**Racial Justice Sunday**

***Musings... Spiritual Food for Reflection***

**From Hagar’s Daughters: Womanist Ways of Being in the World**

*by Diana L. Hayes*

*(For people of colour) ours is a God who directly intervenes in human affairs, in the affairs of nations and individuals against the wicked and on behalf of the downtrodden, but according to God’s timetable.*

“The African universe is conceived as a unified spiritual totality. The way of the world is one in which all being is organically interrelated and interdependent. The essence of the African cosmos is spiritual reality, but one not separate from the material for *both* are necessary for meaningful reality.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

“As we laid down our burdens, we became lighter. As we testified and listened to others testify, we began to understand ourselves as communal beings, no longer the kind of person that the slave system tried to make us. Through our participation in these rituals, we become one. We become again, a community.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Strength to Love[[3]](#footnote-3)**

*by Martin Luther King, Jr.*

*This hour in history needs a dedicated circle of transformed nonconformists. Our planet teeters on the brink of atomic annihilation; dangerous passions of pride, hatred, and selfishness are enthroned in our lives: truth lies prostrate on the rugged hills of nameless calvaries; and men do reverence before false gods of nationalism and materialism. The saving of our world from pending doom will come, not through the complacent adjustment of the conforming majority, but through the creative maladjustment of a nonconforming minority.*

**Slaves**

*by James Russell Lowell, 1819-1891*

*Public Domain*

They are slaves who fear to speak,

for the fallen and the weak;  
they are slaves who will not choose,

hatred, scoffing, and abuse,  
rather than in silence shrink

from the truth they needs must think;

they are slaves who dare not be, in the right with two or three.[[4]](#footnote-4)

For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

Psalm 30.5

*“Faith in the dawn rises arises from the faith that God is good and just. When one believes this, he (or she) knows that the contradictions of life are neither final nor ultimate. He can walk through the dark night with the radiant conviction that all things work together for good for those that love God. Even the most starless midnight may herald the dawn of some great fulfilment.”*

*“God is able to conquer the evils of history. His control is never usurped. If at times we despair because of the relatively slow progress being made in ending racial discrimination and if we become disappointed because of the undue cautiousness of the federal government, let us gain new heart in the fact that God is able. In our sometimes difficult and often lonesome walk up freedom's road, we do not walk alone. God walks with us. He has placed within the very structure of this universe certain absolute moral laws. We can neither defy nor break them. If we disobey them, they will break us. The forces of evil may temporarily conquer truth, but truth will ultimately conquer its conqueror. Our God is able! James Russell Lowell was right:*

Truth forever on the scaffold,

wrong forever on the throne,

yet, that scaffold sways the future

and behind the dim unknown,

standeth God within the shadow,

keeping watch above his own.

**God Has A Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time[[5]](#footnote-5)**

*by Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

*“In the act of forgiveness we are declaring our faith in the future of a relationship and in the capacity of the wrongdoer to change. We are saying here is a chance to make a new beginning. According to Jesus, we should be ready to do this not just once, to just seven times, but seventy times seven without limit – provided, it seems Jesus says, our brother or sister who has wronged us is ready to come and confess the wrong he or she has committed yet again. Because we are not infallible, because we will hurt especially the ones we love by some wrong, we will always need a process of forgiveness and reconciliation to deal with those unfortunate, yet all too human breaches in relationships. They are an inescapable characteristic of the human condition.”*

*“Arrogance really comes from insecurity and in the end our feeling that we are bigger than others is really the flip side of our feeling that we are smaller than others. When we realise that we are all children of God and equal and intrinsic worth to God, then we do not feel better – or worse – than anyone else. Proper humility helps us avoid the hubris that can so quickly turn to hopelessness.”*

*“Perhaps the ultimate expression of seeing with the eyes of the heart is when we are able* to *see each other as god sees us – not our earthly human bodies, but the divine light that shines through the. It was this revelation of Jesus’ divinity, of his luminosity that the disciples saw on the mountaintop. As the New Testament records it the face of Jesus shone brightly and his clothes became glistening white. His body, his clothes, gross material things that up to then might have been thought to be impervious to the spiritual, the transcendent, became translucent with an unearthly illumination. The term ‘transfiguration’ originates in this mountaintop experience as a description of how the physical can be shown to be truly spiritual, can be transformed from the profane into the sacred.*

1. “The Implications of African American Spirituality,” in *African Culture: The Rhythms of Unity*, eds. Molefi Kete Asante and Kariamu Welsh Asante (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Excerpt from Diana Hayes, “Slain in the Spirit: Black Americans and the Holy Spirit” in *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, Vol.20, Fall 1992/Spring 1993. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. From the book of the same title (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963), see pp.27, 66, and 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Slaves*, a short poem by James Russell Lowell, online at The Poetry Nook: Poetry for Every Occasion, <https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/slaves-0>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Excerpts from the book, (London: Ryder, 2004), pp.56-57,83, and 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)