

## PAUL YN THESALONICA.

**Emyn:** 844 'Efengyl tangnefedd.'

**Darlleniad:** Actau 17:1-15.

### A. CYHOEDDI'R EFENGYL.

Pan oedd Paul a Silas yn cyhoeddi'r efengyl yn Thesalonica, ymateb yr Iddewon i'w presenoldeb oedd, "*Y mae aflonyddwyr yr Ymerodraeth wedi dod yma,*" 6. Pan gyhoeddwyd Efengyl Iesu Grist yn ffyddlon y disgwyl oedd gweld cyffro ymhlith y bobl.

Yn dilyn eu carcharu yn Philipi, fe dderbyniodd Paul a Silas nerth o Dduw i gyhoeddi yn Thesalonica. "*Yr oeddem eisoes wedi dioddef ac wedi cael ein sarhau, fel y gwyddoch, yn Philipi, ond buom yn hy trwy nerth ein Duw i draethu i chwi Efengyl Duw,*" 1 Thesalonicaid 2:2. Ar ôl cael ei erlid, **pam oedd Paul yn parhau i gyhoeddi'r efengyl?** Gwyddai '*nad oedd ei lafur yn yr Arglwydd yn ofer,*' (1 Corinth 15), ac fe gyhoeddodd, "*Yr wyf yn cyfrif nad yw dioddefiadau'r presennol i'w cymharu â'r gogoniant y mae'r dyfodol i'w ddatguddio i ni,*" Rhufeiniaid 8:18.

Yn Thesalonica, yn ôl ei arfer, aeth Paul i mewn i'r synagog, a bu yno am dri Saboth. **Beth oedd ei ddull o**

**gyhoeddi'r efengyl?** '*Bu'n ymresymu â hwy ar sail yr Ysgrythurau, gan esbonio a phrofi fod yn rhaid i'r Meseia ddiodeff a chyfodi oddi wrth y meirw,*" 2.

i) Rhesymu: Ceisiodd resymu gyda'i wrandawyr, trwy adael iddynt ofyn cwestiynau a'u hateb ar sail yr Ysgrythurau. '*Buodd yn trafod yr ysgrifau gyda'r bobl.*'

ii) Esbonio a phrofi: Yn ail, ceisiodd egluro'r efengyl, trwy agor yr Ysgrythurau iddynt. Yna ceisiodd brofi bod rhaid i Iesu farw a chyfodi o'r marw, trwy gyflwyno'r dystiolaeth helaeth oedd ar gael.

iii) Cyhoeddi: Yn olaf cyhoeddodd mai Iesu, yr un a bu farw ac a gyfododd o'r meirw, oedd y Meseia!

### B. YMATEB I'R EFENGYL.

*'Cafodd rhai ohonynt eu hargyhoeddi, ac ymuno â Paul a Silas; ac felly hefyd y gwnaeth lliaws mawr o'r Groegiaid oedd yn addoli Duw, ac nid ychydig o'r gwragedd blaenaf,'* 4. Yn ddiddorol, credodd rai o'r Iddewon, pobl o genedl Dduw a oedd yn gyfarwydd â'r Ysgrythurau yn yr efengyl. Ond roedd 'lliaws mawr' o'r Groegiaid sef y Cenhedloedd, pobl heb yr Ysgrythurau, wedi ymateb i'r neges am Iesu atgyfodedig, y Meseia! Hefyd, roedd Iddewon eraill yn genfigenus o Paul a Silas, gan godi torf

yn eu herbyn a chreu terfysg yn y ddinas. Gwnaethant ddatgan, *“Y mae aflonyddwyr yr Ymerodraeth wedi dod yma hefyd, ... y mae’r bobl hyn i gyd yn troseddu yn erbyn ordeiniadau Cesar trwy ddweud fod brenin arall, sef Iesu,”* 6. Y cyhuddiadau yn eu herbyn oedd iddynt aflonyddu ar heddwch Rhufain trwy greu twrw, a throseddu yn erbyn cyfraith Rhufain trwy ddatgan bod brenin gwahanol sef Iesu, un oedd yn dwyn gwir heddwch trwy ei atgyfodiad o’r meirw.

Bu rhaid i Paul a Silas adael Thesalonica ac fe ryddhawyd Jason ac eraill (cyfeillion i Paul) gan y llywodraethwyr ond ar ôl iddynt dalu gwarant (guarantee).

### C. CYFLE NEWYDD YN BEREIA.

Danfônwyd Paul a Silas i Berea (tua 50 milltir i ffwrdd). **Sut ymateb cawsant yno?** *‘Credodd llawer ohonynt, ac nid ychydig o’r Groegiaid, yn wragedd bonheddig ac yn wŷr,’* 12. Cafwyd ymateb gwell nag yn Thesalonica! **Pam?**

i) *‘Yr oedd y rhain yn fwy eangfrydig,’* 11. Dyma gredinwyr yr Hen Destament a oedd yn cymryd gair Duw o ddifrif.  
ii) Derbynasant *‘y gair â phob eiddgarwch.’* Roeddent yn barod i dderbyn yr Ysgrythurau a’u credu. iii) Roeddent *‘yn chwilio’r Ysgrythurau beunydd i weld os oedd pethau fel yr oeddent hwy yn dweud.’* Iddynt hwy, yr Ysgrythurau

oedd y safon i weld os oedd yr hyn a oedd gan Paul i ddweud yn gywir. Sylwer, daeth llawer o Iddewon i gredu.

Unwaith yn rhagor, daeth erledigaeth o’r Iddewon yn Thesalonica. Dyma hwynt yn codi terfysg a gorfodwyd i Paul ffoi i Athen. Arhosodd Silas a Timotheus i barhau gyda’r gwaith gyda’r bwriad iddynt ddilyn Paul yn fuan. Crynhoi: Gwelir yn y darlleniad heddiw ymateb gwahanol gan bobl i efengyl Iesu Grist. Rhai fel y bobl yn Berea yn derbyn y gair yn eiddgar gan roi prawf ar yr hyn a glywir. Eraill yn derbyn, ar ôl i’r efengyl gael ei esbonio a’i phrofi, fel credinwyr Thesalonica. Eraill yn gwrthod yr efengyl, fel yr Iddewon yn Thesalonica, gan erlid credinwyr.

### **Sut wnawn ni ymateb i’r newydd am Grist atgyfodedig?**

**Gweddi:** O Dduw Dad, diolch am dy ofal cyson drosom a dy fendithion parod, yn feunyddiol ac yn dymhorol. Diolch bod pethau o ran y feirws yn gwella, a’n gobaith yw y cawn dy addoli di yn ein capel yn fwy rhydd a chynnes, cyn hir. Cofiwn am ein cyd-aelodau, sydd mewn cartrefi gofal a’r rhai sydd yn gaeth i’w cartrefi; boed iddynt wybod am nerth a chysur yr Ysbryd, y dyddiau hyn.

Diolch am dy Air i ni heddiw, a boed i ni amlygu dewrder Paul a’i debyg, trwy fod yn barod i gyhoeddi’r newyddion da am Iesu, er nad yw hyn yn hawdd bob amser. Amen.

## PAUL AND SILAS IN THESSALONICA.

**Hymn:** 898 'We have a gospel to proclaim.'

**Reading:** Acts 17:1-15.

### A. PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL.

When Paul and Silas proclaimed the gospel in Thessalonica, the response of the Jews was, "*These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also,*" 6. When the gospel of Jesus Christ was proclaimed faithfully there was usually a reaction.

Following their imprisonment in Philippi, Paul and Silas received strength from the Lord to preach in Thessalonica. "*Though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God,*" 1 Thess. 2:2. Having already suffered so much, **why did Paul continue to proclaim the gospel?** Paul knew, '*that in the Lord his labour was not in vain,*' 1 Corinth. 15. Paul also declared, "*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to*" come, Rom. 8:18.

In Thessalonica, according to his custom, Paul attended the synagogue, and did so for three Sabbath days. **How did**

**he proclaim the gospel?** '*He reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and rise from the dead.*'

i) Reasoned: Paul reasoned with those who listened to him; he allowed them to ask him questions and answered according to the Scriptures.

ii) Explained: Secondly, he explained the gospel to them by opening/teaching the Scriptures. Then he offered proof that Jesus had risen from the dead, by presenting the abundant evidence that was available.

iii) Proclaimed: Finally, he proclaimed firmly that Jesus, who had died and risen from the dead, was the Messiah.

### B. RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL.

*'And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women,'* 4. Interestingly, only 'some' of the Jews, (people who were acquainted with the Scriptures), were persuaded to believe in Jesus, while 'a great many' Greeks (Gentiles, who did not have the Scriptures), believed in the message about the resurrected Jesus. Other Jews were jealous that people followed Paul and Silas and raised a mob and created an uproar in the city. It

was these men who declared, *“These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also. ... they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus,”* 6. The accusation against them was that they had disturbed the Roman peace and that they declared ‘another king’, one who was different to Caesar. This King had come to bring a new life of peace, through his resurrection from the dead!

Paul and Silas had to leave Thessalonica quickly, and Jason and others (friends of Paul) were only released by the city authorities, upon the payment of a guarantee, 9.

### **C. A NEW OPPORTUNITY IN BEREIA.**

Paul and Silas travelled to Berea (some 50 miles from Thessalonica). **What kind of response did they receive there?** *‘Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men,’* 12. **Why was there a better response to the gospel there?** i) *‘These Jews were more noble,’* 11. Here were believers of the Old Testament who took the Scriptures seriously. ii) They *‘received the word with all eagerness.’* Not only did they hear, but openly received the word of God. iii) They *‘examined the Scriptures daily.’* They conferred with the Scriptures to find out whether what Paul and Silas

proclaimed was true. Notice, many Jews believed in Berea!

However, opposition was not far away, and Jews from Thessalonica came and agitated and stirred up the crowd. Paul had to flee to Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy behind to continue with the work.

Summary: We learn from the reading today that people responded differently to the proclaiming of the gospel. Some, like the people of Berea, received the word eagerly and tested that which they heard. Others received, after having the gospel explained and proved to them. While others, like the Jews from Thessalonica, rejected the gospel and persecuted Paul and his companions.

### **How do we respond to the proclaimed gospel of Jesus?**

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, thank you for your continued care for us and the blessings that you offer day by day. Thank you that things are improving with regards to the virus, and we truly hope that soon we will be able to worship you with greater freedom and peace. We continue to pray for those in care homes and those confined to their own homes; may they know of your presence and comfort. Thank you for your word to us. Give us boldness like Paul to share the gospel, Amen.

