

EXERCISING OUR RIGHTS AS KINGDOM CITIZENS



Act 16:34-39 KJV 34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. 35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. 36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. 37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. 38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. 39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.

This account was about the imprisonment of Paul at Philippi. Paul and Silas had cast out a devil from a possessed girl and the owners of the girl dragged them before the magistrate who ordered them to be stripped naked and flogged. They put them in jail. There was a miracle earthquake that got their chains broken but they did not run away. The jailer attended to them. In the morning the magistrate sent sergeants to the jailer to allow them to go.

What would you do if you were in their shoes? You will be glad and quickly leave.

But Paul said no. He said they will not leave unless the magistrates themselves come to the prison to release them. Why was Paul saying this? He said they disgrace and beat them publicly even though they were Romans.

When the magistrates heard that they were Romans they were afraid and came to be sought and escorted them out of prison.

My question? What is it about being a Romans that made the magistrates to be afraid?

A similar incidence occurred in Act 22. The story actually started in chapter 21 where the Jews arrested Paul in the Temple accusing him of bringing a gentile Trophimus into the court of Jews, a thing forbidden by law. They saw Trophimus with Paul in town so they assumed that he brought him into the temple.

While they were beating Paul the chief captain heard of it and rushed down to rescue him. They bound Paul and were taking him out when he asked for permission to talk to the crowd. The chief captain agreed after he introduced himself as a Jew of Tarsus Act 21:39.

In chapter 22 when he started talking to the people, he mentioned the word "gentiles" and there was another riot and the chief captain was confused that Paul must have done something terrible that made the people desire him to be killed. So he ordered his soldiers to interrogate him by scourging.

While they were tying him down, he asked a question.

Act 22:25 KJV And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?



The centurion informed the chief captain and one asked Paul if he were a Roman truly? Paul said he was a Roman. This was the reaction of the people that were about scourging him.

Act 22:29 KJV Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

My question again. What is it about being a Roman?

Remember that in chapter 21:39, he introduced himself as a Jew and nothing happened. In chapter 22: 3 he introduced himself again to the crowd as a Jew and yet nothing happened but when he introduced himself as a Romans, things happened.

What was it that made the magistrates in chapter 16 to come and start begging prisoners? What was it that made the chief captain to be afraid and interrogators to depart?

The answer is in the statement of accusation of Paul to the magistrates.

Act 16:37 KJV But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.

Paul only asked them if it were lawful

Act 22:25 KJV And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

There were two major laws in Rome at that time.

Paul well knew the Roman laws; and on their violation by the magistrates he pleaded.

The **Valerian law** forbade any Roman citizen to be bound. The **Porcian law** forbade any Roman citizen to be beaten with rods.

This was the reason that made the magistrates beg because they had broken the two laws by bounding Paul and beaten him without being subjected to trial and found guilty.

The same reason that made the Chief captain to be afraid because he had broken the Valerian law by putting Paul in bondage.

They knew consequences of their illegitimate action that may lead to confiscation of properties and removal from offices, so they came begging.

Paul had dual citizenship. His Jewish citizenship did not save him but here the Roman's citizenship saved him.

He was from Tarsus. Tarsus were Roman citizens because of the services tendered to the Romans by the inhabitants, Julius

Caesar endowed them with all the rights and privileges of Roman citizens.

Privilege of coming into God's family.



Every child of God also has another citizenship other than that of his home country. In Ephesians 2: 19 Paul was telling something to the Ephesus believers.

Eph 2:19 KJV Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

What does he mean by being a "fellow citizen"? They were already citizens of Ephesus, now he said they have become fellow citizens with the saints, talking about the Jewish believers.

What kind of citizenship was he talking about?

Phi 3:20 KJV For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

The word "conversation" there is not what it used to be used for in KJV bible like manner of life and conduct or conversing with people. Here the Greek rendition is "politeuma" it means citizen.

ESV:But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

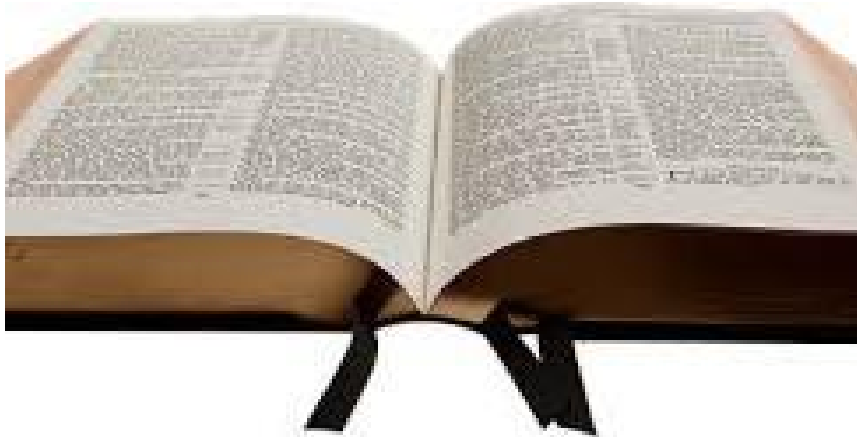
NIV:But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

AMP:But we are citizens of the state (commonwealth, homeland) which is in heaven, and from it also we earnestly and patiently await [the coming of] the Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah) [as] Savior,

Therefore every Christian has dual citizenship.

Under the new covenant, this is one of the things Jesus died for and that we are celebrating today is the privilege of becoming a child of God.

In John 3: 3, the Lord told Nicodemus that he must be born again. The word "again" is "**anōthen**" in Greek and it means from above or born from above. A Christian is born from above and thus has a citizenship of heaven.



There are rights and privileges attached to being a citizen of a particular country. Paul knew it and took advantage of it. It delivered him from shame, ridicule and scourging. We too as christians have much more than Roman citizenship. We are heavenly citizens with rights and privileges.

The devils, demons, Satan himself know about it, the Lord knows about it, angels know about it, the only person that is unaware of it is the christians.

There are many unlawful things that the devil is doing to us, our family, our bodies, our economy and finances but we are not aware or ignorant of where we came from. We subjected ourselves to the economy of our country of origin. When there is depression, recession and losses we fully participate in them. When there is an outbreak of illnesses and plague, we are participants.

Our citizenship of our home country will not deliver us from devils, principalities, powers and territorial demons, your

position in the office will not do the same, but there are laws that give us rights and privileges.

These rights are as a result of what Jesus paid for. He died for them. He died to redeem us from this present evil world.

Gal 1:4 KJV Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

He died to redeem us from poverty, sickness, generational curses, etc. He has purchased our healing through His stripes. He paid for our poverty so that we can be rich. Everything that happened to Jesus was for our sake. He was made sin for us so that we can be made the righteousness of God.

2Co 5:21 KJV For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

2Co 8:9 KJV For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

1Pe 2:24 KJV Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Isa 53:4-5 KJV 4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God,

and afflicted. 5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.



What are we supposed to do?

- Every child of God should get his country's constitution and a copy of the holy Bible. We have human rights activist that fight for our human rights enshrine in the law and in Geneva agreement
- Every child of God should study both documents very well. Ignorance is not an excuse.
- Find out the rights and privileges which His death, burial, resurrection, accession and His sitting at the right hand of God has given us.
- Jesus paid for it in full. He paid for our rights to live a healthy and prosperous lives

- Resist anything that is a contradiction. Anything that is contrary to our redemptive rights. we are not to be passive but actively resisting the devil. We already got the victory but we have to enforce that victory.

Jas 4:7 KJV Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- Declare your rights. Ask a question like Paul: Is it lawful?
2Co 4:1 KJV Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;
- Enforce your redemptive rights as a citizen of heaven by fighting the good fight of faith.

1Ti 6:12 KJV Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

It is a slap on the face of Jesus when we begin to suffer for what He had suffered for.

When He arose, we rose with Him. Eph 2 :6 says he has raised us together with Him and made us sit together with Him in heavenly places far above principalities, rulers and powers. That is where we are, we function from above.

Jesus Said i am from above, you are from beneath.

Paul told Timothy to be strong in the grace of the Lord Jesus. It means for him to take full advantage of it. Maximize it and have

a complete knowledge of it. Ginosko is when there is a relationship between the knower and the known such that the **knowledge** of the known begins to influence the knower.

Prayers: Declare who you are, what you have, where you are and what you possess.

My body, business, spiritual life, family receive the quickening power of the Holy Ghost now in Jesus name.

Rom 8:11 KJV But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

I am from above, he that is from above is above all. I am above principalities and rulers