

*When women rise ,  
the world rises with them.*



## **WHEN WOMEN RISE**

A sample of the “When Women Rise” devotional by  
Tirzah’s global network of women leaders.



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# WHEN WOMEN RISE

When women rise, the world rises with them.



With a network of Global Leaders, Tirzah International helps marginalized women gain skills and training so they can overcome their circumstances, discover their God-given potential, and lead others to do the same. We do this through three solution initiatives: small-business training, leadership development, and sustainability initiatives.

"When Women Rise" is a devotional written for women who are stepping into leadership roles, igniting change, and making a lasting impact. Just as Tirzah, the inspiring biblical figure found in Numbers 27, dared to rise and use her influence, this devotional is an encouragement for modern women in leadership who find themselves in boardrooms or classrooms, or guiding families, ministries, or communities. Each devotion is written by a Global Leader or sister we count as an amazing woman in Tirzah's international network.

"When Women Rise" was developed for Tirzah's Emerging Leader's Program where young women around the world are embarking on a two-year mentorship journey. These devotions were written to encourage mentees to reflect on God's love for all people, including women, and encourage them to step into their full God-given potential. Through the Emerging Leader Program, we are seeing Tirzah sisters thrive as they embrace opportunities, break through barriers, and redefine their leadership paradigms.

We are excited to share these reflections with you! The full devotional can be found in [the Tirzah Bazaar](#). You will also find the writers bios and prayer requests from our Global Leaders for women in the countries where the devotions were written.

*-Team Tirzah*

*If you have a group that would be interested in walking through the entire study, please reach out to [info@tirzah.org](mailto:info@tirzah.org) to discuss options.*



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“Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.” Matthew 8:3

A compassionate, healing touch transforms lives. Many factors such as health, race, religion, national origin, and income levels can make people feel greater or less than others in the community, causing division and isolation. In India, many generations suffer stigma as “untouchables.” But everyone on earth needs a tangible touch that connects them physically with family, society and God.

Jesus challenged his time by demonstrating the power of the touch of a hand. Mosaic law taught that you became impure when you touched something unclean. But Jesus showed the way of compassionate touch, being willing to break all the norms and come in contact with “unclean” people, even those with leprosy.

People who are hurt and rejected by family and society are starved for a compassionate touch. After Yuma lost her husband to AIDS, she learned she was HIV-positive. Because of this, she was isolated in a room with her two small children. She was not allowed to use any common space in her own home, not even the bathroom. She was forced to go outdoors, tying a long saree between walls for some privacy. One time as Yuma bathed, the saree fell to the ground. Her shame at being exposed before all her neighbors was so great, she wanted to die. Only the thought of her two children becoming orphans kept her going from day to day.

One day, Yuma came to our HIV clinic. The doctor listened to her story and offered her comfort and counseling. Then he stretched out his hand, touched her shoulder and said, “You will live.”

Nobody had touched Yuma for eight months. She stood before the doctor and sobbed profusely. From that day, her life started anew. Today Yuma is a strong woman, one who has faced many difficult circumstances and emerged with confidence and hope. She is now touching many lives. That is the power of human touch, of healing hands.

As we move in his Spirit, our hands can do great miracles, imparting God’s goodness and love, and restoring hope. Like Jesus, let us give others the gift of compassionate touch and witness the healing of bodies, minds, and spirits!

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Mark 1:40- 45, Luke 5:12-16

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What are some conditions that cause hurt and isolation in your communities?
- What hesitancy do you have about touching others? Are you willing to give these concerns to God?

## PRAYER

Father God, thank you that you reached out and touched us through Jesus Christ. Help me to do the same and not fear in reaching out and touching others.  
Amen.

# PRAYING HANDS

“Let us lift our hearts and hands to God in heaven.” Lamentations 3:41



Prayer is central in the life of a believer because it is the main gateway to God. It is in prayer that believers come before God to express their love, thanksgiving, adoration and praise, as well as to ask for his mercy and present all their needs.

Praying from the heart involves the whole self: body, soul, and spirit. Hands, in this respect, play a very significant role as a physical expression of worship.

In the Holy Bible, while they spread the truth of God’s kingdom, God’s servants spread their hands toward heaven in various situations.

David, known as a praiser and worshipper, is an example to follow, as seen in Psalm 63:4: “Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.” Moses raised his hands to wage war with the help of God: “When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.” (Exodus 17:11). Paul in 1 Timothy 2:8 encourages us to “. . . pray with holy hands lifted up to God, free from anger and controversy.” Lifting our hands corporately can create unity and peace within the body of Christ.

The laying on of hands in prayer is another important practice used in both the Old and New Testaments. It’s done for various purposes: for the transfer of leadership (Numbers 27:22-23), for setting apart for ministry (Acts 13:3, 2 Timothy 1:6), for the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17, 19:6), and for healing (Luke 4:40, Mark 16:18).

Our hands are a very important part of prayer to God. They are a visible expression of a heart earnestly seeking the presence, intervention, and glory of God. Let us not hesitate to lift our hands to the Lord in faith, worshiping in spirit and truth.

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

*See above.*

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- We are living in the world bound by overwhelming problems and must look to the One who can free us. How does posturing your hands change the way you pray?
- Would you lift your hands right now to the Lord and pray?

Written by Sophia Mengistu, Ethiopia

## PRAYER

Lord, we pray that You would stir us to lift up our hearts and hands to you once again! In Jesus’s mighty name.  
Amen.

# FEEDING HANDS

“She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.”  
Proverbs 31:20



The hand is an amazing part of our body. We talk of helping hands, the right hand of fellowship, hand-in-hand, to give a hand, or lay hands on. Hands can connote friendship, approval, help, support, and generosity.

When we think of feeding hands, Mother Teresa of Calcutta may come to mind. She walked the streets and extended feeding hands to the poor. “She did what she could, when she could.” (Mark 14:8 MSG). In Matthew 25, Jesus commends those who extend feeding hands to the hungry and thirsty.

Our Homecare Ministry’s offices are a short drive from the sprawling Kibera slum in Nairobi, Kenya. Mothers from Kibera affected by HIV/AIDS began attending our weekly prayer meetings, not so much to pray but to seek help. We realized that God had positioned us to extend our feeding hands to them.

One lady, Margaret, came with three of her friends. They were all HIV positive, and quite unwell. To my shock, Margaret’s dying wish was, “Reverend Judy, please buy me a coffin to be buried in.” I wept. In those days, many people dying from AIDS were wrapped in polythene bags and thrown into graves. Sadly, Margaret’s three friends died soon after her.

As we bought Margaret a white dress and a coffin, we asked ourselves what we could do to prevent these deaths, most of which were hunger-related. We asked Homecare members to share whatever leftover food they had. Their willing response cascaded into a weekly program which now reaches forty-five women, and over two hundred dependents, with love, food, rent, and education funds.

We soon noticed many of the mothers declined to eat their full meal. Their reasons were heart-gripping: “Reverend, what woman would eat when her children have had nothing?” We extended our feeding hands to these children. The program now reaches over six hundred children in seven Bible Club locations, and over two hundred children sponsored through school. Today, will you extend your feeding hands and see what God will do? Just try.

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Matthew 25:31-46, Proverbs 22:9, 1 John 3:17-18,  
Matthew 10:42, Isaiah 58:10

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- How has God been leading you to extend your feeding hands?
- Read the Additional Scriptures. What spiritual consequences come from ignoring or fulfilling the physical needs of others?

## PRAYER

Lord, thank you for the opportunity to touch another’s life through my hands. Make me sensitive not to miss any chance to touch your heart. Open my eyes, and open my hands. In Jesus’s name, amen.  
Amen.

# SUFFERING HANDS

For she thought, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed."  
Matthew 9:21



"The plane has crashed, and there are no survivors." Upon hearing those words, every bit of strength drained out of me. I sank to my knees and cried out to God. My beloved husband of 22 years was gone. How could I go on?

But something mysterious was happening in the midst of my anguish. Instead of shriveling up and blowing away like a dry leaf, I felt the nearness and the power of Jesus. I reached out to him, much like the desperately ill woman who brushed her fingers along the fringe of Christ's robe for healing. The surprise of suffering was this: as I bled, I healed. And as I healed, I was able to offer healing.

I used to think the path to spiritual maturity was paved with faithful attendance at church, Bible studies and conferences. Yes, these can be important components of the life of faith. But no one wants to sign up for the workshop called "The Fellowship of His Sufferings."

There are some lessons that can only be learned in the dark. In the dark is where this very self-sufficient woman discovered how much she needed God, sometimes just to get out of bed. It's also where he showed me, I was not alone in my suffering. Pain became a bridge to others, a doorway into ministry—the purest kind—because it was birthed in weakness, not strength.

My grief journey led me to other widows and single mothers. As my compassion grew, so did my confidence in the Lord. Eventually I found myself in ministry leadership. I looked back and realized my primary training had been in the school of suffering. I shouldn't have been surprised, since Jesus himself was a man of sorrows, well-acquainted with grief. "You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope," he declared in his Sermon on the Mount. "With less of you, there is more of God . . ."

It's the empty cup God looks to fill, the feeble hands he's glad to strengthen. So, when hard times come, loosen your grip on the rope . . . and grab for the edge of his robe.

## ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:3

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Looking back on your life, can you see where God used periods of stress, pain, or loss to shape your character and faith?
- Have your experiences enabled you to minister to others? In what ways?

## PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help me to lay down my suffering, past and present, at the foot of your cross. I trust you to use it for my good and your glory.  
Amen

**TIRZAH INTERNATIONAL** is founded on our Christian belief in God's love for women and their equality as leaders at home, in places of worship, their communities, and nations. Women of all faith backgrounds are welcomed and respected.

We work with women impacted by injustices like poverty, HIV/AIDS, trafficking, and violence who refuse to be defined by their circumstances and rise from marginalization to empowerment and leadership. Around the world, Tirzah has stood with our sisters, setting the precedent as one of the first Christian empowerment organizations aimed at equipping indigenous female leaders to pursue justice and healing in their context.

LEARN MORE AND JOIN THIS COMMUNITY OF CHANGE-MAKERS AT [TIRZAH.ORG](https://tirzah.org).  
FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA AT [@TIRZAHINTL](https://twitter.com/tirzahintl).

## MEET THE AUTHORS



### **DR. LAVANYA SUNEETHA, INDIA**

Lavanya is the Executive Director of Nireekshana ACET, an organization giving holistic care with basic medical health care, skill development and training, and encouraging leadership development. She is one of Tirzah's Legacy Leader.



### **SOPHIA MENGISTU, ETHIOPIA**

Sophie is co-founder of Beza International Ministries in Addis Ababa and a Tirzah Legacy Leader. She helped to launch the women's empowerment microenterprise program for HIV+ women and is a mentor in Tirzah's Emerging Leader Initiative. She is a well-known international speaker and leader who invests in women and girls around the world.



### **JUDY MBUGUA, KENYA**

Judy is the founder and CEO of Homecare Spiritual Fellowship and a Tirzah Legacy Leader. She serves as the East African leader for Tirzah. She was the Pan African Christian Women Association (PACWA) coordinator for 21 years. She is passionate about developing women in ministry.



### **DEBBIE CHRISTIAN, USA**

Debbie has been affiliated with Tirzah since 2002. She has a background in economic research, corporate philanthropy, and publishing. A devoted book lover, she happily handled submissions for Alive Literary Agency and acquisitions/production for Bondfire Books until retiring in 2019.

## PRAY WITH US



Tirzah's Global Leaders share prayer requests on a quarterly basis. Would you spend a minute praying for our sisters and their dreams for women around the world?

You can sign up to receive Tirzah's Prayer Calendar at [www.tirzah.org/prayer-partner](http://www.tirzah.org/prayer-partner). Prayer Partners are invited to join Global Leaders during our quarterly zoom prayer meetings.

### ETHIOPIA

In Ethiopia, women face many challenges. They are the primary agricultural laborers, yet their contributions often go largely unrecognized. Their fathers or husbands often restrict access to resources and community participation. One in three women experience physical, emotional, or sexual violence. Sixty-five percent of women have experienced female genital mutilation. Only half of girls who enroll in primary schools ever make it to grade five. Tirzah's Global Leader Rebecca makes sure that projects identify specific needs of women and respond to their challenges. Join us in praying for her dream for women in her region to be empowered through education and access to opportunities including finances. She wishes to see them become self-sufficient and confident.

### USA

Tirzah International acts as a connector, catalyst, and capacity builder for Tirzah's network of Global Leaders. Pray for Team Tirzah as they support the Global Leaders in ways that will accomplish more than we can ask or imagine. Pray for each team member who is working to meet financial goals to further empower local leaders in their efforts.

### INDIA

At the grassroot level, Global Leader Victoria says India still has a long way to go toward achieving gender justice. Girls are considered a liability. Many parents focus on finding a suitable man for their daughter and will marry her off, leaving the girl financially dependent on her husband. Women suffer and tolerate verbal and physical abuse from their husbands because they are the providers. The women Victo trains are proud that they can save for their kids' education and also have some extra to spend on themselves. Pray with Victo that parents of girl children will focus on educating and empowering them so they become financially independent before being married.

### KENYA

Many women in East Africa are left destitute by their relatives when they become widows. Their rights and those of their children are taken from them. Widows struggle through life with little or next to nothing. Global Leader Njambi walks alongside and empowers those suffering from this injustice. Her vision is to create development programs and sustainable structures that will mobilize, train, and empower families with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Pray for Njambi as she works to see women find freedom through salvation in Jesus Christ. And that families will be transformed through prayer and economic empowerment.





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## **PARTNER WITH US**

As a ministry, there are many ways for churches to partner with Tirzah. From use of the complete “When Women Rise” devotional, to holding a Tirzah Bazaar pop-up shopping experience or having Team Tirzah speak at an event, our desire is to see sisters supporting sisters towards a more just and equitable world.

Connect with us at [info@tirzah.org](mailto:info@tirzah.org) for more information on how your church or small group can engage with Tirzah International.



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