of the scriptures** — "patience" is literally *remaining under*, the staying power we gain from watching men and women stay under a load; "comfort" is a *calling alongside*, the strength God brings when He meets them there, which is why Paul calls Him "the God of patience and consolation" in the very next verse. **That we might have hope** — not a wish, but confident expectation: the return of Jesus Christ and everlasting life with Him. That is why these accounts exist, and it is how they should be read.

Singing in the Dark

It was midnight in the inner prison of Philippi. Two men sat in the dark with their backs torn open from a public beating with rods, their feet locked in wooden stocks. They had done nothing wrong. They had set a slave girl free from an evil spirit, and her owners, furious at losing their income, had stirred up a mob.

And the two men were singing.

The other prisoners lay listening in the dark. Then the ground heaved, the walls shook, every door in the prison flew open and every prisoner's chains came loose. The jailer woke, saw the open doors, and drew his sword to kill himself — until a voice called out of the dark: "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." Trembling, he fell at their feet and asked the most important question anyone can ask: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

Before sunrise, the jailer and his whole household had believed. He had washed the prisoners' wounds with his own hands, and set a meal before them in his home. And in the morning the city's magistrates, who had beaten two Roman citizens without a trial, came in person to beg them to leave quietly.

This is how the gospel first came to Europe.

The Setting

When. About A.D. 49–50, on Paul's second missionary journey. With Paul was **Silas** (also called Silvanus), a leader of the church in Jerusalem and a prophet (Acts 15:22, 32). At Lystra they had been joined by a young believer named **Timothy** (Acts 16:1-3). And at Troas, the story begins to say "we" instead of "they" — the writer, **Luke**, had joined the team.

How they got there. They had not planned on Europe. They had tried to go west into the province of Asia, and north into Bithynia, and each time God stopped them:

> **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,*
> **Acts 16:7** *After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.*
> **Acts 16:8** *And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.*
> **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.*
> **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.*

"Forbidden of the Holy Ghost… the Spirit suffered them not." God was leading them — closing doors as well as opening them, by revelation through the gift of holy spirit in them. **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"** (Romans 8:14). Then, at Troas on the coast, came a vision in the night: a man of Macedonia pleading, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." **"Assuredly gathering"** means they put the pieces together and concluded that the Lord had called them.

Philippi. A city in northern Greece, founded by and named after **Philip II of Macedon**, the father of Alexander the Great. In 42 B.C. a great battle was fought outside it, and afterward the Romans settled retired soldiers there and made it a **Roman colony** — a little piece of Rome planted abroad. Its citizens had the rights of Romans, its laws were Roman, and its people were proud to say, "we are Romans." It stood on the **Via Egnatia**, the great Roman road across Macedonia.

No synagogue. Philippi had so few Jews that there was apparently no synagogue. By Jewish custom a synagogue needed ten Jewish men; where there were fewer, the faithful met outdoors, often beside water, at a "place of prayer."

The administration. The age of grace. The gospel had already crossed from Jews to Gentiles; now, for the first time in Acts, it crossed from Asia into Europe.

The Story, Told Faithfully

By the River Side

> **Acts 16:11** *Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;*
> **Acts 16:12** *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.*
> **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.*

"With a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis." The winds were with them: two days' sailing to Neapolis, Philippi's port. (Later the same trip in the other direction took five days, Acts 20:6.) God had called them, and the sea cooperated.

“The chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony.” Luke, who probably had close ties to Philippi, describes it with evident pride.

“On the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made.” “Was wont” means *was customary*. They looked for the place where the God-fearers of the city met to pray — outside the city gate, by a river — probably the Gangites, a little over a mile west of the city. Paul’s custom was to begin with the people who already worshipped the God of Israel.

“We sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.” The first recorded gathering to hear the gospel in Europe was a group of women at a riverside prayer meeting.

Lydia

> **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.*
>
> **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.*

“A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira.” Purple cloth was the costliest fabric in the ancient world — the colour of emperors and the rich. Thyatira, in the province of Asia, was famous for its dyers; inscriptions found there mention their guild. Lydia was a businesswoman, trading in luxury goods far from home, head of her own household.

Notice where she came from. God had **forbidden** Paul to preach in Asia (16:6). And the first convert in Europe was a woman *from Asia*. God did not forget Asia; He sent Asia to the river. (Years later Paul spent two years at Ephesus, and **“all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus,”** Acts 19:10.)

“Which worshipped God.” Like Cornelius, she was a God-fearer — a Gentile who worshipped the God of Israel.

“Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.” Paul spoke; the Lord opened. Preaching is our part; opening hearts is God’s. “Attended” means she paid close attention and took it to heart.

“And when she was baptized, and her household.” Her household — family, servants, workers — believed with her. Here scripture plainly describes a baptism, and this series reads it as written: a real baptism in water, in the river beside which she had first heard.

“If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.” “Constrained” means she *urged them strongly* until they agreed. Her first act as a believer was hospitality. Her house became the meeting place of the first church in Europe (Acts 16:40).

The Girl With a Spirit of Divination

> **Acts 16:16** *And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:*
>
> **Acts 16:17** *The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.*

> **Acts 16:18** *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.*

"A spirit of divination." In Greek, literally *a spirit, a python*. In Greek religion the Python was the serpent that guarded the oracle at Delphi, and the priestess who spoke the oracles there was called the Pythia. A "python" came to mean a spirit that told fortunes. This girl was possessed by such a spirit, and her owners made money from her fortune-telling. God's Law had forbidden all such things: **"There shall not be found among you any one... that useth divination"** (Deuteronomy 18:10).

"These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." Every word was true — so why did it trouble Paul? Because the spirit was not helping. In a city full of gods, "the most high god" could mean Zeus as easily as the God of Israel, and the Greek actually says "*a* way of salvation" — one way among many. And the testimony came from a fortune-teller's spirit, tying the gospel to the occult in people's minds. Evil spirits had cried out the truth about Jesus too — **"I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God"** (Mark 1:24) — and He silenced them. The adversary sometimes tells the truth in order to discredit it.

"This did she many days." Paul waited. He did not act rashly.

"But Paul, being grieved." The word means *worn out, deeply troubled*. Grieved for the girl, enslaved twice over — to her owners and to the spirit — and grieved for the gospel.

"I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour." Paul did not speak to the girl, but to the spirit, and he commanded it in the name of Jesus Christ — by the authority of the risen Lord. The girl was set free.

The Hope of Their Gains Was Gone

> **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,*
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> **Acts 16:20** *And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,*
>
> **Acts 16:21** *And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.*
>
> **Acts 16:22** *And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.*
>
> **Acts 16:23** *And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:*
>
> **Acts 16:24** *Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.*

"When her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone." The spirit had "come out" — and the same Greek word is used of their hope of profit: it too had "gone out." They did not care about the girl. They cared about the money.

"These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city... being Romans." They did not say, "these men cost us our income." They appealed to prejudice and pride: *these Jews* are troubling *us Romans*. The emperor Claudius had recently expelled the Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2), and such a charge would find ready ears.

“The magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.” The magistrates of a Roman colony were attended by officers called *lictors*, who carried bundles of rods as the badge of their authority. Paul and Silas were stripped and beaten with those rods in the marketplace. Paul later wrote, **“Thrice was I beaten with rods”** (2 Corinthians 11:25); this was one of the three. He also wrote to the Thessalonians that they had been **“shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi”** (1 Thessalonians 2:2).

“Many stripes.” No number is given. Roman beatings had no legal limit, unlike the Jewish “forty stripes save one.”

“Thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.” The inner prison was the deepest, darkest cell. The stocks were heavy wooden beams with holes for the ankles, sometimes set to force the legs painfully apart. With torn backs and locked feet, they could neither lie down in comfort nor move.

Songs at Midnight

> **Acts 16:25** *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*
>
> **Acts 16:26** *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.*

“At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God.” Not complaints, not curses — prayer and praise. “Sang praises” is *humneō*, to sing hymns, very likely psalms. Job had asked, **“Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night?”** (Job 35:10). David wrote, **“in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life”** (Psalm 42:8). Years later, Paul wrote to the Philippians from another prison: **“Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice”** (Philippians 4:4). He had practised it in their own jail.

“And the prisoners heard them.” “Heard” here means *listened*. Every prisoner was listening. Sufferings borne with joy preach louder than sermons.

“Suddenly there was a great earthquake.” Macedonia is earthquake country, but this one came at the exact moment, and did exactly what was needed: **“all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed.”** God answered their praise.

Do Thyself No Harm

> **Acts 16:27** *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.*
>
> **Acts 16:28** *But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.*

“He drew out his sword, and would have killed himself.” Under Roman practice a jailer who lost his prisoners could suffer the punishment they had faced (compare Acts 12:19). Believing every prisoner had fled, the jailer saw only disgrace and death ahead, and was about to take his own life.

“But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.” Paul could have walked out. Instead he stayed, and cared for the man who had locked his feet in the stocks. And not one prisoner ran — as this series understands it, the men who had listened to those midnight songs knew

something greater than an earthquake had happened. Paul's first thought was not his own freedom but another man's life.

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

> **Acts 16:29** *Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,*
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> **Acts 16:30** *And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*
>
> **Acts 16:31** *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*
>
> **Acts 16:32** *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.*
>
> **Acts 16:33** *And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.*
>
> **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.*

"He called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas." The jailer who had thrust them into the inner prison now fell at their feet.

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Where had he heard of being "saved"? For many days the slave girl had been crying through the streets that these men showed "the way of salvation." As this series understands it, the jailer had heard it too — and after the midnight songs and the earthquake, he wanted it.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The whole gospel in a single sentence. Not "do penance," not "keep the Law," not "be circumcised" — *believe*. Paul later wrote, **"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"** (Romans 10:9). **"And thy house"** — not that the jailer's faith would save his family for them, but that the same salvation was offered to every one of them on the same terms. Verse 32 shows how: **"they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house."** Every one of them heard; every one believed (verse 34).

"He took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." A beautiful exchange. The jailer washed their wounds, and then he was washed in baptism. Here too scripture plainly describes a baptism, and this series reads it as a real baptism in water — at once, in the middle of the night.

"He set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." "Meat" means a meal. A few hours earlier they had been his prisoners; now they were guests at his table. **"Rejoiced"** — the midnight joy of the prisoners had become the joy of the jailer's whole house.

Let Them Come Themselves

> **Acts 16:35** *And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.*
>
> **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.*
>
> **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.*

> **Acts 16:38** *And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.*
>
> **Acts 16:39** *And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.*

"The magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go." The "serjeants" were the lictors, the rod-bearers who had beaten them the day before. Perhaps the earthquake had frightened the magistrates; perhaps they thought a night in the stocks was punishment enough. Either way, they wanted the matter quietly closed.

"They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans." Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. Roman law strictly forbade beating a citizen without a trial. The magistrates had broken the law of the very Rome they were so proud of — publicly.

Why had Paul not said so the day before? Luke does not tell us. In the uproar of a mob, he may not have been heard. (Years later in Jerusalem he did speak up in time: **"Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?"** Acts 22:25.)

"Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out." This was not pride. As this series understands it, Paul was protecting the young church he was leaving behind. If the preachers slipped away in secret, the believers of Philippi would be left looking like followers of criminals. A public release by the magistrates themselves cleared the gospel's name in the city.

"They feared, when they heard that they were Romans." Now it was the magistrates' turn to be afraid.

"They came and besought them." "Besought" means *begged*. The officials who had ordered the beating came in person and pleaded with them to leave.

Comforted the Brethren

> **Acts 16:40** *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.*

"They went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia." Before leaving town, they went back to the church. The first church in Europe met in the house of a businesswoman from Thyatira, and it included — as far as we can tell — Lydia's household, the jailer's household, and very possibly the girl who had been set free.

"When they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed." The men who had been beaten comforted those who had not. And here the "we" of Luke's account stops; Luke seems to have stayed behind in Philippi. The "we" picks up again years later, when Paul passes through Philippi once more (Acts 20:5-6).

Where the Story Leads

To the Messiah

The name of Jesus Christ. The spirit came out "in the name of Jesus Christ" — by the authority of the risen Lord at God's right hand, who "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts 10:38).

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. The whole way of salvation rests on one Person: the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, was raised from the dead, and ascended to God's right hand.

Suffering and joy. Like their Lord, "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross" (Hebrews 12:2), Paul and Silas endured the rods and the stocks with praise.

To the Grace Administration

Salvation is by believing. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." No works, no rituals, no background required — a jailer at midnight, a businesswoman at a river, a slave girl in the street.

Our citizenship is in heaven. The Philippians were proud of being Roman citizens in a Roman colony. Paul later wrote to them: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20). The word translated "conversation" means *citizenship*. Believers are a colony of heaven on earth, awaiting the return of their Lord.

Partners in the gospel. The church born in Lydia's house became Paul's most faithful supporters. "No church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only" (Philippians 4:15). "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you… For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now" (Philippians 1:3, 5).

Led by God. God closed doors in Asia and Bithynia and opened one in Macedonia. He leads His people today by the same gift. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14).

Suffering is not a sign of being outside God's will. Paul and Silas went exactly where God had called them — and were beaten and jailed there. God's calling and their suffering were in the same city on the same day. And the suffering became the doorway to the jailer's salvation.

Singing in the dark. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God" (Ephesians 5:19-20).

To the Topic of Rejoicing in Trouble

- **Pray and sing** when it hurts. Praise is not denial; it is trust.
- **Someone is listening.** "The prisoners heard them."
- **Care for others in your own trouble.** "Do thyself no harm."
- **Answer the question simply.** "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."
- **Stand up for the truth wisely**, so that others are not left under a cloud.
- **Comfort others** even when you are the one who was hurt.

The Main Takeaway

God led His servants into Europe by closing doors and opening one; He opened a businesswoman's heart by a river, set a slave girl free, and answered midnight songs in a prison with an earthquake —

and a jailer who asked "What must I do to be saved?" heard the simplest answer in the Bible: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

- **God leads by closed doors as well as open ones.**
- **The Lord opens hearts**; we speak the word.
- **Not every true-sounding voice is from God.**
- **Praise in the dark** is heard — by men and by God.
- **Care about your enemies' lives.**
- **Salvation is by believing** on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Our true citizenship is in heaven.**

For Our Learning — The People

- **Paul.** The apostle, on his second journey, led by God into Macedonia; a Roman citizen.
- **Silas (Silvanus).** A leader and prophet of the Jerusalem church, Paul's companion; also a Roman citizen; beaten and imprisoned with him.
- **Timothy.** A young believer from Lystra who joined Paul's team (16:1-3); later co-writer of the letter to the Philippians (Philippians 1:1).
- **Luke.** The writer of Acts, who joined at Troas ("we") and seems to have stayed in Philippi.
- **The man of Macedonia.** Seen by Paul in a night vision, pleading for help.
- **Lydia.** A seller of purple cloth from Thyatira; a God-fearer; the first recorded convert in Europe; host of the church in her house.
- **The damsel with a spirit of divination.** A slave girl whose fortune-telling earned money for her owners; set free in the name of Jesus Christ.
- **Her masters.** Who dragged Paul and Silas to the magistrates when their income was lost.
- **The magistrates.** The chief officials of the Roman colony, who had the prisoners beaten without trial.
- **The serjeants (lictors).** Officers who carried rods, carried out the beating, and later brought the order of release.
- **The jailer.** Who locked Paul and Silas in the stocks, nearly took his own life, asked how to be saved, and believed with all his house.
- **The prisoners.** Who heard the midnight songs and did not flee.

For Our Learning — Customs and Orientalisms

- **Roman colonies.** Cities settled by Roman citizens (often retired soldiers), governed by Roman law, proud of their Roman status.
- **Places of prayer.** Where there was no synagogue, Jews and God-fearers met outdoors, often by a river.
- **Purple cloth.** Dyed with costly dyes; worn by royalty and the wealthy; Thyatira was known for its dyers.
- **Households.** A household included family members, servants and dependants under its head.

- **Hospitality.** Receiving travelling teachers into one's home was a mark of faith and love.
- **Fortune-telling.** The "python" spirits of Greek religion were believed to foretell the future; owners of such slaves profited from them.
- **Lictors and rods.** Roman magistrates were attended by officers carrying bundles of rods, used for public beatings.
- **Roman citizens' rights.** A citizen could not lawfully be beaten without trial.
- **The inner prison and stocks.** The deepest, darkest cell, with wooden stocks to lock the feet.
- **Jailers' responsibility.** A jailer who lost prisoners could face their punishment.
- **Night watches.** Midnight was the middle of the night, the darkest and quietest hour.

For Our Learning — Figures of Speech

A figure of speech is a deliberate departure from the plain, ordinary way of saying something, used by God to add emphasis and feeling. These are the ones in this story:

- **Metaphor** — speaking of one thing as another. "Whose heart the Lord opened" (16:14); "the way of salvation" (16:17).
- **Metonymy** — one thing put for another closely related. "Thy house" (16:31), for the people of the household; "the name of Jesus Christ" (16:18), for His authority.
- **Idiom** — "assuredly gathering" (16:10), concluding with confidence; "was wont to be made" (16:13), was customary; "set meat before them" (16:34), served them a meal.
- **Wordplay** — the spirit "came out" of the girl, and the masters' hope of gain "was gone" (the same Greek verb, 16:18-19).
- **Idiom** — "nay verily" (16:37), "no indeed," a strong refusal.

What the Bible Actually Says

- **God forbade them to preach in Asia and Bithynia**, and called them to Macedonia by a vision.
- **The first recorded convert in Europe was Lydia**, a woman from Asia.
- **The Lord opened her heart.**
- **Lydia's and the jailer's baptisms were real baptisms in water.**
- **The slave girl spoke true words**, but Paul cast out the spirit that spoke through her.
- **Her masters were angry about money**, not about truth.
- **Paul and Silas were beaten without a trial**, which Roman law forbade.
- **They prayed and sang at midnight.**
- **None of the prisoners escaped.**
- **The answer to "What must I do to be saved?" was "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."**
- **The jailer's whole household heard the word and believed.**
- **The magistrates came in person to release them.**

God’s Will and Intent

- **God leads His people** where He wants the gospel to go.
- **God opens hearts** to hear His word.
- **God sets captives free** from evil spirits.
- **God wants everyone saved** — businesswoman, slave girl, jailer.
- **God hears the praises of His people in the night.**
- **God wants salvation received by believing**, not earned.
- **God turns suffering into a door** for the gospel.
- **God makes His people citizens of heaven.**