

## Spirit Blowing and Psalm 55

kriskvam@spst.edu

*Join the global movement toward a world without rape or violence. . . This is not about victims. This is about resistance, resilience, solidarity.* Thursdays in Black video

### A. ELCA Resources

*Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action.* ELCA, 2019. [ELCA.org/socialstatements/sexism]  
*Social Message on Gender-based Violence.* ELCA, 2015. Statement and Documentation in English and Spanish.  
Bulletin Insert for October's Domestic Violence Awareness Month. <https://resources.elca.org/gender-justice-and-womens-empowerment/domestic-violence-awareness-month-insert>

### B. Gender Violence

Bail, Ulrike. "O God, Hear My Prayer': Psalm 55 and Violence Against Women." In *Wisdom and Psalms: A Feminist Companion to the Bible*, edited by Athalya Brenner and Carole Fontaine, 242-263. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

FaithTrust Institute. This organization, originally named Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, provides multifaith and religion-specific educational materials and training. [faithtrustinstitute.org]

Graybill, Rhiannon. *Texts After Terror: Rape, Sexual Violence, and the Hebrew Bible.* Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2021.

National Indigenous Women's Resource Center. *NIWRC Advocacy Curriculum.* Lame Deer, Montana: National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, 2021. [niwrc.org/resources]

Religions for Peace. An international coalition of persons representing world religions, RFP joined the Thursdays in Black campaign of the World Council of Churches. [rfp.org]

Tanner, Beth LaNeel. "Hearing the Cries Unspoken: An Intertextual-Feminist Reading of Psalm 109." In *Wisdom and Psalms: A Feminist Companion to the Bible* (second series), edited by Athalya Brenner and Carole Fontaine, 283-301. Sheffield, England: Sheffield, 1998.

Trible, Phyllis. *Texts of Terror: Literary Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives.* Overtures to Biblical Theology series. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984.

West, Traci C. *Solidarity and Defiant Spirituality: Africana Lessons on Racism, Religion, and Ending Gender Violence.* New York: New York University Press, 2019.

World Council of Churches. The WCC invites persons and organizations to participate in Thursdays In Black, a "simple but profound" campaign by wearing black—for resistance and resilience—clothing on Thursdays and badges proclaiming this movement to resist actions and attitudes that permit rape and violence. See the WCC's web pages for Thursdays in Black. The Resources page includes "Thursdays in Black Bible Study: Exorcising the Silence in David's House." The Promotional Materials section has information about making badges, flyers, and banners. <https://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/thursdays-in-black#about>.

### C. USA and Global Occasions Relevant to Gender Justice

January: Stalking Awareness Month (USA). Slavery and Human Trafficking Month (USA).

February: Teen Dating Violence Prevention Awareness Month (USA). February 6: International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (UN)

March: Women's History Month (USA, United Kingdom, Australia). March 6: International Women's Day. March 31: International Transgender Visibility Day.

April: Child Abuse Prevention Month (USA); Sexual Assault Awareness Month (USA). April 7: International World Health Day (UN).

May: Mental Health Awareness Month (USA). May 5: Red Dress Day. May 15: International Day of Families. May 23: International Day to End Obstetric Fistula (UN).

June: LGBTQ Pride Month (USA)

July: July 11: World Population Day (UN). July 30: World Day against Trafficking in Persons (UN).

August: August 1—7: World Breastfeeding Week (UN).

October: Domestic Violence Awareness Month (USA). October 11: International Day of the Girl Child; October 15: International Day of Rural Women.

November: November 20: International Transgender Day of Remembrance. November 25: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence (UN): November 25 to December 10.

December 10: Human Rights Day (UN).

## Spirit Blowing and Psalm 55

kriskvam@spst.edu

### Psalm 55<sup>1</sup>

To the leader; with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David.

- 1 Hear my prayer, O God;  
do not hide yourself  
from my petition.
- 2 Listen to me, and answer me;  
I am restless in my complaint.  
I am distraught,
- 3 because of the noise of my enemy,  
and the oppression of the wicked;  
for they bring evil upon me  
and are set against me in fury.
- 4 My heart quakes within me,  
and the terrors of death  
have fallen upon me.
- 5 Fear and trembling  
have come over me,  
and horror overwhelms me.
- 6 I said,  
"Oh, that I had wings like a dove!  
I would fly away and be at rest;
- 7 I would flee to a far-off place;  
and make my lodging  
in the wilderness.
- 8 I would hurry to find a shelter  
for myself  
from the stormy wind  
and tempest."
- 9 Confuse them, LORD,  
confound their speech  
for I have seen violence and strife  
in the city.
- 10 Day and night the sentries  
make their rounds upon its walls,  
but the real trouble and misery  
are in the midst of the city.
- 11 There is corruption within the city;  
its streets are never free  
of oppression and deceit.
- 12 For had it been an adversary  
who taunted me,  
then I could have borne it;  
or had it been an enemy  
who rose up against me,  
then I could have hidden  
from that danger.
- 13 But it was you,  
one after my own heart,  
my companion,  
my own familiar friend,
- 14 with whom I kept pleasant company  
and walked with the throng  
in the house of God.
- 15 Let death come upon them suddenly;  
let them go down alive into the grave;  
for wickedness is in their dwellings,  
and in their very midst.
- 16 But I will call upon God,  
and the LORD will deliver me.
- 17 In the evening, in the morning,  
and at noonday,  
I will complain and lament,  
and God will hear my voice.
- 18 The LORD will bring me safely back  
from the battle waged against me;  
for there are many who fight against me.
- 19 God, who is enthroned from of old,  
will hear me and bring them down;  
because they never change  
and do not fear God.
- 20 This friend of mine laid hands on me,  
and has broken our covenant.
- 21 My friend's speech  
is smoother than butter,  
but war lurks within;  
my friend's words,  
as soothing as lotion,  
are in fact drawn swords.
- 22 Cast your burden upon the LORD,  
who will sustain you;  
who will never  
let the righteous stumble.
- 23 But you, O God,  
will bring murderers and deceivers  
down to the lowest pit;  
they will not live out half their days.  
but I will put my trust in you.

---

<sup>1</sup> Translation in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.