

Freed Slaves

Romans Chapter Six

I. Introduction:

A. Historical narratives, given by slaves or former slaves themselves, paint a graphic verbal picture of the wide spectrum of the treatment of slaves.

- 1. From the most deplorable treatment and conditions, to the often ignored kindness shown to some slaves.**
 - a) E.g. Field slaves beaten to death or nearly to death for the slightest imagined infractions.**
 - b) E.g. House slaves treated as family – sometimes kept together for generations (The Smith plantation of Beaufort, S.C. had pictures and records of a slave family of 5 generations. The Smith family treated the slaves and their children as family – even participating in their weddings, funerals, and religious activities.) [See also Mary Prince's testimony – page 1](#)**
- 2. This is not to condone slavery or an attempt to paint a rosy picture. All men desire freedom and none, I suppose, slavery when given freedom as a genuine option. QUOTATION: Aeschylus (es'ke-les) (525–456 B.C.), Greek tragedian. “Willingly no one chooses the yoke of slavery.” I don’t suppose that sentiment has changed any over the past 2,500 years!**

B. The Bible and Slavery.

- 1. See preceding notes ([page 2](#))**
- 2. The first mention of “slavery” is by Noah in Genesis 9:24-25.**
- 3. Jacob was an indentured slave (. A contract binding one party into the service of another for a specified term.¹)**

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4. Other examples: Joseph, Daniel, Naaman's wife's maid servant. Etc., etc.
5. Jews in Egypt. Later, in captivity as punishment for their idolatrous worship and rejection of God.
6. Onesimus – formerly unprofitable slave of Philemon.
7. The New Testament does not directly address the question of slavery from a moral perspective. There are however, numerous passages that would give us direction and instruct us that the misuse of any man, slave or free, will require answer before God.
 - a) E.g. **1 Peter 2:18-21**
 - b) Cf. **James 5:1-7** – reward/punishment of the rich who misuse their servants.

C. The point of our lesson is not a history lesson on the atrocity of physical human slavery.

D. Our lesson is intended to draw attention to the FACT that we are all slaves to a master. The difference between human bondage and the slavery of which we submit to today is WE CHOOSE OUR OWN MASTER! We choose, in a manner of speaking, whether we are going to be “field hand” under an harsh and punishing taskmaster, or “house servants” under the kind tutoring of a gentle and loving master.

II. Our Text: Romans Chapter Six.

A. Paul's point throughout chapter 6 is to show that Christians are to be dead to sin and it's enslavement, being made alive to serve a Master which promises eternal life:

Romans 6 Conclusion: If time and audience permit – make connection to Roman 7 from Romans 6