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SLAVERY

A DIVINE INSTITUTION.

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BY J. B. THRASHER,  
OF PORT GIBSON.

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A SPEECH,  
MADE BEFORE THE BRECKINRIDGE AND LANE CLUB,  
November 5th, 1860.

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PORT GIBSON, MISSISSIPPI:  
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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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PORT GIBSON, Miss., Dec. 21, 1860.

JOHN B. THRASHER, Esq.—*Dear Sir*:—We have noted, with pleasure, that you in your late speech, presented an able and elaborate exposition of slavery in Scripture. In the present crisis, whatever throws light upon the origin and progress of our peculiar labor-system, ought to be submitted to the public consideration. We therefore are gratified to request that you will consent to the early publication of your learned exposition.

We have the honor to be your friends,

HENRY HUGHES,  
H. T. ELLETT,  
JNO. A. B. JONES,  
W. S. WILSON,  
W. ST. J. E. PARKER,  
WM. T. MAGRUDER,  
R. SHOEMAKER.  
WM. SILLERS.

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PORT GIBSON, Miss., Dec. 21, 1860.

*Messrs. Henry Hughes, H. T. Ellett, W. St. J. E. Parker and others :*

GENTLEMEN:—I sincerely thank you for the high-toned and flattering courtesy of your late note. Your request for the publication of my Scripture Exposition of Slavery, leaves me no choice but to comply with your wishes. My late speech was delivered on the spur of the exciting occasion, and therefore cannot be recalled; but that portion which treated the scriptural bearings of slavery, was carefully and conscientiously prepared. In fact, I aimed to make out, from the laws of God, an old lawyer's "Brief in Defense" of our labor system. An ample reward for my pains and trouble is a request for publication, coming from gentlemen who are known to be scholars and critics.

Yours, respectfully,

J. B. THRASHER.



SPEECH  
OF  
J. B. THRASHER, ESQ.

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FELLOW CITIZENS—

I have been speaking to you of the origin of Abolitionism. I have pointed out to you its rise among the Red Republicans, in the Jacobin clubs of France, during the bloody reign of Robespierre, in which the very dregs of society got possession of the government, and administered it, not only for the destruction of royalty, but of aristocracy, morality and religion; that in the wild rant of the Jacobins for universal liberty and equality, and to remove the last restraint to their vicious passions, the Jacobin Assembly decreed that "there was no God, and that death was an eternal sleep;" that some of those Jacobin Abolitionists transported themselves to the French West India Islands, and there preached universal liberty and equality to the slaves, which ended in the bloody scenes of St. Domingo—the destruction of the white race, and the relapsing into barbarism of the black race; that the abolition creed thus propagated in the West Indies, first took root in England; that England, becoming jealous of our commerce and northern factories—which were operating upon the product of slave labor—induced a Mr. Thompson, member of the British Parliament, to visit the Northern States to preach abolition there. We are told that, on his first appearance, the principles which he promulgated were so abhorrent to the people, that he was greeted with rotten eggs; but the New England mind being by nature inclined to fanaticism and infidelity, Mr. Thompson's doctrine took root and spread, and has continued to expand, until the Abolition party will probably elect Lincoln President of the United States, upon purely sectional grounds, and upon such avowed principles of hostility to the South, and the institution of slavery, as amounts to a declaration of war against slavery and the South.

The avowed reason given by Abolitionists for this declaration of war against the institution of slavery, is that it is immoral and contrary to the laws of God; that "man can not hold property in man."

The Southern platform upon the subject of slavery, is that "it is a blessing, both to the master and to the slave, and that it is an ordinance of God."

At the special request of some of our friends, I will now proceed to establish, from the Bible and New Testament, the latter proposition, that "slavery is a blessing, and an ordinance of God;" at all events, that it is an ordinance of God, and, as such, must continue till the end of time.

As it regards the proposition that slavery is an ordinance of God, we have but few revelations from God, and no records from man, except the inspired writings of Moses, during the antediluvian period of the world; but from this inspired writer it would seem that the merciful administration of God's providence toward man, underwent some change, with the commencement of nations, after the flood; that prior to the flood of Noah, there were, perhaps, no carnivorous animals, and man did not eat flesh. [Gen. i: 29.] Neither had it rained upon the earth for a period of sixteen hundred and fifty-six years. [Gen. ii: 5, 6.] And to punish the sinful antediluvian world, God had destroyed it, and cut off all flesh, by a flood—except Noah and those preserved in the ark with him. But that, after the flood, God blessed Noah and his sons, permitted them to eat flesh, and entered into a covenant with them that he would not again "cut off all flesh," nor destroy the world by a flood. And from this period God commenced the punishment of sin, and sinful nations, in a different manner, to wit: by slavery, captivity, and death. Gen. viii: 21; ix: 1, 2, 3.

After the flood, therefore, in the days of Noah, nations began, and slavery began with them. Hence, slavery was, from the beginning, a constituent part of every nation on earth; for we read, in the ninth chapter of Genesis, that Noah, who was inspired of God, cursed his grand-son, Canaan, in these words:

"Cursed be Canaan: a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. And God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." Gen. ix: 24 to 27.

It might be well to remark here, before proceeding further, that in King James' translation of the Bible and New Testament, great injustice has been done by rendering the word *slave* into the English word, *servant*. The words, in the Hebrew and Greek languages, meaning a slave, are translated servant. The letters of the word by which the Hebrews meant a slave—according to the learned and critical Dr. Blany, and that indefatigable biblical scholar, Dr. Bagnster—should be pronounced *ebed*; and, however used and in whatever form, is never used in Hebrew disconnected from the idea of slavery. [See Fletcher's Studies on Slavery, page 259.]

The word meaning a slave, in Greek, and used in the New Testa-



ment, is *doulos*, an original Greek word, and, according to all the best Greek scholars, means a [slave] unconditionally. [See Fletcher's Studies on Slavery, page 510.]

The English word, *servant*, into which the Hebrew word, *ebed*, a slave, and the Greek word, *doulos*, a slave, have been rendered, in King James' translation, is derived from the Latin word, *servus*, a slave, and when first introduced into the English language, did as distinctly carry with it the idea of slavery as does the present term, slave; and will continue to do so, wherever the English language and slavery prevail.

But let us return and examine, for a moment, this very remarkable curse of Canaan, in its bearing on all subsequent time, at least for forty-two hundred years.

"A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren." That is, the nations arising out of the descendants of Ham, or Canaan, shall be enslaved by their brethren. This has been true of Egypt, Abyssinia, the Barbary States, Senegambia, Timbuctoo, Dohomey; and in short it is true of every native kingdom in Africa. [See Bayard Taylor in Africa; Brown's Self-Interpreting Bible, page 12; Rollins' Ancient History, etc.]

"Blessed be the God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." The Chaldeans, Assyrians, Medo-Persians, Persians, Jews, Arabians, Hindoos, Indians, (of India) and Saracians, sprang from Shem, and each of them, in their turn, made slaves of the descendants of Canaan—especially the Jews. [See Gen. xiv; Numbers xxi; Joshua ix and xix; I Kings ix: 20, 21, where Solomon reduced one hundred and fifty thousand of them to bond service.]

"God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." We see the English in India, the descendants of Japhet, dwelling in the tents of Shem; and very recently the English, French, Dutch, Spaniards, Portuguese, and other European nations, made slaves of the descendants of Canaan.

It was, perhaps, Canaan who first saw the nakedness of his grand father, Noah, and told his father of it; or the curse may have passed over Ham on to Canaan, his son, in consequence of God having previously blessed Ham, on coming out of the ark. Thus has this curse been literally fulfilled up to the present time. But it is not to end here, for Noah does not limit it. Hence we conclude that slavery is to continue among men till the end of time.

These predictions are very extensive. Almost every prediction in scripture, relative to the Egyptians, Canaanites, Tyrians, and Zidonians, is comprehended in this repeated curse of Canaan. Almost

every prediction relative to the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, and Arabs, and especially what relates to the Jewish nation and Jesus Christ, is included in the blessing of Shem. Almost every prediction relative to the Greeks, Romans, Goths, Tartars, and Turks, and especially whatever relates to the gospel church among the Gentiles is contained in the blessing of Japhet. The fulfillment of these predictions is no less remarkable. Much of the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, much of the history of nations, is no more than an account of it.

The descendants of Ham peopled Africa and part of western Asia. For about forty-two hundred years past, the bulk of the Africans have been abandoned of Heaven to the most gross ignorance, rigid slavery, stupid idolatry, and savage barbarity. Scarcely ever hath a State, formed of them, made any respectable figure. For many ages the northern parts of Africa were enslaved or harrassed by the Assyrian, Chaldean, and Persian descendants of Shem, and next by the Greeks, but especially by the Roman and Vandal descendants of Japhet. For twelve hundred years past they have been enslaved by the Ishmaelite Saracens descended from Shem, or, by the Ottoman Turks descended of Japhet.

But we are drawing rather too largely on history, and will therefore return to the curse of God, pronounced, through Noah, on Canaan and trace up God's decrees and sanction of slavery, through the books of the Old and New Testament, where it will be found, by all who will examine the subject, that slavery has ever been a constituent part of every nation since this curse was pronounced on Canaan, twenty-three hundred and forty-seven years before Christ.

After about four hundred years' respite, the curse pronounced upon Canaan, broke forth with great violence upon the sinners of Sodom and adjacent places, in which five kingdoms of Canaan were reduced to servitude by the Elamite descendants of Shem. [See Gen. xiv.] And Lot, Abram's nephew, having been carried away captive in this war, induced Abram to raise a military force to pursue the conquerors, and to retake his nephew. Abram, the favorite of Heaven, who entertained angels in his tent, one of whom was the son of God [Gen. xviii: 24; John v: 22] Abram, to whom God appeared while in Ur, of the Chaldeans, and at least eight times afterwards, probably in human shape, and conversed with him, and changed his name to Abraham; [Gen xii; xiii; xv; xvii; xviii; xx; xxii] Abram, to whom the promise was made, and from whose seed the Messiah was to spring, was a large slave holder, and enrolled in his military force, to pursue the Four Kings who had carried away his nephew, three hun-

dred and eighteen slaves, born in his own house. But Abram had other slaves, bought with his money, which he probably enrolled. [Gen. xiv: 14; xvii: 23.] With these slaves, Abram, after being joined by some auxiliary forces, came to battle with the Four Kings, stripped them of their spoil, retook Lot and the other captives, returned, and was met and blessed by Melchizedek, priest of the most high God, king of righteousness, to whom he gave a tenth part of the spoil, Gen. xiv.

Melchizedek, who blessed Abram, saying: "Blessed be Abram of the most high God," was like unto the son of God. Jesus was made a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Heb. vii: 1.

Surely, therefore, God sanctioned the holding of slaves by Abram, and why not? He had doomed one portion of the human race to slavery, for sinful conduct, to wit: Canaan and his descendants, and being slaves by the decree of Omnipotence, as a punishment for sin—they must have masters. These masters God had designated in the curse, and Abram was one of them. "Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." Gen. ix: 25.

About two years after this Southern slave holder, who was an especial favorite of Heaven, had returned from the slaughter of the Four Kings, God again appeared unto him, and after promising him seed, as numerous as the stars of Heaven, [Gen. xv: 5] informed him that his seed should go into slavery four hundred years. Thus it is written:

"And he said unto Abram, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years." Gen. xv: 13.

This four hundred years of slavery foretold to Abram, was not to benefit the Egyptians, whom they served, for the Egyptians were a nation of idolators; but to punish the seed of Abram—who had a knowledge of the true God—for sin, and idolatry.

But to demonstrate still further that slavery is of God, and was at all times upheld and sanctioned by him, in fulfilment of his immutable laws, we will refer to the case of the Egyptian slave Hagar, the hand-maid of Abrams' wife Sarai. Hagar had fled from her mistress, and the Angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water, in the wilderness.

"And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou; and whither wilt thou go? And she said I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the Angel of the Lord said unto her, return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands." Gen. xvi: 7, 8, 9.

In the passages of Scripture above cited, and in many other places, the Angel of the Lord or Angel Jehovah, denote Jesus Christ, who

is the messenger of the New Covenant, as in Gen. xxii: 11; xlviii: 16; Judges, ii: 1; vi: 2; xiii: 3; Mal. iii: 1. So that we find the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, before he appeared on earth in the flesh, commanding a runaway slave to return and submit to her mistress. St. Paul, therefore, had very high authority for sending the runaway slave Onesimus, back to his master, Philamon; for the Lord Jesus Christ had set him the example, nineteen hundred and eleven years before he appeared on earth in the flesh.

Abraham died eighteen hundred and twenty-one years before Christ; and Isaac, his son by Sarah, inherited his slaves, and other property. Gen. xxiv: 36; xxv: 5.

Isaac, too, was a favorite of God and a "Southern" slave holder. After the death of Abraham, the Lord appeared unto Isaac, and promised to be with him, and to bless him, and to make his seed multiply as the stars of Heaven; and from his seed the Messiah was again promised. Isaac was a large slave holder living in about the latitude of the Southern States, and in the language of Scripture "had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds and great store of servants, and the Philistines envied him," [Gen. xxvi: 3, 4, 14] just as the Northern fanatics, envy the slave holders of the South at this day.

But God had decreed that slavery should exist, as the punishment of sin and sinful nations after the flood; and it was no objection to him that Isaac was a slave holder, and in that respect was but fulfilling the ordinance of his God; which we suppose comprised religious instruction to his slaves, such as the slave holders of the South are in the habit of extending to their slaves, at the present time. For we read, in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis, that God commanded Abraham to circumcise his slaves bought with his money, as well as those born in his house. God appeared unto Isaac a second time and blessed him. [Gen. xxvi: 24.] Isaac died about seventeen hundred and twenty-seven years before Christ, leaving his son, Jacob, in possession of his blessing. Gen. xxvii.

Jacob, on account of his faith, was another favorite of Heaven. God appeared unto him five times, at least, if no more, and conversed with him. [See Gen. xxxi: 5; xxxii: 30; xxxv: 1, 9; xlvi: 2.] And when returning from the residence of Laban, his father-in-law, to Seir or Succoth, with his wives, his children, his slaves, and his flocks, he was met by a company of angels as a welcome. [Gen. xxxii: 1.] And the Son of God spent a night with him on his way back, at Peniel, wrestling with his faith, and then and there changed his name to Israel, and blessed him. Gen. xxxii: 24, 30.

Jacob was a slave holder, and had slaves with him at the time of

receiving the blessing at Peniel. [Gen. xxx: 43; xxxii: 5.] And his two wives, Leah and Rachel, had each received a female slave as a gift from their father, Laban, upon their marriage to Jacob, which slaves he had with him at the time of receiving the blessing of the Son of God. Gen. xxix: 24, 29.

The promise was again renewed to Jacob, that his seed should multiply as the sand of the sea, that could not be numbered for multitude, and that in him and in his seed, all the families of the earth should be blessed; that is to say, that from his seed the Messiah should spring. Israel died in Egypt sixteen hundred and eighty-nine years before Christ, leaving twelve sons, who became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel.

In point of time, Job was the next large slave holder who received the blessings of God, and to whom God appeared, and with whom God conversed in person. Job lived about fifteen hundred and twenty years before Christ, in the land of Uz,—probably about the time that Moses lived in the land of Median, or perhaps one hundred years before. That Job was an especial favorite of God, we know from the fourteenth chapter of the prophet Ezekiel, fourteenth and twentieth verses. We do not know the number of Job's slaves, but we know that he was a slave holder, and have reason to believe that he owned a large number of them; for we read, in the first chapter of Job, that he had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; that the oxen were plowing, and the asses were feeding beside them; and that the Sabeans took them away and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; that the fire of God fell from Heaven, and burnt up the sheep, and the servants; that the Chaldeans fell upon the camels, and carried them away, and slew the servants with the edge of the sword. From this chapter, it is evident that Job owned slaves enough to plow five hundred yoke of oxen, attend seven thousand head of sheep, three thousand camels and five hundred she asses, in separate places. The thirty-first chapter of Job, thirteenth verse, alludes to the treatment of his slaves. But the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before, after the destruction of his property, and therefore doubled his slaves. Job, xlii: 10.

About thirty years after this period, or fourteen hundred and ninety-one years before Christ, the children of Israel completed their four hundred years of bondage in Egypt, as foretold to Abraham, and we find them with Moses, the prophet and chosen instrument of God, encamped before Mount Sinai, about forty-seven days out from Egypt, to receive the law from God, which was to govern them, as his chosen

people. In the laws thus derived from God, we find that God opened the slave trade, sanctioned slavery, and regulated it by Omnipotent decrees, in which he calls a slave his master's money. Thus it is written :

“And if a man smite his servant, or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished, notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished; for he is his money.” Exodus, xxi; 20, 21.

Hence we find that the laws of God authorized the holding of men and women in bondage, and the punishment of them with a rod. Also, that God, in order to protect the master's rights of property in his slaves, did sanction the separation of man and wife, and of father and children. For we read, in the same chapter :

“If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve thee, and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife (one of his bondmaids) and she have borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free; then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.” Exodus, xxi: 3, 4, 5, 6.

In the institution of the Passover, we find God distinguishing between the hired servant, and the bond slave, bought for money, in which he gives the bond slave the preference, and bestows on him some of the marks of divine favor which he bestowed upon his chosen people. The passage alluded to, reads thus :

“And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron: This is the ordinance of the Passover; there shall no stranger eat thereof. But every man's servant, that is bought for money, when thou has circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof.” Exodus, xii: 43, 44, 45.

Again, we find God for the honor of his sanctuary, prescribing that no priest should eat their share of the sacred offerings, while under any ceremonial uncleanness. And therein, he, again, not only distinguishes between the bond slave bought for money, and the hired servant, and gives the bond slave the preference: but regards the purchaser of a soul for money, as pure and without spot or blemish. Thus it is written :

“There shall no stranger eat of the holy thing; a sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant, shall not eat of the holy thing. But if the priest buy any soul with his money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house, they shall eat of his meat.” Leviticus xxii: 10, 11.

In the passage of Scripture above quoted, God speaks of the purchase of a soul for money. The soul, we believe, is the immortal part of man, which is inseparable from the body during life; but departs from it in *articulo mortis*, and does not die with it. So that the pur-

chaser of a slave, to wit: of a heathen, or a descendant of Canaan, acquires both the soul and the body, during life.

Soon after this period, sometime in the year fourteen hundred and ninety, before Christ, we find God again<sup>s</sup> sanctioning slavery, and regulating the slave trade from Mount Sinai, by law, in the following language, to wit:

“Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shall have shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land. And they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you to inherit them for a possession: they shall be your bondmen forever.” Leviticus xxv: 44, 45, 46.

Not long before the death of Moses, sometime in the year fourteen hundred and fifty-two, before Christ, he went to war with the Midianites by the command of the Lord. The record reads thus:

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites; afterwards shall thou be gathered to thy people.” Numbers xxxi: 1, 2.

In this war the children of Israel took thirty-two thousand captives who were divided as slaves among the men who went to battle—the congregation levying a tribute unto the Lord of thirty-two captive slaves, which were given to the Levites, who kept the charge of the tabernacle of the Lord, “as the Lord commanded Moses.” Numbers xxxi.

About a month before the death of Moses, he, in the most affecting manner, renewed the covenant between God and Israel, and rehearsed to them, what God done for them, and the laws which he had given them. In this rehearsal, the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy contains the laws of the Hebrew wars, derived from God himself, in which he ordained, that their captives taken in war should be enslaved. Deut. xx: 10 to 15.

Thus stood the law of God in regard to slavery and the slave trade, when Joshua succeeded Moses, by appointment of God, as Governor of Israel. That Joshua, like Moses, acted under the Lord's direction, and with his sanction, no student of the Bible can doubt. The Lord appeared unto Joshua, after the death of Moses, repeatedly, and communed with him and promised to be with him “whithersoever he went,” [Josh. i.] and seems to have conducted all his movements, and battles, “as captain of the host.” Joshua v: 13, 14.

The Book of Joshua contains a remarkable fulfilment of God's promises to the patriarchs and their descendants, in giving them the land of Canaan and the fulfilment of the curse of God pronounced by Noah

upon Canaan in the destruction and slavery of his descendants, and of God's policy; shadowed forth after Noah's flood, to punish sin and sinful nations by slavery, captivity and death, after entering into the covenant with Noah and his sons—instead of destroying the whole earth, and cutting off all flesh by a flood, as he had before done.

And thus we find Joshua, acting under the immediate sanction and direction of the Lord, enslaving a whole nation—the Gibeonites—and making them “hewers of wood and drawers of water for Israel.” Joshua ix.

In consequence of the Gibeonites having submitted to Joshua, the five kings of the Amorites formed a league to cut them off, and to destroy them as a people. The Gibeonites now being the slaves of Israel, appealed to Joshua for protection, who marched with his whole force against the army of the five kings. It was upon this memorable occasion, that Joshua, when ostensibly fighting to protect the slaves of his people, “Spake to the Lord and exclaimed in the sight of all Israel: Sun stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.” Joshua x: 12, 13.

Joshua, after serving God faithfully, died about fourteen hundred and twenty-four years before Christ, and slavery continued to exist in Israel, and among all other nations by the sanction of God, and by virtue of his Omnipotent decrees; and doubtless will continue to exist until the end of time; for there is no limit to the curse of Canaan whence we date the origin of slavery, as decreed by God himself. Accordingly we find it sanctioned by God; by the Lord Jesus Christ; by the Apostles; and by holy men throughout the books of the Old and New Testament.

King David was a man after God's own heart. The Redeemer was the promised seed of David, Judah, Isaac, Jacob, Abraham and Eve, according to the flesh. David enslaved the Moabites, Syrians and Edomites, “and the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went.” [II Samuel viii: 2, 6, 14.] And so common was slavery in his day, that when he was fleeing from Saul, and in the wilderness of Paran, that he was himself accused of being a runaway slave by Nabal, who was shearing sheep in Carmal, and to whom David had sent for provisions: “And Nabal answered David's servants and said, who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master.” I Samuel, xxv: 10.

David died about ten hundred and fifteen years before Christ; and Solomon, the renowned King of Israel, who was endowed with wisdom from on high, the son of David by Beth Sheba, Uriah's wife, was chosen of God to succeed his father David.



Solomon who built the Temple of God according to a plan furnished by God himself to David, built it with slave labor, and had one hundred and fifty thousand slaves employed in building the Temple. He enslaved the remnant of five nations of Canaanites left in the land up to his time. I Kings ix; 20, 21; v: 15, 16. Brown's Self-Interpreting Bible, page 12.

That the Israelites, the chosen and favored people of God, were a nation of slave holders, and that most of the prophets, and holy men of God, owned slaves, no student of the Bible, having any regard for veracity, can dispute. Thus we find the prophet Samuel trying to persuade the people against a king to rule over them, by telling them that a King "would take their men servants and maid servants, and put them to his own work." I Samuel v: 16.

Elijah, the prophet, who was translated to Heaven without tasting death, owned a slave, which he left at Beersheba, when fleeing from Jezebel. I Kings xix: 3.

Also the prophet Elisha, on whom the mantle of Elijah fell—the man of God who performed so many miracles, and among others, that of raising the dead to life—was a slave holder, and punished his slave Gehazi, by afflicting him with leprosy. II Kings, v.

The children of Israel were often reduced to slavery themselves by God's command for breaking his law, and having broken their covenant with God respecting Hebrew slaves, [See Jere. xxxiv: 11] God decreed as a punishment, that they should themselves go into bondage and serve the King of Babylon seventy years; which bondage was foretold to them by Jeremiah the prophet, in the year six hundred and seven, before Christ. Jere. xxv: 11.

After the expiration of the seventy years of bondage in Babylon, Nehemiah, who rebuilt Jerusalem by commission from Artaxerxes, four hundred and forty-five years before Christ, was a slave holder. Neh. iv: 22, 23.

Likewise, most of the returned Israelites held Chaldean slaves at the time, which had been promised to them, and foretold by Isaiah the prophet, seven hundred and thirty years before Christ, and about two hundred and eighty-five years prior thereto. Isaiah xix: 2.

So that we find God ever after entering into the covenant with Noah and his sons, constantly punishing sin and sinful nations, whether Jew or Gentile, with slavery, captivity and death. Hence we believe that the slavery of the negro is of God, which we can trace back to the curse of Caanan.

"A son honoreth his father and a servant his master." [Mal. i: 6.] Malachi was the last prophet that God commissioned on earth,

prior to the advent of the Savior. He foretold the coming of John the Baptist, and the incarnation and ministry of Christ.

Christ appeared about four hundred years afterwards, descended in the flesh from a long line of slave holding ancestors, from whose seed he had been repeatedly promised by Jehovah. The precise year that the Messiah was to appear and be cut off, and did appear, had been foretold by Daniel, the prophet, in Chaldea, four hundred and ninety years previous thereto. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city." Dan. ix: 24-27.

Each of the weeks above mentioned, denotes seven years, a day for a year, as we learn from the prophet Ezekiel iv: 6.

Christ appeared on earth at a time when slavery abounded everywhere. Barns, in his infamous work on slavery, [page 251, 252] admits that in Italy there were three slaves to every free man, and that there was more than twenty millions of slaves in Italy alone, and not less than sixty millions in the Roman Empire. Consequently, Christ and his Apostles came in constant contact with slavery—recognizing it upon all occasions, as of divine origin, and giving instructions both to the master and to the slave, in relation to their conduct towards each other.

Not long after Christ's sermon on the Mount, we find him healing the slave of a Roman Centurion, and restoring him to the service of his master, upon the master's application. Mat. viii: 5, 13. Luke vii: 2, 10.

We again find Christ recognizing the institution of slavery, as recorded in St. Luke xvii: 7, 9; xix: 12, 16; and St. John viii: 33, 36.

St. Paul the great Apostle of the Gentiles, exhorts slaves to be obedient to their masters. "Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh." Eph. vi: 5. The same doctrine was preached to the Collossians.

"Servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God." St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, iii: 22.

The Apostles, at a very early period of their ministry, in obedience to the divine law, were compelled to encounter abolition fanatics, who, like the abolition fanatics of the present day, inculcated the doctrine that the religion of Christ gave liberty and equality to the slaves. This was especially the case at Ephesus, where judaizing abolition teachers perverted the gospel. St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy condemns the abominable heresy, and gives us a most graphic description of that vile race of beings called abolitionists at this day. Says St. Paul:

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own

masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit of the things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness: he is proud, teaching nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy, vi: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Again, St. Paul in his Epistle to Titus, instructs him as follows:

"Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again: not rebelling; but showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of our Savior in all things." St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, ii: 9.

In the First Epistle of Peter, second chapter and verses 18 and 19, it is written: "Servants be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."

The Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon was written to a Christian slave holder. In this Epistle, we find the great apostle following the example set him by Christ in the case of Hagar, nineteen hundred and eleven years before he appeared on earth in the flesh, and actually sending back the fugitive slave Onesimus to his master Philemon. In regard to the runaway slave Onesimus, St. Paul in King James' translation, is made to say, in the twelfth verse of the Epistle, "whom I have sent again." Macknight renders the words "Him I have sent back." Dr. Macknight renders the term applied to Onesimus, in the Epistle to Philemon into the English word slave. In like manner, Moses' Stuart calls Onesimus the slave of Philemon; and Brown, in his "Self-Interpreting Bible," does the same thing.

Such were the sanction and teachings of the Holy Apostles who were taught of Christ and inspired of God, respecting slavery. And we find the Christian fathers, who immediately succeeded them, inculcating the same doctrine. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, according to the early church historians, was the child whom the Savior took in his arms, and set before his disciples as a pattern of humility, when he told them that unless they should be converted and become as little children, they should in no wise enter into the kingdom of God: And from thence he took the name of Theophrasts. [He who has Christ in his breast.] Be this matter, however, as it may, it is certain that St. Ignatius was the disciple of St. John, "and like unto the Apostles in all things." St. Chrysostom tells us that he was intimately acquainted with the Apostles, and instructed by them. That

he was chosen by the Apostles that were still living to be Bishop of Antioch, and received imposition of hands from them.

St. Ignatius, in his second Epistle to St. Polycarp, who was also a disciple of St. John, says: "Overlook not the men and maid servants, let them be the more subject to the glory of God, that they may attain from him a better liberty. Let them not desire to be set free at public cost, that they be not slaves to their own lusts." St. Ignatius suffered martyrdom, for his religion and faith in Christ, under Trajan.

St. Barnabas, the companion of St. Paul, and according to the early church historians, the disciple of Christ, was one of the seventy chosen by him. He was the competitor of Mathias. His first education was at the feet of Gamaliel, by whom he was instructed, together with St. Paul, his class mate. But whatever may be the testimony of the early church historians in relation to St. Barnabas, it is certain, from the testimony of St. Luke, that he was a good man, and full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost. Acts xi: 24.

In the Catholic Epistle of St. Barnabas, nineteenth chapter, he says: "Thou shalt not be bitter in thy commands towards any of the servants that trust in God; lest thou chance not to fear him who is over both; because he came not to call any with respect to persons, but whomsoever the spirit prepared."

Thus we find that God has ordained one portion of the human race to be bond slaves, from the period whence nations commenced—and that he has transmitted to us his decrees on the subject, through his inspired writers and vicegerents on earth, we cannot doubt. That the greater portion of the human race, thus ordained to bond service by Omnipotent decrees, have ever been far in advance, in point of intelligence and civilization to the negroes, whom we hold in slavery. That the negroes whom we hold in bondage, are the lowest and most degraded of the descendants of Canaan, and never enjoyed freedom in their own country, for the best of all reasons; first, because they were incapable of it; secondly, because they were slaves in their own country, without any prospect of becoming free, when purchased from their owners and transported to this country; and thirdly, because God decreed them to bondage, and in that decree, designated their masters, to wit: the descendants of Shem and Japhet, from whom we sprung.

But even if this were not the case—yet to transport negroes from Africa, and to hold them in bondage in this country, is sustained by the highest and purest principles of morality and religion. In the first place, the population of Africa is estimated at fifty millions, of whom forty millions are in bondage to their own native chiefs and color. Secondly, they are barbarians, of the deepest dye and darkest hue, having no word, in their dialects, which means or signifies God

and according to Sir Charles Anderson (a late Swedish traveler) and others, they have no conception of Deity whatever, or of a resurrection or future rewards and punishment. They live virtually in a state of nudity, eat worms and insects, sleep on the ground in the open air or under the forest growth, like cattle, and frequently live on human flesh: for they are cannibals in the true sense of the word. They are constantly engaged in war and pillage, and always enslave their captives, which they retain, or kill and eat for food, or sell into foreign bondage.

We make a few extracts from English travelers, and others in Africa, to demonstrate the foregoing statements, respecting the degraded condition of the negro race in their own country. James Edward Alexander, H. L. S., during the years 1836 and 1837, made an excursion from the Cape of Good Hope into the interior of South Africa, and the countries of the Manuquas, Boschmans, and Hill Damaras, under the auspices of the English government and the Royal Geographical Society, which was published in two volumes, from which we first extract:

"I was anxious to ascertain the extent of knowledge among the tribe (Damaras) with which I dwelt, to learn what they knew of themselves, and of men and things in general: but they positively knew nothing. They did not know one year from another: they only knew that at certain times the trees and flowers bloom, and then rain was expected. As to their own age, they knew no more of what it was, than idiots. Some even had no name. Of numbers they were ignorant: few could count above five. Above all, they had not the least idea of God or a future state." Vol. I. page 126.

"At Chubecches, I bought a fine little Damara boy, for a shepherd, of his mother, for two cotton handkerchiefs and two strings of glass beads." Page 162.

Lander, a modern traveler in Africa says: "With the negro, affection is altogether out of the question. They have no love of country, and in general betray the most perfect indifference on being enslaved and exiled from their native land." Vol. II, page 208.

At Katungua, Lander describes the food to be "such as lizards, rats, locusts and caterpillars, which the natives roast, grill, bake and boil." Page 179.

"In the forenoon we passed near a spot where a party of Falatahs murdered twenty of their slaves, because they had not food sufficient." Page 227.

"We are anxious to leave this abominable place, from the fact that a sacrifice of no less than three hundred human beings of both sexes is shortly to take place. We often hear the cries of these poor wretches." Page 58.

"The Gingo and Eboe negroes, are cannibals. At Bancore some of the pots were found on the fire with human flesh in them. At last we came to a place where human arms, legs and thighs, hung upon wooden shambles, and were exposed to sale like butchers' meat." Steadman's Narrative. vol. II, page 267.

"One most inhuman custom still prevails in this part of Africa, and that is the sacrifice of a number of slaves at the burial of their dead, in testimony of the respect in which their memory is held." Osborne's Collection of Travels, vol. II, page 537.

"We will only observe, that human flesh is one of their delicacies, and that they devour it as the most agreeable dainty. Some of their commanders carried young women along with them, some of whom were slain almost every day, to gratify this unnatural appetite." Modern Universal History, vol. XVI, page 321.

"With regard to their funeral ceremonies, the corpse remains in the house till the son, the father, or next of blood, can procure or purchase a slave; who is beheaded at the time the corpse is buried." Family Magazine, 1836, page 431.

"Nobody can be permitted to marry, till he can present a human head of some other tribe to his proposed bride." Family Magazine, 1836.

Since England and the United States have abolished the slave trade, it has increased in other directions, and its enormities have been doubled. Instead of being brought under the regenerating influences of Christianity, their slaves are now sacrificed at the shrine of friends at home, or sold to Pagans, to the Arab tribes, into Egypt, Asia, and Turkey in Europe. Mr. Buckhart in his travels in Nubia gives us very full information on the subject. He traveled with companies of slaves and slave merchants, through the deserts of Nubia. The chief mart of the Egyptian and Arabian slave trade, is Shendy, and a village near Siout, in Egypt, where slaves are collected from various tribes and nations in Africa and sold. Mr. Buckhart estimated that five thousand slaves under fifteen years of age, were sold yearly, at Shendy alone. He describes the hardships of travel over the desert to these points, as extreme.

Such has been the condition of Africa from the remotest period of time; at all events, since the voyage of Hanno was made, five hundred and seventy years before the Christian era. The account of this voyage was written in Punic, and deposited in the temple of Moloch, or Carthage. It was afterwards translated into Greek, thence into English by Dr. Faulkner. See also Humpal's History of African Settlements, translated from the Punic books of Sallust, and into English by D. Stewart, page 22.

If, then, we must conclude after a full survey of the condition of the negroes in Africa, from remote periods, that to purchase them of their owners in that country, where they are already in bondage, and liable to be sacrificed in honor of the dead, or eaten for food, and from thence to transport them to this country and hold them in bondage—clothing, feeding, and working them—protecting their lives, and instructing them in the principles of the Christian religion, is a purely moral and religious act, and pleasing in the sight of God. And that the man, or set of men, who could say that the opening of

the African slave trade, and the holding of negroes in bondage in this country, are immoral, could have cried fire in the general deluge. Yet we know that there are a class of fanatical writers at the North, prompted by envy and hatred to the South, who repudiate God's sanction of slavery. We allude principally to Wayland, Channing, and Barnes, with whom we will connect the name of Dr. Paley, and pronounce them all either infidels or wilful perverters of holy writ, who by their writings detract from the purity and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles.

They are either infidels or wilful perverters of holy writ, because they deny and pervert the revealed laws of God, and the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles on the subject of slavery, and set up an inward monitor, claimed to reside in their own minds, as an infallible guide, and attempt to reason it out in opposition to divine revelation, which they call "the higher law." This constitutes infidelity in the true sense of the term, and renders them liable to the above charge.

They detract from the purity and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles, because they virtually accuse them of suppressing the truth, in not revealing the sin of slavery, through motives of policy or fear. This abominable slander upon the Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles, first promulgated by Dr. Paley, an Englishman, from whom Wayland, Channing, and Barnes borrow it, does of necessity involve the divinity of Christ and the divine commission of his Apostles, by the inference that they suppressed the will of God on the subject of slavery, through motives of policy or fear. The principles for which Wayland, Channing, Barnes, and Dr. Paley contend, must of necessity presume that God has recalled the curse of Canaan, and revoked his former decrees on the subject of slavery, and that hence the holding of slaves has become sinful. Yet the only evidence that they offer us of this fact, is the teachings of that inward monitor claimed to reside in their own unbalanced craniums, while holy writ convinces us that slavery is an ordinance of God, and that it must continue until the end of time.

We, in the South, therefore, believe it to be our duty to God, to ourselves, and to posterity, to perpetuate African slavery, and to extend it as a missionary duty. This can only be done by severing all government relations with the Northern States, and forming a Southern Confederacy of slave States. That a majority of the people of the Northern States have become demoralized on the subject of slavery, cannot be denied. They are covenant breakers. They deny the equality of the slave States in the partnership property of the Union, and repudiate the

Constitutional guarantees for our protection. In all the Northern States, the abolition party, now in the majority, have societies formed for the purpose of stealing Southern property, not for the love of gain; but aimed at the destruction of the Southern people. These societies are known to the authorities of the States in which they exist, and are tolerated instead of being put down as thieving bandits, acting in violation of the international law of the States and do contribute, among other things, to render a longer union with the Northern States impossible.

[Mr. Thrasher continued to speak at some length—demonstrating the necessity of secession and the ability of the South to sustain herself in the new relation.]—ED.









