

Psalm and Readings Tuesday 17th September 2024

Psalm 48

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised
in the city of our God.

His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation,
is the joy of all the earth,
Mount Zion, in the far north,
the city of the great King.
Within its citadels God
has shown himself a sure defence.

Then the kings assembled,
they came on together.
As soon as they saw it, they were astounded;
they were in panic, they took to flight;
trembling took hold of them there,
pains as of a woman in labour,
as when an east wind shatters
the ships of Tarshish.
As we have heard, so have we seen
in the city of the Lord of hosts,
in the city of our God,
which God establishes for ever.

We ponder your steadfast love, O God,
in the midst of your temple.
Your name, O God, like your praise,
reaches to the ends of the earth.
Your right hand is filled with victory.
Let Mount Zion be glad,
let the towns of Judah rejoice
because of your judgements.

Walk about Zion, go all around it,
count its towers,
consider well its ramparts;
go through its citadels,
that you may tell the next generation
that this is God,
our God for ever and ever.
He will be our guide for ever.

1 Kings 13:11-end

Now there lived an old prophet in Bethel. One of his sons came and told him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words also that he had spoken to the king, they told to their father. Their father said to them, 'Which way did he go?' And his sons showed him the way that the man of God who came from Judah had gone. Then he said to his sons, 'Saddle a donkey for me.' So they saddled a donkey for him, and he mounted it. He went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak tree. He said to him, 'Are you the man of God who came from Judah?' He answered, 'I am.' Then he said to him, 'Come home with me and eat some food.' But he said, 'I cannot return with you, or go in with you; nor will I eat food or drink water with you in this place; for it was said to me by the word of the Lord: You shall not eat food or drink water there, or return by the way that you came.' Then the other said to him, 'I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord: Bring him back with you into your house so that he may eat food and drink water.' But he was deceiving him. Then the man of God went back with him, and ate food and drank water in his house.

As they were sitting at the table, the word of the Lord came to the prophet who had brought him back; and he proclaimed to the man of God who came from Judah, 'Thus says the Lord: Because you have disobeyed the word of the Lord, and have not kept the commandment that the Lord your God commanded you, but have come back and have eaten food and drunk water in the place of which he said to you, "Eat no food, and drink no water", your body shall not come to your ancestral tomb.' After the man of God had eaten food and had drunk, they saddled for him a donkey belonging to the prophet who had brought him back. Then as he went away, a lion met him on the road and killed him. His body was thrown in the road, and the donkey stood beside it; the lion also stood beside the body. People passed by and saw the body thrown in the road, with the lion standing by the body. And they came and told it in the town where the old prophet lived.

When the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard of it, he said, 'It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of the Lord; therefore the Lord has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him according to the word that the Lord spoke to him.' Then he said to his sons, 'Saddle a donkey for me.' So they saddled one, and he went and found the body thrown in the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body. The lion had not eaten the body or attacked the donkey. The prophet took up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to the city, to mourn and to bury him. He laid the body in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, 'Alas, my brother!' After he had buried him, he said to his sons, 'When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. For the saying that he proclaimed by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass.'

Even after this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people; any who wanted to be priests he consecrated for the high places. This matter became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth.

Acts 19:21-end

Now after these things had been accomplished, Paul resolved in the Spirit to go through Macedonia and Achaia, and then to go on to Jerusalem. He said, 'After I have gone there, I must also see Rome.' So he sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he himself stayed for some time longer in Asia.

About that time no little disturbance broke out concerning the Way. A man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the artisans. These he gathered together, with the workers of the

same trade, and said, 'Men, you know that we get our wealth from this business. You also see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost the whole of Asia this Paul has persuaded and drawn away a considerable number of people by saying that gods made with hands are not gods. And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be scorned, and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her.'

When they heard this, they were enraged and shouted, 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!' The city was filled with the confusion; and people rushed together to the theatre, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's travelling-companions. Paul wished to go into the crowd, but the disciples would not let him; even some officials of the province of Asia, who were friendly to him, sent him a message urging him not to venture into the theatre. Meanwhile, some were shouting one thing, some another; for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together. Some of the crowd gave instructions to Alexander, whom the Jews had pushed forward. And Alexander motioned for silence and tried to make a defence before the people. But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours all of them shouted in unison, 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!' But when the town clerk had quietened the crowd, he said, 'Citizens of Ephesus, who is there that does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple-keeper of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven? Since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. You have brought these men here who are neither temple-robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess. If therefore Demetrius and the artisans with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges there against one another. If there is anything further you want to know, it must be settled in the regular assembly. For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion.' When he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

The Collect of the Day

Most glorious and holy God,
whose servant Hildegard, strong in the faith,
was caught up in the vision of your heavenly
courts:

by the breath of your Spirit
open our eyes to glimpse your glory
and our lips to sing your praises with all the
angels;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

A prayer for this time of transition

Faithful and loving God
we hold our Benefice before you in this time of
uncertainty.
Be with us in our waiting, in our expectation and
in our preparation as we seek our new
Incumbent.
Be with our new incumbent as he or she also
waits, expects and prepares.
Bring us together in love for you and for this
Benefice,
and be our light for the way ahead.
In Jesus' name,
Amen