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## ARTICLE III.

## THE HISTORICAL AND LEGAL JUDGMENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES AGAINST SLAVERY.

By George B. Cheever, D. D., New York.

In this investigation, the words, or periphrastic expressions, employed for *servants* and *bond-servants*, *servitude* and *bondage*, first claim our attention. Not a little is depending on their history and usage. The modern definition of the word *slavery* cannot, with the least propriety or truth, be assumed as the meaning of the word used for *servant* or *bond-servant* in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The ordinary word for *servant* is עֶבֶד. The verb עָבַד, *to labor*, constitutes the root. The primary signification of the verb has nothing to do with that afterwards attached to the noun, but is independent, separate, generic. It is an honorable meaning; for labor is the vocation of freemen, or was so before the fall, when the father of mankind was put into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it, and to till the ground; to *work* upon the ground, to cultivate it. The first instance of the use of the verb is in Gen. 2: 5, *There was not a man to till the ground, לַעֲבֹד, to labor upon it, to cultivate it.*

So in Gen. 3: 23, The Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, *to till the ground*, from whence he was taken; לַעֲבֹד, *to work upon it.*

So in Gen. 4: 2, Cain was a tiller of the ground, עֹבֵד, a man *working* the ground; that was his occupation.

Also, Gen. 4: 12, in the sentence of Cain, the same word is made use of, the verb in the second person, *when thou tillest the ground, תַּעֲבֹד.*

The generic signification of the word, and the only signification possible in primeval society, is that of *labor, work*, personal occupation. The same universal meaning is in the commandment, Six days shalt thou *labor*, תַּעֲבֹד, Ex. 20: 9.

In process of time comes the secondary meaning, with the idea included of laboring for another; that additional idea *constitutes*, indeed, the *secondary* meaning. At first it is only the idea of working for another willingly, or for a consideration, for wages;

as might be done by brothers and sisters, or other blood relatives in the same family. See Malachi 3: 17. As a man spareth his own son that *serveth* him, *תַּעֲבֹד*. There is yet no signification of subjection or of servitude. In Gen. 29: 15, it is used concerning the service of Jacob to Laban: *Shouldst thou serve me for nought?* Tell me what shall thy wages be? *תַּעֲבֹדֵנִי*, a voluntary service. — And Jacob *served*, etc., *וַיַּעֲבֹד*, 29: 20. — *For the service which thou shalt serve*, 29: 27, *בְּעִבְדָּה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲבֹד*.

Next comes the added significance of *subjection*, first, politically, the subjection of tributary communities under one lord, as in Gen. 14: 4, Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֹתוֹ*. — So in Deut. 20: 11, All the people shall be tributaries unto thee, and *they shall serve thee*, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּךָ*. So in Gen. 26: 23, of the subjection of Esau to Jacob, *The elder shall serve the younger*, *וַיַּעֲבֹד*. — Also, Gen. 27: 40, in Isaac's prediction, *Thou shalt serve thy brother*, *וַיַּעֲבֹד*. — Also in Jeremiah 25: 11, These nations *shall serve* the king of Babylon, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֶת־מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל*. So Gen. 27: 29, *Let people serve thee*, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּךָ*.

Second, both politically and personally. Gen. 15: 13, spoken of the bondage in Egypt, *Thy seed shall serve them*, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ*. — Gen. 15: 14, That nation *whom they shall serve*, will I judge, *אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ*. Also, Ex. 1: 13, The Egyptians made the children of Israel *to serve* with rigor, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ*. Also, Ex. 14: 12, Let us alone, *that we may serve* the Egyptians, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֶת־מִצְרַיִם*. Also, Jer. 5: 19, *Ye shall serve* strangers in a land not yours, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ*. Also, Jer. 17: 4, I will *cause thee to serve* thine enemies, *וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ־יָדְיָךְ אֹיְבֶיךָ*.

Third, spoken of personal servitude. Ex. 21: 2, concerning a Hebrew servant, *six years shall he serve thee*, *שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים יַעֲבֹד*. — Ex. 21: 6, *shall serve him forever*, *וַיַּעֲבֹד לְעֹלָם*. — Lev. 25: 39, *Thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant*, *לֹא־תַעֲבֹד בּוֹ עֲבָדָה עָבֵד*. — Lev. 25: 40, *Shall serve thee*, unto the year of Jubilee, *וַיַּעֲבֹד לְךָ*. The personal servitude embraces the idea of laboring for another, in subjection and inferiority, either on contract, for wages, or as a bond-servant without wages. And thus the meaning and reality of the verb *עָבַד* passes gradually from voluntary labor for oneself into service performed for another, at first for wages, then in bondage.

There are several other modes of usage in which the verb is employed, as first, and most commonly, *of the service of God*. Deut. 6: 13, Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and *serve him*,

הַצֵּבֹה. — Josh. 22: 6, To love the Lord your God, *and to serve him*, וְלַעֲבֹד. — 1 Sam. 7: 3, Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, *and serve him only*, וְעָבְדוּהוּ. Also, 7: 4, The children of Israel *served the Lord only*, וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֱלֹהֵיהוָה. — Ps. 72: 11, All nations *shall serve him*, יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ.

Second, of the service of idols. Ps. 97: 7, Confounded be all they that *serve graven images*, קָל־עֲבָדֵי חָקֶל. — Ezek. 20: 39, *Serve ye every one his idols*, עָבְדוּ. — Deut. 12: 2, The nations *served their gods*, עָבְדוּ אֱלֹהֵיהֶם. — Deut. 17: 3 and Judg. 10: 13, *served other gods*, וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים. — 2 Kings 21: 3, worshipped all the host of heaven, *and served them*, וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֹתָם. — Jer. 22: 9, worshipped other gods, *and served them*, וַיַּעֲבֹדוּם.

Third, it is used once as synonymous with עָשָׂה, to perform, in the sense of presenting sacrifice to God; doing sacrifice, as our translation has it, Isaiah 19: 21, The Egyptians *shall do sacrifice and oblation*, וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ זֶבַח וּמִנְחָה.

Fourth, imposing labor on others. Ex. 1: 16, all their service wherein *they made them serve*, קָל־עֲבֹדָתָם אֲשֶׁר־עָבְדוּ בָהֶם, *service served upon them*. Similar is Lev. 25: 46, rendered in our translation, *They shall be your bondmen forever*, בָּהֶם תַּעֲבֹדוּ, *on them ye shall impose bond-service*. So, Jer. 22: 13, with his neighbor's *service* without wages, בְּרַעְיוֹתָי יַעֲבֹד דָּהָם, upon his neighbor *imposeth work* for nothing. — Jer. 25: 14, Greek kings *shall serve themselves of them*, עָבְדוּ־בָהֶם. — Jer. 30: 8, Strangers shall no more *serve themselves of him*, that is, of Israel, וְלֹא־יַעֲבֹדוּ־בוֹ עוֹד יָרִים, shall no more *impose servile bondage* on him, shall no more play the bond-master with him. This is as far as the verb ever goes toward the signification *to enslave*, an expression for which there is no equivalent in Hebrew, though the verb מָכַר, *to sell*, is used for the transaction, as in the enslaving of Joseph, when his brethren sold him to the Ishmaelites.

Now upon the verbal עָבַד, which is the word all but universally employed in Hebrew for servant, it is the secondary meaning, and not the primary, that has descended from the verb עָבַד. The noun עָבֵד never means a laborer, a worker, in the generic sense, as Adam and Noah were laborers, but always a worker with reference to the will of another, a worker in subjection, either on contract by hire, or by compulsion. In Eccl. 5: 12, it is said, Sweet is the sleep *of a laboring man*; but here the verb is used, and not the noun; וְעָבֵד, him that worketh, or him working, the working man. The noun עָבֵד means, indeed,

a working man, but always under direction of another, or in subjection as a servant, a *servant* man. This is the generic meaning of the noun, not labor, but servile labor.

In Deut. 26: 6, 7, we have examples of several words used for labor, in the same connection, that is, the condition of Israel in bondage, The Egyptians laid upon us *hard bondage*, עֲבָרָה קָשָׁה, *hard labor*. And the Lord looked on *our labor and our oppression*, עָבַר וְעָבַד וְעָבַר. עָבַר is the verb frequently used for *laboring* to weariness, and עָבַל, the verbal from it, for wearisome *toil*, employed frequently in Ecclesiastes, as in Eccl. 2: 10, 11, 19—22, both the verb and the noun, both concerning labor of the mind and the body. So Ps. 127: 1, they labor in vain, עָבַדוּ.

In Ps. 128: 2, yet another word for labor, which is frequently used, יָבַע, thou shalt eat *the labor of thy hands*, יָבַע, the verbal, used also in Gen. 31: 42, Hag. 1: 11, Job 10: 3, *the labor of the hands*. But none of these words besides עָבַד are used of servile labor exclusively, or with any definition that restricts their meaning, and decides it as applied to bond-service, as is the case with עָבַד and עָבַר, for example, in Lev. 25: 39, עֲבָדוֹת עָבָד, *the labor of a bond-servant*.

Then, secondarily, עָבָד is applied by persons of noble station and life in speaking of themselves to other noble personages, instead of using the personal pronoun *me*. It is an oriental peculiarity. Gen. 33: 5, in Jacob's address to his brother Esau, The children which God hath graciously given *thy servant*, עֲבָדִי. — So Gen. 42: 13, *Thy servants* are twelve brethren, עֲבָדֶיךָ. — In the same manner, speaking of their father Jacob, Gen. 44: 27, *Thy servant* my father said unto us, עֲבָדֶיךָ. — So in Isa. 36: 11, the style of Eliakim, Shebna and Joab with Babshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto *thy servants*, עֲבָדֶיךָ.

This is the style of deference, politeness, humility. It may be the formal style of equals toward one another in high life, or the style of the inferior toward the superior. The effect is an elaborate and elegant courtesy toward equals, and a deferential, respectful homage toward superiors. The abruptness of an immediate address is prevented, and the form of language seems to have the effect of employing an ambassador or mediator between potentates. That which, in the courtesy of a formal politeness is connected by us with the signature at the bottom of letters, as, *your obedient and humble servant*, or, *faithfully and truly your friend and servant*, the men of the East applied in daily conver-

sation. See, for example, David's interview with Saul, 1 Sam. 17: 34, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, etc. Also, David's conversation with Jonathan, 1 Sam. 20: 7, 8, Thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant. Also, Abigail's address to David, 1 Sam. 25: 24—31, When the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid. And likewise David's address to Achish, 1 Sam. 28: 2, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. See also Dan. 1: 12, Prove thy servants. Also 2: 7, the address of the Chaldean astrologers to the king, Let the king tell his servants the dream.

Now to trace the delicate distinctions of intercourse in the use or neglect of such a form, and the manner in which the necessity of an independent spirit may compel its abandonment, let the reader mark the fact, that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in their interview with Nebuchadnezzar, when they encountered the rage and authority of the king in full conflict with the authority of God, threw aside utterly the formal and deferential mode of address, and exclaimed, in the first person: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." This defiance of the tyrant was far more bold, direct, and energetic, than if they had said: "The king's servants will not worship the image of the king." But their indignation annulled this form of homage, and even the intimation of being the king's servants, so grateful to the sense of power, they rejected from their language, and, rising to the dignity of equals and of freemen, they said: We, O king, will not obey thee, be it known unto thee. We will not serve thy gods. It was much as when, with us, to make defiance stronger, it is added, I tell thee to thy face, I will not heed thee.

But this deferential form is more especially and commonly the usage of the word עֶבֶד in all addresses to God, and in prayer. Gen. 18: 3, My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. And so 1 Kings 8: 28—32 and 1 Chron. 17: 17—19, What can David speak more to thee for the honor of thy servant, for thou knowest thy servant. So Ps. 27: 9, Put not thy servant away in anger. Ps. 31: 16, Make thy face to shine upon thy servant. Dan. 9: 17, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, אֱלֹהֵינוּ עֶבְדֶּךָ.

In the same manner in which the verb עָבַד is used to signify



may be violence, despotism, and oppression of the most terrible nature, even where the system of personal slavery does not exist.

The curse pronounced upon Canaan contains the first instance of the use of the word עֶבֶד, Gen. 9: 26, *a servant of servants*, עֶבֶד עֲבָדִים. No mention had been made of servants or slaves in the whole Antediluvian history. There were neither servants nor slaves in the ark. There was no slave upon the earth, when God entered into covenant with Noah. The whole earth was peopled with freemen, for God would have the new experiment begin with such, and the curse of servitude, predicted and denounced as a curse, grew directly out of sin. "Cursed be Canaan; *a servant of servants* shall he be unto his brethren."

The use of the word עֶבֶד by Noah, as a word of degradation, a word of inferiority and subjection, the meaning of which was well understood, shows that the thing indicated by it was not then a new and strange thing. At the same time, the after history of the word, and its indiscriminate application to servants in general, and service of all kinds, proves conclusively that it was not a *specific* word for that *kind* of servitude which we call slavery. But if there had been the thing, there would have been the name, and if Noah had intended the particular thing, he would have used the specific name. If slavery had existed among the Antediluvians, it cannot be questioned that there would have been a term exclusively denoting it; and if Noah had designed to threaten *that* curse, or to predict it, concerning a part of his posterity, he would inevitably have used that term, and not a term applied to all kinds of service. There is no word for slavery in the Hebrew language, answering to *our* word slavery, nor to the Greek word δουλεία, although that word is sometimes employed in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew עֲבָדָה, as in Ex. 6: 6, for עֲבָדָתָם, *from their bondage*, viz. *Egyptian bondage*. It is certainly a fact of no unimportant significance, that there is no word in Hebrew which specifically signifies *slave* or *slavery*; and there is the best of all reasons for it: the reality did not exist, and from the outset, when the language was formed, the root-word *labor* was of necessity taken for *service*, and from that the various constructions have been formed, and no word for slavery has been created.

In this curse upon Canaan there is, therefore, no proof that what we call slavery was intended; no proof that the state of



slavery was either in the mind of the speaker, Noah, or in the will of God, considered as inspiring the prediction. There is, indeed, no declaration that either the curse or the prediction was God's, no intimation that Noah was inspired of God in uttering it, no more than in planting his vineyard; and were it not for the gift of the land of Canaan to Abraham, and the subjection of the Canaanites to the Hebrews, there would be no reason for supposing a Divine inspiration in the case, since there is no reference anywhere to the prediction as inspired. But whether it were or not, it is not probable that the word *servant*, used by Noah, had the signification sometimes attached to it a thousand years afterwards. They assume too much, who suppose that slavery existed among the Antediluvians, there being not the least trace of it, and no more proof of it than that the immediate posterity of Adam were idolaters. It is most likely that man-stealing and man-selling came into practice along with idolatry, fit accompaniments or consequences of such wickedness, after the deluge.

The use of the words עֶבֶד and עֲבָדֶיךָ by Noah cannot, therefore, be assumed to mean anything more than servants and under-servants, even were the passage applied in a personal sense, which, however, is not the sense of the prediction. It is applied, as in many other cases, to the subjection of nations. The same word precisely is used by Isaac in regard to the dominion of Jacob over Esau, Jacob's posterity being the subject of Isaac's prediction as the dominant power. Gen. 27: 37, All his brethren have I given to him *for servants*, לְעֲבָדֶיךָ. I have made him (Jacob) *thy lord*, אֲבִיר. This did not mean that Jacob and his posterity were to be slaveholders, and Esau and his posterity slaves, but that one nation should be under the government of the other. *Let people serve thee*, וְעַבְדְּךָ עַמִּים, Gen. 27: 29. Just so in the original prediction, Gen. 26: 23, *The elder shall serve the younger*, וְיָעֲבֹד; *nation in subjection to nation*; the phrase employed by Gesenius is *populus populo*; people shall be tributary to people. The prediction in the blessing given to Esau, as well as that to Jacob, and the completion of both, leave no doubt as to the meaning of the word, and the nature of the service designed. See Gen. 27: 40, *Thou shalt serve thy brother*, וְעָבַדְתָּ אֶתְּעִבְרָא, but shalt break his yoke from off thy neck. So accordingly in 2 Sam. 8: 14, the posterity of Esau are recorded as in subjection to the posterity of Jacob, but not as slaves. David put garrisons

in Edom, and all they of Edom became David's *servants*, עֲבָדָיו. But in 2 Kings 8: 22, it is recorded that under the reign of Jehoram, 892 B. C., Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves. This kind of service and rebellion is recorded in similar language in Gen. 14: 4, Twelve years they *served* Chedorlaomer, עֲבָדוּ; in the thirteenth, rebelled, מָרְדוּ.

After Gen. 9: 25, it is full five hundred years before we meet the word עֲבָד again, or any indication that the reality answering to it exists in human society; and then we meet it first in the family of Abraham, or rather, first of all, in the family of Pharaoh, where Abraham for a season resided. After Abraham went down into Egypt, and was received into Pharaoh's house, and entreated well, he is represented, Gen. 12: 16, as having sheep and oxen, and he-asses, and *men-servants*, עֲבָדָיו, and *maid-servants*, יִשְׁתָּוֹת. Here we have, as yet, no commentary on the word, nothing by which we might be permitted to imagine or assert that these in Abraham's family, were slaves. Hagar, Sarah's handmaid, was an Egyptian; and, doubtless, was taken into Abraham's household, and given to Sarah, in this, his first visit to Egypt. But Abraham did not go down into Egypt to copy Egyptian manners, or to adopt into his own household, and set at the foundation of the domestic and national policy, of which the Divine Being had informed him he was to be the stock, the civil and social principles and customs of a people of idolaters. He had gone on compulsion into Egypt, by reason of the great famine; but his idea of the morals and manners of the Egyptians may be gathered from his anxiety and distress in behalf of Sarah, Gen. 12: 11, 12. He knew that the fear of God was not in Egypt. The question, therefore, very naturally comes up: Did Abraham, on receiving these men-servants and maid-servants into his household, receive and treat them according to the principles of servitude then prevalent in Egypt? The consideration of the nature of God's covenant with Abraham will enable us the better to determine this question.

But, in the meantime, let us suspend our inquiry as to the word עֲבָד, and consider the meaning of the two words applied to Hagar, and designating her situation in Abraham's family. These are the Hebrew words עֲבָדָתָא and אֲמָתָא. Hagar is first introduced to us under the name אֲמָתָא, Gen. 16: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and under this name Sarah gives her to Abraham to be his wife,

and by her Ishmael is born unto him, and the condition of Ishmael has no taint of bondage from the condition of his mother. The Hebrew patriarchs neither held nor sold their own children for slaves. Some fifteen years after Hagar's first appearance as a *מִטְּוֹפֶה*, Sarah, enraged at the mocking of Hagar's son Ishmael, calls her *מִטְּוֹפָה*, rendered by our translators, *a bondswoman*, and her son the *son of a bondswoman*, Gen. 21: 10. But there is no reason for translating this word *bondswoman* rather than *servant*. God, speaking to Abraham concerning the whole transaction, calls her *מִטְּוֹפָה*, most generally translated *handmaid* or *maid-servant*, and says to Abraham: "Of the son of the *handmaid*, *מִבְּנֵי מִטְּוֹפָה*, will I make a nation." Now this same word *מִטְּוֹפָה* is used in Ps. 116: 16, of the mother of David, I am thy servant, and the *son of thine handmaid*, *בְּנֵי מִטְּוֹפָה*. It is also used by Hannah, 1 Sam. 1: 11, addressing the Lord, Look on the affliction of *thine handmaid*, *מִטְּוֹפָה*, repeated in the same verse three times. Also addressing Eli, 1: 16, Count not *thine handmaid*, *מִטְּוֹפָה*. This usage corresponds with that of the word *עַבְדָּךָ* under similar circumstances. But in the 18th verse, also addressing Eli, she says, Let *thine handmaid*, *מִטְּוֹפָה*, find grace in thy sight. It is obvious, therefore, that the words *מִטְּוֹפָה* and *עַבְדָּךָ* are synonymes, one being no more indicative of a state of bondage than the other. Another instance of the use of both interchangeably is in 1 Sam. 25: 41, in Abigail's address to David, Behold, let *thine handmaid*, *מִטְּוֹפָה*, be for a servant, *עַבְדָּתְךָ*, to wash the feet of the servants, *עַבְדֵיךָ*, of my Lord. Here, then, are these two words, at periods of nearly a thousand years distance, employed in the same manner, applied to the same persons. The impossibility of making a distinction between the two, as to dignity, will be further evident by examining the following passages:

Gen. 20: 14, And Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and *men-servants and women-servants*, *וְעַבְדָּרִים וְשִׁמְוֹת*, and gave to Abraham.

Gen. 20: 17, God healed Abimelech and *his maid-servants*, *וְאִמָּתָיו*.

Gen. 12: 16, Abram had *men-servants and maid-servants*, *שִׁמְוֹת*.

Gen. 21: 10, Cast out *this bondswoman*, *מִטְּוֹפָה*.

Gen. 30: 43, Jacob had *maid-servants*, *שִׁמְוֹת*.

Gen. 31: 33, Jacob's *maid-servants'* tents, *אֶתְוֵן*.

Ex. 11: 5, The first born of the *maid-servant*, *הַשִּׁמְוֹתָה*.

Ex. 20: 10, Man-servant nor *maid-servant*, *אִמָּתְךָ*.

Ex. 23: 12, The son of thine *handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

Deut. 5: 14, Man-servant or *maid-servant*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ; also 12: 18. 15: 17. 16: 11, 14.

Ex. 21: 7, If a man sell his daughter to be a *maid-servant*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

Ex. 21: 27, 32, Man-servant or *maid-servant*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

Judges 9: 18, Jotham calls Abimelech the son of his father's *maid-servant*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ, who was his father's concubine at Shechem.

Ruth 2: 13, applied by Ruth to herself and the *handmaidens* of Boaz, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

Ruth 3: 9, used by Ruth twice, *thy handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

1 Sam. 25: 14, Let *thine handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

1 Sam. 25: 25, But I *thine handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

1 Sam. 25: 27, *Thine handmaid* hath brought, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

1 Sam. 25: 28, Trespass of *thine handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

1 Sam. 25: 31, Remember *thine handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

1 Sam. 25: 41, Let *thine handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ, be a *servant*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

2 Sam. 14: 15, Thy *handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

2 Sam. 14: 15, The request of *his handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

2 Sam. 14: 16, To deliver *his handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

2 Sam. 14: 17, *Thine handmaid* said, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

2 Sam. 14: 19, The mouth of *thine handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

2 Sam. 14: 6, 7, 12, *Thine handmaid*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

2 Sam. 6: 20, *Handmaids*, of his servants, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

2 Sam. 6: 22, David calls the same, *maid-servants*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

Job 31: 13, My *maid-servant*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

Jer. 34: 9, 10, 11, 16, the same word is used six times, singular and plural, for *maid-servants* of the Hebrews, coupled with *men-servants*, אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ.

These instances determine the usage of the words. They are evidently used for precisely the same relation, being each applied, indifferently, to the maid-servant, whether Hebrew or heathen, just as the word אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ is applied to the man-servant. Neither word seems to indicate a higher grade than the other, Job using אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ, Jeremiah אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ, and Moses אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ, indiscriminately, for persons held as maid-servants, both Hebrew and heathen, and the usage in Samuel putting both words indifferently into the mouth of free women, speaking of themselves.

The Septuagint translation uses the word *παῖδες* for both the Hebrew words אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ and אֲנִי־אֵלֶיךָ. The same word is used of Ruth,

where the Hebrew is the feminine of נָעַר, a young man, נַעֲרָה, this young woman. So Ruth is the *παῖδιον* as well as Hagar. Also, of all the maidens of Boaz the same word is used, as in Ruth 2: 22, his *maidens*, נַעֲרוֹתָיו, his *young women*, and 2: 23, the *maidens* of Boaz, נַעֲרוֹתַי, *the young women*. Boaz himself uses the same word, 2: 8, my *maidens*, נַעֲרוֹתַי, my *young women*, or damsels. And in 2: 5, 6, Boaz asks concerning Ruth, Whose *damsel* she is? נַעֲרָה, and the servant answers, the Moabitish *damsel*, נַעֲרָה מִזְּבֻלָּה, *young woman*.

But in the New Testament, the same word *παῖδιον* is employed in contrast with the word *ἐλευθέρως*, with reference to the case of Hagar, Gal. 4: 22, *the servant*, in contrast with *the free-woman*, the word servant being translated *bondswoman*, though the same is in other places simply translated servant or damsel or maid, as in Matt. 16: 69. Mark 14: 66, one of the maids of the high priest, *μία τῶν παιδισκῶν τοῦ Ἀρχιερέως*. If this had been translated one of the bondwomen of the high priest, it would have been an unjustifiable assumption, if by the term bondwoman were signified slave. The ordinary usage in the New Testament may be learned from Matt. 26: 69. Mark 14: 66, 69. Luke 12: 45. 22: 56. John 18: 17. Acts 12: 13. 16: 16. Only in one of these cases is it clear that the word probably signifies a slave, and that is the case in Acts 16: 16, of the damsel possessed of the spirit of divination, who brought much gain to her masters. On the other hand, the word *δούλη* is used only three times, Luke 1: 38, 48 and Acts 2: 18, in all three spoken of servants and handmaidens of the Lord.

It is, therefore, impossible to determine, merely from the word *παῖδιον*, the exact condition signified; for the term in the New Testament, though it implies service, in a state of servitude, does not imply necessarily bond-service or slavery, but may be used also of a free person hired, a hired servant, as the נַעֲרָה of the Hebrews, or also a free maiden, in no respect under servitude. As applied to Hagar, the term used by Sarah in the Old Testament, and by Paul in the New, would seem to apply more directly and specifically to her original condition among the Egyptians, and not to her state in the family of Abraham. In Abraham's family, and as his wife, she certainly was not his bond-servant or slave, and the sarcasm of Sarah is directed to her former state, out of which she had been raised, and especially when presented by Sarah to Abraham to be his wife.

Continuing now our investigation through the life of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the next step is found in Gen. 14: 14, 15. Abram armed his *trained ones*, as our translation has it, *born in his own house*, הַנְּקָרוּ יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ. There were in number three hundred and eighteen; and he divided himself against the enemy, he and *his servants*, עַבְדָּיו.

In this passage, the word הַנְּקָרוּ, the verbal from הִנָּקָה, *instructed ones, experienced, proved*, seems to be used as synonymous with עַבְדָּי, servant, and both words are equivalent with יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ, *the born in his own house, the sons of his house*. In the 24th verse the same are called young men, הַנְּעָרִים, that which the *young men* have eaten. These young men, though born in Abraham's house, were not slaves, and an examination of the circumstances of the case, and of the phrases יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ, the born of the house, and בְּרֵבֵיתוֹ, the son of the house, will show the extreme mistake of defining either of these expressions as signifying necessarily a slave; for Hebrew servants might be *the born of the house*, but could not under any circumstances be *slaves*.

In Gen. 15: 3, the phrase used is בְּרֵבֵיתִי, *the son of my house*, one *born in my house* is mine heir.

But it is clear that at this time Abraham had other servants besides those born in his house; at a previous period he had received such in Egypt, where, as a consequence of Pharaoh's favor, he had *men-servants* and *maid-servants*, or an increasing number of them.

In Gen. 12: 5, there is mention of the souls that Abram and Lot had gotten in Haran. At Bethel they were so rich in cattle and silver and gold, in flocks and herds and tents, that the land was not able to bear them together, and the quarrels among their herdmen led to their separation. At this period they were Nomadic chiefs, and those that were born in their tents belonged to their households, and were dependent upon them under the guardianship and care of the patriarchal authority. A patriarchal community, that could muster 318 young men to bear arms, born under Abraham's government, and under allegiance of service to him, must have been numerous; and, besides these dependents, he had other servants, gained by purchase of the stranger; among these his herdmen may have been comprised, for the phrase *bought with money* was applied, though not exclusively, to such a purchase or contract as secured the right to their time and labor for a limited period. In regard to the Hebrews, this is

clearly demonstrated from the very first law on record in this matter, Ex. 21: 2, *If thou buy* an Hebrew *servant*, six years he shall serve, עָבַד חֶקְנָה, *if thou buy*, the same word being used as in the description of the portion of Abraham's household designated as *bought with money*. Parents were accustomed sometimes thus to sell the services of their children. It was something like the purchase of apprentices, or the contract of an apprenticeship for a number of years. Hosea bought his wife, Hos. 3: 2. The term מִקְנֵי-כֶסֶף, *bought with money*, or the *purchase of money*, does not, therefore, necessarily imply an unlimited servile sale; and, as we shall see, a restriction was finally imposed on all such transactions by the Laws of Jubilee, rendering the system of what we call slavery impossible.

Here, then, are three phrases demanding careful consideration: קָרְבִיּוֹת, וְלֵידֵי בַיִת, and מִקְנֵי-כֶסֶף. In Eccl. 2: 7, we have the קָרְבִיּוֹת, thus, I acquired *servants and maidens*, עֲבָדִים וְשִׁמְחוֹת, and *sons of my house* were mine, לִי, וּבְנֵי-בַיִת חֵיָהּ לִי. In Gen. 16: 3, a *son of my house* is mine heir, בְּרֵייתִי. These two phrases, וְלֵידֵי בַיִת, and קָרְבִיּוֹת, seem to be nearly synonymous, but the קָרְבִיּוֹת, *the son of the house*, is descriptive of a class of servants more affectionately attached, and enjoying greater privileges, with greater confidence reposed in them. The whole 318 of Abraham's young men are called לֵידֵי בַיִת, born of the house, that is, of the families under his authority and patriarchal government and care; but the קָרְבִיּוֹת, the son of his house who might be his heir, may have been of his own immediate household. In Gen. 17: 12, 13, 23, 27, in the detail of the covenant of circumcision, and the execution of that rite on all born in Abraham's house, the phrase used is וְלֵידֵי בַיִת. Elsewhere it is very seldom found, once in Lev. 22: 11, concerning the priest's family, and who in it may, and who may not, eat of the holy things; no stranger, nor any sojourner, nor any mere hired servant of the priest shall eat thereof; but the servant bought with his money, and he that is *born in his house*, וְלֵידֵי בַיִת, may eat of it. The hired servant was not regarded as an inseparable part and fixture of the priest's family, in the same manner as the servant born in his house was, and had not the same privileges. A hired servant might be a foreigner, but a servant born in the house was a native of the land, and might be also a native Hebrew.

Neither can this phrase *born of the house*, with safety or correctness be assumed as always specifically implying servitude

of any kind, or a servile state; for it might be right the opposite. It might be used of freemen as well as servants, and of the children of the master and mistress of the house. In Lev. 18: 9, a similar phrase is employed of the daughter of the family, *daughter of thy mother, born of thy house*, בְּתוּלַת מִלְכָּה בֵּיתָה. In Jer. 7: 14, it has been supposed to be used as synonymous, or nearly so, with עֶבֶד. *Is Israel a servant, עֶבֶד? Is he a home-born, אֶבְרָהָם בֵּיתָה.* But these words are not synonymes, and a very different translation of this verse is possible, as may be seen in the note of Blayney, in his translation and commentary on this Prophet, a passage which is worthy of consideration. He translates Jer. 2: 14, thus: *Is Israel a slave? Or if a child of the household, wherefore is he exposed to spoil?* And he remarks "that יָלִיד בֵּיתָה answers to the Latin word *filius-familias*, and stands opposed to a slave." The same distinction is made, Gal. 4: 7, and an inference drawn from it in a similar manner: "Wherefore, thou art no more a servant (a slave), but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." As Christians now, so the Israelites heretofore, were the children of God's household; and if so, they seemed entitled to his peculiar care and protection."

The passage is susceptible of this rendering. *Is Israel a servant, עֶבֶד? but if a home-born, אֶבְרָהָם בֵּיתָה, why is he yet spoiled?* If he were an עֶבֶד merely, he might be expected to be rigorously treated, to be carried into captivity, and "sold with the selling of a bondman." But if a home-born, then under a care and privilege, which would preserve him from such treatment. The ordinary interpretation is different, grounded on the idea that the question is equivalent to a negation. Israel is *not* a servant, neither עֶבֶד nor יָלִיד בֵּיתָה, but is God's own son, and free born, Why then is he become a prey? Because of his own wickedness.

That the phrase יָלִיד בֵּיתָה does not necessarily mean a servant, or a bond-man in contradistinction from a freeman, appears from Gen. 17: 27. After relating the circumcision of Abraham and Ishmael his son, it is added that *all the men of his house, born in his house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.* It is absurd to suppose that of all Abraham's dependent community or tribe, for such are the households here designated, not one male was accounted a freeman. Every male among the men of Abraham's house was circumcised, and all the men of Abraham's house are divided into these two classes only, *born*



*in the house, or bought with money of the stranger.* In the next chapter, 18: 7. Abraham is described as fetching a calf from the herd, and giving it to a *young man*, יְזַרְיָהוּ, to dress it. This young man was in Abraham's service, of Abraham's household, but there is no intimation whatever of his being in the condition of a slave. In fine, we might as well assert that our domestic household animal, the *cat*, was precisely the same animal with the South American *Jaguar* or the Bengal *tiger*, as assume that the servants of Abraham's household were what we call slaves. There might be families beneath his patriarchal authority, neither the head nor the children of which, though born in his house, dependent on him, as the יְלֵדֵי בֵּיתוֹ, were in any condition approximating to that of slaves.

From the building of Babel to the time of Terah, Abraham's father, it was but two hundred years, and during this period there is not the slightest intimation of any such vast social inequality in the community as that of slavery on the one hand and freedom on the other; nor is there time and scope, nor are there causes sufficient, in the generations of Shem, to produce such a condition, where the population was sparse, and the whole race, within little more than three generations, on a perfect equality. It is easy to conceive how the habits of patriarchal government and life could arise and be established, but that a state of slavery should become the social state, while Noah and his family were still living, is incredible. There are no intimations of slavery in Bethuel's family, nor in Laban's after him, in Mesopotamia. We find Rachel feeding her father's sheep, and performing servile labor, and all the indications are of a simple social life, in which slavery was unknown. Up to the time of his sojourn in Canaan, Abraham had been engaged in no wars or predatory excursions, so that that which was afterwards so pregnant a source of captivity and slavery, did not in his family exist, and indeed the very first war in which we find him a conqueror, we find him also refusing to hold any of the conquered as his captives. There was no black color as yet to stigmatize a servile race as the legitimate property of the white races. There were no laws by which free persons might be seized and sold for their jail-fees, not being able to prove their freedom. In short, a more gross and gratuitous assumption can hardly be imagined than that the three hundred and eighteen young men born and trained under Abraham's jurisdiction, of his household, were slaves!

The tie between him and them was assuredly not of compulsion, or oppression, or legal chattelism, but of service and obedience at least as justly required and freely yielded as that of hereditary clans in Scotland, or tribes and families in Arabia.

The other phrase, *קָנָה בְּכֶסֶף*, Gen. 17: 12, the *possession of money, the thing bought with money*, is applied to any acquisition gained by purchase, and also to the price paid. In Gen. 23: 9, 18, 20 it is used as synonymous with *קָנָה*, the *possession of his burying place*. According to the use of the verb *קָנָה*, *to buy*, from which it is derived, it would be suitably applied to acquisitions transitory as well as permanent, and to attainments of the mind as well as earthly riches. The same verb *קָנָה*, *to buy*, is applied by Boaz to his purchase of the field that was Elimelech's, and also to his purchase of Ruth herself to be his wife. *I have bought, קָנִיתִי, all that was Elimelech's, moreover, Ruth have I purchased, קָנִיתִי, to be my wife.* It is also applied, Prov. 4: 7, to the acquisition of wisdom. Prov. 15: 32, to the getting of understanding. So also 16: 16, and 19: 8. It is applied in Isa. 11: 11, to the Lord's *recovering of cattle*. Cain's name, *קַיִן*, that is, *gotten from the Lord*, was given because Eve said, Gen. 4: 1, *קָנִיתִי, I have gotten a man from the Lord.* In Ps. 78: 54, God is said to have *purchased, קָנָה*, this mountain with his right hand. And in Prov. 8: 22, God is said to have *possessed wisdom in the beginning, קָנִיתִי.*

It is clear, then, that the circumstance of the servile relation being acquired by money, and called the purchase or possession of money, did not necessarily constitute it slavery, any more than the purchase of a wife constituted *her* a slave, or the purchase of wisdom constituted *that* a slave. Abraham could acquire a claim upon the service of a man during his life by purchase from himself; he could acquire the allegiance of a man and his family, and of all that should be born in the family, by similar contract, not to be broken, but by mutual agreement; and, in this way, in the course of years he might have a vast household under his authority, born in his house and purchased with his money, but not one of them a slave. He might in the same way purchase of the stranger whatever claim the stranger possessed to the service of the person thus sold, and yet the person thus transferred to Abraham's household might be a voluntary party in the transaction, and in no sense a slave. It is not possible to suppose that, if a servant were offered to Abraham for his purchase,

who could say *I was stolen* by my master, as Joseph could say, it is not possible to suppose that Abraham would consider such a purchase as just, or that he could rightfully make such a person his servant, without his own consent. There is no intimation whatever of any such unrighteous or compulsory service in Abraham's household; there is no ground for the supposition that he either bought slaves, or traded in slaves, or held slaves in any way.

In Lev. 25: 47 there is mention of two modes in which a poor man might sell himself for a servant, namely, being a Hebrew, he might sell himself to a stranger or sojourner, or, *to the stock of the stranger's family*. Here we have great light cast on these transactions. The poor man sells himself on account of his poverty, but not as a slave. He may sell himself not merely to one master, during that master's life, but to the *stock of the family*, לְעַמְּךָ סְפֹּרוֹתָא, as a fixture of the household. It is supposable that he might thus sell himself with his children, or make a contract for the service of his children that might be born to him during the time of this stipulation; and the children so born would be the בְּנֵי בַיִת, the born of the house of his master, or בְּנֵי בַיִת, the sons of the house. But from this contract he might be redeemed by any one of his kin, or he might redeem himself, if he were able, by returning a just proportion of the price of his sale, the price of his services; and whether redeemed or not, the contract should be binding no longer than up to the period of the jubilee.

In the case of the household of Abraham, the phrase in Gen. 17: 12, סְפֹרוֹתָא זָרָה, *the possession or purchase of money*, is qualified with reference to a *stranger only, which is not of thy seed*. In the 27th verse, all the men of Abraham's house are designated as either born in the house, or bought with money of the stranger. They were all circumcised, at the commandment of God.

But Hebrew servants might also be bought with money, as in Ex. 21: 2. Lev. 25: 47. Deut. 15: 12. Jer. 34: 14.

But only for six years ordinarily could such a purchase bind the person bought; the seventh year he was free. Deut. 15: 12. Ex. 21: 2.

He might sell himself, that is, sell his own time and labor, for seven years. In such a case, as when a master sold him, he was a servant bought for money, and distinct from the servant

born in the house. The rule was the same for men-servants and maid-servants.

Supposing him to have been a married man, and himself and his wife sold, and that during their six years of servitude they had children born to them, then, in the seventh year all would go free. Supposing his master to have given him a wife, if a Hebrew, then his wife could not be retained beyond the period of *her* six years of servitude by law, neither her sons nor daughters. But yet, on comparison of Ex. 21: 2—6, with Lev. 25: 39—41 and 47—54, and Deut. 15: 12—18, and Jer. 34: 14, it is manifest that Hebrew servants, husbands, wives, and children, might be retained, under certain conditions, until the year of jubilee, in servitude. Many of them, in such cases, would be servants born in the house, *sons of the house*; yet, even then and thus, no master could compel them to serve as bond-servants, but they were to be treated as hired servants and sojourners. If a man with a household already thus composed, should buy a Hebrew servant, and give him a wife from among the number of maid-servants that were already, by rightful contract, the fixtures of his family until the jubilee, then he would have no right, if he chose to go out free at the end of his six years, to take away his wife, and the children she might have borne him, but they were to remain until the jubilee; and, if he chose not to avail himself of his legal privilege of quitting his master's residence and service, but preferred to remain with his wife and children, the sons of the house, then he too must remain till the jubilee. He could not quit, after making this choice, at the expiration of another seven years; but all were free in the year of jubilee, men, women, and children.

It is clear, then, that, while the servants born in the house might, under certain conditions, be born under a claim of continued service till the jubilee, those bought with money could be bound only for a period of six years. On the other hand, the master was obliged by law to treat those who were under servitude until the jubilee, not as bond-servants, but as hired-servants, giving them their stated and covenanted wages. The question then comes up as to the specific difference between bond-servants and hired-servants, and the nature of their respective treatment. This we shall have occasion to examine historically, in considering the successive developments of the law; but much light may be gained from the examination of the words.

But, before considering this, we have to ask how far it is safe to draw conclusions as to Abraham's household, from the laws made for his posterity more than four hundred years after his age? The gross perversions and mistakes made by commentators taking the state of things in Modern Egypt and in Pagan Rome in the horrid prevalence of the lowest and most universal slave-life and manners, and carrying that picture and those ideas back for supposed originals and illustrations of the servitude in the time and even the household of Abraham, may teach us the necessity of caution. Even the words coined out of Roman despotism and slave-customs have been taken by lexicographers to interpret Hebrew words that had no such meaning; and hence the assumption with which *קָנָה* and *אָמָה* and *אֲמָתָיִךָ* are sometimes rendered by *mancipium*, *verna*, and *slave*, when there was neither Hebrew word, nor personal chattel, answering to any such appellative.

But conclusions and illustrations from the completed theocracy and system of Hebrew law and life back to Abraham as chosen and instructed for its beginning, cannot be very erroneous. The general principles on which God would govern and train the Hebrew nation were certainly revealed to Abraham, along with the great covenant that separated them from the heathen world as a peculiar people, and the appointed seal of that covenant, in the rite of circumcision. The application of that rite to servants as well as masters, and to those purchased from the stranger as well as those born in the house, and the admission of all to the privileges of the same national covenant, was a remarkable equalizing interposition, doing away, by itself alone, with most of the injustice and evil of the system of slavery as it came to exist in the heathen world. All were to be instructed in religion, and treated with kindness. According to the nature of the Divine law as revealed to Abraham, Abraham could not, if obedient to God, treat his servants that were bought with his money, or those born in his house, whether obtained in Egypt or elsewhere, according to the principles of idolatry and servitude prevalent in the countries where he travelled and dwelt. When they came into his household, they came on very different principles, and under very different regulations, from those of the system of an irresponsible despotism, or of what we call slavery.

There is really no such thing as slavery discoverable in Abraham's household, though there were servants that had been

given to him by the most despotic slave-holders then in the world, and others whose service was bought with money, of strangers, and others, doubtless, who were in his family as servants for a stipulated time. But, concerning his administration of the whole, God declares: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment," Gen. 18: 19. This is sufficient proof that there never was, in Abraham's household, that thing which the Romans called *mancipium*, nor that iniquitous system, which in modern times we call *slavery*. His was a system of paternal and patriarchal kindness, instruction, and well-regulated service, but not of enforced and unpaid servitude. It was a system of generosity and confidence on one side, and of free and affectionate obedience on the other. It was neither power without right, nor submission without willingness. There were no fugitive slave laws, nor any need of them, nor do we find traces of any such custom as that of training hounds to hunt runaways. It is manifest that a confidence almost unlimited was reposed by Abraham in the faithfulness and contentment of those under his authority. The oldest servant of Abraham's house, who ruled over all that he had, and had been trained himself under the influence of the laws and manners of his household, bears witness, by his own character, to the nature of the whole system. This man was called, Gen. 24: 2, עבדו זקן ארצו, *his eldest servant of his house*, or, his servant, the elder of his house, the *majordomo*, the word used being the same employed to designate the elders of Israel. The arming of the whole multitude of his servants, and committing to their steadiness and bravery the conduct of a war, argues for them all a participation in the same character, and the enjoyment of a freedom among them, and of privileges and blessings so great and valuable under their allegiance to Abraham, that he could repose the utmost confidence in that allegiance, and in their contentment under his authority and service. The only case in which there is any intimation of oppression or severity in the household, is on the part of Sarah, and the subject of it takes an immediate opportunity to flee from such oppression. And such opportunity, in that state of society, was open to all, nor were there, in the sojournings and life of the patriarchs, any of those safeguards of law and State-power, to keep down the oppressed, without which a system such as that of Roman or of modern slavery could not be maintained for a single generation.

It is scarcely to be doubted that slavery grew out of idolatry, and in its perfection was one of the last and most perfect fruits of the execrable system of Egyptian and of Roman paganism. The exalting of men of gigantic vice and ability into gods, and the consequent consecration of tyrannic power as a celestial attribute, and the obedience of its instruments to its despotism, the superstitious debasement of the soul before it, and the necessity of slaves as the victims and tools of its ambition and success, very naturally suggest and account for the progress and fixture of slavery in the old heathen social life. Everything evil and abominable grew in such society, out of the bestial and oppressive idolatrous systems into which men fell. There were near five hundred years from Abraham to Moses, during which the idolatry of the Egyptians and the Canaanites, and every depraved habit along with it, grew more dreadful and inveterate. It was a prominent article of the Divine law: "When the Lord thy God shall cast out the nations from before thee, take heed to thyself that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God: for every abomination which he hateth have they done unto their gods: for even their sons and their daughters have they burnt in the fire to their gods."

Now as to the difference between bond-servants and hired servants, we take, first, the word for bond-servants, which is none other than the general term עֶבֶד, defined by the context, or the circumstances of the case. It is sometimes by our translators rendered *servant*, and sometimes *bondman*. The peculiar signification *bondman* is determined by reference to the nature of Egyptian bondage, which was the ultimate standard of rigor, of cruelty, and oppression. *Remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt*, Deut. 15: 15, an עֶבֶד, without mitigation, held to rigorous and unpaid bondage. Thou shalt not compel thy brother to serve as such a bond-servant. For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, they shall not be sold as bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigor, but shalt fear thy God. Lev. 25: 39, 42, 43, *They shall not be sold as bondmen*, לֹא יִמְכְּרוּ כְּעֶבְדֵי אֲדָמָה עֶבֶד, *not with the sale of a bondman*. And in verse 44, *Of the heathen shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids*, עֶבֶד וְאִמָּה, *the servant and the maid-servant*. There was no separate word for *bond-servant*, no word for *slave*. There was only the word, honorable in its origin, and free in its original meaning,

which they had to adopt and use. But a man might be an עֶבֶד, a servant, and yet be a freeman. It is not the term, therefore, but the context, that limits and particularizes the signification. In 2 Kings 4: 1, "The creditor is come to take my two sons to be bondmen," that is, to be לְעֶבְרִים, to be servants, but not bondmen, for by law, being Hebrews, they could not be sold as bondmen, though they might be taken as servants, at a valuation of their time and labor, for the term of six years, for payment of the debt, to work out the debt. But if that did not suffice, but they must be held longer, then it was not lawful to hold them as bondmen, but as hired servants. See the law, Lev. 25: 39, 40: "If thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant, but as a hired servant and a sojourner he shall be with thee." Not as עֶבֶד but as עֹבֵד. *Thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant, לֹא-תַעֲבֹד בּוֹ עֶבֶד כְּעֶבֶד עֶבֶד.* — *Thou shalt not task upon him the tasking of a bondman.*

The service of the bond-servant thus designated was frequently compared, for illustration, with the servitude endured by the Israelites in Egypt. This was despotic and without wages, without stipulated reward; no agreement or bargain between master and servant, but the latter forced into the service and under the rule of the former; a degradation and a yoke, under which no right of a freeman could be asserted. See Lev. 26: 13. Deut. 16: 12. 24: 18, 22. 26: 6. 28: 68. It was the bondage endured by the Jews in their captivity, Ezra 9: 9. Neh. 5: 8. It was the bondage into which Joseph was sold, Gen. 37: 28, 36 and Ps. 105: 17. Various legal privileges, to which even the lowest class of servants among the Hebrews were entitled, and various liminary statutes, controlling the system of servitude, made it impossible for the Hebrews to impose the same despotic slavery upon others; they could not rule over the servants purchased from the heathen with the same unlimited authority with which the heathen ruled over their own slaves. Both the Hebrew servants, and the servants bought with money of the stranger, were under protection of the same laws against cruelty, and were in the same relation to the church by circumcision, and entitled to their rights in all the religious festivals and privileges of instruction and of worship. The Sabbath, and also the Sabbathical year of rest, was theirs as well as their master's, and, as we shall see, the recurrence of jubilee was a limit beyond



which no form or period of bondage could in any case be continued.

The Hebrew term for hired servant, שָׂכָר, the *hireling*, is from the verb שָׂכַר, to hire. Lev. 19: 13, *the wages of him that is hired, שָׂכָר*. — Ex. 22: 15, of a person who has hired himself out with his ox, or ass, or implement of husbandry, *If he were a hireling, אֲשֶׁר שָׂכַר*. So in Ex. 12: 45, a hired servant, שָׂכָר; also, Lev. 22: 16, a hired servant of the priest; also, Lev. 25: 40, 50, 53. In Isaiah 16: 14, we have an illustrative passage, *Within three years, as the years of an hireling, שְׁנֵי שָׂכָר*; also Isa. 21: 16, *Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, שְׁנֵי שָׂכָר*, computed as the years of a servant hired by the year are computed. But the שָׂכָר, the hired servant, might be hired by the day, while the ordinary servant, the עֶבֶד, had no such compensation. Job 7: 2, *As a servant, עֶבֶד, earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling, שָׂכָר, looketh for his wages.* Here the contrast between the two words, and their respective signification is marked. The עֶבֶד, the ordinary servant, looks for no wages, but longs for the evening and for rest, or for a shadow from the sun, and for some relief from his toil. But the hired servant, שָׂכָר, looks for the reward of his work, according to the law in Lev. 19: 13. So, likewise, Job 14: 6, *that he may accomplish, as an hireling, his day, מְבַרְכֵי*.

Now it is to be noted that the word עֶבֶד is never used in conjunction with any adjective to signify a hired servant; for the עֶבֶד, the servant, was one whose whole services were purchased at the outset for a specified time, longer or shorter, as the case might be, from himself, or from some one to whom for such time he owed those services; it might be for a term of years, it might be till the jubilee. It is quite clear that the distinctive signification of עֶבֶד excluded the idea of wages, or of serving for hire. In Lev. 25: 39, 49, the particular difference between the ordinary servant and the hired servant is legally drawn out, "If thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant, but as an hired servant and as a sojourner shall he be with thee." Here it is not said, *Thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant, but as a hired bond-servant*, though this seems to be the point in view; but, there being ordinarily no such thing as a hired bond-servant, a hired עֶבֶד (the time and labor of the עֶבֶד being purchased ordinarily for years or for life), the specific word שָׂכָר is

used; thou shalt not compel him to serve as an עֶבֶד, but as a שֶׂכֶר, and a sojourner shall he be with thee. Yet this is spoken of one who is sold, one who is bought with money. The buying with money did not imply ownership, did not render consequent or extant the condition which we call slavery; this is perfectly clear. All the Hebrew servants so bought were merely servants bound out for a term of years, and if longer than six years, then to be treated as hired servants, not as bond-servants. So in Ex. 21: 7, where it is said, *If a man sell his daughter*, the thing signified is merely a six years' contract for her services; her service for six years is sold for so much.

A Hebrew might sell himself to a stranger, sojourner, or alien in Israel, or to the stock of the stranger's family, to the heir, for an unlimited time, that is, for the period of time from the making of the bargain to the jubilee. But this sale had two conditions: first, he was to be with his master "as a yearly hired servant," שֶׂכֶר שָׂנָה מִשָּׁנָה, Lev. 25: 53, as a hireling from year to year, or year by year; second, he could at any time be redeemed, that is, could buy back his own time, or have it bought back for him, and his owner was compelled to grant the redemption and take the money. The price of redemption was reckoned from the year that he was sold to the year of jubilee, so much a year, according to the price and time of a yearly hired servant. If more years remained to the jubilee, a greater price, if fewer, a less price, was to be paid for his own time. If not redeemed, he and all his family were to be free at any rate in the year of jubilee, and meanwhile he was to receive wages as a yearly hired servant, a שֶׂכֶר, and not an עֶבֶד, a bondman. It is added that his master shall not rule with rigor over him. And in Lev. 25: 46, when it is enacted that the bondmen of the Hebrews shall be purchased of the strangers or the families of strangers, the heathen or their descendants in the land, it was added, "but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule, one over another with rigor." The rigorous rule, as contrasted with the lenient rule over hired servants, consisted partly in the very fact of their being bound to serve without stipulated wages. This was the grand difference between the עֶבֶד and שֶׂכֶר.

There were other differences by statute, as described in Ex. 12: 43—45 and Lev. 22: 10, 11. No uncircumcised stranger or foreigner, nor any man's hired servant might eat of the passover. But the servant bought for money might eat thereof, when cir-

circumcised. It was a household ordinance, to be observed by families, as well as national. The home-born servants were regarded in this respect as belonging to the family, but the hired servants, not. Yet this could not have been intended to operate to the exclusion of hired servants under all circumstances, from the passover; it *may* mean, hired servants uncircumcised. Certainly, Hebrews themselves were sometimes in the state of hired servants, and could not have been excluded. But again, in the priest's family, Lev. 22: 10, 11, while the servant bought with money, or born in the house, was permitted to partake of the holy things, the hired servant was forbidden, was not regarded as belonging to the priest's household.

In Deut. 15: 18, there is a computation of the comparative worth of a bond-servant, עֶבֶד, and the hired servant, שֹׂכֵר. "The Hebrew servant, serving thee six years by sale, *hath been worth a double hired servant to thee, in serving thee six years;*" or perhaps it means, duplicate the wages of a hired servant for six years; that is, if you had kept a hired servant for six years, by yearly wages, it would have cost you double the price you paid for the six years' Hebrew servant. The servant bought for six years, you had no yearly wages to pay; but the hired servant you must pay by the year. On this account, when the Hebrew servant was set free at the end of his six years' service, the master was by law enjoined to give him a parting gift, was not permitted to send him away empty, but was bound to "furnish him liberally out of the flock, the floor, and the wine-press." It was an outfit, intended in some measure to supply to him the absence of yearly wages. Deut. 15: 13, 14.

From all this it appears that, so far as the Hebrew servant was an עֶבֶד, he was such only for the term of six years, an עֶבֶד, without wages; but if in longer servitude, then he was an עֶבֶד שֹׂכֵר, a servant, an hireling, a servant on wages. The mere עֶבֶד was ordinarily the servant bought for money, and was considered as bound to pay, by his labor, for the sum of money given as the purchase of his whole time. If the master had to pay him yearly or daily wages in addition, then the servant bought with his money would have cost him much more than the hired laborer. It was the difference between a six years' apprenticeship, and a six years' service on wages.

Such were the relations between master and servant in the Hebrew household four or five hundred years after the time of

Abraham. Such was the system of servitude as regulated by law, to which God's regulations with Abraham, in the founding of the Hebrew nation and policy, looked forward. Abraham, five hundred years before the operation of the Mosaic statutes, had servants that were born in his house, servants that were given him, and servants that were bought with his money. They were all circumcised and instructed, and his children and his household were to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. God's testimony to Isaac concerning Abraham, after his death, was this: "because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." Gen. 26: 5. There were men in Abraham's house, born in his house, and there were those bought with money of the stranger; they were all circumcised, along with Ishmael his son, and formed one and the same religious family.

It is in Abraham's household that we first find mention of servants under the form *נַעַר*, a *young man*, Gen. 18: 7. This designation is repeated in Gen. 22: 3, 5, 19, where Abraham's *young men* accompanied himself and Isaac to the mount of the appointed sacrifice. They were employed in menial services, though the word does not necessarily mean servants, and Isaac himself is called by the same designation, rendered in his case *lad*. Indeed, the generic signification is *lad*, or *boy*, while it is often applied to designate *servants*, as also is the feminine of *נַעַר* applied to a *maid-servant*. Thus we find Abraham, on these two important occasions, personally waited on (as also his illustrious guests) by his young men, *נַעַרָיו*.

There is the same usage in the following instances: 2 Kings 4: 22, 24, used to designate the servants of the Shunamite, and verse 25, applied to Gehazi, the servant of Elijah. Also, 5: 20 and 8: 4. In 2 Kings 6: 15, it is one of two terms applied to designate the servant of Elisha, the first from the verb *שָׁרַף*, to serve, to minister, and the second *נַעַר*, as also in verse 17. In 1 Kings 19: 3, Elijah left his servant at Beersheba, *נַעַר*. It is used also in 1 Kings 20: 14, 15, 17, 19, and in like manner in 2 Kings 19: 6. The same designation is applied in Neh. 4: 16, 22, 23, and 5: 15, 16, and 6: 5. It is applied to Nehemiah's servants, the people's, Sanballat's, and the former governor's servants. But in the same history Tobiah, *the servant*, the Ammonite, is designated with intended contempt as the *נַעַר*, probably a runaway slave of the heathen, though he was the son-in-law

of Shechaniah, the son of Arah. Neh. 2: 10, 19, and 6: 18, and 13: 19. In Num. 22: 22, the term נַעֲרֵי is applied to the two servants of Balaam.

After the overthrow of Sodom, Abraham sojourned in Gerar, and there Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and men-servants and women-servants, עַבְדֵי וְאִשְׁתּוֹ, and gave to Abraham, Gen. 20: 14. And all that Abraham had, he gave unto Isaac, flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and men-servants and maid-servants, and camels and asses, Gen. 24: 35, 36 and 25: 5. After the death of Abraham we find Isaac dwelling in Gerar, under the Divine blessing, so that he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants, וְיַעֲבֹדָה רָבָה, Gen. 26: 14. Precisely the same words are used of Job, that he had a very great household, עַבְדָּו רָבָה, *the whole body of domestics and dependents*, Job 1: 3.

But the servants are here called, as in Gen. 22: 3, and other places referred to above, *young men*, וְנָעָרִים, Job 1: 15—17, three times: first, the servants are slain; second, the sheep and the servants are consumed; third, the camels are carried away and the servants slain by the Chaldeans. These נָעָרִים were certainly a part of the great household, the עַבְדָּו, the domestics and servants of Job. But in the 19th verse the same word is used to describe Job's own sons as destroyed in the falling of the house; they too are called the young men, וְנָעָרִים. In Job 41: 5, the feminine plural is used for maidens. Wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? לְנָעֳרֹתַי.

This peculiar usage prevails in Judges, Ruth, and the first book of Samuel. Judges 7: 10, 11, Phurah the *servant* of Gideon, נַעֲרֵי. Judges 19: 3, His *servant* with him, and a couple of asses, נַעֲרֵי. 19: 9, 11, 13, 19. The master to the servant, and the servant to the master, the distinction being that of אֲדָרְכִי and נַעֲרֵי. Ruth 2: 6, 6, Boaz to his *servant* over the reapers, his young men, לְנָעָרָיו. Also 2: 9, 15, 21. The feminine of the same word in this book is used for maidens, as 2: 8, *my maidens*, נַעֲרֹתַי. 2: 22, 23, the maidens of Boaz. It is the servants of Boaz that are thus designated, and Ruth calls them in 2: 13, handmaidens, נַעֲמָנוֹתַי. The young men and the maidens, as servants to Boaz, were at work in his fields, and Ruth gleaned among them and after them. In this book the word עַבְדֵי for servant, is not once employed; an indication that there was no approximation to slavery known in the household of Boaz, though he was a mighty man of wealth of the family of Elimelech.

In 1 Sam. 9: 3, 5, 8, 7, 22, 27, and 10: 14, there is the same usage. Kish said to Saul, take now one of *the servants*, עֲבָדָיִם, with thee, and seek the asses. Then said Saul to *his servant*, נַעַר, and so repeatedly. The same usage in reference to maidens employed in drawing water, in 9: 11, they are called נְעָרוֹת. And so in 1 Sam. 2: 13, 15, the masculine of the same noun is used for the priest's servant, נַעַר.

In 1 Sam. 30: 13, the word is used as follows, *a young man* (נַעַר) of *Egypt, servant* (עֲבָד) to an Amalekite. In 2 Sam. 9: 2, compared with 9: 9, 10, and 16: 1, and 19: 17, the terms עֲבָד and נַעַר are applied to the same person, Ziba, of the house of Saul; and a close examination of the passages indicates the condition signified to be quite different from anything implied in the appellation of slave. Ziba is first called a servant, עֲבָד, of the house of Saul, and then he is named the נַעַר of the house of Saul, with twenty servants, עֲבָדָיִם, under him, in his own house, and all that dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants, עֲבָדָיִם, unto Mephibosheth. 9: 9, "The king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, נַעַר, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his house. Thou, therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, עֲבָדָיִךָ, shall till the land for him." 16: 1, Ziba is called the servant, נַעַר, of Mephibosheth, and meets king David with provisions. 19: 17, again he is called Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, נַעַר בֵּית שָׁאִיל, the *young man* of the house of Saul. Very evidently, Ziba was an officer of some importance in Saul's household, but it is equally clear that he was not a slave, though called both the עֲבָד and the נַעַר of his master the king. The *naarism* would seem to have been a form of service, or a class of servants, more honorable, and of a higher grade, than the *evedhism*. The indication, wherever נַעַר is employed, is certainly that of free service, and not bond-service.

For the present we stop, in our investigation, with the Abrahamic period. From the survey of this period, as it lies in the Scriptures, we find no trace whatever of the existence of *slavery*, except among idolatrous and despotic nations. There is no proof that it ever existed in the household of Abraham. There is evidence of the revealed judgment of God against it. God's description to Abraham of the bondage which his seed should be compelled to undergo in Egypt, was a reprobation of involuntary unpaid servitude, as a crime on the part of those who enforced it. *The nation whom they serve will I judge.* Know of a surety

that thy seed shall serve them, and they shall afflict them. The sentence is as clearly condemnatory, as if God had said, They will be guilty of great and cruel oppression, and for the crime of such oppression, I will punish them. Is it possible to conceive that the individual, with an enlightened moral sense, to whom this revelation was made, could himself, as the head and founder of a social race and system, establish in his own family and nation the same reprobated state of enforced, unpaid, involuntary servitude? Could Abraham make *another* seed his prey and property, by the same spoliation and affliction denounced of God as a crime to be punished, when inflicted on *his own* seed? The crime of the Egyptians against the Hebrews was the enslaving of them, and treating them as slaves. The enslaving of *others*, and treating *them* as slaves, would be the same crime in Abraham; it would be the founding of the same system of oppression and cruelty, which God plainly informed Abraham was wrong.

Even when, in the execution of God's judgments against the heathen nations expelled from the promised land, the Hebrews were commanded to put the remnant of those nations to tribute and service, they were forbidden to treat *them* as they themselves had been treated in Egypt. The system of servitude under which they were to be brought, was hemmed in and restricted by such legal limitations and periodical closures, that what we call slavery could not grow out of it, but would, on the contrary, be abolished by it. It is impossible that the system which God thus predestinated to abhorrence, as a system of iniquity, could at the same time be set in the household and line of the patriarch as an example and model of social and domestic life. There must be positive proof, of the most unquestionable clearness, before we can admit the existence of such an anomaly; but no proof is found. It is no proof to take assumptions from the existence and nature of slavery in ancient Greece and Rome, or in modern ages, and carry them back to the foundation of the patriarchal society, and force them there, as a supposititious conclusion in regard to that society. It is no proof to take from modern times and languages a name, a term, of which there is no trace in the Hebrew tongue, and apply it to Hebrew usages, that have no reality corresponding to it, and then, notwithstanding all this, draw from such application of the term an opinion that the thing itself existed. Strange to say, this has been the

case with not a few commentators, almost without reflection, with not the slightest examination of the question; so that we find the term *slave* most carelessly, incongruously, and groundlessly applied, even in books and essays assuming to be critical.

If we could suppose a species of crab-apple to have been grafted on the antique olive-tree, so that, from the time of Julius Caesar down to this day the most ordinary fruit of the olive should be a bitter, oily, poisonous crab-apple, used for the purpose of intoxication and intemperance, it would certainly be a somewhat serious error to assume the existence and use of this artificial corruption of the olive in the land of Palestine in the time of Joshua and the Judges. If this modern perverted fruit had its own peculiar name, it would be an extraordinary stupidity, or wilful perversion, for any lexicographer or commentator to call the fruit of the oriental antique olive by that name. And it would be a most disastrous and absurd confusion to carry in our minds the idea of that poisonous and vicious modern invention, when reading of the habitual use of the olive as a native and most precious production of the Holy Land, one of the most gracious gifts of God to its inhabitants. But even this would be not more absurd, than for us to carry the name or the idea of *slavery* back to the household life of Abraham.

Should the permission afterwards distinctly given from God for the Hebrews to buy, from the stranger and the heathen, their servants for a possession and inheritance, their עֲבָדֵי, their bond-servants, occur to any mind at this stage of our investigation, as a difficulty, let it be remembered that, besides, and even apart from, the benevolent law of Jubilee, which we are to consider, such purchase and adoption into Hebrew families was an appointed redemption from a worse state. There could not, consequently, be any sentiment of injustice, under this revealed will of God, in regard to the purchase from heathen masters of servants possessed by them as slaves, and treated as such. Such purchase brought the slaves themselves out from an irresponsible, unlimited slavery into a system of guardianship and protection, a system of religious instruction, and of family and national privileges. The children of such would be circumcised, adopted, and become *sons of the house*. In purchasing of a heathen there was no violence, no injustice, but a favor conferred. The heathen laws and fixtures of society included slavery in its worst forms. Captives in war, criminals, hereditary slaves,



and slaves for debt, were numerous among them. In no other way than by purchase, could the Hebrews redeem them, even if they had started on such an emancipation of the nations; and it was only the land of Canaan that had been given them. If, therefore, they had been forbidden to buy; if they had been restricted to hired servants of their own race alone, they could not have got possession of heathen slaves, even to redeem them, except as runaways; and thus multitudes would have been kept in heathen bondage, who, the moment they passed into Hebrew bondage, passed into a state of comparative freedom. Fugitives from the heathen, as well as from cruel masters of the Hebrews themselves, the people were bound by law to shelter and protect, and were not permitted to deliver them back to their masters.

[To be concluded.]

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#### ARTICLE IV.

EMANUEL GEIBEL.<sup>1</sup>

By James B. Angell, Professor in Brown University.

On Sunday, the first day of May, 1868, a sad, but illustrious, assembly were gathered together in Berlin. Rauch, the sculptor, was there, at the head of a deputation from the Academy. Von Raumer, Werder, Waager, and the great Humboldt were there. The hearts of all were heavy with grief. For before them lay all that was mortal of Ludwig Tieck. Loving hands had strewed the coffin with flowers. The tears, which moistened many an eye, told of a deeper and holier feeling than mere admiration of a world-renowned author. On every face was depicted sorrowing love for the Friend and the Man. In an eloquent discourse, Dr. Sydow portrayed the character and the genius of the deceased.

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Gedichte von Emanuel Geibel. Sechszwanzigste Auflage. Berlin, 1851.

2. Juniuslieder von Emanuel Geibel. Neunte Auflage. Berlin, 1853.

3. German Lyrics, by Charles T. Brooks. Boston, 1853.