

THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE

Acts 16: 16-34

16. And it came to pass, as we (that is, Paul, Silas, and me) went to prayer, a certain damsel of fine proportions but possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying and flaunting of her many talents: (Let the reader understand.)

17. The same followed Paul and us, and did distract us from our message with her repeated moaning and gyrations, and she repeatedly ejaculated, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. At least I think that's what they meant.

18. And this did she many days. And at first she was a merry diversion, but after the third day Paul, being grieved with her repetitions, turned and said to the spirit, Okay, enough is enough. I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour and suddenly did flee unto the hills where his wails and shrieks and rather rude exclamations did disturb the shepherders. Not to mention most of the sheep.

19. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, and that the maiden was now calm and chaste, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, but I escaped their search by passing through their midst of them, and went my way, and did hide myself with the maiden who did give me shelter and great comfort and joy. (Surely the reader understands by now.)

20. And the men brought Paul and Silas to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and have ruined our business,

21. For they teach divers customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being good toga-clutching upright Romans.

22. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes which did cause some women to faint and other men to stand amazed, (but some doubted,) and commanded to beat them.

23. And when they had laid many stripes upon them with diverse implements, (which are too many to name here,) they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24. Who, having received such a charge and the appropriate fee, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them, and some did cry out for them to be quiet, whilst others were amazed at the simple choruses, others were amazed at the simple choruses, and others were amazed at the simple choruses, and did swiftly learn the words so that many voices were raised in praise and arms uplifted. But not legs.

26. And suddenly there was an great earthquake which did pause the singing, and the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And there was much dust in the air so that all were covered. And many sneezed.

27. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep was asked by his wife if the earth had moved for him, and he did affirm that it was so. And she did feel blessed. And rising, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, which he kept about his pyjamas, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Oi! Do thyself no harm: for we are all here and are needful of liquid refreshment to wash away the dust. Quite a bit of liquid actually. If you could see your way to, that is.

29. Then the jailor called 'Ave you got a light, boy? and a candle was brought him by one of the guards, and he did spring in over the rubble, and came trembling, and tripping on the door beam he fell down before Paul and Silas,

30. And getting to his feet he ushered them out into the guard room, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And the jailor's wife (who had arrived by this point) was grateful, for her house was her pride, and she had spent much money on its decoration. Vine-patterned wallpaper, matching curtains and cushions, and a little icon shelf in the lavatorium.

32. And Paul and Silas spake unto him the word of the Lord, sang two choruses, two choruses, two choruses, and did convince him.

33. And he took them the same hour of the night unto his house, and washed their stripes, which stung a bit, and wiped the dust from out of their hair and ears and nostrils; and when all the orifices were cleansed he was baptized, he and all his household, straightway. Even the decorator who had called to see if the glue had set on the new beading.

34. And when the washing was completed, there was a bit of towelling, and Paul sent for me and I did join them, and the jailor set meat and wine before us, and we all rejoiced. And I was witness unto these things, and that the keeper of the prison and all his household believed in God.