God in the ghetto was written to show a deeper level of need within the communities. “God, in the ghetto, invites consideration of race, schism on a level that touches the soul. We tend to see racism as a social, economic, and political matter, which it certainly is. But it is also a spiritual issue.” Intro XXV This for me is very profound because we tend to leave out the spiritual aspect of all that has happened that is currently happening and will happen in the future. God said that he is the same yesterday, today and forever more and it is people that change. Due to arrogance, pride, control, power, greed, and a need to make oneself bigger than what they are, these brazen acts have placed our nation, and our world in a state of emergency. Jones intention is to bring God to the ghetto and to make him accessible to everyone.

For as the word states in John 3:16 “For God, so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever shall believe in him shall not perish but have eternal life. In addition, the word states in Matthew 5:17 (NIV) “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. In the second scripture, Jesus is not talking about modern day law. He is talking about the Jewish law, the law enacted by God through Moses, and carried on by the prophets. Jesus saw the need for the people, and he saw the need for the nations, and this is why he walked through places that Jews would not walk through. Jesus associated with people that the Jews would not associate with. In doing so he created many enemies out of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and due to his knowledge and understanding of who his father was, and what the intentions were for him and his life he did what he did unapologetically with grace and love.

Jesus accepted the fact that people would be people, and there was nothing he can do but to fulfill his purpose. Jones states, even in the ghetto, created and sustained by oppressive intent, God is present to reassure that, “I am with you, and I am at work to bring deliverance. I am

calling you to become and to help build the beloved community." Although what we see here on earth tends to refute the promises that have been made in the Bible, we must realize as the word states in Ephesians 6:10 - 18 **10** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. **14** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, **15** and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. **16** In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17** Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. **18** And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this is mind be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Jones believes that man has the capacity for good and bad; justice and injustice; democracy and the lack thereof. However, through man's rouse to get, keep, and stay in control, systems have been created to block out a certain group of people. Due to them being blocked out, it has created confusion, madness, and Mayhem but according to a specific group of people it is black people's fault that they are in the bind that they are in, which of course is not true. Some people from a certain persuasion would have others to believe that blacks were destined to be slaves and that their lives would be better because of it. Although racism was, is, and will always be offensive, it is very real. I call it colorism, because we are supposed to be of one race although there is current talk that there are other species, and we are of a different race. Anyway, if we

talk about racism, and the system that was put in place to protect one culture and make themselves appear bigger than the other, what you see now is a result of it. This is not the only system like this but because there is a demonic spirit attached to this movement it has taken on a life of its own.

The racism today, although not as overt and in your face as it was during slave times, it's still here in full force. Jones states that "dehumanizing features and symbols of the period of racial segregation, such as separate restrooms and water fountains, segregated transportation, and the nigger's not allowed signs are no longer present. However, the absence of over expressions does not spell the demise of covert realities." (P4) The only thing that has changed is that there are no picket signs, or KKK walking around with white sheets and white hats. Amongst some other things however, there is absolute hatred due to colorism, mass incarceration, lack of resources, and the ability to utilize a system, that makes other people look like they're the animals. When in essence, the animals are those who have beaten down people because they didn't look like them. Those animals are the ones who have raped, maimed, killed and dehumanized other cultures.

Jones goes on to say that the ghetto is a symbol of the system. This is due to lynchings, murder by other means, rapes, demeaning behaviors, animalistic ways towards Black people and the people of this land. Operations tend to be kept up by what is considered the norm but might be anything but. Social aberration says that the ghetto is abnormal however, to keep up the force of normality of the white man the ghetto must appear abnormal. Due to this way of thinking, we must understand that the standards were set by a group of people who are anything but normal, and they don't act or treat people normally. I'm not sure if one can really understand what it means to treat somebody the way you want to be treated because in this world and in the society

that I have grown up in and come to know it as I have lived in it, is the statement, to do as I say, not as I do. However, the word of God says in Proverbs 22:6 (NIV) Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.

So, whichever way you train someone that is the way they're going to act, that is what they are going to take from it. Unfortunately, we are similar way, in that we want others to do what we are not willing to do. It is the case for everyone but there are a lot of people who feel that certain people are meant to do things that they will not do themselves. Then we have what one we call physical aberrations, which is the living condition in which people in the ghetto live, psychospiritual aberrations, which includes depression, illiteracy, cynicism, broken homes. Cultural aberrations, which come from more failed institutions, placed in places where it is supposed to help, but creates more dependency. This is my favorite one, economic aberration and I say this is my favorite one sarcastically. This aberration would be true if there wasn't oppression involved. Any time a person of color, especially Black people start to gain ground our brothers and sisters from another Mr. gets frightened and starts to do things that threatens the very lives of black Americans all over. There have been instances where people, nations, and groups have started to rise to power. Leave it to other people of color who think that they mean something to their white counterparts, or should I say get played, have brought down people like Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., black Wall Street, black panthers, etc. Economic aberrations also include infant mortality rate of non-white infants to be higher than the white infant mortality rate and the inability to see a physician because of low funding, and poor nutrition, which leads to heart disease, mental disorder, and other health issues.

With this system and structure, the way it is it allows the racist to create God in their own image and make it to be what they want it to be. Jones says once the scheme is designed and

developed heaven is expected to honor it, angels are asked to applauded and white people are called into service by the eternal to promote and preserve it. (P. 32) However, according to Exodus, chapter 3:16-17 **16** "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. **17** And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—a land flowing with milk and honey.' This doesn't mean that the white people are the ones to be brought up out of Egypt into a land flowing with mile and honey, this means that those who were oppressed will be blessed. "God has placed God's power on the side of those who are heavy, laden, downtrodden, and the oppressed. Throughout the Bible, it speaks of justice and democracy under God. Amos 5:24 NIV – "But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!" and Luke 4:18-21 (NIV) **18** "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, **19** to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."[a] **20** Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. **21** He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" are just a couple of examples.

Unfortunately, there are still some that believe that "God's best belongs to the so-called better people who reside in better communities." However, when we focus on the life of Jesus, we come to know that Jesus wasn't rich, he didn't live in a big house or a castle, where he traveled to was where he rested, and he didn't have a consistent place to rest his head. Also know

that this way of thinking is the very fabric that has been holding together the white supremacy‘s actions for centuries. This is a spiritual battle y’all we can’t fight it in the flesh.

To challenge the system and confront it, we must engage in steps that work towards restoration. First, investigate what you feel is the oppressive system. Look at the jobs, the dynamics, the cultures, and who does what. Second, educate yourself. Education is power, education is strength, education is needed. God in Hosea 4:6 “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.” Sometimes, even if we are the oppressed, we can look at the actions of our ancestors to determine how we got here and was a part of it our rejection of God’s word in our ancestors’ lifestyle.

Third one is negotiation, make the people in power, the oppressors understand that it takes two to tango. If you receive a response in good faith, then you are moving in the right path but if good faith is not demonstrated, then we go to demonstration. Demonstration can be picketing, protesting, word of mouth, the pulpit, and the use of public media. I honestly would not use the pulpit for this method. It is not because God is not amidst it all and we can’t leave Him out of any of it. It is because sometimes we will use the pulpit as a bargaining tool, or as the beating rod. We want God amidst everything and we don’t always have to be standing in the pulpit to relay that message. Last is when there is reconciliation, reconciliation could go along way if the parties involved or willing to participate. In Roadmap to Reconciliation, Brenda McNeil says that “the identification phase is, therefore the beginning of shaping our cultural identity.” We must come together to understand what it means to be one with each other. Taking away the color barriers which will take time because it took a long time to get where we are. God

will always be in the Ghetto and no matter how many people want us gone, we are what keeps there abnormality, normal.

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