

## Chocolate Moses: Mission Statement

Chocolate Moses is a Jewish moral agent acting in contemporary consumer society. We exist to educate the Jewish community about modern slavery and to advocate for ethical, achievable responses.

### The Chocolate Moses Story

#### From Ignorance to Awareness

(\*Include picture of DLS entitled "Chocolate Moses Story.jpg")

In spring 2008, I was with a friend in my living room in San Francisco. As a part of our preparation for the Passover Seder, we were studying the Haggadah and talking about the Jewish people's redemption. I was happily, obliviously munching on some chocolate when my friend casually mentioned that much of the world's chocolate supply begins in West Africa, specifically Ivory Coast and Ghana. ([link to "The Complexities of Cocoa and Child Slavery"](#)) He said that in these countries enslaved children frequently harvest the cocoa beans.

At first, I denied the truth of his statement. *Slavery still exists? C'mon.* I believed slavery was a thing of the past.

But if it did exist, how many slaves were there and what else did they labor to produce? Did my choices have a connection to slavery? I had no clue about the origin of my chocolate or many of the other products I consumed. If what he said was true, there was a distinct possibility that the chocolate sweetness I had been enjoying began in the bitter roots of slavery.

When my attention returned to the Haggadah, the text was the same but I began to see it with different eyes. *Avadim Hayyinu.* Yes, we were slaves. As I soon learned, there are still slaves in the world today.

**This experience gave birth to the idea for Chocolate Moses.**

#### From Awareness to Education

That initial experience birthed an awareness that changed everything. As I began learn about modern slavery and the concurrent global crisis of human trafficking, any resistance I had toward accepting its existence quickly vanished. ([link to page "Modern Slavery"](#)) I read books and articles by Kevin Bales, Ron Soodalter, E. Benjamin Skinner, David Batstone, Christien Van Den Anker, and many others. I researched data provided by the websites of the U.S. State Department ([hyperlink to http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/](http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/)), the U.S. Department of Labor ([hyperlink to http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/2012TVPRA.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/2012TVPRA.pdf)), The International Labour Organization (<http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm>), The Polaris Project (<http://www.polarisproject.org/>), Free the Slaves ([hyperlink to http://www.freetheslaves.net/SSLPAGE.aspx](http://www.freetheslaves.net/SSLPAGE.aspx)), Not for Sale ([hyperlink to](#)

<http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/>), and many other non-governmental studies and organizations.

What I discovered made my heart sink. There are between 21 and 27 million slaves in over 70 countries around the world, including the United States and Israel ([link to "How Many Slaves?"](#)). Not only does slave labor taint our chocolate, it is present in the harvest, mining and production of over 100 different goods around the world, ranging from artificial flowers in China to zinc in Bolivia. Equally painful is the awareness that sex workers around the world are commonly trafficked and enslaved.

Looking to the Jewish tradition for guidance ([link to "Jewish Responsibility"](#)), I needed help to frame my feelings and organize my thoughts as I considered how best to act. Seven arguments inspired me to take up this project:

- The Torah teaches we are created *B'tzelem Elohim*,<sup>1</sup> ([hyperlinked to "In the Image of God"](#)) In the image of God. This text does not mean a world in which we are all seen as fundamentally the same. When we look at the other, we see the other. And in the other, we see a trace of God's creation. This forces us into relationship with each other in order to attempt to fulfill our responsibility to God.
- The Passover Haggadah reads, *Avadim Hayyinu* ([hyperlinked to "We Were Slaves"](#)), Once we were slaves. Passover reminds us of our ancestor's liberation from slavery and we are commanded to retell the story as if it were we who went out from Egypt. We are now called to partner with God in humankind's liberation, fulfilling our responsibility to our ancestors and to the Jewish tradition.
- As a general principle, *Kol Yisrael arevim zeh bazeh* ([hyperlinked to "Responsibility to the Other"](#)), All Jews are responsible for one another. But as a progressive Jew in the tension between the particular and the universal, I lean toward a view advocated by the French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. He said, "All who cleave to the divine law, all men worthy of the name, are responsible for each other."
- According to the 12<sup>th</sup> century sage Maimonides, to redeem a slave ([hyperlinked to "Redeeming Captives"](#)) from a life that is beyond his control is among the most important of the commandments. It is more urgent than clothing or feeding the poor, since a slave is also hungry, thirsty and his life may be in immediate danger. Maimonides said that to ignore our responsibility to redeem the enslaved is to violate the biblical prohibitions forbidding us from hardening our hearts, from standing idly by the blood of our neighbor, and from ruling over our laborers ruthlessly. To ignore the enslaved also violates the commandments to open our hands to the poor, to let our brothers live by our side, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:27

- Judaism forbids denying the free will of the worker (*hyperlinked to “Free Will of the Worker”*). In Judaism we learn that workers are free to organize themselves and they may refuse to work until employers meet their conditions. The Rabbis of the Talmud also teach that a worker is free to quit his job at any time, provided his resignation will not cause irreparable harm to his employer because of the timing of his resignation.
- The dignity and rights of workers (*hyperlinked to “Fair Treatment of the Worker”*) are our concern. The Torah forbids us from wronging or oppressing the stranger. We may not abuse a needy or destitute laborer nor may we withhold their wages. According to the Talmud, if we do this we deprive the laborer of his life, for he risked his life for his work and his life depends on his wages. And if we gain honor through the degradation of another human being, we violate the principle of *k’vod ha’briyot*, human dignity. Instead, God commands us to uphold the cause of the stranger; for once we were strangers in the land of Egypt.
- Lastly, Judaism forbids us from benefitting from unethically obtained goods (*hyperlinked to “Forbidden Unethical Goods”*). For example, the Mishnah prohibits us from using a stolen *lulav* in order to fulfill the commandment of taking up the *lulav* during Sukkot. In fact, the stolen *lulav* is categorized along with other prohibited *lulavim*, including a *lulav* that grew on a tree used for idolatry or a *lulav* that grew in a city condemned for idolatry. Since at its essence idolatry is a denial of God, in this way we learn that benefitting from a stolen good is akin to idolatry and is a denial of God.

### **From Education to Personal Action**

**As modern slavery and human trafficking continued to become an issue of personal importance, I deliberated over how best to move it from my sphere of concern and into my sphere of influence. I began to imagine a patient, sustainable course of personal action that I could ultimately share with the Jewish community and the community at-large.**

This Chocolate Moses website is an expression of this desire and I am delighted to share it with you. On this website you will find background materials on modern slavery and trafficking (*hyperlink to “Modern Slavery”*), a Jewish Responsibility (*hyperlink to “Jewish Responsibility”*) *educational and action resources* (*hyperlinked to same page as “Act Now” button*), and relevant links (*hyperlinked to “Links.”*).

I am still in the planning stages of my second component of personal action. Along with this website’s educational materials and opportunities to respond will be a chocolate figurine named “Chocolate Moses.” Chocolate Moses will be a fair trade molded chocolate figurine designed to be the physical embodiment of the Jewish ethics conveyed in the background and educational material. The figurine will initially be sold during Passover, with the hope of adding a new idea and a new voice of freedom to our Seder tables. Proceeds raised from Chocolate Moses sales will be reinvested into furthering education and inspiring action in the Jewish community.

## Personal Action to Invitation to Participate

The last step in the Chocolate Moses story involves a unique ingredient: **YOU**. We invite you to collaborate with us in the work to make Chocolate Moses a voice for freedom. Learn and [share](#) (hyperlink to "share" button on Facebook) the information provided on this website. [Download the worksheets](#) (hyperlink to same page as "Act Now" button) and educate the people in your life. Adapt the materials as needed and create new ones. Organize a [Chocolate Moses Salon](#) (hyperlink to "Salon"). Teach about modern slavery and human trafficking at you [Seder](#) (hyperlink to "Seder").

I am Chocolate Moses. You are Chocolate Moses. Together, we are Chocolate Moses.

## Modern Slavery Blurbs

**What is Slavery?** *"Slaves cannot express their free will, are controlled through violence or threat, suffer extreme economic exploitation, and receive no payment other than basic sustenance."* [Read more...](#)

**How Many Slaves?** *"The numbers are so massive that it is impossible for us to grasp their magnitude. It is easier to comprehend one slave than it is one million."* [Read more...](#)

**The Work of Slaves** *"Slavery remains prevalent in four areas: Forced agricultural or industrial labor, bonded labor, involuntary domestic servitude, and sex trafficking and prostitution."* [Read more...](#)

**Where Does Slavery Exist?** *"The 2012 U.S. Department of Labor's List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor reports modern slavery -- adults or minors incapable of consent -- in 74 countries."* [Read more...](#)

**The Price of Slavery** *"According to a recent International Labour Organization estimate, slaves generate an annual profit of at least \$32 billion while victims of slavery lose at least \$21 billion each year in unpaid wages and illegal fees for recruitment."* [Read more...](#)

**Why Slavery Persists** *"As prices remain low while demand remains high, the cocoa industry in Africa is a place of slavery...With small plantation owners unable to meet their labor costs, slavery becomes an attractive option for those with no other options."* [Read more...](#)

**Spotting the Signs of Slavery** *"I urge all Americans to educate themselves about all forms of modern slavery and the signs and consequences of human trafficking."* —President Barack Obama [Read more...](#)

**The Complexities of Cocoa and Child Slavery** *"In cocoa production, factors such as extreme poverty and agricultural inefficiencies contribute to global economic injustice and foster the conditions that perpetuate slavery."* [Read more...](#)

**The Limits of Fair Trade** *"Fair Trade is only a very limited solution and just a small piece of a much bigger puzzle of global economic justice... Fair Trade does nothing to address global production and distribution. These are the real roots of poverty, underdevelopment, and slavery."*  
[Read more...](#)

## Fair Trade vs. Ethical Trade Labeling

**ILO 2012 Global Estimate of Forced Labour Executive Summary**

**ILO 2012 Global Estimate of Forced Labour Fact Sheet**

**2012 U.S. Department of Labor List of Goods Produced by Child or Forced Labor (Complete Report)**

**2012 U.S. Department of Labor List of Goods Produced by Child or Forced Labor (Summary of Countries/Goods)**

## What is Slavery?

*When Ashley (United States) was 12-years-old she got into a fight with her mother and ran away from home. She ended up staying with her friend's older brother at his house and intended to go home the next day, but when she tried to leave he told her that he was a pimp and that she was now his property. He locked her in a room, beat her daily, and advertised her for sex on websites. Once, she looked out a window and saw her mother on the street, crying and posting flyers with Ashley's photo. When Ashley tried to shout her mother's name from the window, her pimp grabbed her by the hair and yanked her back, threatening, "If you shout, I'll kill you."<sup>2</sup>*

Imagine waking up in the morning to begin *your* day. But instead of working to support your family, the fruits of your labor create a better life for someone else – the slaveholder who possesses you. You are alive, but your life is not your own. You labor, but receive no benefit. You must say "yes" when you mean "no." And if you refuse to cooperate, the threat of violence looms over you. Imagine if this was your life.

Violent control is slavery's most significant characteristic. With violence established, slavery occurs in agriculture, manufacturing, mining, domestic work, among sex workers, and in the form of debt bondage (hyperlinked to "The Work of Slaves").

Professor Kevin Bales, a leading scholar on the subject and the founder of Free the Slaves (hyperlink to "https://freetheslaves.net/SSLPage.aspx"), asks two key questions about people in situations of extreme exploitation:

- *Can they walk away?*

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<sup>2</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department Trafficking in Missing Persons Report, page 27.

- *Are they under violent control?*<sup>3</sup>

Four features that define the lives of slaves:

1. Slaves cannot express their free will. They do not have freedom of movement. They are forced to work. A slave cannot say “no.”
2. Slaves are controlled through violence or the threat of violence. Slaves are also controlled through a combination of fraud, manipulation, accumulated debt, the retention of identity papers, or the threat of being turned over to immigration authorities.
3. Slaves suffer extreme economic exploitation at the hands of slaveholders.
4. Slaves receive no payment for their work other than basic sustenance (meager food and shelter).<sup>4</sup>

Human trafficking is a subcategory of modern slavery, defined by The Trafficking in Victims Protection Act (TVPA) (*hyperlink to*

<http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/2012TVPA.pdf>) as:

- Recruiting, harboring, transporting, supplying or obtaining a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of involuntary servitude or slavery;
- Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform sex acts is under 18 years of age.<sup>5</sup>

Traffickers frequently prey on chronically poor, unemployed or underemployed people who may lack access to social safety nets. Lured with false promises of good jobs and better lives, the trafficked are then violently forced to work in brutal conditions.<sup>6</sup>

Because slavery is globally illegal, the challenge of freeing the millions enslaved today is a matter of enforcing existing laws and examining the global economic conditions leading to enslavement and our relationship to these conditions.

#### “Slavery” or “Forced Labor?” A word about terminology:

“Slavery” correctly describes the above conditions, accurately naming the loss of free will, violence and manipulation, economic exploitation and lack of compensation. For some, this word choice is perilous. “Slavery” is evocative and runs the risk of sensationalizing a critical issue and further exploiting victims. We respect other organizations’ use of alternative terminology, such as the International Labour Organization’s preference for the term “forced labor.” We also respect the objections of some representatives of African states as well as North American advocates who contend that the term “slavery” should be reserved for the transatlantic slave trade.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kevin Bales/Free the Slaves, Anti-Slavery International, International Labour Organization.

<sup>4</sup> Kevin Bales/Free the Slaves, Anti-Slavery International, International Labour Organization.

<sup>5</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department *Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> van den Anker, Christien, ed. *Political Economy of New Slavery*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pages 8-9.

Nonetheless, slavery exists in our world. It is an urgent crisis requiring our attention and inspired action.

### How Many Slaves Are There Today?

***There are approximately 21 million slaves today.***

**If there remained only one slave on planet earth, it would still be one too many.**

Unlike the slavery that existed in the U.S. prior to the passing of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, slavery is a hidden crime. This means that gathering exact information about the number of modern slaves is next to impossible. Extensive research conducted in the early 2000s by Kevin Bales of Free the Slaves ([hyperlink to https://www.freetheslaves.net/SSLPage.aspx](https://www.freetheslaves.net/SSLPage.aspx)) yielded an estimate of 27 million slaves; the number is the most frequently quoted by abolitionist organizations and government officials addressing the issue today.

But it is an imprecise number. To illustrate, former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton quoted the 27 million estimate at the 2012 presentation of the U.S. Trafficking in Missing Persons Report.<sup>8</sup> However, the report she was introducing contradicted her with an estimate of 21 million, the 2012 International Labour Organization's (ILO) global slavery estimate.

Chocolate Moses prefers the more conservative ILO number of 21 million both because the data is newer and the ILO methodology is thoroughly explained in this [document](#). ([link to 2012 ILO Global Estimate Forced Labour.pdf](#))

According to the ILO, among the enslaved there are:<sup>9</sup>

- 15.4 million adults
- 5.5 million children
- 11.4 million women
- 9.5 million men
- 4.2 million in Central and South Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
- 4.0 million in Africa
- 3.4 million in the Middle East
- 3.3 million in Asia and the Pacific
- 3.1 million in Latin America and the Caribbean
- 1.5 million in Developed Economies (including the U.S.) and the European Union

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2012/06/193368.htm>. Release of Report 6/19/12

<sup>9</sup> ILO 2012 Global Estimate of Forced Labor

**The numbers are so massive that it is impossible for us to grasp their magnitude. It is easier to comprehend one slave than it is one million.**

### The Work of Slaves

The lives of today's slaves are ruled by four conditions: loss of free will, violence, economic exploitation and no pay other than sustenance. One way of deepening our understanding of slavery is to shine a light on four areas where it remains prevalent:

- Forced labor (*linked to "Forced Labor," below*)
- Bonded labor (*linked to "Bonded Labor," below*)
- Involuntary domestic servitude (*linked to "Involuntary Domestic S," below*)
- Sex trafficking and prostitution (*linked to "Sex T and P," below*)

### Forced Labor

Industrial and agricultural forced labor exists around the world and uses either physical force or psychological coercion to extract labor from individuals. At the same time, these people are denied freedom and financial compensation. Immigrants are especially vulnerable to forced labor, especially when they do not speak the language or understand their rights. In these scenarios, they can be easily isolated and manipulated. And in cases where the victims of forced labor are women or girls, sexual exploitation is common.

According to the U.S. State Department (*hyperlink to <http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/2012TVPPRA.pdf>*), forced labor and child labor exists in the production of 134 goods in 74 countries around the world.<sup>10</sup> Burma and China have a particularly high number of products made by enslaved forced laborers and South Asian countries combine to make up over 55 percent of the forced laborers in the world.<sup>11</sup> In regions with long histories of ethnic discrimination, certain ethnic castes, minorities and religions are frequently enslaved. In Latin America, certain groups are vulnerable to enslavement because they are isolated, lack social safety nets, and live with the precarious economic status in relation to the rest of society.<sup>12</sup>

Agricultural goods produced through forced labor frequently include cotton (produced with forced labor in eight countries), cattle (five countries), and sugarcane (five countries). The most prevalent industrial goods include garments (made with forced slave labor in eight countries) and bricks (seven countries).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> 2012 U.S. Department of Labor List of Goods Produced by Forced Labor or Child Labor. Page 13.

<sup>11</sup> 2012 ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour Executive Summary. Page 2.

<sup>12</sup> 2012 U.S. Department of Labor Trafficking in Missing Persons Report. Page 36.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, September 2012, page 362.



In the United States, captives forced to labor are primarily immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, Thailand or other countries who are here either illegally or temporary guest workers in the United States on H-2 visas but who become trapped into slavery.

Forced child labor deserves separate mention. Since children under the age of eighteen have an underdeveloped understanding of consent, they are often at risk for exploitation by family or non-family members. In the U.S., they are legally incapable of consent. One of the most prevalent industries for child labor is cocoa, where it is estimated that approximately 284,000 children labor in the cocoa fields on the Gold Coast of Africa.

### Bonded Labor

Bonded labor is another form of modern slavery where victims either sell themselves into slavery or inherit debt from their ancestors, or they are made to repay the “costs” their traffickers or sellers incurred in trafficking them. In instances of a bonded laborer, victims have little possibility of repaying their debt and gaining their freedom. They never know how much they owe in relationship to their rate of repayment or they continually incur additional costs — exorbitant prices for food or shelter, for example — at the hands of their captors. This makes repayment all but impossible.

According to U.S. Law and to the UN Palermo Protocols (*hyperlink to <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html>*), it is coercive to use a debt or other threats of financial harm against a person. This is criminal behavior in the U.S. and international community considers this a form of human trafficking.

### Involuntary Domestic Servitude

Involuntary domestic servitude is different from other types of slavery. Enslaved domestic servants work and live in private residences and are generally unseen by the outside world. In the U.S., their employers often control their visas. As their captors, the employers are often the only link to the outside world. Without documentation, language skills, outside relationships or freedom of movement, the domestic servant disappears from view and finds escape impossible.

### Sex Trafficking and Prostitution

A person over the age of 18 is a victim of sex trafficking and slavery when she (sex trafficking almost exclusively involves women and girls) is forced or deceived into prostitution. A person is still a victim if she originally consented but then changed her mind about working as a prostitute. Debt bondage often accompanies sexual servitude, as victims struggle to repay “debts” incurred during trafficking. They may even be forced to repay their captors for the amount the captor paid for them.

As with forced labor, a child under the age of 18 is incapable of consent. When she performs an act of commercial sex, without exception and without respect to cultural differences or socioeconomic standards, it is unnecessary to prove that the act was committed under the threat of force or coercion. In the United States and in most of the world, using children in the commercial sex trade is illegal.

### Where Does Slavery Exist?

***Saeeda, a deaf Pakistani woman, was ten years old when she left Pakistan for Manchester, England for a job as a domestic worker. For nearly a decade, she was abused, raped, and beaten by her employers, a Pakistani couple. Now in her 20s, Saeeda told the courts that she was confined to a cellar and forced to work as a slave.<sup>14</sup>***

Slavery is banned and illegal in every country. But nearly 21 million men, women and children remain enslaved today and the 2012 *U.S. Department of Labor's List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor* ([hyperlink to http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/PDF/2011TVPRA.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/PDF/2011TVPRA.pdf)) reports modern slavery – adults or minors incapable of consent – in 74 countries.<sup>15</sup> Remember, these numbers do not include prostitutes or domestic workers because they do not produce finished goods. A complete Department of Labor list appears [here](#). ([hyperlink to "Goods Made with Slave or Child Labor"](#))

Where are the slaves? About 11.7 million, or 56%, of modern slaves are in Asian countries. Africa accounts for 3.7 million slaves and another 1.8 million are enslaved in Latin America and the Caribbean. Western, developed economies harbor 1.5 million slaves. 1.6 million slaves toil in Central, Southeast and Eastern Europe (non-European Union) and in the Commonwealth of Independent States (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.) In the Middle East, there are approximately 600,000 slaves.<sup>16</sup>

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Africa have the greatest concentration of modern slaves: 4.2 and 4.0 per 1,000 inhabitants, respectively. In Western, developed economies and in the European Union the prevalence is the lowest: 1.5 per 1,000 people. In contrast to Asian nations, European, non-EU, and CIS countries have higher ratios per 1,000 people because of their relatively small populations.

Modern slavery is also a consequence of migration. There are 9.1 million people enslaved due to internal or international movement, with a substantial percentage of those moving across borders trafficked into sexual servitude. The 11.8 million modern slaves who remain in their birthplaces, or who were already residents in a location prior to enslavement, are most often enslaved in agricultural or industrial settings.<sup>17</sup>

Modern slavery and human trafficking are not simply far-flung phenomena, someone else's problem while our own backyards remain clean. Perpetrators and victims of these crimes reside in cities and towns across the United States. In addition, more slaves are

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<sup>14</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department *Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*, page 18.

<sup>15</sup> 2012 U.S. Department of Labor's *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor*, page 13.

<sup>16</sup> ILO 2012 Global Estimate of Forced Labour Executive Summary, page 2.

<sup>17</sup> ILO 2012 Global Estimate of Forced Labour Executive Summary, page 3.

annually trafficked into the United States than were in all of 17<sup>th</sup> century America.<sup>18</sup> According to the U.S. State Department, the U.S. remains a source and destination for enslaved men, women and children. Every year, between 14.5-17.5 thousand people are trafficked into the U.S.<sup>19</sup> Here, victims are subjected to forced labor, debt bondage, involuntary servitude and sex trafficking. Trafficking occurs in legal and illegal industries including agriculture (in 2004, leading abolitionist Kevin Bales estimated 1 in 10 slaves in America was a bonded farm laborer<sup>20</sup>), manufacturing, domestic services, janitorial services, health and elder care, massage parlors, street prostitution, hospitality and hotel services.<sup>21</sup>

Victims come from a range of residential statuses, from native-born U.S. citizens to people filling labor needs while in possession of temporary visas to individuals in the United States without legal status. The top countries of origin for foreign victims in 2011 were Mexico, The Philippines, Thailand, Guatemala, Honduras, and India.<sup>22</sup>

### THE PRICE OF SLAVERY

***“Migrant workers from Nepal and other countries are like cattle in Kuwait. Actually, cattle are probably more expensive than migrant workers there. No one cares whether we die or are killed. Our lives have no value.”***

— Nepalese man trafficked to Kuwait, during an interview with Amnesty International<sup>23</sup>

Consider this: In 1850 slaves were regarded as investments. A typical Southern agricultural slave sold for \$1,000 to \$1,800 (around \$50,000 to \$100,000 in today's money). For perspective, this was more than three times the average annual American wage! And since the annual profit made from a slave was only 5-10%, slaveholders had to balance the violent control they inflicted on their slaves against the risk of an injury and lost profits.

Today a slave can be bought for a few hundred dollars<sup>24</sup> or less. To their owners, they are disposable. In India, a bonded laborer costs as little as \$36 and generates over a 50% annual profit for his slaveholder. For example, until a slave either escapes, buys her freedom, or dies (average servitude lasts six years), a slave earns for her slaveholder \$8,700 in Brazil and \$2,000 in India. In sexual servitude the profit is greater: \$18,000 over the slave's working life in Thailand and \$49,000 in Los Angeles.<sup>25</sup> With these massive returns and the prevailing economic conditions creating no shortage of

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<sup>18</sup> A Crime So Monstrous, page 265.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2006.

<sup>20</sup> Hidden Slaves: Forced Labor in the United States, page 265.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, September 2012, page 359.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, September 2012, page 360.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, 2012 *Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*, page 33.

<sup>24</sup> Free the Slaves, “Slavery in the 21st Century: Part 1.” Page 1.

<sup>25</sup> Kara, Siddharth. *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*. New York. Columbia University Press, 2009.

desperate people to take their places, it is no wonder that slaves' lives have so little value to those who would possess them.

What is the global economic impact of slavery? According to a recent International Labour Organization estimate, slaves generate an annual profit of at least \$32 billion while victims of slavery lose at least \$21 billion each year in unpaid wages and illegal fees for recruitment. According to both the U.S. State Department and Interpol, this means that slavery and trafficking are now believed to be the third largest source of profits for international organized crime, trailing only behind the illegal sale of drugs and guns.

Where we, the consumers, enter the picture is in our unknowing purchases of products made with slave labor. It is tempting but erroneous to draw a direct link between the manufacturer and the consumer and to implicate corporate America as the "middlemen." In truth, slavery is several steps removed from the American companies from whom we buy. **It becomes their responsibility to know their supply chain and our responsibility not to oversimplify a complex situation by believing we can solve slavery simply by making different consumer choices.**

To learn more about the complexities of slavery, [\*\*click here\*\*](#) (*hyperlink to essay, "The Complexities of Cocoa and Slavery"*)

For a complete list of countries and goods made with slave and/or child labor, [\*\*click here\*\*](#) (*hyperlink to same named list*)

### WHY SLAVERY PERSISTS

Why, more than 200 years after its abolition in the United States and on a planet where slavery is universally illegal, does slavery persist? The causes are many and varied, beginning with the fact that we live on a globalized, rapidly industrializing planet with an insatiable need for cheap, consumer goods. But a globalized economy is only a broad, general explanation for modern slavery. Several other factors are interrelated to globalization and help explain its persistence:

1. **Exploding population growth.** In 1927, the global population was 2 billion. By 1974, that number was 4 billion. By 1999, it was 6 billion. And in 2011, only 12 years, the population had increased to 7 billion.
2. **Tremendous economic inequality and devastating global poverty.** For example, in India 76% of the population lives on less than \$2 a day. In China, about 36% lives on the same amount.<sup>26</sup> Both of these countries are emerging economies experiencing the rise of a wealthier class, making for a more pronounced gap between haves and have-nots. Often these economic changes have driven rural populations into urban centers, where they are in vulnerable, unfamiliar situations. The poorest sometimes sell themselves into slavery as an act of self-preservation.

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<sup>26</sup> CBS Evening News interview with demographer Joel Cohen of Rockefeller University. October 2011.

3. **Incessant, armed conflicts.** Wars drive people from their homes and leave them vulnerable to predatory traffickers and to those who would enslave them.
4. **Government corruption.** When officials responsible for maintaining law and order turn a blind eye and accept bribes, slavery goes unimpeded.
5. **Gender discrimination.** Because of their gender, women have a much more difficult time finding sustainable employment, leaving them vulnerable to abuses and enslavement.
6. **Ethnic and racial discrimination.** In many societies, certain castes and ethnicities face deep-rooted prejudice and discrimination, making their opportunities fewer and the likelihood of enslavement greater.

Globalization consists of:

- Economic processes (like the deregulation of financial markets and international trade and investments)
- Political processes (such the rising demand for democracy in Arab States)
- Cultural processes (music, art, and social media makes influence global and instantaneous)

Here are several examples of the effects of globalization on contemporary slavery:

As prices remain low while demand remains high, the cocoa industry in Africa is a place of slavery. The economic policies of free trade, export-focused growth, and the restructuring of local subsidies demanded by financial institutions contribute to the price drop of this commodity. With small plantation owners unable to meet their labor costs, slavery becomes an attractive option for those with no other options.

In cases of bonded labor (instances where people sell themselves into slavery in order to repay a debt) in countries like India, Nepal, and Pakistan, globalization has a complex role. Although the practice has existed for centuries and is in many instances an embedded part of the culture, the increase in bonded laborers is linked to growing poverty and the economic uprooting that accompanies rural-to-urban migration patterns caused by the globalizing economy.<sup>27</sup>

In the former Soviet Union, the link between globalization and human trafficking is rooted in increased poverty during the economic transition from communism to capitalism. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, unemployment grew drastically with women comprising the majority of the unemployed. Additionally, freely flowing capital has not been matched by freely flowing patterns of immigration. The poor rarely have the opportunity to become legal, economic immigrants. Instead, they pay illegal networks of criminals to help them relocate with the false hope that they will be moving toward better opportunities. This provides a third link to globalization, as criminals are allowed to transfer capital and launder money in a deregulated global economy.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> van den Anker, Christien. *The Political Economy of New Slavery*. Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, England, 2004. Page 27.

<sup>28</sup> van den Anker, page 25.

While globalization has opened our eyes to injustice in the world and made us aware of our complicity in these crimes, its processes have also created greater poverty and economic disparity and fostered a planet in which there are more slaves now than at any other time in human history.

### Spotting the Signs of Slavery

***"I urge all Americans to educate themselves about all forms of modern slavery and the signs and consequences of human trafficking. Together, and in cooperation with our partners around the world, we can work to end this terrible injustice and protect the rights to life and liberty entrusted to us by our forebears and owed to our children."***

-U.S. President Barack Obama, December 30, 2011<sup>29</sup>

When we open our eyes to the reality of modern slavery and the real possibility that it exists in our communities, we begin to experience our surroundings and the people around us in a different light. As we wonder about the life conditions of people we previously ignored, we may begin to think a timid kitchen worker who speaks no English or a young woman on the corner at night might be enslaved.

From *The Slave Next Door* by Kevin Bales and Ron Soodalter, here are several questions to consider in potential situations of slavery:

- Does this person enjoy freedom of movement?
- Does this person appear to be held against his will?
- Is this person followed or under the supervision of someone else?
- Does this person seem nervous or afraid to speak freely?
- Is this person free to change employers?
- If this person appears to be of school age, are they working when they should be in school?
- Does this person control his earnings?
- Was this person cheated into payment of debt upon arrival in the U.S.?
- Has this person had his passport or other documents taken away?
- Does this person seem injured? Are signs of physical injury apparent?
- Does this person seem confused, undernourished or afraid?
- Does he seem disoriented, confused, malnourished or frightened?<sup>30</sup>

A youth trafficking victim may display these signs or behavior:

- She has unexplained school absences and may be regarded as a truant.
- She may be unable to regularly attend school.
- She may chronically run away from home.
- She may make references to frequent travel to other cities.

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<sup>29</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department *Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*, page 33.

<sup>30</sup> Bales, Kevin and Ron Soodalter. *The Slave Next Door*. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2009. p. 41.

- She may exhibit bruises or other physical trauma, withdrawn behavior, depression or fear.
- She may lack control over her schedule or identification documents.
- She may appear to be hungry or malnourished and inappropriately dressed for the weather or her surroundings.
- She may show signs of addiction.<sup>31</sup>

Before acting on what you see or imagine you see, remember two things: Do not be a hero. The person you suspect of being enslaved may not be so. If you see someone whom you suspect is enslaved, your best first step is to call one of these numbers:

- Call 911 to contact your local law enforcement agency.
- 888-373-7888: The National Human Trafficking Resource Center information hotline. (hyperlink to <http://www.polarisproject.org/what-we-do/national-human-trafficking-hotline/the-nhtc/overview>) This is a national, toll-free hotline with trained professionals available to answer calls — 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year — related to potential trafficking victims, suspicious behaviors, and/or locations where trafficking is suspected to occur.

### The Complexities of Cocoa and Child Slavery

Although our mission is to educate and advocate on all forms of modern slavery and human trafficking, our awareness began with the cocoa industry in West Africa, Ivory Coast and Ghana in particular. Here, cocoa production presents complex circumstances that defy simple solutions. The positive steps of farmers who grow Fair Trade-certified beans and our purchases of Fair Trade chocolate bring us closer to economic justice, but these are incomplete consumer fixes and it is naïve for us to believe they are *the* solution to economic injustice.

**In cocoa production, factors such as extreme poverty and agricultural inefficiencies contribute to global economic injustice and foster the conditions that perpetuate slavery.**

Although 70% of the world's cocoa beans are grown in West Africa and it is the biggest cash crop in Ivory Coast and Ghana, cocoa is non-native to the region. Cocoa has no place in ritual or in indigenous cuisine, yet its introduction into the local agricultural economy at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century drove a massive increase in world cocoa exports. By 1925 the African Gold Coast had become a leading cocoa exporter, producing at an especially stunning level since cocoa is not a plantation crop, meaning it cannot be grown and harvested using mechanized means of production on large factory farms. Because it is labor intensive, small farm holders produce between 90-95% of the world's cocoa on plots of land approximately seven acres or less.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 163-164.

<sup>32</sup> International Cocoa Organization, *Annual Report, 2006/2007*, p. 23.

Despite their prodigious output, there is a huge economic disparity between these mostly family-run farms and the 75 billion dollar-a-year cocoa business. For example, Ghana exported 1.2 billion dollars worth of cocoa beans in 2008, yet cocoa farmers receive only 4% of the sale price of a bar of chocolate, or about \$0.0025 per bar.<sup>33</sup> And since production is inconsistent and their yields are low, the poorest of these family farmers make as little as \$500 per year. It may be the most profitable commodity among the farmers in Ivory Coast and Ghana, but with so meager an income, hiring labor or making capital investments for better fertilizer or new seedlings remains difficult.

The intensive agricultural process and extreme rural poverty creates ideal conditions for labor abuses. In her 2006 book *Bitter Chocolate: Investigating the Dark Side of the World's Most Seductive Sweet*, reporter Carol Off wrote about the labor workforce that moves from Mali to Ivory Coast to work on the cocoa farms. In addition to the tens of thousands who migrate annually to work in a mutually beneficial arrangement between small farmers and laborers, Off discovered another category of laborer: **child slaves**.

According to Off, farmers (or their hired supervisors) worked these children and teens almost to death. They were fed little, locked in their bunks at night, and were regularly beaten. The story gets darker. Apparently, many of these slaves had been trafficked by organized groups of smugglers collaborating between the borders of Mali, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast. Border police along the Ivory Coast were frequently bribed to look the other way.<sup>34</sup> In a 2000 human rights report on Ivory Coast, the U.S. State Department estimated there were 15,000 Malian children working on Ivorian cocoa and coffee farms. Many were under 12 years old, were sold into bonded labor for the equivalent of \$140 and worked 12-hour days for \$135-\$189 a year.<sup>35</sup> In a conversation with Malian diplomat Abdoulaye Macko, Off wrote:

*“...Macko pulled out a heavy sack from beside his chair. He had brought photo albums...containing evidence of what he discovered on the farms. The photographs are startling. Page after page reveals groups of dusty, frightened children...there are scores of boys in the pictures, ranging in age from about ten to eighteen; dozens of photos show the shoulders and backsides of youths with their open sores and cuts...Most of the boys had been on these farms for months of even years before Macko found them. His most depressing discovery was of a boy who was nearly dead. ‘I saw something hidden under a pile of leaves. At first I couldn’t believe it, but it was a child. He was sick, his pants were covered in excrement, and they had left him out in the field to die.’”<sup>36</sup>*

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<sup>33</sup> Ryan, Orla. *Chocolate Nations: Living and Dying for Cocoa in West Africa*. Zed Books, London, 2011. page 6.

<sup>34</sup> Off, Carol. *Bitter Chocolate: Investigating the Dark Side of the World's Most Seductive Sweet*. Random House Canada. 2006. Page 121.

<sup>35</sup> Off, page 133.

<sup>36</sup> Off, page 123-124.



Shocking stories such as these compete with another perspective and the two contrasting sides illustrate complex cultural realities. According to an extensive study published by Tulane University in 2009, an estimated 800 thousand people in the Ivory Coast and almost 1 million in Ghana work in cocoa each year. Among the 1.8 million, more the 500,000 worked in violation of the International Labour Organization's guidelines regarding minimum age. Among these workers, children weed, harvest and carry cocoa beans to sheds to dry. Over half of these workers reported injuries. Only 5-10% worked for pay. **However, according to the report there appeared to be little evidence of slavery.<sup>37</sup> In other words, children did labor in the cocoa fields, they did not receive pay and they frequently suffered injuries. But their conditions might not have equaled slavery or trafficking.**

In contrast to unscrupulous border stories, another border narrative emerges telling a different story. In *Chocolate Nations: Living and Dying for Cocoa in West Africa* author Orla Ryan reports that in a Ivorian town on the border between Ivory Coast and Ghana, police say the children crossing the border are not being taken against their will. Many are not in school and are in search of a better life of work, food and a future. In the most impoverished nations such as Burkino Faso and Mali, food is scarce and it is easy to believe life will be better elsewhere. When parents send their children off with a stranger in hopes of a better life, they think they are doing the child a favor.<sup>38</sup>

**How are we supposed to think about these contrasting stories?** Our Western views contend that childhood and work are incompatible and these views shape our beliefs on how childhood should be experienced. The West frequently asserts child labor has a negative impact of children's health and their wellbeing, that work denies them an education, and it continues the cycle of poverty. This perspective forms the basis of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**It is important to understand the general concept that our personal views reveal cultural biases, a key fact in understanding the relationship of children and work in the developing world and our Western attitude toward child labor.<sup>39</sup>** Whereas the West shields children from manual labor, a different attitude prevails in the Gold Coast. For example, the basis of Ghanaian culture is reciprocity, work, and a concern for family cohesion that leads families to encourage child participation. Through this, children gain maturity and learn responsibility. Work helps to socialize and holds an educative function that prepares children for adulthood.<sup>40</sup> And while children on cocoa farms worked long hours in often-hazardous conditions, they were not necessarily any worse off than other children in these countries.<sup>41</sup>

This paradigm of working childhood is problematic when work shifts in purpose from being constructive or educative to the primary focus being on earning a wage, leading to the potential exploitation of the worker. Here, political theorist Hannah Arendt

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<sup>37</sup> Ryan, page 49.

<sup>38</sup> Ryan, page 55.

<sup>39</sup> van den Anker, Christien, ed. *The Political Economy of New Slavery*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York. page 139.

<sup>40</sup> van den Anker, ed. 141.

<sup>41</sup> Off, p. 50.

would have drawn her distinction between work and labor, with work consisting of containing enduring, educative value and labor taking place away from home and family, leading to exploitation detrimental to the child and as having no lasting benefit.

Unfortunately, the distinctions between productive work and exploitive labor defy neat categorizations. In the case of children in the Ghanaian cocoa fields, the common stance of social justice advocates — that large multinational corporations exploit workers — in the cocoa fields to keep production prices low remains questionable. This oversimplification may even damage the overall cause to bring better conditions and wages to workers.<sup>42</sup>

Although globalization brought greater familiarity with the problems in the developing world, it has not necessarily brought a better understanding of them. For example, the problem of child labor cannot be solved by well-intentioned consumer campaigns. Boycotts of companies often have a negative direct impact on the people the boycotts are intended to help. As lowered demand for a product stifles production, workers are further driven into poverty.

International diplomatic measures are not necessarily a solution either. Given a farmer's constraints, in many cases banning child labor could worsen the challenges faced by farmers. For example, child labor on a family or relative's farm saves money that would have been otherwise spent hiring a laborer. With the money saved, families can afford to send that child to school.

Instead, we need to consider a more holistic approach to reducing global poverty and economic injustice. An honest assessment of the cocoa industry and children's lives reveals varying challenges. In the developing world we have to recognize our cultural biases, the pervasive power of the economic gap between the developed and the developing world, and the need for farmers to integrate better farming techniques. These techniques include shifting from an economy that dictates monocultural growing patterns to more sustainable options. Finally, although its relative impact remains limited and we have to responsibly make sure of the accuracy of a manufacturer's claim, our purchase of Fair Trade and ethically sourced goods contributes to a more economically just planet. For a deeper discussion of Fair Trade and its limits, click [here](#). (hyperlink to "Fair Trade and Its Limits")

At the end of the day, we are both obligated to create a more just world and need to accept the difficult reality that we are incapable of getting it completely done. In the instance of the complicated realities of cocoa in the African Gold Coast, the well-worn words of Rabbi Tarfon remain true:

***"It is not incumbent upon you to complete the work, but neither are you at liberty to desist from it."***<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> van den Anker, page 162.

<sup>43</sup> *Pirke Avot*, 2:21

## The Limits of Fair Trade

***“Our teachers have said: If all the troubles of the world are assembled on one side and poverty is on the other, poverty would outweigh them all.”***

-Midrash Exodus Rabbah 31:12

My original idea for Chocolate Moses was well intentioned but the initial solution to modern slavery was naive. Alongside background educational material, I planned to create and offer Fair Trade, sculpted chocolate figurines of Chocolate Moses that embodied the positive Jewish ethic conveyed by the material. Imagine a chocolate Easter Bunny, but better: The purchase of a Chocolate Moses would help free slaves because proceeds would go towards efforts to educate and advocate for an end to slavery in our time.

While this idea remains integral to my long-term vision and I continue to believe in the power of informed consumer choices, I became convinced that Fair Trade is only a very limited solution and just a small piece of a much bigger puzzle of global economic justice. Advocating for Fair Trade as *the* solution turned out to be a mistake we can learn from. Here then is a brief introduction to Fair Trade: the history, parameters, limitations, and how Fair Trade impacts the cocoa industry in the Gold Coast of Africa.

Fair Trade seeks an equitable and just commercial, cooperative partnership between marketers in developed countries and producers of both raw and finished goods in the developing world, including countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. It is a way of doing business grounded in dialogue, transparency, and mutual respect and seeks to foster better equity in international trade,<sup>44</sup> working to provide marginalized, low-income farmers, artisans and other producers a living wage for their work. Fair Trade was established to assist in poverty reduction, enabling producers to earn more money for their businesses, and to aid in local community development. Fair Trade prices paid to producers cover the cost of sustainable production and an improved quality of life and, upon producer request, partial advance payments are made available.

In the United States, Fair Trade began in the late 1970s, as entrepreneurs started to meet with international producers. These informal relationships gave birth to the Fair Trade Federation (<http://www.fairtradefederation.org/>)(1989) and the World Fair Trade Organization (*hyperlink to* <http://www.wfto.com/>)(1994). These organizations were founded as global networks of committed Fair Trade organizations with the intent of improving the lives of producers in the developing world and providing forums for the exchange of information and ideas.

In 1988, a Dutch NGO farmer organization named Solidaridad created the first Fair Trade certification initiative. The label initially applied only to coffee in the Netherlands, but within a few years similar independent initiatives began across Europe. In 1997, these organizations created Fairtrade Labeling Organizations

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<sup>44</sup> Fair Trade Federation website: “What is Fair Trade?” <http://fairtradefederation.org/ht/d/sp/i/2733/pid/2733>

International (FLO) to set fair trade certification standards and to support, inspect and certify farmers in the developing world. In 1997 TransFair, a FLO affiliate in Canada, opened and in 1999 TransFair USA (now Fair Trade USA) opened. In 2011 Fair Trade USA separated from the international system. In the US market there are now several Fair Trade certification systems including Fair Trade International USA, Fair Trade USA, and IMO Fair for Life.<sup>45</sup> In the new millennium Fair Trade sales have continued to keep pace with increased consumer demand, leading to a wide expansion in the offering of Fair Trade merchandise. From its early focus on coffee, products made under Fair Trade certification now annually surpass \$2.6 billion in sales.<sup>46</sup>

But ambitious Fair Trade growth has not been without challenges and controversy, as unscrupulous businesses became increasingly aware of their opportunity to capitalize on the demand for Fair Trade products. Not all corporate buyers live up to their Fair Trade promises. Corporations that seek a share of this multi-billion dollar industry can be undisciplined in their efforts to follow the full length of supply chains to ensure they are free of forced labor. This abuses the public's trust and exploits our willingness to pay an inflated sale price for the option of including ethical considerations in our purchases. Because capturing the power of the free market to reduce the demand for slave-made products is an imperfect measure against slavery, at best it complements collaborations between governments and ongoing legal efforts to arrest and prosecute traffickers. Fair Trade is not a substitute for governmental efforts to prosecute and punish those who enslave and traffic others.<sup>47</sup>

While each one of us may make a small difference to the lives of producers and their communities by choosing Fair Trade products and the best practices they encourage, **Fair Trade does nothing to address global production and distribution. These are the real roots of poverty, underdevelopment, and slavery.** World production and distribution follow a pattern of developing countries providing raw materials, agricultural products and minerals while concurrently serving as markets for goods from the developed world. Fair Trade does nothing to address this imbalance.<sup>48</sup> Never does Fair Trade challenge the underlying structure of the global economy nor does it address historical roots that began with force, conquest, colonialization and the original slave trade.

In today's cocoa industry in West Africa, Fair Trade is beginning to grow. Co-ops such as Kuapa Kokoo in Ghana successfully increased business transparency and the overall welfare of the local community and have aided in the economic and political empowerment of cocoa farmers, including women. However, in addressing slavery and trafficking, since few chocolate bars are made from a single village or cocoa producer, it is impossible to ensure that no children were exploited or enslaved in its production. Hundreds of thousands of small farms cover the countryside and individuals or families, not chocolate companies, own the farms. These small producers sell cocoa beans to

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<sup>45</sup> Fair Trade Federation website: "History of Fair Trade,"  
<http://fairtradefederation.org/ht/d/sp/i/19528/pid/19528>

<sup>46</sup> Fair Trade Federation website: "History of Fair Trade,"  
<http://fairtradefederation.org/ht/d/sp/i/19528/pid/19528>

<sup>47</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department *Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*, p. 20

<sup>48</sup> van den Anker, Christien, ed. *Political Economy of New Slavery*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York. pages 220, 232

middlemen who pay them in cash, who in turn sell the beans to the government. Because of this arrangement, it is next to impossible to absolutely guarantee slavery-free chocolate.<sup>49</sup>

**In Ghana, democratic elections have been more economically impactful than the role of Fair Trade. The government remains responsible for setting cocoa prices; this is what brings better stability to farmers, of which only approximately 40,000 participate in Fair Trade business.** Once the Ghanaian government realized the farming lobby was a powerful force in the country, this lobby was able to effectively advocate for a continually rising floor to the prices paid to cocoa farmers. The price for cocoa now easily surpasses the minimum prices established by Fair Trade.<sup>50</sup>

Fair Trade may successfully set a marketing agenda, but the success of sustainable farming and the ultimate welfare of producers have been more greatly aided by democratic forces that surpass ethical initiatives.<sup>51</sup>

Unfortunately, Fair Trade oversimplifies the roles of government, free elections and world markets. Instead, it focuses on only a single relationship: the relationship between the consumer and the farmer. In this insufficient narrative, the farmer's central concern is only which chocolate the consumer buys. Fair trade did not bring democratic changes to Ghanaian villages. Rather, it grew as a result of democratic advances in Ghana. Farmers are not only producers of cocoa. They are voters, too.<sup>52</sup>

On the consumer side, a relatively small percentage of shoppers are willing to pay premiums for ethically branded items. This presents another complexity in the Fair Trade response. Simply too few people can or will prioritize this choice to significantly impact producers. Further, when considering the real impact of Fair Trade, savvy consumers must question who actually earns the profit on a higher priced Fair Trade product. Grocers and other retailers are not magnanimous. They are in business to enjoy a profit. Why does the retailer enjoy a reward for supplying ethically sourced products? Why should the consumer pay the retailer an extra premium for the privilege of making an ethical choice?

It is not clear what we accomplish when we purchase Fair Trade. While our actions state that we care about the ethical origins of our consumer products, we may be fulfilling a personal obligation to live more ethically conscious lives without really making an impact on the lives of producers. Fair Trade is not *the* solution. It is a statement. We have little influence on free and democratic elections or on sustainable farming practices in other countries, and the conundrum of Fair Trade forces us to accept the limits of our impact on global economic justice.

As limited as our impact may be, Fair Trade remains a positive practice. Its initiatives aim to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking and attempt to address root

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<sup>49</sup> Ryan, Orla. *Chocolate Nations: Living and Dying in the Cocoa Fields of Africa*. p. 52.

<sup>50</sup> Ryan, Orla. p. 117.

<sup>51</sup> Ryan, Orla. p. 118.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

causes of poverty. Although we have to resist the oversimplification that our purchases free slaves, when possible we have a duty to choose Fair Trade products as a statement of our ethical values. In this case, humility demands we make the best decision we can to create a better world, but the complicated reality of Fair Trade and global capitalism make absolute moral certainty impossible.

### Fair Trade vs. Ethical Trade Labeling

According to the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), “Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the Developing World. Fair Trade organizations, backed by consumers, are engaged actively in supporting producers, raising awareness and campaigning for changes in the rules and practices of conventional international trade.

“Fair Trade products are produced and traded in accordance with the principles above and wherever possible are verified by credible, independent assurance systems.”<sup>53</sup>

The WFTO’s Charter for Fair Trade Principles identifies five Fair Trade goals:

1. *Increased market access for marginalized producers.* Not only does Fair Trade provide ethically minded producers with access to consumer markets, Fair Trade shortens trade chains. In turn, producers earn a greater profit from their good than they would in conventional trade scenarios involving more intermediaries.
2. *Sustainable and equitable trading relationships.* Terms offered by Fair Trade buyers enable producers to earn a sustainable living that not only provides for daily needs but also improves future conditions. In Fair Trade, prices and payment consider these needs rather than relying on current market conditions. In Fair Trade, both producers and buyers commit to long-term partnerships based on cooperation, sharing and planning.
3. *Capacity building & empowerment.* Fair Trade relationships educate producers about market conditions to develop better understanding and resources to enjoy greater control and influence in their business dealings.
4. *Consumer awareness raising & advocacy.* Fair Trade connects producers and consumers and raises consumer awareness around issues of social justice. Consumer support helps Fair Trade organizations to advocate toward a more just and equitable global economy.
5. *Fair Trade as a “social contract.”* These principles rely on committed, ongoing relationships based on dialogue, transparency, and mutual respect. Fair Trade depends on an implicit “social contract” in which buyer and consumers agree to do more than is expected by conventional standards. This is not a charitable act but is a partnership for change as producers apply the benefits of Fair Trade to improve their economic and social conditions.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> [www.wtfo.com](http://www.wtfo.com)

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

The Ethical Trade approach differs from Fair Trade in three ways:

1. Whereas Fair Trade focuses on producers and worker, Ethical Trade seeks to protect worker rights all along the supply chain.
2. Fair Trade applies specifically to products, while Ethical Trade seeks to reform the behavior of retailers and suppliers to ensure these companies respect worker rights.
3. Fair Trade has multiple certifying organizations with corresponding branding, but Ethical Trade is not dependent of consumer awareness. Therefore, Ethical Trade does not depend on a certifying label.

While each of these three points of the ethical trade approach are potentially commendable, companies who brand their products as “ethical” or “fairly traded” may simply be responding to increased consumer demand for ethical purchasing alternatives. Ethical trade may be nothing but a market ploy. Without the oversight of an independent agency, their standards and criteria may not be rigorous enough and unscrupulous companies seeking to capitalize on market trends may or may not live up to their claims. While Fair Trade’s impact is open for debate, in order for a label to carry any of the Fair Trade symbols, a company and its product must meet the standards of the certifying organizations. With ethically branded goods, it is unwise to blindly accept the ethical claims of any company. Their claims should be formal, quantifiable and should withstand public scrutiny.

#### 2012 TVPRA List of Goods Made with Slave and/or Child Labor

Afghanistan: Bricks, Carpets, Coal, Flowers

Angola: Diamonds

Argentina: Blueberries, Bricks, Cotton, Garlic, Garments, Grapes, Olives, Strawberries, Tobacco, Tomatoes, Yerba Mate

Azerbaijan: Cotton

Bangladesh: Bidis (hand-rolled cigarettes), Bricks, Dried Fish, Footwear, Furniture, Glass, Leather, Matches, Poultry, Salt, Shrimp, Soap, Textiles

Belize: Bananas, Citrus Fruits, Sugarcane

Benin: Cotton, Granite (crushed)

Bolivia Brazil Nuts/Chestnuts, Bricks, Cattle, Corn, Gold, Peanuts, Silver Sugarcane, Tin, Zinc

Brazil: Beef, Bricks, Cashews, Cattle, Ceramics, Charcoal, Cotton, Footwear, Garments, Manioc/Cassava, Pineapples, Rice, Sisal, Sugarcane, Timber, Tobacco

Burkina Faso: Cotton, Gold

Burma: Bamboo, Beans (green, soy, yellow), Bricks, Jade Palm Thatch, Physic

Nuts/Castor Beans, Rice, Rubber, Rubies, Sesame, Shrimp, Sugarcane, Sunflowers, Teak

Cambodia: Bricks, Cassava, Fish, Rubber, Salt, Shrimp, Tobacco

Cameroon: Cocoa

Central African Republic: Diamonds

Chad: Cattle

China: Artificial Flowers, Bricks, Christmas Decorations, Coal, Cotton, Electronics  
Fireworks, Footwear, Garments, Nails, Textiles, Toys  
Colombia: Bricks (clay),  
Colombia: Coal, Coca (stimulant plant), Coffee, Emeralds, Gold, Pornography,  
Sugarcane  
Cote d'Ivoire: Cocoa, Coffee  
Democratic Republic of the Congo: Cassiterite (tin ore), Coltan (tantalum ore), Copper,  
Diamonds, Heterogenite (cobalt ore), Gold, Wolframite (tungsten ore)  
Dominican Republic: Baked Goods, Coffee, Rice, Sugarcane, Tomatoes  
Ecuador: Bananas, Bricks, Flowers, Gold  
Egypt: Cotton, Stones (limestone)  
El Salvador: Coffee, Fireworks, Shellfish, Sugarcane  
Ethiopia: Cattle, Gold, Textiles (hand-woven  
Ghana: Cocoa, Fish, Gold, Tilapia (fish)  
Guatemala: Broccoli, Coffee, Corn, Fireworks, Gravel (crushed stones), Sugarcane  
Guinea: Cashews, Cocoa, Coffee, Diamonds, Gold  
Honduras: Coffee, Lobsters, Melons  
India: Bidis (hand-rolled cigarettes), Brassware, Bricks, Carpets, Cottonseed (hybrid),  
Embellished Textiles, Fireworks, Footwear, Garments, Gems, Glass Bangles, Incense,  
Leather Goods/Accessories, Locks, Matches, Rice, Silk Fabric, Silk Thread, Soccer  
Balls, Stones, Thread/Yarn  
Indonesia: Fish, Footwear, Gold, Oil (palm), Rubber, Tobacco  
Iran: Carpets  
Jordan: Garments  
Kazakhstan: Cotton, Tobacco  
Kenya: Coffee, Miraa (stimulant plant), Rice, Sisal, Sugarcane, Tea, Tobacco  
Kyrgyz Republic: Cotton, Tobacco  
Lebanon: Tobacco  
Lesotho: Cattle,  
Liberia: Diamonds, Rubber  
Madagascar: Sapphires, Stones  
Malawi: Tea, Tobacco  
Malaysia: Garments, Oil (palm)  
Mali: Cotton, Gold, Rice  
Mauritania: Cattle, Goats  
Mexico: Beans (green beans), Chile Peppers, Coffee, Cucumbers, Eggplants, Melons,  
Onions, Pornography, Sugarcane, Tobacco, Tomatoes  
Mongolia: Coal, Fluorspar (mineral), Gold  
Mozambique: Tobacco,  
Namibia: Cattle, Charcoal  
Nepal: Carpets, Bricks, Embellished Textiles, Stones  
Nicaragua: Bananas, Coffee, Gold, Gravel (crushed stones), Shellfish, Stones (pumice),  
Tobacco  
Niger: Cattle, Gold, Gypsum (mineral), Salt, Trona (mineral)  
Nigeria: Cocoa, Granite, Gravel (crushed stones), Manioc/Cassava, Sand  
North Korea: Bricks, Cement, Coal, Gold, Iron, Textiles, Timber



Pakistan: Bricks, Carpets, Coal, Cotton, Glass Bangles, Leather, Sugarcane, Surgical Instruments, Wheat  
Panama: Coffee, Melons, Sugarcane  
Paraguay: Bricks, Cattle, Cotton, Pornography, Stones (limestone) Sugarcane  
Peru: Brazil Nuts/Chestnuts, Bricks, Coca (stimulant plant) Fireworks, Fish, Gold, Timber  
Philippines: Bananas, Coconuts, Corn, Fashion Accessories, Fish, Gold, Hogs, Pornography, Pyrotechnics, Rice, Rubber, Sugarcane, Tobacco  
Russia: Pornography  
Rwanda: Tea  
Senegal: Gold  
Sierra Leone: Cocoa, Coffee, Diamonds, Granite, Oil (Palm)  
South Sudan: Cattle  
Suriname: Gold  
Tajikistan: Cotton  
Tanzania: Cloves, Coffee, Gold, Nile Perch (fish), Sisal, Tanzanite (gems), Tea, Tobacco  
Thailand: Fish, Garments, Pornography, Shrimp, Sugarcane  
Turkey: Citrus Fruits, Cotton, Cumin, Furniture, Hazelnuts, Peanuts, Pulses (legumes), Sugar Beets  
Turkmenistan: Cotton  
Uganda: Bricks, Cattle, Charcoal, Coffee, Fish, Rice, Sugarcane, Tea, Tobacco, Vanilla  
Ukraine: Coal, Pornography  
Uzbekistan: Cotton  
Vietnam: Bricks, Garments  
Zambia: Cattle, Cotton, Gems, Stones, Tobacco  
Zimbabwe: Diamonds

### A Jewish Responsibility

With all the suffering in the world it is easy to give up hope that things can be another way. Yet we don't abandon our ideals in the face of harsh realities. We are responsible for making a different choice. **We are partners in the creation of a better world.** Understanding and accepting this requires maturity, but unless we make this choice we are as incomplete as Adam was in the Garden of Eden when God asked him, *Ayekah?*<sup>55</sup> Where are you? God didn't ask for His sake, but for Adam's, because Adam didn't know where, or who, he was. We are the inheritors of the Covenant between God and Israel, and every day we are challenged to accept the consequences of this inheritance. Every day we are supposed to ask ourselves, "Where are we?" Where are we creating the world we want for ourselves, for others and for those who will inherit it?

Our Sages taught that we are responsible for others. To prove this, they commented on the phrase in Leviticus, "And they shall fall one upon another."<sup>56</sup> The Rabbis said that people fall because our brothers fall, to teach us that we are all responsible for one

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<sup>55</sup> Genesis 3:9.

<sup>56</sup> Leviticus 26:37

another.<sup>57</sup> The French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas developed this thought and warned against the temptation to care only for ourselves. He said a person who is a fully human soul does not retreat into himself. Our humanity depends on being responsible for, and reaching out to, others.<sup>58</sup>

Responsibility to others is also a path to personal meaning. Reaching out allows us to reach within, uncovering our uniqueness while simultaneously teaching us that our lives are bound to one another. And when we are conscious of others and when we root our morality in our ability to care for them, we fulfill our covenantal responsibilities as a part of the Jewish people and define meaning in our existence.

Attaching personal meaning to the fulfillment of our responsibility to others might feel strange. Holding what we can do for others as a source for meaning is a choice based on values that are different from the natural state of humankind, but it is a loving choice. Instead of being eager to dominate and believing that our consciences are true measures of morality, Jews have to submit to teachings that require, most of all, humility.

"How much are we responsible for?" Judaism seldom speaks about this with a single voice but the question is a central concern. In the Talmud, Rav Papa said, "The Princes of the world have to answer to all charges,"<sup>59</sup> and Emmanuel Levinas taught that every conscious person has an "infinite responsibility" to others. Fortunately, both of these statements are just starting places to begin our work rather than impossible destinations that we cannot reach. But high standards are good. They call on us to demand more of ourselves. We need to consistently ask ourselves whether or not we are living just lives.

To respond to the question, "For how much are we responsible?" we turn to our texts. In the words of Levinas, they are the "Saying," the guiding Word to which all our words (the "Said") answer. When we offer a biblical verse, we do not do it as a proof text or to justify right action, but as an affirmation of our connection to a shared tradition and an experience.<sup>60</sup> You might say, "We do *this* because *this* is what we do." We are not bound to God by blind faith, but by a covenantal tradition of thinking. We are not obliged to sacrifice critical thought to rabbinic authority. The wisdom that preceded us must be true to our time and to our understanding of what is right.

The accompanying texts support **seven reasons why Jews have a special responsibility towards the enslaved**. They consistently affirm a textual perspective we believe in. The essence of our thinking is a dedication to a loving God Who gives us our lives to strive to become fuller human beings. One of the ways we do this is by responding to the call of others. While there may be easier paths, this path makes conscience a priority. We invite you to join us:

*(Each of these links to named pages)*

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<sup>57</sup> Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 27b.

<sup>58</sup> Levinas, Emmanuel. *Humanisme de l'autre homme*, p. 97; *Collected Philosophical Papers* 149

<sup>59</sup> Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 55a.

<sup>60</sup> Levinas, Emmanuel. *Collected Philosophical Papers* 148

**In the Image of God:** *"The face of another person does not reveal the image of God but just a trace of the Infinite. And when we see that trace, we cannot turn away because it is the sign of God imposing responsibility for the other onto us."* [Read more...](#)

**Because We Were Slaves:** *"(W)e partner with God in humankind's liberation, fulfilling our responsibilities to our ancestors and to the Jewish tradition."* [Read more...](#)

**Responsibility to the Other:** *"(O)ur humanity depends on being responsible for, and reaching out to, the other. We are not fully human until we reach out to others."* [Read more...](#)

**Redeeming Captives:** *"(W)e are responsible for the fulfillment of a broader definition of the redeeming of captives. We seek the liberation of all enslaved people held against their will."* [Read more...](#)

**Free Will of the Worker:** *"Judaism forbids denying a worker's free will. Another may not be enslaved and therefore has the right to stop work at any time."* [Read more...](#)

**Fair Treatment of the Worker:** *"Work is an essential part of the human condition, so Judaism teaches we have a responsibility to protect the dignity and rights of workers."* [Read more...](#)

**Forbidden Unethical Goods:** *"We are responsible for where the goods we purchase and consume come from. Those origins must be consistent with the demand that the good be ethically produced, and this includes the fair treatment of the worker."* [Read more...](#)

### In the Image of God

According to the Torah, human beings were created **In the Image of God**. In Hebrew, we say *B'tzelem Elohim*.<sup>61</sup> But just what does this mean?

Let's start with what this does *not* mean. According to modern French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, *B'tzelem Elohim* does not mean we live in a world where we are all fundamentally the same. When we look at another person, we do not see ourselves. We are not each other's mirrors. Instead, when we see someone as *B'tzelem Elohim* we accept that person as having his or her own unique life path. To Levinas, this distinction creates an opportunity for us to be in relationship with each other.

**The face of another person does not reveal the image of God but just a trace of the Infinite. And when we see that trace, we cannot turn away because it is the sign of God imposing responsibility for the other onto us.**

*B'tzelem Elohim* teaches us that to ignore the enslaved is like ignoring God's creation. In recognizing a trace of the Infinite in another person we open ourselves to our

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<sup>61</sup> Genesis 1:27

responsibility for the welfare of others. **And in acting on this responsibility, we fulfill our responsibility to God and honor our Covenant.**

Because We Were Slaves

*“Even if we do not know the particular experience...we do carry with us the collective memory of being alienated and mistreated.”*

-Professor Alyssa Gray, HUC-JIR<sup>62</sup>

Jews are the inheritors of this collective memory, and should we forget, every year during Passover, the Haggadah reminds us: ***Avadim hayyinu. We were slaves.*** Retelling the story of God’s intercession in history and His redemption of our ancestors from slavery does more than remind us about something that happened long ago in order to teach us where we came from. According to the tradition, we actually relive the story in the first person, as if it were we who went out from Egypt. In our experientially remembering our ancestors’ slavery, we remain sensitive to the struggles of today’s slaves.

The Torah repeatedly tells us to remember our history as slaves. It forbids us from oppressing the stranger, reminding us, “You know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.”<sup>63</sup> **Even more than forbidding our oppression of the other, the Torah commands us to uphold his rights<sup>64</sup> and to befriend him.<sup>65</sup> With this in mind, we partner with God in humankind’s liberation, fulfilling our responsibilities to our ancestors and to the Jewish tradition.**

Responsibility to the Other

***The rabbis taught: We sustain the non-Jewish poor along with the Jewish poor and visit the non-Jewish sick along with the Jewish sick, and bury the non-Jewish dead along with the Jewish dead for the sake of peace.***

-Talmud, Tractate Gitten 61a

A general Jewish principle teaches *Kol Yisrael arevim zeh bazeh*. All Jews are responsible for one another. While this is true, Chocolate Moses believes that we are also responsible for people other than Jews. We want to push the limits between Jewish particularity and our universal mandate to heal our broken world. As French-Jewish

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<sup>62</sup> *Huffington Post*, February 2012.

<sup>63</sup> Exodus 23:9

<sup>64</sup> Deuteronomy 24:17

<sup>65</sup> Deuteronomy 10:19

philosopher Emmanuel Levinas said, "All who cleave to the divine law, all men worthy of the name, are responsible for each other."

The Rabbis of the Talmud taught: "Whoever has the capacity to protest to prevent his household from committing a crime and does not do so is accountable for the sins of his household. If he could do so for his fellow citizens, he is accountable for the crimes of his fellow citizens. If the whole world, he is accountable for the whole world."<sup>66</sup>

Elsewhere in the Talmud, Rav Papa said, "The Princes of the world have to answer to all charges."<sup>67</sup> Because we have the capacity, it is not enough for us to be only responsible for ourselves and for other Jews. We have to know that we fall when our brothers and sisters fall and that this is the real meaning of, "And they shall fall one upon another."<sup>68</sup> We are all responsible for one another.<sup>69</sup> Not only are we responsible for others, Levinas added that **our humanity depends on being responsible for, and reaching out to, the other. We are not fully human until we reach out to others. The human soul does not retreat into itself.**<sup>70</sup> And among those for whom we are responsible, the Torah tells us on 36 occasions to care for the stranger and the most vulnerable among us.

Understanding and accepting our responsibility requires maturity, but unless we make this choice we are as incomplete as Adam was in the Garden of Eden when God asked him, "*Ayekah?*"<sup>71</sup> "Where are you?" God didn't ask for God's sake, but for Adam's, because Adam didn't know where, or who, he was. We are the inheritors of the Covenant between God and Israel, and every day we are challenged to accept it consequences. Every day we are supposed to ask ourselves, "Where are we?" Where are we creating the world we want for ourselves and for those who will inherit it?

### Redeeming Captives

The commandment of *Pidyon Shvuyim*, the Redeeming of Captives, is rooted in the collective principle that all Jews are responsible for one another. But while Jews are responsible for each other, Chocolate Moses believes that the Jewish responsibility to help others extends to everyone in need. So to express the fullness of our humanity, **we are responsible for the fulfillment of a broader definition of the redeeming of captives. We seek the liberation of all enslaved people held against their will.**

When we look at this commandment with an attitude of universal liberation, *Pidyon Shvuyim* assumes new vitality, real urgency, and it demands that we prioritize our response to modern slavery. The Talmud called redeeming captives a "great *mitzvah*,"<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Babylonian Talmud *Shabbat* 54b

<sup>67</sup> Babylonian Talmud *Shabbat* 55a

<sup>68</sup> Leviticus 26:37

<sup>69</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin* 27b.

<sup>70</sup> Levinas, Emmanuel. *Humanisme de l'autre homme*, p. 97; *Collected Philosophical Papers* 149

<sup>71</sup> Genesis 3:9.

<sup>72</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Bava Batra* 8b

stating that captivity is worse than death. For the 12<sup>th</sup> century sage Maimonides, redeeming a slave from a life that is beyond his control is among the most important of the *mitzvot*. He said it is more urgent than feeding or clothing the poor. Why? Because a slave is also hungry, thirsty and he might be naked. To Maimonides, to ignore our responsibility to redeem slaves is a violation of biblical prohibitions forbidding us from hardening our hearts, from standing idly by the blood of our neighbor,<sup>73</sup> and from ruling over laborers ruthlessly.<sup>74</sup> **When we ignore the enslaved, we also violate the commandments to open our hands to the poor,<sup>75</sup> to let our brothers live by our side,<sup>76</sup> and to love our neighbor as ourselves.<sup>77</sup>**

### Free Will of the Worker

**Judaism forbids denying a worker's free will. Another may not be enslaved and therefore has the right to stop work at any time.** While a laborer temporarily surrenders some independence in exchange for employment, he may reassert himself by resigning at any time. This right of resignation originates in Leviticus 25:55, "For it is to Me that the Israelites are servants." The Talmud adds, "And are not servants to servants."<sup>78</sup> In other words, a laborer may labor for his employer, but he really serves God.

Workers also have the right to express their free will to satisfy their physical needs. Jewish law gives them the right to eat meals on the job consisting of the food they harvest.<sup>79</sup> If you are working in an orchard, while you are working the fruit is yours to eat. The worker's free will is also protected if he gets sick or injured. According to the Rabbis, in biblical times an indentured Hebrew servant who became ill for up to three years was not compelled to make up this lost time to his employer.<sup>80</sup> Workers maintain their freedom by being protected from punishment or coercion during a time of illness.

Judaism also protects the free will of the worker in hazardous conditions, maintaining that workers who are injured in job situations that differ from customary practices are entitled to damages suffered as a consequence of their risk. Further, the Torah strives to protect the free will of the worker with the verse, "Therefore, take good heed unto yourselves,"<sup>81</sup> an injunction against placing oneself in dangerous situations. In this way, workers are prohibited from accepting work that threatens their safety.

Workers may also express their free will to form trade unions, to bargain collectively and to strike when necessary. To demonstrate this, the Talmud teaches there was

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<sup>73</sup> Leviticus 19:16

<sup>74</sup> Leviticus 25:43, 46, 53

<sup>75</sup> Deuteronomy 15:7, 11

<sup>76</sup> Leviticus 25:36

<sup>77</sup> Leviticus 19:18

<sup>78</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Bava Kamma* 116b.

<sup>79</sup> Deuteronomy 23:25

<sup>80</sup> *Kiddushin* 17a.

<sup>81</sup> Deuteronomy 4:15

separate seating in the Temple for different types of workers, in order that tradesmen would benefit from shared self-help. The Rabbis wrote, "When a poor man entered the place he recognized the members of his craft and on applying to that quarter obtained a living for himself and for his family."<sup>82</sup> Workers also have the right to regulate wages and to make enforceable rules on members of the association. Regarding the rights of day laborers to collectively bargain and to strike, the Rabbis' reasoning remains consistent with their belief that the laborer may quit at any time since, as we said, he cannot be enslaved.

### Fair Treatment of the Worker

***"You shall not abuse a needy or destitute laborer, whether a fellow countryman or a stranger in one of the communities of your land. You must pay him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets, for he is needy and his life depends on it; or else he will cry to Adonai against you and you will incur guilt."***

-Deuteronomy 24:14-15

***"Abusive labor practices constitute a hillul Hashem, a violation of God's name."***

-from the 2008 Union For Reform Judaism Resolution on Worker Rights

**According to the Torah, work is sacred.** In his comment on the verse, "Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease from labor...(Exodus 23:12)," Rabbi Judah HaNasi taught, "Just as the Jewish people were given the positive commandment of Shabbat, so were they given the commandment of working."<sup>83</sup>

**Work is an essential part of the human condition, so Judaism teaches we have a responsibility to protect the dignity and rights of workers.** The Torah forbids us from wronging or oppressing the stranger and we may not abuse a laborer who is needy or destitute. We are also not allowed to withhold their wages. According to the Talmud, if we do this we deprive a laborer of life, because he risked his life for his work and his life depends on his wages. Elsewhere we learn from a story that worker rights go beyond the letter of the law and extend to the spirit of the law:

*Some porters negligently broke a barrel of wine belonging to Rava bar Rav Huna. He seized their garments, so they went and complained to Rav. "Return their garments," ordered Rav. "Is that the law?" Rava bar Rav Huna asked. "Even so (do the right thing)," Rav replied, "'So you may walk in the way of good men' (Proverbs 11:20)." Their garments having been returned, the men observed, "We are poor and have worked all day, and are in need. Do we get nothing?" Rav ordered: "Go and pay them." "Is that the law?" Rav bar Rav Huna asked. "Even so," Rav replied. "'And keep the path of the righteous' (Proverbs 11:20)."<sup>84</sup>*

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<sup>82</sup> Sukkah 51b.

<sup>83</sup> Mekhilta of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, cited in Perry, Michael S. "Labor Rights in the Jewish Tradition," Jewish Labor Committee, 1993. Page 3.

<sup>84</sup> Babylonian Talmud, Bava Metzia, 83a.

From this text, the Rabbis teach that we are forbidden to gain through the degradation of another human being. This violates *k'vod ha'bríyot*, human dignity. Instead, God commands us to uphold the cause of the stranger; for once we were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Also, in Judaism we learn that fair treatment of workers depends on the principle that all employer-employee relationships should follow local customs. The Biblical and Rabbinic texts establish a base for the relationship, but local customs can add a range of benefits and prohibit employers from establishing agreements that are less favorable than the prevailing local wages and benefits. **Today, Federal, state and local labor laws are, in effect, “custom” and are given the status of religious law. This expands worker rights beyond those granted in Jewish religious law and provides an extra measure of protection of those rights.**<sup>85</sup>

Ultimately, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and honor the laborer (a partner in creation), his labor (an act of creation), and the fruit of his labor (the produced good itself). **We are called to see past the finished goods we purchase and connect the choices of our lives to the path the finished good travelled, and to the many hands that helped make it possible.** In turn, this opens us to opportunities to do our part to insure that workers are fairly treated. When we do this, the products we consume become imbued with the ingredients of justice and fairness.

### Chocolate Moses Haggadah Insert

P22 – all who expand on the telling...

“All who expand on the telling of the going out from Egypt are worthy of praise.”

This year, consider adding some or all of these supplemental readings to your Passover Seder at the appropriate moments of the Haggadah:

Ha Lachma Anya

*Uncover the matzah and say:* “This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.” Tonight, we add a fourth matzah to recall the 21 million men, women and children enslaved and trafficked on our planet today. A slave cannot express his free will, is controlled through a combination of violence, threats and manipulation, suffers extreme economic exploitation, and receives no payment for their work other than basic sustenance. Their lives may be little different than the lives of our ancestors.

According to the French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, “Man’s humanity is a responsibility for the other.” Our humanity depends on being responsible for, and reaching out to, the other.

Reflection: In your opinion, what does it mean to be responsible for others?

Avadim Hayyinu

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<sup>85</sup> Perry, Michael S. “Labor Rights in the Jewish Tradition,” Jewish Labor Committee, 1993. Page 13.



"We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt but with a strong hand and an outstretched arm the Lord our God took us out from there." Modern slaves are primarily in these four areas: Forced labor in agricultural and industrial settings, bonded labor (working off impossible to repay debts), involuntary domestic servitude, and sex trafficking and forced prostitution.

The typical slave can be bought for a few hundred dollars and, over the course of servitude, earns \$8,700 in Brazil and \$2,000 in India for the slaveholder. A sex slave in Thailand earns \$18,000 for the slaveholder and earns \$49,000 in Los Angeles.<sup>86</sup> According to the International Labour Organization, slaves generate at least \$32 billion annually while victims of slavery lose at least \$21 billion each year in unpaid wages and illegal fees for recruitment.

"Even if we do not know the particular experience...we do carry with us the collective memory of being alienated and mistreated."

-Professor Alyssa Gray, HUC-JIR<sup>87</sup>

Reflection: Does our collective historical memory of enslavement in Egypt influence your connection to modern slavery? How?

Arba'a banim

"The Torah speaks in reference to four children: One wise, one wicked, one simple, and one who does not know to ask." The U.S. government estimates that 14,500 to 17,500 people are brought into the U.S. annually to be used as slaves. Which child are you and would you recognize slavery if you saw it?

Questions to Consider in Potential Situations of Slavery:

- Does this person enjoy freedom of movement?
- Does this person appear to be held against his will?
- Is this person followed or under the supervision of someone else?
- Does this person seem nervous or afraid to speak freely?
- Is this person free to change employers?
- If this person appears to be of school age, are they working when they should be in school?
- Does this person control his earnings?
- Was this person cheated into payment of debt upon arrival in the U.S.?
- Has this person had his passport or other documents taken away?
- Does this person seem injured? Are signs of physical injury apparent?
- Does this person seem confused, undernourished or afraid?
- Does he seem disoriented, confused, malnourished or frightened?<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Kara, Siddharth. *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*. New York. Columbia University Press, 2009.

<sup>87</sup> *Huffington Post*, February 2012.

<sup>88</sup> Bales, Kevin and Ron Soodalter. *The Slave Next Door*. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2009. p. 41.

The 12th century Jewish sage Maimonides considered *Pidyon Shvuyim*, the redeeming of captives, among the most important of the commandments and placed it ahead of feeding the hungry or clothing the poor.

Reflection: Why would Maimonides place a greater priority on redeeming captives than on feeding the hungry or clothing the poor?

Maror

“Why are we eating this bitter herb? The Egyptians embittered the life of our ancestors in Egypt...they made their lives bitter with hard bondage.” Work is an essential part of the human condition and we have a responsibility to protect the dignity and rights of workers. We cannot accept that modern slavery and human trafficking are unavoidable byproducts of a global society. To acquiesce violates *k’vod ha’briyot*, basic human dignity.

*“Abusive labor practices constitute a hillul Hashem, a violation of God’s name.”*

-2008 Union For Reform Judaism Resolution on Worker Rights

There is an apocryphal tale told about Rabbi Israel Salanter, renowned for his teachings on Mussar, Judaism’s ethical practice. Every year before Passover, Salanter inspected matzah bakeries to verify their *kashrut* (religious appropriateness). One proud owner couldn’t wait to show off the efficiency of his matzah production. But when Salanter finished his inspection, he declared that the bakery was in violation of the *halakhic* prohibition against blood in food. “Your sense of efficiency, together with the unacceptable demands placed upon your workers, shows that their blood is mixed into the food produced in this bakery,” Salanter said. Even though the blood was purely metaphoric, Rabbi Salanter would not certify the *kashrut* of the matzah.

Reflection: Where does your food come from? What is our relationship to God when we benefit from an unethically made product?

### Take Action:

**Learn:** Visit [chocolatemoses.org](http://chocolatemoses.org) for further background information on modern slavery and human trafficking and a Jewish perspective on our responsibility to respond to it.

**Teach:** Visit [chocolatemoses.org/salon](http://chocolatemoses.org/salon) to host your own Chocolate Moses Salon. Facilitate a discussion about modern slavery and Jewish responsibility and explore further ways to take action.

**Call:** If you suspect someone is enslaved or has been trafficked, call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center’s information hotline: **888-373-7888**.

**Give:** It is traditional to give *tzedakah* on Passover. This year, consider giving to organizations committed to a 21<sup>st</sup> century Exodus of the 21 million enslaved:

- **Truah** ([truah.org](http://truah.org))
- **Atzum** ([atzum.org](http://atzum.org))
- **Free the Slaves** ([freetheslaves.net](http://freetheslaves.net))
- **Polaris Project** ([polarisproject.org](http://polarisproject.org))

### Key Facts About Modern Slavery:

- According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), there are approximately 21 million slaves on earth today.
  - 15.4 million adults/5.5 million children
  - 11.4 million females/9.5 million males
- A slave:
  - Cannot express free will
  - Is controlled through violence, threats and manipulation
  - Suffers extreme economic exploitation
  - Receives no payment for his/her work other than basic sustenance
- Slavery is globally illegal but exists everywhere, with the majority of slaves found in India, Asia and Africa
- Modern slaves are found primarily in:
  - Forced labor in agricultural and industrial settings
  - Bonded labor
  - Involuntary domestic servitude
  - Sex trafficking and forced prostitution
- A slave can be bought for a few hundred dollars or less. Collectively, the ILO estimates that slaves generate an annual profit of at least \$32 billion while victims of slavery lose at least \$21 billion in unpaid wages.

### A Jewish Responsibility:

We are partners in the creation of a better world, and the Jewish textual tradition affirms this responsibility in seven ways:

1. To see another person as "*B'tzelem Elohim*," created in the image of God, creates the opportunity to be in relationship with each other. By caring for their welfare we begin to fulfill our responsibility to God.
2. We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and we carry the collective memory of ostracism and abuse.
3. Our humanity depends on being responsible for, and reaching out to, the other. We are not fully human until we reach out to others.
4. We are commanded to redeem captives. According to Maimonides, this duty takes precedence over even feeding the hungry or clothing the naked.
5. Judaism defends the free will of the worker. He cannot be enslaved, may stop work at any time, and is protected from hazardous conditions.
6. Work is a sacred, essential part of the human condition and we have a responsibility to protect the dignity and rights of the worker.
7. We have a responsibility to know where the goods we purchase and consume come from and are prohibited from unethically obtained goods.

### Chocolate Moses Salon

### What is a Salon?

Salons began hundreds of years ago in Europe as small gatherings of intelligent, opinionated people exchanging ideas about important topics of the day. The word “salon” comes from “salone,” the large reception room in Italian mansions where hosts would welcome their guests and share conversation. But you don’t need to live in a mansion to host a salon. Your living room will do just fine.

The issue of modern slavery and human trafficking is a pressing matter of our time and is worthy of our attention. The material in the Chocolate Moses Salon provides a launching point to discuss the issue of modern slavery through a Jewish lens and gives participants opportunities for further learning and ways to take action.

This material makes no assumptions regarding Jewish knowledge or beliefs. Instead, the salon is provides introductory background materials for host/facilitators and gives participants interesting content, stimulating questions, and tangible ways to take action – all designed to help make the salon a success. All that is required from facilitators and participants is passion, an opinion, and a willingness to be a part of the conversation.

How to Host a Salon ([hyperlink to How to Host a Salon.pdf](#)) An overview of what you will need to host and facilitate an engaging, successful Chocolate Moses Salon.

Chocolate Moses Facilitator’s Guide ([hyperlink to Facil Guide.pdf](#)) Contains:

- Special prompts and questions for facilitators
- Background materials on slavery and trafficking
- Reasons for Jewish responsibility
- Questions for reflection
- Ways to take action

Chocolate Moses Participant’s Guide ([hyperlink Partic Guide.pdf](#)) Contains:

- Background materials on slavery and trafficking
- Reasons for Jewish responsibility
- Questions for reflection
- Ways to take action

### How to Host a Salon

**The most important skills for facilitators are the ability to lead a group discussion and a willingness to encourage and accept divergent opinions and beliefs.** You don’t have to be an expert on the issue. In fact, it’s better if you are not. The whole point is to encourage, not stifle, conversation. Facilitators should not dominate the salon or seize it as an opportunity to express opinions to the exclusion of differing beliefs. It’s your job to manage the overall experience, making sure every voice is heard and all opinions are respected.

### Print Copies

The Chocolate Moses Facilitator’s Guide and Participant’s Guide are indispensable to your salon. Make sure you have printed a copy for each of your guests.

### Have Some Chocolate on Hand

As an icebreaker, a Chocolate Moses Salon begins with participants tasting chocolate and then reflecting on the experience. Facilitators will ask guiding questions to shape the experience. **Important: DO NOT provide participants with Fair Trade chocolate. Chocolate should be ordinary chocolate coming from an unknown source.**

### Who Should I Invite?

As the host/facilitator, it is your job to invite a great mix of the brightest people you know. The right combination of people from different backgrounds and points of view can make for a great salon. **Go for chemistry.**

### How Many Should I Invite?

A smaller number is ideal for salons. If you invite too many people, it becomes hard to keep the group together in a single conversation. Invite too few, and it could be hard to keep the conversation going. **For this salon, try to get between eight and ten people together, depending on the size of your space.** It is important that there be enough seating for everyone sit inside a single circle.

Invite your guests at least three weeks in advance, and remind them the week before and one more time the night before to ensure maximum participation.

### How Long is a Salon?

Depending on how many guests attend the salon, **plan on the conversation lasting 90 minutes.** With some time for shmoozing before and after, people can expect about a two-hour experience. Your guests will appreciate this information, especially in advance!

### Salon Etiquette

- There are no leaders. The facilitator is not the leader. It's his/her job to help everyone shine and to be a part of the gathering.
- Allow for silence. Address the silence.
- No cross-talk (No interrupting. Let people speak.)
- No giving advice.
- Use "I" statements only.

It is true that some of these guidelines don't make for ideal conversation. They're not written in stone. They're just suggestions meant to help people to feel respected and heard, not to stifle anyone's voice. A healthy group can support real dialogue.

### A Few Questions to Ask Yourself

Answer these questions as you prepare for the salon. They will help create a more enjoyable evening and make for a better outcome.

- How will you invite and then remind your guests?
- Does your conversation space (living room or otherwise) feel comfortable and inviting?
- Will there be privacy to ensure confidentiality?
- What is the lighting and temperature in the room?
- Is there room for all participants to be in a single circle?
- Will you provide food or drink or ask guests to bring something?
- Is the salon time on a day and time conducive to success?
- How long will your salon be?
- Will you be able to accommodate people with special needs?
- Will there be a follow up?

#### How to Ask a Good Question

A good question invites participation, can be answered by everyone at the salon, and always welcomes personal experience. **You know you've asked a good salon question when it supports "both/and" responses.**

#### IMPORTANT: Print Copies!

This is worth repeating: The Chocolate Moses Facilitator's Guide and Participant's Guide are indispensable to your salon. Make sure you have printed a copy for each of your guests.

#### Chocolate Moses Salon: Facilitator's Guide

##### **Part I: Introduction**

Welcome to the Chocolate Moses Salon and thank you for speaking up and taking action to end modern slavery and human trafficking! Before you begin your salon, take a few minutes to review "How to Host a Salon." You can find this on our website, on the page "Chocolate Moses Salon."

**The content of the material is best read aloud by salon participants** and there should be plenty of room for questions and reflections. The more participation, the better the salon.

Before the salon begins, remember to prepare the **non-Fair Trade chocolate** for the icebreaker.

After everybody arrives and settles in, tell participants that it is time to begin. Invite everyone to have a seat in the circle. To welcome everyone, you (the facilitator, indicated by an "(F)" in this Facilitator's Guide) might say:

(F) "Welcome to our Chocolate Moses Salon. Thank you for coming tonight, and I am looking forward to our conversation about modern slavery and human trafficking, along with a Jewish response to this issue and ways for us to take action. As we begin, here are a few ground rules to help make this a positive and productive evening:

- Please put your phones away and turn off ringers if you can.
- Confidentiality is key; our conversations tonight remain in this room.
- Speak in the first-person, making "I" statements based on experience and personal truths.
- Assume the best about each other and what is shared.
- No interrupting. Let people speak.
- No giving advice.
- Allow for silence.

(F) "We are going to introduce ourselves. But before we do, I am passing around a taste of chocolate for everyone. As you have some, I invite you reflect on the experience. How does it taste? How does it make you feel?

After participants have had a moment to taste and reflect silently on the chocolate, then ask:

(F) "Now think for a moment about slavery. What do you see or feel when you hear the word? How would you describe the contrast between the chocolate and your thoughts on slavery?

Give people a moment to think about your question. When you are ready, be the first to respond to the prompt:

After introducing yourself and speaking briefly, say:

(F) "As you feel ready, please share your name and what you associate with slavery or what it means to be a slave. We do not have to go in a circle."

After everyone has introduced him/herself, continue here:

## **Part II: Modern Slavery and Jewish Responsibility**

(F) "How would you define slavery? Where do you think slavery exists?"

*The following excerpt appeared in January 18, 2008 edition of the Ft. Myers News-Press:*

In one of the largest slavery prosecutions Southwest Florida has ever seen, authorities arrested a sixth suspect Wednesday, charging her with making money off unpaid illegal immigrant farm workers.

"Slavery, plain and simple," said Chief Assistant U.S. Attorney Doug Molloy.

For two years, federal prosecutors claim, (the defendants) held more than a dozen people as slaves on their property. They made them sleep in box trucks and shacks, charged them for food and showers, didn't pay them for picking produce and beat them if they tried to leave.

"In the past 10 years, prosecutors have handled several slavery cases, but none as large as this. According to the federal indictment, the defendants threatened the immigrants, held their identification documents, created debit accounts they couldn't repay and hooked them on alcohol and drugs to keep them working. The documents list 13 instances when the workers were beaten. 'Some of the folks have been there for years,' Molloy said. 'It is their hope to send back money to their families, and they hang on to that hope. It's just a situation that's difficult to get out of. Sadly, this is the worst of what happens when you have across-the-board degradation of labor and conditions that allow slavery to take root and flourish,' said Laura Germino of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, which has helped prosecute six slavery cases that freed more than 1,000 workers in the past decade."

(The main defendants in this case, Cesar and Geovanni Navarrete, were subsequently convicted and sentenced to 12 years in prison.)

**FACT:** According to the International Labour Organization's 2012 global estimate of forced labor, there are 20.9 million slaves in the world today.

*A slave...*

- 1) Cannot express free will
- 2) Is controlled through a combination of violence, threats and manipulation
- 3) Suffers extreme economic exploitation at the hands of slaveholders
- 4) Receives no payment for their work other than basic sustenance.

\*Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery involving recruiting, harboring, transporting, supplying or obtaining a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of involuntary servitude or slavery.

From the Tradition:

BRING HEBREW OF GENESIS 7:16 HERE

*"And they went unto Noah into the ark...and Adonai shut him in."*

— Genesis 7:15-16

According to the French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, God had to close the door for Noah because it would have been impossible for Noah to shut the door and remain safe while all the other people were doomed to die. "A human being does not



retreat into himself. Man's humanity is a responsibility for the other," said Levinas. Our humanity depends on being responsible for, and reaching out to, the other.

For Reflection:

- In the article above, what were the ways the situation in Southwest Florida fulfilled the definition of slavery?
- In your opinion, what does it mean to be responsible for others?
- How are we responsible for what happened in Southwest Florida?

Take Action!

Write a paragraph exploring the boundaries of your responsibility. Do you prioritize Jewish or universal responsibility? Is your focus local, national or global? Why?

**Part III: The Work of Slaves, Who Were Created in the Image of God**

(F) Now that we've got a basic definition of slavery, we are going to explore some of the types of work where slavery is most prevalent. Before we do, do you have any thoughts on where your life might intersect with slavery?

*Gayan, a 15-year-old boy, was a school dropout who was recruited by a broker promising him a good job in the Jharsuguda district (in India). Instead, Gayan, along with other boys, was confined to a factory to work, given little food, severely beaten, branded, burned with cigarettes, and allowed only a few hours' sleep each night.<sup>89</sup>*

*Saeeda, a deaf Pakistani woman, was ten years old when she left Pakistan for Manchester, England for a job as a domestic worker. For nearly a decade, she was abused, raped and beaten by her employers, a Pakistani couple. Now in her twenties, Saeeda told the courts that she was confined to a cellar and forced to work as a slave.<sup>90</sup>*

**FACT:** Modern slaves are primarily in these four areas:

- 1) Forced labor in agricultural and industrial settings
- 2) Bonded labor
- 3) Involuntary domestic servitude
- 4) Sex trafficking and forced prostitution

**FACT:** The 2012 U.S. Department of Labor's List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor states that child and forced labor exists in 74 countries. This number does not include countries, including the United States, where women are forced into sexual servitude.

From the Tradition:

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<sup>89</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department Trafficking in Missing Persons Report, page 14.

<sup>90</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department Trafficking in Missing Persons Report, page 18.

BRING HEBREW TEXT FROM GENESIS 1:27

*"And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*

-Genesis 1:27

Gayan and Saeeda were both created in the image of God. Those who enslaved them were, too.

(F) What are some ways to think about what it means to be created "in the image of God?"

According to Levinas, *B'tzelem Elohim* does not mean we live in a world where we are all fundamentally the same. When we look at another person, we do not see a reflection of ourselves or the image of God, but only a "trace of the Infinite." In that trace is a sign of God Who imposes responsibility for the other onto us. And in acting on this responsibility, we fulfill our responsibility to God and honor our Covenant.

For Reflection:

- Does Levinas' reading of "*B'tzelem Elohim*" change your understanding of the verse?
- Does his interpretation change your relationship to Gayan and Saeeda or how you might respond?
- How do you reconcile the enslaved, the enslavers, and "in the image of God?"

Take Action!

Visit Slavery Footprint ([www.slaveryfootprint.org](http://www.slaveryfootprint.org)). Take the survey to find out how many slaves work for you.

**Part IV: Know the Price of Slavery, Because We Were Once Slaves**

(F) Do you feel a connection to our Jewish history of the Exodus from Egypt?

*"Migrant workers from Nepal and other countries are like cattle in Kuwait. Actually, cattle are probably more expensive than migrant workers there. No one cares whether we die or are killed. Our lives have no value."*

-Nepalese man trafficked to Kuwait, during interview with Amnesty International<sup>91</sup>

Consider this: In the 1800s typical Southern agricultural slave was an investment, selling for \$1,000 to \$1,800 (around \$50,000 to \$100,000 in today's money). Slaveholders had to balance the violent control they inflicted on their slaves against the risk of an injury and lost profits. **Today, a slave can be bought for a few hundred dollars or less. To their owners, they are disposable.**

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<sup>91</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, *2012 Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*, page 33.

**FACT:** Over the course of servitude, a slave earns \$8,700 in Brazil and \$2,000 in India for the slaveholder. A sex slave in Thailand earns \$18,000 for the slaveholder and earns \$49,000 in Los Angeles.<sup>92</sup>

**FACT:** According to International Labour Organization estimates, slaves generate at least \$32 billion annually while victims of slavery lose at least \$21 billion each year in unpaid wages and illegal fees for recruitment.

From the Tradition:

BRING LINE FROM DEUT 6:21 IN HEBREW

*"We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and with a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt."*

-Deuteronomy 6:21

*"Even if we do not know the particular experience...we do carry with us the collective memory of being alienated and mistreated."*

-Professor Alyssa Gray, HUC-JIR<sup>93</sup>

In addition to reminding us of our history of enslavement, the Torah also:

- Forbids us from oppressing others (Leviticus 19:13, Deuteronomy 24:15)
- Commands us to uphold the stranger's rights (Exodus 23:9)
- Instruct us to befriend the stranger (Deuteronomy 10:19)

For Reflection:

- Does knowing the price of modern slavery make your relationship to it more tangible?
- Does our collective historical memory of enslavement in Egypt influence your connection to modern slavery? How?

Take Action!

You can help end slavery by writing to the President, your Senators and Representatives. As one of their constituents, let them know this is important to you and ask them to take action against slavery.

To email President Barack Obama, U.S. Senators, and U.S. Representatives visit:  
<http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml>

**Part V: Spotting the Signs of Slavery and Redeeming Captives**

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<sup>92</sup> Kara, Siddharth. *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*. New York. Columbia University Press, 2009.

<sup>93</sup> *Huffington Post*, February 2012.

(F) Would you recognize a slave if you saw one? What does a slave look like today?

**FACT:** The U.S. government estimates that 14,500 to 17,500 people are brought into the U.S. annually to be used as slaves.

*"I urge all Americans to educate themselves about all forms of modern slavery and the signs and consequences of human trafficking. Together, and in cooperation with our partners around the world, we can work to end this terrible injustice and protect the rights to life and liberty entrusted to us by our forebears and owed to our children."*

-U.S. President Barack Obama<sup>94</sup>

Questions to Consider in Potential Situations of Slavery:

- Does this person enjoy freedom of movement?
- Does this person appear to be held against his will?
- Is this person followed or under the supervision of someone else?
- Does this person seem nervous or afraid to speak freely?
- Is this person free to change employers?
- If this person appears to be of school age, are they working when they should be in school?
- Does this person control his earnings?
- Was this person cheated into payment of debt upon arrival in the U.S.?
- Has this person had his passport or other documents taken away?
- Does this person seem injured? Are signs of physical injury apparent?
- Does this person seem confused, undernourished or afraid?
- Does he seem disoriented, confused, malnourished or frightened?<sup>95</sup>

#### From the Tradition:

The commandment of *Pidyon Shvuyim* (redeeming captives) obliges Jews to redeem other Jews who have been taken captive. Chocolate Moses universalizes this duty and extends our Jewish responsibility to everyone in need.

If we ignore our duty to liberate the enslaved, we violate the commandments to:

- Open our hands to the poor (Deuteronomy 15:7, 11)
- Let our brothers and sisters live by our side (Leviticus 25:36)
- Love our neighbors as ourselves (Leviticus 19:18)

The 12<sup>th</sup> century Jewish sage Maimonides considered *Pidyon Shvuyim* among the most important of the commandments, placing it ahead of feeding the hungry or clothing the poor.

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<sup>94</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department *Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*, page 33.

<sup>95</sup> Bales, Kevin and Ron Soodalter. *The Slave Next Door*. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2009. p. 41.

For Reflection:

- Why would Maimonides place a greater priority on redeeming captives than on feeding the hungry or clothing the poor?
- If you thought someone was enslaved, what might keep you from action?

Take Action!

If you believe you have seen or know someone who is enslaved, your best first step is to call:

- 911 to alert your local law enforcement agency or
- 888-373-7888 for The National Human Trafficking Resource Center information hotline

**Part VI: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Free Will of the Worker**

(F) What is a “right?”

*At a carpet factory in Nepal, Nayantara met a labor broker who promised her a good job as a domestic worker in Lebanon. The broker convinced her to take the job opportunity, assuring her that she did not have to pay anything. He instead took Nayantara to India, confiscated her passport, and sold her to a brothel where she was forced to have sex with at least 35 men each day with only five hours of sleep. When she tried to refuse, the brothel owner would beat Nayanthara with an iron pole until she gave in. She was not allowed to contact her family or anyone else outside of the brothel and her freedom of movement was constantly controlled.<sup>96</sup>*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Modern Slavery:

In the wake of the horrors of WWII, the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on December 10, 1948. In vowing to never again allow a repeat of the war’s atrocities, the international community complemented the UN Charter with a road map guaranteeing the rights of every individual. The UDHR addresses slavery directly and the conditions of slavery several times:

- Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
- Article 4. **No one shall be held in slavery or servitude;** slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
- Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

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<sup>96</sup> 2012 Trafficking in Missing Persons Report, page 23.

- Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

#### From the Tradition:

Regarding worker's rights, the UDHR echoes Judaism. Judaism forbids denying the free will of the worker, meaning that a person cannot be enslaved and that she maintains the right to stop her work. Judaism also maintains workers have the right to satisfy their physical needs and they must be protected in hazardous situations.

In her relationship to her employer and to her labor, the free will of the worker originates with the verse:

#### ADD HEBREW

*"For it is to Me that the Israelites are servants."*

-Leviticus 25:55

The Rabbis added:

*"And not servants to servants."*

-Babylonian Talmud, *Bava Kamma 116b*

#### For Reflection:

- Where do rights originate?
- How were Nayantara's rights violated from the perspective of the UDHR? How were they violated from the perspective of Judaism?
- How do rights and responsibilities complement each other?

#### Take Action!

Encourage your local city council to pass a municipal resolution in support of better-coordinated national anti-slavery measures. To learn how to effectively engage your city council, visit: <http://ejusa.org/act/resolutions/city>.

### **Part VII: The Persistence of Slavery and Fair Treatment of the Worker**

(F) Slavery is globally illegal. Why does it persist? What is our connection to it?

*"Abusive labor practices constitute a hillul Hashem, a violation of God's name."*

-2008 Union For Reform Judaism Resolution on Worker Rights

Slavery does not exist in a vacuum. Rather, it is a net result of a globalized, rapidly industrializing planet with an insatiable need for cheap, consumer goods. In addition, these factors contribute to the persistence of slavery:

- *Exploding population growth.* Between 1999-2011 the global population grew from 6 billion to 7 billion.
- *Tremendous economic inequality and devastating global poverty.* 76% of the world's population lives on less than \$2 a day.
- *Incessant, armed conflicts.* Wars drive people from their homes and leave them vulnerable to predatory traffickers.
- *Government corruption.* When officials responsible for maintaining law and order turn a blind eye and accept bribes, slavery goes unimpeded.
- *Gender discrimination.* Women have a more difficult time finding employment, leaving them vulnerable to abuses and enslavement.
- *Ethnic and racial discrimination.* Discrimination towards certain castes and ethnicities makes opportunities fewer and increases the likelihood of enslavement.

Every one of these conditions contributes to global slavery and conspires to deny the fair treatment of workers.

From the Tradition:

HEBREW EX 23:12

According to the Torah, work is sacred. In fact, Rabbi Judah HaNasi compares work in importance to Shabbat in a comment on the verse, "Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease from labor...(Exodus 23:12)." He said, "Just as the Jewish people were given the positive commandment of Shabbat, so were they given the commandment of working."

*-Mekhilta of Shimon bar Yochai*

Since work is an essential part of the human condition, we have a responsibility to protect the dignity and rights of workers. We cannot accept that modern slavery and human trafficking are unavoidable outcomes of globalization. To acquiesce violates *k'vod ha'briyot*, basic human dignity.

For Reflection:

- What does it mean for work to be sacred?
- What are some ways for you to honor the sacred work that went into providing your food and consumer goods?

Take Action!

Write a short fictional story or draw a picture that expresses your feelings and frustrations about why slavery persists. Ask God “why?” and create your own dialogue between yourself and God.

## Part VIII: Complexities of Cocoa and Slavery

(F) So far, the message of this salon might be summarized as, “Slavery is wrong. Judaism forbids it and demands we work to end it.” This is true, but it oversimplifies a complex situation.

Recently, the agricultural cocoa industry captured public attention for its use of child labor in the harvesting of cocoa beans. Several documentaries, including *The Dark Side of Chocolate* and a series of CNN special reports, have reported on the prevalence of child trafficking and child slave labor in Ivory Coast and Ghana.

In an interview with Malian diplomat Abodoulaye Macko, author Carol Off reported:

*“...Macko pulled out a heavy sack from beside his chair. He had brought photo albums...containing evidence of what he discovered on the farms. The photographs are startling. Page after page reveals groups of dusty, frightened children...there are scores of boys in the pictures, ranging in age from about ten to eighteen; dozens of photos show the shoulders and backsides of youths with their open sores and cuts...Most of the boys had been on these farms for months of even years before Macko found them. His most depressing discovery was of a boy who was nearly dead. ‘I saw something hidden under a pile of leaves. At first I couldn’t believe it, but it was a child. He was sick, his pants were covered in excrement, and they had left him out in the field to die’.”<sup>97</sup>*

As an example of the horrible abuses perpetrated against children, this story should and does shock us. Yet, not all of the children who labor in the cocoa fields on the Gold Coast of Africa are slaves. According to an extensive, 2009 Tulane University study:

- An estimated 800 thousand people in Ivory Coast and almost 1 million in Ghana work in cocoa each year.
- More the 500,000 worked in violation of the International Labour Organization’s guidelines regarding minimum age.
- Only 5-10% worked for pay.
- There appeared to be little evidence of slavery.

Children did labor in the cocoa fields. They did not receive pay. They frequently suffered injuries. But these conditions do not necessarily equal slavery or trafficking. Sometimes, parents in the neighboring countries of Mali and Burkina Faso send their children across the border into Ivory Coast and Ghana because they cannot feed them. While their children are unpaid for their labor, they do receive food and shelter, however meager.

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<sup>97</sup> Off, page 123-124.



Our assumption that the Western concept of childhood is universally appropriate is culturally biased. That children should only be in school and not working is not always true and the two are not mutually exclusive. For example, the small, family-run cocoa farms in Ghana rely on contributions from every member of the family, and many of these children both go to school and help on farms. Children are not only vital to production, their farm work establishes maturity, responsibility, and holds an educative value that prepares a child for adulthood. Because of these complexities, it is easier to identify a problem than it is to solve it.

**Until we recognize that there are no simple solutions, we are destined to be frustrated in our efforts to effect real change.**

For Reflection:

The problem of child labor in the cocoa fields cannot be solved with well-intentioned consumer campaigns such as boycotts. Ask yourself:

- If prices for cocoa are already so low that unpaid child labor is an attractive option for cocoa farmers, what would be the effect of a reduced demand for cocoa?
- Would this lower or raise the price of cocoa? Who would be most directly affected by this boycott?

Child labor in the cocoa fields requires a holistic approach to approach to reducing global poverty and economic injustice. More effective than consumer campaigns or buying Fair Trade chocolate (which may do more to make ourselves feel better about being on the advantaged side of economic disparity than anything else), these changes would do the most good:

- Free, fair democratic elections
- More efficient farming techniques that produce better yields
- An economic shift from monoculture to greater diversity among the crops grown by farmers (making them less vulnerable to economic conditions and the forces of nature)

From the Tradition:

*"Our teachers have said: If all the troubles of the world are assembled on one side and poverty is on the other, poverty would outweigh them all."*

-Midrash Exodus Rabbah 31:12

Take Action!

The next time you buy chocolate:

- Insist on seeing the actual cost paid (vs. the markup) from both your grocer and the chocolate manufacturer.

- Question how much of the premium you pay to make ethical, Fair Trade choices actually reaches the farmers you are trying to help.
- Be honest with yourself. Address the possibility that ethical consumerism does as much to make you feel better about yourself as it does anything else.

## Part IX: The Limits of Fair Trade and Forbidden Unethical Goods

(F) Just how much can we do? Is it possible to wipe away the tears of the oppressed?

*To be Jewish today is to recognize that every person is created in the image of God and that our purpose in living is to be a reminder of God. A Jew must be sensitive to the pain of all human beings. A Jew cannot remain indifferent to human suffering, whether in other countries or in our own cities and towns. The mission of the Jewish people has never been to make the world more Jewish, but to make it more human.*

-Elie Wiesel

As Wiesel wrote, we cannot remain indifferent to suffering and our mission is to make the world more human. **Buying Fair Trade is one such way to fulfill this mission.** It seeks an equitable and just commercial, cooperative partnership between marketers in developed countries and producers of both raw and finished goods in the developing world. It strives to assist in poverty reduction, to aid local community development, and to create sustainable agricultural and commercial processes.

**But Fair Trade is an incomplete solution.** Beyond unscrupulous businesses capitalizing on the demand for these products while failing to live up to Fair Trade promises, Fair Trade does nothing to address global production and distribution. Never does Fair Trade challenge the underlying structure of the global economy. These are the real roots of poverty, underdevelopment and slavery.

It is not clear what we accomplish when we purchase Fair Trade. While our actions state that we care about the ethical origins of our consumer products, we may be fulfilling a personal obligation to live more ethically conscious lives without really making an impact on the lives of producers. Fair Trade is not *the* solution. **It is a statement that we care just as we acknowledge the limits of our influence.**

### From the Tradition:

Even as we acknowledge the limits of Fair Trade, as Jews we accept that we are responsible for knowing where the goods we purchase and consume come from. Those origins must be consistent with the demand that they be ethically produced, and this includes the fair treatment of the worker.

*According to our Sages, "The first question a person will be asked by the heavenly court after he or she dies will be: "Did you deal honestly in business?"*

-Babylonian Talmud, *Shabbat 31a*

### HEBREW

*“A stolen lulav or a dried out lulav is invalid (to use to fulfill the mitzvah). [If it comes from an] asheirah (a tree used for idolatry) or from a city condemned for idolatry, it is invalid. If its tip is cut or if it is split, it is invalid. If its leaves are spread, it is kosher.”*  
Mishnah Sukkah 3:1

To deny a person his wage is akin to stealing, taking something for nothing. According to the Rabbis, a stolen *lulav* is comparable to the *lulav* that was connected to idolatry.  
**Idolatry is the denial of God.**

For Reflection:

- What is Wiesel’s definition of justice?
- Why does the Mishnah compare a stolen *lulav* to one used for idolatry?
- What is our relationship to God and responsibility when we benefit from unethically obtained good?

Take Action!

Give *tzedakah* to these organizations committed to a 21<sup>st</sup> century Exodus of the 21 million enslaved:

**Truah** ([truah.org](http://truah.org))

**Atzum** ([atzum.org](http://atzum.org))

**Free the Slaves** ([freetheslaves.net](http://freetheslaves.net))

**Polaris Project** ([polarisproject.org](http://polarisproject.org))

**Part X: Conclusion**

(F) We have covered a lot of ground tonight, and you might be feeling both a little bit overwhelmed by the enormity and complexity of the problem of modern slavery and human trafficking. Maybe you are unsure of what to do next. What we may not do is turn our back and plead indifference or ignorance of these crimes against humanity.

HEBREW

*Rabbi Tarfon used to say, “You are not required to finish the job; neither are you free to desist from it.”*

*-Pirke Avot 2:21*

**It is time to roll up our sleeves and get to work:**

*“The problem of modern trafficking may be entrenched, and it may seem like there is no end in sight. But if we act on the laws that have been passed and the commitments that have been made, it is solvable.”*

*-U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, June 28, 2011*

Change is not simple and in our finite capacities we are hard-pressed to solve the problems of global slavery and human trafficking. But based on these principles, Jews we have a responsibility to make every effort:

- Every human was created in the image of God
- We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt
- We have a responsibility to the Other
- We are obligated to redeem captives
- We have a duty to honor the free will of the worker
- We are commanded to treat the worker fairly
- We are prohibited from benefitting from unethically obtained goods

### **What are some next steps?**

- Visit the Chocolate Moses website ([www.chocolatemoses.org](http://www.chocolatemoses.org)). The site contains more complete information regarding each of the subjects discussed tonight, materials to host your own Chocolate Moses Salon and materials to augment your Passover Seder, as well as links for further learning.
- Review the "Take Action!" steps in this guide and put them into practice.

(F) We cannot solve all the problems of the world, because we are not God. But we can be God's partners. We can do what we can, with what we've got, in the time we have. Perhaps one day we will each live to fulfill these words from our Sages:

*"He who saves just one life in Israel is one who has saved an entire world."*

-Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin 37a*

## Chocolate Moses Participant's Guide

### Chocolate Moses Salon: Facilitator's Guide

#### **Part I: Introduction**

Welcome to the Chocolate Moses Salon and thank you for speaking up and taking action to end modern slavery and human trafficking! Before you begin your salon, take a few minutes to review "How to Host a Salon." You can find this on our website, on the page "Chocolate Moses Salon."

**The content of the material is best read aloud by salon participants** and there should be plenty of room for questions and reflections. The more participation, the better the salon.

First, a few simple groundrules:

- Please put your phones away and turn off ringers if you can.
- Confidentiality is key; our conversations tonight remain in this room.
- Speak in the first-person, making "I" statements based on experience and personal truths.
- Assume the best about each other and what is shared.
- No interrupting. Let people speak.
- No giving advice.
- Allow for silence.

## **Part II: Modern Slavery and Jewish Responsibility**

*The following excerpt appeared in January 18, 2008 edition of the Ft. Myers News-Press:*

In one of the largest slavery prosecutions Southwest Florida has ever seen, authorities arrested a sixth suspect Wednesday, charging her with making money off unpaid illegal immigrant farm workers.

"Slavery, plain and simple," said Chief Assistant U.S. Attorney Doug Molloy.

For two years, federal prosecutors claim, (the defendants) held more than a dozen people as slaves on their property. They made them sleep in box trucks and shacks, charged them for food and showers, didn't pay them for picking produce and beat them if they tried to leave.

"In the past 10 years, prosecutors have handled several slavery cases, but none as large as this. According to the federal indictment, the defendants threatened the immigrants, held their identification documents, created debit accounts they couldn't repay and hooked them on alcohol and drugs to keep them working. The documents list 13 instances when the workers were beaten. 'Some of the folks have been there for years,' Molloy said. 'It is their hope to send back money to their families, and they hang on to that hope. It's just a situation that's difficult to get out of. Sadly, this is the worst of what happens when you have across-the-board degradation of labor and conditions that allow slavery to take root and flourish,' said Laura Germino of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, which has helped prosecute six slavery cases that freed more than 1,000 workers in the past decade."

(The main defendants in this case, Cesar and Geovanni Navarrete, were subsequently convicted and sentenced to 12 years in prison.)

**FACT:** According to the International Labour Organization's 2012 global estimate of forced labor, there are 20.9 million slaves in the world today.

*A slave...*

- 5) Cannot express free will
- 6) Is controlled through a combination of violence, threats and manipulation
- 7) Suffers extreme economic exploitation at the hands of slaveholders
- 8) Receives no payment for their work other than basic sustenance.

\*Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery involving recruiting, harboring, transporting, supplying or obtaining a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of involuntary servitude or slavery.

From the Tradition:

BRING HEBREW OF GENESIS 7:16 HERE

*"And they went unto Noah into the ark...and Adonai shut him in."*

– Genesis 7:15-16

According to the French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, God had to close the door for Noah because it would have been impossible for Noah to shut the door and remain safe while all the other people were doomed to die. "A human being does not retreat into himself. Man's humanity is a responsibility for the other," said Levinas. Our humanity depends on being responsible for, and reaching out to, the other.

For Reflection:

- In the article above, what were the ways the situation in Southwest Florida fulfilled the definition of slavery?
- In your opinion, what does it mean to be responsible for others?
- How are we responsible for what happened in Southwest Florida?

Take Action!

Write a paragraph exploring the boundaries of your responsibility. Do you prioritize Jewish or universal responsibility? Is your focus local, national or global? Why?

### **Part III: The Work of Slaves, Who Were Created in the Image of God**

*Gayan, a 15-year-old boy, was a school dropout who was recruited by a broker promising him a good job in the Jharsuguda district (in India). Instead, Gayan, along with other boys, was confined to a factory to work, given little food, severely beaten, branded, burned with cigarettes, and allowed only a few hours' sleep each night.<sup>98</sup>*

*Saeeda, a deaf Pakistani woman, was ten years old when she left Pakistan for Manchester, England for a job as a domestic worker. For nearly a decade, she was abused, raped and beaten by her employers, a Pakistani couple. Now in her twenties, Saeeda told the courts that she was confined to a cellar and forced to work as a slave.<sup>99</sup>*

**FACT:** Modern slaves are primarily in these four areas:

- 5) Forced labor in agricultural and industrial settings
- 6) Bonded labor

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<sup>98</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department Trafficking in Missing Persons Report, page 14.

<sup>99</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department Trafficking in Missing Persons Report, page 18.

- 7) Involuntary domestic servitude
- 8) Sex trafficking and forced prostitution

**FACT:** The 2012 U.S. Department of Labor's List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor states that child and forced labor exists in 74 countries. This number does not include countries, including the United States, where women are forced into sexual servitude.

From the Tradition:

BRING HEBREW TEXT FROM GENESIS 1:27

*"And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*

-Genesis 1:27

Gayan and Saeeda were both created in the image of God. Those who enslaved them were, too.

(F) What are some ways to think about what it means to be created "in the image of God?"

According to Levinas, *B'tzelem Elohim* does not mean we live in a world where we are all fundamentally the same. When we look at another person, we do not see a reflection of ourselves or the image of God, but only a "trace of the Infinite." In that trace is a sign of God Who imposes responsibility for the other onto us. And in acting on this responsibility, we fulfill our responsibility to God and honor our Covenant.

For Reflection:

- Does Levinas' reading of "*B'tzelem Elohim*" change your understanding of the verse?
- Does his interpretation change your relationship to Gayan and Saeeda or how you might respond?
- How do you reconcile the enslaved, the enslavers, and "in the image of God?"

Take Action!

Visit Slavery Footprint ([www.slaveryfootprint.org](http://www.slaveryfootprint.org)). Take the survey to find out how many slaves work for you.

#### **Part IV: Know the Price of Slavery, Because We Were Once Slaves**

*"Migrant workers from Nepal and other countries are like cattle in Kuwait. Actually, cattle are probably more expensive than migrant workers there. No one cares whether we die or are killed. Our lives have no value."*

-Nepalese man trafficked to Kuwait, during interview with Amnesty International<sup>100</sup>

Consider this: In the 1800s typical Southern agricultural slave was an investment, selling for \$1,000 to \$1,800 (around \$50,000 to \$100,000 in today's money). Slaveholders had to balance the violent control they inflicted on their slaves against the risk of an injury and lost profits. **Today, a slave can be bought for a few hundred dollars or less. To their owners, they are disposable.**

**FACT:** Over the course of servitude, a slave earns \$8,700 in Brazil and \$2,000 in India for the slaveholder. A sex slave in Thailand earns \$18,000 for the slaveholder and earns \$49,000 in Los Angeles.<sup>101</sup>

**FACT:** According to International Labour Organization estimates, slaves generate at least \$32 billion annually while victims of slavery lose at least \$21 billion each year in unpaid wages and illegal fees for recruitment.

From the Tradition:

BRING LINE FROM DEUT 6:21 IN HEBREW

*"We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and with a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt."*

-Deuteronomy 6:21

*"Even if we do not know the particular experience...we do carry with us the collective memory of being alienated and mistreated."*

-Professor Alyssa Gray, HUC-JIR<sup>102</sup>

In addition to reminding us of our history of enslavement, the Torah also:

- Forbids us from oppressing others (Leviticus 19:13, Deuteronomy 24:15)
- Commands us to uphold the stranger's rights (Exodus 23:9)
- Instruct us to befriend the stranger (Deuteronomy 10:19)

For Reflection:

- Does knowing the price of modern slavery make your relationship to it more tangible?
- Does our collective historical memory of enslavement in Egypt influence your connection to modern slavery? How?

Take Action!

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<sup>100</sup>U.S. Department of Labor, *2012 Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*, page 33.

<sup>101</sup> Kara, Siddharth. *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*. New York. Columbia University Press, 2009.

<sup>102</sup> *Huffington Post*, February 2012.



You can help end slavery by writing to the President, your Senators and Representatives. As one of their constituents, let them know this is important to you and ask them to take action against slavery.

To email President Barack Obama, U.S. Senators, and U.S. Representatives visit:  
<http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml>

## Part V: Spotting the Signs of Slavery and Redeeming Captives

**FACT:** The U.S. government estimates that 14,500 to 17,500 people are brought into the U.S. annually to be used as slaves.

*"I urge all Americans to educate themselves about all forms of modern slavery and the signs and consequences of human trafficking. Together, and in cooperation with our partners around the world, we can work to end this terrible injustice and protect the rights to life and liberty entrusted to us by our forebears and owed to our children."*

-U.S. President Barack Obama<sup>103</sup>

Questions to Consider in Potential Situations of Slavery:

- Does this person enjoy freedom of movement?
- Does this person appear to be held against his will?
- Is this person followed or under the supervision of someone else?
- Does this person seem nervous or afraid to speak freely?
- Is this person free to change employers?
- If this person appears to be of school age, are they working when they should be in school?
- Does this person control his earnings?
- Was this person cheated into payment of debt upon arrival in the U.S.?
- Has this person had his passport or other documents taken away?
- Does this person seem injured? Are signs of physical injury apparent?
- Does this person seem confused, undernourished or afraid?
- Does he seem disoriented, confused, malnourished or frightened?<sup>104</sup>

### From the Tradition:

The commandment of *Pidyon Shvuyim* (redeeming captives) obliges Jews to redeem other Jews who have been taken captive. Chocolate Moses universalizes this duty and extends our Jewish responsibility to everyone in need.

If we ignore our duty to liberate the enslaved, we violate the commandments to:

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<sup>103</sup> 2012 U.S. State Department *Trafficking in Missing Persons Report*, page 33.

<sup>104</sup> Bales, Kevin and Ron Soodalter. *The Slave Next Door*. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2009. p. 41.

- Open our hands to the poor (Deuteronomy 15:7, 11)
- Let our brothers and sisters live by our side (Leviticus 25:36)
- Love our neighbors as ourselves (Leviticus 19:18)

The 12<sup>th</sup> century Jewish sage Maimonides considered *Pidyon Shvuyim* among the most important of the commandments, placing it ahead of feeding the hungry or clothing the poor.

#### For Reflection:

- Why would Maimonides place a greater priority on redeeming captives than on feeding the hungry or clothing the poor?
- If you thought someone was enslaved, what might keep you from action?

#### Take Action!

If you believe you have seen or know someone who is enslaved, your best first step is to call:

- 911 to alert your local law enforcement agency or
- 888-373-7888 for The National Human Trafficking Resource Center information hotline

### **Part VI: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Free Will of the Worker**

*At a carpet factory in Nepal, Nayantara met a labor broker who promised her a good job as a domestic worker in Lebanon. The broker convinced her to take the job opportunity, assuring her that she did not have to pay anything. He instead took Nayantara to India, confiscated her passport, and sold her to a brothel where she was forced to have sex with at least 35 men each day with only five hours of sleep. When she tried to refuse, the brothel owner would beat Nayanthara with an iron pole until she gave in. She was not allowed to contact her family or anyone else outside of the brothel and her freedom of movement was constantly controlled.<sup>105</sup>*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Modern Slavery:

In the wake of the horrors of WWII, the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on December 10, 1948. In vowing to never again allow a repeat of the war's atrocities, the international community complemented the UN Charter with a road map guaranteeing the rights of every individual. The UDHR addresses slavery directly and the conditions of slavery several times:

- Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
- Article 4. **No one shall be held in slavery or servitude**; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

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<sup>105</sup> 2012 Trafficking in Missing Persons Report, page 23.

- Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.
- Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

#### From the Tradition:

Regarding worker's rights, the UDHR echoes Judaism. Judaism forbids denying the free will of the worker, meaning that a person cannot be enslaved and that she maintains the right to stop her work. Judaism also maintains workers have the right to satisfy their physical needs and they must be protected in hazardous situations.

In her relationship to her employer and to her labor, the free will of the worker originates with the verse:

#### ADD HEBREW

*"For it is to Me that the Israelites are servants."*

-Leviticus 25:55

The Rabbis added:

*"And not servants to servants."*

-Babylonian Talmud, *Bava Kamma 116b*

#### For Reflection:

- Where do rights originate?
- How were Nanyantara's rights violated from the perspective of the UDHR? How were they violated from the perspective of Judaism?
- How do rights and responsibilities complement each other?

#### Take Action!

Encourage your local city council to pass a municipal resolution in support of better-coordinated national anti-slavery measures. To learn how to effectively engage your city council, visit: <http://ejusa.org/act/resolutions/city>.

## Part VII: The Persistence of Slavery and Fair Treatment of the Worker

*"Abusive labor practices constitute a hillul Hashem, a violation of God's name."*

-2008 Union For Reform Judaism Resolution on Worker Rights

Slavery does not exist in a vacuum. Rather, it is a net result of a globalized, rapidly industrializing planet with an insatiable need for cheap, consumer goods. In addition, these factors contribute to the persistence of slavery:

- *Exploding population growth.* Between 1999-2011 the global population grew from 6 billion to 7 billion.
- *Tremendous economic inequality and devastating global poverty.* 76% of the world's population lives on less than \$2 a day.
- *Incessant, armed conflicts.* Wars drive people from their homes and leave them vulnerable to predatory traffickers.
- *Government corruption.* When officials responsible for maintaining law and order turn a blind eye and accept bribes, slavery goes unimpeded.
- *Gender discrimination.* Women have a more difficult time finding employment, leaving them vulnerable to abuses and enslavement.
- *Ethnic and racial discrimination.* Discrimination towards certain castes and ethnicities makes opportunities fewer and increases the likelihood of enslavement.

Every one of these conditions contributes to global slavery and conspires to deny the fair treatment of workers.

### From the Tradition:

#### HEBREW EX 23:12

According to the Torah, work is sacred. In fact, Rabbi Judah HaNasi compares work in importance to Shabbat in a comment on the verse, "Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease from labor...(Exodus 23:12)." He said, "Just as the Jewish people were given the positive commandment of Shabbat, so were they given the commandment of working."

-*Mekhilta of Shimon bar Yochai*

Since work is an essential part of the human condition, we have a responsibility to protect the dignity and rights of workers. We cannot accept that modern slavery and human trafficking are unavoidable outcomes of globalization. To acquiesce violates *k'vod ha'briyot*, basic human dignity.

### For Reflection:

- What does it mean for work to be sacred?
- What are some ways for you to honor the sacred work that went into providing your food and consumer goods?

### Take Action!

Write a short fictional story or draw a picture that expresses your feelings and frustrations about why slavery persists. Ask God “why?” and create your own dialogue between yourself and God.

### **Part VIII: Complexities of Cocoa and Slavery**

Recently, the agricultural cocoa industry captured public attention for its use of child labor in the harvesting of cocoa beans. Several documentaries, including *The Dark Side of Chocolate* and a series of CNN special reports, have reported on the prevalence of child trafficking and child slave labor in Ivory Coast and Ghana.

In an interview with Malian diplomat Abodoulaye Macko, author Carol Off reported:

*“...Macko pulled out a heavy sack from beside his chair. He had brought photo albums...containing evidence of what he discovered on the farms. The photographs are startling. Page after page reveals groups of dusty, frightened children...there are scores of boys in the pictures, ranging in age from about ten to eighteen; dozens of photos show the shoulders and backsides of youths with their open sores and cuts...Most of the boys had been on these farms for months of even years before Macko found them. His most depressing discovery was of a boy who was nearly dead. ‘I saw something hidden under a pile of leaves. At first I couldn’t believe it, but it was a child. He was sick, his pants were covered in excrement, and they had left him out in the field to die’.”<sup>106</sup>*

As an example of the horrible abuses perpetrated against children, this story should and does shock us. Yet, not all of the children who labor in the cocoa fields on the Gold Coast of Africa are slaves. According to an extensive, 2009 Tulane University study:

- An estimated 800 thousand people in Ivory Coast and almost 1 million in Ghana work in cocoa each year.
- More the 500,000 worked in violation of the International Labour Organization’s guidelines regarding minimum age.
- Only 5-10% worked for pay.
- There appeared to be little evidence of slavery.

Children did labor in the cocoa fields. They did not receive pay. They frequently suffered injuries. But these conditions do not necessarily equal slavery or trafficking. Sometimes, parents in the neighboring countries of Mali and Burkina Faso send their children across the border into Ivory Coast and Ghana because they cannot feed them. While their children are unpaid for their labor, they do receive food and shelter, however meager.

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<sup>106</sup> Off, page 123-124.

Our assumption that the Western concept of childhood is universally appropriate is culturally biased. That children should only be in school and not working is not always true and the two are not mutually exclusive. For example, the small, family-run cocoa farms in Ghana rely on contributions from every member of the family, and many of these children both go to school and help on farms. Children are not only vital to production, their farm work establishes maturity, responsibility, and holds an educative value that prepares a child for adulthood. Because of these complexities, it is easier to identify a problem than it is to solve it.

**Until we recognize that there are no simple solutions, we are destined to be frustrated in our efforts to effect real change.**

For Reflection:

The problem of child labor in the cocoa fields cannot be solved with well-intentioned consumer campaigns such as boycotts. Ask yourself:

- If prices for cocoa are already so low that unpaid child labor is an attractive option for cocoa farmers, what would be the effect of a reduced demand for cocoa?
- Would this lower or raise the price of cocoa? Who would be most directly affected by this boycott?

Child labor in the cocoa fields requires a holistic approach to approach to reducing global poverty and economic injustice. More effective than consumer campaigns or buying Fair Trade chocolate (which may do more to make ourselves feel better about being on the advantaged side of economic disparity than anything else), these changes would do the most good:

- Free, fair democratic elections
- More efficient farming techniques that produce better yields
- An economic shift from monoculture to greater diversity among the crops grown by farmers (making them less vulnerable to economic conditions and the forces of nature)

From the Tradition:

*"Our teachers have said: If all the troubles of the world are assembled on one side and poverty is on the other, poverty would outweigh them all."*

-Midrash Exodus Rabbah 31:12

Take Action!

The next time you buy chocolate:

- Insist on seeing the actual cost paid (vs. the markup) from both your grocer and the chocolate manufacturer.

- Question how much of the premium you pay to make ethical, Fair Trade choices actually reaches the farmers you are trying to help.
- Be honest with yourself. Address the possibility that ethical consumerism does as much to make you feel better about yourself as it does anything else.

## Part IX: The Limits of Fair Trade and Forbidden Unethical Goods

*To be Jewish today is to recognize that every person is created in the image of God and that our purpose in living is to be a reminder of God. A Jew must be sensitive to the pain of all human beings. A Jew cannot remain indifferent to human suffering, whether in other countries or in our own cities and towns. The mission of the Jewish people has never been to make the world more Jewish, but to make it more human.*

-Elie Wiesel

As Wiesel wrote, we cannot remain indifferent to suffering and our mission is to make the world more human. **Buying Fair Trade is one such way to fulfill this mission.** It seeks an equitable and just commercial, cooperative partnership between marketers in developed countries and producers of both raw and finished goods in the developing world. It strives to assist in poverty reduction, to aid local community development, and to create sustainable agricultural and commercial processes.

**But Fair Trade is an incomplete solution.** Beyond unscrupulous businesses capitalizing on the demand for these products while failing to live up to Fair Trade promises, Fair Trade does nothing to address global production and distribution. Never does Fair Trade challenge the underlying structure of the global economy. These are the real roots of poverty, underdevelopment and slavery.

It is not clear what we accomplish when we purchase Fair Trade. While our actions state that we care about the ethical origins of our consumer products, we may be fulfilling a personal obligation to live more ethically conscious lives without really making an impact on the lives of producers. Fair Trade is not *the* solution. **It is a statement that we care just as we acknowledge the limits of our influence.**

### From the Tradition:

Even as we acknowledge the limits of Fair Trade, as Jews we accept that we are responsible for knowing where the goods we purchase and consume come from. Those origins must be consistent with the demand that they be ethically produced, and this includes the fair treatment of the worker.

*According to our Sages, "The first question a person will be asked by the heavenly court after he or she dies will be: "Did you deal honestly in business?"*

-Babylonian Talmud, *Shabbat 31a*

### HEBREW

*“A stolen lulav or a dried out lulav is invalid (to use to fulfill the mitzvah). [If it comes from an] asheirah (a tree used for idolatry) or from a city condemned for idolatry, it is invalid. If its tip is cut or if it is split, it is invalid. If its leaves are spread, it is kosher.”*

Mishnah Sukkah 3:1

To deny a person his wage is akin to stealing, taking something for nothing. According to the Rabbis, a stolen *lulav* is comparable to the *lulav* that was connected to idolatry.

**Idolatry is the denial of God.**

For Reflection:

- What is Wiesel’s definition of justice?
- Why does the Mishnah compare a stolen *lulav* to one used for idolatry?
- What is our relationship to God and responsibility when we benefit from unethically obtained good?

Take Action!

Give *tzedakah* to these organizations committed to a 21<sup>st</sup> century Exodus of the 21 million enslaved:

**Truah** ([truah.org](http://truah.org))

**Atzum** ([atzum.org](http://atzum.org))

**Free the Slaves** ([freetheslaves.net](http://freetheslaves.net))

**Polaris Project** ([polarisproject.org](http://polarisproject.org))

**Part X: Conclusion**

HEBREW

*Rabbi Tarfon used to say, “You are not required to finish the job; neither are you free to desist from it.”*

*-Pirke Avot 2:21*

**It is time to roll up our sleeves and get to work:**

*“The problem of modern trafficking may be entrenched, and it may seem like there is no end in sight. But if we act on the laws that have been passed and the commitments that have been made, it is solvable.”*

*-U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, June 28, 2011*

Change is not simple and in our finite capacities we are hard-pressed to solve the problems of global slavery and human trafficking. But based on these principles, Jews we have a responsibility to make every effort:

- Every human was created in the image of God
- We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt



- We have a responsibility to the Other
- We are obligated to redeem captives
- We have a duty to honor the free will of the worker
- We are commanded to treat the worker fairly
- We are prohibited from benefitting from unethically obtained goods

**What are some next steps?**

- Visit the Chocolate Moses website ([www.chocolatemoses.org](http://www.chocolatemoses.org)). The site contains more complete information regarding each of the subjects discussed tonight, materials to host your own Chocolate Moses Salon and materials to augment your Passover Seder, as well as links for further learning.
- Review the "Take Action!" steps in this guide and put them into practice.

*"He who saves just one life in Israel is one who has saved an entire world."*

-Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin 37a*