

BLACKS: FROM THE PLANTATION TO THE PRISON

“The Move, The Mockery, The Mental Slavery”

PREFACE

When I first met blacks that were on the rise to enormous wealth such as, rappers Ja Rule, DMX, Trick Daddy, Pastor Troy and reggae artist Mr. Vegas, I felt the sense that they were all running from something. It seemed like they were running a sprint towards a direction on the other side of the spectrum from whence they came, and rightfully so, they should have been. Many of the black entertainers today are first generational performers and many times first generational millionaires. These individuals typically came from such bad conditions that they raise their children different from how they were reared and try to give them the opportunities they didn't have. This is actually admirable. These persons are usually a fraction of the black community because many times there are those of the black community that never make it out or change the conditions they were brought into. Then meeting individuals like reggae artist Sean Paul, producers Jermaine Dupri and Pharrell, gospel artist Vickie Winans, Atlanta TV News anchor Monica Kaufman-Pearson, and R&B Jagged Edge singer Brian was a little different. These individuals seemed secure and settled. What were the differences in these persons who, for the most part, shared the same strife in life yet how they were handling it was not the same? It seemed like the second list of persons may have already met the intervention that is necessary to not make the prison their final destination. Perhaps, they had someone in their lives teaching them about the trappings of society that a black person may face and if they are not prepared, they can easily become a statistic. Whether the case, there are blacks that rise from unfortunate circumstances to a fortune. In some cases, a person's financial stature develops much faster than their mental stature causing an even bigger quandary for the blacks with money. So they rise and so they are still prone to fall, and this book will show how the majority of blacks never rise but is laterally transferring from the Plantation to the Prison.

Blacks: From the Plantation to the Prison brings clear insight to the transition that Blacks have made throughout history and is continuing to make. Many Blacks today are still faced with the plantation mindset, resulting in them heading swiftly to the prisons. This mindset often acts as a crutch or discourager of success. It also rejects taking risks. As we know, high risks equal high rewards and these risks can be mitigated through a series of contingencies and thoughtful research. However many Blacks are often afraid to take the great risks for great rewards. The lack of education is a high factor in the poor decision-making dilemma and obtaining education through various means can counteract many of the plights Blacks encounter. Instead, we typically fall in line with the trends, cultures and way of life that we have inherited or that is being fed to us. We don't question the reasoning behind our ancestors while growing up. As our ancestors age and decide to explain the reasons behind many of their actions, by that time we feel it's too late to listen to a grumpy old person. Rather than listening with the notion of “swallowing the meat and spitting out the bones”, we elect not to listen at all. We disregard to abundant wisdom our predecessors have to offer. Grave decision.

What this does is causes us to perpetuate a past behavior that does not apply to present situations. Many of our predecessors did things or acted in ways that was a defense mechanism because of a plight(s) that they were facing. It is often said that success is not secret and this is true! However, since success first begins in the mind, tapping into success is where many blacks fall short. It is not necessarily the fault of Blacks. We previously weren't allowed to tap into the success in our minds. But we are fully to blame if we are unable to tap into this success today. There are Black teachers, judges, police officers and many more who set the example

or impart wisdom into our kids on a daily basis. Our kids not grasping the example they set is a collective epidemic.

Today, Blacks in America are still trying to navigate through a system that was not created with our success or progress in mind. When the United States Constitution was written, the founding "fathers" only acknowledged Blacks as property. To date, the Constitution has never been re-written. Instead there are amendments upon amendments, band-aids upon band-aids being placed on a covenant that actually needs surgery.

Though America is seemed to many as the global melting pot, the voice of any race other than Whites have been unheard from the beginning of development of the United States of America and its American Government. The Constitution was written with the White culture, habits and behaviors in mind while not considering others. This makes it much easier for Whites to be successful under such this current system while other races tend to struggle. Blacks come from a culture that weighs heavily on relationship, physical strength, entertainment and music, family unity and creativity. So does Native American and Hispanic cultures. Since becoming successful in the American Culture is contrary to some of these habits, we find ourselves lagging behind on the success ladder. It is not only because of the lack of this, it is also due to the gatekeepers standing at the helm of success. When a black person does make it big and is highly successful, such as the Oprah Winfrey(s), the Bob Johnson(s) and the Tyler Perry(s) it becomes a large story. How can individuals who have been oppressed, suppressed and surpassed actually make it? This is the question many other Blacks who simply dream the American Dream but never actually find themselves in the position they actually dream about.

Since this is the case, Blacks often find themselves coming up short on success. To be successful in a capitalist society, it sometimes requires a person to offend or slight persons that may be very close to the opportunist. Being successful in America is a simple yet complex formula. There are many persons who do not possess the ability to think outside of our natural being. Some Blacks do. In order for us to be successful, we must possess the aptitude to perform in a system that never had us in mind when it was created. Meaning, we must first understand the system of capitalism and where each individual fits. Then we must understand the controlling factors of capitalism and who are the individuals in control of it, or who are the reigning individuals in it. Is it the executive, the politician, the famous, the business owner, the voter, or the employee? Then we have to actually execute what we've learned.

Blacks are heading towards the judicial system in truckloads for the lack of proper execution because of the absence of proper decision-making. Because the odds are against us under a Constitution that was formulated without us in mind, we continue to make hasty, poor decisions. Poor decisions come from a lack of training, experience and/or education. If the plantation is not a direct correlation with the prison, then why are we headed to the prison in such large numbers?

Presently Blacks make up 40% of the U.S. prison population, while we only occupy 12% of the U.S. total population. Blacks went from building America's economic system as slaves and now we find ourselves still contributing to the economic system as inmates. Today, some persons focus so much on the 400 years of progress Blacks lost during the oppression of slaves, that we are not realizing that more years are being lost on the front end. A 2005 prison statistics showed that the black male prison population was collectively serving over 15,000,000 years in prison. The belief is we are not only 400 years behind, we are 15,000,400 years behind and counting. Many of us are still "plantation minded" causing us to become "prison inmates." From the Plantation to the Prison delivers an easy-read and practical approach to the reader. Reconstructing one's mind is closer within reach than one may think!

The prison system is very similar to the plantation system. No escape allowed, conjugal visits for some, work with little to no pay, no access to education, backed by a larger institution, a team of overseers to watch the inmates with a watchtower in the yard and one chief with executive decisions. Very similar make-up exists in both systems. This book will also illustrate how one caused the other.

It's important to understand that the larger institute was the government. The government helped to develop slavery then enforced and protected the sanctity of it. This is the same situation for the prison system. If this similarity is accurate, then the solution to rid many Black Americans of the plantation mindset is for a large agency to get behind the reprogramming of the descendents of slavery. This would lead to the unlearning of the beliefs and behaviors of a slave.

INTRODUCTION

If you're wondering why the title of this book is not "African-Americans: From the Plantation to the Prison" it's because I never became comfortable with the term African-American. In my opinion, it doesn't capture a "race". It describes a nationality. It captures a segment of Blacks. It adds even more confusion of the black identity. Trust me, we need no more complex identifications. Does this term mean I'm not the same race of an African citizen or a black born and raised in Australia? When a form says "race", it should not simply cover those in an isolated hemisphere. It should pertain to "all" of that type. It should not speak only to a certain group occupying a specific area. This further complicates and polarizes our global relationships. Then what would we call Roy Welensky, the White African politician. What would his race be if he moved to America? The more we dissect a group, the more divisive we create ourselves. If sickle cell were considered a black disease, then this would mean that ALL Blacks and not just African-Americans can contract this hereditary disease. We have to move away from trying to be politically correct in all areas. Some things should be cut and dry and "static" to a situation. Forgive me for attacking this term so passionately and so early in the book, but I thought I would single out another harmful label. The labels of Blacks have changed so many times throughout recent history and yet, our progress remains stalled. So Blacks. Where are we? Where were we? Where are we headed? Don't ignore the larger picture by subtle pacifications. We are black! Now, let's move on to the book.

There are many individuals that helped to break the physical slavery system. These individuals came in different shapes and form, races and nationalities. Though we only highlight a percentage of those heroes in our history books and record keeping, they are not unappreciated. Choosing which individuals to discuss is a difficult task for many simply because a sacrifice of a life, is a sacrifice of a life. No one's life is more important than the other. Once one's life has been sacrificed it is seen as them making the ultimate sacrifice; their lives. We have those who chose to go against the grain. We have the Nat Turner's, the Bass Reaves and the John Brown's (who raided "Harpers Ferry"). In an address at the final hours of his life, John Brown stated"

... I believe to have interfered as I have done, . . . in behalf of His despised poor, was not wrong, but right. Now, if it be deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children, and with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments, I submit: so let it be done."

Like Brown, there were many individuals who were convicted in going against the grain and

going with what they felt to be right. However, there are individuals that prefer to go with the masses. There are individuals who remained on the plantation despite the conditions; whether for the lack of vision, the profusion of fear, level of comfort or abundance of convenience, there were individuals that had no desire in changing their circumstances.

Then we have the heroines like Ellen Craft and Harriet Tubman. Craft was a fair-skinned slave that disguised herself as a white man (slave owner) accompanied by her dark-skinned husband (William Craft), who posed as her slave, traveling north for medical treatment of Ellen – the slave owner. Neither one of them could read nor write but possessed the undeniable courage to escape to the north with such a daring plan. At times during the escape, Ellen had to sit in train cabins with all white men and discuss the perils of slave retention and the “benefits” of owning and controlling another human being. This was very difficult for her, and as a naturally emotional being it was tough for her to maintain her composure and the presence of an insensitive, inconsiderate, and thoughtless person. Ellen displayed candor and helped to set the example for others to follow.

Harriet Tubman on the other hand, though a female, was tougher and more determined than many males of that time and today. Tubman freed over 300 slaves and made the daunting trip back to the south 19 times. Getting the courage to go against the grain and be convicted in one’s stance is a difficult process, especially when the masses have conformed or are conforming and there is no clear path to the vision in one’s mind or there is no concrete evidence that such a life exists. This does not only pertain to the system of slavery. This pertains to the achievement of many personal or professional goals that a person may possess. Tubman served in many forms in her quest for freedom. She served on her own conquest and she served on others. She supported John Brown, met at antislavery meetings and even worked for the Union Army as a cook, spy and a nurse. Though there was a \$40,000 bounty on her capture and life she still received many rewards and recognitions for her heroism. In the receipt of one of her awards, she stated, “...I would have freed many more slaves had I been able to convince them that they were in fact slaves.”

People live out lives they weren’t destined to live and live out “shelled personalities”, or personalities to survive, succeed or be accepted. This goes back to the Nature vs. Nurture theory. The phenomenon of slavery not only enslaved the body, it also enslaved the mind, according to Willie Lynch. Emancipation Proclamation only released us physically and left us enslaved mentally. We are still in need of the mental phenomenon since slavery’s phenomenon captured both mind and body. Willie Lynch taught many slave owners of the 1700’s how to alter the minds of slaves in such a way they would not want to be free individuals. Since the mind was captured and there were no deprogramming sessions offered by the U.S. Government following the proclamation of slaves, there will be years of discord among the black community until this mindset dissipates from our beings. Without intervention, Blacks actually risk putting ourselves back into an inferior position, like slavery or incarceration.

Though the American system is evolving for the better, those in command of it simply cannot emphatically connect with the plight of the oppressed. The country is really making strides but because of the power since 1776 lying in the hands of the oppressor, they cannot truly know what Blacks face daily. Blacks that reside, study or work outside of the black community drive to job interviews hoping and praying the interviewer is either black or at least non-prejudice. When Blacks face a judge in the courtroom, they pray for the same. Blacks have an internal hope that who they interact with judges them on their character. Perpetuating racism isn’t smart. Singling out racism with fallacies irresponsibly heightens the presence of racism without facts. Yet, this is something that is involuntarily present by many Blacks that have experienced any discriminatory treatment.

Tubman's frustration still exists today in the minds of many. Today, there are many individuals who have yet to be convinced that they are in fact "slaves". They are being birthed, trained and treated like the new "slaves", which are the inmates. We have individuals growing up in our society that insist on making short-term decisions. There are persons who are driven by money and greed. The individuals who would like to see them as inferior push vanity on them. The million-dollar questions are, should we be praising those Blacks who fought for slavery emancipation or should we be upset at ancestors who subjected us to slavery? Should those Africans have chosen to die free than to live as slaves? Should 100% of Africans have given or taken their own lives at capture or during the transatlantic voyage rather than land on Plymouth Rock?

Oppression is big business for the oppressor! Whether it is slavery, communism, or incarceration (especially for many corporations). Without the inmate, some corporations and investments would suffer. Though Blacks may be still swimming upstream, there are many more opportunities than there are obstacles for Blacks in America. We are actually much harder on ourselves than we should be. Slavery was not developed specifically for Blacks, nor is the prison. We are just failing ourselves by seeking crutches and carrying the "woe is me" perspective. There will be many depictions of setbacks placed on Blacks in this book, but don't be consumed by it. It is to be informative not to affirm a stagnant Black's notion of "standing still". If Blacks don't get it together, we will continue to steadily cross the bridge... from the plantation to the prison!

THE BLACK IDENTITY

Researchers have declared the first human to exist on this planet to perhaps, be black. According to Arabicnews.com, the remains were actually found in North Africa by Egyptian excavators and has said to be as old as 30,000 – 33,000 years. Does this have any significance? Should blacks be the wisest, richest or perhaps the first to discover the mysteries of this planet? Who knows? These are all theories, studies, hypotheses and beliefs of human inquisitiveness. One thing I do know. A cliffhanger is definitely not a good way to start a book...

Those Left Behind

The Black Identity. Researchers trace one of the black traits in males as being crafty warriors who could construct the most impressive pyramids. The black male was a person who could work well with his hands and protect his family from harm in the most dangerous situations. Many question if the black identity, in its pristine state, still exists. Is there even a clear Black identity in existence? Some would say yes, it does exist. Others would say no, it doesn't exist. Those that believe it does exist say it does in Africa. They believe that if Black Americans return to Africa we would be able to indulge ourselves in the rich traditions that we have been separated from. We often hear Black Americans leaving America on trips to Africa in order to experience the identity we have lost through the Middle Passage. Some feel that in America, the only heritages that truly exist are those of the Indians and the Whites. True Indians were forced from their land, but their minds did not undergo forced alteration. But is this an accurate belief? Is it accurate that the true identity of Blacks resides in Africa? Let's assess this for a moment. What would you say happens to a woman when her child goes missing? What would you say happens to a family [including children and parents] when a husband goes missing or perhaps, what happens when a sister goes missing? Those that are left behind are charged to pick up the pieces and fill the new void that has been left by the removal of the lost relative.

Being thrown into an unforeseen situation often forces you to act outside of your normal character and make decisions you wouldn't otherwise have. The instant absence of a person that has served a role in a particular place creates hardship on those involved. It can be in family, work

or school. These unfortunate events create resentments, rifts, grief, pain, selfishness, violence and many other mental behaviors to emerge in persons affected by the atrocity. It causes a change in those stricken with the pain of the lost one. The human life cycle is cyclical. We expect it to run its natural course. When a parent rears children, you are able to identify similarities in them from their parents. The parents impart their values and beliefs into their children for them to carry on to their offspring. As the child ages, those around are also able to benefit from the new variation of personality that the child develops into. They are seen as the latest model. This is the one who is to carry on the traits of a bloodline. When a person is suddenly stripped from a family, the new, fresh, innovative hereditarily traits are instantly removed from the family's heritage. It creates a disruption in the family's legacy. Disrupting a legacy has lengthy detriments associated with it. It takes a long time for the family to get back on track and repair what has been lost. This can take generations upon generations to successfully happen. These detriments can find their way spilling outside of the family's walls and into the community.

Tragedies happen daily. There is the innocent child who is gunned down by the warring assailants mistakenly angers us. There is the grandmother who's home was mistakenly taken for a drug house, raided by narcotics officers and she is murdered in the process. These events would find discord finding its way into another family's home. This widespread of void finds its way to those who are far away from the center of the conflict.

The removal of family members in many instances happened in large form to the Africans of the African continent. This helped cause a widespread of dissension in the entire race body of that continent. Sunday dinners were probably halted after Whites stole a sister of an African family. Anger between neighbors of African tribes who cast blame on each other for her disappearance perhaps took shape and spiraled into a blood battle. Jealousy of whose family escaped the pillage of a Slave ship crew probably escalated in the villages. This could have been the beginning and systematical incremental end of the true Black identity. To date, conflicts are not easily resolved in Africa. Is the dispute among Africans in Africa today because of this constant void that ravaged the continent in the 15th and 16th centuries? Has the identity been lost through the Diaspora and tribal wars? Who are Africans? Who are Blacks? Can we truly answer this question or has it been erased from the hearts and minds globally or throughout the African generations of those who were left behind?

Restoring the Minds

What about the ones who went missing or were forcefully taken from their families? Psychologists have revealed information that a person who has been kidnapped for an extended period of time, never returns to their original state. They have also produced evidence that soldiers that engaged in war also undergo a period of shellshock and often require therapy in order to relieve them of their tragic mental effects from the war. It has recently become known as the "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder". This is where an event in peacetime conditions can trigger the soldier to thinking he is at war. It also happens when the returning soldier wakes up from sleep thinking he is in wartime conditions and cause them to respond with wartime tactics. They feel as if they are still in the midst of danger and their nerves have a tough time settling back into a domestic lifestyle. Now, don't expect me to have the clinical terms as I am not a clinician but I am a U.S. Military veteran who witnessed first hand the effects that war has on an individual and is sometimes compounded depending on the individuals previous upbringing or predisposition. Not only did I witness other soldiers in peacetime situations and hardship overseas tours, but I also witnessed my dad as he returned from Operation Iraqi Freedom in December 2006. The United States Government rightfully treat returning soldiers like victims of tragedies and it works to return the soldiers to their original state of minds. This is an admirable and well-deserved post war benefit. The Government understands that it's its fiduciary duty to ensure the soldiers lead normal lives. The Government understands that it can be damaging if it does not step in

to ensure the family and community, is not negatively affected by the soldiers. Once they are cleared from military processing and deemed stable to operate in society, they allow them to live their normal lives. They effectively treat those that were affected. There were over 38,000 soldiers treated for post-traumatic stress disorder between 2003 and mid 2008. There were over 13,000 soldiers treated in 2007 alone. These statistics prove that the Government agrees in the diagnoses over Post-Traumatic Stress and it believes it is equally important to treat it.

However, the U.S. continues to ignore the 800-pound gorilla in the room. True, it would be an enormous feat for the Government to place over 30 million black Americans under therapy. But I do believe the Government is a brilliant agency that solves complicated conflicts and solves critical issues. Is it simply saying the cost will not be beneficial to the entire country or is it happy with Blacks maintaining a victimized and oppressed mentality? If cost is the obstacle, the Government should easily place the burden of this cost on the companies who benefited and profited during the slave trade. This is not reparation. It is a tax similar to that of an employer bearing some of the cost of unemployment claims by having them pay unemployment tax. This gorilla sitting in America's living room is refusing to willingly remove itself and it possibly just can't. While Whites can visit the living room and gracefully walk by ignoring this gorilla, Blacks can't. Blacks live in this house!

When a person survives heinous acts such as rape, brutality and torture, it requires them to be reprogrammed or the effects will remain with them for a long time. They will change the way they would've reacted to situations prior to the trauma. They will respond to comments differently. They will possess a level of cautiousness or anger and it will possibly be more than they previously possessed. In other words, part of them will have died and another part of them will be born. If the part that has died is never revived, it finds itself lost in fulfilling its purpose. It then derails the person and takes them into a life they were not destined to live.

When someone is victimized, the change is more noticeable in some than in others. While some individuals are resilient enough to rise above the perils, other individuals need complex assistance getting there. If this weren't true, psychology would be a minimum waged career.

The Road Trip

Those who were taken from their African homeland by force were also divulged of their identity. It wasn't that Africans didn't fight back. It's just that the strategy and techniques of the White rebels overtook many of their defenses. Their strategies included silent kidnapping and surprise midnight ambushes. Not expecting this type of ambush from people of a different continent, Africans were overtaken and not prepared to defend themselves of such attacks. They eventually took notice of what was taking place and began setting counterattack measures to defend the abduction on their families.

However, it's important to understand that the majority of Blacks avoided capture of the White invaders in Africa. Yet there still was a large number of the Blacks were ambushed and kidnapped, many unbeknownst to their family members. Even though there were millions of slaves in America during the height of the slave trade, only a percentage of those slaves were born Africans. Many of the slaves were born in America and grew up as slaves, not even having an idea of what Africa or freedom tasted like. It only requires a handful of individuals to populate an area. Over time, the generations [and population] can become sizeable.

Since the Middle Passage was such a horrendous mind altering voyage, many Africans lost intrinsic assets like self-esteem, beliefs, courage, bravery, fortitude, and of course freedom. These assets were lost somewhere at sea and on the ships. Not only were the innate attributes lost but also were their names, families, desires, goals and pride. Some of these attributes

were traded for fear, intimidation, inferiority, misery and sorrow. While these were lost, so were the shapes of their identity, the true Black or African Identity. The movie Roots depicted the divulging of the character best when the overseer whipped Kunta Kinte into submission until he uttered his new name as being Toby. This was the beginning of the end for the African heritage in this bloodline. From that point forward, whatever that family knew to be freedom, norms and traditions forever became history. The Road Trip will be focused on in details in the “Middle Passage” segment of this book.

Take notice of the black female living inside of America (and in countries influenced by America). The black hair and beauty care industry fosters between \$9 billion and \$15 billion annually. Results show that the black woman spends almost three times as much on hair care products than that of any other race. Some state that this is because the black woman wants to enhance her beauty or always be beautiful. There is no arguing this point but go a little further and ask, “Why is she doing that and what does she consider to be beautiful?” The black woman is the only woman that spends so much money keeping her hair from returning to its original state. She also spends a significant amount of money on skin lightening products. Why is this? That is the true question. Is it because the black woman [and man] relates beauty to being of straight hair and light skin? Why is there a depiction of bad hair being kinky and good hair being straight or wavy? Is the true black identity really lost or ashamed of? Has the black race abandoned it? Is the real reason Madame CJ Walker became the first black female millionaire in history because she was able to fill a need that helped with the self-esteem of women? Was this good or bad? Was it a good idea to feed into the notion that straight hair was best to have or should we have convinced the Black American female that her attributes were also beautiful despite what was being spoon-fed to her? Are we continuing to attack or pacify the symptoms of true problems and not actually facing problems head-on?

What are the true religious beliefs of the Black race? In America you would find that there is an overwhelming number of Blacks that practice the Baptist religion. I am one of them. But where did we get this belief? I am not trying to shake up the Black religion, so please don't put me on the chopping block. But I would like us to think about it. Did we admire the slave owner so much that we assimilated his religion as being true? Did we believe his words to be so wholesome that we felt the Baptist religion was gospel? If you notice, this was predominantly the religion of the slave owners. Is it simply a coincidence that this is now the religion of many Blacks? Are we practicing what we were originally practicing in Africa? I am not saying that we worshipped another god. Many religions practice different beliefs and still believe in God. My thought provoking question is, what were our true methods of practice? What day did we worship, how did we worship, what clothing did we wear to service, what type of structure did we worship in, how was the infrastructure of the fellowship hall designed, what was the Peking order, etc? I am not speaking of the answers in the books or research that were written by other races. I am speaking about what we know to be true!

This chapter was to simply highlight the important point that there may no longer be a black identity in existence anywhere on this Earth. The ones who stayed in Africa were affected. The ones who were taken from Africa were affected. Both were affected in unique ways that led to the divestiture of the Black Identity. In some cases, some of the slaves that made the trip through the Middle Passage were handed over to the slave ships. Some of the Africans were sold to the Whites, who were sold to them by other Africans. This left a huge hole in the heritages in the African community and helped to derail the lineage of it as well. There has been so much deceit, distrust, and divide in the history of Blacks that it is difficult to trace what the true black identity is and even more difficult to repair it to its original state. Can we even get back to it?

THE MOVE: SLAVERY

Transition One

THE INSTITUTION of SLAVERY – Part One

With our powerful talents, humans possess a gift and a curse. We have the power of creativity, independent thought, the art of interpretation, the art of persuasion and the ability to generate ideas. Typically, a society's norms and beliefs are practiced based on the attributes of the person or group of people with the greatest strength. Though persuasion can oftentimes be more powerful than physical strength, physical strength can be the next step to ensuring one gets their way. History has proven this time and time again. Communist countries rule with power and ensure its occupants do not deter from their rules. The Bible displays stories of those with the greatest power that were able to rule over land and people, and even when their ideologies were sometimes wrong. This is because of the power or persuasion they were able to effectively convey or practice. The less intelligent or weak had to follow the rules of kings and armies whether they wanted to or not. Over time, rules and powers that are wrong are changed and dissolved. Cults are formed and last for many years but eventually begin to lose power and followers. Cult leaders use both power and persuasion to perpetuate their teachings and retain their followers. However, humans are born with an innate tendency to do the right thing and as a whole are soon able to realign themselves with what is actually right for mankind. The activities of a human can be monitored and enforced but not the activities of the heart, soul and mind.

Slavery existed in the Bible. There were Masters and there were Slaves. Over the years, races of people took these examples and interpreted them to be that slavery was an okay institution to form. After all, it kept people in great power. Yet, the Bible mentions nothing about a race having to succumb to another race based on skin color. Nor does it mention that in order for a race to be successful, it must acquire the attributes of another. The Bible speaks to all people, though many Masters throughout the years used this [and their Christianity] as a manual to execute slave operations. Slavery began as an institute of class. The rich typically enslaved the poor no matter their race. Basically, in history, Whites were also slaves. Many of the slaves work their way to freedom by becoming slaves, then indentured servants (working as a slave for a specific number of years) and eventually becoming free. Indentured servants had fewer restrictions than slaves. This was a common practice, especially in the European continent. A person typically would become an indentured servant as a result of debts owed or wars that their tribe or province may have lost. There were parents who would become slaves, then sign deals with Masters allowing them to enslave their children for so many years and so on.

Many different types of deals were constructed. Sometimes, Masters would go back on their word of releasing someone from indentured servitude or find minor infractions coming to the end of the timeframe of servitude in order to add more years to their indenture. Masters quickly realized there were enormous economic benefits to slavery [and indentured servitude]. This launched a trend in the ownership of slaves. As ships set sail to the African continent to retrieve slaves, the trend grew even more. Ships would return with slaves they either kidnapped or bought from other Africans and sold the slaves throughout the Caribbean or back in the European countries. Many times, the bulk of the slaves were sold or traded in the Caribbean or North America and the goods or wages were taken back to European countries, such as Portugal, Spain, Denmark and others. Masters soon found that the Africans possessed enormous physical strength and resiliency to hard labor and hardcore elements.

As years progressed, it became increasingly confusing to identify who were slaves, indentured servants or free. This spawned another change in the way the Whites did business and would change the Black race's image globally forever. Whites had to develop an easier way to manage

slaves in their society and not make errors on the treatment of a free person. In the courts, they came up with an idea. Whites decided that since the Black slave was more valuable than any other slave race due to their ability to work and survive under harsh conditions, they should make slavery based on skin color. This would make it much easier for them to know who were slaves and who were not. As this law began to take effect, Whites were slowly weaned out of the slave trade system. After this took effect, Blacks were now the new commodity and solely because of their skin color. Because of the cooperation of some Africans, the African slave trade became one of the highest profitable industries in the 20th Millennium. This industry was the foundation of many others such as, sugar, cotton, crops, transportation, and dairy. Without slavery, many of these industries would suffer and perhaps even dissipate.

Knowing this, many West Africans began to fear being sold into slavery and never seeing their families again. This was the first point of the slavery economic system. Africa can be seen as the manufacturer, and the slave ships were the distributor, while the transport hubs in the various countries acted as the retailer, and Whites were the sole consumer. Since this created wealth for some of the Africans, they obliged the thought of being of assistance to the slave captors. This perhaps is the origin in modern history where the Black race began to be at odds with each other and lose the trust that once existed. Today, we still see this trust broken. It happens in local communities, business communities and prisons. Blacks tend to see more value in doing business or working for companies of a race other than black. The deceit that existed in Africa in the early 1300's-1600's has made its way to the 21st century in modern times.

THE TRIP: Middle Passage – Part Two

The Middle Passage was seen as the most treacherous part of the slave trade. This usually was where the instant shock of leaving Africa and being treated like less than a human being took place. In some cases, the Africans were kidnapped by other Africans and held in African camps before they were shipped away. Even the treatment in the camps was not as inhumane as what occurred on the ships.

Imagine being placed in small confined areas with hand and leg restraints placed upon you. There were no bathroom or medical facilities. A slave had to use the bathroom where they sat then live with their waste for the duration of their trip. Then if they got sick from the exposure of it, they were now seen as a liability to the slave traders. Being seen as a liability was not a good thing. It often meant death by neglect or murder. Some of the ships provided smaller areas for men and larger areas for women and children. This could be for a number of reasons. One reason could be to keep the men restricted for fear of escape or it could be for extra hygienic areas provided for the women and children. Whatever the reasons are, some of the traders felt the need to do so. Speculation exists that slave traders did this in order to keep the men from considering mutiny at sea.

Many of the slaves had not been in a boat before and the turbulent filled journey due to high winds, storms and waves made motion sickness only one of the detriments that the slaves had to face. They faced diseases, starvation, rape, sickness, corpses, cold, heat, whippings, assault, physical pain, crying babies, homesickness, anguish, mental pain, threats, embarrassment, humiliation, hard labor, and murder. There are more to add to this list, but you would simply had to have been on that journey to understand what else was associated with the trip. Imagine going from one day of pleasantries with your family and the next day being exposed to such environments.

If food became scarce, the traders would dump the slaves [while shackled] into the ocean to perish. (This forced Africans to begin fighting against each other for food. This was another cycle beginning to take shape where Blacks would in-fight. Slaves tried to store food in hiding

places around them for later use.)

This was a blatant disregard for human life. Now remember, this is solely because of skin color. At times, sicknesses were punished with death as well. Traders saw a sick slave as a liability because of their risk of spreading their communicable disease or their inability to perform laborious tasks. Sick babies were not excluded from suffering the traders' hands of death. Though a young baby was perhaps the most precious property of a slave owner because of its easy adaptation, they were not excused from successfully making the woeful trip. However, some slaves preferred to die at their own hands rather than to suffer the plight of slavery and the Middle Passage, thus committing suicide was their option of escape. This took place as well and cost the traders money. This forced them to pay closer attention to the slaves and care for their property, yet the care was far beneath being humane. Others wanted to devise plans and opposition from other slaves intervened, causing another case of infighting. There were slaves that wanted to take over ships, while others wanted to simply survive the trip. This caused them to be at odds and in some instances, slaves would report the planned revolt to the captors. This snitching on others did not stop there. It made its way to the plantations and often earned the slave who told respect with the overseer and positions overseeing their slave counterparts.

This inhumane treatment rarely lied on the consciences of the traders. It continued for centuries! It is reported that the height of slave exportation was for the 200 years between 1440-1640. Some statistics estimate that 5,000 slaves were exported annually. That works out to be approximately 1,000,000 slaves brought to America within a 200-year period. It is said that this is a conservative number but if it's not, this number only represents the slaves brought to America and does not include those that suffered death during the trip from Africa. In other words, there were many more actually taken from Africa. Other estimates state that over 5,000,000 Africans were taken from Africa involuntarily as slaves during this time. While during the late 1700's to early 1800's it is estimated that 70% of the population in South Carolina were slaves. Think about that. 70% were slaves, yet the plantations were able to keep slaves oppressed for many years.

Being able to successfully make the journey meant that the slave was in great shape. It meant they were able to survive on malnourishment and severe conditions. It also meant their immune system was strong enough to repel the many communicable diseases that lingered in the cabins on the slave ships. It also meant they could strongly control their bowel movements. Though this proved to be their survival techniques it also worked out to be one of the plights of Blacks. Doctors have released records showing a connection between filling one's bladder and holding it too long with having "high sugar". Doctors have also been studying the connection between the black disease sickle cell anemia and slavery. These findings show that the average native African [if given the same diet as a Black American] does not suffer from the same diseases as the Black Americans and this can be tied to heredity and not solely race.

Poor nutrition on the slave ships has also led to hereditary problems in slaves. High fat or poorly cared for foods were given to the slaves. Slop and scraps were also fed to them. Some slaves preferred to starve instead of eating the audacious foods being served to them. In some cases, slaves simply lost their appetites because of the stress involved in the journey.

I view Black Americans to be the descendents of strength. This is because if you made it through the Middle Passage, you were of strong qualities. These qualities would soon rise to the occasion and go against the grain of the institute of slavery but not without first being crucially conditioned and not without meeting tremendous opposition.

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