

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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May 19, 2024

“The Noble Bereans”

By Jim McDonald

After the midnight earthquake and the early morning conversion of the jailer and his household, Paul and Silas were returned to the prison for their dismissal by the authorities (Acts 16:35-40).

Early that day authorities sent word to the jailer to release Paul and Silas which news was conveyed to Paul. But the rulers had a surprise awaiting them. The men whom they had beaten and imprisoned, not even giving them opportunity to tell their story, were not, as the rulers been led to believe, just despised Jews — they were Romans!

This revelation put a “different twist” on their imprisonment and beating which caused the rulers to tremble. They might treat despised Jews in the fashion they had; but it was a different story with a Roman, for a Roman had rights and privileges which would have spared him from the beating and binding in stocks which had been dealt to Paul and Silas.

These authorities were in real trouble so they personally came (as Paul had demanded) and released them from prison, urging them to leave their city. After Paul had spoken with the brethren and said goodbye, they departed the city.



And as one reads the narrative, the observant reader will notice that the narrative reverts back to events attributed to others in the third person. Luke the historian is no longer in the company of these brethren. We assume that Luke stayed behind to comfort and to edify the infant church.

The three traveled to Thessalonica where, as they searched it out, found a synagogue and for three Sabbath days Paul reasoned there with them, teaching them that the Scriptures predicted that the Messiah they were looking for would suffer, be put to death; raised to life again, and that the Jesus they preached was that Messiah (Acts 17:3).

The response to Paul’s preaching was mixed; some disbelieved, but on the other hand, some of the Jews were converted but of *“the devout Greeks a great multitude; and of the chief women, not a few”* (Act 17:4). An even larger number of pagan Gentiles were converted, for in his first letter to this church Paul wrote, *“For they report concerning you ... how that ye turned unto God from idols to serve a living and true God”* (1 Thessalonians 1:9).

The immense success of Paul and his company did not go unnoticed by the unbelieving Jews who heard him, and they stirred up mob action against Paul so that once more he found it necessary to leave a city where he was having so much success. Acts 17:10 records, *“So, the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas by night unto Berea”*.

The reception Paul and his company received from the Berean synagogue was vastly different from that in Thessalonica: *“Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily whether these things were so”* (Acts 17:11).

The nobility of the Bereans was composed of two important things. They were willing to listen to the things which Paul and Silas were teaching. After all, their Scriptures had indicated a Messiah was coming to establish His kingdom, and because they believed what the scriptures taught them, they were willing to hear these who claimed the Scriptures had been fulfilled in Jesus.

The Bereans were not gullible, however. They didn't just accept the word of these strangers who taught them they had been fulfilled in Jesus, the Messiah for whom they looked. They weighed the things the Scriptures said against the things which Jesus had said and done. They took as their final word of proof, the testimony of the Scriptures. One is always on safe ground who has taken the Scriptures as his final voice of authority.

The result which occurred from what the Bereans did is recorded in Acts 17:12: "*Many of these therefore believed also of the Greek women of honorable estate, and of the men, not a few.*" A preacher who encounters a prospective person could hope for no better candidate than this: one who believes the Scriptures to be true and who searches them daily, whether the things the teacher speaks are shown to be true or false by the only standard to measure such things — the Holy Scriptures.

We should pray that those people who consent to study with us are those who believe and accept what the Bible says, and who have a willing spirit to accept what he hears if the Scriptures identify it to be true.

How vast will be the number of those who receive the Word if these two qualities are in him!

"THE BLIND SPIES"

Kent Heaton

Twelve men walked the length of Canaan for forty days spying the cities, the land, and the people. They witnessed a place of great beauty and produce. One cluster of grapes had to be carried on a pole between two men. The land impressed them as a land that "flows with milk and honey" (Numbers 13:27). What troubled the hearts of most of the spies were the people that lived in this place of bounty. Of the twelve men sent to spy the land, ten feared the strength of the cities and the people. The cities seemed impregnable. The descendants of Anak (giants) filled the land. The ten spies reported they felt like grasshoppers in the sight of the people.

By their words they discouraged the people of Israel (Numbers 13:28-29, 31-33). Joshua and Caleb were the only spies who believed the land could be conquered. They begged the people to reject the counsel of the ten spies and go at once to take possession of the land (Numbers 13:30). With God's power they did not need to fear the people because the Lord would fight for them. The seeds of doubt had settled in the hearts of the people, and they refused to listen (Numbers 14:1-4). For their rebellion Jehovah God caused the people of Israel to wander in the wilderness for forty years (Numbers 14:34).

Why did ten men see fear and two men see victory? The ten spies did not see what Joshua and Caleb saw. Their hearts were blinded by what they saw with their eyes rather than what they could see with God's power. Moses had instructed the twelve to see how strong the people were and how difficult the cities would be to conquer (Numbers 13:17-20). The twelve spies were leaders among the people yet ten were blinded to the things that they had witnessed in the past few months. Had they forgotten the power of God in Egypt when the Lord brought the plagues upon Pharaoh? How could anyone fail to remember the crossing at the Red Sea? If the Lord was victorious over the nation of Egypt how difficult would it be to conquer this new land? Joshua and Caleb saw the same giants and fortified cities the ten spies saw but they viewed them as weak because they knew what God could do. "*If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey.' Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them*" (Numbers 14:8-9).

We can be like the ten spies when we fail to see how God can work in our lives. The giants of doubt and fear will stand before us and we shrink back with worry and fear not believing that we can overcome. Paul reminds us that nothing is impossible for us if we trust in God. "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*" (Philippians 4:13).

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:31-39).

Those Who Need Our Prayers & Encouragement:

Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Jamie Jones, Mary Ann Holley, LuAnne Parrish, Billy Grisham, Fred Johnson, Burt Ward, Wesley Trimble, and Isaiah Switcher (Tim Harris Jr's 1 cousin) has brain cancer.

Prayers for the family of Robert Howard (He passed away Thursday).

Prayers for the family of Paula (Ferrell) Ginter (She passed away Tuesday).

Anita Harris has a heart cath scheduled for this Tuesday (5/21).

Nathan Cox had to go the Tupelo Hospital Friday for a urinary tract infection.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Paul Johnson
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: "The Hand Of Man"

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Jerry Kennemur
Author: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
Starting Page & Question: Herschel Patton
Page 77, Question #1

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Blake Briggs
Scripture Reading: 2 Chronicles 30:12
Song Leader: Jerry Kennemur
Lord's Supper: Paul Busby
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: "The Hand Of God"
Closing Prayer: Fred Johnson

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

May 22, 2024

Auditorium Bible Class: Russell Briggs
Workbook: The Book Of Daniel
Author: By Daniel H. King
Starting Page & Question: Page #90, Question #1
Invitation: Doug George
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Closing Prayer: Brian Meade

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“The Hand Of Man”

Lesson Text: **Exodus 4:1-4**. The Hand Plays A Major Role In Our Lives:
We Use Them To: Work, Carry Things, Eat Our Food, Clothe Ourselves, Write....

I. Hands Can Signify Or Express Certain Things:

- Working With Hands Signifies Manual Labor- **Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thess. 4:11**.
- To “Put Forth The Hand” **Deuteronomy 15:10; 28:8**.
- Strengthened Hands Signifies Encouragement- **Judges 7:11; 1 Samuel 23:16**.
- Weak Hands Signifies Weakness- **Isaiah 35:3; Hebrews 12:12**.
- The Hands Of Men Signifies Their Control/Dominance- **Psalms 71:4; Luke 9:44**.
- Lifting Up Hands Against Someone Signifies Rebellion- **1 Kings 11:26**.
- Can Signify Putting One’s Life In Jeopardy- **Judges 12:3; Psalm 119:109**.
- Claspings The Hand Expresses Friendship- **2 Kings 10:15**.
- Striking The Hands Expresses Making A Pledge- **Proverbs 6:1**.
- Laying Hands To Undertake A Duty- **Num. 27:12-23 (23); Acts 13:3; Luke 9:62**.
- The Right Hand Expresses Favor/Authority- **Psalms 16:11; Matthew 20:21**.
- Our Hands Can Express Gladness- **2 Kings 11:12**.
- Our Hands Can Express Grief- **2 Samuel 13:19**.
- Our Hands Can Express Humility- **Proverbs 30:32**.
- Our Hands Can Express Opportunity- **Proverbs 3:27-28**.
- Our Open Hands Can Express Generosity- **Deuteronomy 15:11**.
- Our Empty Hands Can Express Poverty- **Ecclesiastes 5:14**.

II. The Kinds Of Hands:

- Diligent Hand- **Ecclesiastes 9:10; Proverbs 12:24**.
- Lazy Hands- **Proverbs 19:24**.
- Defiled Hands- **Isaiah 59:3; Proverbs 6:17**.
- Clean Hands- **Psalms 24:3-4; Psalm 73:13**.
- Lawless Hands- **Acts 2:23**.
- Holy Hands- **1 Timothy 2:8**.

“The Hand Of God”

Lesson Text: **2 Chronicles 30:12.**

I. The Hand Of God In Creation.

- **Psalm 102:25-27; 19:1-7.**
- **Hebrews 1:10-12.**
- **Jeremiah 32:17-22.**

II. The Hand Of God In Deliverance.

- **Exodus 13:1-5; 13-16; Hebrews 8:9.**
- **Psalm 18:1-6; 17-21.**
- **2 Timothy 4:17-18; 2 Peter 2:9.**

III. The Hand Of God In Providence.

- **Joseph’s Prosperity By The Lord- Genesis 39:3.**
- **Proverbs 21:1.**
- **Psalm 145:14-20; 139:10.**
- **Providence In Going back To Jerusalem- Ezra 7:6.**
- **Providence In The Life Of John the Baptist- Luke 1:66.**
- **God At Work In The Lives Of The Disciples- Acts 11:21; vs. 24.**

IV. The Hand Of God In Salvation.

- **Isaiah 59:1-2.**
- **Titus 3:4-6.**
- **Romans 10:17-21.**

V. The Hand Of God In Judgment.

- **Exodus 9:3.**
- **Isaiah 5:23-25.**
- **Hebrews 10:31.**