

# Women's Journeys: A meditation



*This meditation is adapted from the ecumenical morning worship for the International Women's Day at the WSCF-Europe study session in Strasbourg.*

*Setup:* Arrange the chairs in a circle with a small cairn (pile of stones used to mark a place on a journey) in the centre. There should be other small stones, at least one for each participant although more is better, scattered around the inside of the circle.

*Introduction:* During this meditation five Bible stories are read, and after each one of them a passage of the prayer Speaking of silence: a reproach by Nicola Slee<sup>1</sup> is read, followed by a short silence during which there is an opportunity for contemplation on the texts and for placing a stone in the middle of the circle either in silence or with a short prayer or reflection.

## Introductory Sentences

Women's stories both from the scripture and from our traditions are often overlooked. In this meditation we will listen and reflect on the lives of our foremothers, remembering that as both men as women we can draw on their experience and wisdom.

<sup>1</sup> Slee, Nicola, *Praying Like a Woman*, London, SPCK, 2004. P.29 (adapted) Reprinted with permission



## *Pharaoh's Daughter*

### *Exodus 2: 1-9*

The sounds of women's silence run deep.  
Let us attune our ears to the  
sounds of women's silence,  
to attend and listen to what is not said,  
what has never been said,  
what is only now beginning to be said.  
Let this silence cry aloud in our ears,  
let it resound and reverberate inside our heads,  
let it deafen our whole being with its colossal roar.

## *Silence*

### *Rahab*

#### *Joshua 2: 1-8, 11b-16, 21*

This silence is eloquent, articulate of women's pain and  
women's lives.  
It is compelling, hypnotic, fearful, overwhelming.  
It speaks louder than words.  
It utters volumes of speech.  
It drowns out all other language.

## *Silence*



## *Deborah*

*Judges 4: 4-9*

Where are the women in our history, in our heritage?  
Where are the stories of our women heroes, mystics, leaders and teachers?

Who will guide the footsteps of our children  
born today into a deafening silence about their ancestors, about themselves?

*Silence*

## *Hannah*

*1 Samuel 1: 1-20*

So many women's voices have been  
lost in the pages of history,  
erased and blotted out and passed over in silence  
by the rulers of patriarchy, the makers of culture.  
So few have survived in the pages,  
and their stories have so often been ignored,  
trivialized, marginalized, distorted.

*Silence*

## *The Women at the Tomb*

*Mark 15: 33-41 and 16: 1-8*

We want to hear the sounds of  
our foremothers' voices.  
We want to listen to our grandmothers' tales.  
We want to speak the names of our sisters who came before us.  
We need to hear their stories,  
we need to hear their voices,  
to hear and know who we are.

*Silence*

*Participants are free to leave when they are ready*

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MOZAIK  
2007  
summer



**Last Things – Women's Journeys Meditation**

# Song of Pity Shining in Our Eyes

— THIS IS AN EXCERPT FROM A SONG  
BY HEIKKI LAITINEN & NEUTRAALIT, TAKEN FROM THE FINNISH SCMS  
ANNIVERSARY CD, AND FREELY TRANSLATED TO ENGLISH BY AURA NORTOMAA.

wishes, encouragements, demands, threats, insults,  
defamations, pamphlets, declarations  
what good will words alone accomplish

conferences, meetings, big words, prayers, synod  
appeals, church day introductions  
what good will words alone accomplish

words cannot drive away hunger  
cannot take away oppression, exploitation  
even though we have hunger, oppression, exploitation and injustice  
only pity shines in our eyes  
when others have hunger and injustice

coin from there, coin from here  
coin from there, coin from here  
coin wanders

coin from there, coin from here  
coin from there, coin from here  
coin goes, two coins come

the iron grasp of the iron system  
give a little from your plenty and plenty from your little  
and everything will stay the same  
I guarantee that

but it is always about the money  
little reparations won't do anymore, you have to make a full  
renovation

...

what good will words alone accomplish  
words cannot drive away hunger  
cannot take away oppression, exploitation  
even though we have hunger, oppression, exploitation and injustice  
only pity shines in our eyes  
when others have hunger and injustice

...

During this  
meditation  
five Bible  
stories are  
read, and  
after each  
one of them  
a passage of  
the prayer  
Speaking of  
silence.