

Conflict

By THE AMERICAN PHARAOH

FROM MOSES WANDERING THROUGH THE WILDERNESS TO THE MESSIAH'S FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS, SOLITUDE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SIMILARITY AMONGST THE METHODS USED BY OUR HISTORY'S MOST PROFOUND SPIRITUAL LEADERS.

SOLITUDE ALLOWS US TO DETACH OURSELVES FROM THIS CHAOTIC LIFE AND FOCUS ON SELF-REFLECTION AND MEDITATION, WHEN PROPERLY DONE, AIDS A PERSON IN SPIRITUAL, EMOTIONAL, AND MENTAL GROWTH. THE KNOWLEDGE OF SELF IS FOUND WITHIN SOLITUDE. NO KNOWLEDGE IS MORE CRUCIAL TO ATTAIN IN A MAN'S PROCESS OF CHANGE THAN KNOWLEDGE OF SELF. WITH SOLITUDE SEEMINGLY BEING A KEY INGREDIENT IN OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS SELF-ENLIGHTENMENT, HOW CAN THOSE WITHIN THE GEORGIA SLAVE INSTITUTIONS, ALSO TERMED THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, REACH THIS GOAL WHEN SOLITUDE IS ONLY REWARDED AS A FORM OF PUNISHMENT WITH A LOSS OF MOST PRIVILEGES OR AS A PLUS SIDE TO PROTECTIVE CUSTODY, WHICH ALSO NEGATES MANY PRIVILEGES AND CARRIES A NEGATIVE CONNOTATION AMONGST PEERS?


BOTH MEDIUM SECURITY FACILITIES, OUNTY STATE PRISON AND WASHINGTON STATE PRISON, ARE IN VIOLATION OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS BECAUSE OF TWO MAN HOUSING UNITS HAVING AN EXTRA BED AND LOCKER ADDED TO THESE ROOMS, MAKING IT A THREE MAN CELL. THOUGH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GAVE GEORGIA A DEADLINE TO CORRECT THIS VIOLATION, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEGLECTED TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS THEMSELVES WHEN THE STATE ~~IGNORED~~ IGNORED THE ORDER ALTOGETHER. AT THAT TIME THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HIT THE STATE WITH A HEALTHY FINE, WHICH →

IS ONE AMONGST SEVERAL GEORGIA'S SLAVE INSTITUTION PAYS, THAT WHEN PAID, ALLOWS GEORGIA TO CONTINUE THEIR ILLEGAL AND WHUMANE TREATMENT OF AMERICA'S CITIZENS. GEORGIA'S BASICALLY PAYING OFF OUR GOVERNMENT TOO LOOK THE OTHER WAY.

MEAN WHILE, ELDERLY MEN WHO CAN BARELY WALK, STRUGGLE TO CLIMB TO A TOP BUNK THAT THE YOUNG AND ABILE FIND SLIGHTLY CHALLENGING. ONCE ATOP HE FINDS HIMSELF LESS THAN A FOOT AND A HALF FROM THE CEILING.

THIS CRANNY IS TERRIBLY HOT AND STUFFY IN THE POORLY VENTILATED, UNAIR CONDITIONED BUILDINGS. ME VOLUNTEERING TO TRADE PLACES WITH THE SENIOR CITIZEN ALLOWED ME TO EXPERIENCE THIS FIRST HAND. SADLY, MY BOTTOM BUNK, LESS THAN FIVE INCHES FROM THE FLOOR, WASN'T MUCH BETTER FOR THE SIXTY PLUS, EX MARINE, WHO STILL CARRIED SHRAPNEL IN PARTS OF HIS BODY. WATCHING A MAN WHO FOUGHT FOR THIS COUNTRY BUMPING HIS HEAD AGAINST THE CEILING, FALLING SEVERAL FEET ONTO CONCRETE AND STEEL WAS HORRIBLE. YET SOMEHOW, SEEING HIM HAVE TO CRAWL IN AND OUT HIS BED ON HANDS AND KNEES WAS IN SOME WAY WORSE.

OUR SYMPATHIES AND APPRECIATIONS FOR ONE ANOTHER, WAS NO MATCH FOR OUR FRUSTRATIONS THAT CAME FROM THE LIVING CONDITIONS. THERE'S NO WAY TO IMAGINE LIVING IN A CELL THE SIZE OF A BATHROOM WITH THREE FULL GROWN MEN STRESSING OVER TIME, BEING SEPARATED FROM LOVED ONES, THE LACK OF THINGS NEEDED, THE LACK OF THINGS DESIRED, AND THE LIST STRETCHES ON. ONE OF MY CELL MATES WAS AN EXTREMELY AGGRESSIVE ADDICT THAT WAS GANG RELATED. HE WAS ALSO ON THE MENTAL HEALTH CASE-LOAD.

THIS MAN, WITH ALL OF HIS ISSUES, WOKE UP EACH DAY WITH A CHIP ON HIS SHOULDER AND A HANGOVER. NEITHER WAS EVERY MORNING A SUNNY ONE FOR ME AND THE MARINE, WHO WAS NOW WELL PAST HIS PRIME AND FIGHTING CAPABILITIES. FROM BUMPING INTO ONE ANOTHER TRYING TO PREPARE IN 

the mornings, to dealing with the body odors that come with living and sleeping together overnight, mornings could be a look away from a brawl.

Seeking escape and a peace of mind, you enter the dayroom, where the real happenings are going on. Sports debates, trash talk at all of the game tables, the dorm delinquents going about aimlessly, accomplishing their goals of mayhem, and tons of loud, mind numbing disorderly conduct. There is no escape. There is no peace.

There are a people in life who participate in life but are not a part of it. They are in the world but not of the world. They are called anti-social and varying degrees of this detachment from the world are termed as more serious illnesses. Though couldn't it be said of Buddha, Gandhi, Einstein, The Messiah, and many more of our great contributors of society, that they were detached or anti-social. At least at some point in their lives; they spent monumental amounts of time alone. Though they would later emerge and mingle. Malcolm X is a great example of how solitude can positively change a man or help him find drive and purpose. These people are many but few. Within Georgia's slave institution, not only are these people not given a chance to flourish into what history presents their kind to be, but they are living in a constant torturing of every aspect of their being. This constant friction on every level tears him down mentally, spiritually, and emotionally. How he reacts to this destruction of his soul depends on a multitude of variables, but most likely it's fight or flight. Neither one being a good thing in the betterment of a man. Georgia's slave institution has no facility that offers one man cells, which would reduce high stress levels that are responsible for most violence. Instead, they've decided to start cramming more

men into the nooks and crannies. your only chance at peace is signing up for protective custody where you lose a very extensive list of privileges and proclaimed 'conards' openly by staff members, making a return to general population a dangerous and doubtful one. "fore hell hath not mercy."

solitude, silence, peace of mind, and rest is necessary if only for a few moments a day. without it, a damage defying measure occurs within a man. a man that may one day be released back into society in a community near you. what decades of constant chaos has shaped and molded is a vessel only fit for the pouring of disarray. solitude led the man into prophethood. the rioting masses sent him to martyrdom. life or death of the soul lies within the balance of peace and conflict. Georgia force feeds it conflict.