



Red de Mujeres y Justicia de Género de las Iglesias Luteranas de América Latina y el Caribe - FLM

Rede de Mulheres e Justiça de Género das Igrejas Luteranas da América Latina e Caribe - FLM

Women and Gender Justice Network of the Lutheran Churches of Latin America and the Caribbean - LWF

BIBLE STUDY 1.

RED DE MUJERES Y JUSTICIA DE GÉNERO, LAC.

Time of Lent "Ash Wednesday".

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It is the time of Lent, a liturgical space that invites us to think on the times we are living. The approach to the book of Joel will help us to think among ourselves how we are managing this time of crisis, from our homes and in the midst of fears and uncertainties.

The people, in the historical time of the book of Joel, were under the Persian Empire, which imposed strong violence in all senses, even economically. According to what the text tells us, there was no authority among the Jewish people who had the wisdom or the courage to raise their voices and denounce the abuses that the Persians were carrying out. It is then when a call is made to the people, "to consagrate the assamble" (Joel 2:16), that is to say, the old men and women, the children, the nursing mothers, the newlyweds will be part of this listening on behalf of the prophet, where they will ask for forgiveness and demand that their suffering ends. (Joel 2:19).

How exciting it's to observe the strength, the struggle and the courage to denounce oppression against an Empire, comes from the voices of people who are considered "weak" or who do not have much importance in society. In this case, women, girls, boys, old men and old women who are suffering hunger, fear, illness and uncertainty are made visible.

Can we imagine what their requests would be? Surely they were asking for peace, stability, but also the possibility of being able to sow, harvest and have everything they need on the table to feed their families. And the request will be heard, for in Joel 2:19 it says that Jehovah will answer them as follows: "I am sending you grain, new wine and olive oil, enough to satisfy you fully; never again will I make you an object of scorn to the nations."



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Let us observe the movement in the text: when we demand and work for a fair economy, for full justice, giving people what they need, thinking of everyone, peace and the common good come as well. And an ecological justice is observed in Joel 2:22, for peace and blessing reach the animals and pastures: "Do not be afraid, you wild animals, for the pastures in the wilderness are becoming green. The trees are bearing their fruit; the fig tree and the vine yield their riches."

In the same chapter 2, verses 28 and 29, it speaks of the possibility of continuing to dream, the Spirit is for everyone, and it is not only for prophesying but also for dreaming. The old men and women, the servants will have the necessary time to think that their world can be different, that the social conditions can change, and they will not only dream, but it will be possible to make it come true.

Today our world is in a complicated situation with diseases that have brought death, poverty, unemployment, violence and despair. Our future is uncertain and it is possible that we do not know where we are going.

This chapter 2 of the book of Joel encourages us to follow our dreams, as women, girls, boys, young men, old women and old men. It pushes us to remember that we can demand that things in our countries will be better and the Spirit of God is with us.

What are our petitions at the beginning of Lent? To be healthy, to be vaccinated, to have the vaccinated for everyone, to work for fair and communitarian economies so that our tables have daily bread. The payment of our jobs, health care in all our countries, governments that truly attend to the needs of the people. And us, are the ones who have to speak out and ask for things to be that way.

What do we dream of at the beginning of Lent? May our liturgies invite us to think and ask forgiveness for our omissions, for not thinking of the other. May our hearts truly lament and we can with our biblical-theological reflections, fight for our rulers to be merciful and if they are not, may we have the courage to ask them to leave.

This liturgical season of Lent is a time for the Churches to be taken by the Spirit of God and to live the Gospel in fullness, that our repentance be for not fighting for fair



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causes, for not supporting those who work for fair governments, for not governing for and in favor of the people.

Let us listen to the voice of everybody, especially of those who are hungry, afraid, sick, suffering violence, persecuted, without hope.

Let us be the women who breastfeed our daughters and sons, who give life and who unashamedly fight with our daughters and sons for a better world.