I Have a Name: Readings on Women through Whom God Worked

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This series of short readings reflects the contributions of women amidst God’s covenant people. The reading might be appropriate for Mother’s Day or Pentecost season as a way of celebrating women in the life and ministry of the church. The “I” lines may be read by the same woman or by a series of different women, one for each Biblical character (W). The “She” lines may be read by a single reader, a reader’s choir, or the whole congregation (R).

Prologue
W  We are the daughters of God
   We are the sisters and wives and mothers of men
   We were planned by God to be partnered with men
R  They were in the beginning good
    They are in the end graced
W  We are women
   We have names
R  We celebrate their names

Eve
(Genesis 1.26–3.24)
W  I am also the image, the likeness alike
   I knew the joy of joining, flesh of my flesh
   I shared the shame, felt its effects
R  She was the mother of all living
    Before she fell, she fit
W  I am a woman
   I have a name
R  Her name is Eve

Sarah
(Genesis 21.1–7)
W  I had a claim to that covenant too
   The promise of son and nation and blessing
   I too laughed and felt little Laughter leap in my womb
R  She was wife and mother to covenant-bearers
   She was a covenant-bearer
W  I am a woman
   I have a name
R  Her name is Sarah
Zipporah (Exodus 2.15–22, 4.24–26)
W I was a foreigner, a stranger to the covenant
    I married a murderer, a man named Moses
    I reminded that shepherd of the sign of the covenant
R She was the wife of the prophet of God
    She was the mother of circumcised sons
W I am a woman
    I have a name
R Her name is Zipporah

Miriam (Exodus 15.19–21)
W I sang God’s people through the sea
    I saw horse and rider hurled into the sea
    I danced the daughters across on dry ground
R She was a prophet of God
    She saw and spoke for God
W I am a woman
    I have a name
R Her name is Miriam

Rahab (Joshua 2.1–21, 6.15–25)
W I was more than a prostitute—or less, a priestess
    I lived in the walls that came tumbling down
    I heard God’s hand at work in his people
R She protected the people of God with a rope
    They protected her with a scarlet thread
W I am a woman
    I have a name
R Her name is Rahab

Deborah (Judges 4.4–5.12)
W I dispensed justice in the name of Jehovah
    I led the Lord’s army into battle
    I arose a mother in Israel
R She was a prophet of God
    She saw and spoke…and led for God
W I am a woman
    I have a name
R Her name is Deborah
Ruth (Ruth 1.1–4.22)
W I gave my life to my mother-in-law
   I gave my heart to her kinsman
   I gave my self to her God
R She was the great-grandmother of David
   She mothered the Messiah
W I am a woman
   I have a name
R Her name is Ruth

Hannah (1 Samuel 1.1–28)
W I cried bitter years for a baby
   I prayed and pled and begged for a baby
   I pressed him on the priest, still a baby
R She was meant to mother
   She dedicated her darling to the Lord
W I am a woman
   I have a name
R Her name is Hannah

Huldah (2 Kings 22.1–23.3)
W When they found the long-lost law, the king came to me
   The king sought out my insight
   I called for repentance and guided reform
R She was a prophet of God
   She saw and spoke for God
W I am a woman
   I have a name
R Her name is Huldah

Mary (Luke 1.26–2.52)
W I was the servant overshadowed by the Lord
   I suffered the pain of the miracle of his birth
   I suffered the pain of the miracle of his death
R She held him like a son
   She held him like a sword
W I am a woman
   I have a name
R Her name is Mary
Anna

W I was only eighty-four when I finally found him
   I had waited, relishing the redemption
   I held him, a toddler in the temple
R She was a prophet of God
   She saw and spoke for...and saw God
W I am a woman
   I have a name
R Her name is Anna

Mary


W I had seven demons that he had driven out
   I followed and financed the steps of my Savior
   I stood at the cross and knelt at the tomb
R She was the first witness of the risen Lord
   She was the first to go-and-tell the good news
W I am a woman
   I have a name
R Her name is Mary

Joanna and Susanna

(Luke 8.1–3)

W We had also been healed
   We had also helped
   We also followed and funded
R They were the companions of his way
   They listened and learned
W We too are women
   We too have names
R Their names are Joanna and Susanna

Mary and Martha

(Luke 10.38–42; John 11.1–45)

W We too called him the Christ, the Son of God
   We loved Lazarus like the brother he was
   Ours was the last home the Christ called home
R They were sisters to each other
   They were like sisters to the Lord
W We are women
   We have names
R Their names are Mary and Martha
Dorcas (Acts 9.36–42)

W I sewed the clothes the widows wore
  I sowed the seeds of the gospel with each garment
  I was raised by Peter in the upper room
R She was the seamstress of Joppa
  She was loved by the lowly
W I am a woman
  I have a name
R Her name is Dorcas

Lydia (Acts 16.13–15)

W I gathered with the women to worship God
  I listened to Paul at the place of prayer
  I opened my heart to the way and my home to the wayfarers
R She was a buyer and a seller
  She was baptized with her household
W I am a woman
  I have a name
R Her name is Lydia

Priscilla (Acts 18.2–3; 24–26; Romans 16.3; 1 Corinthians 16.19; 2 Timothy 4.19)

W I taught the teacher the way of the Lord
  I partnered with Paul in the work of the Lord
  I opened my home to the household of faith
R She was a learner and a teacher
  She was a wife and a witness
W I am a woman
  I have a name
R Her name is Priscilla

Phoebe (Romans 16.1–2)

W I was his sister, the sister he sent
  I was a minister, a servant from Cenchrea
  I cared for Paul and cared for his correspondence
R She was a leader in the church of the Lord
  She was a letter-carrier—Romans, no less
W I am a woman
  I have a name
R Her name is Phoebe
**Euodia and Syntyche** *(Philippians 4.2–3)*

W We were his co-workers too
   We wrestled side by side for the sake of the gospel
   When we wrestled he called us together to his side
R They were Paul’s partners in pastoring
   They were pastored by Paul
W We are women
   We have names
R Their names are Euodia and Syntyche

**Lois and Eunice** *(2 Timothy 1.5)*

W We timothied him first in the faith
   We showed him the Shema, taught him the Torah
   We gave to the Lord the one to whom we had given the Lord
R They were grandmother and mother
   They were his models of ministry
W We are women
   We have names
R Their names are Lois and Eunice

**Epilogue**

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