

LYDIA

ACTS 16:13-15

INTRODUCTION.

---**Acts 16:6-12**, it is very obvious that God directed the work of Paul and his companions. They had plans to preach in certain places but God indicated to Paul in a vision that he should go to Macedonia.

--- Acts 16:12 they are now in Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia.

--- Acts 16:13, "**And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city by the riverside**" (places of prayer, they were simple enclosures made of stones, in a grove of trees or under a tree,)

---"**where prayer was customarily made; and sitting down, we spoke to the women who met there.**" In some cities there was no synagogue, the meeting place of the Jews, and there were gatherings like this gathering of some women "by the river."

--- There was a way to find these groups that did not have a synagogue and Paul and companions could locate this meeting and attended it.

--- Those women who had gathered were invited to speak.

---**Lydia worshipped God.**

---**Acts 16:14, "Then a woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, from the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to be attentive to what Paul was saying."**

--- This text tells of the conversion of a woman named Lydia. She "worshipped God." It is very important to remember this, she was already "worshipping God" when she heard the gospel preached by Paul and companions.

--- **Romans 10:17, "So faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."** So it was that hearing the gospel Lydia believed.

--- Likewise in all the examples of conversion in the book of Acts of the Apostles: The 3000, the Samaritans, Saul, Cornelius, Lydia, the Ethiopian, the jailer, the Corinthians, the Ephesians. Without exception all heard the gospel preached by the apostles.

--- "**and the Lord opened her heart.**" How? Because she was "hearing" the gospel. It wasn't a miracle! God opens hearts through the gospel preached, understood, and obeyed.

--- **Luke 24:44, 45**, Jesus "said to them, These are the words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you: that it was necessary that all that is written of me in the law of Moses, in the prophets, and in the psalms should be fulfilled.

⁴⁵**Then he opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."** How did He open their understanding to understand the Scriptures? Obviously by teaching them about the fulfillment of prophecies about Him. It was not a miraculous opening of their heart.

--- **2 Corinthians 3:15**, "And even to this day, when Moses is read, the veil is placed over their hearts." It's no miracle! Hearing the teaching of Scripture, they closed their hearts not to accept God's will. They themselves put the veil over their own hearts!

--- Christ removed the veil of darkness and made everything clear (Jn. 1:17), for He is the truth concerning the purpose of the law of Moses. The rebellious Jew, hearing Moses read to them, held a veil over their heart so as not to see that Moses was speaking about Christ. That veil of darkness they kept over the eyes of their mind because they preferred to follow their traditions instead of God's commandments (Matt. 15:3-9). They were without excuse (Rom. 2:1).

---**Ephesians 1:16-17**, "¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him

--- **Ephesians 1:18**, "enlightening the eyes of your understanding, that you may know what is the hope of His calling...."

--- Paul does not ask for miracles, but that the word preached by the apostles produce such important effects. It is very important to pray for the success of preaching.

--- "**that they might receive what Paul said.**" It is what we always ask, that the Lord help the listeners to receive the gospel to obey it as Lydia did.

--- **Philippians 2:13**, "For it is God who works in you **both to will** and to do His good will," not miraculously, but through the obeyed word and prayer.

--- **LYDIA OBEYED AT ONCE**

--- Acts 16:15, "and when she was baptized." This language indicates that at once Lydia accepted the gospel and obeyed by being baptized, Obviously on the day of Pentecost the 3000 were baptized on the same day they heard the gospel. Likewise, the other examples of conversion. In the case of the jailer, he was baptized at midnight, the same time he learned the gospel. The Ethiopian said, "Here is water, what prevents me from being baptized?"

--- Acts 16:15, "and his family (house)." This text is twisted by some to teach "infant baptism," but everyone in his house heard and understood the gospel.

Acts 11:14, "**He will speak to you words by which you and all your household will be saved.**"

--- Being a seller of purple it is very likely that those in her "house" were the people who helped her in her business. Remember also that the rest of the text explains that Lydia was very hospitable and for this she needed helpers.

--- When studying a text such as this, it is essential to study the context and the parallel texts related to the text under consideration. For example, the examples of baptized people recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. There is no example of "infant baptism." Of course the so-called "baptism" in this case of "infant baptism" is not baptism (immersion).

--- THE HOSPITALITY OF LYDIA

--- Acts 16:15, "she begged us, saying, If ye have judged that I should be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and rest. And she persuaded us to stay."

--- **Paul** was determined to preach the gospel of Christ at no cost (1 Corinthians 9:18; Acts 20:34), so **that** worldly people **should have no occasion to** reproach the preachers of the gospel as greedy **and** selfish men, and that the brethren should have no occasion to complain about the expenses of their religion.

--- But Lydia insisted, she put **as** a condition, that if they **accept her** as faithful they must accept her hospitality. Compare the case of Abraham inviting angels (Genesis 18:3), If I have now found favor before you, do not refuse my hospitality.

--- **Acts 16:40**, "Then, coming out of prison, they went into the house of Lydia, and having seen the brethren, they comforted them, and when they had seen the brethren they encouraged them and departed".

--- It would have been very helpful for Lydia and the jailer to keep Paul and companions for a long time to receive more teaching from them and pray with them and win more souls to Christ.

--- But it was necessary for them to go to other places.

--- **Epistle to the Philippians.** This letter clearly reveals how much Paul loved this church. **Philippians 1:8** he says, "**I long for you.**"

---**GRATITUDE.** Here is a very clear demonstration of gratitude, a quality of utmost importance in God's eyes. **Lydia had a house and obviously these servants of God needed lodging.**

--- We teach a lot about the requirements of discipleship. Here is another requirement. After obeying the gospel, **Lydia wanted to serve the Lord and**

did not have to look very long to find a valuable opportunity to serve and show her gratitude to God as well as to Paul and companions.

--- Being hospitable is undoubtedly one of the most necessary services or ministries of Christian women.

--- **Romans 12:13**, "distributing for the needs of the saints; practicing hospitality."

--- **1 Timothy 3:2**, "But the bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, sober, prudent, decorous, **hospitable**, able to teach;"

--- **Titus 1:7, 8** For the bishop must be blameless, as God's steward; not proud, not wrathful, not given to wine, not quarrelsome, not greedy for dishonest gain,⁸ but **hospitable**, lover of the good, sober, just, holy, master of himself."

--- **1 Peter 4:9**, "Be **hospitable** to one another without murmuring."

--- BUT SHE WAS NOT MERELY HOSPITABLE.

--- She practiced hospitality and this is a virtue of utmost importance.

--- But no doubt Lydia attended church services faithfully and especially on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper and make an offering.

--- Such sisters are also very active as teachers of other women and children.

--- Who can imagine that Lydia stopped meeting with Christians to devote herself to her work of selling purple cloth? If she had had carnal tendencies she would easily have neglected attendance by saying, "Well, you have to work to eat."

--- Lidia is a very good example of a very helpful sister.

... The first thing Lydia did after her conversion was to serve. God opened her heart and she opened the doors of her home to serve.

--- **Acts 16:40**, "When they came out of prison, they went to Lydia's house, and when they saw the brethren, they comforted them and departed."

--- Even in the midst of riots in the city over manifestations of God's power (Acts 16:16-40), Lydia received Paul and his companions to be comforted and encouraged to continue their mission. What a beautiful example of service! Our homes can be used as a center to advance the gospel, the hospitality of a sister like Lydia can serve to strengthen others in the work of making disciples.