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PRAISE DEFEATS THE ENEMY

Paul and Silas were witnessing on the streets of Philippi. There were many pagan shrines with their deities that people worshipped in that area. There were merchants selling their idols of these deities which made them a lot of money. A woman came along that practiced soothsaying (fortune telling) and started following Paul and Silas. She began making statements about the Most-High God. Paul discerned she had a demonic spirit controlling her and cast out the demon.

In doing so, the merchants became enraged, because this woman was making money for them through her fortune telling. They took hold of Paul and Silas and brought them before the magistrates and the multitude that followed the demonic pagan gods commanded that they be beaten. So, they were beaten with many stripes and thrust into prison and the jailor secured them into stocks where they could not move about in their "cell." (Acts 16:23-24)

One might think they would be questioning God about their situation, because they had been ministering Jesus to the people and this was the result. Was this fair God? Why are we in prison? That is what most of us would say, but not Paul and Silas.

In Acts 16:25 it says, ***"and at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."*** They did not question God. They gave praise to God in such a loud voice that the other prisoners heard them. What? Praised God while they were in chains? Yes, they did just that.

The results of that praise brought a great earthquake which shook the foundations of that prison. All the doors of each cell were opened and all, yes all, of the prisoner's bands were unloosed. Wow. That was quite a moment of praise and triumph! Then, God used Paul and Silas to lead the jailer and his household to the Lord and he treated their wounds and released them both. I honestly believe that their praise was the weapon that brought them freedom.

We must realize that all those that are godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. (2 Timothy 3:12.) But that isn't the end of the story. If we praise God in our hard circumstances, we will be set free from that bondage, just like Paul and Silas.

The moral of this lesson? No grumbling is allowed in the midst of your trials if you want to be free! Let praise be your weapon of offense to defeat the enemy!