

TITLE AND NUMBER: 239 Paul and Silas in prison

REFERENCE AND KEY VERSES: Acts 16:25-31

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, 'Don't harm yourself! We are all here!' The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household.'

LOOKING FURTHER: Romans 10:9; Jeremiah 32:17; Luke 1:37, Acts 16:16-24

What does the Bible passage tell us?

Today one in seven Christians worldwide are being persecuted or discriminated against for their faith. It was the same for Paul and Silas in Macedonia. They were also persecuted when they preached the Gospel and miraculous things happened. In verses 16-24, men who were exploiting a young girl to be a fortune teller lost their lucrative livelihood when the girl was set free from her oppression. Consequently, Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into prison with the most extreme conditions of imprisonment. Even in the worst of circumstances, they prayed and worshipped God at midnight. And everyone in the prison heard them. God had an answer to their predicament – an earthquake which opened every door in the prison. Just imagine!

Understandably, the jailer was beside himself. Fearing punishment, he was about to take his own life. But, when God acts, there is always a positive side to what He does, even if we can't see it initially. Not a single prisoner went missing. Paul and Silas were released, they preached the Gospel to the jailer, and he asked the most important question ever – 'What must I do to be saved?' Paul's response? 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and everyone else in your household.' They heard the Good News of Jesus, responded to it and were baptised, too.

All the people in today's passage learned that, 'With God, nothing is impossible' (Jeremiah 32:17; Luke 1:37). Whatever situation we find ourselves in, God has a plan for our lives. But, we have to be willing for Him to work with us. We all need to repent of our sin and put our trust in Him. If we do, then God will surprise us and change our lives forever.

Reflections

- What surprises you in today's passage?
- What would you ask God to do for you today?
- Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in your response to Him.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for?
It's okay to talk to God about this.

