



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## God Blesses His Leaders: Acts 16

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*Today's leaders face high expectations, sometimes of miracle proportions! These study notes highlight the intervention of our mighty God in the lives of Lydia, Paul, Silas and their colleagues. The prayers of these leaders were answered in powerful ways. Over 100 references in the Holy Scriptures assure us that God blesses those who trust Him.*

### INTRODUCTION

Have you reflected, wondering about the choices you have made and the direction that your life has taken? We can look ahead and pray about our challenges and the decisions that we will face. Prayer has a powerful impact on our life, and prayer moves Jehovah God to intercede, using us for His purposes.

### TRUST GOD

*Matthew 6:33-34 Seek first God's kingdom and what God wants. Then all your other needs will be met as well. So don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will have its own worries. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*<sup>1</sup>

A woman named Lydia relocated to Philippi from the Roman colony of Thyatira in Asia where she had learned the art of dying cloth. Philippi was a rapidly growing city on the major trade route into Macedonia, now Europe. Lydia specialized in purple cloth, the lucrative market of royalty and the wealthy. She purchased a home where her family and servants lived and worked. Lydia was seeking Yahweh, Israel's God. However, there was no temple at Philippi or priest to guide in this quest. Lydia and her servant girls worshiped and prayed on Sundays at the bank of the Gangites River just outside of the city.<sup>2</sup>

### GOD HEARS AND ANSWERS PRAYER

*Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

The Apostle Paul, was traveling with disciples Luke, Silas, and Timothy. They were visiting local churches Paul had started on earlier travels. God's Spirit urged Paul to pass through Galatia, ending their journey at the seaport in Troas. That night, Paul had a vision of someone in Macedonia calling for him. The team sailed to Philippi where they walked through the city looking for the temple. On Sunday, they went out to the river to pray. Meeting Lydia and the women gathered there, Paul told of Jesus, God's Messiah, who paid our sin debt, giving eternal life to all who accept this pardon. Lydia and her household believed and were baptized (Acts 16:6-15). She urged the team to lodge at her home while there. Are you in prayer long enough to hear God?

### GOD IS IN CHARGE

*Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

Paul and Silas were in the city for several days, sharing of Christ. They were being harassed by a slave girl who babbled about the future, making profit for her owners. Paul commanded the spirit to leave her by the name of Jesus Christ. The evil spirit left, ending her owner's profits. They seized Paul and Silas, dragged them to the authorities, and charged them with disrupting the city. Paul and Silas were beaten with rods and thrown into prison. During the night, they were praying and singing hymns of praise to God while chained in the inner cell. An earthquake shook the place, opening all the gates and unfastening everyone's chains. The frightened jailer was about to commit suicide to avoid Roman execution when Paul shouted that all the prisoners were still there. The jailer asked how he could receive God's grace. Paul explained salvation to his household, and they all were baptized. Later that day the authorities apologized for the mistreatment but begged them to leave the city (Acts 16:16-40). Timothy and Luke stayed, building Europe's first church in Lydia's home. Are you growing in obedience so that God is moving boldly in your life?

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Bible, New Century Version. (Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Spangler/Syswerda, Women of the Bible. (Zondervan Publishing). 1999. p.415.