

Thoughts from the Heart
by
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The Power of One

Congress shall make no law abridging the right of the people to petition the government for redress of grievance: The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in pertinent parts: This right is not a fundamental right of the people but an “Absolute Right” which is embedded in our country’s Constitution. So much so, the Ohio Department of Corrections under a federal court order, i.e. Taylor vs. Perini establishes their Prisoner Grievance Procedure, and codified it under the Ohio Administrative Code 5120-09-31, which states in pertinent parts: Retaliation or the threat of retaliation for the use of the Inmate Grievance Procedure is strictly prohibited (sic).- Ohio Administrative Code 5120-09-31(H). Window Dressing at its best. The writer only redresses concerning prison officials abuse is the Inmate Grievance Procedure. The writer has known very few quiet days in this year, due to the writer’s use of the Grievance Procedure. The writer hesitates to mention these acts of reprisal by prison officials for fear of conveying the wrong impression. A person who constantly calls attention to one trials and suffering is in danger of developing a “martyr complex” and impressing others that one is consciously seeking sympathy. But the writer feels somewhat justified in mentioning them today in these writings because of the influence they have had put upon my thought. Due to the use of the Grievance Procedure, the writer has been, and still is being denied adequate medical care. The writer is a diabetic and due to this disease, complications of high blood pressure and Glaucoma has entered the picture. My personal trials have also taught me the value of unmerited suffering. It has also reminded me of the unmerited sufferings of both blacks and Jews. As my sufferings mounted, I soon realized that there were two ways in which I could respond to my situation – Either to react with bitterness or to seek to transform the suffering into a creative force. I decided to follow the latter course – and wrote about it in this blog. To date the writer is being denied medications for his high blood pressure and Glaucoma. The average person in the free

world would say “How can they get away with that?” My answer would be, “Because they Can...Because they can!” It reminds me of my oldest sister’s daughter, who came with her three years ago to see me in the hospital after almost dying due to these people’s indifference. She was nine at the time. She took her small hands and said, “Uncle Joey, I wanted to be a policeman like my mother, but now I’m going to be a lawyer and get you away from these evil people and that evil place – because I can. ” My niece is presently an honor student in Pre-Law at the University of Michigan. Little children may not know as much as adults, but they can teach us a lot. And every time I’m tempted to retreat and give up, I’m reminded of the words of this pertinacious child. The agonizing moments through which I have passed during the last few months have drawn me closer in my Jewish faith. More than ever before I am convinced of the reality of a personal God. This same ☞ God Who brought the Jews out from the gripping yoke of Egyptian slavery. But like the old guard that never surrenders, the Egyptians, in a desperate attempt to prevent the Jews’ freedom, had their army go after the Jews. But this same God – the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, led the Jews across the Red Sea – and caused the Egyptians to drown in the Red Sea. This same God has sustained me. In the midst of lonely days and dreary nights I have heard an inner voice saying, “Lo, I will be with You.” When the chains of fear and manacles of frustration have all but stymied my efforts, I have felt the power of God transforming the fatigue of despair into the buoyancy of hope. This God, the God of our forefathers, both evokes and answers prayer. There is a checkpoint in the universe: Evil cannot permanently organize itself. As Shakespeare once said, “There’s a divinity that shapes our ends, roughen them how we will – though the cause of evil prospers, yet ‘tis truth alone is strong.” It is true that I am only one man, but I can make a difference.”

Shalom Aleichem

(Meaning “Peace Be with You)