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

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

LEE MAGNESS

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 (Luke 2.36–38)

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 (Luke 8.1–3, 23.55–56; Mark 15.40–41, 16.1–8; John 19.25)

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

- W We are the daughters of God
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