

Mary, Mother of God C Jerome Biblical Commentary with Texts

Reading 1

[Nm 6:22-27](#)

The LORD said to Moses:

“Speak to Aaron and his sons and tell them:

This is how you shall bless the Israelites.

Say to them:

The LORD bless you and keep you!

The LORD let his face shine upon
you, and be gracious to you!

The LORD look upon you kindly and
give you peace!

So shall they invoke my name upon the Israelites, and I will bless them.”

THE PRIESTLY BLESSING (6:22-27). This beautiful prayer was used by the priests when they blessed the people.²⁵ *let his face shine upon you*: The act is a sign of the divine pleasure. The word for “be gracious” (*nan*) occurs often in Pss. Psalm 66:2 closely resembles this blessing. (See L. J. Liebreich, “The Songs of Ascent and the Priestly Blessing,” *JBL* 74 [1950] 33-36.)¹

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8](#)

May God bless us in his mercy.

May God have pity on us and bless us;
may he let his face shine upon us.

So may your way be known upon earth;
among all nations, your salvation.

May God bless us in his mercy.

May the nations be glad and exult
because you rule the peoples in equity;
the nations on the earth you guide.

May God bless us in his mercy.

May the peoples praise you, O God;
may all the peoples praise you!

JBL Journal of Biblical Literature

¹Brown, R. E., Fitzmyer, J. A., & Murphy, R. E. 1968]; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996. *The Jerome Biblical commentary* (electronic ed.). Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ

May God bless us,
and may all the ends of the earth fear him!

May God bless us in his mercy.

Ps 67. A national thanksgiving Ps (?). The classification is not clear; the poem may be taken as a request for blessings (2, 8) or as a national thanksgiving for a good harvest (7). The remarkable thing in the Ps is how God's blessings on Israel are taken to be a sign of his salvation for the nations (3). Hence, the nations (whom he rules, 5) should praise God (2-6); if they are to share in the blessings, they must "fear him" (8). The structure is determined by the refrain (sung by the congregation?) in 4 and 6.² This line is modeled on the priestly blessing of Aaron (cf. Nm 6:24-26).³ *your way*: The divine manner of dealing with men—blessings for those who "fear" him.⁵ This verse recalls the theme of Yahweh as just ruler of the world (cf. Pss 96:10; 99:4).²

Reading II

[Gal 4:4-7](#)

Brothers and sisters:

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son,
born of a woman, born under the law,
to ransom those under the law,
so that we might receive adoption as sons.
As proof that you are sons,
God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,
crying out, "Abba, Father!"
So you are no longer a slave but a son,
and if a son then also an heir, through God.

4. fullness of time: From the "date set" (4:2) Paul widens the application of his comparison to the point in history when God's salvific intervention took place. Man's freedom came with Christ. *God sent forth his son:* The vb. (ex)apostell developed in the early Church a specific religious meaning: to send someone in the service of the kingdom with authority fully grounded in God (see *ThDNT* 1, 406). The "sending" is functional, expressing the mission of the Son in the purpose clause. Here nothing is said explicitly about the Son's pre-existence; it is at most implied (→ Pauline Theology, 79:53). *born of a woman:* The ptc. **genomenon** is aorist, emphasizing the assumption of human condition for the mission. So born, he submitted to the Law by being circumcised, and thus became capable of falling under its curse. But lest the Galatians draw a

²Brown, R. E., Fitzmyer, J. A., & Murphy, R. E. 1968]; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996. *The Jerome Biblical commentary* (electronic ed.). Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ

ThDNT G. Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, 1964-). English version of *ThWNT*

wrong conclusion, Paul does not mention Christ's circumcision.**6. the proof that you are sons:** The conj. *hoti*. could mean "because"; then adoptive sonship would be the basis for the gratuitous sending of the Spirit. However, Rom 8:14-17 seems to suggest that the gift of the Spirit is the constitutive element of Christian sonship. Hence many commentators prefer the sense, "the fact that." (Cf. S. Zedda, *L'adozione a Figlio di Dio* [Rome, 1952].) *the Spirit of his Son:* The Spirit is also the object of a personal mission from the Father (**ho theos**); elsewhere he is the gift of the Risen **Kyrios**. (For the pertinence of this phrase to Paul's lack of a clear distinction between Son and Spirit, → Pauline Theology, 79:75-79.) *Abba [my] father:* The vivifying Spirit of the Risen Son is the dynamic principle of adoptive sonship (see Rom 1:3; 8:15-17). It empowers the Christian's inmost conviction, as he exclaims of God, "Father!" Although the Aram 'abbâ means "the father," This emphatic form was often used as a vocative and frequently had the meaning, "my Father" (see *ThDNT* 1, 5-6). The Christian prays to the Father with the same formula that was used by Christ. When taken up in Gk communities, its literal Gk equivalent **ho pat r** was added, and the combination became a liturgical formula. But without the Spirit a Christian would never be able to utter this cry.**7. no longer a slave:** The Christian is free of the Law. *through God:* Inferior mss. read "through Christ" or "an heir of God through Christ."

Gospel

[Lk 2:16-21](#)

The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

When they saw this,
they made known the message
that had been told them about this child.

All who heard it were amazed
by what had been told them by the shepherds.

And Mary kept all these things,
reflecting on them in her heart.

Then the shepherds returned,
glorifying and praising God
for all they had heard and seen,
just as it had been told to them.

When eight days were completed for his circumcision,
he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel

Gk Greek

mss. Manuscripts

before he was conceived in the womb.

16. *with haste*: The same root word is used as in 1:39.**19.** *Mary kept in mind*: Cf. Dn 7:28; Gn 37:11; Lk 8:4-21 (see B. F. Meyer, *CBQ* 26 [1964] 31-49).**21.** *was circumcised*: The circumcision of Jesus is told in a way reminiscent of that of John (1:59). Jesus is formally stamped as a member of God's chosen people, through whom world salvation was to be achieved. Such hopes were now fulfilled in Jesus, even in his name (1:31).

Meyer H. A. W. Meyer, *Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament* (Göttingen)

CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly