

= Cry ( Michael Jackson song ) =

" Cry " is a song recorded by American recording artist Michael Jackson that features on his tenth and final studio album , *Invincible* ( 2001 ) . The song was written by R & B singer @-@ songwriter R. Kelly , who had previously written Jackson 's 1995 single " You Are Not Alone " . " Cry " was produced by Jackson and Kelly . It was released in December 2001 under Epic Records as the second single from *Invincible* . " Cry " is a R & B ballad , with lyrics that highlight problems with the planet . The lyrics also urge people to unite to make the world a better place . The track , thus , recalls previous Jackson songs that promote peace and environmentalism .

The song was released with two B @-@ side tracks ; " Shout " and " Streetwalker " . " Cry " received mixed reviews from music critics . The single had a moderate chart performance internationally , with its highest peak being number sixteen in Denmark , and its least successful charting country being Austria . The track was promoted with a music video , which was filmed by Nicholas Brandt . The video does not feature Jackson but shows people holding hands and standing side by side in a variety of settings , including a beach and a forest .

= = Background = =

" Cry " was recorded by American singer Michael Jackson for his tenth and final studio album , *Invincible* ( 2001 ) . The song was written by R & B singer @-@ songwriter R. Kelly , who had previously worked with Jackson on his 1995 single , " You Are Not Alone ; " Jackson and Kelly 's collaboration on " Cry " is the second of what would be three collaborations . The track was produced by Jackson and Kelly . Outside of the United States , the song was released in December 2001 as the second single from *Invincible* , under Epic Records . The single was released with two B @-@ side tracks , " Shout " and " Streetwalker " . " Shout " was a previously unreleased song that was originally intended for *Invincible* , but was replaced at the last moment by " You Are My Life " . " Streetwalker " had previously appeared as a track on the 2001 special edition of Jackson 's seventh studio album , *Bad* .

= = Composition = =

The themes of " Cry " are world issues such as isolation , war , and brotherhood . It also suggests if everyone pulls together as one , then they make a change to the world , with Jackson singing , " You can change the world / I can 't do it by myself " . Music critic Mark Brown of *Rocky Mountain News* felt that Jackson cries the lyrics " I can 't do it by myself " . The song 's lyrics and themes are similar to the ones in Jackson 's 1988 single " Man in the Mirror " and his 1991 single " Heal the World " . " Cry " is composed in the key of A major and the song 's time signature is common time . " Cry " has a moderate metronome of eighty four beats per minute . The single is built in the chord progression of A ? G / A ? A ? A / G in the verses and A ? A / G ? D ? A in the chorus . The sheet music indicates the vocal range spans A3 to G5 .

= = Critical reception = =

Jason Elias of *Allmusic* thinks " Cry " is a moody and reflective piece of material reminiscent of Jackson 's Quincy Jones @-@ produced ballads for *Bad* , and indicates the song 's themes are those of alienation and sorrow rather than love . He believes the strength of the strings , the competent backing vocals , and the keyboard figures prevent the listener from convulsing with laughter at Jackson 's " oh @-@ so @-@ pained delivery " and interjections of " Hold on " or " Oh my ! " Jon Pareles of the *New York Times* called the track the " change @-@ the @-@ world @-@ song " and wrote that the single " applies its grand buildup to one of pop 's strangest utopian schemes , " which was asking everyone to cry at the same time , at which point Jackson may answer their prayers . Catherine Halaby of *Yale Daily News* felt that the song is a " less triumphant use of a contemporary 's input " on the album .

NME music critic Mark Beaumont believed that Jackson " starts banging creepily on about " the lyrics which pertain to saving the children . Frank Kogan of the Village Voice noted that while " Cry " and another song from Invincible ( " Speechless " ) are " very pretty " , they give the impression that Jackson 's " standing sideways , so as to let the beauty slide off him . " Los Angeles Times staff writer Robert Hilburn wrote that the track " fills the social commentary role " of Jackson 's " Man in the Mirror " ( 1988 ) , while Hartford Courant rock music critic Roger Catlin believed that the single is a redux to Jackson 's " Heal the World " ( 1991 ) . Newsday staff writer Glenn Gamboa said that the song was " equally average " to other tracks on Invincible . James Hunter of Rolling Stone magazine wrote that R. Kelly " more or less succeeds with the kind of life affirming number " on the single .

Jim Farber of New York 's Daily News wrote that in " Cry " , Jackson " goes into his healing @-@ the @-@ world shtick , though rarely has he been this condescending about his role as universal savior . " Chicago Tribune rock music critics Greg Kot believed that R. Kelly " reprises the formula of his big gospel @-@ stoked anthem " ( " I Believe I Can Fly " ) on the track . A journalist for The Wichita Eagle wrote that Jackson " shines on the sincere ballads " such as " Cry " , " Heartbreaker " and " Speechless " . Pop music critic Thor Christensen of the Dallas Morning News described the single as being the musician 's " latest batch of inspirational cotton candy . " Francisco Cangiano of University Wire noted that the overall good songs from Invincible are " Heartbreaker , " " Cry " and " Speechless . " Pamela Davis and Gina Vininetto of St. Petersburg Times called the song " hubris-filled " and said that it was full of Jackson 's " freaky messiah @-@ savior complex . "

= = Chart performance = =

" Cry " was released as a single outside of the United States , but it had been charted at the bottom of Billboard music charts for 3 weeks within the country , which peaked at number one at Bubbling Under R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Singles . Unlike previous singles released from Invincible that charted internationally , " Cry " was a moderate commercial success worldwide . " Cry " debuted at number twenty five , its peak position , on December 22 , 2001 , on the UK Singles Chart . The single remained on the country 's chart for four consecutive weeks from December 2001 to January 2002 , before falling out of the top 100 positions . The track debuted at number thirty seven on December 12 , and peaked at number thirty in the succeeding week on the French Singles Chart . The song debuted at its peak position , number forty three , on December 12 , on the Australian Singles Chart . It only remained on the country 's chart for one week . " Cry " did not chart on Belgian Tip Singles Chart , but did chart on the Belgian Wallonia music chart , debuting at number thirty seven on December 15 , and peaking at number thirty one on January 12 , 2002 .

" Cry " charted on the Swedish Singles Chart for five consecutive weeks . Having debuted at number fifty on December 21 , and peaked at number forty eight the following week . The single spent the next four weeks fluctuating down the chart . The track peaked at number forty two on the Swiss Singles Chart , and remained on the country 's chart for six weeks . The single 's most commercially successful charting territory was Denmark . Although the track only remained on the singles chart for one week , it managed to chart within the top 20 , peaking at number sixteen . The single 's least successful chart territory was Austria . Having debuted on the country 's singles chart at its peak position , number sixty five on December 16 , in the succeeding week the track charted at number seventy one and fell out of the top 100 positions the following week . Regarding the song 's chart performance , Halstead and Cadman wrote that it was a " setback for sure , but not a major one " for Jackson .

= = Music video = =

" Cry " was promoted by a music video , or " short film , " as Jackson would refer to it . The video was directed by Nicholas Brandt , who had previously directed " Earth Song " ( 1995 ) , " Childhood " ( 1995 ) and " Stranger in Moscow " ( 1996 ) , all of which were featured on Jackson 's HIStory : Past , Present and Future , Book I album . The video was filmed in six different locations , five of which were in California and another in Nevada . People featured in the video included members of

a real life gospel group . The video begins with dozens of people of different ages , ethnicities and races holding hands . Long lines of people were stretched over mountains , across highways , in a forest and on the beach . Everyone stands in silence for a majority of the video . Following the bridge , everyone begins singing the chorus . Towards the final chorus , the group collectively clap their hands along with the song , taking hands once more as the song ends .

" Cry " is the only Michael Jackson video to be included on an enhanced CD of the single .

" Cry " was issued as a single against Jackson 's original intentions to release " Unbreakable . " ( The same situation applied with the release of " You Rock My World " months prior . ) Due to his dissatisfaction with the way Sony was handling the album 's promotion , he refused to appear in the music video for " Cry " . Craig Halstead and Chris Cadman , authors of the book Michael Jackson : The Solo Years , believe that Jackson 's absence from the video " did little to promote it . "

= = Track listing and formats = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Written and composed by R. Kelly

Produced by Michael Jackson and R. Kelly

Lead vocal by Michael Jackson

Percussion by Paulinho Da Costa

Keyboard and drum programming by Michael Jackson and Brad Buxer

Choir arrangement by R. Kelly

Drums by John " JR " Robinson

Guitars by Michael Landau

Recorded by Mike Ging , Bad Gilderman and Humberto Gatica

Mixed by Michael Jackson and Mick Guzauski

= = Charts = =