

**Micah 5. 2-5a**

**The Ruler from Bethlehem**

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labour has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return  
to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,  
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.  
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth;

<sup>5</sup> and he shall be the one of peace.

If the Assyrians come into our land  
and tread upon our soil,  
we will raise against them seven shepherds  
and eight installed as rulers.

**Psalm 80**

**Prayer for Israel's Restoration**

To the leader: on Lilies, a Covenant. Of Asaph. A Psalm.

<sup>1</sup> Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
you who lead Joseph like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

<sup>2</sup> before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

Stir up your might,  
and come to save us!

<sup>3</sup> Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

<sup>4</sup> O Lord God of hosts,  
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

<sup>5</sup> You have fed them with the bread of tears,  
and given them tears to drink in full measure.

<sup>6</sup> You make us the scorn of our neighbours;  
our enemies laugh among themselves.

<sup>7</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

<sup>8</sup> You brought a vine out of Egypt;  
you drove out the nations and planted it.

### **Hebrews 10. 5-10**

<sup>5</sup>Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,  
'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,  
but a body you have prepared for me;

<sup>6</sup> in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings  
you have taken no pleasure.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God"  
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me). '

<sup>8</sup>When he said above, 'You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings '(these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup>then he added, 'See, I have come to do your will. 'He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup>And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

### **Luke 1. 39-55**

#### **Mary Visits Elizabeth**

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

<sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

#### **Mary's Song of Praise**

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said,

'My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

<sup>50</sup> His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;

<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,  
<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'