



F R E E D O M

S H A B B A T

29 JULY 2017

R E S O U R C E P A C K



“In the eyes of God, each human being is a free person, whether girl, boy, woman or man, and is destined to exist for the good of all in equality and fraternity. Modern slavery, in terms of human trafficking, forced labour and prostitution, organ trafficking, and any relationship that fails to respect the fundamental conviction that all people are equal and have the same freedom and dignity, is a crime against humanity.”

Pope Francis, Her Holiness Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma), Venerable Bhikkhuni Thich Nu Chan Khong (representing Zen Master Thích Nhất Hạnh), The Most Ven. Datuk K Sri Dhammaratana, Chief High Priest of Malaysia, Rabbi Dr. Abraham Skorka, Rabbi Dr. David Rosen, Dr. Abbas Abdalla Abbas Soliman, Undersecretary of State of Al Azhar Alsharif (representing Mohamed Ahmed El-Tayeb, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar), Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi al-Modarresi, Sheikh Naziyah Razzaq Jaafar, Special advisor of Grand Ayatollah (representing Grand Ayatollah Sheikh Basheer Hussain al Najafi), Sheikh Omar Abboud, Most Revd and Right Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel of France (representing His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew)

A quote from the Global Freedom Network Faith Leaders declaration
www.globalfreedomnetwork.org/declaration

W H A T A R E **F E E D O M D A Y S ?**

At the close of 2014 a number of world faith leaders including Argentine Rabbi Dr Abraham Skorka, Pope Francis, Archbishop Welby, Iraqi Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi al-Modarresi and Zen Master Bhikkhuni Thich Nu Chan Khong signed an historic declaration aimed at tackling human trafficking and modern slavery. It stated that everyone is born with dignity and freedom, and anything that injured that was an “abhorrent crime against humanity”.

STOP THE TRAFFIK is not a faith based organisation but many of our members are and we believe that the world’s faith communities must demonstrate a united and tangible response against human trafficking. Together we must raise awareness of the crime of human trafficking and show the world our compassion for men, women and children who are trafficked and exploited around the world. This heinous crime must not be tolerated. We must prevent the physical, emotional and sexual abuse it causes.

Through Freedom Days, faith communities are invited to make commitments to take action to prevent the crime of human trafficking and its abuse in our local and global communities. The resources have been prepared with for the weekend closest to the 30th July, The United Nations World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. Communities can choose any day which works for them.

Together, let’s stop human trafficking and let’s start freedom.

W H A T I S H U M A N T R A F F I C K I N G ?

Human Trafficking is the recruitment or movement of a person, by deception or coercion for the purpose of exploitation. People are bought and sold for sexual exploitation, forced labour, street crime, domestic servitude or even the sale of organs and human sacrifice.

Human Trafficking is the world's fastest growing global crime and is one of the largest sources of income for organised crime. The profits are high and the risks are low.

Human Trafficking is a system based on greed, control and power. In whatever shape or form everyone dreams of progress, whether it's to be loved, to be seen, to belong, or for a better future for their family. Traffickers often exploit that desire amongst the most vulnerable. The trafficker creates an intimate point of sale, making promises of progress like an education, a new start and future choices. This is the ultimate deception.

Human Trafficking is a global market place where people are the product and everyone has a price tag. It's based on an international conveyor belt of transactions and exchange, with sophisticated trade routes and communications. This human product creates profit, tens of billions every year...and growing.

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS
AN HORRENDOUS CRIME**

This crime is so awful that often people instinctively struggle to admit it exists. Often society doesn't listen, business doesn't see and governments don't talk about it. Those trafficked are often invisible, always powerless, and are put to work.

THIS HAS TO STOP!

The answer is for individuals, communities and society to see this crime, listen for it, talk about it, and take action to prevent and disrupt this global system! We can only STOP this crime together. Society, government and business must work together to generously share knowledge, information and resources that can be used to empower vulnerable communities, making them safe, and to disrupt and ultimately stop the traffickers' trade.

Faith communities around the world have a vital role to play!

R E F L E C T I O N O N H U M A N T R A F F I C K I N G

Human trafficking is an issue that resonates with some of our most basic sensitivities. The idea of someone being displaced, enslaved, living in appalling conditions is deeply emotive and these feelings alone are motivation to combat human trafficking and modern slavery. Yet as Jews, beyond these emotional responses, there is theological rationale for making this thought our own. The values of social justice, personal freedom and performing acts of lovingkindness are central to Jewish thought and practice and provide a base from which we can join our voices to the call against human trafficking.

‘IN EVERY GENERATION ONE IS BOUND
TO REGARD ONESELF AS THOUGH THEY
HAD PERSONALLY GONE FORTH FROM EGYPT’

BABYLONIAN TALMUD, PESACHIM 116B

The story of the Exodus from Egypt forms the foundational core of Jewish belief, tradition and practice. Our relationship with God is demonstrated in the Covenant made between God and the Jewish people at Mount Sinai, which begins ‘I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage’ (Exod. 20:2), and there are numerous exhortations to remember the Exodus from Egypt not least in the Haggadah and the rituals surrounding Passover. Often, this commandment to remember the Exodus from Egypt is explicitly related to social justice, for example ‘you shall not subvert the rights of the stranger or the fatherless; you shall not take a widow’s garment in pawn. Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and that the Lord your God redeemed you from there’. (Deut. 24:17-18). This is an explicit command to value and uphold the rights of all people, particularly the right to freedom, drawn out from personal experience of having those rights removed.

IF YOUR KINSMAN UNDER YOU CONTINUES IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES
AND MUST GIVE HIMSELF OVER TO YOU, DO NOT SUBJECT HIM TO THE
TREATMENT OF A SLAVE...HE SHALL SERVE WITH YOU ONLY UNTIL THE JUBILEE
YEAR. THEN HE AND HIS CHILDREN WITH HIM SHALL BE FREE OF YOUR
AUTHORITY...FOR THEY ARE MY SERVANTS, WHOM I FREED FROM THE LAND OF
EGYPT; THEY MAY NOT GIVE THEMSELVES TO YOU IN SERVITUDE. YOU SHALL NOT
RULE OVER HIM RUTHLESSLY; YOU SHALL FEAR YOUR GOD.

LEVITICUS 25:39-43

Yet even beyond this, we are taught the value of all human life and human dignity, both in scriptural and rabbinic texts. From Genesis, the initial description of the creation of humanity is ‘in God’s image’ (Gen. 1:27), noting that the divine is reflected in each human life, and demonstrating its value and importance. The rabbis in Tractate Sanhedrin take this further, discussing why initially a single man was created alone; they conclude: ‘To teach you that whoever destroys a single soul...scripture imputes [guilt] to him as though he had destroyed a

complete world...furthermore for the sake of peace among men, that one might not say to his fellow "my father was greater than yours"...for if man strikes many coins from one mould, they all resemble one another, but the supreme King of Kings, blessed be He, fashioned every man in the stamp of the first man, and yet not one of them resembles his fellow. Therefore every person is obliged to say: the world was created for my sake.' (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 37a).

In this passage, the Rabbis recognise the value and complexity of every human life but develop what could have been left as an exhortation against murder into an explicit statement of the equal value of all people in the eyes of God and, ideally, in each other's eyes. And yet this could be developed further: if, as the Rabbis note 'every person is obliged to say: the world was created for my sake' we must also acknowledge that 'it was created for your sake too', as all people, much as they may not resemble one another, can trace their ancestry to Adam, who was created in the image and likeness of God. In this way we must appreciate the rights and liberties of all other people in the same way as we appreciate our own, which does not leave room for modern slavery or human trafficking.

Finally, it is important to ask "why is this my problem? What can I really do about it"? When Cain kills Abel, God asks him 'where is your brother Abel' to which Cain responds 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?' (Gen. 9:4). Although not explicitly said, the answer implied in God's response is "yes", we are all responsible for each other and are mandated to look after each other as a part of Tikkun Olam, sustaining and repairing the world. It is true that the issue of human trafficking and modern slavery is huge, as it constitutes the fastest growing global crime and takes place on an industrial, international scale. Yet through small, local initiatives we are able to contribute to a growing social action movement which can begin to eliminate human trafficking and modern slavery. Furthermore, these actions can have a profound impact on the lives of people who have been trafficked or enslaved, or are involved in these issues, and this in itself is of great value, making a quantifiable, meaningful difference.

IT IS NOT FOR YOU TO COMPLETE THE TASK,
BUT NEITHER ARE YOU FREE TO STAND ASIDE FROM IT
MISHNAH AVOT 2:21

BEHOLD, YOU FAST FOR STRIFE AND DEBATE, AND TO SMITE WITH THE FIST OF WICKEDNESS: YOU FAST NOT THIS DAY TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD ON HIGH. IS SUCH A FAST THAT I HAVE CHOSEN? A DAY FOR PEOPLE TO AFFLICT THEIR SOULS?...WILL YOU CALL THIS A FAST THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE LORD? IS NOT THIS RATHER THE FAST THAT I HAVE CHOSEN? TO LOOSE THE CHAINS OF WICKEDNESS, TO UNDO THE BANDS OF THE YOKE AND TO LET THE OPPRESSED GO FREE, AND TO BREAK EVERY YOKE? IS IT NOT TO SHARE YOUR BREAD WITH THE HUNGRY, AND THAT YOU BRING THE POOR THAT ARE CAST OUT TO YOUR HOUSE? WHEN YOU SEE THE NAKED, THAT YOU COVER HIM; AND THAT YOU DO NOT HIDE YOURSELF FROM YOUR OWN FLESH
Isaiah 58:3-7

T A K I N G A C T I O N

CAMPAIGN GLOBALLY

We live in a global village. Each day we are connected to countless individuals, communities and countries through the products that we buy, wear and consume. Trafficking is a global problem that takes place within many business's supply chains. This challenges us to consider our own buying power and consumer habits. As the faith community we can also raise our voice to campaign for an end to this injustice.

DID YOU KNOW Thousands of boys as young as 10 yrs old, from the Cote D'Ivoire and neighbouring countries, are trafficked to pick and harvest Cocoa beans?

DID YOU KNOW that a young girl of 14 may have been trafficked to make your cotton t-shirt?

DID YOU KNOW that the conditions of poverty tea pluckers are trapped in by big plantation owners mean human traffickers can easily prey on their vulnerability?

To find imaginative ways that your community can engaging in campaigning to end trafficking through engaging with one of our campaigns www.stophetraffik.com.au.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Whatever Freedom Shabbat looks like for your community - we'd love other groups to be encouraged! Take a few photos, post them up on social media. When you post, the best way to connect your post with the rest of the world is by including hash tags. You can also share them on STOP THE TRAFFIK's Facebook page www.facebook.com/StopTheTraffikAustralia/

#FREEDOMSHABBAT
#HUMANTRAFFICKING
#STOPTHETRAFFIK

F R E E D O M S H A B B A T S E R M O N

Just a few days ago our community observed Yom Kippur. We sang or listened to familiar melodies designed to stir us awake; surely some us have emerged more spiritually uplifted and alert. But perhaps for some us these very same tunes function more like familiar lullabies comforting us and lulling us to sleep. Of course the intention of Yom Kippur is that we reflect on where we have missed the mark in the last year. We call to mind our sins of both commission and omission--the way we did wrong through our actions, but also how we did wrong by failing to act.

As we proceed to a new year of commitment to being awake as Jews, it is an appropriate time to consider the matter of modern day slavery. The 2016 Global Slavery Index reports that nearly 46 million human beings are currently trapped in slavery. This is the highest number of slaves in human history. This weekend has been named Freedom Shabbat. Representatives of various faiths are committing themselves to shaping a world where slavery no longer exists.

The number 46 million is nearly incomprehensible. Consider then the story of one slave who is now free: In January 2016, a group of twelve representatives from the anti-slavery organisation STOP THE TRAFFIK visited Mumbai. The women of the group arranged to have their hands and feet painted with henna designs. They soon learned that the woman who had been hired to do the painting was herself a slave working off an insurmountable debt.

This is how Ashani (not her real name) came to be in such a dire situation: Ashani's father was sick, but the family had no money to pay for needed treatment and medicine. Ashani accepted a loan with the understanding that she would work off her debt in a Mumbai factory. When she reached Mumbai she discovered that her job would not be in a factory but in a brothel.

Trapped, powerless and penniless, she suffered in this place until finally she worked up the courage to escape. She returned home and soon married. However the brothel sent men to find her and force her back. They beat her up. When her husband tried to protect her, he was beaten too.

She found herself not only back in the Mumbai brothel – but also pregnant. When her son was born, she was fortunate to get him back to his father. The normal practice of brothel owners is to hold onto any children born so that they can threaten them if their mothers do not do what is required of them.

Carolyn from STOP THE TRAFFIK asked how much Ashani still owed. It was 20,000 rupees, or around AU\$400. Ashani was earning only a few dollars each day, and she was forced to pay rental for her cubicle in the brothel and for her room, board and clothing. She would realistically never be able to pay off the debt. She was enslaved. The ten women from

STOP THE TRAFFIK readily agreed to pitch in \$40 each to buy Ashani's freedom, along with money for train fare.

On the day she was freed, an anti-slavery caseworker took Ashani to the brothel, paid off the debt, took her to her room and collected her few meagre belongings. By 7:00 pm she was on the train back to her husband and 11-month-old baby. The group from STOP THE TRAFFIK was astonished by the experience and kept repeating to one another: "We just freed a woman from slavery!"

Multiply Ashani's story by millions and millions, and you begin to understand the depth of suffering that is being endured by so many in the world. Our obligation to those living in bondage does not end when Yom Kippur ends.

A constant principle of ethical monotheism is to stand up for the weak and downtrodden, for the underdog. This theme is strongly articulated in the haftorah recited on Yom Kippur (ISAIAH 58:3-7). We read of a person who cried out to God, "I have fasted but you have not seen!" God replied, "You fast but with a clenched fist!" We perform ceremonies as rituals, but there is no internal change. Patterns of injustice and exploitation are not being disrupted. This is not the fast God desires. Instead, God demands that we "Loose the chains of wickedness...to let the oppressed go free and to break every yoke. Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and that you bring the destitute in your home. When you see the naked, that you cover him and that you do not hide from your own flesh."

The highest form of charity is not to share more crumbs from our tables but to ensure that more people have a seat at our tables of plenty. As Jews we are called to break the cycles of poverty and the bonds of oppression and servitude.

One of the most essential elements of Judaism is the value of freedom! Every Shabbat we begin with a reference to freedom in mentioning the exodus from Egypt in the Friday night kiddush. The Exodus is also mentioned in the Kiddush of every single festival. It is mentioned again in the Shema, in the third paragraph. The Ten Commandments open by speaking words of freedom, the freedom we were granted by being liberated from the house of slaves. Please note the deviation from the popular translation of the first commandment as the "house of slavery", because to be denied freedom is not just an external problem of circumstance but is an assault on one's identity and dignity. If we are enslaved, we are demeaned and become slaves (Samson Raphael Hirsch). The rabbis also understand the verse in the ten commandments which states "do not steal", as a prohibition against kidnapping and selling someone into slavery rather than stealing material goods (Sanhedrin, 86a).

When we hear about slaves, most of us think about the distant past or far away places. This is not true. The products of modern day slavery are found in the homes of ordinary citizens in every western city and town. They are present in our shops and supermarkets. The opposite is also true, because some well-known businesses are part of the effort to eradicate slave labor and human trafficking. As consumers we can choose to be part of the problem or to use our purchasing power to advance freedom and justice.

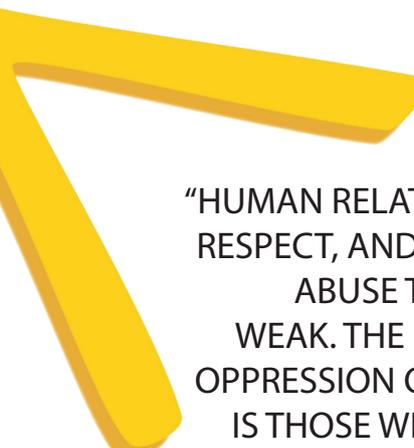
In Australia, the organisation STOP THE TRAFFIK has been instrumental in drawing attention to the misery of those held as slaves around the world. Its website is a rich source of information for us when we shop for clothing and for foods that are sadly

connected with slavery, including fish, coffee, and chocolate. When we purchase products that have the “Fair Trade” label we know we are not complicit with slavery. We are also strengthening organisations like STOP THE TRAFFIK that engage directly with companies to promote fair labour conditions.

The Torah calls us to cry freedom in the land for all its inhabitants! The scholar known as the Pnei Yehoshua explains that If one person is not free, no one is free. When we free the slaves, we are truly free ourselves.

Sukkot begins on Sunday night. We are commanded to dwell in Sukkot to remind us that God housed us in Sukkot when we were freed from slavery in Egypt. We, and not our ancestors. We are called upon to hear the bitter cries of today’s slaves and to do what we can to free them. As the haggadah reminds us, “this year we are all still slaves.” Only when all are free, will we too be truly free. Shabbat shalom!

Rabbi Shoshana Kaminsky, Beit Shalom Synagogue, Adelaide
Rabbi Zalman Kestel, Together for Humanity, Sydney



“HUMAN RELATIONS DEPEND UPON THE TREATING OF EACH INDIVIDUAL WITH RESPECT, AND TRAFFICKING IS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE WHEREBY THE POWERFUL ABUSE THE POWERLESS, WHERE THE STRONG TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE WEAK. THE HEBREW BIBLE AND ITS PROPHETS CONDEMN FREQUENTLY THE OPPRESSION OF ‘THE WIDOW AND THE THE WIDOW AND THE ORPHAN’, THAT IS THOSE WHOSE ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES FORCE THEM TO LIVE AT THE MARGINS OF SOCIETY AND WHO FACE ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION AS A RESULT.”

RABBI DANNY RICH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF LIBERAL JUDAISM

“[TRAFFICKING] A FELLOW HUMAN BEING INTO THE UNIMAGINABLE PAIN AND SUFFERING OF SLAVERY, CAPTIVITY AND EXPLOITATION IS A CRIME AGAINST HUMAN DIGNITY, FREEDOM AND GOD. IT IS UTTERLY FORBIDDEN IN JEWISH LAW AND THE CONSCIENCE CRIES OUT AT THE VERY THOUGHT OF SUCH A TERRIBLE WRONG.”

RABBI JONATHAN WITTENBERG, SENIOR RABBI FOR MASORTI JUDAISM IN THE UK

“TRAFFICKING IS NOT ONLY A MATTER OF OPPRESSING INDIVIDUALS - THOUGH THAT IN ITSELF IS AN ENORMOUS CRIME - BUT IT IS ALSO A DIRECT ATTACK ON GOD. BY DENYING THOSE INDIVIDUALS THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS, THE TRAFFICKERS ACT AS IF GOD DOES NOT EXIST, DOES NOT CREATE PEOPLE IN THE DIVINE IMAGE, DOES NOT CARE, DOES NOT INSPIRE OTHERS TO PROTECT THE VULNERABLE... AND DOES NOT WARN THAT ACTIONS ALWAYS CARRY CONSEQUENCES, NOT JUST FOR THE PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS, BUT ALSO FOR THOSE WHO STAND BY.”

RABBI DR JONATHAN ROMAIN, MAIDENHEAD REFORM SYNAGOGUE

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