



The HUMAN of the Bible Reflection for November is Silas.

I Thessalonians 1:1

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.

Who is Silvanus or Silas?

In my research I learned he was a Hellenistic Jew, as well as, a Roman citizen - according to Acts 16:37:

But Paul replied, 'They have publicly beaten us without a trial and put us in prison — and we are Roman citizens. So now they want us to leave secretly? Certainly not! Let them come themselves to release us!'

Silas is not a writer of any of the books in the Bible. Silas is not the main character of a Bible chapter. Silas is mentioned in paragraphs in various chapters throughout the New Testament. Yet, his contribution to the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is far more significant than we might ascertain.

Acts 15:22

Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, men who were leaders among the believers.

Acts 17:14-15

14 The believers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea.

15 Those who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.

In Acts we see Silas is chosen to go to Antioch with others. He is considered to be a leader among the believers. Later in Acts, Silas along with Timothy are instructed to join Paul.

Their ministry was challenged. The Gospel was not received. Yet they continued on.

I Peter 5:12

With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.

Silas was preaching with the apostles and assisting them. Peter referenced him as a “faithful brother.”

Silas was chosen by Paul to journey with him to the Macedonia area - specifically Phillipi. As we read in Acts chapter sixteen, verse nineteen through twenty-one - Paul and Silas were dragged before authorities and magistrates. The accusations were, 20 ...”These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar 21 by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.”

Acts 16:19-24

19 ...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 uproar 21 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 with rods. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Unfortunately, the crowd joined in the attacks against Silas and Paul. Therefore, the magistrates ordered that they be flogged. They were thrown in prison and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Subsequently, they were taken to the inner cell of the prison and their feet fastened in stocks.

I shared the story in the HUMAN of the Bible - Month of September, Paul - where in the midnight hour, Silas and Paul began praying and singing hymns to God.

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 everyone'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 household 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 household.

35 When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: "Release those men." 36 The jailer told Paul, "The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace."

37 But Paul said to the officers: "They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out."

38 The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. 39 They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city.

Reviewing the remaining portion of the testimony of Silas and Paul in prison, in verse twenty-six, we see the other prisoners were listening to the prayers and singing of Silas and Paul. Pause and think about this for a moment. What a witness we can bring when in our darkest moments our response is to praise the Lord, run to Jesus, trust in our God ...AND just maybe others are listening! May this be what they hear from our hearts in our toughest times.

We see God's reaction to their praise. There was an earthquake so great that the prison doors were opened. Yet - nobody moved. The jailer was ready to take his own life for fear everyone had escaped. We can hear the voices of Silas and Paul reassuring him that all is well, not to harm himself. Then they lead him and his family to know Jesus and they receive salvation.

After all of this - the fact that both Silas and Paul were Roman citizens gave the magistrates reason to release them.

Silas was known in Acts 15:32 to be an encourager to many. He was a faithful brother and servant of the Lord - willing to use his gifts for the ministry of the Gospel.

Much can be said for the attributes of Silas - our HUMAN of the Bible for the month of November. As stated - he was an encourager, willing to be used for the ministry, servant of the Lord, faithful - but one unassuming characteristic of Silas needs to be exemplified, magnified - if you will. Silas was thankful. In the midnight after being beaten in front of a crowd, dragged to a dark prison cell and feet fastened into stocks - Silas, along with Paul, found it inside himself to raise song and hymn of thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God. It is not about being thankful for the circumstances - but it is about being thankful in the circumstances.

In this season of Thanksgiving - I pray for you and yours that within yourselves you can find thankfulness and gratitude in your situation - no matter what it is. May this be the moment your heart arises in praise and gratitude to God IN all things. The Lord instructs us to do just that -

I Thessalonians 5:18

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

I am thankful for you and I pray you, your family and friends have a very Happy Thanksgiving season.

I will meet you again - here at HUMAN Living Ministry!