

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

(Acts 16:16-34)

With Paul and Silas, we came to Philippi of Macedonia, a Roman colony, and¹⁶ when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling.¹⁷ This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."¹⁸ She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.¹⁹ When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities.²⁰ They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar²¹ by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."²² The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten.²³ After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully.²⁴ Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.²⁷ The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped.²⁸ But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself ! We are all here!"²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas.³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household."³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.³⁴ The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God--he and his whole family.

The Word of the Lord.

Please join together in saying today's psalm.

(Psalm 97)

- 1 The LORD is King; let the earth rejoice; *
let the multitude of the isles be glad.
- 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him, *
righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne.
- 3 A fire goes before him *
and burns up his enemies on every side.
- 4 His lightnings light up the world; *
the earth sees it and is afraid.
- 5 The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD, *
at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
- 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, *
and all the peoples see his glory.
- 7 Confounded be all who worship carved images
and delight in false gods! *
Bow down before him, all you gods.
- 8 Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah
rejoice, *
because of your judgments, O LORD.
- 9 For you are the LORD, most high over all the earth; *
you are exalted far above all gods.
- 10 The LORD loves those who hate evil; *
he preserves the lives of his saints
and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.
- 11 Light has sprung up for the righteous, *
and joyful gladness for those who are truehearted.
- 12 Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, *
and give thanks to his holy Name.

A Reading from the book of Revelation.

(Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21)

¹²"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.¹⁴"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

¹⁶"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."¹⁷ The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

(John 17:20-26)

Jesus prayed for his disciples, and then he said,²⁰"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,²¹that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.²²I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one:²³I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.²⁴"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.²⁵"Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.²⁶I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

The Gospel of the Lord.