

## I'LL RAISE MY HOPES

*Mark S. Aidoo*

A great woman; a wealthy wife  
 Independent and generous; intuitive and nameless  
 Her table has one more space for a visitor  
 Her roof chamber has one more room for a man of God  
 A cosy bed; a comfy chair  
 A table and a lamp  
 All she needs is to comfort the comforter  
 Not for the prophet to raise her hopes  
 Not for the prophet to give her a son

A humble woman; a childless wife  
 What good reward does she deserve?  
 A pregnancy in her old age  
 O she knows her people  
 A child for her effort  
 She refuses a word to be spoken on her behalf  
 O she hates to be deceived  
 Not to have a child and lose him  
 Not to lose a son when the prophet is away

A caring woman; your strong lap  
 Your warmth cannot save your boy  
 Your joy is lost; your heart cannot beat  
 Whence shall help come from?  
 No caring father; no loving husband  
 Except those who frustrate a mission  
 From Shunem to Mount Carmel  
 For she refuses to deal with an intermediary  
 She accedes her demand; she intercedes for her seed  
 Not until the prophet intervenes  
 Not with the staff because she would not leave

A thoughtful woman; a compassionate wife  
How can she settle for deception?  
A brave woman; an insistent woman  
She resists to let go; for his God can restore  
Hoping against hope, she lives her faith  
To give and to take is more than to take and not give  
For she lives among her own people  
Not till the son sneezes seven times  
Not till she sees new life

Africa, your children are infected and dying  
COVID is trying its worst  
Our fears would be past  
Can I raise my hopes?  
Be of good cheer; women of strength  
You graced your generation  
When all refuse to care; social distance from healers  
Women near; hope is there  
Your concern for the dying is unparalleled  
Sit on your donkey; ride till you find hope  
For better in the worst, move in faith  
Nothing is complete until life is found.