

First Reading 2 Kings 6: 8 – 23

⁸ Once when the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he took counsel with his officers. He said, 'At such and such a place shall be my camp.' ⁹ But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, 'Take care not to pass this place, because the Arameans are going down there.' ¹⁰ The king of Israel sent word to the place of which the man of God spoke. More than once or twice he warned such a place so that it was on the alert. ¹¹ The mind of the king of Aram was greatly perturbed because of this; he called his officers and said to them, 'Now tell me who among us sides with the king of Israel?' ¹² Then one of his officers said, 'No one, my lord king. It is Elisha, the prophet in Israel, who tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedchamber.' ¹³ He said, 'Go and find where he is; I will send and seize him.' He was told, 'He is in Dothan.' ¹⁴ So he sent horses and chariots there and a great army; they came by night, and surrounded the city. ¹⁵ When an attendant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. His servant said, 'Alas, master! What shall we do?' ¹⁶ He replied, 'Do not be afraid, for there are more with us than there are with them.' ¹⁷ Then Elisha prayed: 'O Lord, please open his eyes that he may see.' So the Lord opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw; the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. ¹⁸ When the Arameans came down against him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, and said, 'Strike this people, please, with blindness.' So he struck them with blindness as Elisha had asked. ¹⁹ Elisha said to them, 'This is not the way, and this is not the city; follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek.' And he led them to Samaria. ²⁰ As soon as they entered Samaria, Elisha said, 'O Lord, open the eyes of these men so that they may see.' The Lord opened their eyes, and they saw that they were inside Samaria. ²¹ When the king of Israel saw them he said to Elisha, 'Father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?' ²² He answered, 'No! Did you capture with your sword and your bow those whom you want to kill? Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink; and let them go to their master.' ²³ So he prepared for them a great feast; after they ate and drank, he sent them on their way, and they went to their master. And the Arameans no longer came raiding into the land of Israel.

Second Reading Acts 17: 15 - 34

¹⁵ Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and after receiving instructions to have Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible, they left him. ¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the market-place every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, 'What does this babbling want to say?' Others said, 'He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities.' (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) **(Continued on next page)**

¹⁹ So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, 'May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?' ²⁰ It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means.' ²¹ Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new. ²² Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, 'Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³ For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, "To an unknown god." What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶ From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷ so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him - though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we too are his offspring." ²⁹ Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰ While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.' ³² When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, 'We will hear you again about this.' ³³ At that point Paul left them. ³⁴ But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Sunday Services

Next Sunday, 30th August, is the 5th Sunday of the month. Therefore, there will not be an evening service at St. Mary's. There will be Holy Communion, as usual, at 9.15am at St. Mary's, and at 11am at the Church of The Holy Spirit.

The following Sunday, 6th September, is the Patronal Festival at St. Mary's. There will be a Team Service of Holy Communion at 10am at St. Mary's, and no service at Holy Spirit that day.

More Funnies

Some notices that have appeared in church newssheets or were announced during church services:

Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again', giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24th in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their schooldays.