

This is Paul's **Second Missionary** Journey- which lasted **three years**.

- He desired to visit the churches he had planted to make sure they were strengthened.

Acts 16:12-40

The Conversion of Lydia

12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days.

- Philippi was a Roman colony. Roman colonies were usually strategic centres. In them, Rome planted little groups of army veterans who had completed their military service. Nowhere was there greater pride in Roman citizenship than in these outposts of Rome.
- Luke, who is the author of Acts, may have gone to medical school there. It had a famous school of medicine with graduates from throughout the then-known world.

13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.

- You couldn't just walk into the main street of a major city in the ancient world and begin preaching. The authorities would have you picked up in no time. You needed a base, a place from which to operate. And Paul's habit, for good theological reasons, had been as we have seen to begin where the local Jews were worshipping. That normally meant the synagogue.
- The Jewish population at Philippi must have been limited, for there was no synagogue there; 10 Jewish males were required for a synagogue.
- Failing this, a place of prayer (*proseuchē*) under the open sky and near a river or the sea was to be arranged for.
- The river is flowing and moving like the spirit.

14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of **Thy-a-tie-ra**, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

- Lydia came from the very top end of the social scale; she was a purple-merchant. The purple dye had to be gathered drop by drop from a certain shellfish (the size of a shrimp(bleed out) and so was extremely costly.

- Romans incorporated purple cloth into clothing to signify "rank, so the demand for her product gave her a lot of business.
- She was a worshiper of God, a term used for Gentiles.

15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

- That she was a woman of considerable means is evidenced by the size of her **house**. It would have to be large enough to house four men as well as her household.

Paul and Silas in Prison

16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling.

- The English words, a spirit by which she predicted the future, translate two Greek words, "a spirit, a python." This concept goes back to the Greek city of Delphi where the god Apollo was believed to be embodied in a python snake.
- Apollo was able to predict the future; therefore, anyone possessed by the python spirit could foretell coming events.
- Generals throughout history have relied heavily on the services of fortune-tellers to indicate the best time for battle and to inspire their troops with favorable predictions.
- Someone with her abilities would have had a giant client base among the Romans in Philippi.

17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

- Annoyed- better translation, means grieved.
- She was a double slave to a man and the devil.

19 But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice."

- Shortly before this incident the Emperor Claudius had expelled the Jews from Rome Philippi, a Roman colony, would have been influenced by this.
- They accused the men of "throwing our city into confusion.

- “In most ancient cities, the marketplace was a public spacelike a flea market.
- the marketplace usually included a “judgment seat” a raised stone platform from which government officials tried cases.

22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

- **“inner prison”** This means maximum security.
- Not only their feet but also their hands and their necks were held in the stocks.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to 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 everyone's bonds were unfastened.

- This was a district where earthquakes were by no means uncommon.
- The door was locked by a wooden bar falling into two slots,
- The earthquake shook the bar free, and the prisoners were freed from their chains and the door was open.

27 When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

- The jailer was about to kill himself because Roman law said that if a prisoner escaped the jailer must suffer the penalty the prisoner would have suffered.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” 29 And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. 30 Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 31 And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

Reaching these 3 people came at a high cost.

To scourge, a Roman citizen was a crime punishable by death.