

Acts 16:1-35

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Timothy Joins Paul and Silas (1-5)



Paul's Second Missionary Journey

1 He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. 2 The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. 4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

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http://www.bible-history.com/maps/maps/map_pauls_second_missionary_journey.html

Bible History Online

The map illustrates Paul's second missionary journey across the Eastern Mediterranean region. It shows the Black Sea to the north and the Mediterranean Sea to the south. Key geographical features include the Taurus Mountains, the Meander River, and the island of Cyprus. Major cities and regions are labeled, such as Macedonia, Greece, Asia, Phrygia, Galatia, Cilicia, Syria, and Israel. The journey is marked with numbered points (1-10) indicating the sequence of events. A white circle highlights the locations of Lystra and Derbe, with a '2' next to Lystra. A red box highlights the region of Asia Minor, with a red arrow pointing to the location of Jerusalem. The text on the left provides a detailed account of the journey, focusing on the events at Lystra and Derbe.

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas (1-5)

- *...Timothy...whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek...The brothers...spoke well of him (1-2)*
 - Timothy had a good reputation in the local fellowship
 - This speaks well of his suitability for Christian service (1Ti 3:7-10)
- *Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek (3)*
 - Recall that when Paul took Titus to Jerusalem, Titus was not compelled to be circumcised (Gal 2:1-5)
 - Despite this and the recent conclusion of the Jerusalem Council that circumcision is no longer required, Paul circumcises Timothy.
 - Why? Probably because of the principle from the Council that the Gentiles not give offense to the Jews (14:20; cf. 1Co 9:19-20)

Paul's Vision of the Man of Macedonia (6-10)



The map, titled "Paul's Second Missionary Journey," shows the region of Asia Minor and the surrounding seas. Key locations are marked with numbered circles: 1 (Antioch, Syria), 2 (Lystra, Derbe), 3 (Troas, Mysia), 4 (Philippi, Neapolis, Macedonia), 5 (Thrace), 6 (Macedonia), 7 (Achaia), 8 (Cenchreae), 9 (Ephesus), and 10 (Jerusalem). The map also labels the Black Sea, Aegean Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Meander River, and Taurus Mountains. A red box highlights the region of Macedonia, with a red arrow pointing to it from the text below.

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

⁶ Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.

⁷ When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹ During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

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Paul's Vision of the Man of Macedonia (6-10)

- *Paul and his companions traveled...having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching...in the province of Asia...they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to (6-7)*
 - The missionaries seem to be wandering at this point
 - Are they like Abraham, who obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going (Heb 11:8)?
 - Or have they gotten ahead of God by moving presumptuously, without the Spirit's blessing or the blessing of the church?
- *Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia...we conclud[ed] that God had called us to preach the gospel to them (9-10)*
 - Finally, there is clear leading from the Lord
 - Indeed, God's will is confirmed by the successful ministry in Macedonia (cf. Ex 3:12)
 - Notice that now it's not just Paul and company but "we" (including Luke)

Lydia's Conversion in Philippi (11-15)



The map, titled "Paul's Second Missionary Journey," shows the route of Paul and his companions across the Eastern Mediterranean. The journey is marked with numbered stops from 1 to 10. Stop 1 is in Antioch, Syria. Stop 2 is in Lystra, Asia. Stop 3 is in Troas, Mysia. Stop 4 is in Neapolis, Macedonia. Stop 5 is in Philippi, Macedonia. Stop 6 is in Berea, Macedonia. Stop 7 is in Athens, Achaia. Stop 8 is in Corinth, Achaia. Stop 9 is in Ephesus, Asia. Stop 10 is in Jerusalem, Israel. The map also labels various regions like Macedonia, Greece, Asia, and the Black Sea, and cities like Thessalonica, Berea, Philippi, Neapolis, Troas, Ephesus, Lystra, Antioch, and Jerusalem. A red box highlights the area around Philippi, and a white oval highlights the Macedonia region.

11 From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. **12** From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

13 On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. **14** One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. **15** When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

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Lydia's Conversion in Philippi (11-15)

- *Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia (12)*
 - The missionaries—and the gospel—have finally arrived in Europe
 - In a Roman colony, all freemen were regarded as having all the rights of Roman citizens; Paul played upon this fact when he later wrote to the Philippians, “But our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil 3:20)
- *And we stayed there several days (12)*
 - This is, perhaps, not what they might have expected from the vision of a man specifically asking for help
 - Instead, they find themselves in the appointed field for ministry with apparently nothing to do!
- *On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river (13)*
 - That there was no synagogue suggests that the Jewish community was small
 - That there were no men at the prayer meeting suggests that men back then were much like men today: too busy with their work and other activities for prayer!
- *Lydia...a worshiper of God...and the members of her household were baptized*
 - These are the first Christian converts in Europe

Paul Drives Out A Spirit (16-21)

¹⁶ Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling.

¹⁷ This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." ¹⁸ She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

¹⁹ When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. ²⁰ They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar ²¹ by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."

Paul Drives Out A Spirit (16-21)

- *Paul...said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!” (18)*
 - Paul was not interested in the testimony of demons!
 - This is reminiscent of what Jesus did in Capernaum (Lk 4:33-35)
- *[T]he owners of the slave girl...seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities (19)*
 - The owners lashed out at Paul because he had taken away their livelihood
 - This is serious of course for obvious reasons. Further, taking a man's livelihood as security for a debt was forbidden (Dt 24:6)
- *These men are Jews... (20)*
 - No distinction in Philippi between Jews and Christians (cf. 11:26)
 - This appeal to race prejudice would be especially pertinent because of the recent decree of Claudius expelling Jews from Rome (18:2)^[6]
- *[U]nlawful for us Romans (21)*
 - “Romans” in contrast to the “Jews” who have stirred up this trouble
 - Most probably, however, these slave owners are motivated by zeal for money rather than zeal for Rome!

Paul And Silas In Prison (22-28)

²² The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. ²³ After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. ²⁴ Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. ²⁷ 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. ²⁸ But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

Paul And Silas In Prison (22-28)

- *The crowd joined the attack (22)*
 - Probably a sudden and violent uprising of the people rather than an actual attack since Paul and Silas were in the hands of the officers
 - Though it was unlawful with Paul and Silas being Roman citizens, orders were probably given for Paul and Silas to be stripped of their outer garments
 - Why doesn't Paul here assert his rights as a Roman citizen as he does later (v. 37) and in Jerusalem (22:26f.)?
 - Possibly because it would have done no good in this hubbub and no opportunity was allowed for deference of any kind^[6]
- *...severely flogged...thrown into prison...guard[ed] carefully...in the inner cell...their feet in the stocks (23-24)*
 - The Roman public prisons had a vestibule and outer prison and behind this the inner prison, a veritable dungeon with no light or air save what came through the door when open^[6]
- *Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. (25)*
 - Count it all joy when you fall into various trials (James 1:2-8)
 - Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances (1Th 5:16-18)

Paul And Silas In Prison (22-28)

- ⊙ *...there was...a violent earthquake...all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose (26)*
 - Note “all” and “everybody’s”
 - Paul and Silas’ faith released God’s grace in abundance (Ro 5:17)
 - Luke draws us to the conclusion that this was a miracle (cf. 4:31)
- ⊙ *The jailer...drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped (27)*
 - No one had escaped, perhaps because they were panicked by what had just happened (28)
 - Not knowing this, the jailer is about to kill himself, probably because he is responsible for the prisoners with his life (cf. 12:19)

The Philippian Jailer (29-34)

²⁹ And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰ and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household." ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. ³⁴ The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God--he and his whole family.

The Philippian Jailer (29-34)

- *Sirs, what must I do to be saved? (30)*
 - A man in the position of this jailer (poised and ready to die) is ready to think about eternity!^[2]
 - The testimony of Paul and Silas was such that the jailer both knew that he was lost and who could help him be saved
- *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household. (31)*
 - The same thing Peter told Cornelius (10:43)
 - Not that the jailer's belief would save his household
 - Rather, the way of salvation is the same for his household as for him
- *Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. (32)*
 - In order for the household to believe, first they must hear the gospel
 - Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. (Rom 10:17)

The Philippian Jailer (29-34)

- *At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. (33)*
 - Since Paul and Silas had been “severely flogged” (v.23), they were in need of such treatment as this for their wounds
 - The very man who had put them into the dungeon with their feet in the stocks now ministers to his prisoners
 - This changed life is evidence of salvation (1Co 15:10) and it is precisely because he and his household have been saved that they are baptized, for baptism too is a testimony of a changed life
 - Baptism speaks of death to what we were and a new life (Ro 6:4ff.)
 - As circumcision was the mark of old covenant faith, baptism is the mark of new covenant faith (Col 2:11-12)

Paul And Silas Released (35-40)

³⁵ When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: "Release those men." ³⁶ The jailer told Paul, "The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace."

³⁷ But Paul said to the officers: "They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out."

³⁸ The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. ³⁹ They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city. ⁴⁰ After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then they left.

Paul And Silas Released (35-40)

- *“They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out.” (37)*
 - Notice how Paul forcefully asserts the illegality of the treatment which he and Silas had received.
 - Paul's claim to Roman citizenship was not challenged either here or in 22:27
 - It was a capital offense to make a false claim to Roman citizenship^[6]
 - A Christian is not to be a door-mat in the world; rather, he has his place like everyone else to appeal to the civil authorities for justice
 - Paul's reason for insisting upon a public recognition of their innocence was to protect the new believers whom he would soon be leaving there in Phillipi,^[2] setting a precedent as it were

Bibliography

- [1] Scripture from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society
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