



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

A Communion
of Churches

lutheranworld.org

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

Friday Morning Prayer, Ecumenical Centre

World Council of Churches – Lutheran World Federation

Call to Worship: Setting the Tone (Ps 13:1-4)

1 How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?

2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?

3 Look on me and answer, Lord my God.
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,

4 and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

Hymn 'Lift every voice' (v. 2; *music attached*)

Stony the road we trod,

Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

Scripture Genesis 16:1-10

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so she said to Abram,

ALL ***The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.***

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram,

ALL ***You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me.***

(Males) **"Your slave is in your hands,"** Abram said. **"Do with her whatever you think best."**

Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her. The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

(Females) **"I'm running away from my mistress Sarai,"**

she answered. Then the angel of the Lord told her,

ALL ***“Go back to your mistress and submit to her.”***

The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”

Prayer of Lament – Lord’s prayer Spiritual version

Poem (see overleaf)

Silence

Prayers of intercession

Naming -

Invitation to name

- Sin of complicity, silence, violence against the vulnerable
- Survivors
- Persons still trapped in systems of abuse and victimisation

Scripture – Mark 5:41

Holding her hand, he said to her,

“Talitha koum,”

which means “Little girl, get up!”

Mutual prayers (we invite you to pray with/for each other in pairs)

Benediction

Did you know my name

when you agreed to sleep with me

for the sake of

perpetuating your progeny?

Did you care who I am

beyond the sturdiness of my limbs
and the potential genes
that the perfect prize stallion I could yield?

And when urged to
'get rid of that uppity woman who doesn't know her place';
did you remember that I was forced by your wife, my owner, into your space
despite the incongruity of my race?

Did either of you know me,
acknowledge my existence,
care that I too have feelings
Yearn for another way of being - of living?

Do you truly know my name,
can you count the times
you birthed my shame,
resurrected the pain of being less than
– while bearing the fruit of your outrageous plan?

And as you send me forth now and for all times,
do you dare say MY name?
Do you even remember HIS name –

For my name consummates the fullness
Through time of woman used, abused, abandoned
Left to die in the wilderness,
broken, hungry, bereft
Do either of you say my name
since I so hastily left?

Stripped of all rights
like a thief in the night?
Did you? Can you?

Say my name; admit your complicity
Say my name – restore my dignity
Say my name, acknowledge your son

Say my name now and right the wrong!

But God knows my name,
El Rohi, the ever seeing One
hid my shame – rescued our son
Making streams in dry places
healing my brokenness, ending my distress

God calls my name,
and I am ever grateful,
God gives a new lease on life,
established us as a nation.

Now my God,
the Eternal, ever present One
keeps me going
even when you think you've won.

Say my name – give voice to loneliness
Say my name – restore us to wholeness
Say my name - exchange power for weakness
Say my name – eradicate now the bitterness
Say my name - acknowledge our brokenness
Say my name – comfort me in my fearfulness
Even as a whisper; perhaps as a prayer Say my name!