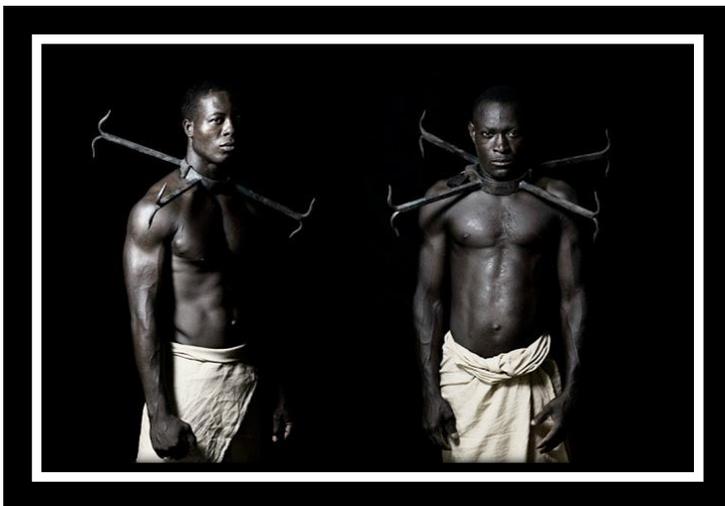
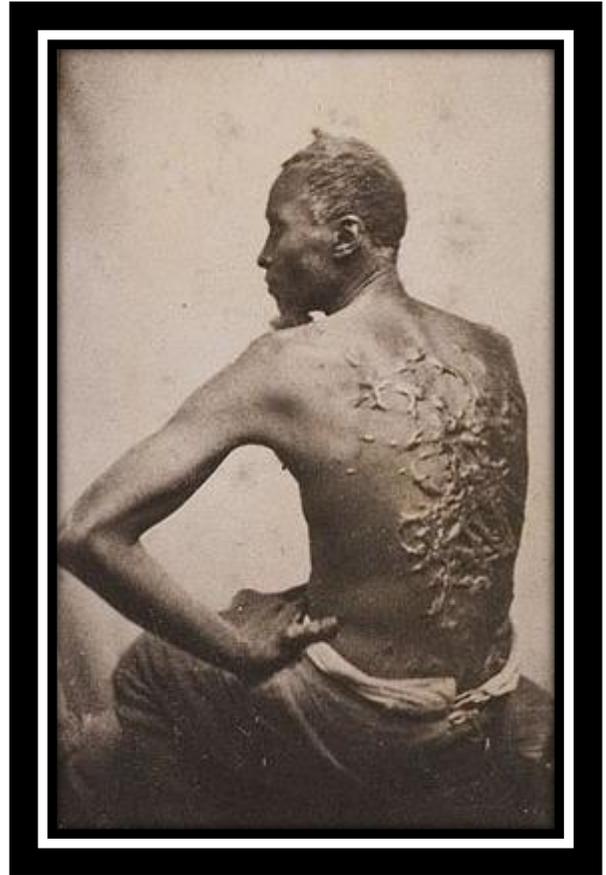


For starters this week, I invite you to ponder the following photographs.
Let them sink into your soul.



As many of us know, tomorrow is “Juneteenth.” Though President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, with an effective date of January 1, 1863, it had minimal immediate effect on most slaves’ day-to-day lives, particularly in the Confederate States of America. Texas, as a part of the Confederacy, was especially resistant to the Emancipation Proclamation.

Juneteenth commemorates June 18 and 19, 1865. The 13th Amendment to the Constitution had been passed by Congress on January 31, but it was not finally ratified by the states until December 6 of that year.¹ President Lincoln was assassinated on April 15.

June 18 is the day Union General Gordon Granger and 2,000 federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to take possession of the state and enforce the emancipation of its slaves. On June 19, 1865, while standing on the balcony of Galveston’s Ashton Villa, Granger read the contents of “General Order No. 3”:

The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor. The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.

That day has since become known as *Juneteenth*, a name coming from a portmanteau of the word *June* and the suffix, “*teenth*,” as in “*Nineteenth*,” coined by 1903.² Please note the attachment which advertises this year’s Juneteenth program for Howard County, which is this Sunday afternoon (and note that our own Terry Burks is going to sing. ☺)

With these things in mind—particularly the photographs—read again the words of this great hymn by James Weldon Johnson, written in 1900:

Lift every voice and sing,
‘Til earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past
has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present
has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on ‘til victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast’ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,

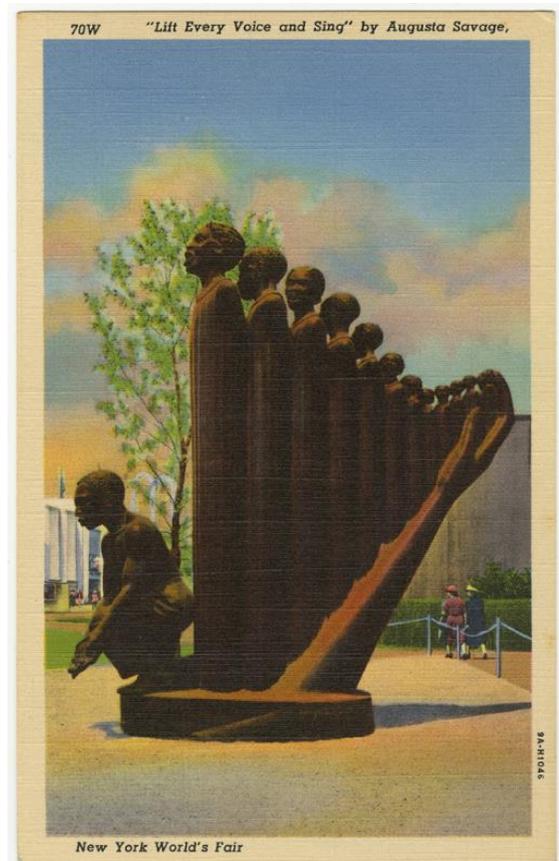
¹ “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.”

² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juneteenth>

Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears
 has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through
 the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Til now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God,
 where we met Thee,
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world,
 we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

The sixteen-foot sculpture portrayed on this old postcard was done by sculptor Augusta Savage for the 1939 World's Fair, where it was enormously popular. The sculpture was based on Johnson's hymn, and the sounding board at the back of the harp is the hand of God.



<http://usslave.blogspot.com/2012/03/sculptor-augusta-savage.html>

There's more . . .

Postscripts:

1. I want to commend **Calvin McCormick** and **Men in Ministry** for their most excellent observance of resolve during our Father's Day remembrance last Sunday!
2. I hope that you'll join me in welcoming **Ed & Ruth Ann Quick**, who moved their membership to CBF last Sunday from the Parker Memorial Baptist Church in Anniston, Alabama. Ed and Ruth Ann have been worshiping with us for some time now, as does their daughter, Katherine Taylor, when she's in town. WELCOME!!!!
3. If you would be willing to serve as an "Internet Friend" for one of our folk without Internet access, please let me know. This would consist of being sure they get a paper copy of this *Laptop* each week, together with whatever information comes through our INFO and PRAYER lines.
4. On Sunday we begin a ten-week whirlwind tour of the entire Bible. I've never attempted such a thing before (and I may regret it this time!), but here's the plan:

June 23	<i>Summer Reading 1: The Books of Moses</i>
June 30	<i>Summer Reading 2: Old Testament History</i>
July 7	<i>Summer Reading 3: The Writings</i>
July 14	<i>Summer Reading 4: The Major Prophets</i>
July 21	<i>Summer Reading 5: The Minor Prophets</i>
July 28	<i>Summer Reading 6: The Gospels</i>
August 4	Ron Mallow (I'm on vacation in Oregon)
August 11	Andrea Taylor (I'm still in Oregon)
August 18	<i>Summer Reading 7: New Testament History</i>
August 25	<i>Summer Reading 8: The Pauline Epistles</i>
September 1	<i>The Way of Jesus: Celebration</i> (Labor Day)
September 8	<i>Summer Reading 9: The General Epistles</i>
September 15	Mark Wakefield (Missionary to Guatemala; I'll be here)
September 22	<i>Summer Reading 10: New Testament Prophecy</i>
September 29	Youth Sunday, Neville preaching