

# Light and Truth

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ARE YOU SAVED? \* PART 3

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## What Must I Do to be Saved?

Paul and Silas were apostles of Jesus Christ. They were imprisoned in Philippi, a city of Macedonia, for preaching the Word of God. Though they had been beaten and their feet were in stocks, their faith was strong and their hearts were full of joy. The Lord Jesus Christ was their song and praise. The prison was suddenly shaken by an earthquake. The doors were thrown open by the quake and the prisoners' chains were broken. They were set free but not one attempted to leave the prison and escape in that midnight hour.

### Prison Doors Open

What could keep a prisoner from fleeing with the prison doors open wide? There is only one explanation. The prisoners had been mightily transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ as they saw the joyful lives and heard the praises of these two prisoners who were locked in the inner prison. The prison keeper, thinking the prisoners would have escaped into the darkness, was about to kill himself. "Seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, sup-

posing that the prisoners had been fled” (Acts 16:27). He had to give account to the Roman government for every one of these prisoners. He was astounded to hear Paul cry out to him, “Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.”

What a sight for this prison keeper, to see all the prisoners with a new light on their faces, rejoicing in their new-found Saviour! They looked on their keeper who was still bound, not by prison chains but by the chains of sin. Jesus Christ who had set them free could set their prison keeper free also. The love in their hearts and the joy in their shining faces melted his heart. He fell down and said, “What must I do to be saved?”

## **Believe and be Saved**

God’s servants replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:30-31). He heard and believed the testimony of the Word of God concerning Jesus Christ. He was saved immediately. Though the hour was after midnight, he took the servants of God to his house to speak the Word of the Lord to all his household. As a result everyone in that house heard, believed and was saved that same night. “He took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straight-way. And ... he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house”(Acts 16:33-34).

What rejoicing there was in that home in Philippi of Macedonia! God grant the same may happen in many

homes in this city and country. Not one person in the prison keeper's house complained that night, 'This is no hour to hear the Word of God.' All of them gladly heard Paul and Silas open the Scriptures to show them how to be saved. They received salvation and joy filled their hearts. They set food before the servants of God. Their hearts were so grateful.

## Gospel Message

God's message to this unsaved prison keeper was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The apostles did not say, might be saved, or could be saved; but thou shalt be saved. Dear Reader, to be saved you must also believe, and call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ on whom you have believed. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:13-14).

Have you heard the Word of God concerning Jesus Christ? Has a servant of God or someone who is saved shown you the way of salvation? "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace" (Romans 10:15). But have you believed the gospel? Are you saved? It is written, "They have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias [Isaiah the Old Testament prophet] saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" (Romans 10:16).

What is it that you must believe concerning Jesus Christ to be saved? We read in the Scriptures, “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:14-15). What then is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? Paul the apostle who preached to the prison keeper in Philippi wrote, “I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received ... By which also ye are saved ... For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

## **Suffering of Christ**

The testimony of Scripture is that Christ had to suffer for our sins; He had to die in our place to pay for our sins. Isaiah is one prophet who wrote of the coming Messiah, whom God would send into the world: “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth ... he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken” (Isaiah 53:7-8).

The Lord sent Philip the evangelist, who came from the church in Jerusalem, to Gaza in the south. There he

met a man of Ethiopia (in Africa) who held a position of great authority under Candace Queen of Ethiopia (Acts 8:27). Though of high position in his country, he was a godly man who took his journey right up to the temple in Jerusalem to worship God. He did not yet know salvation through Jesus Christ.

Returning through the desert of Gaza, he was reading from the same Scripture written seven hundred years earlier (Isaiah chapter 53). He was not a proud man. He called Philip to sit with him as he wanted to ask him about this Scripture. “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Acts 8:35). That Ethiopian believed with all his heart, was baptized, and went on his way to Ethiopia rejoicing.

Both Old and New Testament Scriptures speak of the suffering of Christ for our sins. The apostle Peter wrote, ‘Christ also suffered for us ... He bore our sins in his own body on the tree [the cross] that we ... should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed ... Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust’ (1 Peter 2:21,24; 3:18). Paul the apostle wrote, “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many” (Hebrews 9:28). Thus we see that “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”

The suffering of Christ on the cross is not the whole message of the gospel. Not only did Christ die for our sins, but we read, ‘He was buried, and He rose again the

third day according to the Scriptures.’ If Christ did not rise from the dead we could not be saved. “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins” (I Corinthians 15:4,17).

## **Resurrection of Christ**

To be saved you must know Jesus Christ, who died for your sins and rose again from the dead. How can we know and be assured that He truly rose again? We have the testimony of many eyewitnesses. “He was seen of Cephas [Peter], then of the twelve ... after that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me”, wrote the apostle Paul (I Corinthians 15:5-8). Not only did they see the risen Christ, but they “did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead” (Acts 10:41). By many infallible proofs the Lord Jesus showed Himself alive after His resurrection (Acts 1:3). On the day when He rose again, which was the first day of the week, the apostles were assembled behind locked doors for fear of the Jews.

Suddenly Jesus stood in the midst of them and said, “Peace be unto you”. The Lord suddenly stood among them in His resurrection body. “They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when

he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet” (Luke 24:37-40). Then the Lord Jesus opened the Scriptures to the apostles: “Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:46-47).

Thomas was not with the apostles when Jesus appeared to them on the day of resurrection. He did not believe the other apostles when they told him, “We have seen the Lord”. He said, “Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe” (John 20:25).

A week later, Jesus appeared to the apostles again and Thomas was with them. Jesus said to Thomas, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27). Thomas was ashamed. He repented of his unbelief; he called Jesus “my Lord and my God”. Then the Lord told Thomas, “Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:29).

## **Gospel of Jesus Christ**

The Lord Jesus commanded His disciples to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). The gospel of

Jesus Christ is the everlasting gospel (Revelation 14:6). It is unchanging for it tells of Jesus Christ who died for our sins and rose again from the dead. The gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes (Romans 1:16). Have you believed? If not, will you now repent of your sins; repent of unbelief and believe the Scriptures, that testify of Jesus Christ?

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13). The Blood of Jesus was shed for the remission (forgiveness) of your sins. Take it by faith. Call upon His name in true repentance and ask Him to wash away your sins in His Blood (Matthew 26:28; Revelation 1:5-6; Psalm 51:7). Do not doubt that He has heard if you have believed from your heart and called upon Him with your mouth.

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). Thank and praise Him for His mercy. “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).

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