



A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- Acts 16
- Today we find Paul back at Lystra, the city where he had been stoned, and left for dead.
- It was also here that Barnabas and Paul had severed their missionary partnership.

- On this second return to Lystra, Paul was rewarded by the emergence of a young convert who was destined to be a faithful companion of the great apostle,
- And whose name would adorn two of the 27 New Testament books.

- But there was a bit of a problem.
- Timothy was half Jewish, half Greek.
- His father was a Greek but his mother was a Jew, and, according to the Jews, this made him a Jew

- The amazing thing is that Paul circumcised Timothy,
- While earlier he had refused to do the same to Titus.
- This is not recorded in Acts, but from a parallel passage in Galatians
- We have learned that he had taken Titus, who was a Greek, with him up to Jerusalem.

- The Jewish brethren there wanted to circumcise Titus, but Paul absolutely refused.
- He was adamant because to have permitted it would have been a concession to the idea that you had to become a Jew in order to become a Christian.

- In any situation involving customs and rituals the governing rule is to find the underlying principle at stake, and to act accordingly.

- So what is the governing principle here? ⁷

- In the case of Titus,
it would have
been devastating
to have circumcised him.
- It would have meant
yielding to the whole
concept of legalism.

- But the case of Timothy is different.
- Timothy is looked upon as a Jew,
 - And in order not to offend the Jews among whom he must labor
 - Paul submits to this Old Testament ritual and circumcises Timothy.

- "I became all things to all men, in order that I might win some," (1 Corinthians 9:22).
- Paul accommodated himself to the prejudices and preferences of men so far as he could
 - Without sacrificing truth and righteousness, in order to win them to Christ.

- **Paul was under no obligation** whatever to keep the forms and ceremonies of the law of Moses;
- Yet he observed and kept such things in circumstances **where his failure to do it would have antagonized the Jews,**
- And where their observance **did not violate the spirit of the new law** in Christ Jesus.

- Thus, Paul shaved his head;
(**Acts 18:18**)
- But there is no record that he ever ate the Jewish Passover.
 - As he said,
"Christ is our Passover."
(**1 Corinthians 5:7**)

- In Acts 16:9

A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing beseeching him and saying,

- "Come over to Macedonia and help us."
- **And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.**
(**Acts 16:9-10** RSV)

- And notice something else that is interesting here.
- This is where Luke joins the party.
 - In Verse 8, Luke says, "they went down to Troas."
- But when you come to Verse 10, it is "And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach ..."

- **Verse 4**
- **And as they went on their way through the cities, (Derbe & Lystra) they delivered them the decrees to keep, which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem.**
- The message being that Gentiles were not to be burdened **by circumcision and law-keeping;**

- Paul protected them against the devices of the **Judaizers**.
- This was the position Paul had required the **apostles** and **elders** in Jerusalem to accept.

- The **four** prohibitions regarding:
 - **idols**,
 - **fornication**,
 - **blood**
 - **things strangled**
- were grounded **not** in the law of Moses primarily,
- But in God's teachings which **preceded the Mosaic covenant** (**Genesis 9:3-5**).

- **Verse 5**

- **So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.**
- Having been freed, for the time being, from the troublesome insistence of the Judaizers, the churches prospered **spiritually** and **numerically.**

- The issue, however, was not dead;
- The Pharisee-Christians would continue to trouble the whole world of that day by their efforts to subvert Christianity by mixing elements of Judaism with it;

- And the issue would not be effectively removed until the armies of Vespasian and Titus removed the Jewish state, the daily sacrifices, and the temple itself in 70 A.D., a full twenty years later.
 - The books of Hebrews, Romans, Galatians were addressed, in part, to this very issue.

- How strange it is that the Judaizers have never disappeared.
- Even now the Judaizers are still in business:
 - (1) attempting to bind sabbath-observance on Christians,
 - (2) dragging instruments of music into the worship.

- (3) devising daily "sacrifices," such as that of the Mass,
- (4) ordaining a "priesthood" separate from the "laity,"
- (5) the lighting of sacred candles,
- (6) the requirement of certain periods of official, formal fasts, and
 - (7) the imposition of diet restrictions, etc.

- In verse 16 we find Paul in the city of Phillipi of Macedonia.
 - It was here that the gospel message was planted by means of the conversions related in this chapter.

- **Verse 13**

- **And on the sabbath day we went forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the women that were come together.**

- There was no synagogue
in Philippi,
but whatever Jews might have
been in the area
could have been expected to
observe prayers on the sabbath,
and the preachers
"supposed" such a place
of prayer to be a certain site
on the river's edge.

- The fact of there having been no synagogue means that there were fewer than ten Jewish men living in Philippi,
 - That being the number required before a synagogue could be built.
 - The custom of going to the rivers for worship dates back to the Babylonian captivity. (Psalms 137:1; Ezra 8:15,21).

- In his ministry here at Philippi
Paul met three different kinds of sinners
and saw **two** won to Christ:
 - **Verse 14**
- **And a certain woman named Lydia,
a seller of purple,
of the city of Thyatira,**
- **one that worshiped God, heard us:
whose heart the Lord opened to give
heed unto the things which
were spoken by Paul.**

- Lydia, a seller of purple ...
- An expensive purple dye,
made of the murex shell,
was one of the most valuable
commodities of antiquity;
- This was the dye that gave rise
to the words "royal purple,"
 - Suggested by the fact that
royalty and the extremely rich
were the principal purchasers of it.

- One that worshiped God ...
 - These words emphasize the deeply religious character of Lydia.
 - Whose heart the Lord opened to give heed ...
- The obvious means by which God opened the heart of Lydia was that of preaching the gospel to her.

- Since God gave the gospel, the results produced by it were properly said to be God's action.
- There is not the slightest suggestion of any direct action of the Holy Spirit,
- Other than the words of the gospel.
 - It was Jesus who said:
The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.
(**John 6:63**)

- Verse 15

- **And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there.
And she constrained us.**

- **All** New Testament conversions end with the baptism of the convert.
- **Not** with their prayer experience,
 - **Not** with their testimony,
 - **But** with their baptism.

- And why was she baptized?
 - Why would a Jew who had never heard a gospel sermon be baptized?
 - Because the commandment to obey the Lord was included in Great Commission. (**Matthew 28:19-20**)
 - There being no other reasonable explanation of why she was baptized.

- And her household ...
- The allegation that this household included infants is denied by the earlier statements that the evangelists "spake unto the women that were come together" (**Acts 16:13**),
- Thus making it mandatory to find Lydia's household in that group of women.
- And offering no support whatever for the notion that infants should be baptized.

- **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:**

- **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.**

- **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.

- On their way to prayer

Paul and Silas

meet up with a slave girl
and cried, saying,

These men are the servants
of the most high God,
which shew unto us
the way of salvation.
(Acts 16:16-18).

- Her words appeared to be friendly to the apostles, as though she were promoting the work of the Lord.
- But Christ never needs Satan's help in promoting the Gospel.
- This testimony was a hindrance, not a help; and Paul put a stop to it.

- The ancient world had a strange respect for mad people because, they said, the gods had taken away their wits in order to put the mind of the gods into them.
- Therefore, they were deemed special.

- That the father of lies,
the Devil,
sometimes speaks
the truth,
though, never for
truth's sake,
but for his own advantage:

Actually this was a very
dangerous satanic attack

upon the gospel.

The Devil knows
that the gospel

is the power of God
unto salvation.

(Romans 1:16)

- He transforms himself now into an angel of light.
(2 Corinthians 11:14)

- The testimony of truth from the father of lies, is enough to render truth itself suspected.

- So what is Satan's scheme?

- **Satan's scheme is now revealed.**
- **Acts 16:19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone,**
 - **16:20 they brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,**
 - **16:22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.**
- **16:23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:**

- Let us observe that **love of money** was the root of all this persecution.
(**1 Timothy 6:10**)
- And Satan uses this love **to his cause.**

- So he was already prepared to adopt his most powerful tactic:
- To derail their proclamation right at the beginning
- By appearing to be in line with it,
 - By attempting to form an alliance.

The devil has
two basic approaches:

- **# 1 Apparent alliance**

- **# 2 Outright attack**

- Of the two,
**alliance is by far
the more dangerous**
because it appears
to be so helpful.

- What this girl said is **absolutely true.**
- These men were indeed **servants of the Most High God,**
- And had indeed come **to declare the way of salvation.**
(**Acts 16:17**)

- So, you might ask,
why didn't they welcome this?
- In the Gospels we are told that wherever Jesus went, the evil spirits would cry out:
"Thou art the Son of the Most High God!"
(**Mark 5:7-8** KJV).
- And Jesus would always rebuke them,
"Hold your peace."
He did not want that.
Why?

- For two reasons:
 - First, if men are drawn to him on that basis, they always come with a wrong motive of self-interest.

- Second,
The Devil,
the father of lies,
will use truth to
further his cause.

- That is the story of every cult which bears the name of Christianity in the world today.
- They all began with a proclamation of truth,
- But soon error began to be intermingled wit truth.

- Next, we read about an unlikely conversion.
- It takes little imagination to see that this Roman jailer was a typical calloused official with no sympathy for man and no interest in Christ.

- Even though Paul and Silas had been humiliated and beaten, the jailer added to their sufferings by thrusting them into the inner prison and putting their feet in the stocks.
- Then he went about his business and finally went to sleep for the night.
(Acts 16:19-40).

- We find Paul and Silas praising God instead of complaining!
- Maybe remembering the words of David:
“At night His song is with me”
(**Psalms 42:8**)

- So it is no wonder that the jailer,
on awakening,
tried to commit suicide.
 - He was first
reduced to despair,
 - And next led to
hope in Christ.
- It is the will of God to all:
Do thyself no harm.
(2 Peter 3:9)

- **Acts 6:29**

Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

- **16:30** **And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**

- **How** did this man know he was lost?

- Where did he get **information**?

- **Acts 16:31** And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.
- **Act 16:32** And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.
 - Why
“speak unto him the word of the Lord”?

- The text implies that he was an immediate believer before being baptized.
- But it was after they all heard “word of the Lord” that they were baptized.
(**Acts 16:32**)
 - And not before!

- The promise of salvation was to all of the jailer's household (Acts 16:31);
- The preaching was heard by the household (Acts 16:32);
- All the household was baptized (Acts 16:33);
 - But it was because all the household believed (Acts 16:34)!

- **By no stretch of the imagination**
can we conceive of
infants understanding
the Word and believing!
- The jailer proved he had
truly been converted
by washing the apostles' wounds
and feeding them in his own house.
- **What a chance**
this jailer was taking.

- Some Christians are puzzled by Paul's actions in (Acts 16:35-40).

- Why did Paul humiliate the Roman officials by making them settle the case openly?

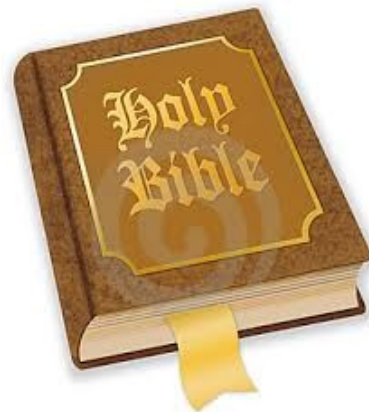
- Paul was simply making use of his Roman citizenship and legal rights to give proper respect to the Gospel and the church.

- **Christ takes the weak things of the world and confounds the mighty.**
(1 Corinthians 1:27)
- The nucleus of that church was made up of
 - **a wealthy woman,**
 - **and a Roman jailer!**
- But such is the grace of God.

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



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