

*“When we go before Him, God will ask, ‘Where are your wounds?’ And we will say, ‘I have no wounds.’ And God will ask, ‘Was there nothing worth fighting for?’”*

-Rev. Dr. Allan A. Boesak

*“People do not choose rebellion; it is forced upon them.”*

-Rev. Dr. CT Vivian

*“If anything, I’m heartbroken and sad. Sad that in 2014 we have to take to the streets to say that back people can’t be killed.”*

-Deray McKesson

*“For us, fear comes where terror comes to others because we are anesthetized to the guns constantly pointed at us. And the terror we have known is something few Westerners ever will...Our sadness can make the stones weep.”*

-Susan Abulhawa

In this present moment, as in moments past, it has seemed as though time itself has stood still, waiting for us to move within it. It has waited for us to act upon it. It has tarried. For some months now, people of color globally and black Americans specifically, have been consistently reminded of the sheer urgency of struggles for freedom. And it appears that God has allowed a *Kairos* moment all our own to pursue those important ends.

It is no coincidence that we presently inhabit multiple fiftieth anniversaries. The 1964 Civil Rights Act, as well as the hallmark Voting Rights Act, Bloody Sunday march and assassination of Malcolm X, all in 1965, were critical moments in the African American struggle for civil rights that defined a century. And particularly germane to our present context of justice struggles against hyper-militarized police violence, the 1965 Watts Riots rose to national notoriety as Black and Latino/a communities stood prophetically against police discrimination and brutality in their own age.

At long last, it seems that the ebbs and flows of time have brought us again to a similar moment. They have brought us to a moment, separated from the last by a half-century, yet conjoined to it by familiar cries for peace and justice. The justice struggles that have, in the past few months, captured our national imagination (and countless others) do not exist within a vacuum. Instead, they are part of a broader continuum, stretching across historical time and place that binds the globally marginalized together.

Soweto, South Africa and Selma, Alabama: two historic sites of popular resistance and youth protest that helped change history’s course. Amidst growing worldwide contempt for South African apartheid, the Rev. Dr. Allan A. Boesak posed, to us, the God-question, “Where are your wounds?” And tens of thousands of Soweto high school youth reminded us that there were, indeed, treasures that made freedom fighting worthwhile. There were treasures that made wounds worth enduring.

In a current age when black resistance and protest are so often labeled, by popular media, as looting-sprees—not as justice struggles that ensue when empowered communities choose to

Speak truth to power—we are reminded that we stand upon broad ancestral shoulders within a glorious tradition. The Rev. Dr. CT Vivian reminds us that rebellion is forced upon a people. We can invoke that marvelous moment in which God pushed and prodded, challenged and charged those resistance marchers as they approached the Edmund Pettus Bridge, suspended over the Alabama River, on Bloody Sunday. We can call upon the spirit of that moment, pointing towards the countless wounds and scars borne of it, understanding it as an historical representation of our foremothers and forefathers mightily asserting that #BlackLivesMatter.

These struggles give precedent to the present. They help give our current realities further meaning by situating them within a broader history. They do not allow us to exist alone. These struggles help remind us that the days of prophetically asserting that white supremacy simply cannot continue to execute black women, men and children in the middle of the street are not over.

But again, we do not exist alone. Even in 2014, as in decades foregone, global solidarities among justice-seeking communities of color thrive. Of the perpetual culture of violence, militarism and state-sanctioned terror that our brothers and sisters in Palestine live in daily, activist Susan Abulhawa has said, “Our sadness can make the stones weep... And the terror we have known is something few Westerners ever will.” But among those “few,” many of our Black communities do abide. If we have learned anything from the recent protest and unrest in Ferguson, Missouri—and the countless other communities that have taken up this mantle—it is that they have awakened our awareness to a paternalistic global culture that surveils and terrorizes those it views as its bastard children, the most disposable among us. But they have also awakened our awareness to the global power of God to connect and move within and throughout our communities. We see this at work in moments, such as when young Palestinian resistance fighters took to social media to communicate recipes for protecting against police violence and tear gas in Ferguson. Even as we weep, we are strengthened and encouraged.

But what, we may ask, do these present happenings mean for Christian communities worldwide, especially in this celebrated season of Advent? Advent is a time of waiting and expectation, hope and celebration. It is a time to commemorate the glory of the Nativity. Christian communities across the globe celebrate the birth of the Great Hope of the world. Perhaps, in this moment of increased popular resistance and unrest—this *Kairos* moment—we should more fully embody a God-consciousness that fills us with faith and hope that the tides of injustice could, at any moment, change. Perhaps we should take great care to love, while simultaneously speaking truth, in anticipation of God shifting the frame of history, once again. Perhaps we should be pregnant with commitment, much like the fire trapped in Jeremiah’s own bones, scarcely able to be contained—a renewed commitment to the work of faith and justice, waiting for a new moment to be born.