

PAUL YN ATHEN.

Emyn: 24 *'O cenwch fawl i'r Arglwydd.'*

Darlleniad: Actau 17:16-34.

A. Y PROBLEMAU YN ATHEN.

i) Eilunod – Roedd Athen yn llawn o eilunod i dduwiau o bob math. *'Cefais yn eu plith allor ac arni'n ysgrifenedig, 'I Dduw nid adweinir.'* ii) Addysg – *'Nid oedd gan neb o'r Atheniaid, ... amser i ddim arall ond i adrodd neu glywed y peth diweddaraf,'* 21. Roedd gan yr Atheniaid faich am wybodaeth, ond nid am wirionedd Duw. iii) Dirmyg: Cyhoeddodd rai, *"Beth yn y byd y mae'r clebryn yma yn mynnu ei ddweud?"* Roedd eraill yn ddirmygus tuag at yr efengyl ac yn wawdlyd o Paul. **Sut wnaeth Paul ymateb?**
a) Gweld eu Cyflwr: *"Bobl Athen, yr wyf yn gweld ar bob llaw eich bod yn dra crefyddgar,"* 22. Gwnaeth Paul gyfarch yr Atheniaid trwy gyfeirio at yr hyn oedd yn gyfarwydd iddynt sef eu crefyddoldeb. Cymaint oedd eu diddordeb mewn crefyddau, roeddent wedi codi allor 'i Dduw nid adweinir,' rhag ofn iddynt dramgwyddo unrhyw dduw! Drwg mawr yr Atheniaid oedd addoli a chreu cymaint o dduwiau gwag, duwiau bach. Heddiw, gall bobl greu pob math o dduwiau bach i lanw eu bywydau.

b) Cyhoeddi'r Gwir Dduw: Dyma Paul yn datgan yn bendant am Dduw, nad Duw pell ydoedd nac amheronol, ond un oedd yn bosib Ei adnabod. **Sut Dduw oedd Duw Paul?**

B. CYHOEDDI'R GWIR DDUW. Wrth wneud hyn edrychwn ar dri chwestiwn pwysig: **'O ble y deuthum?'** **'Pam ydwyf yma?'** **'I ble'r wyf yn mynd?'**

1. Duw'r Creawdwr.

"O ble y deuthum?" Atebodd Paul y cwestiwn trwy ddatgan, ***'Duw a wnaeth y byd a phopeth sydd ynddo,'*** 24. Nid hap a damwain yw'r byd ond creadigaeth Duw. *'Gwnaeth ef hefyd o un dyn yr holl genhedloedd, i breswyllo ar holl wyneb y ddaear,'* 26. Duw hefyd a greodd dynoliaeth, a'u greu ar ei ddelw ef ei hun. Gwnaeth bawb o 'un dyn', h.y. yn gig a gwaed, felly nid yw neb yn well na phawb arall. *'Canys ei hiliogaeth ef hefyd ydym ni,'* 28. Nid oedd Paul yn dweud bod pawb yn blant i Dduw yn ysbrydol, ond cadarnhau 'tadolaeth' Duw ydoedd, bod pob person wedi ei greu gan Dduw.

2. Duw yn Rhoi Pwrpas i Fwyd.

"Pam ydwyf yma?" Meddai Paul, *"Yr oeddent i geisio Duw,"* 27. Crëwyd dyn i geisio Duw ac i *'ogoneddi a mwynhau Duw.'* **Sut gwna dyn hyn?** Trwy adnabod Duw yng Nghrist

Iesu a thrwy aros yn Ei gwmini, ufuddhau iddo a'i wasanaethu. **Sut wasanaeth mae Duw yn dyheu am?** 'Ni wasanaethir ef (chwaith) â dwylo dynol, fel pe bai arno angen rhywbeth, gan mai ef ei hun sy'n rhoi i bawb fywyd ac anadl a'r cwbl oll,' 25. Gall dyn ymfalchio yn ei wasanaeth i Dduw ond Duw mewn gwirionedd sydd yn rhoi i ddyn, yn rhoi'r 'cwbl oll' iddo ar gyfer bywyd. Mae Duw yn hunan- gynhaliol (self-sufficient) ac ni all dyn gynnig dim iddo. **Felly, beth mae Duw yn dyheu am oddi wrthym?** Calon lân, nid calon ddeublyg sydd yn rhannol gydag Ef a rhannol yn eiddo i'r hunan. Adnabod Duw â chalon sydd yn gyfan gwbl yn eiddo i Dduw - dyma sy'n rhoi gwerth a phwrpas i fywyd.

3. Duw Gras ac Iachawdwr.

Cwestiwn pwysig gwna pobl ofyn yw, "**I ble'r wyf yn mynd?**" Meddai Paul, "*Ond yn awr y mae'n gorchymyn i bawb ym mhob man edifarthau, oblegid gosododd ddiwrnod pryd y bydd yn barnu'r byd mewn cyfiawnder, trwy ŵr a benododd,*" 31. Gwnaeth Paul ddatgan bod Duw yn galw ar bobl i edifarthau, i droi o'u pechod a throi at Iesu Grist. **Pam?** Oherwydd bod Dydd Barn yn dod. **Pwy yw'r Barnwr?** Iesu Grist, yr un a atgyfododd o'r meirw yn fyw, y cyfiawn un. Bydd y sawl sydd dan fendith y Tad, y cyfiawn rai, 'yn

etifeddu'r deyrnas a baratowyd ers seiliad y byd,' y nef! Ond bydd yr anghyfiawn yn mynd i gosb dragwyddol, *Mathew 25: 34, 46.* **Felly, i ble fyddwn ni yn mynd?**

Beth oedd ymateb yr Atheniaid i gyhoeddiad Paul?

Gwawdiodd rhai tra'r oedd eraill yn datgan eu bod am glywed mwy. Credodd rhai yn Iesu Grist a dilyn Paul. **Beth amdanom ni?** A wnawn gredu yn Nuw fel Creawdwr, rhoddwr bywyd, cynhaliwr bywyd ac iachawdwr bywyd, yn a thrwy Iesu Grist? A ydym yn rhan o'i deyrnas Ef?

Gweddi: O Dduw Dad, maddau i ni, am ein bod mor barod i golli golwg arnat Ti, ac i greu pob math o dduwiau bach. Helpa ni i weld mai dros dro y mae pleserau'r byd ac ond ynot Ti y mae gwir ystyr i fywyd yn awr a gobaith am fywyd bythol i ddod. Diolch am dy greadigaeth ac am i Ti ein creu ar ddelw dy hun. Er bod y ddelw yna wedi ei throchi gan bechod, diolch bod modd i'w hadfer yn dy Fab, Iesu Grist.

Diolch am fendithion bywyd bob dydd a thymhorol. Mae effaith y pandemig dal i'w brofi o'n cwmpas, felly parha i'n cadw'n ddiogel a gwna ni'n ystyriol o anghenion a phryderon ein cyd-aelodau. Boed i ni fod yn barod i helpu'n gilydd ar bob adeg, gan ddangos cariad Iesu Grist. Yn Ei enw, Amen.

PAUL IN ATHENS.

Hymn: 944 *'Amazing grace.'*

Reading: Acts 17:16-34.

A. THE PROBLEMS IN ATHENS.

i) Idolatry – Athens was full of idols to many gods, “*I found also this inscription, ‘To the unknown god.’*” ii) Knowledge – ‘*Now all the Athenians ... would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new,*’ 21. The Athenians had a desire for knowledge, but not a knowledge of the true God. iii) Contempt – ‘*And some said, “What does this babbler wish to say?”*’ There were some people who mocked Paul and his message.

How did Paul respond? a) He saw their error: “*Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious,*” 22. Paul acknowledged that they were very religious, so religious that they had placed an altar ‘to an unknown god,’ rather than upset a particular god! The error of the Athenians was to worship so many gods and to create for themselves ‘little gods.’ Even today, people create for themselves ‘little gods’ to fill their lives.

b) He proclaimed the true God: Not a distant and impersonal God, but a God who people could relate to.

B. PROCLAIMING THE TRUE GOD.

While looking at the attributes of God, we will consider three questions: ‘**Where have I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going?**’

1. God the Creator.

‘**Where have I come from?**’ Paul declared, “*God (who) made the world and everything in it,*” 24. He stated that the world and human life was not random or coincidental, but that God created all things! ‘*He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth,*’ 26. Paul’s understanding of ‘one man’ was that all people, being made of flesh and blood, were to be treated as equals. Paul continued, ‘*For we are indeed his offspring,*’ 28. Paul did not intend it to mean that everybody was a ‘child of God’ spiritually, only those who believed in Jesus. He declared the ‘Fatherhood of God’, that God had created all mankind.

2. God, the Purpose of Life.

“**Why am I here?**” Paul says, “*They should seek God,*”. Every person is to seek God, ‘*to glorify and to enjoy Him.*’ **How does a person glorify God?** By knowing God through Jesus Christ, by remaining in His presence, by being

faithful to Him and serving Him. **What kind of service does God desire?** God is not *'served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything,'* 25. A person can become proud of his service for God, but the truth is, it is God who serves man, by giving him all he needs for life! God is all sufficient and man can not offer him anything. **So, what does God desire for us?** A pure heart, not a divided heart, partly with God and partly with the self. Knowing God with a pure heart gives purpose to life.

3. God of Grace.

A third question is, "**Where am I going?**" Paul proclaimed, *"Now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed"* 30. Paul declared that God desires all people to repent, to turn from their sin and to turn to Jesus. **Why?** Because a day of judgement was coming. **Whom had God appointed as judge?** **Jesus**, the one he raised from the dead, the righteous one. All who are blessed by God and righteous in his sight, *'will inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world,'* that is heaven! While the

unrighteous *'go away to eternal punishment,'* Matthew 25: 34, 46. **'Where are we going?'**

How did the Athenians respond? Some mocked Paul's teaching while others wanted to hear more from him. *'But some joined him and believed,'* 34, that is, believed in Jesus. **What about us?** Have we believed in God as the Creator, the giver of life, the purpose for living and the giver of spiritual life, through Jesus the Son?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, forgive us for losing sight of you and creating for ourselves so many 'empty, little gods.' Help us to realise that the pleasures and things of this world are temporary and that it is only in You that there is a real purpose to life and hope for the future. Thank you for your wonderful Creation, and that you created us in your own image. Though that image has been stained by sin, we give thanks that it can be renewed in Jesus.

Thank you for your many blessings to us both daily and seasonal. The effects of the virus have not disappeared fully, therefore we pray for your continued protection. Help us to be mindful of other people and to do what we can to show Jesus' love to others. Amen.