

AAM: There is Babylonian evidence in cuneiform tablets of people called *Habiru*, which may perhaps be the same as Hebrew. They are found in a number of different areas and it probably is the same thing as Hebrew. We find in the Bible a reference to Abraham the Hebrew, showing that Hebrew was a term which could be used to describe Abraham. Abraham was not a descendant of Israel. If Hebrew means a descendant of Israel it could hardly be applied to Israel's grandfather. Many descendants of Abraham were not Israelites. There were all the descendants of Ishmael and also the descendants of Esau. Why would you call Abraham "the Hebrew" if Hebrew meant anybody descended from Abraham? Hebrew seems to designate Abraham as one of a group of people. We do not know a great deal about it. But this use in the Bible suggests very clearly that the words "Hebrew" and "Israelite" are not originally identical. An Israelite is a descendant of Jacob or Israel, and Hebrew is a term which could be applied to Jacob's grandfather. Then we have this archaeological evidence of the discovery of this reference to these Habiru, who are very likely the same people as the Hebrews. We cannot prove it but there is much to suggest it. The term is clearly much wider than Israelite. One says, "if you buy a Hebrew servant." The other says, "if your brother who dwells by you waxes poor and is sold to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a bondservant."

One concerns either the whole group of Israelites or, more likely, a larger group, who serve other people. The one is dealing with people who are very definitely called "your brethren." They are people who live near you, in the same area. To say that the second one is an amelioration of the first takes a great deal for granted. The second one is dealing with people right in your neighborhood while the first is dealing with a much larger group.

More important than that, the first says that a man after six years of service can contract for life-long servitude, while the second says that no Israelite shall sell himself to another. Does this say no Israelite shall sell himself to another? If your brother that dwells by you waxes poor and is sold to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a bondservant, but as a hired servant that sojourns with you, shall he be