



ANTI-INCARCERATION/JUSTICE DAY

Sunday, May 6, 2012

Guest Writer for This Unit: Jennifer S. Leath. Jennifer is an Itinerant Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and a Ph.D. Candidate in Religious Ethics and African American Studies at Yale University.

The unit you are viewing, Anti-Incarceration/Justice Day, is a compact unit. This means that it is not a complete commentary of the Scripture(s) selected for this day on the calendar, nor does it have a full, supporting cultural resource unit and worship unit. Instead, to enliven the imagination of preachers and teachers, we have provided a sermonic outline, songs, suggested books, and suggested articles, links, and videos. For additional information on Anti-Incarceration/Justice Day and related annual days, see the 2008–2011 archives. 2011 was the first year that the African American Lectionary posted compact units for moments on its liturgical calendar.

I. Description of the Liturgical Moment

“More African American men are in prison or jail, on probation or parole than were enslaved in 1850, before the Civil War began.”¹

— Michelle Alexander

“What would it mean to imagine a world without prisons?” At the helm of a contemporary movement to abolish prisons are significant scholars and activists, including Angela Davis, who are asking this question. Davis invites us to imagine “the world we want and the world we need”—a world with equal rights and access to the benefits of education and healthcare for all people, a world that establishes and maintains just distribution of wealth, resources, and opportunity for all people. When we pray “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven,” do we pray that God will teach us to co-imagine, co-create, and co-sustain a world without prisons? Anti-Incarceration/Justice Day invites us to include this new world, a world without prisons, in our thoughts, our words, and our actions of prayer and worship.

Yet the perennial challenges of incarceration and related forms of injustice in the lives of African Americans seem insurmountable. As Madeline McClenney-Sadler (Founder, The Exodus Foundation, Charlotte, NC) noted in her Anti-Incarceration Day Lectionary Commentary (2008), the thirteenth amendment left a loophole that justifies the continued extraction of forced labor from those convicted of a crime, and it was no coincidence that “in 1865, in order to oversee the operation of the only legally remaining slave plantation, an association was founded. It is known

today as the American Correctional Association. The plantation that its members have operated since 1865 is the prison plantation.”² The principle targets of the American Correctional Association have not changed; in 1865 and still today, the principle targets of the United States (U.S.) prison system are blacks, in many cases the descendents of those enslaved in the U.S. It is no surprise, then, that one in every 100 adults is incarcerated in the U.S. (the highest percentage incarceration vis-à-vis the national population in the world); one out of every nine adult Black men is incarcerated; and the fastest-growing demographic group of the prison population is Black women.³

And there are *new* challenges with respect to the prison industrial complex at work in the United States: on December 31, 2011 a bill, H.R. 1540, the “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012,” was signed into law. This is a law that many people fear will lead to the indefinite detainment without trial of a broad spectrum of people, many of whom are unjustly targeted, *including* U.S. citizens within the U.S. At a time when U.S. prisons are already overpopulated with black and brown bodies, the U.S. government seems to be expanding its authority to imprison more people *and* to deny the accused a fair and prompt hearing of their cases.

With this material as our backdrop, we provide a sermon outline for Anti-Incarceration/Justice Day.

II. Anti-Incarceration/Justice Day: Sermonic Outline

A. Sermonic Focus Text(s): Lamentations 3:31-42 (New Revised Standard Version)

(v. 31) For the Lord will not reject forever. (v. 32) Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; (v. 33) for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone. (v. 34) When all the prisoners of the land are crushed under foot, (v. 35) when human rights are perverted in the presence of the Most High, (v. 36) when one’s case is subverted —does the Lord not see it? (v. 37) Who can command and have it done, if the Lord has not ordained it? (v. 38) Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and bad come? (v. 39) Why should any who draw breath complain about the punishment of their sins? (v. 40) Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the Lord. (v. 41) Let us lift up our hearts as well as our hands to God in heaven. (v. 42) We have transgressed and rebelled, and you have not forgiven.

B. Possible Titles

- i. Do You See What God Sees?
- ii. Adopting God’s Policies for Prisoners
- iii. Prisoners of Love

C. Point of Exegetical Inquiry

In any text, there can be several words or phrases that require significant exegetical inquiry. Exegetical inquiries raised by this text include the following:

- **What is the meaning and significance of steadfast love in this Scripture?** The word used to denote steadfast love in this passage is familiar to many, *khesed*. The word is often translated as love, kindness, mercy, or loving-kindness. The concept of *khesed* serves as the foundation of Jewish ethical structures. It also connotes a freely given love, a love that is offered without cause.
- **What is the relationship between imprisonment and sin?** This text offers an interesting challenge because the selected verses trouble a contemporary assumption that prisoners are inherently sinful. Scholars have noted two types of prisoners in ancient Israel: prisoners of faith and prisoners of war. Prisoners of faith included prophets; these were often given the opportunity to plead their cases before the leaders of Israel. Prisoners of war included those who were spared execution when Israel conquered a territory; these prisoners were made laborers or slaves of Israel (c.f. Deuteronomy 20:10-18).⁴

In both cases, imprisonments were deeply connected to faith in the sense that they were measures taken in order to silence or protect particular standards of the faith of the people of Israel. However, with respect to prisoners of war, there were also very important socio-economic reasons for holding those captured prisoner. These prisoners became a form of social capital for the people of Israel; they satisfied a fabricated “need” for free labor. Importantly, the sinfulness that results in imprisonment is a matter of controlling heretical *faith*—that is often, in ancient Israel’s case, associated with foreign national identity, but not necessarily sinful *behaviors*. While the year of Jubilee might not (strictly) be applied to prisoners of war, interestingly *Lamentations* 3:31-42 does *not* specify the prisoners to which it is referring. It only indicates that *even* prisoners, irrespective of the cause of their imprisonment are (1) visible to God and (2) can be victims of injustice and violation (vv. 34-36). While this *alone* does not invalidate the violence and justifications of violence articulated in the Hebrew Scriptures, it does point to a higher moral virtue: though God may reject, the rejection is not forever (v. 31); God does not enjoy grieving anyone (v. 33); and God’s *mercy* is abundant and eternal (v. 32).

- **How do we assess the relationship between God and “good and bad”?** This passage seems to suggest that God is in control of all things and oversees all things. In other words, God has authority over “good” and “bad.” The passage seems to hold in tension a God who “causes grief” (v. 32), but does not “willingly afflict or grieve” (v. 33). This may seem to some to be an irreconcilable contradiction, but the Hebrew phrasing of the text does provide some assistance. In verse 32, one word denotes “caused/inflicted grief,” whereas verse 33 specifies the heart, soul, intention, and determination of God through a distinct word that distinguishes “willingness” from affliction and grief (again, “caused/inflicted grief”). Although this distinction in the Hebrew satisfactorily shifts any responsibility for evil further from God, there is still a series of central promises and commitments on God’s part that are reflected in the text: rejection is temporary and love

is enduring, even (and maybe *especially*) for those who are deemed social outcasts (i.e., prisoners).

What promise could be greater than this: love and dignity—even and especially for the outcasts—is what will ultimately triumph. **It is not**, therefore, possible, through this text, to shift the responsibility for both good and bad onto God’s shoulders.

- **What is the relationship between human moral agency and God’s agency?** Though it is not possible to blame God for sin, for “bad,” or for suffering, there is a particularly strong sense of human agency that is confirmed through this passage. **The sin, which we might assume is in the hearts of the outcasts, is, ironically, located in the hearts and deeds of those with explicit and implicit power over the outcasts.** As such, it is necessary for those with such power to *both* take note of and dismantle injustices reflected in their community, and also to take note of and dismantle the injustices in which they, themselves, participate. In the same way that human beings are accorded responsibility for the ills of crushing prisoners, perverting human rights, and subverting fair hearings for the accused, they are spurred on to a different way of being. This different way of being is both a matter of repentance and participation in creating a world that actively and explicitly *does not* crush prisoners, pervert human rights, or deny fair trials, creating a world that engenders the antidotes to imprisonment, human rights violations, and unjust silencing.

III. Introduction

In 587 BCE, Jerusalem was destroyed and the period known as the Exile or Babylonian Captivity began. During this time the Babylonians, who conquered Jerusalem, established a military occupation of Jerusalem and the Israelite leaders of Jerusalem who were not killed during the occupation (i.e., the elite, those who were best educated and financially secure) were deported and forced to live and work in or near Babylon. This marked a critical time of dispersal for the Jewish community, a dispersal that was permanent for many in this community despite the possibility of return to Jerusalem in 539 BCE, when the Persians defeated the Babylonians.⁵

Lamentations was most likely written during this period of dispersal (587–539 BCE) by a scholar/poet/theologian who survived the experience of exile to Babylon and sought to reconcile this experience in historical and theological terms for himself and other survivors. Traditionally, the authorship of this book is assigned to Jeremiah, but many scholars argue that a survivor of the exile wrote this book, someone who was left in the city of Jerusalem. The unique perspective of the writer of this text is important to note. On one hand, many of those with educational opportunities and/or wealth had been forced to go to Babylon. Though the writer clearly *at least* had the benefit of some educational opportunity, it is unlikely that he was among those forced into exile. On the other hand, he reflects *both* an experiential knowledge and understanding of the pain of dispossession and exile *and* an understanding of the problem of privilege enjoyed at the expense of others. Many scholars argue that those remaining were the poor and landless of the community. They suggest that these poor and landless took over some of the vacant land left by those who were dispersed, they reformed and strengthened their community through “village- and family-based networks of cooperation and support,” and they maintained “religious and literary activity.” Because of the specific Babylonian program of dispersal, it is conceivable that

his and/or his family's privilege may have been a factor in his experience of victimization at the hands of the Babylonians. Yet, this does not blind him to the common abuses of those with privilege and power.

Another interesting feature of Lamentations is its literary form and use as a communal lament. Some commentators argue that the lamenting poems of this book were used in mourning rites at the site of the razed Jerusalem temple. The title of this book was originally "How!," a translation of the Hebrew word *אֵיכָה* ('*ekah*'), which is a word signifying the beginning of wailing, mourning, or lament. The word begins the first, second, and fourth chapters of Lamentations, and the word helps convey shock, disbelief, and/or extensive devastation with respect to a condition or circumstance.

However, in the Greek and Latin translations of the original Hebrew text, the Hebrew word *קִינּוֹת* (*qinot*), meaning elegies, dirges, or sad poems, serves as the source for the contemporary Christian title, Lamentations.⁶ According to ethicist Emilie Townes, the form of lamentation, especially as communal lament, is especially important for the ways that it "names problems, seeks justice, and hopes for God's deliverance."⁷ Thus, communal lamentation as a form and this particular text from Lamentations provide a helpful guide for Christian engagement of problems of injustice in general as well as the specific injustice of contemporary systems of incarceration.

Before concluding this introduction, I must say a brief word about the contemporary social condition as it relates to this text and Anti-Incarceration/Justice Day. Political scientist Michael Dawson writes:

Compounding economic disadvantage, the extraordinary rate of incarceration of African Americans is a disaster for political activists and the black community. In 2007, one out of a hundred Americans was incarcerated. That is by far the highest rate in the world, and the figures are even worse for African Americans. That year, one in nine black men between the ages of 20 and 34 was in jail or prison. In all, one out of fifteen adult black men was behind bars, along with one in a hundred black women, as compared to one in 335 white women. While these numbers are in themselves distressing, they also contribute significantly to weakening economic prospects for African Americans and to widening class divisions.⁸

Most significantly, Dawson defends the claim that incarceration is one of many socio-economic conditions that is crippling the present and future of black politics in the United States.

One glimmer of hope is reflected in a different statistic about African Americans and African American Christians. Pew data reports: "The death penalty continues to draw much more support from whites (68%) than from African Americans (40%)." And, also: "Majorities of major religious groups, except for black Protestants, favor the death penalty for people convicted of murder."⁹

A strong precedent has been set among black churches committed to addressing some of the challenges and unjust laws that intersect with the devastation of mass incarcerations. These are

churches that have refused to turn a blind eye to the causes of imprisonment, unjust imprisonments, and those who survive imprisonment and return to their communities.¹⁰

Finally, this needs to be said: By virtue of the reach and merit of those to whom we assign authority, we assume that everyone who gets captured, incarcerated, or caught, everyone who suffers at the hands of an authority figure (including ourselves), merits suffering. Alternately, by virtue of the reach and merit of the government, the police, the courts, our bosses, our parents, and even God, if we cannot perceive immediate ramifications for our sinfulness, instead of repenting, we assume that we got away with something, we were not necessarily wrong to do something, or some combination of these two assumptions. Lamentations 3:31-42 challenges both of these extremes: the prisoners who might be presumed guilty by virtue of their imprisonment are *not* the ones accused of sinfulness; those who appear to be in power, and receiving some appreciable form of God's favor, are the *very* ones whose sinfulness is highlighted. So, the sermonic moves/points for this text could be as follows:

IV. Moves/Points

Move/Point One – We must learn *how* to see (i.e., what we must learn to see).

- a. See crushed prisoners of the land (i.e., recognize that it is possible to abuse and/or mistreat prisoners and that this is a violation that does occur);
- b. See the perversion of human rights (i.e., recognize when people have been cheated out of their possessions and/or denied their human dignity); and
- c. See that people have been denied fair hearings and trials.

Move/Point Two – See, as we repent.

- a. Repent from our willful blindness to and complicity in injustice;
- b. Repent from our complaints about being held accountable and our failure to be self-reflective; and
- c. Repent from our failure to remember that God sees all. (God sees how we treat others and how we approach our relationship with God.)

Move/Point Three – See with a heart of steadfast love.

- a. God does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone;
- b. Rejection will never trump steadfast love; and
- c. Abundant compassion is the ultimate expression of steadfast love!

V. Celebration

We are seeing the way God sees when:

We no longer justify judging and rejecting others indefinitely.

Instead, we are always looking for ways to demonstrate love and kindness.

We are seeing the way God sees when:

We recognize and destabilize the violations against prisoners—and even, in a new world reality, the human rights violation of imprisonment itself.

And when we recognize and destabilize the sin of out-of-control, un-examined, privilege.

We will know that we are seeing what God sees when:

We remember and celebrate the many ways that God “sees” us as God answers our prayers; and

when we remember that God sees us, and sets us free. Because of this we cannot help but do all we can to “set captives free.”

Lord, help us offer to you a world where steadfast love prevails forever and ever. Amen.

VI. Sounds, Sights, Colors in This Passage

Some of the sights, sounds, and colors include:

Sounds: Lament; grieving; screams; distress; shouts; complaints; pleading; deadly silence;

Sights: Bars; chains; shackles; lynching trees; the Cross; tears falling; and

Colors: Flesh; brown eyes; the color of tears; and crimson red.

VII. Illustration

See Something, Say Something

Many of us have been bombarded by the “See Something, Say Something” campaign. It invites “everyday citizens” to take note of unusual or suspicious behaviors and/or people they observe and then to report these behaviors and/or people to law enforcement authorities. These campaigns have been met with mixed success and, often, vigorous critique, especially within African American and Latino communities. The critique is understandable. On one hand, “snitching” is not necessarily a virtue and can be quite dangerous. On the other hand, this policy is heavily biased against those in society who are already presumed to be criminals (i.e., black and brown people). Lamentations 3:31-42 calls on us to turn this campaign on its head, and to return the gaze toward those who have initiated this effort. When we “see something” in the way that God sees, which means we are sensitive to injustices, abuses, and oppression, we have a moral obligation to “say something.” “Seeing” in the way that God sees, implies “saying.” In other words: *See* policies like the “See Something, Say Something” campaign and call them out for what they are, what they do, and say that they obstruct the ultimate call of God’s justice.

Yet, always be careful that our eyes are not glazed over with our own self-interests and the self-interests of those whose power and/or privilege we envy.

—Jennifer Leath

See the Sermon Illustrations section of the African American Lectionary for additional illustrations that you may wish to use in presenting a sermon for this moment on the liturgical calendar.

VIII. Songs to Accompany This Sermon

A. Spiritual

- Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen. *The version on this video is sung by Paul Robeson.* YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EJSkJlh_fg

B. Hymns

- His Eye Is on the Sparrow (Why Should I Feel Discouraged). By Civilla D. Martin. Tune, (SPARROW). *The version on this video is sung by Mahalia Jackson.* YouTube : http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eM_JRAPSvVM
- Great Is Thy Faithfulness. By Thomas O, Chisholm. Tune, (FAITHFULNESS), by William M. Runyan. *The version on this video is sung by CeCe Winans.* YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60o3UP4Kjwg>

C. Modern Song(s) (Written between 2005–2011)

- He Has His Hands on You. By Marvin Sapp
YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHj49WzGpXk>
- He's Able. By Deitrick Haddon
YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCpEJaKv1Ww>
- What Have You Done, My Brother. By Bosco Mann
YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhWGfhKRA8M>
- Great Is Thy Faithfulness. By Thomas O, Chisholm. Tune, (FAITHFULNESS), by William M. Runyan. *The version on this video is sung by Donnie McClurkin.* YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKKNC_Y6P6s
- Shackles. By Erica Atkins and Trecina Atkins
YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7eZD3TKn_M&ob=av2e

D. Song for the Period of Prayer

- Hold On, Help Is on the Way. By Keith Paden

E. Sermonic Selection(s)

- Deliverance Will Come. By Shea Norman
- I Will Find My Way. By Fred Hammond

F. Invitational Song(s)

- Love Lifted Me (I Was Sinking Deep in Sin). By James Rowe. Tune, (SAFETY). *The version in this video is sung by Leonard Scott.*
YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TL1tHwhsf3I>
- I'm Free. By Milton Brunson

G. Benediction Song(s)

- Have Your Way. By Joe Pace II
- Still My Child. By Erica Atkins, Trecina Atkins, and Warryn Campbell

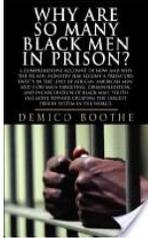
IX. Videos, Audio, and/or Interactive Media

- The Brian Lehrer Show: Prison Protest (a conversation with Angela Davis). Online location: <http://www.wnyc.org/shows/bl/2011/may/16/prison-protest/> accessed 12 December 2011
- Visions of Abolition: From Critical Resistance to a New Way of Life, a DVD. Online locations: <http://www.visionsofabolition.org/index.html> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9BODVxzNQk&feature=related> (trailer) accessed 12 December 2011
- The Big Lie: Prison. Online location: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhXLGh15O9w> accessed 21 December 2011
- A video presentation on the transition from incarceration to rehabilitation. *This is the video featured for today's unit.* Online location: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ghGGsIV_O5w accessed 21 December 2011

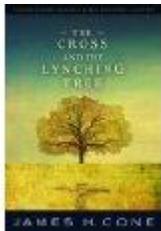
X. Books and Articles to Assist in Preparing Sermons or Bible Studies Related to African American Incarceration, Related Injustices, and Lament

Christian Resources on Incarceration and Related Injustices:

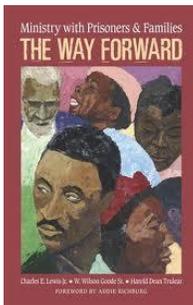
McClenney-Sadler, Madeline. "Anti-Incarceration Day: Lectionary Commentary." The African American Lectionary, March 2, 2008. Online location: <http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/PopupLectionaryReading.asp?LRID=12>



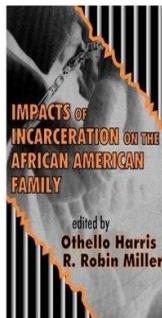
Boothe, Demico. Why Are So Many Black Men in Prison? A Comprehensive Account of How and Why the Prison Industry Has Become a Predatory Entity in the Lives of African Americans. Memphis, TN: Full Surface Publishing, 2007.



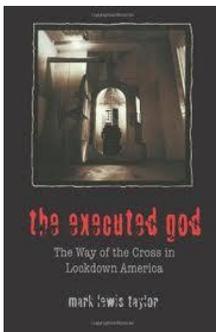
Cone, James H. The Cross and the Lynching Tree. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011.



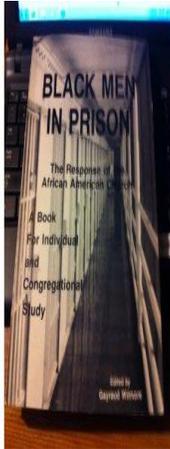
Goode, Sr., W. Wilson. Ministry with Prisoners & Families: The Way Forward. Edited by Charles E. Lewis Jr. and Harold Dean Trulear. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011.



Harris, Othello and R. Robin Miller. Impacts of Incarceration on the African American Family. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002.



Taylor, Mark. The Executed God: The Way of the Cross in Lockdown America. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001.



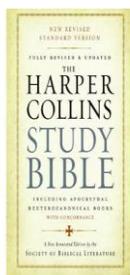
Wilmore, Gayraud. Black Men in Prison: The Response of the African American Church. Atlanta, GA: The Interdenominational Theological Press, 1990.

Christian Resources on Lamentation:

Brueggemann, Walter. "The Costly Loss of Lament." Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 36 (1986): 57–71.



Ceresko, Anthony. Introduction to the Old Testament: A Liberation Perspective. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992.

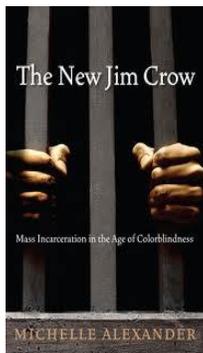


Lemke, Werner E., and Kathleen O'Connor. "Lamentations: Introduction." The Harper Collins Study Bible: Fully

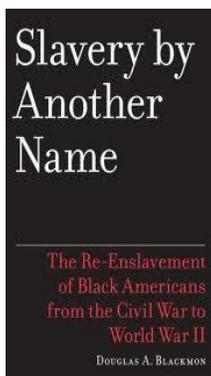
Revised and Updated: New Revised Standard Version, edited by Harold Attridge. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2006.

General Resources on Contemporary Incarceration and Related Injustices:

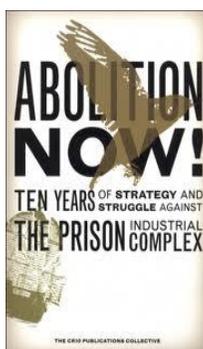
Dawson, Michael C. "The Future of Black Politics." Boston Review (February 2012).
Online location:
http://www.bostonreview.net/BR37.1/ndf_michael_dawson_black_politics.php.



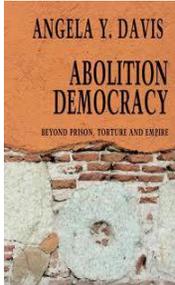
Alexander, Michelle. The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness. 1st ed. New York: The New Press, 2010.



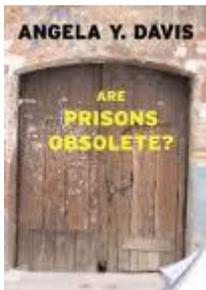
Blackmon, Douglas A. Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II. Reprint. New York: Anchor, 2009.



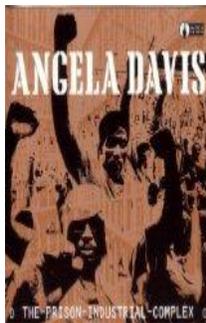
Collective, The CR10 Publications, ed. Abolition Now! Ten Years of Strategy and Struggle against the Prison Industrial Complex. Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2008.



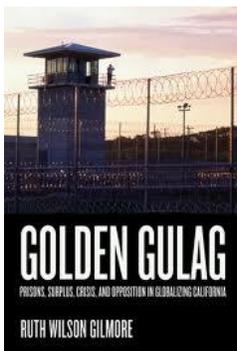
Davis, Angela Y. Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons, and Torture. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005.



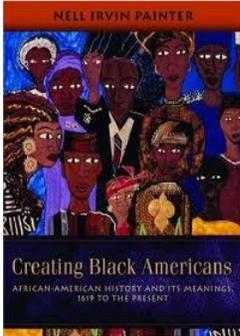
Davis, Angela Y. Are Prisons Obsolete? New York: Seven Stories Press, 2011.



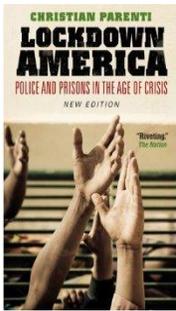
Davis, Angela Y. The Prison Industrial Complex. Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2005.



Gilmore, Ruth Wilson. Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California. 1st ed. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007.



Painter, Nell. Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.



Parenti, Christian. Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis. New Edition. Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2008.



Rodriguez, Dylan. Forced Passages: Imprisoned Radical Intellectuals and the U.S. Prison Regime. 1st ed. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

XI. Links to Helpful Websites on African American Anti-Incarceration Efforts

- Exodus Foundation.org. Online location: <http://exodusfoundation.org/>

- Critical Resistance: “A national grassroots organization committed to ending society’s use of prisons and policing as an answer to social problems.” Online location: <http://www.criticalresistance.org/>
- The Challenge of Prison Abolition: A Conversation (A conversation between Angela Y. Davis and Dylan Rodriguez). Online location: <http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/davisinterview.html>

XII. Notes for Select Songs

A. Spiritual

- Nobody Knows the Trouble I’ve Seen.
Location:
Online location: www.negrospirituals.com

B. Hymns

- His Eye Is on the Sparrow (Why Should I Feel Discouraged). By Civilla D. Martin. Tune, (SPARROW).
Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2001. #143
- Great Is Thy Faithfulness. By Thomas O, Chisholm. Tune, (FAITHFULNESS), by William M. Runyan
Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. #158

C. Modern Song(s) Written between 2000–2011

- He Has His Hands on You. By Marvin Sapp
Location:
Here I Am. New York, NY: Verity, 2010.
- He’s Able. By Deitrick Haddon
Location:
Haddon, Deitrick & Voices of Unity. Together in Worship. Indianapolis, IN: Tyscot, 2007.
- What Have You Done, My Brother. By Bosco Mann
Location:
Naomi Shelton and The Gospel Queens. Brooklyn, NY: Daptone Records, 2009.
- Great Is Thy Faithfulness. By Thomas O, Chisholm. Tune, (FAITHFULNESS), by William M. Runyan

Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. #158

- Shackles. By Erica Atkins and Trecina Atkins
Location:
Mary, Mary. Thankful. New York, NY: Columbia, 1999.

D. Songs for the Period of Prayer

- Hold On, Help Is on the Way. By Keith Paden
Location:
Houston, Whitney. The Preacher's Wife. Movie, Original Soundtrack. New York, NY: Arista, 1996.

E. Sermonic Selection(s)

- Deliverance Will Come. By Shea Norman
Location:
My Heart Depends on You. New York, NY: Zomba, 2004.
- I Will Find My Way. By Fred Hammond
Location:
Somethin' Bout Love. New York, NY: Verity, 2004.

F. Invitational Song(s)

- Love Lifted Me (I Was Sinking Deep in Sin). By James Rowe. Tune, (SAFETY).
Location:
African American Heritage Hymnal. #504
- I'm Free. By Milton Brunson
Location:
Brunson, Milton and The Thompson Community Singers. Great Gospel Moments. Chicago, IL: World Entertainment, 2000.

G. Benediction Song(s)

- Have Your Way. By Joe Pace II
Location:
Joe Pace Presents: Shake the Foundation. New York NY: Integrity/Epic Records, 2002.
- Still My Child. By Erica Atkins, Trecina Atkins, and Warryn Campbell
Location:
Thankful. New York, NY: Columbia/C2 Records, 2000.

Notes

1. Quoted in Dick Price, "More Black Men Now in Prison System Than Enslaved in 1850," Dick and Sharon's LA Progressive, March 27, 2011. Online location: <http://laprogressive.com/law-and-the-justice-system/black-men-prison-system/>.
2. McClenney-Sadler, Madeline. "Anti-Incarceration Day: Lectionary Commentary," The African American Lectionary, March 2, 2008, <http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/PopupLectionaryReading.asp?LRID=12>.
3. "One in 100: Behind Bars in America 2008." The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2008. Online location: http://www.pewtrusts.org/news_room_detail.aspx?id=35890
4. Mafico, Temba L. J. "Incarceration, Morality, and the Family: A Biblical and Theological Challenge to the Black Church." Black Men in Prison: The Response of the African American Church, ed. Gayraud Wilmore and Interdenominational Theological Center . Atlanta, GA: ITC Press, 1990.
5. Ceresko, Anthony. Introduction to the Old Testament: A Liberation Perspective. Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 1992. pp. 244–245, 271–282.
6. Lemke, Werner E., and Kathleen O'Connor. "Lamentations: Introduction." The Harper Collins Study Bible: Fully Revised and Updated: New Revised Standard Version, ed. Harold Attridge. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2006.
7. Townes, Emilie. Breaking the Fine Rain of Death: African American Health Issues and a Womanist Ethic of Care. Eugene OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006, 25.
8. Dawson, Michael C. "The Future of Black Politics." Boston Review (February 2012). Online location: http://www.bostonreview.net/BR37.1/ndf_michael_dawson_black_politics.php
9. "Continued Majority Support for Death Penalty: More Concerns among Opponents about Wrongful Convictions." Pew Research Center, January 6, 2012. Online location: <http://www.people-press.org/2012/01/06/continued-majority-support-for-death-penalty/>.
10. Online location: <http://exodusfoundation.org/>