

The Leader Silas

Series: The Early Days

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Like Barnabas Silas is content to play a supporting role in the ministry of Paul. We get glimpses of him throughout the NT. We know that Silas was a prophet (Acts 15:32) We might call them Silas sightings. He shows up in some interesting places.

AT THE JERUSALEM CONFERENCE

Acts 15:22-29, 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. 23 With them they sent the following letter: The apostles and elders, your brothers, To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings. 24 We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said. 25 So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul— 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 Therefore we are sending Judas and **Silas** to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing. 28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: 29 You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. FAREWELL.

- “Their own men”
- “leaders among the brothers”
- “men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

AT THE LAUNCHING OF PAUL’S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 15:32-35, 32 Judas and **Silas**, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. 33 After spending some time there, they were sent off by the believers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. (34: But **Silas** decided to remain there.) 35 But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Acts 15:36-41, 36 Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.” 37 Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, 38 but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. 39 They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose

Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. 41 He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

- “who themselves were prophets”
- “said much to encourage and strengthen the believers”
- Given leave to return to Jerusalem
- Silas chose to stay in Antioch

AT THE JAIL IN PHILIPPI

Events leading up to being jailed:

- Timothy joins Paul and Silas in Lystra
- Paul has a vision to come to Macedonia (Europe)
- Lydia is converted at Philippi
- A fortune-telling slave girl was healed, owners were angry, leading to the arrest of Paul and Silas (not sure where Timothy was)

Acts 16:25-30, 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?”

- “were praying and singing” at midnight
- Didn’t escape during the earthquake
- Along with Paul ready to lead the jailor and his household to salvation.

Events after their release:

- Wanted to release them quietly
- Revealed they were Roman citizens (indicating Silas may not been from Jerusalem)-escorted them out of the jail

AT A RIOT IN THESSALONIA

Acts 17:1-9, 1 When Paul and **his companions** had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. 2 As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,” he said. 4 Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and **Silas**, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women. 5 But other Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason’s house in search of Paul and **Silas** in

order to bring them out to the crowd. 6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, 7 and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.” 8 When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. 9 Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

- “some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women.”
- The mob wanted to bring Paul and Silas out of Jason’s house.
- “caused trouble all over the world have now come here.” (Turned to world upside down)

AT A BIBLE STUDY IN BEREIA

Acts 17:10-12, 10 As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and **Silas** away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. 11 Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. 12 As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

- After Paul left Berea for Athens because folks from Thessalonica stirred up trouble, Silas and Timothy remained in Berea with the new believers.
- Silas and Timothy were supposed to join Paul in Athens ASAP. It does appear they made it.

AT THE CORRUPT CITY OF CORINTH

Acts 18:5, 5 When **Silas** and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.

- It appears that Silas and Timothy also often worked to raise support for their travels.
- Remember that Corinth was a corrupt city as seen by the types of problems Paul had to address in 1 & 2 Corinthians. This was not an easy place to minister.

AT THE WRITING OF THREE NT LETTERS

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians

1 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.

Oh the stories Silas could tell. He had a front row seat to some of the most amazing events of history, and was a principle player in the action. He sat at the feet of Paul as he preached around the world. He was

there to help new disciples and churches as they were growing in the faith. He was there suffering alongside of Paul, knowing what it was like to be pursued from town to town. He was there to help mentor young Timothy who became an evangelist who became an expert church planter. He was there to see the diligence of the Greeks and Jews who searched to Scriptures. He was there dealing with the problems that the early churches had, and participating in the writing of letters to these churches. Where are the Silas' of today?