

"As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience."

THE DAILY READING BIBLE

LUKE 7-9

MICAH

GALATIANS

60 daily readings with full Bible text

THE DAILY READING BIBLE

Volume 14

LUKE 7-9

MICAH

GALATIANS

The Daily Reading Bible (Volume 14)

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INTRODUCTION

Readng our Bibles regularly is getting harder. That, at least, seems to be the common experience of many Christians. We could waste lots of ink speculating on the reasons for this: is it the frenetic pace of life these days? Is it spiritual laziness? Is it the impact of postmodernism on our culture and the lack of certainty when it comes to interpreting the written word?

But a better option than speculating on the reasons, we thought, was to provide a new resource for Christians to help them get back into a more regular habit of reflecting daily on God's word. So back in June 2001, we decided to start including a section called 'Bible Brief' in our monthly magazine, *The Briefing* (see www.matthiasmedia.com.au for more information about *The Briefing*). The 'Bible Brief' provided 20 short readings each month—acknowledging that there will be days we miss or days when we want to do something a bit different—with questions, thoughts to ponder, and suggestions to get started in prayer.

Now, several years later, we have a good collection of 'Bible Briefs', and it's time to offer them to a wider audience in a format that will, we hope, be even more convenient and useful.

This fourteenth volume contains 60 readings, all designed to be done in 15–20 minutes. These daily Bible readings are designed to

help you feed regularly from God's word. They won't cover every issue in each passage, nor even every passage from each Bible book. In other words, *they are no substitute for the in-depth study of the Scriptures* that you may undertake personally, in small groups or through listening to sermons.

With the kind permission of our friends at Crossway Bibles, we've been able to make this a complete package to take with you—we've included the English Standard Version Bible text with each daily study. So you can take this one book with you and have everything you need—on the train, on the bus, or to the park at lunchtime—wherever and whenever you can get 20 minutes to yourself.

How to use these readings

- *With a penitent heart*, the true prerequisite for all Bible reading. Open with prayer (perhaps using the prayer suggested at the beginning of each set of studies).
- *With 15–20 minutes* of peace and quiet. If you can take longer, and want to read and pray further—great! But we have designed the readings to be done in a fairly short space of time.
- *With an accurate modern translation*. We recommend and have included the new ESV translation. The writers of the studies refer to this translation. Contact us for further details about the ESV or visit www.matthiasmedia.com.au/ESV

- *With a pen.* Even if you only jot down brief ideas, writing focuses the mind.
- *As a guide and help, not a straitjacket.* Feel free to dig further into the passage, to notice and ponder things that the questions don't point to.
- *As a launch-pad for prayer.* Use the prayer ideas at the end of each reading as a starting point for your daily prayer. Many of the points that will arise from the readings will be things you can pray for yourself, and also for others (family, friends, neighbours, etc.). Why not compile a list of people you want to pray for (you can write them in the blank space below), and use the prayer ideas from each reading to pray for the next person on your list?

This fourteenth volume includes:

- studies on Luke 7-9 (written by Stephen Cree, pastor at Southern Cross Presbyterian Church, Lismore)
- studies on Micah (written by Andrew Barry, assistant minister at Jannali Anglican church)
- studies on Galatians (written by David Martin who works in university ministry in regional Victoria).

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Please note: the main section of Scripture for each study is reproduced before the questions. Other Scripture references are reproduced as footnotes at the bottom of the page, or, where the passages are too long to be included as footnotes, in the Appendix.

PEOPLE TO PRAY FOR:

LUKE 7-9

INTRODUCTION

The question that has already been building in Luke 1-6 is "Who is Jesus?" We the readers have already been told the answer by angels (2:11) and by God himself (3:2). But people in the story are still working out their own answers to the question. They are amazed by Jesus (4:36, 5:26), and ask who he is (5:21), but no-one has come up with a clear answer yet.

In Luke 7-9, the section we are reading through in these set of studies, we see more of people's reactions to Jesus, with various answers starting to be offered. As we wrestle with the question of who Jesus is, perhaps the more important question to ask is, "Who does Jesus think he is?" Luke, as he tells Jesus' story, has made it clear that the story of Jesus is a story of fulfilment (1:1). So we need to read Luke with the Old Testament in mind—especially promises like Genesis 12:1-3¹ and Isaiah 61:1-2.² We need to see what Jesus' ministry means for Israel, and therefore for the whole world.

*Dear heavenly Father,
Thank you for sending Jesus to fulfil all your promises. Thank you that he came to offer cleanness to the unclean, and life to the dead. Thank you that he did this through dying for our sins and rising to new life. As I live with him as my Saviour and Lord, help me to follow him sacrificially with my whole life.
Amen.*

NB: Tick the box when you've completed each study ✓

READING 1

LUKE 7:1-10

After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ² Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. ³ When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and

heal his servant. ⁴ And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, ⁵ for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue." ⁶ And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying

1. Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

2. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,

because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn ...

to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. ⁷ Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸ For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." ⁹ When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." ¹⁰ And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well.

1. *How would you describe the centurion and the way he approached Jesus?*

2. *By this point in Luke, we're used to Jesus*

astonishing others (e.g. 4:36,³ 5:26⁴). Why is Jesus astonished by this centurion?

3. *What is so significant about this event? (See Simeon's praise to God in 2:28-32⁵ and 23:47.⁶)*

PONDER Notice that the centurion doesn't actually meet Jesus. He hears about Jesus and he obeys Jesus. How is he a model of faith for Christians?

PRAYER IDEAS Pray that you, like this centurion, will relate to Jesus as your 'commanding officer' as you seek to obey him in all things.

READING 2

LUKE 7:11-17

Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. ¹² As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ Fear seized them all, and

they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" ¹⁷ And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.

1. *In raising this widow's son, what is Jesus demonstrating about the significance of his ministry? (See 1 Kings 17 and 2 Kings 4:8-37 in the Appendix, pp. 67-69.)*

3. And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!"

4. And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

5. ... he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹ "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

6. Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!"

2. In verse 16, what picture do the people have of Jesus? Is it adequate?

3. In touching the dead man's coffin, Jesus should have been made ritually unclean. Where does Jesus' mission to deal with death, disease and uncleanness ultimately take him?

PONDER Jesus took your uncleanness on himself in his death, and rose to give you life. What will this mean for your every day life if you have faith in such a Saviour?

PRAYER IDEAS Ask God to fill your heart with thankfulness for his Son. Ask him to enable you to turn away from the uncleanness that Jesus died for.

READING 3

LUKE 7:18-23

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John,¹⁹ calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?"²⁰ And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'"²¹ In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight.²² And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them."²³ And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

1. John hears in verse 18 that Jesus is doing *Elijah-type things* (cf. 7:16).? How might

John's question about who Jesus is also be a question about who he—i.e. John—is?

2. John had preached that the Messiah would bring judgement (3:15-18)⁸ —especially against Israel's false leaders. Why do you think John, who is now sitting in prison, asks this question?

3. What does Jesus point to for evidence that he is the Messiah (cf. 4:18-19)?⁹

7. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!"
8. As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ,¹⁶ John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people.

9. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

PONDER Jesus' message to John quotes Isaiah 61, but cuts off the quote just before the bit about the 'release of prisoners' (cf. Isa 61:1).¹⁰ Perhaps his message to John is "Be patient". How might his warning to John

apply to you (v. 23)?

PRAYER IDEAS Ask God to help you to recognize Jesus as the one who brings both God's salvation and judgement.

READING 4

LUKE 7:24-35

When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵ What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is he of whom it is written,

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you!

²⁸ I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." ²⁹ (When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John, ³⁰ but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)

³¹ "To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another,

"We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we sang a dirge, and you did not weep!

³³ For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵ Yet wisdom is justified by all her children."

1. In verses 24–30, Jesus refers the people back to John's ministry of preparation. They weren't attracted to John's ministry because of its lack of worldly splendour (vv. 24–26), so what has changed now? What is Jesus implying about himself?

2. Read verses 29–30. Who liked what Jesus said, and why? Who hated what Jesus said, and why?

3. John talked about sin too much; Jesus talks about joy too much! What is Jesus' assessment of "this generation" (vv. 31–35)?

10. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;

he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound ...

PONDER Read Deuteronomy 21:18–23.¹¹ What is the significance of Jesus being called a “glutton and a drunkard” (v. 34)? What is ominous about Deuteronomy 21:23? How will John’s expectation of judgement be fulfilled in a surprising way?

PRAYER IDEAS Thank God that Jesus is not an ordinary king, but a servant king. Ask God to help you to describe the kind of king he is to others.

READING 5

LUKE 7:36-43

One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee’s house and took his place at the table.³⁷ And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment,³⁸ and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.”⁴⁰ And Jesus answering said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” And he answered, “Say it, Teacher.”

⁴¹ “A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.⁴² When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?”⁴³ Simon answered, “The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt.” And he said to him, “You have judged rightly.”

1. Why might Simon the Pharisee have

11. “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them,¹⁹ then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives,²⁰ and they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.’²¹ Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.”

invited Jesus to dinner with him (v. 39; cf. 7:16–17)?¹²

2. Why does Simon quickly conclude that Jesus can’t be a prophet (v. 39)?

3. What does the parable tell you about Jesus, and the different responses people have to him (vv. 41–43)?

PONDER Simon saw this woman as a sinner who was beyond forgiveness. When you have been guilty of this sort of attitude?

PRAYER IDEAS Ask God to help you to never see another person as being beyond the realm of God’s forgiveness.

²² “And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree,²³ his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.”

12. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has arisen among us!” and “God has visited his people!”¹⁷ And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.

Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet.⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.⁴⁷ Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little."⁴⁸ And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."⁴⁹ Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"⁵⁰ And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

1. *According to Jesus, how has Simon been guilty of something more shocking than the woman?*
2. *What deeper problem is revealed by Simon's lack of hospitality towards Jesus?*
3. *What does Jesus say is the sign that someone has been forgiven (v. 47)?*
4. *What questions are people asking about Jesus? What do you learn about Jesus?*

PONDER Simon's greatest problem wasn't seeing this woman as a sinner, it was failing to see himself as one. When are you guilty of this attitude?

PRAYER IDEAS Confess your sins to God, and rejoice in the fact that, through Jesus' death, you have been forgiven much. Ask God to help you to love much as a result.

Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him,² and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,³ and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

⁴ And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable ...

1. *What was Jesus doing as he travelled about from one town and village to another (v. 1)? What does this tell you about his ministry priority?*
2. *Who are the people with Jesus (vv. 1-3), and why does Luke think this is important for you to know?*

3. *What might have been motivating the "great crowd" gathering around Jesus (v. 4)?*

PONDER By the time Jesus dies, the large crowd has gone, and these women now stand "at a distance" (23:49).¹³ What is it that no-one has yet understood about Jesus?

PRAYER IDEAS Ask God to help you receive "the good news of the kingdom of God" truly.

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL PASSAGES REFERRED TO ...

1 Kings 17 (Reading 2)

Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."² And the word of the LORD came to him:³ "Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan."⁴ You shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."⁵ So he went and did according to the word of the LORD. He went and lived by the brook Cherith that is east of the Jordan.⁶ And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.⁷ And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to him,⁹ "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to feed you."¹⁰ So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink."¹¹ And as she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."¹² And she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die."¹³ And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said. But first make me a little cake of it and bring

it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son."¹⁴ For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, "The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth."¹⁵ And she went and did as Elijah said. And she and he and her household ate for many days.¹⁶ The jar of flour was not spent, neither did the jug of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

¹⁷ After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill. And his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him.¹⁸ And she said to Elijah, "What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to cause the death of my son!"¹⁹ And he said to her, "Give me your son." And he took him from her arms and carried him up into the upper chamber where he lodged, and laid him on his own bed.²⁰ And he cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by killing her son?"²¹ Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life come into him again."²² And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived.²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper chamber into the house and delivered him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives."²⁴ And the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth."

2 Kings 4:8-37 (Reading 2)

One day Elisha went on to Shunem, where a wealthy woman lived, who urged him to eat some food. So whenever he passed that way, he would turn in there to eat food.⁹ And she said to her husband, "Behold now, I know that this is a holy man of God who is continually passing our way."¹⁰ Let us make a small room on the roof with walls and put there for him a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so that whenever he comes to us, he can go in there."

¹¹ One day he came there, and he turned into the chamber and rested there.¹² And he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." When he had called her, she stood before him.¹³ And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'See, you have taken all this trouble for us; what is to be done for you? Would you have a word spoken on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?'" She answered, "I dwell among my own people."¹⁴ And he said, "What then is to be done for her?" Gehazi answered, "Well, she has no son, and her husband is old."¹⁵ He said, "Call her." And when he had called her, she stood in the doorway.¹⁶ And he said, "At this season, about this time next year, you shall embrace a son." And she said, "No, my lord, O man of God; do not lie to your servant."¹⁷ But the woman conceived, and she bore a son about that time the following spring, as Elisha had said to her.

¹⁸ When the child had grown, he went out one day to his father among the reapers.¹⁹ And he said to his father, "Oh, my head, my head!" The father said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother."²⁰ And when he had lifted him and brought him to his mother, the child sat on her lap till noon, and then he died.²¹ And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God and shut the door behind him and went out.²² Then she called to her husband and said, "Send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may quickly go to the man of God and

come back again."²³ And he said, "Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor Sabbath." She said, "All is well."²⁴ Then she saddled the donkey, and she said to her servant, "Urge the animal on; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you."²⁵ So she set out and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

When the man of God saw her coming, he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, there is the Shunammite."²⁶ Run at once to meet her and say to her, 'Is all well with you? Is all well with your husband? Is all well with the child?'" And she answered, "All is well."²⁷ And when she came to the mountain to the man of God, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came to push her away. But the man of God said, "Leave her alone, for she is in bitter distress, and the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me."²⁸ Then she said, "Did I ask my lord for a son? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'"²⁹ He said to Gehazi, "Tie up your garment and take my staff in your hand and go. If you meet anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not reply. And lay my staff on the face of the child."³⁰ Then the mother of the child said, "As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So he arose and followed her.³¹ Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the face of the child, but there was no sound or sign of life. Therefore he returned to meet him and told him, "The child has not awakened."

³² When Elisha came into the house, he saw the child lying dead on his bed.³³ So he went in and shut the door behind the two of them and prayed to the LORD.³⁴ Then he went up and lay on the child, putting his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. And as he stretched himself upon him, the flesh of the child became warm.³⁵ Then he got up again and walked once back and forth in the house, and went up and stretched himself upon him. The child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.³⁶ Then he summoned Gehazi and said,

"Call this Shunammite." So he called her. And when she came to him, he said, "Pick up your son." ³⁷ She came and fell at his feet, bowing to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out.

Luke 8:1–15 (Reading 20)

Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, ² and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³ and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

⁴ And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable: ⁵ "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. ⁶ And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. ⁸ And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold." As he said these things, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

⁹ And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, ¹⁰ he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' ¹¹ Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. ¹² The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away. ¹⁴ And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear,

but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. ¹⁵ As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

Exodus 16 (Reading 15)

They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. ² And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, ³ and the people of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. ⁵ On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." ⁶ So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷ and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?" ⁸ And Moses said, "When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD."

⁹ Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.'" ¹⁰ And as soon as Aaron

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