

**Acts 16, Mission to Philippi
16:13-18, First Two Converts
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H. Van Dyke Parunak**

Overview

1. 6-12, how the team got to Philippi (last study).
2. 13-40 what they did once they got there. Focus on three converts:
 - a) 13-15, Lydia
 - b) 16-18, Demoniac girl
 - c) 19-40, Jailor (next study)

A. 13-15, Conversion of Lydia

1. The meeting by the river
 - a) No synagogue in Philippi; that would require ten male adult Jews. Philippi had only women.
 - b) Gathered by water to perform their ablutions.
 - c) Paul and his company make their way there,
 - 1) not only because they are seeking an audience,
 - 2) but also because, as devout Jews, they seek out the synagogue wherever they are.
2. Description of Lydia:
 - a) Thyatira: later, one of the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 1-3). She was from the very place the Spirit had forbidden Paul to go!
 - b) Trader in purple [dye], a well-known product of Thyatira; an independent business woman, of some means; had a house.
 - c) "Lydia" is the name of the district of Asia in which Thyatira is located. Thus it is not really her personal name, but a description, "the Lydian woman." Such names were common for slaves; she may have been a freed woman.
 - d) Worshipped God. Had learned the Jewish faith, and followed it.
3. Notice the things that God does in saving her:
 - a) Brings Paul past Asia to Philippi--HS guidance.
 - b) Brings Lydia from Asia to Philippi--business affairs.
 - c) Brings Paul to the riverside--spiritual discipline.
 - d) Opens her heart--direct work of the HS.

Application: God has his eye on her, and orders both her steps and Paul's to bring her to salvation. How completely of Him our salvation is! How sure and certain his eternal decrees. Paul's mission is not just geographic, but (in God's providence) directed toward specific individuals.

4. Her response is marked by obedience:
 - a) first, baptism,
 - b) then hospitality toward the band. Cf. the behavior that Paul commends in widows in 1 Tim. 5:10, "if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet."

- c) Her home probably becomes the HQ of the church at Philippi.
 - d) Later, does she have a role as well in Thyatira? The prestige that Lydia would naturally have as a convert of Paul might have led to the abuses of "Jezebel," a female false teacher rebuked in Rev. 2:20, but we should not fault Lydia for that.
- Application:* True conversion yields immediate evidence in behavior. If your life does not show the effect of God's Spirit in you, you have reason to fear for your salvation.

B. 16-18, Healing of the Demonic Girl

1. Her circumstances: the demon within her gave her special insight, and her masters banked on this, selling her services to those who wished to have their fortunes told.
2. Her behavior
 - a) Repeatedly accosts Paul and his associates on their way to the place of prayer.
 - b) The content of the message is quite true.
 - c) Hypothesis: were her masters trying to get something from Paul in exchange for advertising his services?
 - d) Something unusual about her message. Compare the episode in Mark 1:23-26:
 - 1) Both are in connection with the Jewish cultus;
 - 2) In both cases the demoniac accurately describes the person confronted;
 - 3) In both cases, cast out.
 - 4) In Mark, the demon describes Christ as judging. Here, the girl says that Paul proclaims "to us" (MT) the way of salvation. Does this represent some faint yearning of her own soul for deliverance?
3. Paul's response

He casts out the demon. Motives:

 - a) Does not want to appear that he has purchased her support.
 - b) compassion for the girl, who recognizes in some sense that salvation is just beyond her grasp.
4. *Application:* "We wrestle not against flesh and blood." Spiritual forces were rampant in Paul's day; we can expect to see a resurgence of them in our age, as many people now recognize the reality of the spiritual realm. We can praise God that "greater is he who is in us than he who is in the world."

Summary:

Two people could hardly be more different than Lydia (prosperous merchant; already a faithful convert to Judaism) and the demoniac (a slave, given over to demonic powers). Both need saving; in both cases, God demonstrates his sovereign power in saving them (in Lydia's case, by arranging circumstances; in the demoniac's, by overcoming demons).

Hymn: 446, "In Tenderness He Sought Me."

Analysis

A. 6-12, Travels [previous study]

B. 13-40, Ministry in Philippi

The basic flow of the story is divine mercy on three people (Lydia, a demoniac slave, and the jailor), then an account of how they went on their way.

1. Setting: h)^men de\ e)n tau/th| th^| po/lei diatri/bontes
h(me/ras tina/s.

2. 13-15, Conversion of Lydia

Notice the things that God does in saving her:

- a) Brings Paul past Asia to Philippi--HS guidance.
- b) Brings Lydia from Asia to Philippi--business affairs.
- c) Brings Paul to the riverside--spiritual discipline.
- d) Opens her heart--direct work of the HS.

Her response is marked by obedience: first baptism, then hospitality toward the band. Her home becomes the HQ of the church at Philippi; later, does she have a role as well in Thyatira? (The prestige that Lydia would naturally have as a convert of Paul might have led to the abuses of "Jezebel," a female false teacher rebuked in Rev. 2:20.)

a) comment p

1) text: 13 th^| te h(me/ra| tw^an sabba/twn e)ch/lqomen e)/cw
th^s pu/lhs para\ potamo\n

2) comment <potamon>: ou(^ e)nomi/zeto proseuxh\ ei)^nai,

b) kai\ kaqi/santes e)lalou^men tai^s sunelqou/sais gunaici/n.

c) 14 kai/ tis gunh\ o)no/mati Ludi/a ... h)/kouen,
Lydia is the district of Thyatira; she may have been a freed slave, since slaves were often named after their origins.

1) porfuro/pwllis

Traded in purple dye, a well-known product of Thyatira

2) po/lews Quatei/rwn

She was from Asia (cf. Rev. 1-3), the very place the Spirit had not suffered Paul to go!

3) sebome/nh to\n qeo/n,

Compare three terms:

a> *fobew theon: technical term for one who is attracted to Judaism but has not been circumcised.*

1> *Cornelius, 10:2,22*

2> *Term used generically by*

a: *Peter, 10:35*

b: *Paul, 13:16,26*

b> *proselytes: full converts to Judaism.*

1> *2:11, present with Jews in Jerusalem at Pentecost*

2> *6:5, qualifies Nicholas of Antioch among the Seven*

3> *13:43, those in Pisidian Antioch showing interest in Paul's teaching.*

c> *sebw theon: many writers think it is the same as fobew theon, but in 13:43 (cf. 50), those thus described are explicitly called "proselytes." In addition to Lydia,*

describes

- 1> 17:4, Greeks in Thessalonica;
- 2> 17:17, interested people in Athens;
- 3> 18:7, Justus in Corinth

d> Relation among the terms.

To equate *sebw* materially with either *fobew* or *proselyte* leads to excess synonymy.

- 1> Kuhn (TDNT VI, 743) sees *fobw* and *sebw* in complementary distribution, *fobw* in first part of Acts, *sebw* in second. But the shift from 13:26 to 13:43 seems abrupt, and the use of *sebw* with *proselyte* in 13:43 is then unexpected.
- 2> Better: *sebw*, unlike the other two terms, is not a TT for relation to Israel. Rather, one born a Gentile who participates in Jewish worship, whether or not a full *proselyte*. Thus *sebomenoi theon* are the union of *proselytes* and God-fearers, and 13:43 is a particularization ("the worshipping Gentiles; specifically, the *proselytes*").

d) h(^s o(ku/rios dih/noicen th\n kardi/an prose/xein toi^s laloume/nois u(po\ tou^ Pau/lou.

e) temporal p--cf. 1 Tim. 5:10.

- 1) time: 15 w(s de\ e)bapti/sqh kai\ o(oi)^kos au)th^s,
- 2) text: quote p
 - a> quote f: pareka/lesen le/gousa,
 - b> quote:
 - 1> Ei) kekri/kate/ me pisth\n tw^| kuri/w| ei)^nai,
 - 2> ei)selgo/ntes ei)s to\n oi)^ko/n mou me/nete:
- 3) kai\ parebia/sato h(ma^s.

3. 16-18, Healing of the Demoniac

a) summary p: the behavior of the Pythoness

1) detail:

a> circumstantial p

1> text: comment p

a: text: 16)Ege/neto de\ ... paidi/skh n tina\
e)/xousan pneu^ma pu/qwna u(panth^sai h(mi^n,
(Study *egeneto* + inf: "It happened"? sense of casualness? No--cf. 4:5.)

b: comment <paidiskhn>: h(/tis e)rgasi/an pollh\
parei^xen toi^s kuri/ois au)th^s manteuome/nh.

2> circumstance: poreuome/nwn h(mw^ n ei)s th\
proseuxh\
n

b> quote p

1> quote f: 17 au(/th katakolouqou^sa tw^| Pau/lw| kai\
h(mi^ n e)/krazen le/gousa,

2> quote: comment p

a: text: Ou(^toi oi(a)/nqrwpoi dou^loi tou^ qeou^
tou^ u(yi/stou ei)si/n,

b: comment <outoi>: oi(/tines katagge/llousin h(mi^ n
o(do\n swthri/as.

MT has hmin; WH, umin. MT suggests a germ of personal interest on the part of the girl herself.

2) summary: 18 tou^to de\ e)poi/ei e)pi\ polla\s h(me/ras.
(Or should this be understood as perfective, "had done,"
since there is no note of time to situate Paul's response?)

b) execution p: the exorcism

Cf. Mark 1:34 "suffered not the devils to speak"; Mark 1:23-26
(Synagogue; nature of what the spirit says; spirit confesses
before being cast out); 3:11,12; Luke 4:41. Unlike the Lord,
Paul suffered this "many days" before casting out the demon.
Motives:

1) Does not want to appear that he has purchased her support.
2) compassion for the girl, who recognizes in some sense that
salvation is just beyond her grasp.

1) command: quote p

a> quote f: diaponhqeis de\ Pau^los kai\ e)pistre/yas tw^|
pneu/mati ei)^pen,

b> quote: quote p

1> quote f: Paragge/llw soi e)n o)no/mati)Ihsou^
Xristou^

2> quote: e)celqei^n a)p' au)th^s:

2) execution: kai\ e)ch^lqen au)th^| th^| w(/ra|.

4. 19-34, Salvation of the Jailor [Next study]

5. 35-40, Departure from Philippi [Next study]