

# Acts 16:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

## Analysis

**When her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone** (ἰδόντες ὅτι ἔξηλθεν ἡ ἐλπὶς τῆς ἐργασίας αὐτῶν)—The Greek ergasia (ἐργασία) means "business" or "profit," exposing the commercial exploitation of the demon-possessed girl. Paul's exorcism destroyed their revenue stream, not their theological worldview. This reveals a stark pattern throughout Acts: opposition to the Gospel rarely stems from intellectual objection but from threatened financial or political interests (cf. Ephesus's silversmiths in Acts 19:23-27).

**They caught Paul and Silas, and drew them** (ἐπιλαβόμενοι τὸν Παῦλον καὶ τὸν Σιλᾶν εἷλκυσαν)—The violent verb heilkusan (dragged forcibly) echoes Jesus's prediction that disciples would be "brought before rulers" (Luke 21:12). Notably, Timothy and Luke avoided arrest, likely because only Roman citizens Paul and Silas could be charged in the agora (marketplace-forum). This judicial setting recalls Socrates's trial—both confronted civic authorities over spiritual truth.

## Historical Context

Philippi was a Roman colony (Acts 16:12) with special legal status, making the marketplace the center of civic and judicial life. The "masters" (κύριοι) were likely multiple slave-owners profiting from the girl's fortune-telling. Roman law protected property rights aggressively, and Paul's miracle constituted economic

interference, making prosecution almost inevitable in this militaristic, commerce-driven city.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. When have you seen the Gospel opposed not on theological grounds but because it threatened someone's financial interests or social status?
2. How does the willingness of Paul and Silas to face legal consequences for liberating one enslaved girl challenge your understanding of costly discipleship?

## Interlinear Text

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ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ κύριοι αὐτῶν ὅτι ἐξῆλθεν ἡ ἐλπὶς  
saw And G3588 masters when her that was gone G3588 the hope  
G1492 G1161 G2962 G846 G3754 G1831 G1680

τῆς ἐργασίας αὐτῶν ἐπιλαβόμενοι τὸν Παῦλον καὶ τὸν  
G3588 gains when her they caught G3588 Paul and G3588  
G2039 G846 G1949 G3972 G2532

Σιλᾶν εἴλκυσαν εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν ἐπὶ τοὺς  
Silas and drew them into the marketplace unto G3588  
G4609 G1670 G1519 G58 G1909 G3588

Ἄρχοντας  
the rulers  
G758

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 21:30** (References Paul): And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

**Acts 17:6** (Parallel theme): And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

**Acts 16:16** (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

**Acts 8:3** (Parallel theme): As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

**Mark 13:9** (Parallel theme): But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

**Matthew 24:9** (Parallel theme): Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

**2 Corinthians 6:5** (Parallel theme): In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;