Chapter 22
Amendment 13: Constitutional vs. Biblical Slavery

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

The African Slave Trade

Amendment 13, the first of the three postbellum reconstruction amendments, was adopted on December 6, 1865. Its purpose was to legalize President Lincoln’s 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, formally ending the African slave trade and by which any Negroes still enslaved were freed.

Had I been alive at the time this Amendment was proposed, I would have been theoretically in favor of it for two reasons. First, I would have endorsed outlawing African slavery because both Old and New Testaments generally promote segregation rather than integration, uniculturalism rather than multiculturalism, and racial purity rather than amalgamation. Consider Deuteronomy 7 in light of Ecclesiastes 1:9: “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done.”

When YHWH thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee ... thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of YHWH be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. (Deuteronomy 7:1-5)

Even if the potential for idolatry were the only reason for segregation, the consequences of ignoring this reason are the same today as they were when Moses first penned Deuteronomy 7. In 1776, approximately 2.5 million people resided in America. More than 99 percent of that population were white Christian Protestants. The remaining 1 percent was collectively represented by 20,000 Roman Catholics, 3,000 Jews, and some deists. In light of these statistics and America’s present-day demographics (51.3 percent Protestant, 23.9 percent Roman Catholic, 3.3 percent other Christian, 1.7 percent Jewish, 0.7 percent Buddhist, 0.6 percent Muslim, 0.4 percent Hindu, 1.2 percent other religions, and 16.1 percent no religion), it is inescapable that the more non-European immigrants allowed to enter and remain in this country, the less Christian this nation becomes. The more racially mixed and multicultural America becomes, the more religiously pluralistic she becomes, and the more pluralistic she becomes, the more pagan she becomes. In 1776, only 1 percent of Americans professed some religion other than Christianity, whereas of October 2009, almost 50 percent of Americans
professed a religion other than Christianity. (The genesis of this staggering increase in non-Christian numbers finds its origin in Article 6 and Amendment 1.) In her book, The Official Guide to the American Marketplace, Cheryl Russell confirmed this paganizing of America:

Immigration will slowly change the nation’s [predominately Christian] religious affiliation.... Because most of the nation’s immigrants are from Mexico ... the Roman Catholic church is likely to gain adherents. The influx of Asian immigrants should boost the share of Americans who are Buddhists or Hindu.

The same demographic consequences are true regarding Jewish, Muslim, and other non-European immigrants. Nationally acclaimed demographics expert Martin E. Marty corroborated this inevitable consequence of mixing races and cultures:

No one noticed it at the time, but the biggest event affecting pluralism [the ever-increasing multi-religious composition of the United States] was in 1965, when immigration quotas that favored Europeans were altered.

Before 1965, when immigration quotas favored Europeans, America was predominately Christian. (Why are most Europeans Christian and most non-Europeans non-Christian? Could the answer be found in Hebrews 8:8-9?) The instructions given by Moses in Deuteronomy 7:1-5 are still valid. Nothing has changed. The consequences of interracial and multicultural immigration (regardless the race) and its promotion of integration are just as cogent today as they were in Moses’ day. This is a reality most Americans do not want to face. Such information is usually met with accusations of racism and white supremacy, but the real racists are those whose agenda destroys the distinct God-created races and their cultures through amalgamation. Nehemiah understood the consequences of the Israelites (Judahites in this instance) mixing with those whose cultures were contrary to their own:

In those days also saw I Jews [Judahites] that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews’ language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.... Shall we then ... do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?... Thus cleansed I them from all strangers.... (Nehemiah 13:23-30)

Anyone who thinks integration has solved America’s race problem has blinded himself to the statistics and the realities of life, particularly in the inner cities where the problem is most evident. The race problem is best solved through segregation. With segregation, there can be no race problem. Integration inevitably leads to amalgamation and ultimate amalgamation is equivalent to genocide. R.J. Rushdoony unmasked the real racists:

Men have tried over and over again to establish a community on the basis of blood. ...[T]his racist idea of community [has been extended] to include all men, a one-world order. All men, it is pointed out, are a common species and hence should live together in community. A widely promoted book of a few years ago was titled The Family of Man, a deliberate appeal to the unity of the family in blood as the ground for the same unity of all men as one in blood. ... [H]owever intensely the national state and the one-worlder try to create a unified human community in terms of blood, these attempts are a failure. Instead of a unified society, there is a divided one which continues to fractionalize.
Look at South Africa since apartheid was eliminated. Of course, you will have to look somewhere other than the mainline media outlets to get your information. After condemning apartheid as such a wicked practice, they are not about to report on the aftermath of bloodshed, rape, and pillage.

If for no other reason, the African slave trade that was practiced in early America was wrong because it led to the integration and mixing of peoples whom Yahweh⁠¹⁰ never intended to be integrated and mixed. If He had intended it, He would have done the mixing Himself. That integration (resulting from the African slave trade) became a significant problem is evidenced in that “by the eve of the American Revolution, half of Virginia’s population was black, and two-thirds of South Carolina’s.”¹¹

African slavery was one of the initial steps in America’s return to the Tower of Babel. Rushdoony elaborated upon unequal yoking and some of its inevitable consequences:

Unequal yoking [2 Corinthians 6:14] plainly means mixed marriages between believers and unbelievers and is clearly forbidden. But Deuteronomy 22:10 not only forbids unequal religious yoking by inference, and as a case law, but also unequal yoking generally.... Man was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26), and woman in the reflected image of God in man, and from man (1 Cor. 11:1-12; Gen. 2:18, 21-23). “Helpmeet” means a reflection or mirror, an image of man, indicating that woman must have something religiously and culturally in common with her husband. The burden of the law is thus against inter-religious, inter-racial, and inter-cultural marriages, in that they normally go against the very community which marriage is designed to establish.

Unequal yoking means more than marriage. In society at large it means the enforced integration of various elements which are not congenial. Unequal yoking is in no realm productive of harmony; rather, it aggravates the differences and delays the growth of the different elements toward a Christian harmony and association.¹²

In an article entitled “Mixed Up: The Case Against Interracial Marriage: A Black Speaks Out Against Interracial Marriage,” Emanuel McLittle concurred:

...interracial marriage ... is contrary to all known laws of physiology, physics, and nature.... It is interesting to note that prior to the early 1900s, everyone on earth, with very few exceptions, knew that marriage to one’s own racial kind, was the most natural and undisputed of all human traditions....

This fact does not imply a kind of prejudice in the fingers of nature. Instead it speaks to a creative wisdom working to preserve each element, kind, species and race as it was originally created – forming a universe where an unnumbered variety cooperate in the shaping of a beautiful whole. I argue that a similar mandate exists for humans, but unlike the pine tree, a blade of grass, or the great white shark, we can ignore this mandate.... Deeper than the obvious, race mixing serves an obtuse political purpose that tends to undermine the social stability of all races....¹³

The racial variations of which McLittle wrote (particularly among those people of mixed races) were demonstrated by recent bone marrow donor statistics:

New reports which have focused on the problems surrounding suitable matches for bone marrow transplant patients have inadvertently revealed why race does exist, and why it
matters for humanity’s sake. The statistics revealed that: –White British people have a 1 in 3 likelihood of finding a bone marrow transplant match. –Asian or black people living in Britain have a 1 in 125,000 likelihood of finding a bone marrow transplant match. –People of mixed race living in Britain have a 1 in 200,000 or more likelihood of finding a bone marrow transplant match.... The statistics are significant because they reveal that race is major factor in determining biological diversity....

Miscegenation was forbidden long before man became aware of these statistics. For the Israelites, the command for racial purity is inherent and principally found in Yahweh’s mandate that they remain a distinct and separate people:

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.... And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. (Exodus 19:5-6)

But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it ... I am YHWH your God, which have separated you from other people ... for I YHWH ... have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine. (Leviticus 20:24-26)

...the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. (Numbers 23:9)

For they be thy people, and thine inheritance.... For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance.... (1 Kings 8:51-53)

After returning from seventy years of Babylonian captivity, both Ezra and Nehemiah understood returning to Yahweh required the Israelites to repent of their assimilation:

And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore make confession unto YHWH God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives. (Ezra 10:10-11)

Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. (Nehemiah 9:1-2)

One often-overlooked reason why Israel is not allowed to integrate is to protect their inheritance:

…The people of Israel ... have not separated themselves from the people of the lands.... For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands.... And when I heard this thing ... I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto YHWH my God. And said, O my God ... for our iniquities have we ... been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. ...[W]e have forsaken thy commandments ... saying, ... Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons ... that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever. (Ezra 9:1-12)
Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens. (Lamentations 5:2)

Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people.... Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not.... (Hosea 7:8-9)

Even the wicked men in Judges 19-21 never went so far as to seek non-Israelite wives for the decimated tribe of Benjamin (Judges 21:7ff). These wicked men were more upright concerning ethnic integrity than are the vast majority of today’s pastors, who are more concerned with political correctness than Biblical correctness.

The second reason I would have opposed the African slave trade is because it violated Yahweh’s law against kidnapping. In America, African slavery was not the consequence of a military defeat (that was sometimes condoned under the Old Covenant), nor was it the result of indentured servitude (voluntary, fiscal, or judicial). African slavery was generally the result of American greed and amounted to kidnapping and human trafficking, both of which are capital crimes:

And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death. (Exodus 21:16)

Exodus 21, in which we find Yahweh’s condemnation of kidnapping, is also where we find provisions and conditions regarding slavery. Yahweh permitted certain forms of slavery, but He did not allow kidnapping as a means of securing slaves or indentured servants.

Constitutional Slavery

Although the principal purpose of Amendment 13 was to abolish the African Slave Trade, the Constitution did not abolish all slavery. Almost no one talks about Amendment 13’s provision for both slavery and involuntary servitude as punishment for crimes. It is completely within a constitutional judge’s prerogative to sentence a convicted criminal to a prison sentence – what amounts to one of the most cruel and unusual forms of psychological slavery known to man. The Constitution reserved for the government what it made illegal for private citizens. This is, in part, a consequence of Amendment 8’s repudiation of Yahweh’s judgments:

It is ironic that many Christians have come to accept the ungodly and humanistic prison system as the norm, while they react in horror to the Bible’s humane system of indentured servitude. Enslavement to the state is sanctioned, while private household “slavery” is anathema. 

Incarceration has proven not only extremely expensive, but also inept at curtailing America’s escalating crime. The argument can be made, in fact, that the United States penal system has contributed to crime. U.S. Senator Jim Webb (D-VA) articulated some of the inherent problems:

The United States has by far the world’s highest incarceration rate. With 5% of the world’s population our country now houses nearly 25% of the world’s reported prisoners. We currently incarcerate 756 inmates per 100,000 residents, a rate nearly five times the average worldwide of 158 for every 100,000. In addition, more than 5 million people who recently left jail remain under “correctional supervision,” which includes parole, probation, and other community sanctions. All told, about one in every 31 adults in the United States is in prison, in jail, or on supervised release. This all comes at a very high price to taxpayers: Local, state, and
federal spending on corrections adds up to about $68 billion a year.... With so many of our citizens in prison compared with the rest of the world, there are only two possibilities: Either we are home to the most evil people on earth or we are doing something different and vastly counterproductive. Obviously, the answer is the latter.\(^\text{16}\)

What makes these figures even more alarming is that upwards of “90% of all criminal cases do not go to court because the criminal pleads guilty to a lesser charge.”\(^\text{17}\) Worse yet, the majority of crimes go unsolved, which means only a minority of criminals are ever arrested and indicted to begin with. A law-abiding citizen has a greater chance of being victimized by a violent criminal than he does of being injured in an automobile accident. Under the United States current unbiblical penal system crime does pay.

Until at least 1978, the consensus of the criminology establishment was that offenders could be rehabilitated in prisons and also in the community under the tutelage of probation officers. This opinion prevailed even though irrefutable statistics revealed that at least two thirds of all offenders upon release from prison or discharge from probation commit other offenses.\(^\text{18}\)

Because non-violent inmates are often housed with hardened criminals, America’s prisons are fertile training grounds for compounded criminal behavior. Non-violent criminals often become physical and sexual victims of the hardened lifers. No one who knows what goes on behind prison bars would ever describe incarceration as humane. “[T]he tender mercies of the wicked are cruel” (Proverbs 12:10) is how King Solomon described the misguided compassion of those who believe it is more humane to imprison criminals than to indenture them or put them to death, depending upon the nature of their crime.

In no stretch of anyone’s imagination have America’s prisons proven to be institutions of rehabilitation. Rare exceptions do not make America’s current penal system a viable choice for crime control – except by those blinded to the facts by their so-called empathy:

Long prison sentences cause immeasurable psychological damage to inmates by wasting their lives away in useless and profitless pursuits, while the soaring costs of prison upkeep place a heavy financial penalty on those who observe the law.\(^\text{19}\)

Except as a means to hold criminal suspects for trial (Leviticus 24:12, Numbers 15:34), incarceration is unbiblical. When Yahweh’s judicial protocol is followed, prisons are completely superfluous.

Restitution and restoration are the essence of justice. The prison system as an answer to the problem of crime is a modern and anti-Biblical scheme: it does nothing to further either restitution or restoration and accomplishes little other than removing the criminal from society temporarily. It does not remedy the crime, nor does it remedy the criminal, as it purports to do.\(^\text{20}\)

Prisons are not only superfluous, they are a counterproductive form of slavery. Although the Bible is often denounced for its provisions for slavery, ironically, the Constitution is rarely condemned for providing its own barbaric and inept version of the same thing:

This is the “dirty little secret” of those atheists, pietists, and antinomians who ridicule the biblical system of slavery: they have accepted the horror of unproductive imprisonment in place of the biblical institution of penal labor servitude, out of which an industrious slave could purchase his freedom. If the criminal in ancient Israel was financially unable to pay his
victim, his sale to a slave-buyer was what provided the victim with his lawful restitution payment. The prison system has always been the Bible-hater’s preferred substitute for the Old Testament’s system of law-restricted labor servitude. In short, in order to enforce the Bible’s principle of economic restitution to victims by criminals, there always has to be a more fearful support sanction in reserve: death, imprisonment, whipping, banishment, or indentured servitude. But only one of these reserve sanctions raises money for the victims: indentured servitude. The critics of biblical law just never seem to remember to mention this fact.21

Yahweh’s law stipulates a three-layered judgment: restitution, indentured servitude, and death. If a thief is unable to pay his debt to his victim and refuses to submit to indentured servitude, his crime becomes contempt of court, which according to Deuteronomy 17:9-13 is a capital crime. Under Yahweh’s penal system, convicted thieves will certainly choose to pay restitution or submit to indentured servitude. (See Chapter Seventeen “Amendment 8: Bail, Fines, and Cruel and Unusual Punishments?” for additional information regarding the United States Constitutional Republic’s unbiblical penal system.)

As with everything man does (knowingly or unknowingly) when he rejects Yahweh law, the Constitutional Republic’s prison system has been an utter failure in deterring criminal behavior and rehabilitating criminals. What has been the Constitutional Republic’s response to this failure? Build more prisons. Yahweh’s answer is to shut all prisons down!22

Biblical Slavery

Because of the way Americans have been programmed to react to the African slave trade, the idea of any kind of involuntary servitude (with the exception, of course, of the United States penal system) is repugnant. Benjamin Rush, a signatory of the Declaration of Independence, renounced domestic slavery as anti-Christian:

Domestic slavery is repugnant to the principles of Christianity.... It is rebellion against the authority of a common Father. It is a practical denial of the extent and efficacy of the death of a common Savior. It is an usurpation of the prerogative of the great Sovereign of the universe who has solemnly claimed an exclusive property in the souls of men.23

Rush did not provide any Biblical basis for his claims; his argument is mere emotionalism. Instead of Yahweh’s Word, Rush, in the tradition of Thomas Paine’s The Age of Reason, lauded capricious reason as the means of determining what is right, including his promotion of a prison (slavery) system:

Whatever is humane is wise – whatever is wise is just – and whatever is wise, just, and humane will be found to be the true interest of states.... These things are the latent struggles of reason, or rather the secret voice of God himself, speaking in the human heart against the folly and cruelty of public punishments.24

According to Rush, because Yahweh’s judgments are not humane, Yahweh is neither wise nor just. This alone provides reason to reconsider the authenticity of the brand of Christianity so prevalent at the time the Constitution was framed and ratified. Noah Webster took his non-Biblical repudiation of slavery a step further:

Justice and humanity require it [the elimination of all forms of slavery] – Christianity commands it.25
Webster did not provide the commandment that forbids slavery because no such commandment exists. Instead, the Fourth Commandment recognizes slavery, and the Ninth even protects it:

But the seventh day is the sabbath of YHWH thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant…. (Exodus 20:10)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s. (Exodus 20:17)

In Genesis 24:35, we are told that menservants (the same Hebrew word translated “bondmen” in Leviticus 25:44) and maidservants were a part of Yahweh’s blessings upon Abraham. At the time of Lot’s kidnapping in Genesis 14, Abraham had three hundred and eighteen adult male bondservants. Contrast Rush’s and Webster’s Scripture-deficient remarks with 19th-century Presbyterian minister Robert L. Dabney’s comments:

…concerning the lawfulness of domestic slavery. The two sides of this issue are defined with perfect sharpness. The political theory says the subjection of one Human being in bondage to another, except for conviction of crime, is essentially and always unrighteous. The Scriptures indisputably declare, in both Testaments, that it is not always essentially unrighteous, since they legitimize it under suitable circumstances, and declare that godly masters may so hold the relation as to make it equitable and righteous. ...[T]he leading facts: (a,) That God predicted the rise of the institution of domestic bondage as the penalty and remedy for the bad morals of those subject to it (Gen. ix. 25); (b,) That God protects property in slaves, exactly as any other kind of property, in the sacred Decalogue itself (Exod. xx. 17); (c,) That numerous slaves were bestowed on Abraham, the “friend of God,” as marks of the favor of divine providence (Gen. xxiv. 35); (d,) That the relation of master and bondman was sanctified by the administration of a divine sacrament, which the bondman received on the ground of the master’s faith (Gen. xvii. 27); (e,) That the angel of the covenant himself remanded a fugitive slave, Hagar, to her mistress, but afterwards assisted her in the same journey when legally manumitted (Gen. xxi. 17-21); (f,) That the civil laws of Moses expressly allowed Hebrew citizens to purchase pagans as life-long and hereditary slaves (Lev. xxv. 44-46); (g,) That the law declares such slaves (that is, their involuntary labor) to be property. 26

For man to be repulsed by anything Yahweh commands or permits is an expression of humanism. Worse, anytime we conclude our morality is superior to Yahweh’s, we are ultimately attempting to usurp His divinity. In Job 35:2, Elihu accused Job of this breach, “Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more [magnanimous] than God’s?” We may not always understand Yahweh’s actions or commands, but this does not give us the right to shun or ignore His instructions. The question we are faced with is not one of slavery or no slavery, but a question of constitutional slavery or Biblical slavery, and which provides what is best.

If you are working from the paradigm that Yahweh’s law is perfect and His judgments altogether righteous (Psalm 19:7-9), the answer to this question is a given: the forms of slavery and indentured servitude mandated in Yahweh’s law are far better than what is mandated in the Constitution. Because most people (consciously or unconsciously) work from the paradigm that their morality is preferable to Yahweh’s, even most Christians are embarrassed that Yahweh’s law authorizes slavery and indentured servitude. They fail to see the beauty of His law, particularly as contrasted with the United States penal system’s slavery.
The Bible mandates four types of servitude: voluntary indentured servitude, judicially mandated servitude, militarily subjugated servitude, and purchased foreign servitude.

**Voluntary Indentured Servitude**

And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith YHWH thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.... And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee; then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise. (Deuteronomy 15:12-17)

And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee [sells himself to you, NASB]; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee: And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as [permanent] bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God. (Leviticus 25:39-43)

These and other slavery passages are problematic for many Bible readers. What they often miss is Yahweh’s provision to restore the financially destitute, in contrast to modern America’s welfare programs, which exacerbate the problems of the poor and further burden the working class. Voluntary indentured servitude provides a means for the financially impoverished or indebted to climb out of his fiscal hole and improve his financial standing:

There are cases where righteous people fall into poverty or trials through no fault of their own. In order to give them a way back into profitable service as debt-free producers, God makes indentured servitude available to them. It is God’s means of grace to them, a means of release from debt bondage. It is clear that the society at large is not supposed to become burdened with extra taxes in order to care for such people. ...[B]ondservice is ... the Bible-sanctioned remedy for poverty.... The poor man is expected to bear the unpleasant burden of becoming a bondservant as the means of his restoration economically. The taxpayers are not to become his servants. A welfare State cannot develop when the biblical laws of servitude are honored.

Indentured servitude also provides incentive and training for future fiscal responsibility:

The major form of capital that he was to take from his place of former servitude was ethical and psychological.... He had been under the direction of a successful manager, someone who could afford to purchase a servant. Being managed by a good manager is one of the best ways to become a good manager.... Thus, short-term indentured servitude was designed to produce long-term independence....

Indentured servitude functioned in the Hebrew commonwealth as a means of dealing with men who were unwilling or unable to manage their own affairs. Indentured servitude provided tools, supervision, education, food, shelter [much the same as with prisons, but with a far better outcome], and some of the comforts of prosperity to those without capital. It also provided security. It was a way of building a capital base. Jacob served Laban for seven years...
in order to earn Rachel as his wife (Gen. 29:20). He became, in effect, an indentured
servant.... He was a future-oriented man. He was also ... [a] man who amassed a great deal of
capital in his 20 years of service ... to his corrupt uncle and father-in-law.29

Voluntary servitude has two forms and two time limitations. The first form, in Deuteronomy
15, was a short-term solution for financially assisting someone back onto his feet. This
servitude lasted a maximum of six years, unless the security of slavery was more appealing
than freedom and the servant volunteered to become a permanent slave. The provision for
voluntary permanent slavery is addressed in both Deuteronomy 15 and Exodus 21. Biblical
slavery could not have been as barbaric as its opponents claim, nor as cruel as constitutional
slavery, because no one volunteers to be permanently imprisoned today except as a plea
bargain to avoid the death penalty.

Probably the most difficult aspect of Biblical slavery is Exodus 21:4’s stipulation that “if his
master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her
children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out by himself.” However, as with everything
Yahweh legislates, there are important reasons for this provision:

At first glance, this may seem cruel and unreasonable. However, the slave could stay with his
wife and family by agreeing to remain in the service of the master for the rest of his life, as
provided for in [Exodus] 21:5-6. Or he could work hard and earn the money to redeem his
wife and children, once he had finished paying off his previous unpaid debts. This law,
preventing a husband from taking with him a wife he had married while a slave was actually
for the protection of the woman. This law was given in the context of a society where every
woman was supposed to have a man who was responsible for her upkeep and maintenance.

…it was considered essential that a potential husband demonstrate his ability to support a
woman and children.... Naturally, a debt-slave was in no position to pay a dowry or to provide
economic security for a woman wishing to marry him. For this reason, the Law provided that
such a woman, having married a debt-slave, would remain with the master, who would be
responsible for and capable of providing for the material welfare of that woman and her
children.

This provision of the law was an obvious incentive for a woman to think twice about marrying
a debt-slave. It would encourage her to consider choosing for a husband another man who
was not in debt slavery and could properly provide for her. Or it would encourage her to wait
until the debt-slave’s 6-year term of servitude was over. Once his burden of debt was paid off,
they could then go ahead and get married in a much more stable and practical situation that
would allow the former slave to provide properly for his family.30

(See Gary North, Tools of Dominion: The Case Laws of Exodus (Vallecito, CA: Ross House
Books, 1982) for more detailed explanation regarding Exodus 21 and other potentially
problematic slavery passages.)

The second form of indentureship, in Leviticus 25, lasted no longer than forty-nine years. The
context of Leviticus 25 associates this with leased land provisions, which were tied to the year
of jubilee:

The second form of servitude ... applied to someone who had leased his land to another
person, and who subsequently fell into poverty again. Let us consider the land lease first. A
poor person could go to another person, Hebrew or resident alien, and offer him a long-term
leasehold arrangement. The purchaser of the lease was able to make a cash payment to buy control over the first person’s land. Such a purchase was temporarily limited by the occurrence of the next jubilee year, the year following the seventh national sabbatical year. The individual could legally redeem the land at any time by paying to the leaseholder the pro-rated value remaining until the jubilee year. Also, his kinsman was allowed to re-purchase the land for him on the same basis (Lev. 25:25-28)....

If a person without land fell into poverty again, he could lease himself in the same way that he had previously leased his land. He could seek an immediate cash payment in exchange for the promise of personal household service until the next jubilee year....

Judicially Mandated Servitude

If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. ...[H]e should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. (Exodus 22:1-3)

Under Yahweh’s judicial system, the first time a thief is apprehended, tried, and judged guilty, he is required to repay what he stole and, in most instances, an additional two to five times more, depending upon the nature of his crime. If he is unable to pay the required restitution, he is not released to steal again, nor is he thrown into prison. Instead, he is indentured – sold into what amounts to slavery – until he has worked off his debt to either his victim or someone who paid his debt to the victim by purchasing him. Either way, the criminal is punished and the victim is compensated.

...criminals were not under the release provisions of the sabbatical year or the jubilee year. He had become a covenantal stranger in Israel, and so did not gain the protection of the jubilee year. To interpret his situation differently would mean that as the year of jubilee approached, the declining sanctions chronologically would have acted as a subsidy to criminal behavior. The criminal might think: “since I cannot be enslaved beyond the jubilee year; I cannot be compelled to make full restitution.” This would have subsidized crime....

Exodus 22:3 may initially sound very much like Amendment 13’s phrase “except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.” However, I could not find any instance in Constitutional America in which thieves were indentured to compensate their victims. On the other hand, we do have evidence that this Eighth Commandment statute was adjudicated in pre-Constitutional Colonial New England (although the restitution amount cited should have been either two or fourfold, depending upon whether the stolen items were still in the thief’s possession):

When one Owen Jones was convicted “of stealing a rug and a coate from Phillip Keane valued at twenty six Shillings,” the court ordered that he make threefold restitution and “in case hee make not Satisfaction accordingly that hee bee sold.”

What we have had in America since the ratification of the Constitution is state-approved and citizen-funded penitentiaries, which amount to slave labor camps. Prisoners are “employed” making boxes, stickers, mattresses, canned goods, textiles, license plates, road signs, and other various items, all to be sold on the open market. These prisoners are paid little or nothing. Their employer is the federal government, doing business as UNICOR (the trade name for Federal Prison Industries, Incorporated):
Under current law, all physically able inmates who are not a security risk or have a health exception are required to work, either for UNICOR or at some other prison job. Inmates earn from US$0.23 per hour up to a maximum of US$1.15 per hour, and all inmates with court-ordered financial obligations must use at least 50% of this UNICOR income to satisfy those debts.\textsuperscript{35}

Despite the significant cost to taxpayers to house, feed, clothe, and entertain prisoners (not to mention the prisoners’ wives and children who, without their principle wage earner, often end up on welfare), government propaganda claims these cut-rate wages provide a means for prisoners to pay their debt to society:

In fact, the reverse is true: society (tax-payers) must finance the criminal’s period of incarceration. ...\textsuperscript{36}It is the State’s bureaucratic functionaries who become the recipients of the tax money. The State, as the operational god of this age, receives its restitution payment. But in today’s humanistic theocracy, victims receive nothing except subpoenas to testify in court and bills from the tax collector.

UNICOR does not pay social security, unemployment benefits, worker’s compensation, health insurance, pensions, holiday and vacation pay, or income tax on their profits. Additionally, UNICOR’s low wages provide inequitable labor advantages to favored state-approved businesses with which other comparable free-market businesses (which pay their laborers at least the current federal minimum wage of $7.25 per hour) cannot fairly compete. UNICOR is essentially a government-created monopoly.\textsuperscript{37}

The question we face is not whether we should allow slavery but whether we are going to choose counterproductive prison slavery, which must be paid for by United States citizens or productive Biblical slavery, which requires criminals to pay for their crimes by reimbursing their victims.

Americans are troubled about migrant workers, many of whom are in this country illegally and who, in many instances, are taking jobs away from natural-born citizens. However, many farmers and business owners rely upon illegal migrant laborers to do labor others will not do. Indentured servitude provides an answer to both sides of this dilemma. Shut down America’s borders and put every unbiblically imprisoned thief to work in the fields, factories, highways, and other civic improvement projects until they have paid off their debt to their victims. If this were done, Americans would benefit in at least five ways: 1) victims would be reimbursed, 2) tax-subsidized prisons would be shut down, 3) illegal immigration would be reduced, 4) crime would be decreased, and 5) government-funded welfare would be dramatically reduced. It should be evident which slavery system is better for everyone involved.

\textbf{Military Subjugated Servitude}

Yahweh allowed the Israelites to take slaves from nations they subjugated in godly warfare:

\begin{quote}
When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries \textsuperscript{[forced labor, NASB]} unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: And when YHWH thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself. ... Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these
\end{quote}
nations. But of the cities of these people, which YHWH thy God doth give thee for an
inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth: But thou shalt utterly destroy them;
namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the
Jebusites; as YHWH thy God hath commanded thee. (Deuteronomy 20:10-17)

Yahweh allowed for permanent slaves to be taken as spoils of war. These slaves are identified
as property and could be inherited by one’s children (Leviticus 25:44-46). Anyone inclined to
be appalled at Yahweh’s provision for such slavery should consider that complete annihilation
was the only other option for a subjugated country. The Gibeonites in Joshua 9 understood
this and offered themselves as permanent slaves to the Israelites as an alternative to genocide.
Military subjugated servitude acts as a powerful deterrent against invasion by foreign nations.

Purchased Foreign Servitude

Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen [goyim,
nations] that are round about [encircle] 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 for ever.... (Leviticus 25:44-46)

Although this may initially seem to justify the early American slave trade, this provision must
be harmonized with Yahweh’s prohibition against kidnapping. The slaves described in
Leviticus 25 were either non-Israelite prisoners of war from nearby nations sold to Israelites
by others or non-Israelites who, because of financial impoverishment, sold themselves into
permanent slavery.

Slavery and indentured servitude is regulated by stringent conditions:

- It is to be administered without severity – Leviticus 25:43, 46
- Flogging is permitted when required, but only with strict stipulations – Exodus 21:20-
21, 26-27; Deuteronomy 24:14-15
- If a slave is maimed, he is to be set free – Exodus 21:26-27
- Slaves must be provided Sabbath rests – Exodus 20:9-11; Deuteronomy 5:13-15
- Fugitive slaves are not to be returned to masters (which dictates exceptional care of
one’s slaves; otherwise all slaves would continually attempt to escape) – Deuteronomy
23:15-16
- Masters are to rule as Yahweh does – Ephesians 6:9
- Masters are to treat their slaves justly in the fear of Yahweh – Colossians 4:1

Genesis 24:2, Proverbs 17:2, and 29:21 establish that some slaves had high positions in their
master’s household and that they sometimes shared in the family’s inheritance.

Fugitive Slaves

Part of Article 4 reads, “No person held to service or labor in one state, under the laws thereof,
escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged
from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such
service or labor may be due.” This provision was made obsolete by Amendment 13, but, for the
period of time in which it was in effect, it was the antithesis of Deuteronomy 23:15-16, by
which runaway foreign slaves were not to be returned to their masters. Article 4 legalized
kidnapping.
Deuteronomy 23:15-16’s decree that runaway slaves are not to be returned to their masters applies only to permanent slaves, not to those paying off debts or fulfilling judicial punishment. To skip out of voluntary indentured servitude would be a breach of contract, which, in turn, would be a form of theft that would result in involuntary servitude if punished. To run away from a judicially mandated judgment would be contempt of court, punishable by death.

Although Yahweh allows foreign slaves to be lifetime possessions, nothing in the Scriptures indicates anything but a minority of Israelites possessed such slaves:

We know that large families are a sign of God’s covenantal blessing (Ps. 127:3-5). The larger that Israel’s families grew in response to the nation’s covenantal faithfulness to God, the smaller each family’s inherited land holding would become. This made it economically impossible for any branch of a family to amass a large number of heathen slaves during periods of God’s covenantal blessings, for it was illegal to amass permanently the large tracts of land that were necessary for the support of slaves. Thus, at the beginning of each jubilee year, when all land holdings reverted to the heirs of the original land-owners, most heathen slaves would have been released by their owners, whether or not the law allowed them to retain ownership of them indefinitely.... Slavery very clearly was not supposed to become a major institution in Israel.38

Evangelism

Slavery also served to introduce slaves to Yahweh and His morality as found in His law. Exodus 12 afforded indentured servants and slaves to partake of Passover, so long as they were circumcised:

And YHWH 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 [Leviticus 25:44-46], when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. (Exodus 12:43-44)

Covenant blessings were extended to proselytes from among non-Israelite slaves:

Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do. Ye stand this day all of you before YHWH your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: That thou shouldest enter into covenant with YHWH thy God, and into his oath, which YHWH thy God maketh with thee this day. (Deuteronomy 29:9-12)

The only opportunity some non-Israelites had to learn of Yahweh would have been through their enslavement. Better to have been a slave and learn of the living God than to have been free and serve idols.

New Covenant Slavery

What the modern humanist dares not admit to himself or in public – and what embarrassed Christians also are fearful of admitting – is that the Bible’s system of indentured servitude for criminals was and still is basic to the Bible’s system of justice in which criminals are made legally and economically responsible for the harm they have caused.39

Yahweh’s law on these matters has not changed. Although, the New Testament does not promote slavery and indentured servitude, it does endorse them. In 1 Corinthians 7, the
Apostle Paul declared that if a slave can manage to become free, it is good to do so; but he did not condemn slavery. How could he have condemned it when the Ninth Commandment protects slave ownership? Paul’s entire letter to Philemon is devoted to Paul’s returning Onesimus, a runaway slave, to his master Philemon, who was Onesimus’ flesh and blood brother:

For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; not now as a servant [doulos, slave], but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?(Philemon 1:15-16)

That the Apostle Paul offered to pay Onesimus’ debt in Philemon 1:18, is evidence that it was not permanent slavery to which Paul was returning Onesimus. Had it been Paul would have been guilty of violating Deuteronomy 23:15-16. Israelites, such as Philemon, were not permitted to permanently enslave fellow Israelites. Paul returned Onesimus (now a Christian) to Philemon to fulfill either a debt obligation or a judicial judgment. In either case, Philemon’s enslavement of his brother would have been an act of mercy.

For anyone who believes that Bible-endorsed slavery ended with the New Covenant, the following requires an answer:

If the institution [of slavery] is the moral evil it is alleged to be ... if it is essentially a violation of basic human right and liberty, if slave-holding is the monstrosity claimed, it is, to say the least, very strange that the apostles who were so directly concerned with these evils did not overtly condemn the institution and require slave-holders to practice emancipation. If slavery per se is immorality and, because of its prevalence, was a rampant vice in the first century, we would be compelled to conclude that the high ethic of the New Testament would have issued its proscription. But this is not what we find.⁴⁰

Nothing changed regarding slavery and indentured servitude under the New Covenant:

...let us see what the New Testament says concerning the relation of master and bondman. It does indeed command all, if they assume this relation, to fulfill it in a Christian spirit, in the fear of an impartial God. (Eph. vi. 9.) It also prohibits all unrighteous abuses of the relation, whether by masters (Col. iv. 1) or by bondmen. (Col. iii. 22-25.) Slave-holders, like the godly centurion (Luke vii. 2-9) and Cornelius (Acts x. 34, 35), are commended for their Christian consistency, without a word of caution or exception, on account of this relation. The Redeemer, in Luke xvii. 7-10, grounds his argument to prove that not even the truest Christian obedience can bring God in our debt, upon a logical analogy, whose very point is that the master is legally invested with a prior title to, and property in, the labor of his bondman.... The apostles enjoin on bondmen conscientious service to their masters, even when unjust (1 Pet. ii. 18, 19); but so much the more willing and conscientious when those masters are brother members in the Christian church. (1 Tim. vi. 1, 2). The Apostle Paul holds that, if masters do their duty, the relation may be lawfully continued, and is just and equitable. The Apostle Paul remands a fugitive slave to his master Philemon.... And so distinctly does he recognize Philemon’s lawful property in the ... labor of his fugitive slave that he actually binds himself, in writing, to pay its pecuniary value himself, that thereby he may gain free forgiveness for Onesimus. In 1 Tim. vi. 3-5, the apostle condemns such as would dare to dispute the righteous obligation of even Christian bondmen, as proud, ignorant, perverse, contentious, untruthful, corrupt in mind and mercenary; and he requires believers to separate themselves from such teachers.⁴¹
Draft Slavery

Although constitutional courts have refused to recognize the draft as indentured servitude, forced military conscription is precisely that. Ask any drafted soldier whether he belongs to himself or to Uncle Sam.

Debt Slavery

Another unlawful type of slavery, legalized, in part, by Article 1, involves debt obligations and unlawful taxation:

The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant [slave, NASB] to the lender. (Proverbs 22:7)

Shackled with both national and private debt (via the Federal Reserve, fiat “money,” usury banking, and income and property taxes), all United States citizens are, in fact, slaves:

Wars in old times were made to get slaves. The modern implement of imposing slavery is debt.43

When the Africans were freed, they went from private slaves to federal slaves. With combined taxation presently at an approximate national average of 51%, it might be argued they had more freedom before 1865:

Those four million slaves of the mid-1880s were “privately owned,” forced to labor on private plantations. Today’s slaves are “federally owned”; they labor on government plantations.... Each of us is made part slave and each of us is left part free. That way we can live in our “own” home, work at our “own” job, attend our “own” church, and even go bowling on Friday nights ... as long as we render unto Caesar that which he demands. Such a convenient arrangement should not blind us to the fact that involuntary servitude is being forced upon citizens by excessive government spending.44

Spiritual Slavery

Psalm 123 compares our relationship with Yahweh as that of a servant to his master:

Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon YHWH our God.... (Psalm 123:2)

All men are spiritual slaves. The question is to whom or what?

If men refuse to place themselves under God and God’s required law-order for society, then they will inevitably place themselves in bondage to someone other than God.... Man cannot achieve freedom by rebelling against God and His law. We must begin our journey on the road from serfdom by placing ourselves under covenantal bondage to the God of liberation. We must seek to become passive toward God and active over His creation (Gen. 1:26–28). The only alternative to this unqualified ethical subordination to God is to become passive toward something or someone else – other men (tyranny), demonic spirits (occultism, mysticism), some aspect of nature (environmental determinism), the “cunning of history” (Hegel), “inevitable social forces” (Marx), the “unconscious” (Freud), alcohol or drugs, or even outright madness.45
Every man is a slave, either to sin or to righteousness (Romans 6:11-23, Ephesians 6:6). No one can be enslaved to two masters at one time, unless one master is subordinate to the other master. This is one reason we can make no halfway covenants with Yahweh, including what’s identified as Christian Constitutionalism. He demands our entire allegiance:

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (Luke 9:23)

Christians cannot entertain two different and antithetical covenants – one that advances a government of, by, and for Yahweh and one that advances a government of, by, and for WE THE PEOPLE.

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End Notes

1. Exodus 33:16; Leviticus 20:24-26; Numbers 23:9; Deuteronomy 32:8; 1 Kings 8:51-53; Nehemiah 9:2, 10:28-29; Hosea 7:8-9; Acts 17:26, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, etc. For a more thorough explanation regarding the Biblical injunctions against interracial integration, multiculturalism, and miscegenation, “The Seventh Commandment” may be read online, or the book *Thou shalt not commit adultery* may be ordered from Bible Law vs. The United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363, for a suggested $6 donation.*

2. All Scripture is quoted from the King James Version, unless otherwise noted. Portions of Scripture have been omitted for brevity. If you have questions regarding any passage, please study the text to ensure it has been properly used.

3. Where the Tetragrammaton (YHWH) – the four Hebrew characters that represent the personal name of God – has been unlawfully rendered the LORD or GOD in English translations, I have taken the liberty to correct this error by inserting YHWH where appropriate. For a more thorough explanation concerning the use of the names of God, “The Third Commandment” may be read online, or the book *Thou shalt not take the name of YHWH thy God in vain* may be ordered from Bible Law vs. The United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 69363, for a suggested $4 donation.*

4. Not everyone claiming to be a Christian has been properly instructed in the Biblical plan of salvation. Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-41, 22:1-16; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27; Colossians 2:11-13; and 1 Peter 3:21 should be studied to understand what is required to be covered by the blood of Jesus and forgiven of your sins. For a more thorough explanation concerning baptism and its relationship to salvation, the book *Baptism: All You Wanted to Know and More* may be requested from Bible Law vs. The United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363, for free.


8. For an explanation regarding Hebrew 8:8-9’s relationship to European Christianity, *The Mystery of the Gentiles: Who Are They and Where Are They Now?* may be read online, or the [book](#) may be ordered from Bible Law vs. The United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363, for a suggested $10 donation.*


10. YHWH (most often pronounced Yahweh) is the English transliteration of the Tetragrammaton, the principal Hebrew name of the God of the Bible. For a more thorough explanation concerning the sacred names of God, “The Third Commandment” may be read online, or the book *Thou shalt not take the name of YHWH thy God in vain* may be ordered from Bible Law vs. The United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363, for a suggested $4 donation.*


22. *Prisons: Shut Them All Down!* may be read online, or the [book](#) may be ordered from Bible Law vs. The United States Constitution, PO Box 248, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69363, for a suggested $3 donation.*


27. North, p. 221.

28. Ibid., p. 127.

29. Ibid., p. 137.


32. See Chapter Seventeen “Amendment 8: Bail, Fines, and Cruel and Unusual Punishments?” for an explanation regarding the two to five times restitution requirements and their modern applications.


37. See Chapter Four, “Article 1: Legislative Usurpation” for additional information regarding unbiblical monopolies.

38. North, pp. 141-142.

39. North, p. 120.


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