

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 Slee¹ 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.

¹ 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.