**Slavery**

**For freedom Christ has set us free.**

**Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.**

***(Galatians 5:1)***

**After an act of Congress, in 1808, prohibited African slave trading, at least a quarter of a million more slaves were illicitly imported into the U.S. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 449)***

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**It's a common argument among conservatives to point out that the remarkable thing about slavery in America is not that we had it, but that we got rid of it. (But) slavery in America was different because America is different. America was founded on principles of universal human equality and dignity. No other country was. There was nothing hypocritical about slavery in Asia, the Middle East, or Europe. To the extent those civilizations had charters, creeds, or some form of fleshed-out ideals, slavery was consistent with them. In America, slavery was a grotesque hypocrisy. Acknowledging this hypocrisy is valuable and important because it illuminates the very ideals being violated. *(Jonah Goldberg, in TheDispatch.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 2, 2021)***

**Slavery was a universal institution throughout ancient times. It was not even questioned in the Old Testament or in the New Testament. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 172)***

**The first U.S. Chief Justice, John Jay, bought slaves in order to free them. Signing a memorial to Congress for the abolition of slavery was the last public act of Benjamin Franklin. (*Isaac Asimov's Book of Facts, p. 138 and 141)***

***I*t wasn’t purely a devotion to science that caused Charles Darwin to turn the world upside down, say authors Adrian Desmond and James Moore. The father of evolutionary theory was an abolitionist at heart: If he had embarked on his journey to the Galapagos Islands already troubled by contemporary rationalizations for slavery, he might never have concluded from the evidence he gathered there that all life shared a common ancestry. Darwin came from an English family steeped in the abolition fight. “It makes one’s blood boil,” he wrote five years before publishing The Origin of Species, to think of the subjugation of so many. When he purposed that various Galapagos finches descended from a shared ancestor, he was arguing knowingly for the common brotherhood of man. *(The Week magazine, February 27, 2009)***

**On July 5, 1852, addressing the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society in New York, Frederick Douglass made his now-famous "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" speech. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**Free American slaves were shipped to Africa in 1822 to found the state of Liberia. They divvied up available land. What many did next was capture slaves of their own to work that land. So writes author Brian Schwartz in "A World of Villages." *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Ulysses S. Grant, who led the Union armies to free the slaves, owned four slaves. (*L. M. Boyd)***

**Harvard has delivered the nation an important lesson on healing the “deep wounds” left by slavery, said Peniel Joseph in CNN.com. School officials last week issued a report that “casts new light on how slavery helped forge one of America’s most prestigious universities.” The report revealed that Harvard faculty and administrators held more than 70 slaves before Massachusetts banned slavery in 1783, some of whom served generations of students. It documented how money derived from slave labor did much to build the university’s wealth during its first two centuries, and how faculty taught “race science” asserting whites’ innate superiority. The school pledged $100 million to fund restoration efforts, including identifying the campus slaves’ modern descendants, creating a memorial, and building exchange programs with historically Black universities. Harvard’s reckoning is a meaningful step “toward a path of healing” and a time when dozens of state legislatures are trying to ban any discussion of America’s dark history of “structural and institutional racism.” *(The Week magazine, May 13, 2022)***

**In Notes on the State of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson describes the institution of slavery as forcing tyranny and depravity on master and slave alike. To be a slaveholder meant one had to believe that the worst white man was better than the best black man. If you did not believe these things, you could not justify yourself to yourself. So Jefferson could condemn slavery in words, but not in deeds. *(Stephen E. Ambrose, in Smithsonian magazine)***

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**How not to celebrate Juneteenth: Juneteenth is now a federal holiday, "and that has me worried," said Erika Smith. I understand why so many Black Americans are jubilant: June 19 is the anniversary of the day when the Black slaves in Texas were told by the Union soldiers that they were legally free, and has been a holiday for Black Americans to celebrate generations of resilience. By making it an official national holiday, President Biden may help the rest of the country understand its importance. Still, "America has a way of squeezing the meaning out of holidays," replacing the original intent with "insipid slogans" and sales events. Will Macy's soon offer Juneteenth-weekend discounts? Will McDonald's and Cheesecake Factory start selling strawberry shakes and red beans to "honor" the Black tradition of eating red foods to symbolize the blood of our ancestors? Corporations will no doubt seek to exploit Juneteenth to "build cachet for their brands." Meanwhile, the descendents of slaves will continue to be underemployed and underpaid, with far less family wealth than other Americans. Ultimately, "I suspect it will be up to Black people to hold on to the true meaning of Juneteenth, so its power isn't commoditized, diluted, and sold off." (*The Week magazine, July 2, 2021)***

**How did Juneteenth start? The celebrations began with enslaved people in Galveston, Texas. Although President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves in 1863, it could not be enforced in many places in the South until the Civil War ended in 1865. Even then, some white people who profited from their unpaid labor were reluctant to share the news. News that the war had ended and they were free finally reached Galveston when Union Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger and his troops arrived in the Gulf Coast city on June 19, 1865, more than two months after Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in Virginia. *(The North Platte Telegraph, June 13, 2023)***

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**When I turned my attention to a series of labor contracts – designed to give the newly freed some legal protections as they negotiated working relationships with their former enslavers – I found a single page documenting a contract between Fabius H. Perry, who owned the plantation next to the one where my ancestors had been enslaved, and Candace Bunch, my great-great-grandmother. That page not only filled a void in my knowledge of my family’s history, but also enriched my understanding of myself. I was amazed at what a single piece of paper could reveal. For two days of farm work in 1866, Candis received $1, and for 44 days of work in 1867, she received $11. The contract also revealed that her daughter Dolly was paid $3 for housework. As I read further, the contract delineated what Candis owed Perry for the purchase of cotton and soap. What reduced me to tears was the fact that, out of her meager earnings, Candis had spent 60 cents on two “baker tins,” more than the payment she received for an entire day’s work. *(Lonnie G. Bunch III, in The Atlantic magazine)***

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**On September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation that stated that all slaves within rebel states would be free on January 1, 1863. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. *(The Wit & Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln, edited by Alex Ayres, p. 175)***

**Whenever I hear anyone arguing for slavery, I feel a strong impulse to see it tried on him personally. *(The Wit & Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln, edited by Alex Ayres, p. 175)***

**My ancient faith teaches me that "all men are created equal"; and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another. *(The Wit & Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln, edited by Alex Ayres, p. 175)***

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**The last state to officially abolish slavery was Mississippi – and it wasn’t until 1995 that it happened. *(Samantha Weaver, in Tidbits)***

**Money made from the slave trade by northern “Yankee” merchants was used to build the mills and factories that produced the war materials that enabled the North to defeat the South in the United States Civil War. Many of “the best” New England families made their fortunes off slave-trading. *(Isaac Asimov's Book of Facts, p. 59)***

**In the early eighteenth century, there were American slaves who were physicians. They treated not only other slaves and free blacks but whites as well, until restricted by law to serving the black community. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 237)***

**Which presidents owned slaves? George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, James Polk, Zachary Taylor, Andrew Johnson, and Ulysses S. Grant. Interestingly, eight of the twelve owned slaves while they held office, including Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Jackson, Tyler, Polk, and Taylor. Four of the first five presidents were from Virginia, then the largest slave state in the United States. Washington had between 250 and 300 slaves. Jefferson, who authored the Declaration of Independence, had approximately 200. Madison owned about 100 slaves, and Monroe about 75. Grant became a slaveholder through his marriage to Julia Dent, whose family owned a plantation outside ofSt. Louis. Grant’s family so abhorred the practice of slavery that they refused to attend his wedding. *(Amy Pastan, in The Smithsonian Book of Presidential Trivia, p. 25)***

**More than 1,700 members of the U. S. Congress throughout history were slave owners at some point in their lives. They represented 37 states, including every state in New England and many Western and Midwestern states. When Sen. Daniel Webster gave a famous speech on slavery in 1850, 45 of the 106 congressmen present were slave owners. *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 21, 2022)***

**On September 17, 1849, Harriet Tubman and two of her brothers ran away from their slave quarters in Maryland. She returned to the South many times to help ferry other slaves to freedom. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**On December 6, 1849, Harriet Tubman escaped for the second and last time from slavery in Maryland. She would become the Underground Railroad's most famous "conductor." *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**When he died, George Washington provided in his will for the emancipation of his slaves on the death of Martha, his wife. Washington was the only member of the Virginia dynasty to free all his slaves. *(Richard Shenkman & Kurt Reiger)***

**Louisiana's Whitney Plantation: Among the pre-Civil War plantations in Louisiana that welcome visitors, only one focuses on former slaves and "relegates the owners to the sidelines," said Andrea Sachs in The Washington Post. At the Whitney Plantation, which sits upriver from New Orleans on the Mississippi, each guest receives a special lanyard to wear: Mine featured the testimony of a former slave named Mary, recalling how her arms tired as a child when, to keep flies off her masters' food, she had to wave a fan all through dinner. More than 350 slaves worked at the plantation, mostly in its fields, and all are commemorated on a Wall of Honor. Some were sold along the way -- a mildly disabled adult male fetching a sixth as much as a teenage girl capable of reproducing. Inside a church on site, statues of slave children stand among the pews, and we were told we each could ring a nearby bell in honor of the site's stolen lives. "There were 15 people in my group, and the bell tolled 15 times." *(The Week magazine, August 17 / August 24, 2018)***

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