

What Freedom Songs Are You Singing to Fight Injustice?

Songs are rising from the earth today. The cries of captivity and pain are increasing on all fronts of our culture. The sounds of it can be overwhelmingly difficult to hear. Oppression has become so loud that we can easily find ourselves either plugging our ears to escape or simply joining the noise of a broken world.

Songs have long shaped culture and marked movements. This is clearly seen in our history books and our hymnals. Music is a vehicle for the expressions of the heart. The vehicle of song can blaze into territory that speech cannot.

In Acts 16, we see Paul and Silas arrested and in prison. About midnight, they are praying and singing songs to God. All the other prisoners are listening intently to the sounds arising from these two men. Suddenly, the freedom inside of these two wrongly imprisoned men produces a sound that causes a great shaking in the earth. Creation itself begins to respond. The shaking is so great that it first breaks open the foundation of the prison itself. As the foundation breaks open, the doors of all the cells are immediately opened and all the shackles are loosened.

The Lord didn't just supernaturally open the doors and shackles on Paul and Silas. He came for all of them. The captives become free. The songs of praise created a shaking that produced freedom for all. The system that held them could no longer stand in the presence of this sound—much less in the presence of the King of this sound.

However, it doesn't stop there. The jailer himself comes to know Jesus as he sees the humility and power flowing from Paul and Silas. As he comes to Jesus, communion is birthed between

captive and captor. Reconciliation happens. That night, the jailer brings Paul and Silas home with him, they share a meal, and he cleans their wounds. Not only is the jailer set free, but so is his entire household! The oppressor begins to serve the oppressed. They share a meal, and the whole household is changed.

Free hearts cause overflow in free mouths that produce free songs. These true freedom songs shake foundations and bring freedom to the world around them. It starts on the inside first. Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks (Luke 6:45). External circumstances will never fully produce the freedom we all long for. That freedom is found in Christ alone and happens first within us. Then it flows from us.

Creation is groaning and awaiting the children of God to be revealed. What song are we singing? Are we letting our souls govern our songs or is the Holy Spirit at the helm? Who has our hearts right now?

Even though it may seem as though things are increasingly growing darker, it is in the midnight hour when the freedom songs of his praying sons and daughters can usher in a shaking. This shaking can break open the systems and set us all—land, oppressed and oppressors—free.

The Lord is enthroned on the praises of his people (Ps. 22:3). This word for “praises” here is the Hebrew word *tehillah*. These are songs of praise. Here we see a profound reality. The song of our praise becomes a throne for the King. The establishment of His throne ushers in His reign in our midst. His tangible reign in our midst shakes everything that can be shaken. What remains is the unshakeable kingdom and the freedom He alone brings (Heb. 12:26-29). When He truly inhabits a place, it must change. Captivity cannot remain in His habitation. Righteousness and justice are the foundations of His throne. Lovingkindness and truth go before Him (Ps. 89:14) Where He is enthroned, righteousness and justice

prevail. His justice and righteousness can sit on your song and shake every other unjust foundation.

If you find yourself silent and spectating right now, I simply ask, who stole your song? Yes, the pain is great, but the healer is greater. Yes, the hopelessness is loud, but the hope of glory is louder. There is a song that belongs to the sons and daughters. And it is time to sing it.

May prayer and praise arise in every coast and every county, in each and every place of captivity. May the sound grow stronger and stronger until the shaking breaks the systems that hold people captive to anything other than Christ. May the foundations of spiritual prisons break open. May the doors swing wide and the shackles be loosed. May all be set free. May oppressors find freedom. May fellowship and communion be birthed among us where there has been animosity, distrust and abuse.

Release the freedom songs. Father, come be enthroned in our praise until each prison becomes an altar. Until all the captives are set free.

Finally, I ask: Where do you see injustice? Pray and sing right there. {eoa}