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Journals on MLK Day

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After so many journal entries, it's always interesting to see how different every day is in prison. I haven't shared but a small fraction of my entries for my readers, considering I started writing a journal about mid December of 2012...and it's 2016 as I write this.

So, let me share another excerpt of a journal written in January of 2016: As I often do, if there is a part I need to describe to you, or fill in the gaps, I will take a "pause" and explain it to you, then continue. Ok, let's begin:

January 18th, 2016: 12:37pm on a Martin Luther King Holiday Monday. I just came back from lunch: fried fish, popcorn shrimp, greens, muffins, sweet potato pie, and more. Considering I've not been there to eat since Wednesday, it was a good meal. I didn't eat from Wednesday night until Sunday afternoon, when Mack gave me 2 Pop Tarts. All I took in was water, coffee and the putrid Fruit Punch packets left over from the boxed meals.

PAUSE: Often on holidays the prisons might make a special meal for the inmates, which increases good morale.

Those of you who think inmates ought to just have "bread and water" need to understand that even in incarceration, there is such a thing as compassion. Yeah, I know a lot of guys here that need to be here, but a majority of guys here made a mistake, and are generally good people. Sometimes the prison understands that, and does things like special meals to lift the spirits of the inmates.

I also mentioned that I hadn't eaten in a few days. I had not eaten ANYTHING from Wednesday to Sunday. Why? I was fasting, something I have seen work quite well in my faith in God. But when I fast, I try not to tell anyone what I'm doing, because guys would then ask me to give them my tray. So I try to be discreet, but after not seeing me in the cafeteria for a few days, people start to wonder why I'm not eating. During those days, all I took was water, coffee, which curves an appetite, and the horrid Fruit Punch packets that they give us. UGH!!! I wouldn't give that to Darth Vader if I thought it would save our planet... (smile). Anyway, let's continue...

So, it was good to eat- only to have Lavant whine and complain about it. Dammit, why does he ALWAYS complain? Every meal is "terrible" to him; he appreciates nothing. I get sick of hearing that! That's one reason I don't like going to the cafeteria. He whines about me NOT going, but he complains about every meal. Go 3 days without eating, and see if your position changes about the quality of food here.

PAUSE: I get frustrated when inmates complain about

the food. Ok, it's not Red Lobster or Olive Garden, I get that. But outside of a couple of meals, most of what they serve is good. But my cellie ALWAYS complains...ALWAYS...you get it? ALWAYS!! Gosh, just shut up and eat, or don't eat. One thing about fasting is that it conditions you to appreciate the simplicity of food. But often at the table in the cafeteria, guys complain about everything. Makes eating a chore... anyway, let's continue.

In another story, I had a deep discussion with Jordan, and why he doesn't believe in God. Funny, I'm listening to "Faithful is our God" by Hezekiah Walker, while I write this. "Holy, Holy, Holy is our God" is one of the lyrics. Yet, as much as I believe in God, and Jesus as my Savior, I know Jordan has a valid point, one that has disarmed many believers.

Jordan told me, when he was in county jail, that there was a guy who believed in God. He was a praying man, and believed God would deliver him. Jordan said one day, he had a prayer, and like 25 guys in the jail were there. He prayed, and as Jordan tells it, he felt something happening. Jordan actually said that the guy seemed like he was "shining"; the power of God was there. Jordan even said that the Holy Spirit was there.

Everybody in that prayer "felt" it; they knew something special was happening. They all felt that this guy was going home... so did Jordan. But, when the guy went to

court, they found him guilty- and he got life.

Jordan said the same guy, with such a powerful prayer, rejected God, and told everyone else to do so. His advice: "trust only yourself. There is no God". For that reason, Jordan abandoned his faith, believing that God will let you down.

How in Jesus' name am I supposed to argue that? Do I take God's side, and point the finger at the guy who prayed? I did, to some degree, say that you can't give up when things get difficult. Even when things look at its worst, you can't give up. Funny, Jordan talks about taking responsibility (but nothing about grace). He says he took the fall, believing the guy he took the fall for will look out for him when he gets out.

I asked, "so you TRUST this guy?" Jordan was definite in saying, "Yeah", to which I countered, "So you can trust in this guy, to honor HIS word, but God CAN'T?" How can he put his trust in a man, who likely got him in prison, but can't trust that God can deliver him? Hard questions, not so easy to answer. I need wisdom.

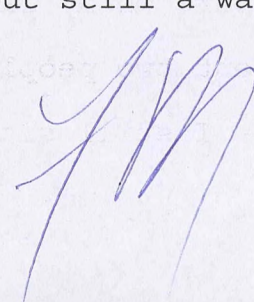
PAUSE: This was a difficult thing to share, because there is exposure of my faith. Do I believe God delivers? Sure...I've sent two people home myself based on my faith in God. And while I still sit in here, in prison, that is actually part of the plan. I have no problem knowing that I am

going home soon. Often times we give up on God because He didn't meet our "deadline". Sometimes guys, the answer comes after all hope is gone, proving that God can do the impossible.

Scriptures clearly show this; read about Lazarus, how he was dead for days. It was past hope, but Jesus came and brought him back to life. The ruler's daughter had died, and everyone thought it was over. They even mocked at Jesus when He said, "she is not dead, she sleeps". But in the end, that girl came back to life.

Guys, I know I'm getting spiritual here, but I have seen miracles in my life, and most times, they come AFTER we exhaust our reasoning. That guy who got time could have still gone home...maybe he realizes later that he still can. But you can't abandon God just because of the circumstances. Jordan, in this entry, was willing to put trust in another MAN, the guy he took the fall for. This same guy isn't putting money in his account, nor takes calls or writes to Jordan. Why then, does Jordan think this guy will look out for him when he gets out?

We put so much trust in people, who are fallible, but fail to trust God, Who can do anything. I often^{have} to learn that myself. I'm getting a little better, but still a ways to go. Anyway, until next time.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the initials 'JM' or similar, located at the bottom right of the page.