
Detective Dan's (Shorter/Simpler) Version of Bible Story for Big Question 13, Bible Truth 6

The Case of the Prayed-for Prisoner *Philippians*

(Numbers correspond to Bible story picture pages in Detective Dan's Big Question Box)

1. "Oh no! Paul is in prison in Rome for telling people about Jesus. We must help him," the believers in Philippi exclaimed. Paul might be cold, hungry, sick, or lonely. God uses His people to care for each others' needs, but Rome was faraway. What could they help Paul from Philippi?

2. The Philippians knew what they could do. They could pray. They could ask God to have Paul freed from jail. They could ask Him to keep Paul from getting sick, and to comfort him with God's Word. Yes, the Philippians could help Paul in faraway Rome by their prayers.

3. But the Philippians wanted to do more. They decided to send money to care for Paul's needs. The believers in Philippi weren't rich, but Paul had brought the good news of Jesus to them, and many, like Lydia, heard and believed. This money gift was a way to say thank you to him.

4. The believers worked hard to save money for Paul. Many did without things they needed so they could give more to Paul. When enough money was collected, they gave it to a godly man, named Epaphroditus. They prayed for him, then sent him off on his long journey to Rome.

5. At last, Epaphroditus made it to Paul in Rome. There was he, an old man, sick and hurting, and chained to a soldier. But even so, Paul was joyful. He was still living for God and telling people about Jesus. He had even shared the gospel with his guards, and some had become Christians!

6. Epaphroditus stayed and cared for Paul for a long time. He used the Philippian's money gift to buy Paul food and other things he needed. And as he and Paul talked about the Lord and prayed, the Lord comforted Paul and gave him strength to keep believing in and living for Him.

7. At last, it was time for Epaphroditus to go home. Paul gave him a letter to read to the believers when he got back to Philippi. Paul wrote: "I thank my God every time I remember you. I pray for you with joy because of our work together for the good news of Jesus."

8. "It's been good for the gospel for me to be in prison. I've been able to tell many people about Jesus, including the soldiers who guard me," Paul told them. "Even though life in prison is hard, I'm full of joy. God is helping me by your prayers and by His Holy Spirit living in me," he wrote.

9. "One day, God will take me home to be with Him forever. That will be best of all. Until then, I will be praying for you, that God give you joy and strengthen you by His Holy Spirit, just as He is strengthening me. One day, I hope to be freed from prison and come visit you again. Paul."

10. What happened to Paul after Epaphroditus left? The Lord had promised that Paul would stand before Caesar Nero, the great Roman king, himself. And so, he did. Nero heard Paul's case, and no doubt, Paul tried to share the good news of Jesus with him.

11. Nero didn't become a Christian, but he DID free Paul from prison. The LORD had answered the Philippian's prayers. Paul probably never saw the believers in Philippi again, but he never forgot them. God had used them to give him strength and comfort when he needed it the most.

12. But oh, how sweet would be the meeting of these dear friends in heaven one day! They had loved each other so well on earth, and now, they would get to go on loving each other forever. And that's what they are doing, even now!