

# 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 Beafort, 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](#) (ès'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.<sup>1</sup>)**

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<sup>1</sup>*The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition* copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from INSO Corporation;

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**