

## Readings

First Reading:	Micah 5:1-4-a
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 (4)
Second Reading:	Hebrews 10:5-10
Alleluia:	Luke 1:38
Gospel:	Luke 1:39-45

## Commentary

The Gospel women meet alone, without the men present in this Sunday. They are concerned about doing the will of God, rather than extending a patriarchal line of succession. Forgiveness within the marriage bond is the prayer for this Sunday.

There is an interaction between how the Church prays and what the Church believes. This interaction develops and changes through history. Married couples have a similar experience.

The experience begins with trust or faith in one another. Trust requires security, which rests better in the Almighty than in any frail human. Trust and trustworthiness require a constant sense of forgiveness. Following Mark A. Yarhouse and James Sellers,<sup>1</sup> by *forgiveness* I mean a return to a rational relationship, rather than a continued temper-tantrum resulting from a hurt.

Mica tells the children of Israel not to worry, because their king will arrive from Bethlehem-Ephrathah, "too small to be among the clans of Judah." Mica is telling the Faithful not to have temper-tantrums against God because of what happens. Eventually, God can and will make everything right.

The Psalmist has the same idea, "Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved." The Psalmist portrays God as the good shepherd. The Epistle to the Hebrews points to Christ as the sin-offering God gives to sinners for their forgiveness. With the Our Father, the Faithful pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." The readings are about forgiveness.

In the Gospel, Mary and Elizabeth share women-talk. The Faithful can wonder what they had to say about Joseph making the pregnant Mary travel seventy-five miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem to give birth. And about the Virginal conception. There must have been a deep sense of forgiveness in their communication.

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## Annotated Bibliography

Material above the double line draws from material below the double line. Those uninterested in scholarly and tangential details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some interesting material.

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<sup>1</sup> Mark A. Yarhouse and James Sellers, "Family Therapies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal" (2009 manuscript in press) 422.

## **Micah 5:1-4 a**

Micah 5:1-5.

Daniel W. Ulrich, review of Joel Willitts, Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King: In Search of 'The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel'<sup>2</sup>

Willitts draws out verses referring to the messianic shepherd-king, but his overall thesis is not convincing. He does not give enough credence to other scholars. Ulrich writes that various "passages do not appear to demonstrate that Matthew equated the reign of Heaven with the kingdom of Israel," as Willitts proposes.

Mic 5:2

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History<sup>3</sup>

Shows that Nazareth is seventy-five miles from Bethlehem.

Micah 5:3-14

Michael Weigl, review of Helmut Utzschneider, Micha<sup>4</sup>

Utzschneider, by removing the Book of Mica from historical context, removes too much. To be convincing, historical context is required.

## **Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 (4)**

This Psalm is in the Sinaiticus.<sup>5</sup>

In 2003, I noted that the Lectionary does not indicate that verses 2-b and 3-a are omitted. In verse 2, I count seventeen words in the Sinaiticus and fifteen words in the Lectionary, making me think something is omitted. In verse 3, I count sixteen words in the Sinaiticus and five words in the Lectionary, making me think that is another instance of sloppy scholarship.

Codex Sinaiticus<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April 2009) 425, 426.

<sup>3</sup> Downers Grove, Illinois, *InterVarsity* Press, 2006, 137.

<sup>4</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (April 2008) 350.

<sup>5</sup>

<http://www.codexsinaiticus.org/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lq=en&quireNo=61&folioNo=7&side=r> (accessed October 19, 2009). Psalm 80 in the Lectionary is Psalm 79 in the Sinaiticus.

<http://www.codexsinaiticus.org/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lq=en&quireNo=61&folioNo=6&side=v> (accessed October 19, 2009). Psalm 80 in the Lectionary is Psalm 79 in the Sinaiticus.

Mica is not in the Sinaiticus.  
Neither Hebrews nor Luke has any difficult words in Nestle-Aland.

## Hebrews 10:5-10

Heb 10:1-10

Pamela Eisenbaum, review of Lloyd Kim, [Polemical in the Book of Hebrews: Anti-Judaism, Anti-Semitism, Supersessionism?](#)<sup>7</sup>

Kim posits that anti-Judaism is different from anti-Semitism, which almost amounts to a difference without a meaning. Kim is not very convincing. Eisenbaum writes, "Since the date remains vigorously contested, the thesis that Hebrews was written to an audience of Jewish Christ-believers while the temple cult was still active is a precarious foundation on which to rest one's case. For this reason alone, K.'s argument will likely fail to convince ..."

Heb 10:5-7

Kenneth Schenck, "2 Corinthians and the Πιστις Χριστου Debate"<sup>8</sup>

Schenck argues that the first Christians saw Jesus praying this section of Hebrews, taken from Psalm 115, as an act of Faith.

Heb 10:9

Todd D. Still, "*Christos as Pistos: The Faith(fulness) of Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews*"<sup>9</sup>

Still argues that Heb 10:5-10 draws from Psalm 39:7-9 to assert that he has come to do the will of God, as the source of salvation for those who obey him.

## Luke 1:38

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.codexsinaiticus.org/en/manuscript.aspx> (accessed October 18, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 70, No. 1 (January 2008) 454.

<sup>8</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 530.

<sup>9</sup> [the Catholic Biblical Quarterly](#), Vol. 69, No. 4 (October 2007) 748, 750.

## **Luke 1:39-45**

Luke 1:39-49

Nicholas E. Denysenko, "The Soteriological Significance of the Feast of Mary's Birth"<sup>10</sup>

Using the Byzantine experience, Denysenko develops the proportionality between the Church praying and the Church believing.

Luke 1:42-55

Teresa Okure, S.H.C.J., "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (Jn 4:1-42) in Africa"<sup>11</sup>

As a Nazorean, Jesus experienced unjust prejudice. Jesus, therefore, was in a position to forgive many people their prejudices against the Samaritan woman.

Luke 1:42

Irene Nowell, O.S.B., "Jesus' Great-Grandmothers: Matthew's Four and More"<sup>12</sup>  
Mary was also from Nazareth, without much status, and with much to forgive others. Nowell explains, "Mary, by her courageous lifetime yes, is a guarantor of our future." Mary can intercede for the Faithful, no matter how untoward their circumstances.

For more on sources see the Appendix file. Personal Notes are on the web site at [www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes](http://www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes)

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<sup>10</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 68, No. 4 (December 2007) 751.

<sup>11</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 404.

<sup>12</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (January 2008) 13.