

## Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 37

### Sha'ul's Second Missionary Journey ~ Part 5

**Note: To examine the graphics in this series, click on them for a pop-up version.**

We continue our ongoing story of **Sha'ul's Second Missionary Journey** beginning in Acts 16:11.

#### Sha'ul Exorcises A Slave Girl

*<sup>16</sup> Once, when we were going to the place where the minyan gathered, we were met by a slave girl who had in her a snake spirit that enabled her to predict the future. She earned a lot of money for her owners by telling fortunes. <sup>17</sup> This girl followed behind Sha'ul and the rest of us and kept screaming, "These men are servants of God Ha'Elyon! They're telling you how to be saved!" <sup>18</sup> She kept this up day after day until Sha'ul, greatly disturbed, turned and said to the spirit, "In the name of Yeshua the Messiah, I order you to come out of her!" And the spirit did come out at that very moment.*

No sooner are lost people saved than **HaSatan** begins to hinder the work. In this case, he used a demonized girl who had made her masters wealthy by telling fortunes. As **Sha'ul** and his "team" regularly went to the place of prayer, still witnessing to the lost, this girl repeatedly shouted after them, *"These men are servants of God Ha'Elyon! They're telling you how to be saved!"* **Sha'ul** did not want either the **Gospel** or the name of **God** to be "promoted" by one of **HaSatan's** slaves, so he cast out the demon. After all, **HaSatan** may speak the truth one minute and tell a lie the next, and the unsaved would not know the difference.

This passage also teaches: (1) Demons can perform apparently valuable services (v. 16). (2) They can tell the truth if it serves their purpose (v. 17), even though their ruler, **HaSatan**, is *"the inventor of the lie"* (Yochanan 8:44). (3) Nevertheless, their object is interfering with the **Gospel** (v. 18). (4) Powerful and remarkable as they are, demons must submit to the authority of **Yeshua the Messiah** (v. 18, Mark 1:23–27). **Note** that in expelling the demon, **Sha'ul** does not address the girl but the demon, and he does not rely on his authority but that of **Yeshua**.

There are few examples of demon possession in the Bible outside the Gospels (see Acts 16:16–18; 19:12). In Scripture, such possession is primarily part of the opposition of evil to the coming of God's Son.

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#### Sha'ul and Sila Are Imprisoned

*<sup>19</sup> But when her owners saw that what had come out was any further prospect of profit for them, they seized Sha'ul and Sila and dragged them to the market square to face the authorities. <sup>20</sup> Bringing them to the judges, they said, "These men are causing a lot of trouble in our city since they are Jews. <sup>21</sup> What they are doing is advocating customs that are against the law for us to accept or practice since we are Romans."*

**Sha'ul** and **Sila** were accused of causing civil disorder and *advocating customs* that were *against the law* among **Romans**. The practice of variant religion was not illegal in the **Roman Empire**, but any activity (religious or otherwise) that risked sparking civil unrest was frowned upon.

*<sup>22</sup> The mob joined in the attack against them, and the judges tore their clothes off them and ordered that they be flogged. <sup>23</sup> After giving them a severe beating, they threw them in prison, charging the jailer to guard them securely. <sup>24</sup> Upon receiving such an order, he threw them into the inner cell and clamped their feet securely between heavy blocks of wood.* <sup>1</sup>

The **judges** acted rashly under the influence of the mob. **Sha'ul** and **Sila** were stripped, beaten, and thrown into jail before the charges against them were investigated. When antisemitic feelings run high, as in this city, which had already ejected its **Jews** (Acts 16:12–13), justice also flees.

In our next post, we will continue to explore **Shaul's Second Missionary Journey**; we continue to learn more about **Sha'ul** and **Sila's** imprisonment starting in chapter 16:25.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 16:16–24.