

**July 27**

**Scriptures:** Read Acts 16

**Key Verse:** "...Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30)

## **Overview**

There aren't many places in Acts where Luke includes himself in the narrative, but here's one occasion when he does. "Once when we were going to the place of prayer," he recounts, 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" (v.16). He goes on to say that 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!'" Strange isn't it? An evil spirit making such a clear proclamation of the apostles' purpose—but then, maybe we shouldn't be surprised. The gospels include many accounts of evil spirits testifying loudly to the deity and purpose of Jesus. They live in the spirit realm—they know exactly who Jesus is, and, as James tells us, they "tremble" (James 2:19).

The girl kept at it for "many days" until Paul had had enough. "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" He commanded the spirit (v.18) and the spirit obeyed, and the girl's owners became very angry: their source of income had fled. So they stirred up the people and the authorities, with the result that Paul and Silas were thrown into jail.

As Paul and Silas sat on the floor of an inner cell, their feet fastened in stocks and their backs torn by a flogging, they prayed "and sang hymns to God" (v.25). Suddenly a violent earthquake shook the prison and all the prisoners' chains came loose even as the prison doors flew open. The jailor, prepared to commit suicide, heard Paul's voice over the uproar, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" (v.28). And trembling, the jailor rushed in and uttered that universal cry, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

The spirit-possessed girl had broadcast the message to the whole city that Paul and his friends had come to show the way of salvation. It would appear the jailor had heard the broadcast. Now he asked the question and Paul gave the answer: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household" (v.31). The jailor believed, and he and his family were baptized that very night.

## **Prayer**

Lord, we worship You for who You are and we thank You for the salvation of our families. Your miraculous intervention on behalf of Paul, Silas, and the jailor shows You mightily at work. Be pleased, O Lord, to continue Your great works of grace in us this day and every day. In Jesus' Name, amen.