

## The Gospel According to John

3-18-2020

1. Last week I taught in part Joh 8:31-38 by way of the *Doctrine of Slavery*. When the clock tolled 7:45 P.M. we had just completed the Hebrew Etymology found in my categorical analysis of slavery.
2. Before we continue our study, I want to give you opportunity to use 1Jo 1:9 as may or may not be necessary.
3. I want to review some of that learned and then we will begin new material on page four.
4. If you want to hear an audio presentation of this lesson please go to *westbankbiblechurch.com* and click on *streaming audio of services*.

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Joh 8:31 To the Jews who had “believed him” Jesus said, "If you (if is a 3<sup>rd</sup> class conditional particle) hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

1. Clearly, as you can see, the Jews listening had come to hear Him but not necessarily ready to accept Him as the Messiah. Paul makes clear in his Epistle to the church at Rome that not every Jew is a real Jew. The most poignant example were the twins born to Rebekah. Rom 9:6-13
2. Let's first review Joh 8:32-38. He begins verse 32 with: If you accept me as the Jewish Messiah then that faith will set you free.

NIV

Joh 8:32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you **free**."

Joh 8:33 They answered him, "We are **Abraham's** descendants and have never been **slaves** of anyone. How can you say that we shall be **set free**?"

Joh 8:34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a **slave** to sin.

Joh 8:35 Now a **slave** has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.

Joh 8:36 So if the Son sets you **free**, you will be **free** indeed.

Joh 8:37 I know you are **Abraham's** descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word.

Joh 8:38 I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father."

# Doctrine of Slavery

## Preface

1. We need to know and apply principles from the *Doctrine of Slavery* since slavery is often mentioned in the Bible. Tit 2:9-10
2. This doctrine will deal only with servitude.

## Introduction

1. Slavery is certainly a social evil and contrary to the first of four divine institutions (Volition). The United States permitted slave trading until January of 1863 when Abraham Lincoln issued the emancipation proclamation.
2. This was almost two years after the beginning of the Civil War in fulfillment of a threat to release all slaves by proclamation should the southern states not return to the union.
3. A threat to free all slaves was issued by President Lincoln in September 1862 and fulfilled on January 1, 1863. Slave trading continued until a blockade successfully put an end to this social evil.

## Slavery in Antiquity

1. Slavery, bondage, or enforced service is attested from the earliest times throughout the ancient Near East and Far East.
2. The Jews were enslaved in Egypt for more than 400 years. In Palestine and Syria, the slave was usually a domestic servant rather than an agricultural or industrial worker.
3. In the Alalakh Tablets (discovered in Syria) the highest number of slaves belonging to one master was said to be three.

## Hebrew Etymology

1. The most frequent Hebrew verb translated "serve" is **Abad**. It means "to work" or "to labor." Exo 20:9; 5:17-20
  - 1.1 It was also often used to mean "to serve a master as a slave," but the noun **Ebed**, in addition to "slave," had a variety of meanings. Notice how it is used in Exo 21:5.

2. The Hebrew **Naar** translated "young man," or "servant," suggests that often one's attendant was youthful. Gen 22:3-5

2.1 **Naar** is used of young men and boys. Gen 21:12; 2Sa 1:5-13

3. The verb **Sharat** means "to minister," or serve in a personal way. For example, Joshua waited upon Moses. Exo 24:13; 33:11;

4. There were often work agreements (**Aboda**) established between two parties for a stipulated period of time. These service or work periods resembled tenures of slavery. Work of the hired servant or hireling (Hebrew **Sakir**) was to be treated fairly and handled with kindness and not as a bond servant. Job 7:1-2

5. Jewish men often became slaves of their brethren because of poverty, i.e., they were unable to provide for either themselves or their families. The person sold the right to his labor in return for sustenance for himself and his family. The term was for seven years or until the next jubilee year. A jubilee year occurred every fiftieth year. Lev 25:39

6. There were at least seven ways for a slave to become a freeman.

- Redemption by a payment of money
- Granting of a bill of freedom
- Disposition through a testament or will
- Making a slave one's heir
- By command of the Lord
- By loss of an eye or a tooth
- A female slave married a master or a master's son.

7. Jesus ministered to Roman slaves and often mentioned slaves in His teachings and parables, yet He never criticized the institution of slavery.

8. Many slaves living at the time of Christ were well-educated men who had been captured by the Roman armies. Some were capable of managing large estates and business affairs and were so used by their masters.

9. Unlike classical Greece or Rome, the economy of Israel never became dependent on what we might call menial slave labor.

10. As the Gospel with its social implications spread throughout the Roman Empire, it became increasingly necessary to define the attitude of the church toward slavery.

10.1 Many slaves were turning to Christ in the households of Christian masters.

10.2 Some slaves desired emancipation, but Paul urged the Christian slave to remain a slave, with the right to accept manumission if offered.

1Co 7:20-22

10.3 Paul makes it quite clear that, whether slave or freeman, as Christians we are all one in Christ, baptized into one body. Christ is all, and in all. Thus, Paul ordered slaves to be obedient for the Lord's sake. Obedience was to be a testimony to the rest of the world.

10.4 At the same time, he instructed the masters to treat believing slaves fairly and justly, thus furnishing another testimony to the world.

10.5 In the case of Philemon and Onesimus Paul makes clear his attitude toward slavery. The book of Philemon addresses the issue of slavery by a real-life anecdote.



Philemon 1:10 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains

Philemon 1:11 Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me

Philemon 1:12 I am sending him -- who is my very heart -- back to you.

Philemon 1:13 I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

Philemon 1:14 But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do will be spontaneous and not forced.

Philemon 1:15 Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good --

Philemon 1:16 no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.

Philemon 1:17 So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.

Philemon 1:18 If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me.

Philemon 1:19 I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back - not to mention that you owe me your very self.

Philemon 1:20 I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

Philemon 1:21 Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

Philemon 1:22 And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

10.6 Paul did not ask his friend Philemon to free the runaway slave, but commended Onesimus to him as a beloved brother. Paul did imply, however, that he hoped Philemon would free Onesimus and treat him as brother in Christ; rather than a slave.

11. Do not be confused by our 21<sup>st</sup> century culture. The slaves of the Roman Empire for at least the first three centuries were not African but conquered provincials.

12. Now let's see what we can learn from Joh 8:39-47

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Joh 8:39 They answered and said unto him, **Abraham** is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were **Abraham's** children, ye would do the works of **Abraham**.

Joh 8:40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not **Abraham**.

Joh 8:41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

Joh 8:42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

Joh 8:43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

Joh 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Joh 8:45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

Joh 8:46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

Joh 8:47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

NIV

Joh 8:39 "**Abraham** is our father," they answered. "If you were **Abraham's** children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things **Abraham** did.

Joh 8:40 As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. **Abraham** did not do such things.

Joh 8:41 You are doing the things your own father does." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

Joh 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.

Joh 8:43 Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say.

Joh 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Joh 8:45 Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!

Joh 8:46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

Joh 8:47 He who belongs to God hears what God says. **The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."**

13. I think the best way to begin is to review several points from the **Doctrine of the Will of God**. After reviewing the Doctrine of the Will of God, I will give you several points about Abraham.

### **Doctrine of the Will of God**

Introduction:

1. That God has the right to do whatever He chooses should never be in dispute. Certainly, He can do whatever He wants, whenever He wants. He has however, chosen to limit Himself by His Word.
2. God has elected to put it all out there on the line for all to see as a self-imposed limitation, and we are so fortunate to have, at least in part, His mind; this so we can know the divine rules.
3. It is always helpful to know the rules of the game before you play or work.
4. With the exception of His self-imposed restrictions, God has the right to do whatever He chooses, and this must never be in dispute.
5. If He elects to save some and leave others to the horrors of hell, without even making known to the unbeliever the gospel, as some hyper Calvinists purport, this would be solely within the purview of God. Let me quickly dispel that horrible assumption, however. He does not do so!
6. As an early writer of the Calvinist persuasion has written, in error, "Out of His great grace He has elected some ... to everlasting salvation ... the rest He leaves in their sins to the praise of the glory of His justice." That would hardly be worthy of praise and a far cry from divine justice.

7. You and I know (from a thorough and scholarly study of the Word of God) He clearly did not do that. Hardly. God went to a great deal of trouble to make the gospel clear to all men.

8. Chafer has written in his *Systematic Theology*:

"The doctrine of election is not without its difficulties-precisely such indeed, as are normal when the finite mind assays to trace the paths of infinity. Within his own consciousness, man recognizes little outside his own power of determination; however, in the end and regardless of the means by which man has reached his destiny, it will be that destiny which was not only foreseen, but was divinely purposed.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Rom 8:29 For whom He did foreknow i.e. know beforehand, He also did predestinate to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

1Pe 1:20 Who, Christ, was verily known beforehand even before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

"Such must be the conviction of every devout soul that contemplates the obvious truth, that the Creator is as resourceful in executing His purposes as He is in originating them."

9. Dr. August H. Strong has taught, "... that the reprobate has been left behind because even after the glorious gospel of salvation had been made clear to them, they then rejected His so great salvation."

10. Strong has merely paraphrased Tit 2:11, a verse familiar to us in this church.

Tit 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

11. Somewhere in between all these pontifications of man lies the truth of what God does, but regardless of your persuasion, be you a Nebuchadnezzar or a Daniel, God will do whatever He pleases with His very own creatures.



## Definition and Concept:

1. Generally speaking, everyone in a sense does the will of God because His will is sovereign and irresistible. A case study from the Old Testament will illustrate.
2. Daniel four deals with God's judgment and discipline of Babylon's great ruler, Nebuchadnezzar. As the story begins, the king is seen wandering around his palace consumed with mental-attitude sins.



3. Nebuchadnezzar had seen the power of God in action in the lives of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, but even having seen these miracles he was not overly impressed. However, the king, had apparently not passed the point of no return.
4. God can be relied upon to reveal Himself to all men.

Rom 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness,

Rom 1:19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities -- his eternal power and divine nature -- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Joh 1:8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

Joh 1:9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

4.1 It is God the Holy Spirit who is responsible for revealing to mankind knowledge of sin, his minus righteousness and Satan's judgment.

Joh 16:8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Joh 16:9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

Joh 16:10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

Joh 16:11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

5. God will continue to work with the great king, and his salvation will come after loss of part of his kingdom and after a bout with insanity.

6. Daniel, chapter four, is actually a gospel tract written by this king, describing the depths of zoanthropy to which he sank before he accepted Christ as his Savior. Let's take a look at Chapter four--Nebuchadnezzar's salvation tract.

6.1 Verses 1-4 are an introduction to his written historical message.

Dan 4:1 King Nebuchadnezzar, To the peoples, nations and men of every language, who live in all the world: May you prosper greatly!

Dan 4:2 It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me.

Dan 4:3 How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his dominion endures from generation to generation.

Dan 4:4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous.

6.2 Verses 5-9 describe his predicament. He had a dream and he wanted someone to interpret it.

Dan 4:5 I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in my bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me.

Dan 4:6 So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me.

Dan 4:7 When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me.

Dan 4:8 Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him the dream. (He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.)

Dan 4:9 I said, "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream; interpret it for me.

6.3 Verses 10-12 describe the greatness of his kingdom, which began in about 620 B.C. when he took over from his dad, who had defeated the Assyrians.

Dan 4:10 These are the visions I saw while lying in my bed: I looked, and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous.

Dan 4:11 The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth.

Dan 4:12 Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the beasts of the field found shelter, and the birds of the air lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed.

6.4 Verses 13-18 describe the demise of the king: he is likened to a felled tree, but there is hope. In verse 15 the tree is to be wrapped with iron and bronze, a technique in antiquity to keep the tree from splitting, so it could grow again.

6.4.1 There is always hope for the unbeliever until that last sin of unbelief, i.e., after God has done all things possible for him or her in order to motivate salvation faith, that last refusal is called by many the unpardonable sin.

Dan 4:13 "In the visions I saw while lying in my bed, I looked, and there before me was a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven.

Dan 4:14 He called in a loud voice: 'Cut down the tree and trim off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches.

Dan 4:15 But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field. "Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth.

Dan 4:16 Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, till seven times pass by for him.

Dan 4:17 "'The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men.'

Dan 4:18 "This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me what it means, for none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you can, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

6.5 In Verses 19-27 Daniel interprets the dream, making it clear the Lord was going to move mightily in the life of Nebuchadnezzar.

6.5.1 The brave young Hebrew must tell the king the bad news, and that he does in verses 19-27.

Dan 4:19 Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was greatly perplexed for a time, and his thoughts terrified him. So the king said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you." Belteshazzar answered, "My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries!

Dan 4:20 The tree you saw, which grew large and strong, with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth,

Dan 4:21 with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all, giving shelter to the beasts of the field, and having nesting places in its branches for the birds of the air—

Dan 4:22 you, O king, are that tree! You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth.

Dan 4:23 "You, O king, saw a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump, bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field, while its roots remain in the ground. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven; let him live like the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him.'

Dan 4:24 "This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king:

Dan 4:25 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.

**Footnote: The malady of zoanthropy experienced by Nebuchadnezzar is “the maniacal state in which one thinks he is an animal even developing characteristics of an animal. Howard Hughes at the end of his life grew his hair long, lived in darkness, grew long finger nails, and ate irregularly as he became a germaphobe. Rather than die a zoantharian Nebuchadnezzar became a believer in Daniel’s God.**

Dan 4:26 The command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots means that your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules.

Dan 4:27 Therefore, O king, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue."

6.6 In verses 28-30 Nebuchadnezzar displays his arrogance. He needs a lesson from the sovereign God of the universe.

Dan 4:28 All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.

Dan 4:29 Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon,

Dan 4:30 he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"

6.7 In verses 31-32 the pronouncement of discipline is made. The stumbling block for Nebuchadnezzar was his pride, his self-importance.

Dan 4:31 The words were still on his lips when a voice came from heaven, "This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you.

Dan 4:32 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes."

6.8 In verses 33-35 Nebuchadnezzar refuses to acknowledge the sovereignty of God, and God imposes that which is necessary to motivate salvation faith.

Dan 4:33 Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.

Dan 4:34 At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation.

Dan 4:35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

6.9 Verses 36-37 are the king's testimony of salvation. There is joy in heaven, for Nebuchadnezzar has become a member of God's forever family.

Dan 4:36 At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before.

Dan 4:37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

7. So much then for Daniel's salvation testimony.

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