

Acts 16:27

And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.

Have you ever had something happen that you knew was from the Lord, but soon afterwards things did not end up the way you expected them to? One reason this may happen is that once the Lord answers our prayers, sometimes we take it and run with it, instead of waiting for further instructions or direction from the Lord.

Let's use today's devotional as an example. In today's devotion, this is mid story and you actually need to go back and read all of chapter 16 in Acts. But quickly, Paul and Silas were sharing the gospel, and they got thrown in prison for it. Then in the middle of the night while they were in prison it says that:

† ***Acts 16:26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.***

Now if you stopped the story right there, you would think that Paul and Silas would had seen this as from the Lord and He was releasing them from prison (which was partially true, it was from the Lord, just not to escape).

Then we get to today's verse where the guard had thought that the prisoners had all escaped, so he was ready to kill himself. But that wasn't the case, because even though the Lord had sent the earthquake, it wasn't to release Paul and Silas from prison (That will happen the next day) but instead, it was so the Jailer and his household could be saved, and it seems Paul knew this, or at least knew they were not supposed to run out.

† ***Acts 16:28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."***

Paul and Silas did not run out of prison, instead they stayed there and by doing so the jailer as well as his household got saved.

† ***Acts 16:33-34 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.***

But if Paul and Silas would had ran out of prison, then the outcome would had been a lot different, because the jailer and his household would not had gotten saved, because the jailer

would had killed himself and his household would have hated Christians for causing the jailer to kill himself because they escaped from prison. Also as you read on, they found out Paul was a Roman and they had to let Paul and Silas go the next day. But if they would had escaped from prison the night before, then regardless if they were Romans or not, they would had gotten thrown back into prison for escaping.

But as you read the entire chapter, it didn't happen that way. The jailer and his household got saved and Paul and Silas were released the following day.

But the question comes up, "How did Paul and Silas know to stay and not run?" and the answer is back in verse 25.

† **Acts 16:25** *But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.*

I believe that Paul and Silas were in tune with God by being in prayer and singing Hymns. Sure, they could have had a pity party because they were wrongfully thrown in prison, just whining and complaining the whole time. And if they did and the prison doors were shaken open, they would had ran, because their focus would had been on themselves. But since their focus was on the Lord, they were in tune with the Lord.

To apply this to us today; we are so used to those "No" or "Wait" answers from God and hearing all kinds of teachings on them. But what about those "Yes" answers to prayer, you don't hear a lot of teachings on those. But God does say Yes a lot of times, and when He does, have you been complaining and whining until you got that Yes answer, so now you have taken it and ran with it, only to have it fail?

There are times God says Yes, but with that Yes, we still need to be in tune with what He wants us to do with that Yes answer. Do we run like crazy to get out of the situation, or do we stay behind waiting for further information so that God will be glorified in that Yes answer, just like Paul and Silas did?

† **Philippians 2:3-4** *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*