

Earthquake!

BASED ON ACTS 16:19-39

PIX

Summer Les. 08

WHEN PAUL REMOVES AN EVIL SPIRIT FROM A SLAVE GIRL, HER OWNERS ARE LIVID. BECAUSE THE GIRL CAN NO LONGER TELL FORTUNES, THEIR BUSINESS IS RUINED. THE OWNERS DRAG PAUL AND SILAS BEFORE THE JUDGES IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE. A CROWD GATHERS ...



AFTER A SEVERE BEATING, PAUL AND SILAS ARE TAKEN TO JAIL.

YOU'LL PAY WITH YOUR LIFE IF THESE MEN ESCAPE.



MIDNIGHT COMES. IN SPITE OF THEIR SUFFERING, PAUL AND SILAS PRAY AND SING PRAISES TO GOD.



SUDDENLY THE PRISON FOUNDATION SHUDDERS. THE WALLS TWIST AND CRACK, SNAPPING CHAINS AND HINGES FROM THE HEAVY DOORS.

EARTHQUAKE!





THE JAILER RUSHES DOWN INTO THE DUNGEON, SURE THAT HIS PRISONERS HAVE ESCAPED.

THEY'RE GONE! I MIGHT AS WELL KILL MYSELF.

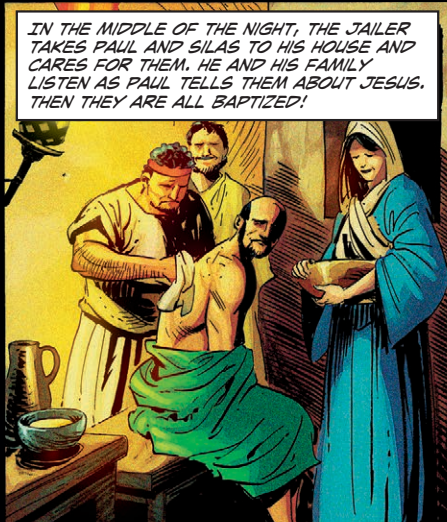
NO! NO! WE'RE ALL HERE! DON'T HURT YOURSELF.



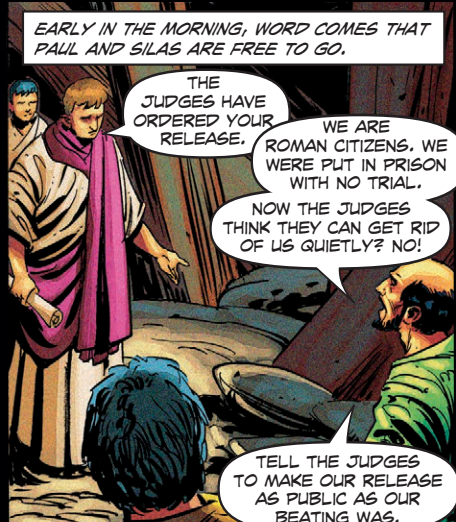
BELIEVING PAUL AND SILAS CAUSED THE EARTHQUAKE, THE JAILER FALLS DOWN IN FRONT OF THEM.

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.



IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, THE JAILER TAKES PAUL AND SILAS TO HIS HOUSE AND CARES FOR THEM. HE AND HIS FAMILY LISTEN AS PAUL TELLS THEM ABOUT JESUS. THEN THEY ARE ALL BAPTIZED!



EARLY IN THE MORNING, WORD COMES THAT PAUL AND SILAS ARE FREE TO GO.

THE JUDGES HAVE ORDERED YOUR RELEASE.

WE ARE ROMAN CITIZENS. WE WERE PUT IN PRISON WITH NO TRIAL.

NOW THE JUDGES THINK THEY CAN GET RID OF US QUIETLY? NO!

TELL THE JUDGES TO MAKE OUR RELEASE AS PUBLIC AS OUR BEATING WAS.

THE ROMAN JUDGES, WHO ORDERED PAUL AND SILAS RELEASED FROM PRISON, ARE SURPRISED WHEN THE OFFICER RETURNS WITH A MESSAGE FROM THE PRISONERS.

THOSE MEN ARE ROMAN CITIZENS. THEY DEMAND THAT YOU COME TO THE PRISON AND RELEASE THEM AS PUBLICLY AS YOU PUNISHED THEM.

THEY'RE ROMAN CITIZENS? AND WE PUNISHED THEM WITHOUT A TRIAL! THIS COULD MEAN SERIOUS TROUBLE FOR US.

FORGETTING THEIR DIGNITY, THE JUDGES GO IMMEDIATELY TO THE PRISON.

WE'RE SORRY FOR THE SHAMEFUL WAY WE TREATED YOU. NOW PLEASE LEAVE OUR CITY TO AVOID FURTHER TROUBLE.

WE FORGIVE YOU-AND WE'LL LEAVE TODAY.

The Strange Birthday of Juan Miguel

Today was Juan Miguel's birthday. He whispered the news into his burro's ear as he led the small animal out of the stable.

"Make haste, little friend," Juan coaxed. "We have a lot of firewood to gather before the sun sets."

The women in the village depended on Juan for wood to keep their cooking fire burning, and Juan needed the money to help his father, who had been injured while fixing a roof in the village.

Wood was scarce in this part of Mexico, and sometimes at the end of the day the two baskets slung across the burro's back would be only half full.

But today Juan was very happy. It was his birthday and his father had said that Juan was to keep the money he got from the wood to spend as he wished.

Juan prayed, "Jesus, help me find enough firewood to buy a sombrero and sandals."

The thought of his new things made him do a dance with his bare feet in the dust. He hummed a little tune he had learned in the mission school.

When the sun was high in the sky, Juan drew the burro into the shade to rest and share his small lunch.

"We have been lucky today," Juan said. "The baskets are half full. If we hurry, we'll have more time to spend shopping at the market."

At last, the baskets were full.
“Thank You, Jesus,” Juan prayed happily. He hurried his burro back down the trail and in the direction of the village.

He hadn’t gone very far when he heard someone crying.

It was Chiquita. She was sitting by the side of the trail nursing a scraped knee.

“What has happened?” Juan asked anxiously. “And why are you so far from home?”

The little girl tried to hide her tears.

“I needed twigs for a fire,” she explained. “My mother and sister are both sick. I must build a fire to fix them hot food. And now I’ve hurt my knee and I can’t go any farther.”

“I have firewood to sell!” Juan offered quickly.

“But . . . but . . .” stammered

the little girl, “I haven’t any money to pay for wood.”

Juan felt so sorry for Chiquita that he reached into the baskets and drew out an armful of wood.

“Take it as a gift,” Juan said. “Today is my birthday, and the wood is mine to do with as I please.”

“Thank you!” cried Chiquita. “I will always be your friend.”

“I really don’t need sandals,” Juan told the burro as they headed back toward the village. “And the wood I have left should buy a sombrero.”

Again Juan began humming the tune from the mission school. “It is a *different* joy to give a gift when you had thought of getting one,” he thought. “But giving the wood to Chiquita makes me feel warm—as if I had pleased Jesus.”

At last he reached the village. “Wood for sale. Wood for sale,” Juan shouted.

“Hello Juan,” called a familiar voice.

Juan turned and saw Pedro, the man who sold grain in the market. “I was just going to your home,” Pedro said. “Your father owes me a small bill for grain.”

“My father must have forgotten,” Juan said, “or he would have paid you.”

“It isn’t much,” Pedro said.



“What happened?” Juan asked.

“And I know your father to be an honest man. Well, I will go now.”

“Wait,” said Juan. “My father has met with an accident and he may not have the money. Will you take wood in payment?”

The man nodded. He reached into the baskets and emptied them into a sling he carried. “Thank you, Juan.”

After the man had gone away, Juan stood for many minutes looking at the empty baskets. No sandals, no sombrero. But he felt happy inside!

“It’s still early,” he told the burro. “Let us go to the market. I will look at the sombreros and choose the one I will buy *next year*.”

At the marketplace, Juan guided the burro through the crowd until he faced the stall with the sombreros.

“The white one with the band of bright beads,” Juan said to himself. “That is the one I will buy.”

As Juan stood dreaming before the white sombrero, a man watched him with interest.

“Boy! You with the burro!”

Juan looked around.

“Come here,” said a fat man standing beside the pottery stall. “Deliver these pots for me. And hurry.”

“But . . . but,” Juan said.

“They go to the house of Jorge,” the man shouted.



Juan saw the brim of the sombrero on his head.

Jorge was the most important man in the village, but his house was far from the trail Juan would take home.

“I can’t,” Juan said.

But the man was already putting large jars into Juan’s empty baskets. “Hurry,” he urged. “And here, put this sombrero on your head. It will help you go quickly.”

“But,” Juan said. “I can’t bring it back. I have to go home.”

“Keep it! Keep it!” the man cried. “Only hurry!”

Juan raised his eyes and saw the brim of the white sombrero on his head.

“I’ll run all the way!” he promised happily.

And as he hurried along beside his burro down the busy village road, he whispered, “What a strange birthday this has been!”

The burro twitched its long ears as if it understood—and trotted a little faster.



Pause a minute

1. Summer nights! You love lounging in the backyard and listening to crickets. This evening, you close your eyes for a minute and doze. Then SNAP. What was THAT? It wasn't a cricket. You open your eyes to see . . . absolutely nothing. It's completely dark. You slept through sunset. Now it's just you, the night, and maybe whatever made that noise!



Take a look back

3. Why is it so hard to believe you'll be saved when you're alone, in the dark, or terrified? How are you changed, once rescued from something terrible?

key verse

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

Acts 16:31



Record your thoughts

4. Make a personal Survival Guide to get through dark times. Keep a running list of Bible verses about how Jesus saves and changes lives. Start with some from this lesson.

Read more this week about how Jesus changes lives:

☐ Acts 16:25–34 ☐ John 3:16 ☐ John 12:44–46

**faith
forward**
in touch with God



Play it out

2. How frightening it is to be alone in the dark, lost, or in an uncertain place. How glad and grateful you are when someone you can trust steps in with light! Jesus is always on the look-out for where you wander. He's ever-ready to show you the way home. His very presence puts out the fears that flare inside your heart and freeze you up. It's like when the Philippian jailer gave up his fears in Acts 16. You know you can depend on Jesus. He will keep your very soul, and turn your fears into faith. **Read Acts 16:31.**

