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FAMILY BATHS,
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A BIBLE VIEW OF SLAVERY.

BY HON. AMOS KENDALL.

[We take the following from the National Intelligencer, in which paper it appeared as one of a series of "Letters to the President."]

To Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States.

RESPECTED SIR:—My object in these letters, be it distinctly understood, is not to commend slavery as a desirable institution, nor to mitigate in the least the crime or the penalty of the Southern rebellion; but it is, by the light of truth, to disarm, in some degree, a set of Northern fanatics, whose insane hatred of slavery makes them equally hostile to our glorious Constitution. It is to show the honest people of the free states that, as a political question, they are not responsible for it, and have no rightful control over it, and that, as a moral question, there is nothing in it which justifies their interference by virtue of any "higher law" than the Constitution of their country. Rebel masters may be divested of their right to the labor of their slaves as a punishment for their treason, just as far as they may be divested of other analogous rights, and no farther; but for the United States to abolish the institution, because individual slaveholders head the rebellion, would be as gross a usurpation as a sweeping act to divorce all wives from their husbands and free all children from their parents in all the slaveholding states for the same reason.

Not from any other motive than to bring home more vividly to the minds of the reader the Bible truths developed in my last letter, I address myself to a Reverend representative of a class.

I say to him, do you, in common with all or most Christian teachers, recognize Noah as a prophet of God who spoke by inspiration? If so, it was God himself who doomed the descendants of Ham to perpetual servitude. If, therefore, slavery be sin, God in this case is responsible for it; and when you attempt on that ground to rescue the African from slavery, you assume to be more wise and just than God! Is it not so?

Abraham bought servants with his money, and had hundreds "born in his house." He was a special favorite of God, who not only heaped blessings upon him, but chose him to be the father of his peculiar people, and the progenitor of the Saviour of mankind.

Your denunciation of the buying of men and women with money as sinful, and its toleration in our country as "a great national sin," which has brought down upon us the judgment of Heaven. Abraham did the same thing, and Heaven showered blessings upon him. Our fathers and brothers did the same thing, and were blessed as Abraham was, until the reformers of God's moral law, by their impious assumptions, disturbed the peace of the country, and aided in bringing down upon it the calamities under which it now mourns.

You denounce slavery as sin. God says: (Exodus, 21, 2.) "If you buy a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve." That is slavery, or involuntary servitude, by the command of God. Who knows best what is sin, you or God?

He may become free at the end of "six years"; but, if he choose, he may be made a slave "forever," by means of a ceremony prescribed in Exodus, 21, 6; and Deuteronomy, 15, 17. He had no further option on the subject; but, says God, "he shall be thy servant forever."

But you may say this is voluntary servitude. Not certainly for the first six years; and, according to your principles, a man cannot alienate his liberty. If so, this voluntary slave, after he has become so voluntarily, may change his mind and resume his freedom; but God says he shall be a servant "forever." Is God a sinner?

But if he accept his freedom at the end of six years, his sons and daughters, if born of a wife given him by his master, (doubtless herself a slave) shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. In other words, they shall not be free on the seventh year, but shall remain slaves forever. This is God's order. Is it a sin, Reverend Sir?

You say there cannot be ownership in man. God says the woman and her sons and daughters in this case "shall be her master's."

In the 21st chapter of Exodus, after directing that if a master beat his slave to death, he shall be punished, God says, verse 21, "Notwithstanding, if he continue for a day or two, he [the master] shall not be punished for he [the slave] is his money." Is not a man's money his property? You, Reverend Sir, say that a man's slave is not his property. God says he is, which shall a Christian believe? I would like to hear you preach a sermon from these words of Scripture: "For he is his money."

"Thus saith the Lord," in Leviticus, 25, 44: "Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen—that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids." Give us a sermon upon this text also, and show us how acts which God expressly authorized can be sinful.

"Thus saith the Lord" in the next verse, 45: "Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among ye, of

them shall ye buy and of their families that are with you, which they begot in your land, and they shall be your possession."

Another good text, Reverend Sir, from which I should like to hear you deduce the conclusion not only that buying those children was a sin, but that "possession" here does not mean "property."

"Thus saith the Lord," in the next verse, "And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them as a possession; they shall be your bondmen forever."

Your Bible tells you, Reverend Sir, that these are the direct words of God. God himself authorizes the buying of slaves; God himself authorizes them to be held as "a possession." God himself declares that they shall be "an inheritance," passing from father to son; God himself declares that they shall remain in this relation "forever."

Yet you teach that slavery is itself a sin; that the buying men and women for money is a sin; that holding them as a "possession" is a sin; that their transmission as an "inheritance" from father to son is a sin; and that holding them in bondage "forever" is "the sum of all villainies."

What is the inference? Either that you do not believe the Bible, and assume to believe it only as a mask to enable you to lend stray ignorant men and silly women, or you believe that God himself legalized sin among his chosen people. Take which horn of the dilemma you choose; you cannot escape both.

Let us now review the subject, in the light of the New Testament.

If slavery be "sum of all villainies," Reverend Sir, is it not strange that Jesus Christ did not denounce it as a sin, tho' it existed all around him? Is it not stranger still that his apostles, instead of denouncing it as a sin, recognized it as a lawful relation, involving certain Christian duties? Let us examine the difference between the Gospel which they preached, and the Gospel which you preach.

The Gospel taught by Paul and Peter enjoined upon every man to be content in the position where Providence has placed him. "Art thou called, being a servant? Care not for it," says Paul, Corinthians I, 7-21. Your Gospel teaches the servant discontent and rebellion.

The Gospel taught by Paul and Peter enjoins servants to be obedient to their masters, whether kind or cruel. "Servants be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh," says Paul, Eph. 6, 5. "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters as worthy of all honor," says Paul, I Tim. 6-1. "Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things," says Paul to Titus, 2-9. "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward," says Peter, I, 2-18. Your Gospel teaches that servants owe no obedience to their masters, whether they be "froward" or "good and gentle."

The Gospel taught by Peter and Paul enjoined upon servants to serve their masters with "good-will," Eph. 6-7. "Not with eye service," Col. 3-22. "To please them well in all things, not answering again, nor purloining, but showing all good fidelity," Titus, 2-10. "To endure grief, suffering wrongfully," I Peter 2, 19.

Your Gospel teaches servants that it is not their duty to serve their masters at all, nor to please them in anything; to be mere eye-servants and faithful in nothing; to purloin their master's property and run away when they can, and to cut their master's throats if necessary to gain their own liberty.

What motive or end does the Gospel taught by Paul and Peter hold out to servants as inducements to be obedient and faithful to their masters? That it is "doing the will of God," Eph. 6, 6; "That the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed," I Tim. 6, 1; "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour," Titus, 2, 10; "That it is acceptable to God," I Peter, 2, 20.

And what motive does the Gospel you teach hold out to the black man for seeking to escape from the position assigned him by God through Noah, and to violate all the duties especially enjoined upon him by the Gospel of Christ? You promise him liberty, not the liberty of "the Lord's free man," which looks to eternity as in Christ's Gospel, but the "proving liberty" which looks only to time as in your Gospel; a liberty which knows no equality, not even with yourself; liberty to exist a degraded being among another race of men who exclude him from all civil, social, and domestic relations; liberty to live and die a miserable outcast on earth, without that cheering hope of eternal liberty and equality in Heaven which Paul and Peter promise to the obedient and faithful servant.

St. Paul was a good painter of character and somewhat prophetic. He seems to have foreseen the anti-slavery crusade of this day and described its leaders. After having emphatically directed Timothy to teach servants to honor and serve their masters; I Tim. 6, 12; he adds, in verses 8, 9, the following picture of an anti-slavery teacher, "If any man

teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil murmurings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness."

This passage, be it remembered, follows directly after Paul's injunction to Timothy to teach servants to honor and serve their masters, "that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed;" "these things teach and exhort," says he, and then proceeds to say, "if any man teach otherwise, &c., he is proud, knowing, &c." Hence it appears that this description of character was designed for just such anti-slavery teachers as yourself and your associates of the present day. And how true the picture! What envy, what strife, what railings, what evil murmurings, what perverse disputings, have your teachings of other doctrines produced? Nay, more; what hatred among Christians; what divisions of churches; what sectional antipathies; what excitements and commotions; and, finally, what desolation, bloodshed, and mourning have your unchristian teachings aided in bringing upon our lately powerful, prosperous, and happy land?

And, not content with the aid you have given traitors in involving your country in a devastating civil war, you are now moving earth and hell to prolong it, to render it more bloody, and perhaps assure the success of the traitors—certainly to afford them their only chance of success—by converting the war for the Constitution into a war against slavery. You are as hostile to the Constitution as the rebels themselves, and you prefer their success to the preservation of the Government transmitted to us by our fathers, simply because that Government recognizes an institution which God has sanctioned, and the rights of masters; and the duties of servants as prescribed by the apostles of Christ. In short, you are not willing to live under a Government which protects slaveholders, although it does not know them in that character, and has no power over the institution.

I wonder that you do not openly rebel against the government of God because "he sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust." To be consistent you ought to object to living on the same earth and under the same sky with slaveholders; and breathing the same air. And surely you will pray for a heaven by yourselves; for those who think no slaveholder can be a fit associate for them in a Christian church can be happy in a heaven peopled with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, David and Solomon; and such advocates of slavery as Paul and Peter. Now, how can you be happy in that Heaven where that God who expressly authorized his people of old to buy slaves and hold them in bondage forever; or that Christ, an essential part of whose religion is the cheerful obedience of the slave to his master?

Yes, in your "dotting about questions and strifes of words," you not only promote revolution and bloodshed in your country; but you are sapping the foundation of your country's religion. When you prove that slavery is in itself a sinful relation, you will prove that the Bible is false, that the God of the Bible is a God of sin, and that Christianity, as taught by the disciple of Christ, is but a cloak for "the sum of all villainies." Truly has it been said on another occasion, "It is hard to believe such men sincere. If not infidels already, they are on the highway to that butte."

How many weak minds, having first imbued with the dogma that slavery is in itself a sin and a crime, when they come to find that from Genesis to Revelations it is recognized as a lawful and not unchristian institution, will be induced to reject the whole Bible as a fable; and the God of the Bible as an imaginary being? April, 1862. AMOS KENDALL.

P. S.—It should be noted that the Greek word *doulos*, and the Hebrew word *eved*, translated by the single word "servant" in the Bible, means bond-servant or slave. The Greek word translated "Aked" is *mitheios*, and the Hebrews had a different expression for that relation. Both relations are mentioned in the 6th verse of the 26th chapter of Leviticus: "If the relation of master and slave be a sinful one, is it not singular that it is used more than any other throughout the Bible to illustrate the relation between God and good men? The patriarchs; prophets and apostles are called the servants of God and Christ, as subject to their will, as subject to their will, and as devoted to their service as a slave to his master's, and in turn God and Christ are called master. If this relation is sinful among men, would not an innocent one, such for instance, as father and children, have been universally used rather than master and slave?"

P. S.—I observe the following communication in your paper of the 13th instant, viz: "Messrs. Editors: I have been both interested and amused with Mr. Kendall's elaborate effort to prove the fallacy of slavery by Scriptural quotations." Mr.

Kendall's too good a lawyer not to know that he cannot make a part of any document "evidence" without accepting the whole. I therefore recommend to his attention the following passage as bearing on a fugitive slave law.

"Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee; even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best; thou shalt not oppress him."—Deuteronomy, xxiii, 15 and 16.

And Altemar Fortem: Philadelphia, June 6.

Upon this I beg leave to submit the following remarks, viz:—

1. I have made no effort to prove the excellence of slavery. My effort has been simply to prove that it is not, in itself, sinful.

2. In my argument there is nothing about a fugitive slave law.

3. The Scripture quotation copied by "Audi" of itself proves the existence of slavery at that period; otherwise there would have been no servants to escape from their masters.

4. I commend to the reader his own rules, viz: "that he cannot make one part of a document evidence without accepting the whole," as well as the additional rule, that "every document should be so construed if possible as to make it consistent with itself." By these rules let us construe this Scripture quotation:

God authorized the Israelites to buy the heathen for slaves.—Lev. 25, 44.

Does this text mean that, if a Hebrew buy such a slave to-day, and he take shelter in another Hebrew's house to-morrow, he shall be forever free?

God authorized the Israelites to hold the heathen so purchased as "a possession"—Lev. 25, 45. Is this text to be so construed as to deprive them of such "possessions" whenever his slave should step into his next door neighbor's and claim protection?

God declared that the heathen so purchased by the Israelites might be held as "bondmen forever."—Lev. 25, 46. Is this text to be so construed as to deprive the children of their inheritance and release the servants from bondage whenever he should escape from the custody of his master?

God says the Hebrew servant who chooses to undergo a certain ceremony after serving six years shall serve his master forever.—Ex. 21, 6; Deut. 15, 17. Is this text to be so construed as to relieve this voluntary slave from his obligation whenever he might choose to run away?

God declares that a man's servant "is his money."—Ex. 21, 31. Is this text to be so construed as to rob the owner of his money whenever the servant should choose to abscond?

In short, should it be construed so as to nullify the institution itself; show that Paul and Peter did not understand what they were about when they inculcated obedience and fidelity of servants to their masters as a Christian duty, and that Paul actually violated the law of God when he sent Onesimus back to his master?

All these apparent inconsistencies vanish at once by construing the passage quoted as an international, instead of civil regulation. It was doubtless intended to regulate the conduct of the Israelites towards their heathen neighbors, and not towards each other. Of this it contains intrinsic evidence.

Throughout the Books of Moses the terms "thou" and "thee" and "thy" are in cases innumerable used to designate the whole Hebrew community. In the passage quoted it is provided that the fugitive "shall dwell with thee, even among you, in one of thy gates." Here thee and you evidently mean substantially the same thing—the meaning the Hebrew nation, and you meaning the people composing the nation. "In one of thy gates" obviously means, not a private dwelling, but one of the cities of Israel, that phrase often being used to signify a walled city or town, but sometimes the whole territory of the nation. "The stranger that is within thy gates" means the foreigners that reside anywhere within the Hebrew territory. With these facts before us, let us apply them to the case in hand, changing the reading of the quotation without changing its meaning, thus:

"Thou [meaning the Hebrew nation] shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which hath escaped from his master into thy territories: He shall dwell in your country, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of your cities where it liketh him best; you shall not oppress him." In short, the Mosaic law treated the slaves of foreigners escaping into the Hebrew territory just as British law treats American slaves escaping into their masters' British territory.

As I feel only for truth, I should like to hear "Altemar Fortem" of this argument; is there any? By what other construction can the Bible be consistent with itself? I pause for a reply. A. K.

The story that has been going on since the advent of George D. Frantics, of the Louisville Journal, had become so impetuous that the proprietors and editors of the paper had passed from his hands, is dated on authority.

A SAILOR'S WIFE.

"Now, Rose, don't cry; you remember what you promised when you became the wife of a sailor?"

"Yes, I know. I promised to be courageous, to be hopeful, to be resigned; but then I had not been your wife for many years, and it was easy to resign a happiness I knew nothing about."

"Then you are happy, wife, dear?—I have been a good husband to you?"

The reply Rose made to this was to burst into tears and throw herself into the arms of her husband. Rose had been the petted child of a widowed mother—she had a little fortune of her own, good temper and good looks. With all these advantages it can be imagined that she did not wait for suitors. Rose, however, turned from all the gay young fellows who wooed her; but when Matthew Carrol came to see her mother she would sit demurely and silently by her side, listening, as Desdemona may have listened to Othello, to the account Matthew gave of his adventures and exploits in the various far distant lands and oceans to which he has been.

He was the captain and owner of a little merchant vessel, and had attained the age of thirty-six without ever having thought of forming any ties that should bind him to the land. His element seemed to be the ocean; man and boy he had lived on it. "All the associations of his youth were with it. He considered his visits to land and his sojourn in cities were incident recreations that had nothing to do with the real business of life. Somehow, even his return to his native village, where he had not been for many years, a strange new feeling came over him. He no longer thought exclusively of his projected voyages when he was alone; he often saw before him the bright eyes and gentle look of Rose Danvers, than the blue danking waves; instead of thinking of future bargains and trades, all that seemed to occupy his mind was the time that intervened between his visits to the cottage."

Yet what could he expect? Surely not that Rose would love him, a poor rough sailor, so many years older, too, than she was. He laughed at himself for a fool when he caught himself even hoping such things, as he sat smoking his pipe on the rocks overlooking the sea.

One evening, however, it happened that Rose and her mother sat beside him gazing at the smooth waters and the distant horizon in silent admiration when Matthew burst out into one of his loud laughs.

"Dear me, Matthew Carrol, what is the matter?" said Mrs. Danvers.

"What are you laughing at, Captain?" exclaimed Rose.

"Would you like to know?" said Captain Carrol, taking his pipe in his mouth and speaking in a serious and decided tone.

"Yes, I should."

"Well, then, I was laughing to think how an old fool like me, rough and weather-beaten, could ever expect a pretty young girl to fall in love with him. Now wasn't that enough to make me laugh right out?"

"I don't think so," gravely replied Rose.

"You don't," said the Captain, looking earnestly at her; "and can you guess who the young girl is?"

"Yes," replied Rose, "in a very low whisper, holding down her head and picking a piece of seaweed to pieces."

The Captain let his pipe fall, and his voice trembled, as turning to Rose he exclaimed:

"Rose, Rose I don't be afraid to speak; I think I could bear the joy."

"Matthew," said Rose, now looking up at him, "do you want me to be your wife?"

The Captain clasped his hands together and for a moment could only gaze on her.

"My wife!" he said at last, "will you young and courted as you are, be my wife?"

"If you will have me," said Rose, with a little coquettish smile.

The Captain's answer, ever not very explicit was exceedingly emphatic for he clasped Rose in his arms, and actually carried her to her mother, and holding her tight to his bosom as he would have done a baby.

"Gave her to me!" he exclaimed; "give her to me!"

Mrs. Danvers smiled; she was evidently not much surprised.

"To none more willingly would I give her, Matthew; but little Rose it requires courage and resignation to be a sailor's wife; how will you bear to let him go from you?"

Rose promised as every one promises everything under the same circumstances, and they were married.

So completely happy was the Captain so entirely new to him were home and its joys, that he had not the courage to break away from them for more than two years.

But behold now a boy who looked like a name, and who could just toddle from his mother to him; Matthew began to draw again of the sea, for his boy's sake he wanted a fortune. He formed the plan of a lucrative venture, and set out the day