

Psalm for International Women's Day

How can I keep from honouring
the women who came before.
Against oppression in all its appalling guises,
they rose, like towering pines.
Locking arms for justice, for rights
that should have been basic,
their voices rose up, like incense
- or revolution.

**How can we keep from honouring
women, who have loosed
the bonds of injustice.**

How can I keep from raging.
Generations of sisters erased from
the record.
Enslaved, silenced, assaulted,
kidnapped, murdered and
missing.
I rage for the hidden hell behind front
doors.
And for desperate mothers who shelter
children
in fields made barren by greed,
in cities decimated by despots,
families on perilous journeys,
searching for a safe place to call 'home.'

**How can we keep from raging,
remembering girls' and women's
lives lost, and generations who have
grief sown into their flesh and bone.**

Yet how can I keep from singing a tender
hymn.
As from the ashes, something new is rising...
Feminists of all sorts banding together,
to inspire girls to learn, to dream, to soar.
Wise truth-tellers, young and elder,
caring for our Beloved Earth
with clarion calls to heal it.
Prophets challenging racism, colonialism,
gender discrimination with
movements that matter.
Communities of kindred spirits, calling us to
see the gift of Light in each one,
that we might break forth like the dawn.

**How can we keep from singing
of hope and liberation,
graced by the One who made us.
Called to rise, like towering pines.**

© ME Chown

