

## Monday Evening Bible Reading Group: March 25<sup>th</sup>: The Magnificat: Luke 1: 46-55

Magnificat anima mea Dominum;	My soul doth magnify ["declare the greatness of"] the Lord.
Et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo, Salutari meo.	And my spirit rejoiceth; in God my Saviour.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generatones.	Because He hath looked down on the lowliness of His handmaid: for behold henceforth all generations will call me blessed.
Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: et sanctum nomen ejus.	Because the Mighty One hath done great things for me: and holy is His name.
Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.	And His mercy is generation to generation: on those who fear Him.
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.	He showeth might in His arm: He scattereth the proud in the conceit of their heart.
Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.	He casteth down the mighty from their throne: and exalteth the lowly.
Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanes.	He filleth the hungry with good things: and the rich He sendeth away empty.
Suscepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae.	He hath received His servant Israel: being mindful of His mercy.
Sicut locutes est ad patres nostros, Abraham, et semini ejus in saecula.	And He spake to our fathers: to Abraham and his seed forever.



The Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis stick in the memory of anyone who loves Evening Prayer/Evensong. Two women meet to swap pregnancy notes: the older woman had given up on any hope of having children. The younger woman was facing un-married teenage pregnancy. Both women must have had rather mixed feelings. It really is very difficult for an unemotional Western man, living in a peaceful democracy, whose idea of wild excitement is momentarily taking his hands out of his pockets, to tune in to Mary and Elizabeth celebrating Mary's baby and Israel's Messiah. Think an un-self-conscious girl dancing to Gospel music for sheer joy and totally unaware of any audience (St John's one Sunday evening.) The Magnificat is both very personal and very political. It is a revolutionary hymn,. Try to imagine "This girl is a nobody going nowhere, and nobody either notices or cares" transformed into "This woman will be the most famous mother of all time, and help to change the world for ever". "Wow" doesn't do it! Try to look at both modern and traditional versions.

