



nations: "Are you not like the children of the Ethiopians (blacks) to Me, O children of Israel? Have I not brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and Aram from Kir?" Kenneth Chelst makes the biblical story of the Exodus clear by his very readable, comprehensive, respectful, and thought-provoking comparisons and analysis of the biblical and African-American slavery experiences, their freedom, and the after-effects that lasted for many generations. Chelst is a professor at Wayne State University with a Ph.D. and a rabbinical degree. He focuses on many of the terrible people-altering experiences of the ancient Israelites and blacks, matters that can be seen to have relevance today. Did it make any difference, for example, that the Israelites entered Egypt as a free people who were given a unique preferable status by the ruling class, while the blacks were driven to America as chained slaves in miserable slave ships during a long crowded trip where many died? How did the fact that the slavery of both people began with the sale of a brother into slavery affect the slaves? Did the retention of pre-slavery names help sustain either culture? Were both groups able to react favorably to freedom? How did they differ? Do the blacks still suffer from their ancestral experience and, if so, why? Chelst raises, investigates, and clarifies many other matters. Did either group have an expectation of freedom? How did the giving up of the blacks' pre-slavery religion and the adoption of Christianity degrade the slave's life? How was the spirit of each group systematically broken? Were the women of both enslaved? What effect did rape by slave owners have on the women and on the men? Did women have a voice among the blacks and Israelites? Did either group have leaders while enslaved? What lies did the masters develop to describe both groups and why did they do so? How did the "righteous" people among the non-slave class act? How does the manner of remembering the ancient experience help mold both groups? These are just some of the tantalizing subjects that Kenneth Chelst explores and clarifies. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Praise for Exodus and Emancipation By Sheila Guyer Exodus and Emancipation by Kenneth Chelst offers fresh and illuminating perspective on these two eras of enslavement. "Go Down Moses" the reknowned spiritual offered hope to the African-Americans. Dr. Chelst points out a wealth of other parallels and differences that not only offer the reader a compassionate understanding of bondage, but also explain the stages both peoples experienced in preparation for emancipation. I thoroughly enjoyed the quotations of first hand experiences of individual slaves and empathized with their plight. This is a must read for Civil War buffs and students of the Bible. I have already purchased copies of this book for Jewish friends to enhance their celebration of the Passover holiday. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Profound Work By Azriel "Dr. Kenneth Chelst, a distinguished academic, and a wide ranging and profound scholar of Jewish thought has produced a compelling and utterly original study comparing the biblical account of the enslaved Israelites with the experience of African-American slavery. Dr. Chelst, it would seem, has read and considered everything of consequence that has been written on both subjects, and Exodus and Emancipation is filled with page after page of stunning and illuminating insights." Rabbi Joseph Telushkin author of Jewish Literacy and A Code of Jewish Ethics: You Shall be Holy

Presenting a new perspective on the saga of the enslavement of the Jewish people and their departure from Egypt, this study compares the Jewish experience with that of African-American slaves in the United States, as well as the latter groups subsequent fight for dignity and equality. This consideration dives deeply into the biblical narrative, using classical and modern commentaries to explore the social, psychological, religious, and philosophical dimensions of the slave experience and mentality. It draws on slave narratives, published letters, eyewitness accounts, and recorded interviews with former slaves, together with historical, sociological, economic, and political analyses of this era. The book explores the five major needs of every long-term victim and journeys through these five stages with the Israelite and the African-American slaves on their historical path toward physical and psychological freedom. This rich, multi-dimensional collage of parallel and contrasting experiences is designed to enrich readers understanding of the plight of these two groups.

Dr. Kenneth Chelst, a distinguished academic, and a wide-ranging and profound scholar of Jewish thought has produced a compelling and utterly original study comparing the biblical account of the enslaved Israelites with the experience of African-American slavery. Dr. Chelst, it would seem, has read and considered everything of consequence that has been written on both subjects, and Exodus and Emancipation is filled with page after page of stunning and illuminating insights. --Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, author of Jewish Literacy and A Code of Jewish Ethics: You Shall be Holy About the Author Kenneth Chelst is a professor of operations research in the department of industrial and manufacturing engineering, as well as the director of the engineering management masters program, at Wayne State University. He received rabbinic ordination from Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University, and is the author of Kaddish: The Unanswered Cry. He lives in the Detroit area.