

couragement whatsoever hinder our perseverance in such a benevolent design. Were the Negroes free, and properly encouraged and instructed, they would in a few generations become as noble and free and high-spirited as ourselves.

3. The example of the Jews is plead in favour of slavery. They indeed had multitudes of slaves. The devoted Cannanites whom they could not kill, they were, it is likely, permitted to enslave; but what the Jews did to them is not to be imitated by us, because the Lord hath not, so far as we know, devoted any other people but themselves indiscriminately to destruction. The Gibeonites forfeited their liberty, and were deservedly enslaved, but, at the same time, by a special command of God. If people forfeit their liberty, let them lose it still. But what have the Africans offended against the laws of Great Britain or America, that we should traverse immense seas, and range their deserts to enchain them? Do the laws of Britain forbid any Negroes to be born in Africa? If they do, by what argument will you justify them? If they do not, how will the example of the Jews justify your conduct? I grant, indeed, that the Jews engaged farther (though not so far as you) in the slave-trade, and reduced to servitude men who had as good a right to be free as themselves: But for this the Lord severely chastised them: In return, he sold them by thousands and millions into the hands of the most cruel masters that ever ruled. Reverend Sir, I am not without fears that you, and your friends in the slave-trade, may also procure for your country the vengeance of Heaven in the same way, or in some other, no less grievous. Beware of forging chains for your children.

It may be thought that the law of Moses allowed slavery: But, 1st. it might be necessary for Moses to make laws about slaves, for the sake of those who forfeited their liberty, and were enslaved lawfully. 2d. Moses, without approving of slavery, might make laws to prevent cruel masters from abusing their slaves. Lastly. Though it should be granted that the law of Moses permitted the Jews to keep slaves, slaves in every respect like yours, yet that will not justify you. In the infancy of the world, when men had little knowledge and experience, the history and example of a few ages only, and above all a very small portion of divine revelation, many things might be permitted which cannot by any means be suffered now in the fulness of time, "when the mystery that was hid from ages and generations is revealed; "when life and immortality are brought to light;" when there is no longer a favourite people, or any distinction of nations; "when they who are not beloved are beloved;" when "they who were not a people," but slaves, "are become the people of God;" when the natural rights and privileges of men are understood, and, in a word, when the light of the Gospel shines with meridian splendour. If Moses's law permitted slavery without limitation, the words of our Lord in another case must be applied to it—Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.

4. Many think that the slave trade is fully authorised from Gen. ix. 25: *Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.* The connexion and force of this argument must be as follows: Slavery is entailed upon the seed of Canaan, therefore also upon every Negro, Reverend Sir, I hope there is no man who is quicksighted enough to see the force of this reasoning, but will be able fully to refute it by such arguments as this: The Grand Turk wears a turban, and therefore ought to be held the sole author of all the hurricanes in the West-Indies.

If the seed of Canaan be doomed to slavery what, in the wide world, is that to the inhabitants of Africa? What have they to do with Canaan, or his curse? You are more likely to be of the seed of Canaan than they. They can shew by probable arguments that they are descended, not of Canaan, but of Mizraim (or Egypt) and Cush (or Ethiopia) who inhabited Africa, anciently called Ham: But as Canaan forsook his brethren and settled among his cousins in Asia, from whence Europe was peopled, you can offer little or no evidence to prove your descent from Japheth rather than Canaan. At any rate you can produce no argument to prove that you are not descended of Canaan: but what will conclude equally in favour of the Africans. If you say that the Negroes are the seed of Ham, the author of the crime that brought the curse upon Canaan, and therefore that they ought to be punished with slavery as well as the Canaanites, I will answer that this is to pronounce the judgment of God unjust. Since he restricted the curse to Canaan, no man may extend it further. I confess indeed, it looks very plausible to say, that Canaan was no more guilty of the sin of Ham than his brothers, and if it be just to punish him, it must be equally so to punish them for it; but it is perhaps not true, at any rate it is not solid reasoning, and methinks it discovers a malicious disposition