

***“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —  
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 11  
The Second Missionary Journey: Jews Reject But Gentiles Receive God’s Grace”***

**Introduction:**

- ***What have we been seeing here in the book of the Acts of the apostles? The Great Transition. “The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace”. In chapters 13 & 14 we saw the ministry to the Gentiles apart from Israel’s salvation and national witness revealed. Peter had such a dominant place in the Acts to this point and now Peter and James give over the ministry to the Gentiles entirely to Paul!! This is so significant in the light of Matt. 19:28, and Matt. 16 & 18.***
- ***So much is a matter of timing. What the Lord is doing is so important to know and sometimes it can only be known step by step as the Lord brings understanding of his great work. We see that here in Acts. One lesson to learn is that doctrines cannot necessarily be derived from the historical record as here we see passing away some things and the bringing in of others as God works to transition from the preaching of Kingdom Law (for it was once “at hand”) to grace and its fullness. Paul goes forth to the Gentiles city by city but to the Jews first in the synagogue. Then, when they reject his preaching concerning their Messiah, our Lord Jesus, we pronounce a judgment from God upon them and departs to preach grace to those assembled, increasingly Gentiles as his ministry proceeds from one missionary journey to another.***
- ***So Paul is raised up as Israel is progressively set aside in God’s Dispensational Timing. His Grand Design is revealed one piece at a time during this Great Transition as we see the intricacies of God’s handiwork revealed.***
- ***Paul’s First Missionary Journey Continues — The First Missionary Journey Is Fruitful and through conflict regarding circumcision and the keeping of the Law, the Second Missionary Journey began.***
  - ***Though Paul’s first missionary journey was beset with many difficulties and challenges, even stoning and attempted stoning, in the end it was counted a great success. The report was made in Antioch from which Paul and Barnabas had been sent forth as***

*apostolic delegates sent out by the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles. Indeed the Lord God had as 14:27 says, “opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles”. Praise God. He did this incrementally, city by city, and there were many adversaries, heavenly and earthly.*

**Review: Conflicts and Concessions Lead to Paul’s Second Missionary Journey (Acts Chapter 15)**

- *The Pauline Message Revealed — Legalists Oppose God’s Gracious Work*
- *The Pauline Message Revealed — Peter Gives a Witness that Counts*
- *The Pauline Message Revealed — James Offers Compromise*
- *The Pauline Message Revealed — A Consensus Is Reached*
- *The Pauline Message Revealed — Gentile Ministry Continues*

**Our Outline Today: The Second Missionary Journey: Through Much Suffering, the Theme Continues as the Lord continues to call Gentiles by his glorious gospel of God’s abundant grace.**

- *The Theme Continues — Paul Goes to Troas and Timothy Is Called to Serve*
- *The Theme Continues — Paul is Called to Philippi and Jailed, but Fruitful*
- *The Theme Continues — Paul’s Ministry Bears Fruit Elsewhere in Macedonia*
- *But first a comment on GAL. 2 COMPARED to Acts 15 is in order. In Galatians 1 & 2 we have Paul’s teaching on circumcision and the law and in some important ways it seems that the teaching is quite different there from what we see in the upcoming chapters in the Book of Acts. I had thought of looking at that today. But, that was not to be. Wisdom I believe dictates that that teaching should wait until later. I think you will see why as we proceed in our studies here in Acts a little further.*

**I. The Theme Continues — Paul Goes to Troas and Timothy Is Called to Serve:**

- *Paul now goes forth with Silvanus (called Silas here), continuing to minister the gospel in Asia Minor, and, specifically, in Galatia:*

**[READ ] Acts 16:1-6**

**1** Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

**2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.**

**3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.**

**4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.**

**5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.**

- *The ministry is obedient in delivering the decrees from Jerusalem to the assemblies founded on the first journey. Paul and Barnabas had retreated from Iconium, you will remember, and had come to this same place and, of course, therefore ministered in these Galatian cities.*
- *“Because of the Jews”, Paul circumcises Timothy who is the son of a Gentile. Timothy was already saved, it seems, but is now called into ministry with Paul. From now on, Timothy will be accompanying Paul and sharing in the ministry.*
- *But their plans for ministry were challenged directly by the Holy Spirit here and the Spirit directed the ministry not further into Asia Minor as they had planned in Antioch, but in another direction altogether, into Greek speaking lands westward across the sea. But there were questions in their minds as to how to proceed and they determined to return to Antioch for a resolution of the issue, but again the Holy Spirit interfered.*

#### **Acts 16:6-8**

**6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, re Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.**

**7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.**

**8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.**

- *Note here that Galatia is specifically mentioned and Paul's letter to these believers is central to his letters. For it is in Galatians (and Romans, of course) where most of his teaching on grace and the*

***Law is found. I wonder whether it was during his great persecutions by the Jews in Macedonia that the Lord taught him precious truths about that critical subject.***

***II. The Theme Continues — Paul, Called to Philippi and Jailed, but Fruitful:***

***The Journey to Philippi.***

***The Conversion of Lydia and Her Household.***

***Acts 16:9-15***

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

**12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.**

**13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.**

**14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.**

**15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.**

- ***There is a lesson here too: a merchant woman named Lydia (which means “a foreigner from Lydia probably) who had traveled to this central city, a Roman city-state even, to sell her valuable wares. She had gone to a place of prayer on the river (a congregating place for Jewish proselytes it seems) and there Paul and his associate went for ministry outreach. She was saved when her heart was opened by the Lord! Therefore the ministry continued here in Philippi, again turning the city upside down as elsewhere on this journey. Much would now transpire here, with ...***

***“The Damsel with the Spirit of Divination Healed.***

***The Rage of Her Masters.***

***Paul and Silas Seized, Scourged, Placed in Prison in the Stocks.***

### ***The Events at Midnight.***

*The Jailer and Household Baptized.*

*An Appeal to Rights of Romans.” **Outlines are from my Bible version online. I do not know the author.***

***[READ ] Acts 16:16-18***

**16** And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

**17** The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

**18** And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

- ***A demoniac woman was delivered and the city’s pagan religious and economic system was severely challenged! This has direct application to our current times.***
- ***For there are other important lessons to be gained here. Paul shows much discernment here, for this woman spoke the truth — they really were sent by God with the message of salvation. But her testimony was not a positive but a negative, because all knew her to be a demoniac and in the Greek / Roman religious world the demon possessed were greatly used by Satan to control the minds of common people. He could foster his evil designs on the world through both religion AND economics! So Paul was compelled to identify that truthfully and to cast out that demon which he did. The risk that the new faith in Christ might be so compromised by an identification with the pagan religions of that day was so great that Paul was compelled to expel that demon.***

***Such is so true in our day as well. BEWARE of the union of the so-called NEW CHURCH with the Neo-liberal and NEW AGE satanic world religion now under rapid development. BEWARE!***

- ***Now therefore because of this they faced great persecution since this woman was part of a satanic work there which brought great benefit to her “handlers”. And so it so often is with the cults. Much profit is to be gained — and the message seems so much like a truth message that those that did not have such discernment are easily led astray. Paul and Silas are mercilessly beaten and left on the city jail for their efforts. The town government has turned against them.***

***We know how it will go though for God is not finished yet and uses this incident to bring great glory to himself through the salvation of the Philippian jailer!! Amen and amen.***

***[READ ] Acts 16:19-24***

19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the marketplace unto the rulers,  
20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,  
21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.  
22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*.  
23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:  
24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

- ***You know the rest of the story.***

***Acts 16:25-36***

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.  
26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.  
27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.  
28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.  
**29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,**  
**30 And brought them out, 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.**  
**32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.**  
33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.  
34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.  
35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

*Grace, grace and more grace! The fruit borne in this ministry here is so clearly magnificent. Paul's later letter to the church in Philippi underscores this so well, doesn't it?*

**III. The Theme Continues — Paul's Ministry Bears Fruit Elsewhere in Macedonia:**

***"Chapter 17  
The Journey to Thessalonica.  
Labors in the Synagogue.  
A Church Planted.  
The Jews Stir Up Persecution.  
Departure to Berea.  
Journey to Athens."***

***[READ ] Acts 17:1-7***

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus.

***[READ ] Acts 17:8-15***

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

**10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews.**

**11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**

**12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.**

**13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.**

**14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.**

**15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.**

- *Paul and Silas entered into Macedonia, an area we now call Greece, having crossed the sea from Tyre (or Troas, as the text indicates). They came in due time to the area of Thessalonica where Paul and Silas entered into the synagogue of the Jews on the Sabbath. For three weeks they preached the gospel there and some Jews but many Gentiles believed and were saved. The unbelieving Jews in the synagogue caused trouble with the Roman authorities and instigated a city-wide unrest causing the detainment of one man, Jason, and others. These unbelieving Jews claimed that Paul and Silas had "... turned the world upside down!" By night, though, Paul and his companion were taken to a neighboring town named Berea where they went directly to the synagogue and taught those who were "... more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so". The end result was that many Jews and even more Gentiles, it seemed, believed.*
- *But the unbelieving Jews from Thessalonica then came into Berea as well causing trouble for the gospel outreach and Paul was secreted away to the sea and by ship then traveled to Athens.*
- *But what have we learned here that is most significant? We want to see not only the history as it develops moment by moment — and that is interesting indeed — but also the essence of his teaching that is seen in Paul's ministry to the Gentiles.*



- *The emphasis in Paul's teaching in the synagogues is very much focused on the death and resurrection of Jesus and on his identity as Israel's Messiah. This teaching was no doubt much like we saw detailed in chapters 13 & 14. Note here his emphasis: "Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ." This emphasis is so different from most of the teaching we hear today that generally does not focus at all of the prophecies relating to Christ except perhaps on certain special Sundays surrounding and including Resurrection Sunday.*
- *Even the Gentiles who may not have known the Hebrew Scriptures were compelled by this teaching. There is a lesson in that for today. It is the word of God that conveys the power of God. Let us never forget that.*
- *Think of the assemblies founded and then the ongoing fellowship and the letters written. What was the content of Paul's teachings during these three or four weeks in Thessalonica? We know something of this from his letters, don't we? When he left the synagogue and taught fundamentals, yes, but also practical truths regarding the faith:*

#### **1 Thess. 1:1-8**

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto **the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace**, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

**4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.**

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

**6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:**

**7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.**

**8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.**

**[READ ] 1 Thess. 1:9-10**

**9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;**

**10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.**

- ***Our contemporary view of the church is so very different, mega-churches and new-age churches abound in many places. But is this an indicator of the spiritual condition of the church today? Paul was content with only the fruit that the Lord brought. And he did not need (or desire, it seems) all the special things that the churches today think necessary for fruitful ministry. The so-called “emergent” church, an offshoot of the Neo-evangelical church and its follow-ons from the church growth movement (all really Neo-liberal, it seems to me) are on a different path altogether. Their view of true fruitfulness in ministry is so very, very different, isn’t it. Now mega-churches set the standard for growth and success in ministry — but do they really, from God’s perspective?***
- ***Consider also what must it have been like for these believers? They turned to God from idols!! What persecution they suffered as Paul recounts in his letter to the Thessalonians! Those believers learned to properly count the cost of being a believer (in difficult times)! Do we?***
- ***So there was often a very short ministry in each place but much fruit was gained. Praise God.***

### **Conclusions:**

***The theme of Jews reject and Gentile receive gladly. Much trial and persecution results as Paul was told would happen at the beginning. This is part of the essential aspect of Grace and not the Kingdom Law with Israel’s Messiah as their King. Israel did not submit to their King and Redeemer, and they opposed him on every side. Jews that did receive him embraced God’s abundant grace. May God be praised.***

***Where are we today. The same as then. Amen and amen.***