

THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

In his search for a more meaningful and satisfying existence, man looks for guidance in psychology, education and religion. He dabbles in social media, self-help, hallucinogenic drugs, astrology, fortune telling and palm reading, just to mention a few. Man pursues the unlocking of his mind to reach a higher consciousness through the mysteries of Eastern religions. He seeks counsel from spiritualists, mediums and gurus, expecting to receive guidance either for present circumstances, or direction regarding his future.

In contrast, the True and Living God guides and directs His own people through His Word. In His Word is the knowledge of Him and His eternal plans for our lives. He has spoken to us through the prophets of old, the apostles and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible says, *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God* [God breathed], *and is profitable for doctrine* [instruction and guidance], *for reproof* [admonishment], *for correction, for instruction in righteousness* [holy living, being conformed to God's will, purpose and action], *that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work* (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). The Lord longs to guide and lead His people into a greater knowledge of Him and His eternal purpose.

THEME SCRIPTURE

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

SECTION I – Definitions

1. WRITE your own definition of *guidance*. _____

Dictionary Definition

The dictionary definition of *guidance* is counsel, advice, help, leading, direction, instruction and enlightenment.

Biblical Definition

There are several Hebrew words used for God's *guidance* in the Old Testament. They define God's guidance as transport, lead forth, govern, straighten, resolve, advise, give counsel, purpose, consult, plan, devise, deliberate, resolve.

The New Testament defines God's guidance through the Holy Spirit: *However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth . . .* (John 16:13a).

Scripture Descriptions

2. READ the following Scriptures on God's guidance. UNDERLINE the words and/or phrases that speak of God's guidance, His leading His people.

Deuteronomy 8:2 *And you [Israel] shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.*

Deuteronomy 32:11, 12 *As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them [Israel, God's people] up, carrying them on its wings, so the LORD alone led him [Israel, God's people].*

Psalms 27:11 *Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.*

Psalms 32:8 *I [God] will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.*

Psalms 73:24 *You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.*

Psalms 77:20 *You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.*

Psalm 139:9, 10

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

Isaiah 42:16

I [God] will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, and not forsake them.

3. What did you learn about God's guidance from these Scriptures? _____

PERSONAL

How has what you have learned about God's guidance strongly influenced you? _____

SECTION II – God's Guidance in Paul's Life

Through the Holy Spirit, God guided and fulfilled His will throughout the life of the Apostle Paul.

Paul's Conversion

READ Acts 9:1-31.

1. What was Saul (later known as Paul) doing before his encounter with Jesus Christ (vv. 1, 2)? _____

2. How did Jesus make Himself know to him (vv. 3-5)? _____

3. Paul asked for the Lord's guidance. What divine guidance did the Lord give to him (vv. 6-9)? _____

What transpired next? _____

4. How did God guide Paul through the disciple Ananias (vv. 10-14)? _____

5. What did God reveal to Ananias about Paul (vv. 15, 16)? _____

6. How did Ananias follow God's guidance (vv. 17-19)? _____

¹ the Way: the first title given to the early church in the New Testament (Acts 9).

What happened as a result of Ananias' obedience? _____

7. WRITE what took place as a result of Paul's preaching (vv. 20-30). _____

8. What was the fruit of Paul's obedience to God's guidance (v. 31)? _____

PERSONAL

How has your obedience to God's guidance benefited someone else? _____

Paul's Commission

READ Acts 13:1-5.

1. What were the prophets and teachers doing when the Holy Spirit² spoke to them (vv. 1, 2)? _____

How did God guide them through the Holy Spirit? _____

2. Were Saul (Paul) and Barnabas obedient? What did they begin to do (vv. 3-5)? _____

This was the beginning of Paul's first missionary journey.

Paul's Persecution

READ Acts 16:6-36.

Often we believe that if we are in God's will and following His guidance, that we should not experience trials and distresses. Paul wrote while he was in jail for the Gospel's sake, *For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake* (Philippians 1:29).

1. As God continued to guide Paul's ministry, what did the Holy Spirit forbid Paul and Silas to do (vv. 6, 7)?

2. DESCRIBE how God communicated His guidance to Paul (vv. 8-10)? _____

How did Paul and his co-laborers respond? _____

² Holy Spirit: third Person of the Godhead, God is a trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

3. In obedience to God's guidance, Paul and Silas sailed to Macedonia³ and arrived in Philippi. What happened as a result of this? What happened on the Sabbath⁴ day (vv. 11-15)?

4. As Paul and his co-laborers went to prayer they were met by a slave girl. What is said about her (vv. 16-18)?

Greatly annoyed by this demonic distraction after many days, how did Paul take control of the situation?

5. What happened to Paul and Silas as a result of their obedience to the guidance of God (vv. 19-24)?

³ Macedonia: region on the Aegean Sea; Europe; major cities such as Thessalonica, Philippi and Berea are located there.

⁴ Sabbath: Old Testament God ordained day of rest and worship still practiced by the Jews today (See Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-10).

⁵ spirit of divination: in Greek mythology the name of the serpent or dragon that dwelt in the region of Pytho at the foot of Mt. Parnassus in Central Greece.

6. In the midst of their persecution, what did Paul and Silas do and who was listening (v. 25)? _____

7. How did God deliver them (v. 26)? _____

8. What were the blessings of their obedience to God's guidance (vv. 27-36)? _____

PERSONAL

How has your obedience to God's guidance led you to experience persecution and/or blessings? _____

SECTION III – Scriptural References of God’s Guidance

1. LOOK UP the following Scriptures. MATCH the Scripture reference to its description of God’s guidance of how and where He leads His people.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| _____ Deuteronomy 8:2 | a. There is no place beyond the reach of His hand. |
| _____ Deuteronomy 32:11, 12 | b. In the wilderness (difficult places) for testing |
| _____ Psalm 27:11 | c. Like a shepherd He guides His flock. |
| _____ Psalm 77:20 | d. By denying ourselves, picking up our cross, and following Jesus |
| _____ Psalm 139:9, 10 | e. Like a mother bird teaching her young to fly |
| _____ Luke 9:23 | f. He teaches His way and leads in the smooth path. |

2. LOOK UP the following Scriptures. ANSWER the questions briefly.

a. Who does God guide?

Psalm 25:9, 12 _____

Isaiah 40:11b _____

John 10:3 _____

b. Where does God guide us?

Psalm 23:2, 3 _____

Psalm 32:8a _____

Luke 1:79 _____

John 16:13a _____

II Thessalonians 3:5 _____

c. How does God guide us?

Psalm 32:8b _____

Psalm 73:24 _____

Psalm 119:105 _____

Isaiah 30:21 _____

d. How long will He guide us?

Psalm 48:14 _____

Isaiah 58:11a _____

e. God's divine guidance is promised to the believer, but what is our part?

Psalm 25:5 _____

Psalm 25:14, 15 _____

Psalm 37:4, 5 _____

Proverbs 3:5, 6 _____

Proverbs 16:3 _____

John 15:7 _____

PERSONAL

Given what you have learned in this study, what steps will you take to seek God's guidance? _____

THEME SCRIPTURE

WRITE the THEME SCRIPTURE.

(Proverbs 3:5, 6).

*I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will guide you with My eye.*

Psalm 32:8

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Due to the holy nature of God, the first letter of all references to Him,
His holy name, and His Word have been capitalized.

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