

## Fourth Sunday in Advent

### OLD TESTAMENT

Micah 5:2-5a

#### *A Promised Ruler From Bethlehem*

**<sup>2</sup>“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” <sup>3</sup>Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor gives birth and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites. <sup>4</sup>He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. <sup>5</sup>And he will be their peace.**

**5:2** In contrast to the dire prediction of v. 1, Micah shifts to a positive note. (CSB)

**BUT YOU** – The Lord addressed this wonderful promise of a future ruler to a people and king whose situation seemed hopeless. (TLSB)

**BETHLEHEM** – Birthplace of David and Jesus, 18 mi NE of Moresheth, Micah’s hometown (1:1). See color map 1. When the Wise Men came to Jerusalem seeking the king of the Jews, they were directed to Bethlehem based on this passage. (TLSB)

**Ephrathah.** The region in which Bethlehem was located (see Ru 1:2; 4:11; 1Sa 17:12). (CSB)

City or region associated with Bethlehem. Jacob’s wife Rachel was buried here (Gn 35:19). (TLSB)

Bethlehem had a notable history. Benjamin, the son of Jacob was born near the town; his mother Rachel was buried here. Ruth gleaned the fields of Boaz at Bethlehem; here King David was born. Yet Bethlehem had remained a small town, too small to be named among the more than 100 cities belonging to the clans of Judah (Joshua 15:20ff). (PBC)

The Messiah is to be born not in Jerusalem, the residential city of David, but in the little town of Bethlehem. That presupposes that David’s line had lost the ruler-ship over Israel, lost the throne. When this prophecy shall be fulfilled, the house of David shall have become quite insignificant and lowly. But such conditions could only be possible, if the people have become subject to the power of the enemy. (Stoeckhardt)

**CLANS OF JUDAH** – Clan meant 1000. (PBC)

Ephrathites were a small clan in the tribe of Judah (Ru 1:2). (TLSB)

FOR ME – Promise of a ruler accords with the Lord's own saving purpose. (TLSB)

*ruler.* Ultimately Christ, who will rule (see note on 4:8) for God the Father. (CSB)

The physical kingdom of Israel would not be restored. This would be a spiritual kingdom. (CSB)

*origins ... from of old.* His beginnings were much earlier than his human birth (see Jn 8:58). (CSB)

Origin of Israel's famous King David, born three centuries before Micah's day, was somewhat ancient. But the promised Ruler's origin was even more ancient, because He was begotten of the Father from eternity. Luther: "He does not come forth first from Bethlehem after the Babylonian captivity but came forth a long time ago already. This is just the way John describes the divinity of Christ (John 1:1): 'In the beginning was the Word.' In his song, Ps. 90:2, Moses sings: 'From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God.' There Moses used the same expression that Micah uses here, that is: 'You did not begin with the world, but, when the world began to be, You already were.' Christ also says about Himself: 'Before Abraham was, I am' (John 8:58)" (AE 18:248). (TLSB)

*from ancient times.* Within history (cf. 2Sa 7:12–16; Isa 9:6–7; Am 9:11), and even from eternity (see NIV text note). (CSB)

The Father's will and purpose from eternity was made manifest in the coming of the Prince of Peace. And even as His outgoings were from eternity, since He is the everlasting Son of the Father, so His generation as man is from Bethlehem, for as a true human being He became subject to time and permitted Himself, as a ruler, to be governed by the limitations of space as well. (Kretzmann)

**5:3** THEREFORE – (laken) points back to verse 1. Because the Ruler shall proceed from that little Bethlehem, for that reason Israel shall be subject to hostile power. (Stoekhardt)

Before the promised Ruler would be born, God's people were left to suffer at the hands of their enemies. (TLSB)

Because Israel, the people of the Lord, is to be redeemed not by his own power, but by the gracious gift of the Messiah. (Kretzmann)

*Israel will be abandoned.* Until the Messiah is born and begins his rule. (CSB)

Abandoned (nathan) here means to hand over, to yield to, to surrender into the hands of the enemy. The subject is God. It is God who gives this people into the hands of the enemies. (Stoeckhardt)

SHE – Refers to Mary. The One whom her labor brought forth healed the pain of the daughter of Zion (4:9–10). (TLSB)

*Israel.* See note on 1:5. (CSB)

RETURN TO JOIN THE ISRAELITES – For at that time the Lord would bring together from the various nations of the world those whom He intended to add to His true Israel, to His spiritual nation. The humiliation of the house of David and of Israel had been included in the plan of God, but the final result would be that the Messiah, like His ancestor David, would go forth from the humble city of Bethlehem. To this end it was necessary for the people to remain under the rule of the enemies (Kretzmann)

Spiritual return of all Israel, all believers (Rm 11:26). (TLSB)

**5:4 HE WILL STAND AND SHEPHERD HIS FLOCK** – The word pictures the shepherd as standing there erect, watching over his flock. There He stands leaning a bit on His staff, while quietly watching His sheep. At the same time there is an indication that His station as Ruler is firm and that His rule is unyielding and will not permit disturbance or interference. Yet there is no note of harshness in His rule. (Stoeckhardt)

Imagery of the king guiding and protecting his people was common (2:12; 4:6–8; Ezk 34:1–24). (TLSB)

*strength ... majesty.* The Messiah will shepherd and rule in the strength and majesty of God the Father. (CSB)

Qualities attributed to kings are here described as coming from the Lord. (TLSB)

That cannot be said of any mere human ruler. No human ruler is so closely united with Jehovah that he could claim all majesty and power of God as his own. (Stoeckhardt)

Qualities attributed to kings are here described as coming from the Lord. (TLSB)

WILL LIVE SECURELY – As the Good Shepherd he knows his sheep by name, and gives his life for them. (PBC)

ENDS OF THE EARTH – All nations will ultimately recognize and acknowledge the authority of the Lord, and so there will be peace and security for the Lord’s people (Phil 2:10-11; Rev. 11:15). (TLSB)

**5:5** *their peace.* Jesus is “our peace” (Eph 2:14). In addition to freedom from war, the Hebrew word for “peace” also connotes prosperity in the OT. See notes on Isa 9:6 (“Prince of Peace”); Lk 2:14. (CSB)

The Messiah is the Prince of Peace (Is 9:6; Lk 2:14). (TLSB)

Jesus’ atoning death made peace between God and us guilty sinners. (PBC)

That means He Himself will be the personification of peace for men. He brings about peace by Himself and so also becomes peace to those whom He calls His own. Similarly St. Paul writes Eph 2:24: “For He is our peace.” It is for that reason that Isaiah, a contemporary of Micah, calls the Messiah “the Prince of Peace.” Is. 9:6. Even Jacob already calls the coming Messiah “Shilo,” Gen 49:10. Peace belongs to the very character of the Messiah and that trait is found in all His descriptions and that of His kingdom. Thus the Messiah is the real Solomon, whose name is a reflection of “Shalom” (peace). This NT Solomon provides peace for His people in a far higher and fuller sense than once did that man Solomon at his time. (Stoekhardt)

## EPISTLE

Hebrews 10:5-10

**<sup>5</sup> Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; <sup>6</sup> with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘Here I am— it is written about me in the scroll— I have come to do your will, O God.’”<sup>8</sup> First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them” (although the law required them to be made). <sup>9</sup> Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. <sup>10</sup> And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

**10:5-18** Using the OT, the writer displays the testimony of the Son (v 5) and the Spirit (v 15) about the institution of the new covenant prepared by the heavenly Father (“You,” vv 5–6). Note that in vv 15–17, the Holy Spirit is equated with “the Lord.” (TLSB)

**10:5–6** The different terms used for Levitical sacrifices represent four of the five types of offerings prescribed by the Mosaic Law (Lev 1–7), namely, fellowship, grain, burnt and sin. (CSB)

**10:5** *when Christ came into the world, he said.* The words of this psalm of David (40:6–8) express Christ’s obedient submission to the Father in coming to earth. The Mosaic sacrifices are replaced by submissive obedience to the will of God (v. 7). (CSB)

The Spirit of Christ inspired the psalmist. If Jesus also spoke these words during His earthly ministry, the Gospels have not recorded it. Cf Jn 20:30–31; 21:25. (TLSB)

The sacrifice had to be a real physical body. Therefore Jesus could not mail it in from heaven. (CSB)

**SACRIFICE** - thusia – To have a victim. This went back to the sacrificing system of the OT which dealt with personal interaction between God and man. The sacrifice was less important than the relationship and how it manifested itself in all of life. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 1)

**OFFERING** - prosphora – A presentation or something sacrificed or offered up. This would be bloodless.

**A BODY** - soma – A sound and whole body. In this case it was Christ’s.

Wording from the LXX, which seeks to clarify the difficult Hbr expression “ears You have dug out [prepared] for me,” which emphasizes that God helps a person hear His Word. It is possible that the LXX manuscripts with “body” were taking “ears” to represent the whole person (a synecdoche). In that case, a person would commit himself to obeying God after hearing His Word. However, the similarity of the Gk letters for “ears” and “body” when tightly written may also have caused the variant. (TLSB)

**10:6** *you were not pleased.* These offerings were only preparatory and temporary, looking forward to the one perfect and final offering—that of the incarnate Son of God. (CSB)

Only through faith in Christ were these sacrifices pleasing to God. (TLSB)

**10:7** *to do your will.* The will of the Father was the Son’s consuming concern (see Lk 22:42; Jn 4:34). (CSB)

**10:9** *He sets aside the first to establish the second.* His perfect sacrifice, offered in complete submission, supersedes and therefore replaces all previous sacrifices. (CSB)

The Lord, speaking through the psalmist, fulfills and ends the old sacrifices that He Himself set up. This shows they were temporary and that, with His own sacrifice, Christ would set up the new covenant. (TLSB)

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**10:10** AND BY THAT WILL – Thelema, “intention,” Not to be confused with “testament, covenant” as described in 9:16. God’s gracious will is expressed in the new testament as a “will,” or covenant. (TLSB)

Gk *thelema*, “intention.” Not to be confused with “testament, covenant” as described in 9:16 (see note there). God’s gracious will is expressed in the new testament as a “will,” or covenant. (TLSB)

*made holy*. Justified, set aside in consecration to God, and now experiencing the process of continuing sanctification (see “being made holy,” v. 14; see also note on 1Co 1:2). (CSB)

hagiazō – To make pure, consecrate, sanctify or venerate. The animals were sacrificed against their will. Jesus on the other hand offered himself and his obedience made it a sacrifice that didn’t need repeating. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 1)

Sins have been taken away. “Christ’s passion was an offering and satisfaction, not only for original guilt, but also for all other sins” (AC XXV 25). (TLSB)

ONCE FOR ALL - ephapax – On one occasion only.

GOSPEL  
Luke 1:39-56

### *Mary Visits Elizabeth*

**<sup>39</sup> At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, <sup>40</sup> where she entered Zechariah’s home and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup> In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! <sup>43</sup> But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup> As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup> Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!”**

**1:39** AT THAT TIME – Literally, “in those days”: Perhaps a pick up on verse 35, marking the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 1)

ἐπορεύθη—This is an important Lukan word that will later refer to Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem. It will be consistently translated as “journey” unless the context indicates otherwise. See comments at 9:51. (CC p. 72)

HURRIED TO – poreuomai – To travel, journey, traverse, walk.

ESV and Greek have “went” before “haste or hurried.”

Literally, “with haste.” Perhaps better translated “eagerly.” With a certain determination Mary wanted to share with Elizabeth the excitement of their astonishing conceptions. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 1)

THE HILL COUNTRY OF JUDEA – An interesting series of parallels between Mary’s journey to the hill country of Judah and the movement of the ark of the covenant to the same locale on its way to Jerusalem has been pointed to by J. McHugh, “The Mother of Jesus,” page 62.

- David and Mary made a journey (2 Sam 6:2; Lk 1:39)
- Greeted with shouts of joy (2 Sam 6:12,15; Lk 1:42,44)
- Source of blessing (2 Sam 6:10-12; Lk 1:41,43-44)
- A sense of awe (2 Sam 6:9; Lk 1:43)
- Remained three months (2 Sam 6:11; Lk 1:56)

Mary appears to fulfill the purpose of the ark of the covenant. (CC p. 72)

Zechariah and Elizabeth lived somewhere near Jerusalem, where Zechariah had recently served in the temple (vv 5–20). (TLSB)

She lost no time in journeying up into the mountainous country of Judea, where the city of priests was situated in which Zacharias lived with his wife Elisabeth. (Kretzmann)

No easy trip for Mary. It would require a few days. She would need to convince a companion to accompany her. Her city of destination is unnamed, probably because Luke did not know it. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 1)

**1:40** GREETED – aspazomai – To enfold in one’s arms, to salute, or to embrace.

**1:41** BABY LEAPED – brephos which means and infant born or unborn.

Perhaps a medical word for the movement of children in the womb. John's leaping in his mother's womb fulfilled the promise made to Zechariah (1:15). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 1)

βρέφος—“Baby, infant” is used for babies both before and after birth, implying that an unborn child is a fully human person. The word occurs eight times in the NT, six of which are in Luke-Acts. It refers to John the Baptist while in his mother's womb in Lk 1:41, 44; to Jesus after his birth in Lk 2:12, 16; to the young children brought to Jesus in Lk 18:15; and to newborn babies in Acts 7:19; 1 Pet 2:2. St. Paul describes Timothy as knowing the Scriptures ἀπὸ βρέφους, “from [the time he was an] infant” (2 Tim 3:15). The biblical usage of this term has important ramifications for human-life issues. It supports—even mandates—a concern for the sanctity of human life from conception onward and makes disregard for such life morally reprehensible. (CC pp. 72-73)

The word of leaped is skirtao which means to jump or move quickly.

What clearly stands out in this structure is the presence of Jesus. Everything that happens is a response to the presence of God in the flesh – the baby inside Mary. Luke accents this by repeating twice John's leap in his mother's womb (1:41,44). In Gen. 25:22 Jacob and Esau leap in Rebecca's womb, foreshadowing the relationship they will have with one another, i.e. the firstborn will serve the second born, so also with John and Jesus. In John's leap are foreshadowed the miracles of Jesus, who will cause all creation to leap (allomai in Acts 3:8 of a healed lame man “leaping” into the temple.) at His presence: “Blind are seeing again, dead are being raised, poor are proclaimed the Good New” (Luke 7:22) (CC p. 75)

FILLED WITH HOLY SPIRIT – The prophecy that John will be filled with the Holy Spirit (1:15) is already coming to fulfillment in his mother. (CC p. 76)

Elizabeth recognized that Mary was carrying a child who was the “Lord,” knowledge that only the Holy Spirit could reveal. Even more remarkably, John reacted from within her womb as well! Cf 2:25–38. (TLSB)

**1:42** IN A LOUD VOICE – ἀνεφώνησεν—“Intone,” specifically “intoned [the words] in a loud voice” is suggested by the LXX usage of this word. (CC p. 73)

BLESSED – εὐλογημένη ... εὐλογημένος—The words εὐλογημένος (twice in 1:42) and μακάριος (1:45; verb in 1:48) reflect בָּרַךְ and בְּרָכָה, respectively, which they regularly translate in the LXX and NT. The two words are close



synonyms in meaning but have distinct usages. Because of these distinctions, 1:42 will be called a “blessing,” while 1:45 will be called a “beatitude. (CC p. 73)

” $\aleph$ י $\aleph$ י= εὐλογητός or εὐλογημένος can be used to praise God, to describe people as “blessed,” and even to describe inanimate objects, as in Deut 28:5: “Blessed will be your be your kneading trough,” meaning that you will be blessed by God with abundant bread.  $\aleph$ י $\aleph$ י(CC p. 73)

Mary’s blessedness is a state of faith that grasps the future promises of God that are already beginning to come to fulfillment for her and in her. (CC p. 76)

**1:43** MY LORD – ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ κυρίου—Remarkably, Elizabeth identifies the child in Mary as the Lord. (CC p. 74)

She considers herself unworthy of receiving, in her modest home, the mother of her Lord. She knew that Mary was to be the mother of the Messiah; she knew that her Lord would be born a true human being, and that her trust in Him would bring her salvation. She was one of the few in Israel that understood the prophecies concerning the Seed of the woman, the Child of the virgin, in their right sense. (Kretzmann)

**1:44** *for joy.* In some mysterious way the Holy Spirit produced this remarkable response in the unborn baby. (CSB)

Elizabeth repeated what happened when Mary greeted her. John the Baptizer, the son in her womb, leaped for joy. Thus Luke made explicit the connection between the mover of John and Elizabeth’s prophetic insight. Also, for Luke, the repetition underlines the importance of the action of the unborn John. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 1)

ἀγαλλιάσει—This word occurs twice in the infancy narrative (1:14, 44), and the verb occurs in 1:47. This is the eschatological joy that accompanies the expectation of salvation. (CC p. 74)

**1:45** BLESSED IS SHE WHO HAS BELIEVED – What a contrast she was to Zechariah! He did not trust the angel’s announcement; Mary believed. She was blessed because what the Lord said to her would be accomplished. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 11, Part 1)

This is the key verse, the fulcrum on which balance the narrative preceding and the Magnificat following. Jesus clearly states th means by which such

blessedness is given: “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it” (11:28). Mary’s blessing comes not by any presupposed sinlessness, rationally-assumed immaculate conception, or co-redemptive character. Rather, as with all the faithful, it comes from outside of her – from God’s Word. And such Word-engendered faith trusts alone in that which was spoken... from the Lord. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

AS LORD HAS SAID – λελαλημένοις is used occasionally of human speech in general (1:65; 7:14; 22:60), but the vast majority of instances are solemn utterances by the Lord, or for the Lord preaching (cf. 1:19; 1:55; 1:70; 2:17, 20; 9:11; 24:25, 32) (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED – τελείωσις—“Fulfillment” (rather than “accomplishment” or “completion” or “perfection”) continues Luke’s emphasis on the promises of God coming to fulfillment already in the lives of John and Jesus. This echoes Luke’s promise in the prologue that he will produce “a narrative concerning the events that have come to fulfillment among us” (1:1). (CC p. 74)

### *Mary’s Song*

**<sup>46</sup> And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord <sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup> for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, <sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name. <sup>50</sup> His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup> He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. <sup>52</sup> He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. <sup>53</sup> He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful <sup>55</sup> to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers.” <sup>56</sup> Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.**

**1:46–55** One of four hymns preserved in Lk 1–2 (see vv. 68–79; 2:14; 2:29–32 and notes). This hymn of praise is known as the Magnificat because in the Latin Vulgate translation the opening word is *Magnificat*, which means “glorifies.” This song is like a psalm, and should also be compared with the song of Hannah (1Sa 2:1–10; see note on 1Sa 2:1). (CSB)

One of four canticles in chs 1–2 (see note, v 46). Zechariah similarly bursts into song at John’s birth (1:68–79), the angels intone their announcement of Jesus’ birth (2:14), and Simeon sings a blessing (2:29–32). Mary’s canticle (called the Magnificat from the first word in the Latin translation) is the most prominent of these four songs of praise, still sung in the Church’s liturgy (*LSB*, pp 248–49). They introduce an important Lukan theme: God delights in exalting the poor and

humble, while bringing down the rich and proud (vv 48, 51–53; cf 14:11; 18:11). See Hannah’s song (1Sm 2:1–10). (TLSB)

The Magnificat itself follows the Hebrew device of poetic parallelism. While probably spoken ex corde by the Blessed Virgin, many OT phrases and themes are woven in. It can easily be translated into the elegant classical Hebrew of the psalms, and its closest parallel is the Song of Hannah (1 Sam 2:1-10). In contrast to the generally catholic character of Luke’s gospel, its outlook is particularistic: the Messiah embodies the entire nation of Israel, and is the culmination of God’s promise to Abraham’s seed. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

**1:46** MARY SAID – Biblical Gk commonly uses verbs of speaking when presenting chanting/singing (cf Rv 5:9). In antiquity, poetic compositions were typically chanted or sung. (TLSB)

GLORIFIES – μεγαλύνει—“Magnifies” preserves the liturgical name of this hymn, “the Magnificat.” In the LXX the Greek word often translates forms of **לָאֵל** in the psalms and is used to praise God. In fact, most of the vocabulary of the Magnificat has a rich history in the OT via the LXX. Cf., for example, textual note on 1:51. (CC p. 78)

So thoroughly familiar was Mary with the writings of the Old Testament that her hymn is cast, almost involuntarily, in the words of the Old Testament poets. All the psalms that had been sung in honor of the Messiah served to give her the thoughts and phrases for her great hymn of the New Testament. (Kretzmann)

First, Mary magnifies the Lord and rejoices (ἠγαλλίασεν) because of his mercy (τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ; 1:50, 54), and then Elizabeth’s “neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had magnified [ἐμεγάλυνεν] his mercy [τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ] with her and they rejoiced with her” (1:58; the only other occurrence of μεγαλύνω in Luke). The Lord is magnified because of the births of Jesus and John, which are interpreted to be acts of God’s mercy. On the threefold purpose of the Magnificat, Luther says:

Just as a book title indicates what is the contents of the book, so this word “magnifies” is used by Mary to indicate what her hymn of praise is to be about, namely, the great works and deeds of God, for the strengthening of our faith, for the comforting of all those of low degree, and for the terrifying of all the mighty ones of earth. We are to let the hymn serve this threefold purpose; for she sang it not for herself alone but for us all, to sing it after her (LW 21:306). (CC p. 79)

**1:47 MY SPIRIT REJOICES** – Rejoices exceedingly. This is the springboard for the entire song, from which stanza after stanza cascades. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

ἠγαλλίασεν—See 1:44. Luther notes that Mary rejoices in God and not the gifts that God gives, as opposed to most human beings who “delighted in their salvation much more than in their Savior, in the gift more than in the Giver, in the creature rather than in the Creator” (LW 21:309). (CC p. 79)

GOD MY SAVIOR – Title often used for God, especially in Psalms. Underscores not only His rescue from physical calamity but also His saving power in spiritual matters (Ps. 18:46; 24:5; 25:5; 27:9). (TLSB)

τῷ σωτήρῳ μου—The word σωτήρ and its derivatives are part of Luke’s vocabulary of salvation. Luke is the only synoptic gospel to refer to Jesus as σωτήρ, and he alone uses the two nouns σωτηρία and σωτήριον. σώζω is also more common in Luke (seventeen times in the gospel and thirteen times in Acts) than in Matthew (fifteen times) and Mark (thirteen times). (CC p. 79)

**1:48 HAS BEEN MINDFUL OF THE HUMBLE ESTATE OF HIS SERVANT** – Because God looked with tender care upon the lowliness of His female slave, whom all generations will consider blessed. This particular verb for blessing occurs only here and in 11:38. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

τὴν ταπείνωσιν—Following Luther, this is translated “low estate” rather than “humility” or “humiliation” to capture Mary’s condition in its totality. Cf. Luther: “The word ‘low estate’ has been translated ‘humility’ by some, as though the Virgin Mary referred to her humility and boasted of it” (LW 21:312). Luther offers extensive comments on this word (pp. 312–24). This word announces the major theme of the Magnificat, and one of the major themes of the gospel, the Great Reversal. (CC p. 79)

Mary humbly acknowledges herself as God’s servant (v 38) and thanks Him for exalting her through the conception of Jesus in her womb. This parallels Israel’s status as an exalted servant in v 54. (TLSB)

**1:49 MIGHTY ONE** – Why will Mary be blessed? Not because of anything in her, but because the Almighty One showed mercy, He has done great things to and with her. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

**1:50** *those who fear him.* Those who revere God and live in harmony with his will. (CSB)

It refers to the holy awe and respect which one has for the Mighty One of whom Mary has just spoken. Such fear will call forth worship and obedience. Mary herself is an example of one who fears the Lord. The Lord's mercy surrounds those who reverence Him. (PBC)

Mary's hymn recalls, not only the song of Hannah, but also many passages in the Psalms, as well as in the songs of Miriam and Deborah. We might compare Ps. 113 and 126, also Ps. 31,8; 34,2.3; 138,6; 71,19; 111,9; 33,10; 34, 10, and others. The grace of God, His holiness, His justice, and especially His faithfulness are celebrated. The whole forms an animated doxology of singular beauty and power, a fitting hymn for the Church of the New Testament to sing the praises of the God of its salvation. (Kretzmann)

GENERATION TO GENERATION – Recalls covenants given to Abraham (Gn 12:1–3) and David. Thus, the climax of Mary's song emphasizes fulfillment (cf vv 54–55). (TLSB)

**1:51** MIGHTY DEEDS –κράτος—“Mighty deed” refers to the actions of God in the next five verses. The wording reflects Ps 77:14–15 and 89:10 (MT 89:11), both of which speak of God's might exercised by his arm. (CC p. 80)

*his arm.* A figurative description of God's powerful acts. God does not have a body; he is spirit (Jn 4:24). (CSB)

ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ—J. Nolland sees in this expression a reference to the “new exodus typology”: “ ‘His arm’ is a frequent OT image for the power of God, especially as manifested in the exodus (e.g., Exod 6:1–6) and in the new exodus of eschatological salvation (e.g., Ezek 20:23; Isa 51:5)” (*Luke 1–9:20*, 76). See also Ex 15:6, 12, 16–17; Is 53:1. (CC p. 80)

PROUD IN THEIR INMOST THOUGHTS – διανοία—“The way of thinking” of the arrogant is pride and conceit. The more general term is preserved here to imply that this is the state of mind of those who are arrogant in their thoughts and hearts. (CC p. 80)

**1:53** *hungry.* Both physically and spiritually (Mt 5:6; Jn 6:35). The coming of God's kingdom will bring changes affecting every area of life. (CSB)

The hungry He has filled with good things, giving them not only the necessities, but more than they need. Those that hunger and thirst after the gift of righteousness, because they realize the manifold shortcomings in their own life, these He fills with the wonderful gifts of His rich, store. (Kretzmann)

**1:54** *remembering to be merciful.* The song ends with an assurance that God will be true to his promises to his people (see Ge 22:16–18). (CSB)

For God remembers His mercy, the covenant of grace which He made with Abraham and renewed with the patriarchs, according to the promise that in Abraham and his seed all nations of the earth should be called blessed. (Kretzmann)

Here remembering expresses the cause rather than the result of God's action. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

**1:56** STAYED... ABOUT THREE MONTHS – Mary remained with Elisabeth for about three months, showing her kinswoman all sympathy and kindness. After that time, tact and' the regard for her own condition made her return home imperative. (Kretzmann)