

Paul and Silas in Prison Craft

At midnight they sang · Acts 16:16–40 · print page 2 for each child (and page 3 for the harder level)

What it looks like finished



Easy and medium

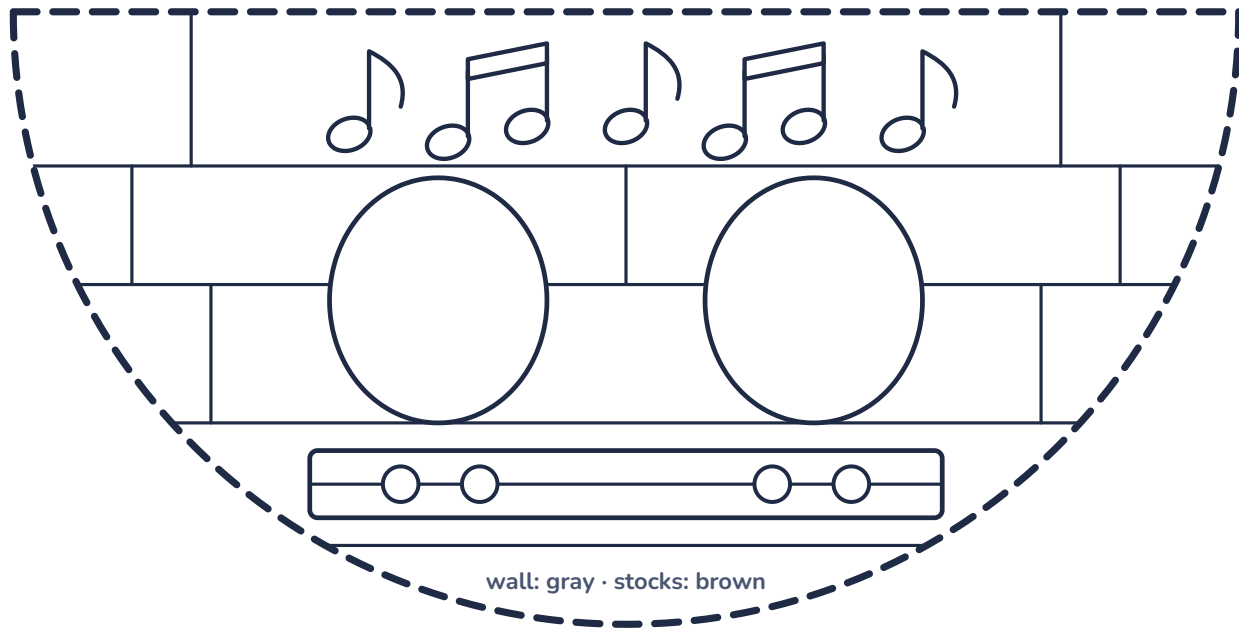


Harder

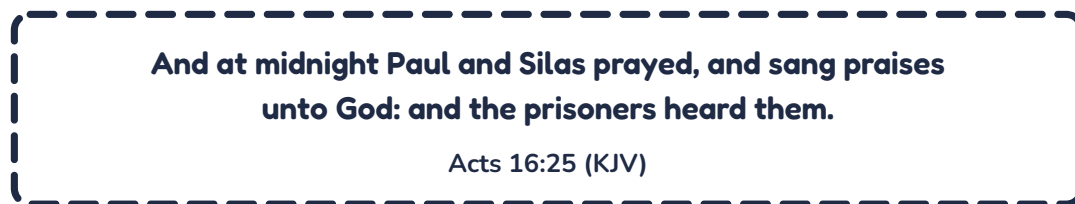
Both levels are a paper plate folded in half that stands on its curved edge and rocks like the great earthquake (Acts 16:26). On the front is the prison wall: gray stones, yellow music notes, Paul and Silas drawn in the two windows, and their feet fast in the brown stocks (16:24–25). Medium (left): the rocking prison. Harder (right): the same, with two brown doors over the windows, opened, because "all the doors were opened" (16:26).

Name: _____

✂ Cut on the dashed lines



prison wall: glue it on the front of the folded plate, straight edge on the fold



verse strip: glue it on the back half of the plate, long edge on the fold

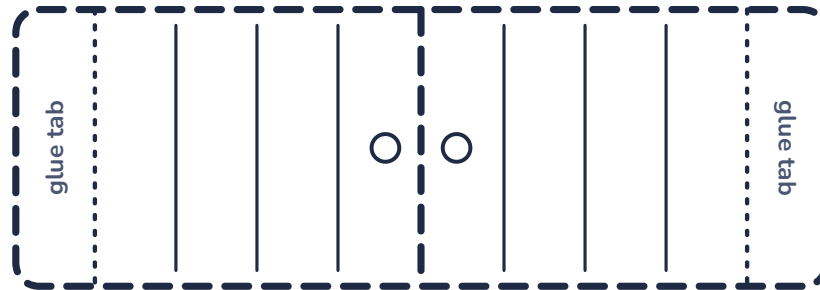
Color the wall gray, the music notes yellow and the stocks brown. Draw Paul in the left window and Silas in the right window. Cut out the prison wall and the verse strip. You also need a white paper plate and a glue stick.

Name: _____

✂ Harder level

Prison doors (harder level)

Cut on the dashed lines, and cut between the two doors. Glue only the tabs.



doors: color brown · fold each door open on its dotted line
left door opens to the left, right door opens to the right

How to add the doors

1. Make the rocking prison from page 2 first.
2. Color both doors brown. Cut out the door piece on the dashed lines, then cut down the dashed line between the two doors.
3. Fold each door on its dotted line and open it flat again, so it bends easily.
4. Lay the doors over the two windows, just under the music notes. Glue only the two side tabs on the wall, so the doors can swing open.
5. Tell it: shut both doors. Paul and Silas are locked in the inner prison (Acts 16:24). Tap the plate: "a great earthquake" (16:26)! Then open both doors: "all the doors were opened" (16:26). Are Paul and Silas still there? Yes: "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here" (16:28).

For the teacher

See it finished: a photo of the finished craft is at vbshq.com/crafts/paul-and-silas-craft

Time: 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the level · **Ages:** 3 to 11, in three levels · **Cost:** under 50 cents a child for the easy and medium levels

You need: page 2 printed once per child (cardstock is sturdiest), one white 9-inch paper plate per child (the plain uncoated kind, so glue sticks to it), gray, yellow and brown crayons or markers, crayons for drawing Paul and Silas, scissors and glue sticks. For the harder level, page 3 for each child and a brown crayon.

Before class: fold one plate yourself and stand it on its curved edge to show the kids. For preschoolers, cut out the prison walls and verse strips ahead of time, fold the plates in half and glue the verse strips on the backs.

Three ways to make it

- **Easy (preschool, ages 3–5), about 15 minutes, no scissors:** before class, cut out each child's pieces, fold the plates and glue on the verse strips. Kids color the wall, the notes and the stocks and draw Paul and Silas. Help them glue the wall on the front, then let them tap it for the earthquake.
- **Medium (grades K–2), about 20 minutes:** follow the steps below. Kids color, draw, cut, fold and glue. This is the craft in the first photo.
- **Harder (grades 3–5), about 30 minutes:** make the rocking prison like the medium level. Then add the prison doors from page 3 over the windows, glued by their side tabs, and open them after the earthquake. This is the craft in the second photo.

Steps (medium level)

1. **Color:** color the prison wall gray, the music notes yellow and the stocks brown. Leave the two windows and the verse strip white.
2. **Draw:** in the left window, draw Paul. In the right window, draw Silas: two men with short hair, singing praises to God (Acts 16:25).
3. **Cut:** cut out the prison wall and the verse strip on the dashed lines.
4. **Fold:** fold the paper plate in half, top side in, and press the fold flat.
5. **Glue:** glue the prison wall on one outside half of the plate, with its straight edge along the fold. Turn the plate over and glue the verse strip on the other half (the back), with its long edge along the fold.
6. **Stand it:** stand the plate on its curved edge, fold at the top, opened a little so it stands.
7. **Verse:** read the verse strip together.
8. **Tell it:** "At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God" (Acts 16:25): sing a song together. "And suddenly there was a great earthquake" (16:26): tap the top of the plate so the prison rocks back and forth!

Questions to ask while kids work

- What city were Paul and Silas in? (*Philippi, Acts 16:12*)
- In whose name did Paul command the evil spirit to come out of the girl? (*In the name of Jesus Christ, 16:18*)
- Where did the jailer put Paul and Silas? (*In the inner prison, their feet fast in the stocks, 16:24*)
- What did Paul and Silas do at midnight, and who heard them? (*They prayed and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them, 16:25*)
- Tap the plate. What shook the prison? (*A great earthquake: all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed, 16:26*)
- What did Paul cry with a loud voice? (*"Do thyself no harm: for we are all here," 16:28*)
- What did the jailer ask? (*"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 16:30*)
- What did the jailer and his family do that same hour of the night? (*He washed their stripes and was baptized, he and all his, straightway, 16:33*)

Tips

- **Old Bible words explained:** **stocks** are heavy wooden boards that lock a person's feet; **feet fast** means locked tight; **sang praises** means sang songs that tell God how great He is; **bands** means chains; **loosed** means came off; **straightway** means right away.
- **What the Bible says:** the doors were opened and the bands were loosed, but Paul and Silas did not run away: "we are all here" (Acts 16:28). The Bible doesn't describe the prison, so the craft keeps it simple: a stone wall, two windows and the stocks.
- **Gentle, not scary:** the craft shows the singing and the earthquake, not the beating or the jailer's sword. Keep the focus on praising God at midnight.
- **Singing fits this craft:** sing a song everyone knows while kids color, like "Jesus Loves Me." Softly first, then louder: "the prisoners heard them."
- **No one is drawn on the template, and never Jesus:** each child draws Paul and Silas in the windows. The jailer is not in the craft.
- **If it won't rock:** open the fold a little wider, and press the fold flat again. Cardstock pieces glued flat make it steadier.
- **Preschool:** pre-cut everything and fold the plates ahead of time. Use glue sticks, not liquid glue. Let every child say, "A great earthquake!" and tap their prison.
- **Teach the story first:** this craft goes with the free Paul and Silas lesson and word search at vbshq.com/bible-stories/paul-and-silas.