

**SLAVEHOLDING  
EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT  
OF THE HOLY BIBLE**

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Slaveholding Examined in the Light of the Holy Bible by William Henry Brisbane

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**WILLIAM HENRY BRISBANE**

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# SLAVEHOLDING EXAMINED

IN THE LIGHT

OF

THE HOLY BIBLE,

BY

WILLIAM HENRY BRISBANE.

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"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."  
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## COMMENDATORY NOTICES.

PHILADELPHIA, *Sept.* 23.

Doctor Brisbane's Bible argument is, to me, more readable and more satisfactory than any other that I have met with. The subject is discussed with a candor, clearness and force equally rare in this controversy. I did not think that the discussion could be revived with so much promise of practical good as the perusal of the Doctor's book now induces me to expect. Its spirit is manly, and style easy, while its thought is mature and its criticism acute, and its argument is conducted, throughout, in the assuring tone of a calm demonstration, without any of the tension and struggle of a difficult and doubtful dispute. It is an open, free, true book, written by an honest, capable man, who has worked his own way through the practice and prejudices of slavery, up into the liberty of his present position and opinions, in all the earnestness of great suffering and great sacrifice. He has *lived* through every stage of his argument, and in a very successful piece of authorship has produced a book, which is well calculated to spread its truths and circulate itself wherever it is most needed.

WILLIAM ELDER.

NORRISTOWN, PA., *Aug.* 8, 1847.

I have very recently examined, with attention, a manuscript of Dr. William Henry Brisbane's, discussing every passage in the Bible, that has heretofore been adduced in support of slavery. Dr. B. defines Slavery as follows: "Slavery is that condition in which one is in the power of another whom he is compelled to serve without the means of redress when wronged," and then rigorously compares this definition with the Scriptures, and shows to a demonstration, as it appears to me, that the Bible not only withholds its sanction from such a relation, but imposes upon it the most fearful condemnation. He proves also, that there is no word in the sacred writings that is equivalent to "slave" or "slavery."

I hope that Bro. Brisbane will print this little book, which, for clear statement and conclusive argument, is unsurpassed by any thing I ever read. It makes no display of learning, but shows a vast amount of thinking, and will, I firmly believe, make many a thoughtful and candid reader, whether learned or unlearned, feel surprised, if not ashamed, that conclusions so naturally flowing from the text had not occurred to him before.

~~WILLIAM HENRY BRISBANE~~ AARON.

IN EXCHANGE

Cornell Univ.

2 51335 \*

BELLEVILLE, Aug. 18, 1847.

*My Dear Sir:*—The evening that you left us, I wrote to Mr. L. Tappan, giving him our views of your Bible argument as he requested, which was, substantially,—1. That its spirit is *admirable*. 2. That its brevity, simplicity, clearness, compact logic, freedom from ambitious pretence of scholarship—its easy, natural flow of common sense, stamped throughout with independent thought and critical acumen, combined with its rare candor, calmness and courtesy—entitle it to a wide dissemination, and will secure for its words of truth and soberness large audience and earnest pondering.

I have just read the above to my wife and to her sister, Sarah M. Grimke—who are now detained by company—and they beg me to say for them, that it is a true expression of their estimate of your Essay. They both join me in affectionate salutations.

In haste and heartiness, your friend,  
THEODORE D. WELD.

The following is from Miss Grimke, formerly of South Carolina, whose opinion, and that of her sister, Mrs. Weld, is valuable; not only on account of their own literary reputation, but because, as Southern ladies, they are particularly qualified to judge of the merits of a work on the subject of Slavery.

Dear Bro.—I feel impelled to add a line, to say, that I bless the Lord for the Essay you have prepared, in behalf of the poor slave; and my heart yearns that He, who has filled thy heart with love to the poor, may give you more and more of his spirit, until your whole being is absorbed in God; that you may do yet greater things, to help forward the great work of regenerating the world. To do this, we must become embodiments of Divine Love; and God will raise up such, to *live out* his Gospel, and be representatives on earth, of love to God and good will to man.

When you go over your manuscript, try it all again by the spirit of Jesus. Look to Him and he will help you. There was one expression, which I cannot recall, in the same part of the work with the word "fool," which seemed to savor more of earth, than heaven; if you detect it, think of it. . . . Faithfully,

SARAH M. GRIMKE.

PEMBERTON, N. J., *Sept.* 20, 1847.

Dear Bro.—I have perused "Slaveholding Examined in the Light of the Holy Bible" with unfeigned interest.

I consider its exposition of Scripture, faithful and true; its arguments candid and convincing; its reminiscences of slavery startling, and its appeals to slaveholders pungent and powerful—an excellent work, and well adapted to convince the reader that the Bible affords no refuge for oppression.

Yours in the Gospel, &c.,

D. S. PARMELEE.

PHILADELPHIA, *Sept.* 25, 1847.

REV. WM. H. BRISBANE:

*Dear Sir*:—I have read, with as much attention as my engagements would permit, your Biblical Examination of Slaveholding; and while I could not pretend, on such a cursory perusal, to endorse every idea or form of expression contained in it, yet I can say, without qualification, that I think the views you have advanced, correct, the principles of interpretation you have followed, sound, and the result to which you have arrived, to be, in almost every passage, the one which a just criticism would demand. May your effort contribute much to expose the unfounded assumption that the Holy Scriptures, in any form, uphold and sanction the abominable system of enslaving the bodies and souls of men.

Yours truly,

GEO. B. IDE.

PHILADELPHIA, *Sept.* 6, 1847.

*My Dear Sir*:—I have looked over the proof-sheets of your forth-coming work, "Slavery Examined in the Light of the Holy Bible," with very great pleasure.

The fact that you yourself were reared in the midst of slavery, and were yourself a slaveholder, will give additional force to the work. When the time shall come, and come it will, when posterity shall look back with wonder and shame that in so plain a case in morals, there could be found professing christians apologizing for such a heaven-daring system of iniquity as American Slavery, your book will doubtless be looked upon as one of the very many instrumentalities in removing the thick film which now so obscures the moral vision.

Yours, truly, for truth and humanity,

C. D. CLEVELAND.

REV WM H BRISBANE.



Sept. 17, 1847.

I have examined a work entitled "Slaveholding Examined in the Light of the Holy Bible," by Wm. H. Brisbane, and I do not hesitate to say, that it is the most lucid and convincing refutation of the assumption that slavery is sanctioned by the Bible that I have ever seen, and in my judgment, it is well adapted on account of its spirit arrangement and style to enlighten and convince all classes of mind that American Slavery is directly opposed to the teachings of the Old and New Testament.

HIRAM HUTCHINS,

Pastor of the Baptist Church, Norristown, Pa.

Extracts from Letters from Mr. Lewis Tappan, of N. Y.

"There is no doubt that your little work is an excellent performance, and that it will do much good." \* \* \*

"Most of the anecdotes refer to members of the *Baptist* Church. All the readers will not know that you are a member and minister of that denomination, and may therefore suppose the author was unfeelingly critical with the Baptists." \* \* \* \*

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### ERRATA.

Page 22,	line 30,	for to,	read unto.
" 23	" 14	" nations shall,	read nations and great kings shall.
" "	" 15	" 4—14,	read 9—14.
" 29	" 21	" 1	read 1, 2.
" 31	" 22	" Abram,	read Abraham.
" 32	" 23	" natural,	read national.
" 34	" 21	" xxii,	read xxxii.
" 38	" 11	" cattle that,	read cattle nor thy stranger that.
" 39	" 8	" a,	read an.
" "	" 14	" born,	read borne.
" 42	" 13	" 10,	read 10, 11,
" 43	" 18	" 6,	read 2.
" 50	" 1	" maid,	read a maid.
" "	" 9	" temporally,	read temporarily.
" "	" 16	" xx,	read xxi.
" 50	" 10	" to a,	read to an.
" 55	" 9	" or a,	read or an.
" 57	" 20	" 39,	read 39—43.
" "	" 24	" a,	read an.
" 58	" 23	" bondmaids,	read and thy bondmaids
" 65	" 26	" And if,	read " And if.

Page 66	“ 7 “	or if, read or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family; or if.
“ 71	“ 1 “	thy, read thine.
“ 79	“ 13 “	master.” read master.
“ “	“ 20 “	able to, read able utterly to.
“ 82	“ 5 “	or, read or a.
“ 89	“ 21 “	Revelations, read Revelation.
“ 92	“ 4 “	shouldst, read shouldest.
“ 94	“ 11 “	, read .
“ 95	“ 18 “	xii, read xiii.
“ 102	“ 1 “	And, read And.
“ “	“ 11 “	bring, read bid.
“ “	“ 21 “	his, read the.
“ 104	“ 13 “	the Lord, read his lord.
“ 108	“ 27 “	which, read that.
“ “	“ “ “	from him, read away.
“ 111	“ 24 “	22, read 22—26.
“ 112	“ 1 “	his, read the.
“ “	“ 16 “	afterwards, read afterward.
“ 113	“ 22 “	and said, read saying.
“ 114	“ 8 “	laidest, read layedest.
“ 121	“ 14 “	thus, read then.
“ “	“ 21 “	yourselves, read your members.
“ 122	“ 2 “	ashamed? But, read ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But.
“ 123	“ 23 “	22, read 24.
“ 124	“ 26 “	temptation, read temptation.
“ 126	“ 19 “	Corinthians, read 1. Corinthians.
“ 132	“ 22 & 23	for blasphemed And, read blasphemed. And.
“ 135	“ 1 for	like, read as.
“ 139	“ 7 & 8 for	reception 7, read reception. 7.
“ 147	“ 6 for	your, read the.
“ “	“ “ “	which, read who.
“ 148	“ 19 “	it all, read it at all.
“ 159	“ 16 “	And, read thou.
“ 163	“ 3 “	xiv, read xiv.
“ 164	“ 25 & 26 for	shoes. read shoes; yea.
“ 165	“ 15 for	xiv, 31, read xxii, 22, 23.
“ 166	“ 10 “	ix, read iv.
“ 174	“ 13 “	it shall, read shall it.
“ 176	“ 14 “	master, read masters.
“ 179	“ 6 “	18, read 18, 19.
“ 186	“ 16 “	Timothy, read 1. Timothy.
“ 196	“ 19 “	advantges, read advantages.

On pages 22 and 23, quotations from Deut., Jeremiah and Joel have the points of separation omitted.

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