

not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

The Philippian Saints, who are "lovers of horses," or "lovers of the race horse," will love and identify with the rider of the white horse of REVELATION 19. REVELATION 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. (These are the Philippian Saints). 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Having now been introduced to the important things that takes place in the hearts of these yet to be Philippian Saints, let's return in our thinking to the very first day that the Apostle Paul arrived at Philippi, knowing only that the Lord had called him to go into Macedonia for the express purpose to preach the gospel unto them, and all of this was in response to the vision of ACTS 16:9 where the man from Macedonia prayed: Come over into Macedonia, and help us. Interestingly one of the meanings of Macedonia is "extended land," which expresses to us the thought of the important message that Paul preached in Macedonia extends even down to the fertile land of our heart today.

Philippi, one of the chief cities of Macedonia, is noted in ACTS 16:12 to be a colony. This means it was a Roman colony, which further means it afforded Roman citizens certain privileges, which will become a factor for the Apostle Paul later in this chapter. Some of the privileges of Roman citizens were: the exemption from scourging, and except in extreme cases, the freedom from arrest, and the right of appeal from the magistrate to the Emperor. Eventually in life the Apostle Paul would use all of these privileges, for Paul was a Roman citizen himself. {Study ACTS 16:37 & 38, and ACTS 22:25-29}. We find Paul and company in Philippi the rest of the time frame of ACTS 16.

As we noted above this trip from Troas to Philippi was expedited by God. Then Luke writes: ...and we were in that city abiding certain days. The word "abiding" means to spend or to pass time. Why did God have them rush from Troas to Philippi just to pass time? ISAIAH 55:8 & 9 perhaps best answers this question by noting: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Once again the Apostle Paul was learning valuable lessons on patience. No other author of scripture writes as much about patience as does the Apostle Paul. Just for example, here is some of what he wrote on the subject of patience. ROMANS 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Note how that trials and tribulation worketh patience. ROMANS 8:25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. 2 THESSALONIANS 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. HEBREWS 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set

before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. So we see from even these few scriptures that patience is something that is necessary in the life of a full overcomer. To the Philadelphia church Jesus states to the full overcomer in REVELATION 3:10 *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.* Jesus, the ultimate full overcomer, waited patiently 30 years here on earth for the time that He was to begin His ministry. Having said all of this, be it noted that these days of abiding in Philippi were working their eternal purpose in God's plan for the life of the Apostle Paul, and his traveling companions. Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke all had equal opportunity here to become full overcomers.

It seems kind of strange, don't it, what we have studied since ACTS 16:9, the fact that God showed Paul a vision where a Macedonia man urged the Apostle Paul to come over into Macedonia and help us, and yet once they got there nothing seemed to happen. ROMANS 12:12 reads: *Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.* I know the Apostle Paul and his companions were being patient here, and were instant in prayer. Perhaps the speedy trip by ship was also a rough one, and the Apostle Paul and his companions needed time to recover from sea sickness. We don't know for the scripture doesn't tell us. However we do know that Paul was following the leading of the Holy Ghost, and the timing of the Lord is always correct. I believed they all took full advantage of their time of patience here at Philippi when they *...were in that city abiding certain days.* Again in the light of eternity Philippi was a very important place in the life of the Apostle Paul, and his dealings there have reached down through the ages even unto you and me! Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither was any full overcomer built in a day (so to speak)!

ACTS 16:12 *...and we were in that city abiding certain days.* 13 *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.*

We know by having studied much about the Apostle Paul, that his manner was upon reaching a city to attend a Sabbath's day service at a synagogue. In ACTS 13:14 in Antioch, Pisidia Paul and Barnabas on their first sabbath day there went unto the synagogue, and so it was the pattern everywhere Paul went. There are probably twenty-some scriptures in the book of ACTS that verify this behaviour of Paul's. ACTS 17:1 & 2 notes: *Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,...* ACTS 18:4 notes: *And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.* In ACTS 18:19 we read of this same thing happenings at Ephesus: *And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.* However here in Philippi Paul has come to the regions where there is no synagogue.

At this point in time the boundaries of Philippi hold no room for Jesus. Paul and company have to go outside the gate, outside the camp of Philippi in order to find the place where close fellowship with Jesus was to be found. ACTS 16:13 *And on the sabbath we went out of the city...* In THE SONG OF SOLOMON chapter 3 and verse 4 we read: *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth:...* meaning the bride found her love outside the city limits, beyond the bounds of popularity, beyond the things of the world, and that is where she found close fellowship with her bridegroom. Abraham's servant sought out a bride for Isaac beyond the land of Canaan in GENESIS 24, and the Holy Ghost today is still searching among believers for those who have an ear for His Voice, and will seek Him even without the camp. HEBREWS 13:13 even tells us: *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.*

Once outside the city Paul and company came by a river side. The river side speaks of a place where water is flowing. In JOHN 4 Jesus gives the Samaritan woman a discourse on the well of living water. In JOHN 7:38 we read: *He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* In EXODUS 17:6 Moses was ordered of the Lord to smite the rock in Horeb with his rod, which Moses did,

and water came out of the rock and the children of Israel had water to drink. The Apostle Paul makes reference to this event in 1 CORINTHIANS 10:4 when he writes: *And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.* Spiritually speaking the rivers of living waters represents the Word of God, who is Jesus, upon whom all believers feed and drink in freely His abundant and refreshing Words of life, or as Paul states it in ACTS 20:32 *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*

So we find on the first sabbath day that Paul and his company were in Philippi they ...went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. {ACTS 16:13}. Note that the reason they went outside the city limits by a river side, was that they perceived, (which is the meaning behind the word "wont" here), that this was the place of prayer and worship on a sabbath day at Philippi. Prayer is such an important part in the lives of all full overcomers. This is why the Holy Ghost is so important in the life of a believer, for ROMANS 8:26 tells us: *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* Furthermore the Apostle Paul encourages us to *Pray without ceasing* in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17. ROMANS 12:12 tells us in part: *...continuing instant in prayer.* PHILIPPIANS 4:6 reads: *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* COLOSSIANS 4:2 *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;...* JAMES 5:16-18 reads: *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.* And 1 PETER 3:12 in part tells us: *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers:...*

When the Apostle Paul and his company of Silas, Timothy, and Luke came without the city limits of Philippi, Luke writes *...and we sat down,...* The phrase "sat down" is found forty times in scripture. Forty is the number of PERFECT TESTING. Sitting down often times requires testing patience. In ACTS 13:14 Paul and Barnabas went unto the synagogue in Antioch, Pisidia for the first time and "sat down." There they waited for the Holy Ghost to open unto them the door of opportunity to once again stand up, and speak the words of truth for Jesus. All Bridal Saints must first learn to "sit down." Ruth could not become the bride of Boaz (a type of Christ) before until she learned to "sit still." {see RUTH 3:18}. Rebekah couldn't become bride to Isaac until she learned how to sit down and patiently ride the camel. In the SONG OF SOLOMON 2:3 we read: *...I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

ACTS 16:13 records that their patience in waiting for the leading of the Lord paid off: *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.* "Resorted thither" means that there was an assembly of women who came to the river side on the sabbath for the purpose of worship in the form of a prayer meeting: *...by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made.* Note it was the women who at the first had a heart for the Lord at Philippi. God made women to think with their heart, and men to think with their head, so it is not a strange thing to first find that it was the women who had a heart for the Lord at Philippi. All full overcomers will have a heart in tune with their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. All full overcomers will be well versed in prayer and worship also, just like these women of Philippi.

In ACTS 16:14 & 15 Luke expounds on the statement he just made in ACTS 16:13: *...and spake unto the women which resorted thither.* ACTS 16:14 *And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.*

This is such a wonderful portion of scripture, just loaded with good stuff if we can only see it with our doves eyes. The focus of these two verses is Lydia, a woman who shows qualities that all full overcomers must have. Qualities also found in the virtuous woman of PROVERBS 31. First of all note that she already was a believer, for she *...worshipped God...*. She was one of the regulars at Philippi who *...resorted thither...*, that is came down to the river on the Sabbath for the purpose to worship God. Secondly, Lydia is noted to have open ears to hear the truth, for Luke informs the reader that she *...heard us...*. Thirdly, we find that the Lord opened her heart to receive the truth she was hearing. Forth, it is specifically noted *...that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.* Any full overcomer from this church age will only be a full overcomer because they attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

The things spoken of Paul were indeed Paul's gospel. There is a long list of doctrines taught by Paul. The doctrine of GRACE is emphasized in Paul's gospel. He learned on the road to Damascus: *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.* {EPHESIANS 2:8 & 9}. Paul was the one who emphasized the importance of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which Brother Hawkins taught at this years (2005) youth camp. Where else do we learn the doctrine of the Bride of Christ? This is one of the many doctrines emphasized by the Apostle Paul. Along with this doctrine is the doctrine of ranks in the resurrection, the doctrine of being a full overcomer, and a New Testament worthy of faith, the doctrine of a race course runner, the doctrine of having God's best, the doctrine of the hope of His calling, the doctrine of the glory of His inheritance, and the doctrine of suffering with Christ Jesus. Paul's gospel teaches of seven mysteries not found in other scriptural records, which are: (1) the mystery of Israel's blindness, (ROMANS 11:25); (2) the hidden mystery, (ROMANS 16:25; 1 CORINTHIANS 2:7; COLOSSIANS 1:26, and EPHESIANS 1:9); (3) the mystery of translation, (1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-53 and 1 THESSALONIANS 4:15-17); (4) the great mystery of the bride, which unfortunately remains a great mystery in most churches today simply because they do not have the Holy Ghost to teach them the truth, and if they do they fail to see Paul's doctrine of ranks in the resurrection, (EPHESIANS 5:32); (5) the mystery of Godliness, (COLOSSIANS 2:2 and 1 TIMOTHY 3:16); (6) the mystery of iniquity, (2 THESSALONIANS 2:7); and (7) the mystery of faith, (1 TIMOTHY 3:9). Paul's doctrine was given him specifically for this church age, and was primarily given him to reach the Gentiles as noted in ACTS 26:16-18. ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* Paul's doctrine teaches about the two natures, and the two heads, (the first man Adam, and the second man Adam, which is Christ Jesus). Paul's gospel teaches about the natural man, the spiritual man, and the carnal man. Paul teaches about the mystical body of Christ. This just scratches the surface of the many things that one can learn, like Lydia did, if they attend to the things which were spoken by Paul.

So we see back here in ACTS 16:14 & 15 that Lydia had open ears to hear and receive with her open heart the things of Paul's doctrine that were spoken by Paul, qualities that all full overcomers must have.

ACTS 16:14 *And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira,...*. At Thyatira it is recorded in history that there was a corporate guild of dyers during the time of the Roman empire. One account records that the waters of Thyatira were so suited for dying that nowhere was the scarlet of fezzes (purple) thought to be so brilliant and permanent as that made in Thyatira. Lydia made a good living selling the purple of Thyatira. We will next see that one of the qualities of a full overcomer that is pictured by Lydia concerns her being a seller of purple.

Purple in scripture pictures royalty. We find the word purple 48 times in scripture. I don't as of yet having a meaning for the number 48, however 48 is 24 times 2. Two being the number of SUFFICIENT TESTIMONY, and twenty four being the number of the PRIESTHOOD. The Bride of Christ will be a part of the royalty in heaven, part of the aristocracy of heaven that Brother Hill so often liked to talk about. The Apostle John

notes this of Jesus in REVELATION 1. REVELATION 1:5 *...Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* This then is your aristocracy of heaven; heaven's royalty.

The tabernacle in the wilderness pictured so many different aspects of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The color purple is found many times in association with the tabernacle in the wilderness. In EXODUS 26:1 we read: *Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them.* Later we read in EXODUS 26:31 *And thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made.* Notice the association of the purple with the cherubims. True Bible students know that the cherubims are figurative of the full overcomers from this church age, whom we also know as the Bride of Christ. Earlier in this study {see page 289 of these notes}, we touched upon Bezaleel, the one who was given the wisdom to make the cherubs that became a part of the tabernacle in the wilderness. Bezaleel also is a type of the Holy Ghost, who works in the hearts and lives of all full overcomers. Out of a single solid piece of pure gold Bezaleel fashioned the mercy seat with a cherub on each end. This was in accordance with the instructions given of God in EXODUS 25:18. EXODUS 25:18 *And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat.* Gold is an emblem of purity, a metal least tarnished, and speaks to us of deity (the divine nature of God), divine life, and Godly perfection. The beaten gold is representative of the suffering of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, of whom Paul said this before King Agrippa in ACTS 26:23 -- *That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.* In HEBREWS 2:9 Paul writes again: *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.* The joint-heirs with Christ, His bride, those that will rule and reign with Him, have learned that the only way they can be joint heirs with Him is to also suffer with Him. ROMANS 8:17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* 18 *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* 2 TIMOTHY 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* 2 TIMOTHY 2:12 *If we suffer, (with Him), we shall also reign with him:...*

EXODUS 37:9 states that *...the cherubims spread out their wings on high, and covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another...* The wings speak of heaven, and heavenly beings. The cherubim facing each other shows that their focus is always upon Him in the center. Their facing each other with wings lifted heavenward also pictures that the cherubim are in total agreement with the will of God. The Bride of Christ has made herself ready we are told in REVELATION 19:7, and a part of this getting ready is being in agreement with the will of God. We read in EXODUS 35:31 & 35: *And he hath filled him (Bezaleel) with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; ...35 Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.*

The work of the *...embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver,...* was just as important as his workmanship in the gold mentioned above. The blue is symbolic of the color of heaven. When we look upward here on earth during the cloudless day we see blue sky, the color of heaven. Purple again figures royalty. Scarlet figures the blood shed by Jesus on Calvary, which washed all believers sins away, and made them white as snow. ISAIAH 1:18 *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* The fine linen speaks of the righteousness of Saints, the kind of righteousness that is only possible by believing on Jesus Christ. REVELATION 19:7 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for*



the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. All of this workmanship mentioned above is symbolic of the work that is taking place in the hearts of those who will qualify to be in the Bride of Christ. EPHESIANS 2:10 -- *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* His Masterpiece will be the Bride of Christ. She will be ...arrayed in fine linen. She will be the rib portion of the mystical body of Christ, which is just a small part of what Jesus called "my church" back in MATTHEW 16:18.

Having said all of this let's read again our text. ACTS 16:14 *And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.*

We notice in verse 15 that Lydia and her household were then baptized. Here again Lydia shows qualities that all full overcomers must have. Lydia was a mature woman who had a "household." "Household" here means those who live in the same house. There is a responsibility of a householder beyond providing a place with a roof over ones head. This responsibility involves leadership. Do you think the Bride of Christ will have leadership qualities? She sure will, for she is to rule and reign with Him. Of course part of good leadership is the ability to also follow instructions. The very first time of the sixty-one times we read the word "household" in scripture is in GENESIS 18:19, where we find the Lord talking about Abraham, and giving His divine viewpoint of him. We will read from GENESIS 18:17, and as we do note the leadership qualities displayed by Abraham in God's eyes here: 17 *And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.* Abraham's leadership qualities was that ...*he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment;...* Of course we know from HEBREWS 11 that Abraham went on to become an Old Testament full overcomer; a worthy of faith, who is indicated to be the father of the faithful in ROMANS 4:12! Lydia displayed this same leadership quality, for when she came to pray and worship, her whole household came with her. She made them come even to the place of worship in other words. She wasn't afraid of her kids, or her maids, for she had established long ago that in order for them to be a part of her household they would have to follow certain rules, which included most importantly worshipping the Lord on the Sabbath. Four times in PROVERBS 31 in the discourse on the virtuous woman we find the word "household." PROVERBS 31:15 tells us: *She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.* PROVERBS 31:21 states: *She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.* Scarlet again figures the blood shed by Jesus on Calvary, which washed all believers sins away, and made them white as snow. In other words the virtuous woman makes sure all her household knows about her precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and she makes sure they join in worshipping Him. And PROVERBS 31:27 shows her leadership qualities further by stating: *She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.* Lydia and her household are found here in ACTS 16 attending unto the things which were spoken by Paul. We will find later in verse 15 that she constrained Paul and his company to become a part of her "household" also! What a thankful and hospitable virtuous woman Lydia was.

Lydia made sure that her "household" was then baptized. We pointed out earlier in this study that the Apostle Paul in his preaching never emphasized water baptism. In fact he writes in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:17 & 18 his point of emphasis: *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish*

foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. We also pointed out that before Paul came on the scene, and even before Jesus came on the scene, the Jews were sent by God one John the Baptist, whose message was *...To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.* {See LUKE 1:77}. John the Baptist didn't come to preach before the Gentiles like the apostle Paul did. John the Baptist preached *...the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.* {See ACTS 13:24}. John the Baptist preached before the time of Jesus ministry. In ACTS 19:4 Paul states: *...John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.* In John the Baptist's day water baptism was an outward expression of an inward belief in the soon coming Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and His forgiveness of sins. After the resurrection of Jesus water baptism to a Jew was an outward expression of an inward belief that they had accepted Jesus as their own personal Saviour, His forgiveness of their sins, and that they had died unto the law of Moses and were to be counted among those who believed in the resurrected Jesus Christ. Brother Copley noted that a fellow Jew will not believe that a Jew is saved if they are not willing to be baptized in water, thus when a Jew is baptized in water the unbelieving Jews denounce the baptized Jew from Judaism, and even from their family. They are referred to by other Jews as "the blotted out," having denounced Judaism and accepted the message of the Saviour. Recall also in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:22 that Paul writes: *For the Jews require a sign,...* . Water baptism was a definite sign unto the Jews that one had accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. We are not told if Lydia was a Jew or not, but if not, why did she come down by the river to worship on the Sabbath?

ACTS 16:15 *And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.* The word "besought" here is the same Greek word translated "prayed" in ACTS 16:9 *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* "Besought" here means to urge, or to earnestly appeal. In other words Lydia was not going to take no for an answer, and she earnestly entreated saying, *...If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.* The Greek word translated "constrained" is only found twice in New Testament scripture, and it simply means insisted. LUKE 24:29 is the other place we find this word "constrained," and in this scripture we find the two men traveling on the road to Emmaus listening to the risen Saviour speak the scriptures unto them. As evening was coming on they "constrained" Jesus to tarry with them for the night. As they begin to eat dinner, Jesus revealed Himself unto them, and then vanished out of their sight. This is when they said one to the other: *Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?* {LUKE 24:32}. Lydia's heart felt the same way after hearing the words of the Apostle Paul, for his gospel had pricked her heart, causing her heart to also compassionately burn within her for more of the gospel of Jesus to be spoken of, and for more of the scriptures to be opened unto her. Since she couldn't seem to get enough of this good gospel message, and not willing to let the day end with a simple good bye, *...she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.*

This is called hospitality. This kind of behaviour also spoke volumes to the heart of the Apostle Paul. In ROMANS 12 the Apostle Paul wrote the following, and especially note the 13th verse. ROMANS 12:9 *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; 13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.* Years later the Apostle Paul would write to Timothy about the office of a bishop, and he noted the qualifications of a bishop. Lydia displayed many of these same qualifications, and here in ACTS 16 Timothy enjoyed her hospitality also, so he knew what Paul was saying when he wrote: 1 TIMOTHY 3:1 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to*

wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Later in the same letter Paul wrote unto Timothy about older widows, stating: 1 TIMOTHY 5:10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. Again Timothy would know what the Apostle Paul was talking about, having himself been one of the strangers lodged by Lydia. In HEBREWS 13:2 Paul writes: *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.* Later in HEBREWS 13 Paul also writes: 20 *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,* 21 *Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* (This hospitality shown by Lydia was one of the good works Paul referenced in the underlined scriptures above.)

We all can learn many things from Lydia, and one of the more important things she said was this phrase found in verse 15: *...come into my house, and abide there.* Is the gospel of the Apostle Paul allowed in your house, and allowed to abide there? In other words have the doctrines of Paul become a part of your household? Paul's gospel is found in the homes of all New Testament full overcomers!

We will find in ACTS 16:40 that the house of Lydia remained the home base of the Apostle Paul, and his group while at Philippi. ACTS 16:40 is the last time we read of Lydia in scripture, however she was very important behind the scenes there at Philippi. We have noted the many fine qualities of a full overcomer displayed by Lydia. When the Apostle Paul writes his epistle unto the PHILIPPIANS he has Lydia and her household in mind. PHILIPPIANS 1:1 *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:* 2 *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* 3 *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,* 4 *Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,* 5 *For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;* (the first day included the day Lydia and her household first heard the gospel of Paul preached down by the riverside.) 6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:* 7 *Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.*

## Opposition at Philippi

We love examining the qualities found in a full overcomer, and have once again just examined many of these qualities associated with Lydia. However in order to be a full overcomer there are things ordained of God that must be placed on our race course for us to overcome, like obstacles, which are put before us to overcome in order for us to become the full overcomer God wants us to become. We can not overcome any of these ordained obstacles in our own power *...For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)* 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3 & 4. That is why the Holy Ghost inspired the Apostle Paul to write of the warfare of the believer in EPHESIANS 6:10-18. EPHESIANS 6:10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* 11 *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* 12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* 13 *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.* 14 *Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;* 15 *And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;* 16