

Journey to Juneteenth: What Does Freedom Mean Today?

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Imagine waiting years to hear the words that finally changed your life: “You are free.” The journey to Juneteenth was painful, long, and filled with hope. For many enslaved African Americans, freedom did not come easily or quickly. Even after slavery was officially ended, thousands of people still waited to hear their life-changing news that they were free. This delay in freedom was shocking and difficult to imagine. The journey to Juneteenth reminds us of the struggles enslaved African Americans faced for freedom and why equality and fairness still matter today.

On June 19, 1865, Union troops led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced that enslaved African Americans were free. This news came to Texas about two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed by Abraham Lincoln. For many enslaved families, the moment was emotional and life-changing because they could finally be free. They felt relief, joy, and hope for a better future. Although freedom had finally arrived, the struggle for fairness and justice would continue for many years afterward.

Today, Juneteenth is celebrated across the United States with parades, music, food, and community gatherings. Families and communities come together to honor African American history and culture. Freedom today means equal rights, opportunities, and the ability to express yourself without fear. Juneteenth reminds people of the freedom that

belongs to everyone, no matter their ethnicity. This holiday also encourages people to keep working toward fairness, equality, and respect for everybody.

In conclusion, the journey to Juneteenth reminds us of how important freedom and fairness truly are. It honors the courage and strength of the enslaved African Americans who had to wait too long for justice. Learning about Juneteenth helps people better understand America's history and the importance of equality. By remembering the past, people today can continue working toward a future where everyone is treated equally and with respect.