

fighting modern-day slavery

a handbook for jewish communities

t'ruah: the rabbinic call for human rights

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January, 2014

As rabbis who are also human rights activists, we work each day to fulfill the responsibility created by the Jewish experience of redemption from slavery: that no human being, anywhere, should be denied their basic dignity. Today, more than 21 million people face the horrific exploitation of human trafficking, a problem made worse by increasing global poverty. But where there is darkness there is also light: grassroots solutions to prevent forced labor and communities of support for survivors.

At T'ruah, we are often asked what one Jewish community can do to end modern-day slavery. This handbook contains the many steps that individuals, congregations, and schools can take: study Jewish texts about slavery (both ancient and modern), understand the facts about modern-day slavery, engage with survivors to support their ongoing needs, and work in coalition with the grassroots organizations ending the root causes of human trafficking.

We hope that Jewish communities across North America will find this guide useful as they work to end the exploitation of our fellow human beings and restore human dignity to those who have suffered from modern-day slavery. For more information, for guidance in building an anti-trafficking campaign, or to receive additional copies or a PDF of this handbook, please contact office@truah.org or 212-845-5201.

**And you shall explain
to your child on that
day, "It is because
of what God did for
me when I went free
from Egypt."**

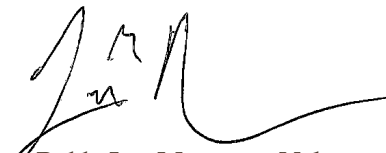
- EXODUS 13:8



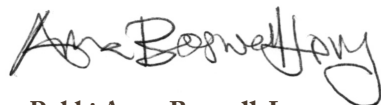
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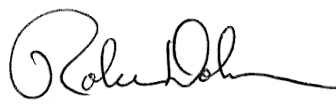
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**JEWISH WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION**
of new york

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Of course, at the end of the day, any errors in this publication remain our responsibility alone.

introduction

To be a Jew is to know both slavery and liberation. The remembered journey to freedom from slavery forms the foundation of Jewish empathy for the most vulnerable. The Torah commands us thirty-six times to protect the stranger in our midst—more often, according to the Talmud’s count, than the Torah teaches the laws of the Sabbath or of keeping kosher¹. The rabbis of the Talmud² emphasize that redeeming captives is one of the greatest of *mitzvot*; Maimonides³ calls it the greatest of them all, taking precedence over *tzedakah*.

The story of slavery and liberation also forms the core of the American narrative. Some of our families experienced slavery directly, either as slaves or as owners. All of us can feel both embarrassed by this history and proud that slavery and forced labor have been illegal for 150 years, even if its implications continue to affect us.

And yet, 3000 years after the Jewish people are said to have been liberated from slavery, and 150 years after the Civil War, more people are enslaved today than at any other point in history. According to the most conservative estimates of the International Labor Organization, nearly 21 million people are held in situations of forced labor today. That’s three out of every 1,000 people in the world.⁴

When we think about modern slavery, we often think only about forced labor in Africa, children trafficked for sex in Asia, or women from Eastern Europe trafficked across borders. But slavery exists in the United States as well, in almost every major city, and in almost every industry.

Each year, tens of thousands of foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States. Many American citizens,

including children and teenagers, also risk being trafficked domestically. Slaves work in hotels, in nursing homes, in factories, in agriculture, in the sex industry, and in personal homes.

When we think about slaves, we might imagine a person locked in a room or chained to a wall. But most slaves today

are held by invisible chains—physical or emotional abuse, sexual assault, threats of extreme violence to themselves or to their families, fraudulent contracts, and real or manufactured debt.

As members of the Jewish community, we share a powerful story that compels us to take action to wipe out slavery. We stand

for educating ourselves and others about slavery, advocating for effective anti-trafficking legislation, supporting survivors to overcome their trauma and build new lives, clearing our supply chains so we do not reap the benefits of distant slavery, and ending the root causes of modern-day slavery in poverty and worker exploitation. This toolkit contains background information to educate your community, suggestions for taking action, Jewish study resources, and links to organizations working to end modern slavery. We hope it is a springboard for powerful learning and productive action.

This year we are slaves; next year, may we be free

- PASSOVER HAGGADAH

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

- UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ARTICLE 4

“Hillel would say: If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?”

- PIRKEI AVOT 1:14

1 Baba Metzia 59b
2 Baba Batra 8a
3 Laws of Gifts to the Poor 8:10
4 http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/press-and-media-centre/news/WCMS_181961/lang--en/index.htm

**background on human
trafficking**

Definitions: Human Trafficking and Slavery

The United Nations⁵ defines human trafficking in two long sentences that hinge on the word “exploitation.” The definition has three parts:

⇒ **The Act** (What is done)

“Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons...”

⇒ **The Means** (How it is done)

“Threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim...”

⇒ **The Purpose** (Why it is done)

“For the purpose of exploitation, which includes exploiting the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices and the removal of organs.”⁶

Slavery, according to a definition adopted by the International Labor Organization (a UN body) in 1930, refers to: “...all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.”⁷

“Forced labor” is the ILO’s preferred shorthand term, as it is an umbrella term that covers many kinds of abuses, including the outright sale of human beings, trafficking across borders, and various forms of indentured servitude.

The American government, in the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), defined human trafficking as follows:

- a) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- b) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

Most American non-profits working on the issue of modern-day slavery use this definition to separate various abusive situations from those that rise to the level of modern-day slavery.

In general, “human trafficking” includes a wider range of abuses than “slavery.” The word “trafficking,” however, can give the incorrect impression that trafficking requires movement. In fact, a person can be trafficked in his or her home town. Many

Bait and Switch

Ravi was among hundreds of workers lured to the United States from India by an oil rig construction company operating in the Gulf Coast. Lacking skilled welders and pipefitters to help rebuild after Hurricane Katrina struck the area in 2005, the company brought Ravi and others from India on H-2B visas, promising them permanent visas and residency. But, the promises were false. Instead, Ravi was forced to live with 23 other men in a small room with no privacy and two toilets. The camp was lined with barbed wire and security guards, so no one on the outside knew Ravi’s whereabouts. The company charged so much for food and a bunk bed that Ravi was unable to send any money home or repay the money he borrowed for his travel expenses to the United States. When the workers began organizing to protest their working conditions, the company began arbitrary firings and private deportations of the protest leaders. Those who remained filed a class action lawsuit and applied for TVPA immigration services.⁸

8 2011 TIP [Trafficking In Persons] Report [published annually by the State Department—see Additional Resources]

⁵ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Article 3, paragraph (a).

⁶ UN Office on Drugs and Crime, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html>

⁷ Convention (No. 29) Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, Article 2.1, http://www.brea.org/index.php?doc_id=430

people also incorrectly assume that “trafficking” refers only to sex trafficking. In fact, people are trafficked for agriculture, manufacturing, domestic labor, and other types of work. The United States Department of State, which uses the term “human trafficking,” has stressed that this is a crime of exploitation and not of movement.

The term “slavery” can be less confusing and strikes a more emotional register. However, many incorrectly assume that “slavery” refers only to a situation that involves property-like ownership. In fact, contemporary enslavers do not always hold

property rights over their slaves, but control through other means such as emotional or physical abuse, real or constructed debt, or the denial of access to visas and passports.

Most anti-trafficking advocates, as well as the federal government, use the terms “modern-day slavery,” “forced labor,” and “human trafficking” interchangeably. This handbook will follow this common practice.

“These men are people”

For over 20 years, the owners and staff of a turkey-processing plant subjected 32 men with intellectual disabilities to severe verbal and physical abuse. The company housed the workers in a “bunkhouse” with inadequate heating, dirty mattresses, and a roof in such disrepair that buckets were put out to catch rainwater; the infestation of insects was so serious the men swatted cockroaches away as they ate. Although the men were as productive as other workers, the company paid them only \$15 a week (41 cents an hour) for labor that legally should have been compensated at \$11-12 an hour. The employers hit, kicked, and generally subjected the men to abuse, forcing some of the men to carry heavy weights as punishment and in at least one case handcuffed a man to a bed. Supervisors dismissed complaints of injuries or pain, denied the men recreation, cellphones, and health care. The U.S. government filed an abuse and discrimination case against the company for damages under the Americans with Disabilities Act. During the trial, the attorney representing the men said: “The evidence is these men were treated like property... these men are people. They are individuals.” A jury awarded the men a total of approximately \$3,000,000, the largest jury verdict in the history of U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.⁹

9 2013 TIP Report



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry releases the 2013 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report and honors the 2013 TIP Report Heroes, men and women whose personal efforts have made an extraordinary difference in the global fight against modern slavery, at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., on June 19, 2013. [State Department photo/ Public Domain]

Why does slavery still exist in the 21st century?

Some of the causes of slavery include:

- ⇒ **Global poverty.** The population explosion and the movement of people from rural to urban areas leave families open to exploitation out of desperation.
- ⇒ **Migration.** More people than ever are leaving their countries of origin to find work. When they cross borders, whether legally or illegally, they are at the risk of being trafficked by recruiters who charge them huge fees, promise them jobs that don't exist, or control their movement by holding onto their documentation.
- ⇒ **Violence and turmoil** that lead to the enslavement of abandoned or orphaned children.
- ⇒ **Corporate interests** that demand lower priced goods—and governments willing to look the other way while citizens are enslaved to produce goods at those prices.
- ⇒ **Visa policies** that allow for exploitation. For example, some categories of U.S. visas for foreign workers tie the worker to a single employer. This gives the employer the upper hand; if the worker complains about conditions, the employer can cancel the visa and have him/her deported.
- ⇒ **The low status of women** in many parts of the world contributes to the existence of sex trafficking.



Foreign Office Minister Hugo Swire speaking at the Wilton Park conference on “Combating human trafficking: business and human rights” in London, 10 October 2013. Photo by British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/deed.en>

Slavery in the Supply Chain

Force, fraud, and coercion

Maira was 15 when two well-dressed men driving a nice car approached her and two friends in a small Honduran village. They told the girls they were businessmen and offered to take them to the United States to work in a textile factory. Maira thought it was the perfect opportunity to help her single mother, who struggled to support seven children.

But upon arriving in Houston, the girls were held captive, beaten, raped, and forced to work in cantinas that doubled as brothels. Men would come to the cantina and choose a beer and a girl, sometimes as young as 12. They would pay for the beer and sit with the girl while she drank it. If they wanted to have sex with the girl, they would take her to the back and pay cash for a mattress, paper towels, and spermicide. The captors beat the girls daily if they did not make enough money.

After six years, Maira was able to escape the cantina and return to her mother with the help of a kind American family. Her two friends remain missing.¹⁰

10 2011 TIP Report



The ceremonial signing of Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to implement the operations manual of Zamboanga City Sea-Based Anti-Trafficking Task Force (SBATTF) to reduce human trafficking. U.S. Marine Corps photo by LCpl Demetrius Munnerlyn. License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/deed.en>

None of us want to think of ourselves as slaveholders. We hope that no one in our immediate community is directly enslaving another person or exploiting their household workers. But we all benefit from modern-day slavery. Products that we use every day, including coffee, sugar, fruits and vegetables, clothes, chocolate, cars, and electronics, may all have been produced in part by slaves. Because of the complex nature of modern corporate supply chain, it is difficult to verify that a product is slavery-free.

One groundbreaking piece of legislation, passed in California in January 2012, takes the first step toward changing this by requiring that “manufacturers and retailers doing business in California disclose on their corporate websites their efforts to eliminate slavery and human trafficking from their direct supply chains. The requirements apply to companies that conduct business in California and have global gross receipts exceeding \$100 million. It is expected to affect more than 3,000 companies worldwide.”¹¹ The law does not obligate companies to eliminate slavery and trafficking, but simply to report on their policies. Since few companies wish to publicize that they do *nothing*, anti-slavery advocates hope that the law will prompt companies to adopt better policies. Efforts to institute similar laws in other states or federally have also begun.

As consumers, however, we need more than just a “slavery-free” label. We need corporations to open their supply chains to independent monitors who confidentially interview workers on a regular basis and market consequences for companies that ignore exploitation by subcontractors.

Because of the ubiquity of slavery in the global supply chain, as consumers, we can’t easily avoid all products produced by forced labor. This is understandably frustrating. We can, however, begin by purchasing Fair Trade versions of the products whose supply chains have often included slavery and for which there is a certified alternative. These include chocolate, coffee, and tomatoes.

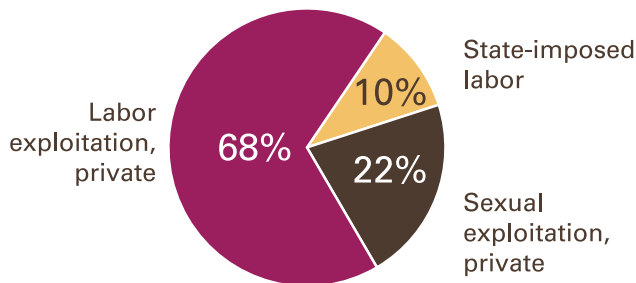
11 http://www.iccr.org/news/press_releases/2011/pr_SB657_111711.php

Slavery by the Numbers

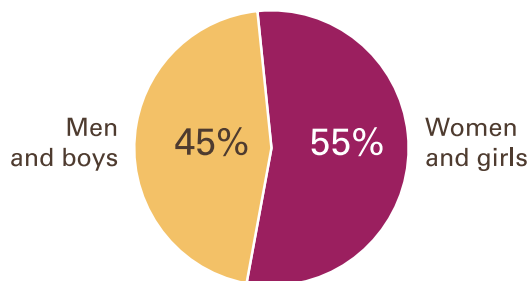
It is hard to get an accurate count of how many people are held in modern-day slavery, because it is generally an invisible crime. Slaves are hidden in private homes, in agricultural fields, in restaurants, in brothels, and in factories.

In June 2012, the International Labor Organization estimated that 20.9 million people are enslaved around the world. That's three out of every 1,000 people alive. The following charts show how the numbers break down¹⁴:

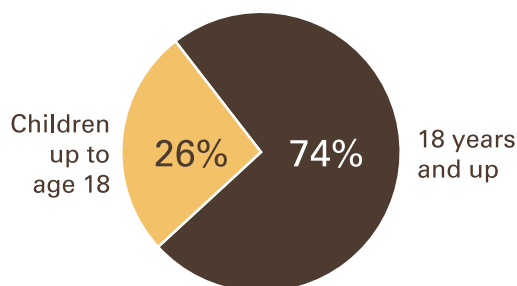
Sectors of Human Trafficking



Human Trafficking by Gender



Human Trafficking by Age



Trapped in Slavery Instead of Finding a Better Life

Maria Elena was 13 years old when a family acquaintance told her she could make ten times as much money waiting tables in the United States than she could in her small village. She and several other girls were driven across the border, and then continued the rest of the way on foot. They traveled four days and nights through the desert, making their way into Texas, then crossing east toward Florida. Finally, Maria Elena and the other girls arrived at their destination, a rundown trailer where they were forced into prostitution. Maria Elena was gang-raped and locked in the trailer until she agreed to do what she was told. She lived under 24-hour watch and was forced to have sex with up to 30 men a day. When she got pregnant, she was forced to have an abortion and sent back to work the next day. Maria Elena finally made her escape only to be arrested along with her traffickers.¹²

12 2012 TIP Report

“There has never been a single day in our America, from its discovery and birth right up to the moment you are reading this sentence, without slavery.”¹³

13 Bales, Kevin and Soodalter, Ron. *The Slave Next Door*. University of California Press: Berkeley, Los Angeles. 2009. p. 7

14 Figures from http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_182109/lang--en/index.htm

In the United States

One of the anti-trafficking community's great challenges is that no solid data exist about the number of people trafficked in the United States. We know that victims—both foreign nationals and U.S. citizens—have been identified in cities, suburbs, and rural areas in all 50 states as well as in Washington, DC. Here are four attempts at estimating the number of slaves in the country today:

1. The 2006 State Department Trafficking in Persons report estimated that between 14,500 and 17,500 people are trafficked into the US from overseas every year.
2. Kevin Bales and Ron Soodalter, in *The Slave Next Door*, estimate that, at any given time, a total of 50,000 people live and work under slavery conditions in the US¹⁵.
3. In a study of immigrants conducted in San Diego County and published in November 2012, sociologist Sheldon Zhang found that “more than 30% of our target population are victims of labor trafficking, and 55% are victims of abusive labor practices or gross exploitations.”¹⁶ While San Diego's proximity to the Mexican border means Zhang is likely seeing a specific subset of the immigrant population, this study serves as a reminder that human trafficking is happening in much more than just a few isolated cases.
4. Federal efforts against trafficking in 2012, the last year for which statistics are available¹⁷:
 - ⇒ 1,599 cases of suspected trafficking investigated
 - ⇒ 201 prosecutions initiated
 - ⇒ 138 convictions secured.

¹⁵ Bales and Soodalter, p. 7.

¹⁶ Zhang, S. X. (2012). Trafficking of Migrant Laborers in San Diego County: Looking for a Hidden Population. San Diego, CA: San Diego State University. p. 15. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/240223.pdf>

¹⁷ From 2013 TIP report; Aggregated numbers include Department of Justice, FBI, DSS, and Department of Defense.

Thank God for Safe Harbor Laws

Mauri was only 16 years old when she was prostituted on the streets of Honolulu, Hawaii. For her, there was no escape; her pimp threatened to kill her family if she did not go out on the street night after night to make him money. If Mauri tried to use some of the money to buy food, she was severely beaten. Mauri finally escaped when she was picked up by law enforcement. She is now in a rehabilitation program and has reunited with her parents, but her road to recovery has been long and difficult. She suffers from terrible flashbacks and severe depression, and has even attempted suicide. Mauri says she was lucky to get out alive: “The longer you stay the less hope you have.”¹⁸

18 2013 TIP Report

Why so few prosecutions and convictions?

- ⇒ Slavery is a difficult crime to discover.
- ⇒ Witnesses don't come forward or are afraid to testify.
- ⇒ The government places a low priority on trafficking and allots little money to discovering and prosecuting cases.
- ⇒ Victims of sex trafficking may themselves be prosecuted under anti-prostitution laws. (As of 2013, 14 states had passed “safe harbor” laws that allow people under age 18 who are arrested for commercial sex to be treated as victims rather than criminals.¹⁹)

19 2013 TIP Report, US Country Narrative. <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2013/215645.htm>

Sex Trafficking and Human Trafficking: Related Aspects of the Same Problem

Most people who hear the words “human trafficking” think first of sex trafficking, also known as forced prostitution. This type of trafficking is a source of some controversy due in part to a split between two groups of activists: those who classify all commercial sex as trafficking (this group is often known as “abolitionists”); and those who allow for the possibility that some commercial sex may not fall into the category of slavery.

Bales and Soodalter²⁰, summarize the debate as follows (footnotes in original):

On one side of this argument, representing the anti-prostitution perspective, are individuals and groups who believe that, except for the “teeny percentage of women who may have entered into it voluntarily”²¹, “all prostitution is a form of slavery... Proponents of this view are often referred to as “abolitionists,” because their ultimate aim is the “complete eradication of all forms of sexual exploitation”²².” ...

On the other side of the battle line, a “cluster of diverse individuals and groups—human rights, public health, labor, and migration—are categorized as the ‘human trafficking sphere.’²³” This group believes in a broad definition that does not differentiate between types of servitude but includes all forms of sexual slavery within the overall category of human trafficking... Despite the assertions of anti-prostitution groups, **not every member of this group believes in the legalization of prostitution, but that, they argue, is beside the point...**

T’ruah does not take a position on the question of whether a person might voluntarily sell his or her body for sex. Our religious ideals lead us to envision a world in which sexual relations are sacred, and in which nobody enters commercial sex out of economic need. On the other hand, we acknowledge that in today’s world there may be people for whom commercial sex might be best of their limited options. We also have concerns about the way federal funding has flowed towards anti-prostitution efforts, rather than toward programs that might stop human trafficking more broadly.

It happens to Americans too

Alissa, 16, met an older man at a convenience store in Dallas. After a few dates, she accepted his invitation to move in with him. But soon Alissa’s new boyfriend convinced her to be an escort for him, accompanying men on dates and having sex with them for money. He took her to an area known for street prostitution and forced her to hand over all of her earnings. He made Alissa get a tattoo of his nicknames, thereby branding her as his property, posted prostitution advertisements with her picture on an Internet site, and forced Alissa to have sex with men who responded. The man, who kept an assault rifle in the closet of his apartment, threatened Alissa and physically assaulted her on multiple occasions. The man later pled guilty to trafficking Alissa.²⁴

24 2011 TIP Report

²⁰ Pages 108-111

²¹ Interview with Norma Ramos, co-founder and co-executive director of CATW, Oct 2007.

²² *ibid.*

²³ Stolz, Barbara Ann. “Interpreting the U.S. Human Trafficking Debate Through the Lens of Symbolic Politics.” *Law & Policy* Volume 29, Issue 3, pages 311–338, July 2007.

An Anti-Trafficking Success Story: The Coalition of Immokalee Workers

The Navarette story (see sidebar), unfortunately, was unusual only in its severity. For years, the Florida agricultural sector was known as “ground zero” for modern slavery in the United States. Since 1998, the Department of Justice has successfully prosecuted cases that have freed 1,200 tomato workers from slavery. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.²⁵

But real change is happening for thousands of workers in Florida, thanks to the groundbreaking efforts of a group of tomato workers to organize and demand that their human rights be respected.

The Coalition of Immokalee Workers formed in 1993 to challenge conditions in the fields such as violence against workers, sub-poverty level wages, sexual harassment, wage



theft, slavery, sexual assault, and other abuses. Agricultural workers, like domestic workers, are at great risk for trafficking because they are

excluded from federal labor laws that protect other workers, such as minimum wage. Some of the CIW's early work included uncovering the cases of slavery later prosecuted by the Department of Justice. These cases were instrumental in updating American anti-slavery laws, which had not been adapted since the end of the Civil War, and led to the passage of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 2000.

After years of trying to persuade major growers to change their practices and pay higher wages, the CIW decided instead to ask giant retailers to demand that their tomatoes be produced under fair conditions and to pass a premium for tomatoes directly to workers.

The First Campaign

The workers chose Taco Bell as the first target, as a known purchaser of Florida tomatoes and part of Yum! Brands, the largest fast food corporation in the world. In 2001, the CIW began a nationwide boycott of Taco Bell. College students

²⁵ This profile is drawn mainly from <http://ciw-online.org/slavery/>

Locked in a Truck

A dozen or more farmworkers were sleeping in the back of a truck in Florida. They were locked in every night, without even any bathroom facilities, by their employers, Cesar and Geovanni Navarrete. These weren't the conditions they had bargained for, but they had no choice; the Navarettes were fierce enforcers. Then, one night, their luck changed. One of the workers saw light coming through a weak spot in the roof of the truck. He managed to pry the roof open and escape. Rather than running off to safety, he came back with a ladder and helped his companions escape. They sought help from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, who collaborated with the police and Department of Justice in a year-long investigation. In December 2008, the Navarette brothers were sentenced to 12 years each in federal prison on charges of conspiracy, holding workers in involuntary servitude, and peonage. They had employed dozens of tomato pickers in Florida and South Carolina. As stated in the Department of Justice press release on their sentencing, “[the employers] pleaded guilty to beating, threatening, restraining, and locking workers in trucks to force them to work as agricultural laborers... [They] were accused of paying the workers minimal wages and driving the workers into debt, while simultaneously threatening physical harm if the workers left their employment before their debts had been repaid to the Navarrete family.”²⁶

²⁶ This profile is drawn mainly from <http://ciw-online.org/about/nline.org/slavery.html>

demanded that Taco Bell not be included in their food courts until they signed a Fair Food Agreement. Tomato pickers, clergy, and others joined in protests against Taco Bell. Over 300 colleges and 50 high schools became involved, and 25 successfully “booted the Bell” from campus.

After four years, the workers won their first victory. Taco Bell signed a Fair Food Agreement to purchase only from growers that instituted worker protections, including zero tolerance for slavery, zero tolerance for sexual harassment, safety protections, and an increase of a penny more per pound for tomatoes that was passed from the retailer through the supply chain to the workers.

Between 2005 and 2014, eleven other companies, including Walmart and most of the fast food giants, signed onto this Fair Food Program. (You can find the current list on the CIW's website: www.ciw-online.org)

The #TomatoRabbis

In 2011, T'ruah brought our first group of "#tomatorabbis" to Immokalee, Florida to meet CIW members, visit the tomato fields, and learn how to engage our own communities in the fight for justice for farmworkers.

The #tomatorabbis have engaged their own synagogue and school communities in demanding fair food tomatoes. Hebrew school and day school students have delivered letters and pictures to managers of local grocery stores, and congregants have taken part in rallies and delegations to grocery stores, fast food restaurants, and corporate headquarters.

The first #tomatorabbis delegation learned that the grocery chain Trader Joe's had not yet signed onto the Fair Food Program. Knowing how popular Trader Joe's is in Jewish communities, we decided to take action. Rabbis traveled to Orange County, CA to visit the Trader Joe's headquarters to deliver a letter signed by more than 100 Jewish clergy. Hebrew school students wrote letters and delivered them to local Trader Joe's. Congregants and their rabbis attended protests and made phone calls. In February 2012, the CIW and its allies planned a weekend of protests at Trader Joe's across the country; rabbis were to speak at many of these. The night before the protests were to start, Trader Joe's signed onto the Fair Food Program.

Since then, T'ruah's #tomatorabbis joined with the CIW and other allies to persuade Chipotle to sign onto the agreement. We now encourage the grocery industry, along with the remaining fast food and restaurant chains, to sign on.

A New Day Dawning

Today, a new day has dawned in the Florida tomato industry. In 2010, the CIW persuaded 90% of Florida's tomato growers to join the Fair Food Program. As a result, tens of thousands of workers now have protections from forced labor, sexual harassment and assault, unsafe exposure to pesticides, and wage theft. An independent auditing body

provides training for workers and growers, interviews thousands of workers in the field, and offers a confidential hotline for workers to report any improper behavior. No other anti-slavery certification today is as extensive as the Fair Food Program or involves the affected workers so centrally. **The Fair Food Program is preventing slavery across an entire sector. Since 2011, no cases of human trafficking have been found on farms participating in the FFP, even with greater ability of workers to safely report abuses. That is tremendous progress.**

This success does not obviate the need for retailers to sign onto the program. Without a market for Fair Food tomatoes, some growers may drop out of the program. Furthermore, participating retailers also pay a penny more per pound for tomatoes. For an

average worker, that can be the difference between \$10,000 and \$17,000 annual salary.

In April, 2013, the White House Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships applauded the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and its collaboration with T'ruah, calling the Fair Food Program "one of the most successful and innovative programs" to eradicate slavery in supply chains.

For updates on the Fair Food Program, and sample letters to bring to your grocery store, visit www.truah.org/slavery.



**jewish and
educational resources**

The Jewish Imperative to Fight Modern Slavery

Seven Categories of Jewish Thought to guide teaching, preaching, and action (specific text studies follow):

1. **The Jewish experience of slavery.** Every year at Passover, we say: “We were slaves to Pharaoh, now we are free.” This legacy informs our moral imperative to fight modern slavery and uphold the right of every individual to be free.
2. **Protecting the most vulnerable members of our society.** The Torah commands us thirty-six times to love and protect the stranger. Our obligation to protect the exploited compels us to support survivors of slavery and fight its root causes.
3. **Fair treatment of workers.** Judaism requires employers to pay workers fairly and on time, and protects workers against dangerous working conditions. Jewish law also prohibits charging high rates of interest on debt. Modern slaves often find themselves caught in endless cycles of debt to their owners or traffickers, receive little or no pay for their hard work, and struggle to support their families. They face violence and sexual assault. Slavery is the extreme end of the continuum of workplace abuse and exploitation.
4. **Creation in the image of God.** The belief that every person is an equal reflection in the divine image means that one person should never be a slave to another.
5. **Prohibition against buying goods produced unethically.** The rabbis forbid buying goods that are known to be stolen, and judge the buyers as harshly as the sellers. Today, we have an obligation to avoid products whose supply chains include documented human rights abuses, and to support independent monitoring of worker conditions.
6. **Redemption of captives.** The rabbis declared the redemption of captives to be a mitzvah of the highest order. Knowing that there are millions of people today who are enslaved, we cannot remain silent.
7. **Tzedakah/Gemilut chasadim.** People who survive trafficking face significant challenges, both logistical and emotional. It’s not enough just to free slaves and to convict traffickers; we also are obligated to care for survivors, and to help them access social services and to cope with their trauma.

“In every generation a person must see him/herself as if s/he had come out of Egypt.”

—PASSOVER HAGGADAH

But doesn't the Torah allow slavery?

Yes. The Torah recognizes the existence of slaves, and legislates some aspect of their treatment. We even hear about a few individual slaves, including Eliezer (Abraham's servant), and the handmaidens Bilhah and Zilpah, who give birth to several of Jacob's sons.

In fact, some slaveholders in the American South—and even some rabbis of the time—referred to biblical laws of slavery as justification for the practice.

For those of us committed both to Torah and to ending slavery, this can be a little hard to take.

There are a few ways to make sense of biblical slavery.

First, we need to distinguish between the Torah's two categories of slaves: the *Eved K'naani* (non-Jewish slave) and the *Eved Ivri* (Jewish slave). The former refers to slaves who remain so for a lifetime; the latter refers to indentured servants trying to pay off a debt or raise money for their families. The *Eved Ivri* works for a set period of time, and then goes free. With today's ethical sensibilities, it is easy to argue that we must extend the protections mandated for Jews to include all of humanity²⁷. (For another look at the differences, see the text from Rambam's Laws of Slaves, sidebar.)

We could simply respond that slavery was a cultural norm in the Bible's time period, but times have changed. Perhaps the Torah, with its mandated release of Jewish slaves, and protections for all slaves (for example, by granting a day off on Shabbat) even improves upon the usual conditions of slaves.

²⁷ See Jacobs, Jill. *There Shall Be No Nedy*. Jewish Lights Publishing, 2009. p. 13-14.

²⁸ *Leviticus*, vol III, pp. 221617. Excerpts from his book explaining the argument in more detail are available at <http://www.truah.org/documents/Slavery-in-Leviticus-25.pdf>.

²⁹ Milgrom reaches this conclusion by isolating the attitude towards slavery encapsulated in the different strands or historical layers of the Torah's text. Based on his analysis, he concludes that the H author (Holiness code, which Milgrom identifies as the source of Leviticus 25) "provides a clear advance over the slave laws of Exod 21 (JE) and Deut 15 (D)." (idem, comment on Lev. 25:40) In other words, while the authors of Exodus 21 and Deuteronomy 15 may have believed in slavery, the author(s) of Leviticus 25 did not and were trying to eliminate it.

"For They Are My Servants"

Professor Jacob Milgrom, in his commentary on Leviticus, goes even further. He suggests that the Torah actually tries to make enslaving others difficult, if not impossible. He writes, "For Israelites, both kinds of slavery, chattel and debt, are prohibited: chattel-slavery is abolished, and debt-slavery is transformed into work for hire."²⁸ In other words, no Jew may own another person, and strict constraints limit how long a person may be held as an indentured servant before the debt is paid off.²⁹ This is especially relevant today, when debt-bondage continues to be a major form of slavery.

Maimonides Laws of Slaves 9:8

It is permitted to work a non-Jewish slave harshly, but even though this is the law, it is the way of lovingkindness and wisdom to be merciful and pursue justice by not making a slave carry a heavy yoke, nor cause them distress, and one should give [a slave] all foods and beverages. The early sages would give their slaves from each and every dish they would eat, and would feed their animals and slaves before themselves. For it says in Psalm 123:2, "As the eyes of slaves follow their master's hand, as the eyes of a slave-girl follow the hand of her mistress..."—thus they shall not be debased by either deed or word; the text has given them over to slavery, but not to humiliation.

A person should not speak [to a slave] with much shouting and anger—rather, he should speak to him pleasantly and should listen to his complaints, as is evident from Job's good ways for which he was praised: "Did I ever brush aside the case of my servants, man or maid, when they made a complaint against me?...Did not the One who made me in my mother's belly make him? Did not One form us both in the womb?" (Job 31:13,15)

Cruelty and arrogance are only found among non-Jewish idolaters, but the descendants of our father Abraham—Israel, to whom God gave the good influence of the Torah and commanded them laws and statutes—are righteous and merciful to all. So too are the attributes of the Holy Blessed One, who commanded us to imitate them—as Psalm 145:9 says, "His mercy is upon all His works." And anybody who is merciful to another, others will be merciful to him, as Deuteronomy 13:18 says, "[God] will show you compassion, and in His compassion increase you..."

What do you think of the contrast between the letter of the law and the way Maimonides wants Jews to implement it? Why might this be better or worse than simply outlawing slavery altogether?

Milgrom's analysis centers on Leviticus 25:42, where God says, "For they are My servants, whom I freed from the land of Egypt; they may not give themselves over into servitude." The Talmud³⁰ uses this as evidence to say that workers always have the right to quit—i.e., they cannot be forced to work beyond the span they wish to.

A Null Category

It is also relevant to note that later rabbis eliminated the category of the *Eved Ivri*. Rabbi Shimon ben Tzemach Duran, the 14th-15th century Spanish and North African authority known as the Tashbetz, ruled that this legal category ceased to exist after the exile of the ten northern tribes of Israel:

Today, when the Jubilee is not in effect, in the case of one who loses all of his possessions, the Torah does not give this person permission to sell him or herself such that he would be like a Hebrew slave—that is, that his body should be acquired by another. Rather, this person should hire himself out as a worker, and if this person has hired himself out—even though he is called "servant," he has not been acquired at all, and may quit even in the middle of the agreed-upon time, as it says "For the children of Israel are my servants"—and not servants to servants. If a person borrowed money, he carries this debt, but his body has not been acquired at all by the lender. Rather, he should pay back the loan when he is able, or he may pay it back with labor—taking out of his earnings enough to pay for his own food, but not enough for food for his household. (Tashbetz 2:27)

We should remember too that Jews have always read the Torah through a rabbinic interpretive lens and not simply on the plain meaning of its words.

Non-Jews Too

Regarding non-Jewish slaves, Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch, the 19th century German scholar often identified as the father of Modern Orthodoxy, offers the following comment on the case in Deuteronomy 23:16-17 of a non-Jewish slave who flees his master:

The Israelite authorities are obligated to extend to such a slave their patronage and concern, and according to Maimonides' system (Laws of Slaves 8:10), which is affirmed in the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh De'ah 167:85), they must bring about the freeing of the slave, and

towards this purpose they must offer the owner these options: either he writes the slave a bill of manumission and accepts in return an IOU for the slave's monetary worth, or if he refuses the court will annul the enslavement and the slave will go free.

A Life with Few Options

Samantha was born in Feira de Santana, Brazil, and grew up in poverty and with little education. At 15, she ran away from home to live on the streets after being sexually and physically abused by her father. A woman she met offered Samantha a job as a maid in another city in the state. Samantha accepted, excited by the opportunity to both earn money and move further away from home. But the destination house turned out to be a brothel, and Samantha was forced into prostitution and drug abuse. She was stripped of freedom and overcome by fear and sadness. After cycling through various assistance programs, government agencies, and shelters, Samantha went back to Feira de Santana, where she lives with a partner and his brother and sister. Her partner beats her and she still occasionally has sex with men for money.³¹

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In other words, the slaveholder loses ownership of the slave either way; the choice he has is whether to comply with the court's order, in which case he is compensated for the money he invested in the slave to begin with, or to resist, in which case he loses everything. Either way, Hirsch makes clear that owning slaves—even non-Jewish ones—is not acceptable.

Don't Be A Degenerate

One last approach is to follow Nachmanides' reading of Deuteronomy 6:18, "And you shall do that which is right and good in the eyes of God." Nachmanides, the 13th century rabbi, reads this seemingly extra commandment as an injunction not to become a *naval birshut ha-Torah*—a degenerate with the permission of the Torah. That is, in addition to the specific commandments enumerated in the Torah, there is also a blanket rule—don't think there are loopholes that you can exploit to be cruel. Surely today, turning our backs on slaves because the Torah allows slavery would be an act of moral degeneracy.

30 Bava Metzia 10a

Redeeming Captives: An Effective Way to End Slavery?

In this text study, we examine classical sources that advocate for redeeming captives and that caution about the risks involved. We then apply this debate to a modern case study.

Rambam, Laws of Gifts to the Poor 8:10-11

Rambam (Maimonides)—12th century rabbi, philosopher, and physician in Spain, Morocco, and Egypt. His Mishneh Torah ("second Torah") is a major Jewish law code.

The redeeming of captives takes precedence over supporting the poor or clothing them. There is no greater mitzvah than redeeming captives, for the problems of the captive include being hungry, thirsty, unclothed, and they are in danger of their lives too. Ignoring the need to redeem captives goes against these Torah laws: "Do not harden your heart or shut your hand against your needy fellow" (Deuteronomy 15:7); "Do not stand idly by while your neighbor's blood is shed" (Leviticus 19:16); and misses out on the following mitzvot: "You must surely open your hand to him or her" (Deuteronomy 15:8); "...Love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18); "Rescue those who are drawn to death" (Proverbs 24:11); and many others like this. There is no mitzvah greater than the redeeming of captives.

If the people of a city have collected money to build a synagogue, and then an opportunity to use the money for a mitzvah occurs, they should spend the money on it. If they already bought stones and beams, they do not need to sell it for the mitzvah, unless it is redeeming captives; even if they have hewn the stones and milled the beams and they have assembled them, they should sell everything solely to redeem captives. If construction is completed, they do not need to sell the synagogue; rather, they should raise more money for redeeming the captives.

Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah 252:3

Shulchan Aruch ("Set Table")—the major law code, considered authoritative to this day, written by Joseph Karo, a 16th century Spanish-born rabbi who lived in Tzfat, Israel.

Every moment that one delays in freeing captives, in cases where it is possible to expedite their freedom, is considered to be tantamount to murder.

discussion questions

- ☛ Why, according to Rambam, is redeeming captives so important?
- ☛ Why do you think the Shulchan Aruch intensified Rambam's ruling?
- ☛ Where does Rambam draw the line for going too far when it comes to redeeming captives? What is the significance of the limit he sets?

רמב"ם הלכות מתנות עניים פ' ח

הלכה י

פדיון שבויים קודם לפרנסת עניים ולכסותן, ואין לך מצוה גדולה כפדיון שבויים שהשבוי הרי הוא בכלל הרעבים והצמאים והערומים ועומד בסכנת נפשות, והמעלים עיניו מפדיונו הרי זה עובר על לא תאמץ את לבבך ולא תקפוץ את ידך ועל לא תעמוד על דם רעך ועל לא ירדנו בפרך לעיניך, ובטל מצות פתח תפתח את ידך לו, ומצות וחי אחיך עמך, ואהבת לרעך כמוך, והצל לקוחים למות והרבה דברים כאלו, ואין לך מצוה רבה כפדיון שבויים.

הלכה יא

אנשי העיר שגבו מעות לבנין בית הכנסת ובא להן דבר מצוה מוציאין בו המעות, קנו אבנים וקורות לא ימכרום לדבר מצוה אלא לפדיון שבויים, אע"פ שהביאו את האבנים וגדרום ואת הקורות ופסלום והתקינו הכל לבנין מוכרין הכל לפדיון שבויים בלבד, אבל אם בנו וגמרו לא ימכרו את בית הכנסת אלא יגבו לפדיון מן הצבור.

שלחן ערוך יורה דעה רנ"ב: ג'

כל רגע שמאחר לפדות השבויים, היכא דאפשר להקדים, הוי כאילו שופך דמים.

Mishnah Gittin 4:6

Mishnah—the first Jewish law code and basis for all subsequent rabbinic tradition, compiled around the year 200 CE in Israel.

One who sells his slave to a non-Jew or to [a buyer living] outside the land [of Israel, the slave] goes free.

One does not redeem captives for more than the going rate, because of *tikkun olam*.

And one does not jailbreak captives, because of *tikkun olam*. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says, because of the Ruling on Captives.

One may not buy sacred books, tefillin, or a mezuzah from non-Jews for more than the going rate, because of *tikkun olam*.

Talmud Gittin 45a

Talmud—the extensive commentary on the Mishnah codified around 600 CE in Babylonia.

What is the difference [between *tikkun olam* and the Ruling on Captives]? When there is only one [captive], there is a difference.

Rashi

Rashi—extremely influential 11th century French rabbi and commentator.

“When there is only one” captive, the first [unnamed] rabbi [of the Mishnah] is concerned about *tikkun* of the entire world, lest captors become angry at future captives and put them in chains and manacles. Rabbi Shimon is only concerned about other captives who are currently there [when you jail break another out of captivity], lest the captors become angry and punish them painfully.

discussion questions

- ☛ Why do you think this mishnah prohibits overpaying for captives and ritual objects, or breaking captives out of jail? What could happen if Jews did these things?
- ☛ The Mishnah here is using the phrase *tikkun olam* in a narrower, more specific way than it is typically used today. Based on these examples, how do you understand the Mishnah’s usage?
- ☛ What do you think lines 2-4 of the mishnah have to do with line 1 (about selling one’s slave)?
- ☛ What is the tension between this mishnah and the two texts on the preceding page (Rambam and Shulchan Aruch)? What commonalities do you see between them? Which do you find more compelling?

משנה גטין ד:ו:

המוכר עבדו לגוי או לחוצה לארץ, יצא בן חורין. אין פודין את השבויין יותר על כדי דמיהן, מפני תקון העולם. ואין מבריחין את השבויין, מפני תקון העולם. רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר, מפני תקנת השבויין. ואין לוקחים ספרים תפלין ומזוזות מן הגוים יותר על כדי דמיהן, מפני תקון העולם.

תלמוד גטין מה ע"א

מאי בינייהו איכא בינייהו דליכא אלא חד.

רש"י

דליכא אלא חד שבוי ת"ק חייש לתיקון העולם כולו שמא יקצפו על השבויים העתידיים לבא ויתנום בשלשלאות ובחריצים ורבי שמעון לא חייש אלא אם כן יש שבויין אחרים עמו שמא יקצפו השבאין לייסרן ביסורין.



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U.N. Criticism Angers Charities Buying Sudan Slaves' Release

By Paul Lewis

March 12, 1999 — *The New York Times*

Private charities that are buying freedom for enslaved children and young women in Sudan, have reacted angrily to recent criticism of them from Unicef, the United Nations Children's Fund.

"It is very difficult to understand why Unicef should say our activities are intolerable," said John Eibner, head of Christian Solidarity International, of Zurich, which since 1995 has bought and set free 5,942 Sudanese children, spending about \$50 a child.

"What is intolerable is to leave these women and children in the hands of brutal captors," said Charles Jacobs of the American Anti-Slavery Group in Boston, which helps raise money to support Christian Solidarity.

At a news briefing in Geneva in early February, a Unicef spokeswoman, Marie Heuzer, described the slave redemption program as "intolerable" after Christian Solidarity raised the topic by appealing to Secretary General Kofi Annan to condemn slavery in Sudan and to create a special program to trace and free enslaved women and children.

Today, a Unicef spokesman, Peter Crowley, said the agency still has "genuine concerns" about buying freedom for children, adding that they were shared by some human-rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch.

He said that buying back slaves did not offer "a lasting solution" to the problem, which he said can only come through bringing about an end to

Sudan's on-again, off-again 30-year-old civil war pitting the Muslim north of the country against the Christian and animist south.

The children were also being returned to villages that remain in the war zone and were subject to future slave raids.

Another objection was one of principal, he said, because the buy-

back program implicitly accepts that human beings may be bought and sold. This could also encourage slave-taking for profit.

Mr. Crowley argued that buying freedom does nothing to change the underlying "social attitudes" of a people who are used to owning slaves and regard doing so as perfectly normal...



Photo by Beatrice Murch. License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en>

discussion questions

- ☛ Whose argument do you find more compelling, the slave-redeemers' or Unicef's?
- ☛ How do the rabbinic texts we have examined shed light on this modern form of redeeming captives?
- ☛ Even if we choose not to let rabbinic law dictate contemporary public policy, what can we take from the texts we have studied?

How far does our responsibility go?

In this text study, we examine two passages about the responsibilities of workers and employers, buyers and sellers. We then apply these to a parable and ask ourselves how far our responsibility goes for investigating the origins of the products we buy.

Rambam, Laws of Hired Labor 13:7

Rambam (Maimonides)—12th century rabbi, philosopher, and physician in Spain, Morocco, and Egypt. His Mishneh Torah (“second Torah”) is a major Jewish law code.

Just as the employer is cautioned not to steal the wages of a poor [worker] and not to delay [payment], so too the poor [worker] is cautioned not to steal the work [owed] the employer by wasting a little time here and a little there, spending the entire day in deceit. Rather, he must be punctilious about his time, for the Rabbis were [so] punctilious that he should not [even] say the fourth paragraph of birkat hamazon [lest he waste the employer’s time]. So too, he must work with all his strength, for Jacob the Righteous said, “I worked for your father [Laban] with all my strength” (Gen. 30:6)—therefore he received a reward even in this world, as it says, “So the man grew exceedingly prosperous.” (Gen. 30:43)

כדרך שמוזהר בעל הבית שלא
 יגזול שכר עני ולא יעכבנו כך
 העני מוזהר שלא יגזול מלאכת
 בעל הבית ויבטל מעט בכאן
 ומעט בכאן ומוציא כל היום
 במרמה אלא חייב לדקדק על
 עצמו בזמן שהרי הקפידו על
 ברכה רביעית של ברכת המזון
 שלא יברך אותה וכן חייב
 לעבוד בכל כחו שהרי יעקב
 הצדיק אמר כי בכל כחי עבדתי
 את אביכן לפיכך נטל שכר זאת
 אף בעולם הזה שנאמר ויפרץ
 האיש מאד מאד.



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discussion questions

- 🗨️ What responsibilities does Rambam assign to the worker and the employer in this text?
- 🗨️ What do you think it means for work to be stolen?
- 🗨️ If the employer’s work can be stolen, do you think the worker’s work can also be stolen?
- 🗨️ Rambam closes by referring to the story of Jacob working for his father-in-law Laban. As you may remember, Laban initially promises to give his daughter, Rachel, in marriage to Jacob in exchange for seven years of service. At the wedding, Laban switches his daughters, so that Jacob ends up marrying the elder, Leah. Jacob then works another seven years for Rachel. Though Laban’s flock increases under Jacob, Laban later tries to trick his son-in-law out of receiving his due share. With some divine help, Jacob overcomes the trick and receives a significant share of the flock. How does Rambam’s reference to Jacob and Laban color the discussion at hand?
- 🗨️ This paragraph is the very last one in Rambam’s Laws of Hired Labor. Does that placement lend any added meaning to the text for you?



A (cropped) detail of a relief flanking the entrance to the temple of Ramesses II at Abu Simbel. The relief depicts Nubian captives, shown bound with feathers in their hair. Photo by Lisa Haney. License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en>

Rambam, Laws of Theft — chapter 5

1. One may not buy stolen goods from a thief; to do so is a great transgression because it strengthens the hands of those who violate the law and causes the thief to continue to steal, for if the thief would find no buyer he would not steal, as it says “He who shares with a thief is his own enemy.” (Proverbs 29:24)

2. A thief sells [his stolen wares], which the owners had not despaired [of recovering]; subsequently, the thief is identified and witnesses testified that the object that So-and-So [the thief] sold is what he stole in front of us.

[In this case,] the object returns to its original owners, and the owners give to the buyer the money that he paid the thief—due to “the enactment of the market” (*takkanat ha-shuk*). The owners then sue the thief [to recover the money that they had to pay to the buyer].

If, however, he was a known thief, the Rabbis did not apply the enactment of the market, and the owners give nothing to the buyer; rather, the buyer must sue the thief and extract from him the money that he paid.

discussion questions

- ☛ In paragraph 1, why does Rambam prohibit buying stolen merchandise?
- ☛ What does this rule say about the distribution of responsibility in society?
- ☛ What is the initial circumstance in paragraph 2? What are the two cases that Rambam rules on?
- ☛ In the first case, what responsibility lies on the buyer? Why do you think this is the general rule?
- ☛ Why is the second case different from the first?
- ☛ What do these texts teach us about our responsibilities as consumers, especially of goods that might have been produced by slaves?

רמב"ם הלכות גניבה פרק ה

הלכה א
אסור לקנות מן הגנב החפץ שגנב ועון גדול הוא שהרי מחזיק ידי עוברי עבירה וגורם לו לגנוב גניבות אחרות, שאם לא ימצא לוקח אינו גונב, ועל זה נאמר (משלי כ"ט: כ"ד) חולק עם גנב שונא נפשו.

הלכה ב
הגונב ומכר ולא נתיאשו הבעלים ואחר כך הוכר הגנב ובאו עדים שזה החפץ שמכרו פלוני זה הוא גנבו בפנינו.

חוזר החפץ לבעליו והבעלים נותנין ללוקח דמים ששקל לגנב מפני תקנת השוק והבעלים חוזרין ועושיין דין עם הגנב.

ואם גנב מפורסם הוא לא עשו בו תקנת השוק ואין הבעלים נותנין ללוקח כלום אלא חוזר הלוקח ועושה דין עם הגנב ומוציא ממנו דמים ששקל לו.

Vayikra Rabbah 6.2

VaYikra Rabbah—Midrash on the book of Leviticus (VaYikra) that was collected and codified, likely in Israel, sometime between the 5th–7th centuries, though it contains earlier material.

“...should he hear the public-voice [carrying] a threat...”

(Leviticus 5:1) This is as it says in Proverbs, “He who shares with a thief is his own enemy; He hears the threat and does not tell.” (29:24)

There once was a governor who used to put to death receivers of stolen property and release the thieves, and all used to find fault with him, saying that he was not acting correctly.

What did he do?

He issued a proclamation throughout the province, saying: ‘Let all the people go out to the public field!’ What did he do then? He brought some weasels and placed before them portions of food. The weasels took the portions, and carried them to their holes.

The next day he again issued a proclamation, saying: “Let all the people go out to the public field!” Again he brought weasels and placed portions of food before them but this time he stopped up all the holes. The weasels took the portions, and carried them to their holes, but finding these stopped up, they brought their portions back to their places.

[He did this] to demonstrate that all the trouble is due to receivers. This, then, we learn from the governor, but how does the parable apply in practice? Reuben stole from Simeon, and Levi knew of it. Said Reuben to Levi: Do not expose me, and I will give you half. The following day, people entered the Synagogue and heard the functionary announce: “Who has stolen from Simeon?” and Levi was present there. Surely the Torah has decreed, “...if he be a witness, whether he has seen or known...” (Leviticus 5:1)

Leviticus 5:1 (Translation: Everett Fox)

Now a person—when he sins: should he hear the public-voice [carrying] a threat and though he was a witness, either seeing or knowing, he does not tell, he is to bear his iniquity.

discussion questions

- How does the parable from *VaYikra Rabbah* illustrate the points made by Ramban? Do you see any holes in the parable?
- This midrash quotes Leviticus 5:1 at the beginning and end of the parable. How is the midrash expanding on the verse?
- What is the role of the “public voice”?

ויקרא רבה ו:ב

ושמעה קול אלה הה"ד (משלי כט)
חולק עם גנב שונא נפשו אלה ישמע
ולא יגיד.

מעשה בשלטון אחד שהיה הורג את
הקבלנין ומתיר את הגנבים והיו הכל
מליזין עליו שאינו עושה כראוי.

מה עשה?

הוציא כרוז במדינה ואמר כל עמה
לקומפון מה עשה הביא חולדות ונתן
לפניהם מנות והיו החולדות נוטלות
את המנות ומוליכין אותם לחורי.

למחר הוציא כרוז ואמר כל עמא
לקומפון הביא חולדות נתן לפניהן
מנות וסתם את החורים והיו
החולדות נוטלות את המנות
ומוליכות אותן לחורין ומוצאות
אותן מסותמות ומחזירות את המנות
למקומן.

לומר שאין הכל אלא מן הקבלנין
הרי מן השלטון, מן המעשה מנין
ראובן גנב לשמעון ולוי ידע ביה אמר
ליה אל תפרסמני ואנא יהיב לך פלגא
למחר נכנסו לבית הכנסת ושמעו קול
החזן מכריז מאן גנב לשמעון ולוי
קאים תמן הלא נתנה תורה איפופסין
והוא עד או ראה או ידע.
ויקרא ה:א

וְנָפֵשׁ כִּי-תִחָטָא, וְשָׁמְעָה קוֹל אֱלֹהִים,
וְהוּא עֵד, אוּ רָאָה אוּ יָדַע; אִם-לוֹא
יִגִּיד, וְנָשָׂא עוֹנוֹ.

“Teach them to your children”: How to approach the topic of trafficking with children and teens

We may wish to shield our children from harsh realities such as the continued existence of slavery and trafficking. However, learning about slavery within a synagogue or other Jewish context can help our children connect to the stories and liturgy of our own people, and to feel empowered to take action within a community committed to pursuing justice together.

🗨️ **Tell a story about a modern-day slave.** Use one of the stories included in this handbook, or check out the following online videos³²:

⇒ **Damayan’s video:** Damayan organizes Filipino domestic workers in New York City; this 3:24 video includes three members’ stories. <http://bit.ly/DamayanVideo>

⇒ **Tomato Rabbis:** This 5:52 video, produced for T’ruah, describes the Coalition of Immokalee Workers’ campaign to improve conditions in the tomato fields and the role of the Jewish community as allies. <http://bit.ly/tomatorabbis>

- 🗨️ **Open a conversation about fairness.** Children have a strong sense of what’s fair and what’s not, and will be able to understand that it’s not fair when someone doesn’t get paid for his or her work.
- 🗨️ **Show positive examples**, like the story of Jon Esformes (see sidebar).
- 🗨️ **Ask students to research the supply chain** for one product that they buy, and to learn whether there are any known cases of slavery in this supply chain.



The official press launch for the MTV EXIT (End Exploitation and Trafficking) Indonesia Campaign at the Hard Rock Café in Jakarta. [U.S. State Dept.] License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/deed.en>

Leading the Way

Jon Esformes, a Jew of Greek heritage, is the owner of Pacific Tomato Growers, one of the five largest tomato growers in the United States. In the fall of 2010, he became the first grower to sign a Fair Food Agreement with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, raising the wages for the farmworkers who worked for him and ensuring they would work in fair and safe conditions. Jon’s leadership led to other tomato growers signing on as well. At the signing ceremony, Jon quoted Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel: “In a free society, few are guilty, but all are responsible.”

🗨️ For middle school and high school students studying American history, **discuss the similarities and differences between nineteenth century slavery and modern slavery.**

🗨️ For high school students, use discussions of sexuality within a religious context to **open up conversations about how people are used for sex.**

Within all of these conversations, introduce students to relevant Jewish texts as a way of bringing a new perspective to the discussion.

The following pages are a sample lesson developed by T’ruah. Call or e-mail T’ruah for more ideas, and check our website for our expanding collection of resources for children.

³² These have been vetted and deemed appropriate for children, but educators should watch them in advance to be sure their students are ready for them.



From a troubling text, a commitment to justice

by Rabbi Joshua Lesser

[My bar mitzvah student] William was challenged by his understanding of Eliezer as a slave—indeed by the very existence of slavery in the Torah. As a young Southern Jewish African-American, he wondered what it meant to enter into Jewish adulthood with a Torah that embraced, accepted and, perhaps, even advocated for slavery.

After exploring the idea of a Judaism that evolves toward righteousness and the differences between biblical and American slavery, we arrived at the issue of modern day slavery and Judaism's response to it... With a handful of other rabbis, I had traveled to Immokalee [with T'ruah] to learn about the oppression in the tomato fields. I met the workers who have dedicated their lives to challenging exploitation, danger and harassment in the fields. As I explained the kind of slavery and work peonage that still exists in our fields today, Will wondered what he could do.

As synchronicity would have it, I had just been contacted by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to

participate and publicize their Publix Truth Tour to encourage the Publix supermarket chain to participate in the Fair Food Agreement, and to commit to buying tomatoes from participating farms that treated workers fairly... I invited Will to accompany me and to participate in his first social justice protest... [W]e came up with some questions about the realities of slavery today. I reached out to my friends at the CIW so Will could speak to one of the farm workers and to an interfaith leader who supported the coalition. As he left our meeting, I wondered if this had been overwhelming. Instead, I was greeted by his big smile two weeks later. He had spoken with members of the CIW and was fully aware and committed to the purpose of the protest... Will reported that it was a powerful experience and helped him understand contemporary slavery; he said he would be adding this theme to his *d'var torah*.³³

³³ Rabbi Joshua Lesser, "Seeds of Change," *Ritualwell.org* (<http://www.ritualwell.org/blog/seeds-change/>)

Lesson Outline: The Fair Food Program for Kids

Goals

- ⇒ To introduce children to the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and the Fair Food Program
- ⇒ To explore concepts of fairness in age-appropriate ways
- ⇒ To connect fairness to Torah

Age range

5+ (This activity has three layers, which can be combined in different ways for different aged children. Use the materials as you see fit for your class.)

Background

The picture on the following page is from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) Community Center in Immokalee, FL. It shows poster-sized enlargements of photos from the worker education booklet that each worker receives. The buckets are full of green tomatoes. “Copete” is a Spanish word meaning “overflow.” The overflowed bucket was the old way of doing things; the flat bucket is the new standard.

The Fair Food Program is an agreement between three groups of people—the farmworkers, the growers, and the corporations that buy the food (including major fast food chains like McDonald’s, Pizza Hut, and Subway, and the supermarkets Walmart, Whole Foods, and Trader Joe’s.) The corporations agree to buy tomatoes only from growers who have signed onto the FFP and to pay a penny more per pound of tomatoes. The growers agree to a set of agreed-upon working conditions in the field and to pass the penny-per-pound surcharge directly to the workers.

Layer 1: Photos

- 🗨 Ask students what they see in the photos.
- 🗨 Engage them in conversation using some of these questions:
 - ⇒ Which bucket is more fair to the worker who has to fill it?
 - ⇒ Why is it fair to get paid for a set amount of work?
- 🗨 For more sophisticated students, a meta-analysis is possible: why is this an effective educational tool?

Layer 2: Torah text

- 🗨 What is the Torah commanding us? What does it mean by “different weights”? (Hint: how did people weigh things before the invention of the modern scale?)
- 🗨 How do the pictures and Torah text shed light on each other?
- 🗨 How might this connect to your own life?

Layer 3: Testimony from the CIW

- 🗨 Have students read the testimony from Emilio, a member of the CIW. Discuss the picture he paints of before and after. Make sure students are clear on the identity and role of different characters in the story—farmworker, crew boss, grower/farmer, CIW.
- 🗨 Explain the Fair Food Program and ask students to discuss how this is a partnership. What does each group bring to the table? What role do we as consumers have in the process?
- 🗨 For a more three dimensional activity, fill a bucket or bin with 32 lb of weight (bags of rice are an easy way to do this). Invite students to try and lift the bucket.



Testimony from Emilio Faustino Galindo, Coalition of Immokalee Workers

“When full, each bucket of tomatoes weighs 32 pounds; you hoist it to your shoulder, run to the truck, and throw it up to the boss, who dumps the tomatoes into the truck, puts a token in the bucket, and throws it back down to you. At the end of the day, you get paid for each token. Before the Fair Food Program, we had to overfill the buckets, as though it had a snow-cone top (copete in Spanish), such that they weighed 36, 37 pounds. In essence, for every ten buckets, you were giving the boss one for free. Furthermore, if the crew boss thought you hadn’t filled it high enough, that the bucket was missing two or three tomatoes, he might send you back. Or he might dump the tomatoes into the truck and not pay you for them because the bucket wasn’t full enough. But today, under the Fair Food Program, we have eliminated this abusive practice by implementing a visual standard. Though it may not sound like much, for those who spend their days filling and hauling tomato buckets, this change is truly dramatic.”



Deuteronomy 25

- ¹³ You shall not have in your pouch alternate weights, larger and smaller.
- ¹⁴ You shall not have in your house alternate measures, a larger and a smaller.
- ¹⁵ You must have completely honest weights and completely honest measures, if you are to endure long on the soil that the Lord your God is giving you.
- ¹⁶ For everyone who does those things, everyone who deals dishonestly, is abhorrent to the Lord your God.

13 לא-יהיה לך בכיסך אבן ואבן גדולה וקטנה.

14 לא-יהיה לך בביתך איפה ואיפה גדולה וקטנה.

15 אבן שלמה וצדק יהיה-לך, איפה שלמה וצדק יהיה-
לך, למען יאריכו ימיה על האדמה אשר הי אלהיך נתן
לך.

16 כי תועבת הי אלהיך כל-עשה אלה, כל עשה עול.

Tomato picking simulation: The effect of the new standard

Materials

For each student/pair of students (either works, depending on the size of the class and how many M&M's you've purchased):

- ⇒ Dixie cup (buy the smallest you can find)
- ⇒ Plastic spoon
- ⇒ Bowl to hold M&M's
- ⇒ M&M's—more than enough to fill the cup
- ⇒ Paper towel or plate as a surface to work on
- ⇒ Set of instructions (see box below)

Directions for teacher

1. Tell students they will be filling cups with M&M's as a simulation of the work it takes to pick tomatoes. They will be in the role of farmworkers and you, as the teacher, will play the role of the crew boss. They must follow the instructions on their sheets precisely or they will be penalized. Go over the rules in advance to make sure everyone understands them.
2. Distribute materials and have them do the activity. This first round is before the Fair Food Program, but don't tell them that yet.
3. In round one, your goal is to have them fill the cups with as many M&M's as possible—full to overflowing. Feel free to make unrealistic demands and send them back to try cramming another few M&M's in. Or, if you think a group can handle it without going ballistic, dump one or two cups back into the reservoir bowl and say it wasn't full enough, so they're not getting credit for it.
4. When the class is finished, ask them to share how they felt filling the cups with M&M's. Draw out what wasn't fair about it. Use this activity as a lead-in to discuss the texts and photographs on the preceding pages, explaining the background on the Fair Food Program.
5. Explain to the class that the farmer who owns the farm has now signed the Fair Food Program, which includes a standard for what constitutes a full cup. Fill a cup to demonstrate, and get the class to agree on it. Repeat the activity a second time, okaying each cup when it meets the standard.
6. Ask students how they felt the second time around. Connect this to the real world by asking what impact they think the Fair Food Program is having on workers. If it doesn't come up (it should), make sure they understand that this is not just about earning more money, it's about the dignity of being treated fairly and feeling secure.
7. "Pay" students by allowing them to eat the M&M's.



Directions for Farmworkers

Your goal is to fill the cup with M&M's, as quickly as possible, without spilling any M&M's.

rules

- ⇒ The cup and the bowl holding M&M's must both remain on the table.
- ⇒ You may not touch the M&M's with your hands. You may only touch the M&M's with the spoon.
- ⇒ When your cup is full, call the crew boss over to give the ok. You will only get paid for the cups that the crew boss signs off on.

Brief Sermon Ideas on Slavery and Human Trafficking

There are numerous opportunities throughout the Jewish holiday cycle and Torah reading cycle to talk about modern-day slavery. Most obvious are Passover, and the opening *parshiyot* of Exodus. Below are a few “hooks” for speaking about forced labor at other points during the year.

Rosh Hashanah

In the Rosh Hashanah Musaf service, each set of shofar blasts is followed by the paragraph “*Hayom harat olam*,” in which we say that we turn to God “*im kevanim im ke’avadim*”—either as children or as slaves. “If as children” the text says, “treat us with compassion as a parent does to children. If as slaves, our eyes are glued to You until You have mercy and release our verdict...” How does this dynamic between the role of child and slave illuminate modern slavery? How does servitude to God affect how we treat people? See more on this above under “Doesn’t the Torah allow slavery?”, page 19.

Yom Kippur

One of the most powerful liturgical devices of Yom Kippur is the phrasing of the confessional prayers in the plural, as a means of forcing us to take collective responsibility for the acts of our entire society. We hope that none of us directly owns a slave. And yet, we are collectively responsible for allowing slavery to flourish by demanding and purchasing low-price products, and by failing to fight for legislation that eliminate the conditions that allow slavery to flourish.

Introduce your community to the website <http://www.slaveryfootprint.org>, which allows users to discover how many slaves contribute to our everyday lives.

Sukkot

Use the opportunity of the harvest festival to introduce the work of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to end modern slavery in Florida’s tomato harvest. Invite a farmworker (actually or virtually) into your sukkah as a guest to remind us of the person who picked the bounty we celebrate. The prophet Hosea teaches: “Plant righteousness for yourselves; harvest the fruits of goodness” (Hosea 10:12). A just harvest cannot mean tomatoes picked by slave labor or for sub-poverty wages.

The book of Genesis

Both Abraham and Jacob fathered children with their wives’ handmaidens. Abraham also owned a slave, Eliezer. How do we grapple with seeing these biblical heroes as slaveholders?

Thanksgiving

Gerardo Reyes, a member of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, says

Enslaved by Debt and Visa Laws

A recruiter in Jamaica promised Sheldon a visa through the U.S. federal H-2B seasonal worker program. The processing fee was hefty, but the prospect of working in America seemed worth it. Sheldon arrived in Kansas City eager to work but ended up at the mercy of human traffickers. Along with other workers from Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, and the Philippines, Sheldon cleaned rooms at some of the best-known hotels in Kansas City. The traffickers kept Sheldon in debt, constantly charging him fees for uniforms, transportation, and rent in overcrowded apartments. Often, his paychecks would show negative earnings. When Sheldon refused to work, the traffickers threatened to cancel his visa and leave him with no legal status. In May 2009, a federal grand jury indicted the leaders of this trafficking ring on charges related to forced labor in 14 states.³⁴

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that Thanksgiving in the Immokalee community often highlights the irony of charity, when some workers receive a free Thanksgiving dinner provided by a local church. He recalls thinking to himself, “Why do I spend every day harvesting food for the rest of America and then have to stand in line at a food pantry on Thanksgiving for a plate of food?” Why do the people who produce, pack, and serve the food we eat face such low wages, risk forced labor and dangerous workplaces? Many of the corporations we buy from engage in significant corporate philanthropy. How do we move them from philanthropy to justice and create a world where philanthropy is extraneous?

The beginning of the book of Exodus

Use the Exodus narrative as an opportunity to discuss

slavery, freedom, and our responsibility to imitate God.

Purim

A parallel can be drawn between the beauty contest held by King Ahasuerus to find a new queen and sex trafficking. American Jewish World Service has a text study about forced commercial sex using Purim as a lens: <http://bit.ly/AJWSpurim>

Parshat Re’eh

The whole book of Deuteronomy is full of inspiring teachings about justice, but chapter 15 is especially relevant because it discusses debt and the slavery that can result from it. So much modern slavery is fueled by debts real or invented, making this parshah a good week to address the topic.



A TOMATO ON THE SEDER PLATE

Standing with Farmworkers in their Struggle to Uproot Modern-Day Slavery

Background:

This Pesach, as we commemorate our liberation from slavery, we draw our attention to those still in bondage. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers is a widely-acclaimed organization of farmworkers who are working to end abusive conditions in Florida's tomato fields, which have long created fertile ground for modern-day slavery to flourish. Over the last decade, their Campaign for Fair Food—led by farmworkers and supported by people of conscience across the country—has brought about historic changes in the fields. We celebrate their victories while recognizing that much work is left to be done. With our own story in mind, we commit ourselves to working alongside them until they, too, can commemorate their liberation.

T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights is an organization of rabbis from all streams of Judaism that acts on the Jewish imperative to respect and protect the human rights of all people. T'ruah mobilizes the Jewish community to participate in the Campaign For Fair Food as part of its larger commitment to fight modern slavery and human trafficking.

At Your Seder:

The seder plate contains a variety of foods that symbolize the Jewish journey from slavery to freedom. To raise awareness about the Campaign for Fair Food, we have been invited to add a tomato to our seder plates, a symbol of the farmworker who picked it. The foods on the seder plate are meant to elicit questions that lead to the telling of the story of the Exodus. We hope the tomato will lead to questions about the legacy of slavery today and to discussion about the progress being made by the CIW—supported by Jewish communities—to bring about a just, slavery-free workplace.

We suggest that you print the following page and distribute it to participants at your seder.

STANDING WITH FARMWORKERS

Supporting Those Working to End Modern-Day Slavery

PART 1 *Please read this towards the beginning of the seder.*

The seder begins: “Let all who are in need, come and share in the Passover meal.” In this year of struggle for workers’ rights, we want to symbolically welcome members of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a human rights organization made up of Florida farmworkers, primarily tomato harvesters, to share in our seder. Before we begin to tell our story of the journey to freedom, we take a moment to hear a voice from this current fight for freedom, symbolizing their presence by placing a tomato on the seder plate. Until we know that the food that we eat isn’t tainted by forced labor and exploitation, none of us is truly free.

“When you’re there, [enslaved,] you feel like the world is ending. You feel absolutely horrible... Once you’re back here on the outside, it’s hard to explain. Everything’s different now. It was like coming out of the darkness into the light. Just imagine if you were reborn. That’s what it’s like.”
— Adan Garcia Orozco, farmworker



PART 2 *This can be read during the Rabban Gamliel section of the seder, when you hold up and explain each of the traditional items on the seder plate.*

Why is there a tomato on the seder plate? This tomato brings our attention to the oppression and liberation of farmworkers who harvest fruits and vegetables here in the United States. And it reminds of us of our power to help create justice.

A tomato purchased in the United States between November and May was most likely picked by a worker in Florida. On this night when we remember the Jewish journey from slavery to freedom, we remember numerous cases of modern slavery that have been found in the Florida tomato industry. The tomato on our seder plate might have been picked by someone who has been enslaved.

Slavery is just the extreme end of a continuum of abuse; perhaps this tomato was picked by someone facing other abusive working conditions, such as wage theft, violence, sexual harassment, exposure to dangerous pesticides, or poverty level wages—just fifty cents for every 32-lb bucket of tomatoes picked and hauled—that have not changed for more than 30 years.

But a transformation is underway. Since 1993, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a farmworker organization, has been organizing for justice in the fields. Together with student groups, secular human rights organizations, and religious groups like T’ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights, they have convinced 12 major corporations, such as McDonald’s and Walmart, to join the Fair Food Program, a historic partnership between workers, growers and corporations. Not only does the Fair Food program raise the wages of tomato workers, it also requires companies to source tomatoes from growers that agree to a code of conduct in the fields which includes a zero tolerance policy for forced labor and sexual harassment. Since 2011, when more than 90% of Florida’s tomato growers began to implement the agreement, over \$8 million has been distributed from participating retailers to workers.

But the resistance of holdout retailers, such as major supermarkets and Wendy’s, threatens to undermine these fragile gains, as they provide a market to farms to continue abusive practices.



PART 3: NEXT YEAR, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM

This can be read at any point towards the end of the Seder, after the meal.

This Pesach, while commemorating our own freedom from bondage, we remind ourselves of our responsibility to end slavery as it exists today and our power to create justice when we join together. We commit ourselves to standing with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, so that next Passover, the tomato on our seder plate might represent workers who have a liberation story to tell of their own.

Ways to take action:

- Learn more about the Campaign for Fair Food through online educational materials.
- Speak up at your local Wendy’s, Stop & Shop, Giant, Publix or Kroger’s! You can download a letter to give to your store manager or send a letter to the corporation who owns your neighborhood store.

- Organize an action! Work with the CIW to plan a demonstration calling on your grocery store or Wendy’s to join the Fair Food Program and commit to buying from farms that comply with the Fair Food Code of Conduct.
- Educate your community! Use educational materials—articles, fliers, and videos—to bring this campaign to your synagogue or school.



For more information and materials for taking action, visit:
www.ciw-online.org and www.truah.org

take action

Make a Difference: Concrete Ways To Fight Human Trafficking

1. **Learn to spot signs and report suspicions.**

Learn human trafficking red flags and ask follow up questions so that you can detect a potential trafficking situation. (See below, page 42, or visit: <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/id/index.htm>) If you think you have identified a case of trafficking, report your suspicions to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-3737-888 or via <http://www.polarisproject.org>.

2. **Make it personal.** The interactive web site www.slaveryfootprint.org estimates how many slaves work for you.

After you learn the answer, research what changes you can make to begin eliminating slavery from your daily life.

3. **Shop smart.** Be a conscientious consumer. Pick one commodity to start off with—be it tomatoes, chocolate, coffee, socks, etc.—and learn about where and how you can buy it from ethical sources.

4. **Be an ethical employer.** Encourage your company or your employer to take steps to investigate and eliminate human trafficking throughout its supply chain and to publish the information for consumer awareness, ensuring you are not part of the demand for slave-made goods. A good toolkit is the Luxor Implementation Guidelines to the Athens Ethical Principles found at: http://www.endhumantraffickingnow.com/luxor_protocol. Publicize what you are doing so that other employers learn from your example.



Photo by Aaron Fulkerson. License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en>

5. **Donate your time.** Volunteer your professional services to help an anti-trafficking organization that needs help from lawyers, doctors, dentists, counselors, translators and interpreters, graphic designers, public relations and media professionals, event planners, and accountants. See more on page 41.

6. **Support survivors:** Raise funds for an anti-trafficking organization or donate needed goods to a group that provides shelter or other social services for trafficking victims (check with them first to find out what they need).

7. Take action. Meet with and write to your local, state and federal government representatives to let them know that you care about combating human trafficking in your community. Support legislation that provides funding for victims of human trafficking, equips law enforcement with the

tools and training to combat human trafficking, reforms the immigration system, and closes loopholes in the visa system. Visit www.truah.org/slavery for information on current legislation.

8. **Speak out:** Write a letter to the editor of your local paper, publish op-eds, and teach others about slavery.

9. **Invest ethically.** Since January 1, 2012, the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act requires most large companies to include their anti-slavery policies on their website. Support businesses with clear guidelines backed by third-party, ongoing, on the ground monitoring.

Fight Trafficking as a Community

1. **Advertise the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline** Call in emergencies or for references to local anti-trafficking resources. Consider posting signs, such as the **poster on the following page**, in synagogue bathrooms, local bars and restaurants, and other public places. Include the hotline in your list of community resources.

2. **Host a speaker.** Invite a speaker from an anti-trafficking organization to learn about their work.

3. **Show a film or read and discuss a book about trafficking.** See our top picks under “Additional Resources” at the end of this handbook.

4. **Learn together.** Study Jewish texts about our obligations to protect the strangers in our midst, treat our workers with respect, and redeem the captives. Then discuss how your community can translate that learning into action.

5. **Honor ethical employers in your community.**

Synagogues and other Jewish institutions can make a statement of values by honoring business owners and other employers who treat workers fairly and who institute zero tolerance policies for forced labor.

6. **Join an anti-trafficking task-force.**

Get in touch with local anti-trafficking task forces, interfaith organizations, or non-profits that advocate against slavery and trafficking, and ask how you can join the effort.

7. **Start a community pledge to buy ethically.** Ask your community to pledge to buy a certain product only from ethical sources. Tally up how much your community has spent on slave-free goods

Promoting the Hotline

In 2008, the Rescue and Restore Coalition of Houston, Texas convinced the state legislature to pass a law requiring the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline be posted in any establishment that sold alcohol. The hotline recorded a sharp uptick in calls from Houston, and the program was so successful that restaurants and cafes that weren't covered by the law began posting it as well³⁵.

35 Bales and Soodalter, p. 182.

in one year, and use your financial clout to let companies know that you will only buy ethically produced goods.

Thanks to the Polaris Project for sharing their flyer, “How Faith-Based Communities Can Get Involved,” with T’ruah. Their recommendations have been incorporated into this list and the following one for directly supporting survivors.

8. **Participate in a campaign.** Partner with the CIW by bringing a group to your local grocery store and delivering a letter asking the chain to sign the Fair Food Program. Or partner with the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (www.iccr.org) to ask American hotels and airlines to join ECPAT's (www.ecpat.net) pledge to end child trafficking. Visit www.truah.org/slavery for

resources, sample letters, and action ideas.

9. **Provide direct support to survivors of trafficking in your area.** See page 41 for a list of ways your community can help.

think **human trafficking**
can't happen in your
neighborhood?

think again.

Human trafficking can happen in factories, homes, farms, restaurants, nail salons, construction sites, or any workplace that employs vulnerable workers. Victims can be men, women, or children, and may be US citizens or foreign nationals with or without legal status.

potential red flags:

- ⇒ An employer who holds onto identity documents, like passports.
- ⇒ An employer or employee who answers questions in a way that seems scripted.
- ⇒ An employee who is unpaid or owes money to his or her employer.
- ⇒ An employee who can't freely quit, choose where to live, leave the house, or talk to people.
- ⇒ Someone being forced to have sex against their will.

National Human Trafficking Resource Center
Centro Nacional de Recursos Para la Trata de Personas

1-888-3737-888

NHTRC@PolarisProject.org

Confidential, toll-free, 24/7, interpreters available

Número gratuito, 24 Horas al día, 7 Días a la semana • Información confidencial, Disponibilidad de intérpretes

“...because of what God did for
me when I went free from Egypt.”

(Ex. 13:8)

be careful!

Asking the wrong questions can be dangerous for you or the suspected victim. Call to get help, report suspected trafficking, or request information and training.



T'ruah: El llamado
Rabinico por los
derechos humanos

For more information on how your Jewish community can end human trafficking, see www.truah.org/slavery

“...Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor...” (Lev. 19:16)

Ways to Provide Direct Support to Victim Service Organizations

Survivors of human trafficking have needs both immediately after leaving a trafficking situation and for months and years afterwards. Government support often phases out long before the need for extra help does. Your faith community may be able to leverage financial resources, material resources and community skills to support survivors and the organizations that care for them.

Remember always to establish a relationship with an organization first, and to ask what they need—don't just start collecting items or soliciting help.

1. Collect and donate food, clothing, toiletries, furniture, or kitchen/house supplies.
2. Purchase public transportation fare cards and gift cards to grocery stores for survivors. Also offer to have a volunteer help the survivor learn the local public transit system.
3. Establish an emergency transportation or emergency housing fund to assist victims who need help getting home or who need to stay in a hotel until stable shelter can be found.
4. If your faith community partners with a homeless or domestic violence shelter, talk to the shelter about making beds available to victims of trafficking.
5. Provide space within your worship center for an organization to conduct therapy groups or classes with their clients.
6. Offer free childcare for survivors with children who need to attend court appointments, doctor's visits, school or work.
7. Host a skills workshop on computer literacy, budgeting, cooking and nutrition, resume writing, learning English, or GED tutoring.

Thanks to Minh Dang, trafficking survivor and activist, for contributing to this list.

[HTTP://MINHSPEAKSTRUTH.TUMBLR.COM/](http://minhspeakstruth.tumblr.com/)

8. Link survivors with job opportunities through community members.
9. Identify legal, dental, healthcare, and massage/personal care professionals within your community

who may be able to offer free or low-cost services to survivors through their businesses.

10. Find out what holidays are important to local survivors, including their birthdays, and support their celebration.

11. Ask if a survivor would appreciate someone checking in on them regularly—to say hello, go for a walk, etc.

12. Ask if a survivor has an emergency contact person. If not, see whether a volunteer is willing to take on that role.
13. Find out what hobbies or fun activities the survivor enjoys and support/encourage pursuit of them (e.g., perhaps by offering free or reduced fee dance, art, or music classes; or helping the survivor get to carnivals, fairs, or sporting events).

The importance of supporting survivors

When Ashley was 12-years-old she got into a fight with her mother and ran away from home. She spent the night with her friend's older brother at his house, with the intention of going home the next day. 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." Ashley eventually escaped her confinement and is now at a treatment center for girls who have been sexually trafficked in New York.³⁶

36 2012 TIP Report

How do I identify a victim of human trafficking?

Forced labor does not necessarily always involve chains or locked doors. Slaves may be right in front of us: in construction sites, restaurants, elder care centers, nail salons, agricultural fields, and hotels. Traffickers use emotional, physical, and sexual violence as well as threats, fraud, and coercion to keep people from seeking help or contacting authorities. Deep debts often compel victims to continue working for their trafficker.

The girls next door never rest

They work day and night and weekends taking care of the old people, and they never, ever leave the eldercare home on Vernon Street, hidden in plain sight inside an ordinary suburban tract house in Long Beach with light-tan stucco, white trim, burgundy awnings, a two-car garage and an American flag waving in the front entryway. Like the home's owners, the girls are Filipino, with dark skin and dark hair. They might be pretty, if not for their miserable expressions.

Jokingly, the man next door asks the girls, "Do you ever get a day off?" No, he finally realizes, they never do. This was the moment when the neighbor understood that he had to do something. He had been stuck at home, on disability from his job, and, in a plot straight out of *Rear Window*, had started paying attention to the activities next door.

"I'm not a snoopy-snoop, but something weird was going on," says the man, who is reluctant to give his name to a reporter. "The whole neighborhood knew something was going on. We are working-class families here, and they'd have brand-new BMW SUVs pull up." There were other cars, too, carrying a steady stream of visiting family members coming and going. The man next door used to get annoyed at the cars constantly parked in front of his house. When at last the man signaled his understanding of the situation, the girls opened up to him. "They used to come over here crying, begging me to help them," he recalls. He tried for a year to call various agencies, though not, for some reason, the police. "Bah, the police," he snorts. "What are they going to do? This is an international issue."

And he is right, it turns out. It was the Feds who came to the rescue. The girls, who had been trafficked into the country, were being held against their will and forced to work for little or no pay.³⁷

37 Enslaved in Suburbia: Inside the World of Trafficked Indentured Servants and the Visa Violators Who Care for Our Old. *By Gendy Alimurung. February 19, 2009. CAST.* <http://www.castla.org/templates/files/enslaved-in-suburbia-la-weekly.pdf>

Most cases of human trafficking are exposed by an ordinary person who observes something out of place—a nanny who never leaves the house, a child working late into the night, or an unusually large number of people living and working in one house or apartment.

You can help stop human trafficking by:

- Knowing the signs of trafficking
- Asking the right questions
- Reporting the situation to the appropriate authorities

Some indicators of trafficking

Here are some potential red flags:

- Poor living conditions, in which the employee seems to have no option to move elsewhere.
- Employees living with an employer, who may be restricting movement.
- A large number of people living together in a house or an apartment.
- An employer who prevents the worker from speaking with outsiders alone.
- An employer or employee who answers questions in a way that seems scripted.
- An employer who holds onto identity documents, like passports.
- Signs of physical abuse.
- An employee who is unpaid or is being paid very little.
- An employee who owes money to his or her employer.
- An employee who seems fearful.
- A potential minor in commercial sex.

Questions to ask

Be careful! The first step is to call the National Human Trafficking Hotline (1-888-3737-888) to report the case and get concrete advice about proceeding. Do not place yourself or the suspected victim in immediate danger.

If you are able, speak with the victim privately, without the employer's knowledge. It is important that such meeting be private because an employer may harm the trafficked employee if the employer learns that the employee sought help. If the victim is a foreign national, s/he may fear deportation for speaking up.

- 🗣 Can you leave your job if you want to?
- 🗣 Can you come or go as you please?
- 🗣 Have you or your family been threatened if you try to leave?
- 🗣 Do you live with your employer?
- 🗣 Are you in debt to your employer?
- 🗣 Who has your passport/identification papers?
- 🗣 Where do you sleep and eat?



Photo by Mayor McGinn. License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en>

Help people know their rights

Foreign workers in the United States (**both those with documentation and those without**) are often not aware of their rights, and many are at risk of exploitation by unscrupulous recruiters. *On the following pages is the State Department's pamphlet detailing the rights of temporary foreign workers, with thanks to the State Department for permission to reprint. The pamphlet is available for download in many languages at http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/pamphlet/pamphlet_4578.html*



More than 150 guests attended the launch of the anti-human trafficking film “Never Again” at @america. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), with financial support from the U.S. Department of State’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, produced the film to raise awareness and to expose the harsh realities of human trafficking. [U.S. State Dept.] License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/deed.en>

Thanks to the TVPA and the Hotline

Mary was enslaved for 18 years as a domestic servant in Saudi Arabia where she endured beatings and sexual abuse. Her traffickers brought her to the US on vacation with them on a B2 visa. When she received this visa, the US consulate provided her with a pamphlet about human trafficking with a number to call for help³⁸. She was freed three days after she arrived in Los Angeles because she called the number in the pamphlet and was connected to a local service provider, the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST).³⁹

³⁸ This booklet is one of the provisions of the TVPA.

³⁹ CAST, personal communication.

Is this how you treat a guest (worker)?

Maria came to the United States with some 50 other Filipino nationals who were promised housing, transportation, and lucrative jobs at country clubs and hotels under the H-2B guest worker program. Like the others, Maria dutifully paid the substantial recruitment fees to come to the United States. But when she arrived, she found that there was no work for her. The recruiters seized her passport and prohibited her from leaving their house. She and other workers slept side-by-side on the floors of the kitchen, garage, and dining room. They were fed primarily chicken feet and innards. When the workers complained, the recruiters threatened to call the police or immigration services to arrest and deport them. A federal grand jury indicted the two defendants for conspiracy to hold the workers in a condition of forced labor.⁴⁰

Star Student Stuck

Katya, a student athlete in an Eastern European capital city, dreamed of learning English and visiting the United States. Her opportunity came in the form of a student visa program, through which international students can work temporarily in the United States. She was promised a job at a beach resort. Instead, the people who met her at the airport put her on a bus to Detroit, Michigan. They took her passport away, and forced her and her friends to dance in strip clubs for the traffickers’ profit. They controlled the girls’ movement and travel, kept keys to the girls’ apartment, and listened in on phone calls the girls made to their parents. After a year of enslavement, Katya and her friend were able to reach federal authorities with the help of a patron of the strip club in whom they had confided. Due to their bravery, six other victims were identified and rescued. Katya now has immigration status under the U.S. trafficking law. She works in a health club and hopes to finish her degree in kinesiology. The traffickers are in federal prison.⁴¹

⁴⁰ 2011 TIP Report

⁴¹ 2010 TIP Report

Are You Coming To The United States Temporarily To Work Or Study?

We Are Confident That You Will Have An Interesting And Rewarding Stay. However, If You Should Encounter Any Problems, You Have Rights And You Can Get Help!

You Have the Right to:

- Be treated and paid fairly;
- Not be held in a job against your will;
- Keep your passport and other identification documents in your possession;
- Report abuse without retaliation;
- Request help from unions, immigrant and labor rights groups and other groups; and
- Seek justice in U.S. courts.

These rights, and others, are explained in this pamphlet.

If you are mistreated or your rights are violated, call these toll-free numbers:

National Human Trafficking Resource Center's
24 Hour Toll-Free Hotline

1-888-373-7888

(Run by a non-governmental organization)

Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation
Task Force Complaint Line

(Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm Eastern Time)

1-888-428-7581

(Run by the U.S. Department of Justice)

If you are in immediate physical danger, Call **911**

For more on your rights to be treated and paid fairly at work, see page 5

For more on your right not to be held in a job against your will, see page 7

This pamphlet was created as a result of a U.S. Federal law, Public Law 110-457.

The U.S. Government has issued this pamphlet to honor the rule of law and uphold the dignity of all who come to this country. The U.S. Government is committed to combating human trafficking and labor rights violations.

REMEMBER!!

There Are Ways to Protect Yourself

- Keep your passport in a safe, easily accessible place at all times;
- Keep copies of your passport, visa, and employment contract in your home country with relatives or friends;
- Always have the phone number of your home country's embassy;
- Keep this pamphlet handy so that you can refer to it once you are in the United States;
- Keep a record of all the days and hours that you work, and the amount and date of each payment that you receive; and
- Call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 (24 hours) or the Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force Complaint Line at 1-888-428-7581 (weekdays 9am-5pm Eastern Standard Time) if you need help.

An Overview of the Nonimmigrant Visa Process

What is a nonimmigrant visa?

A nonimmigrant visa is a U.S. government document that permits individuals who travel to the United States to request entry for a particular purpose; for example, to work or to study.

The nonimmigrant visa process involves two important steps:

1. Applying for the visa at the appropriate U.S. embassy or consulate abroad; and
2. Presenting the visa to an immigration inspector at a U.S. port of entry.

What are the important parts of my documentation?

1. The visa. It is located in your passport and shows your picture and visa expiration date. If your visa expires, you cannot reenter the United States on that visa until it is renewed.
- If you have an employment-based visa, the visa will include the name of the employer who is sponsoring you to work in the United States.
- Your temporary work visa **does not give you permission** to work for **any** employer that you choose—it is permission to work **only** for the employer listed on your visa application. In rare cases, it may be possible to change employers.
- This does not mean you have to continue to work for your employer if the employer is abusing or exploiting you.

2. The I-94 Card. This is a white card provided to you when you enter the United States. Your I-94 card shows the period of time that you are allowed to remain in the United States.

Do not lose this card!

TIP

Before you travel to the United States, **make two copies** of all important documentation, especially your passport (with visa), your contract, and your identity documents. Give one set of these copies to someone you trust in your home country. When you arrive in the United States and receive an I-94, make one copy of the I-94 in case you lose the original. Keep these documents in a safe place.

TIP

Once you arrive in the U.S., **keep your passport and other travel documents in a safe place where you can access it at all times!** It is illegal for your employer to take your passport away from you!

Your Workplace Rights in the United States

There are several protections that are specific to the type of visa you receive. These are outlined below by visa category.

A-3, G-5, and B-1 domestic employee visas

- If you work for a diplomat (A-3 visa) or a representative of an international organization (G-5 visa), or if you are a domestic employee holding a B-1 visa, your employer must provide you with an employment contract that complies with U.S. law.
- The contract must include the following provisions:
 - An agreement by your employer not to keep your passport, employment contract, or other personal property from you;
 - An agreement by your employer to abide by all laws in the United States;
 - An explanation of how much you will be paid for your work, as well as how frequently you will be paid; and
 - A description of your work duties, weekly work hours, holidays, sick days, and vacation days.
- Make sure that you understand the terms of the contract. If you cannot understand the language in which the contract is written, ask someone you trust to read the contract to you in a language that you understand. **Do not sign anything that you do not understand!**
- When you apply for the visa, a U.S. Consular Officer will meet with you and confirm that your contract complies with U.S. law. Do not hesitate to ask the U.S. Consular Officer any questions. Your employer is not supposed to be present when you meet with the Consular Officer.

- If you sign a contract that violates your rights, or if your employer does not do what the contract says, call the hotlines listed in this pamphlet immediately. They can help you find a lawyer who can help explain your rights in this situation.

H-1B and H-1B1 visas for performing services in specialty occupations

- If you are coming to the United States to perform services in a specialty occupation or as a fashion model, please refer to www.Travel.State.gov for more information regarding your rights and ability to change employers.

H-2A temporary agricultural worker visas

- If you are a temporary agricultural worker, you must receive a written description of the terms of your employment no later than the first day of work. This document must contain detailed information about the benefits, wages, housing, work duration, and transportation benefits that your employer will

provide.

- You are entitled to payment at or above a wage that is set by the government. This rate applies whether you are paid hourly or by piece rate.
- You do not have to pay either U.S. social security taxes or fees to a labor recruiter in your home country.
- Your employer must provide clean and safe housing at no charge.
- Your employer must reimburse you for transportation costs from your country to your place of employment, but only after you complete half the contract period; and your employer must pay for your return transportation costs for your trip home after completion of the contract.
- You are entitled to guaranteed work for at least 3/4 of the number of workdays stated as the contract period unless you are displaced by a U.S. worker during the first half of the contract period.

H-2B temporary non-agricultural worker visas

- If you are a temporary non-agricultural worker, you are entitled to payment at or above the prevailing wage, which will be at least the federal, state, or local legal minimum wage, but may be higher. This rate applies whether you are paid hourly or by piece rate.
- Your employer must provide return transportation costs for your trip home if your work ends or you are dismissed for business reasons unrelated to job performance before the end of your contract.
- You are usually entitled to terms and conditions of employment that are normal for similarly employed U.S. workers in the area.
- You should never have to pay fees to a labor recruiter in your home country.

J-1 exchange visitor visas

- Unless your exchange program is sponsored by the Federal government, the program must be a minimum of three weeks duration. The Form DS-2019, the basic document required to apply for a J visa, reflects the category of exchange and the program dates. Depending on the category of exchange, there may be other documents and/or contracts which cover the terms of your exchange program.
- Your sponsor's advertisements must be accurate and explain all costs, conditions, and restrictions of the exchange program. Your sponsor must also give you an orientation and provide you with information about:
 - the J-1 program and a description of the specific program in which you are participating and its rules;

- travel and entry into the United States;
- housing;
- fees, and costs, including living expenses, healthcare, and insurance costs;
- life and customs in the United States;
- local resources;
- your sponsor's address and the name and phone number of the person responsible for you in the United States;
- contact information for the Exchange Visitor Program Services of the Department of State; and
- The Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program brochure;

- If you are entering on a Summer Work Travel program and do not have pre-placed employment, your sponsor must assist you in locating employment if you have not found employment within the first week following your arrival, and insure that you receive pay and benefits commensurate with those offered to your American counterparts.
- If your J-1 visa is for a training and internship program:
 - Your sponsor must interview you in person, by telephone or by web camera;
 - Your sponsor must have a Training/Internship Placement Plan (Form DS-7002) in place before your visa paperwork is submitted. This Form includes a written statement of any stipend you will be paid, and a summary of the training objectives of the program.
 - Your sponsor must give you a written statement of the costs and fees you will have to pay, and an estimate of living expenses in the United States.
 - Your training/internship must be at least 32 hours per week; and
 - If your training/internship is in agriculture, your working conditions and wages must meet strict federal requirements for agricultural workers.
- Your sponsor must assure that you have medical insurance coverage, though your sponsor need not provide or pay for this coverage.
- If you work in the United States, you should apply for and receive your own Social Security number, and your employer must report all tax withholdings using this number.
- If you are bringing your spouse or minor children with you on a J-2 visa, they may apply for work authorization only if the income is not necessary to support you.

For more information on visa categories and U.S. entry procedures, see the Web site of the U.S. Department of State:

www.Travel.State.gov

Your Rights Regardless of Visa Status

There are also many **rights** you have **regardless of your visa status**. If any of these rights are violated, you can report the violations to a government enforcement agency. In most cases, you can also bring a lawsuit to attempt to recover your losses, without fear of being punished.

1. Your Right Not to Be Retaliated Against

- It is unlawful for your employer to try to punish you, for example, by threatening to report you to immigration or the police if you try to enforce your rights! If your employer threatens you at any time, **seek help immediately**. **Remember, your safety comes first!**

2. The Right to Be Paid

- You have the right to get paid for **all work you do, in the same manner as U.S. workers**.
- You have the right to earn at least the federal legal minimum wage, \$7.25 per hour, in the same manner as U.S. workers. Also check
 - The minimum wage for the **state** in which you work. If that wage is higher, you have the right to be paid the higher amount.
 - Your employment contract, which may obligate your employer to pay a higher amount.

- Most workers in the United States are entitled to overtime pay of one and a half times the amount of their wage for any hours worked over 40 hours per week. For example, if your regular wage rate is \$10 per hour, your employer may be required to pay you \$15 for each hour you work above 40 hours in a single week.
- If your employer takes money from your paycheck, this is called a deduction. Many deductions are illegal if they diminish your legal wage rate. For example, an employer usually may not deduct for housing (with some visa classifications, housing must be provided free of charge), most uniforms, safety equipment, or recruitment fees.

3. Your Right Not to be Discriminated Against

- As an employee, you have the right to not be treated differently or badly at work because of your gender, race, national origin, color, religion, or disability.

- Your employer should pay the same amount to each worker for the same work and offer each worker the same job opportunities no matter what the worker's gender, race, national origin, color, religion, or disability.

- Your employer can't make you speak only in English at work unless there is an important business reason to require English.

4. Your Rights as a Woman Worker

- Your employer **MAY NOT** treat you differently or badly because you are a woman or you are pregnant - this is sex discrimination. Whether you are a woman or a man, your employer **MAY NOT** sexually harass you. Your employer should never:

- Demand that you perform sex acts;
- Touch you in a sexual manner; or
- Say or yell sexual or offensive comments.

5. Your Right to a Healthy and Safe Workplace

- All employees have a right to safe and clean working conditions:
 - **Housing:** If your employer provides housing, it should be clean, safe, and in a sturdy structure.
 - **Bathrooms:** Bathrooms should be clean and accessible.
 - **Potable Water:** If you work in agriculture, in most cases, you have the right to receive clean water to drink and to wash your hands.
 - **Illness or Injury on the Job:** If you are injured or get sick at work you may seek medical treatment. In most cases, you will receive free medical treatment and part of the wages lost while injured.
- If you are working with or around **pesticides or dangerous chemicals**:
 - You have a right to wash your hands in clean water after handling the pesticides/chemicals. You are entitled to training on pesticide safety during the first 5 days of work.
 - Your employer must tell you where and when pesticides were sprayed to avoid accidental exposures. Workers and others must not be in an area where pesticides are being applied.
 - If you mix or apply pesticides that require you to use protective equipment (like coveralls or a mask or respirator), your employer must give you

TIP

Keep a detailed record of every inappropriate comment and/or action your employer takes against you and write down the names and phone numbers of any witnesses.

TIP

Make sure to keep a written record of **all the time that you work**. Get a notebook and write down all of the days and hours that you worked, how much you were paid, the days you received a payment, any deductions taken from your paycheck, and the reasons for those deductions.

CAUTION!

Your employer cannot force you to do something or go somewhere, even back to your home country, by withholding your pay.

equipment that is clean and in good condition.

- **Medical Emergencies:** In the case of an emergency, call **911** and ask for an ambulance.
 - Your expenses may be paid for, so you should tell your employer as soon as possible so the employer can file the necessary paperwork.
 - When you are at the doctor or clinic, ask for copies of the paperwork regarding your illness or injury.

6. Your Right to Join a Union and Bargain Collectively

- With few exceptions, all workers in the United States have a right to form and join a union, regardless of their immigration status under federal law. Your employer cannot take action against you for doing so. This means you can:
 - Join with other workers to improve wages and working conditions;
 - Attend public speeches, rallies, and demonstrations; and
 - Join a union or other worker organization.

7. Your Right to More Protections Under State Law

- Call the hotlines listed in this pamphlet for a referral to organizations that can tell you about your rights in the state where you are working.

8. Your Right to Leave an Abusive Employment Situation

- You do not have to stay in your job if your employer is abusing you.
- But, if you came to the United States on an employment-based visa and you leave your employer, your visa status will no longer be valid. However, depending on the type of visa you have, you may be able to change visa categories or employers. You may also be able to remain in the United States legally to pursue a legal claim.

TIP

You have rights in the United States and no one can take those rights away from you. There are hundreds of organizations that can help. Don't be afraid to ask for help to protect your rights.

- You may also make a formal complaint or file a lawsuit against your employer while you are still working. There are severe penalties for an employer who tries to punish workers because they pursue their rights.
- If you are experiencing problems with your current employer, contact the hotlines listed in this pamphlet. They will be able to connect you with a local organization that can speak with you about your options.

Human Trafficking

1. What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is among the most terrible workplace abuses that an individual in the United States could encounter. Human trafficking occurs whenever a person is recruited, transported, or kept against his or her will for purposes of exploitation. For a full definition of human trafficking, please see www.state.gov/j/tip (see Legislation—Trafficking Victims Protection Act). The following are some warning signs that may indicate human trafficking:

Threats and Fear:

Employers, and people who help employers, may use threats and other intimidating acts to make you and other workers feel too afraid to try to leave. For example:

- Beatings, physical abuse, or sexual abuse;
- Threats of beatings, physical abuse, or sexual abuse;
- Locking in or restraining a worker;
- Threats of harm to the worker or the worker's family if the worker tries to leave, complain of mistreatment, report the situation to authorities, or seek help;
- Threats of being deported or arrested, or of being turned over to police for trying to leave, complain, report, or seek help for the worker's situation;
- The employer, or someone working with the employer, has harmed or threatened other workers who have tried to leave, complain, report, or seek help; or makes threats that any worker who tries to escape will be found and brought back.

Rules and Controls:

Employers, and people who help them, may use rules and controls to make it harder for you and other workers to leave, complain about mistreatment, or seek help. For example:

- Rules against leaving the workplace, or strict rules about where you can go when not working;
- Rules against holding onto your own passport, visa, birth certification, or other identification documents;
- Denial of adequate food, sleep, or medical care; or
- Preventing or restricting you from communicating freely with family, other workers, or others outside the workplace.

Deception and Lies:

Employers, and people who help them, may also use deception and lies. For example:

- False promises about working conditions, living conditions, or pay;
- Telling you that you have no rights;

- Telling you that you will not be believed if you try to seek help; and
- Instructing you to lie about their identity.

2. What should I do if these things are happening to me?

- If any one of these things is happening to you or you are in a dangerous situation, **get help immediately** by calling 911, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (1-888-373-7888), or the Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force Complaint Line (1-888-428-7581). They can help refer you to a local organization that help victims of human trafficking in your area.

- If you are in physical danger, you should call **911** to reach the Police. If you call the police, show them this pamphlet and tell them about the abuse that you have suffered.

3. Will I be deported if I report the abuse?

There are programs to protect people who report abuse. You should not be afraid to seek help even if you have immigration concerns. You should consult with an immigration attorney who does not work for your employer. The hotline can help you find someone to consult.

- If you believe you may be a victim of human trafficking or of another serious crime, including rape or sexual assault, you may be entitled to a different nonimmigrant visa, like a T visa (for trafficking victims) or a U visa (for victims of other serious crimes). These visas were created to provide protection for certain crime victims worried about their immigration status. Many people are unfamiliar with these visas and you may need to tell people assisting you about them.

4. What services are available for victims of human trafficking?

- If you are a victim of trafficking in the United States, you may be eligible for benefits, services, and immigration remedies under federal or state programs.
- Many organizations can help you access these services, which include medical care, mental health care, housing, dental care, legal advocacy for immigration and other legal needs, employment assistance, and public benefits.

Know Your Rights

Call one of the hotlines listed in this pamphlet if you need help

You are receiving this pamphlet because you have applied for a nonimmigrant visa to work or study temporarily in the United States. The purpose of this pamphlet is to help you understand your rights when you arrive in the United States. Even though you will be living in the United States only temporarily, you will still have many of the basic workplace rights that U.S. citizens and residents have.

This pamphlet gives an overview of your basic workplace rights. Understanding your rights will help you to protect yourself from abuse. Keep this pamphlet with you in the United States in case you need to reach someone for help.

This pamphlet was also created to help you protect yourself against the most serious abuses, such as human trafficking. Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery where an employer or other individual, through physical or psychological abuse, causes an individual to feel that he or she is not free to leave the situation. **Recognizing that you are in an abusive employment situation is the first step toward getting help.**

If you arrive in the United States and have problems at work, you should seek help immediately. Do not believe your employer if he or she says that you do not have legal rights in the United States. Do not accept legal advice from your employer, contractor, or recruiter. Only an attorney representing you should give you legal advice.

If you believe your rights are being violated, the hotlines listed in this pamphlet can help you reach local organizations that can provide further assistance. **Do not be afraid to contact these organizations! They are here to help you.**

This pamphlet is not a substitute for legal advice. There are many different types of temporary work and educational visas, and you should not be afraid to ask for more information about your visa.

IF YOUR RIGHTS ARE VIOLATED, CALL THESE TOLL-FREE NUMBERS:

National Human Trafficking Resource Center
1-888-373-7888
(24 hours)

Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force Complaint Line
1-888-428-7581
(Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm Eastern Time)

additional resources

Jewish and Interfaith Organizations

- ⇒ T'ruah's website contains Jewish resources, action alerts, text sheets, sample sermons, and breaking news: www.truah.org/slavery. For specific information on T'ruah's campaign to support the work of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, visit: <http://bit.ly/tomatorabbis> or search for the Twitter hashtag #tomatorabbis.
- ⇒ *The Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility* offers many useful booklets on slavery, including a handbook on supply chain accountability and "Celebration without Exploitation," a guide to large gatherings and sporting events: <http://www.iccr.org/issues/subpages/humantrafficking.php>
- ⇒ *Fair Trade Judaica* promotes ethically produced Jewish ritual items and is spearheading the important campaign for fair trade, slavery-free Chanukah gelt and kosher for Passover chocolate: <http://www.fairtradejudaica.org>
- ⇒ A coalition of New York City-based Jewish organizations, under the coordination of the National Council of Jewish Women New York Section and co-chaired by the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, is mobilizing the Jewish community to focus on sex trafficking. <http://www.we-were-slaves.org>
- ⇒ The Jewish Council on Public Affairs, National Council of Jewish Women, and the Religious Action Center of the Reform Movement have long supported legislation on ending human trafficking. In 2011-13, they joined together in a coalition led by T'ruah to pass the reauthorization of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Many local affiliates of these national organizations mobilize to fight human trafficking on a state level.

Government Departments

- ⇒ The President's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Community Partnerships published a report in April 2013 called "Building Partnerships to Eradicate Modern-Day Slavery": http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/advisory_council_humantrafficking_report.pdf

- ⇒ The State Department's *Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons*' website is a good resource for background information about trafficking. The annual *Trafficking In Persons Report* is an incredible resource for up-to-date statistics, survivor stories, and country-by-country data: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/index.htm>
- ⇒ *The Blue Campaign* is the anti-trafficking effort of the Department of Homeland Security. Its focus is on identifying and supporting trafficking victims: <http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/humantrafficking.shtm>
- ⇒ *Rescue and Restore* is the Department of Health and Human Services anti-trafficking campaign. It includes links to local anti-trafficking coalitions in communities around the country: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/>

NGO's and International Organizations

- ⇒ *The International Labor Organization* maintains up-to-date statistics on forced labor worldwide, including current research and frequently asked questions: <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/lang--en/index.htm>
- ⇒ *The International Labor Rights Forum* details many different exploitative labor environments, many of which include human trafficking: <http://www.laborrights.org>
- ⇒ In addition to being a resource for trafficked persons seeking help, the *National Human Trafficking Resource Center* is available to answer questions about fighting human trafficking in your home community and ways to reach out to survivors. Call 1-888-3737-888 or visit: <http://www.polarisproject.org/what-we-do/national-human-trafficking-hotline/the-nhtrc/overview>
- ⇒ *The Alliance To End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST)* is a coalition of major anti-trafficking organizations. Its website is a good way to explore the different groups and their approaches: <http://www.endslaveryandtrafficking.org/>
- ⇒ *Freedom Network USA* is a coalition of anti-slavery groups (including some members of ATEST).

Its website has short position papers relating slavery and trafficking to other social justice issues, including domestic violence, worker rights, and immigrant rights: <http://www.freedomnetworkusa.org/advocacy/index.php>



On the 19th March 2011, 38 Degrees joined up with Anti Slavery International and the Independent on Sunday to hand in a 45,873 signature petition to number 10 Downing Street, asking the government to sign up to the new EU Directive on Human Trafficking. The campaign was a big success, and the government has now agreed to the EU Directive which will provide more protection for victims of trafficking. Photo by 38 Degrees. License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en>

- ⇒ *The Global Alliance Against Trafficking In Women* promotes rights of women migrant workers and trafficked persons and believes that ensuring safe migration and fair workplaces should be at the core of all anti-trafficking efforts. Their website contains important research about sex trafficking and sporting events: <http://www.gaatw.org>
- ⇒ The website of the *End Human Trafficking Now Campaign* is a useful resource for business owners, as it has an E-learning Tool for Business and the Luxor Implementation Guidelines to the Athens Ethical Principles: <http://www.endhumantraffickingnow.com>

Collections of articles

- ⇒ *Freedom Network* has an extensive list of articles, reports, and books about modern slavery: <http://www.freedomnetworkusa.org/resources/index.php>
- ⇒ *CNN.com* has been running a year-long series on the problem of slavery and trafficking: <http://thecnnfreedomproject.blogs.cnn.com/>

Books

- ⇒ *The Slave Next Door*, by Kevin Bales and Ron Soodalter (University of California Press, 2009), provides a thorough and engaging overview of the state of trafficking in America.
- ⇒ *Tomatoland*, by Barry Estabrook (Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2011), offers a journalistic account of the Florida tomato fields and the successes of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers in fighting slavery there.
- ⇒ *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*, by Kevin Bales (University of California Press, 2012), addresses slavery around the world and focuses on supply chains.
- ⇒ The Polaris Project has an extensive list of book suggestions at http://www.polarisproject.org/storage/documents/Human_trafficking_books_full_list_.pdf

Films

- ⇒ *The Dark Side of Chocolate* is an excellent film about exploitation and abuse in the cocoa fields. Related to it, the “Raise the Bar Hershey” campaign is asking Hershey Chocolate to use only Fair Trade cocoa, in order to avoid child or slave labor: <http://www.thedarksideofchocolate.org/> and <http://www.raisethebarhershey.org/>
- ⇒ The organization “Free the Slaves” produced the short documentary *Dreams Die Hard* about people enslaved in the United States.
- ⇒ *Fatal Promises* (2009), directed by Katharina Rohrer, provides a comprehensive view on human trafficking juxtaposed to the rhetoric of today’s political efforts in combating it.
- ⇒ *The Whistleblower* (2010), starring Rachel Weisz and inspired by actual events, is a quasi-documentary that depicts human trafficking perpetrated by UN peacekeepers in post-war Bosnia.
- ⇒ The Polaris Project has an extensive list of film recommendations at: http://www.polarisproject.org/storage/documents/Human_trafficking_films_full_list_with_summaries.pdf

Work Together

To get involved in local anti-trafficking efforts: Many communities have an anti-trafficking taskforce that includes all the local service providers, as well as law enforcement officers who have been trained in anti-trafficking work.

The Polaris Project operates the National Human Trafficking Resource Center and maintains an up-to-date listing of state laws and advocacy groups at <http://www.polarisproject.org/state-map>.

The Department of Health and Human Services offers this partial list of nationwide coalitions⁴²:

LOCATION	NAME OF COALITION	LEAD ORGANIZATION	CONTACT	ALTERNATE CONTACT
Contra Costa County, California	Contra Costa County's Zero Tolerance for Human Trafficking Coalition	Contra Costa County, Martinez, CA	Juliana Carson 925-313-1591 jcarson1@ehsd.cccounty.us	N/A
Fresno, California	Central Valley Freedom Coalition	Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission Fresno, CA	Ronna Bright 559-268-1045 ext. 103 ronna.bright@fresnoeoc.org	N/A
Sacramento, California	Sacramento Rescue & Restore Coalition sacramentorescueandrestore.net	Sacramento Employment & Training Agency (SETA)	Mary Jennings 916-263-1555 mjennings@delpaso.seta.net	N/A
San Diego, California	Unity Coalition of Southern California	Bilateral Safely Corridor Coalition www.bscoalition.org	Marisa Ugarte 619-336-0770 sdbcc@yahoo.com	N/A
Colorado (Statewide coalition)	Colorado Network to End Human Trafficking (CoNEHT)	Colorado Legal Services	Pat Medige 303-866-9385 pmedige@colegalserv.org	N/A
Brevard County, Florida	East Coast Human Trafficking Task Force, Inc.	Greater Orlando Human Trafficking Task Force	Dr. Anthony Davis 407-234-6684 spacecoastrrc@gmail.com	N/A
Greater Orlando, Florida	Greater Orlando Human Trafficking Task Force	Greater Orlando Human Trafficking Task Force	Tomas Lares 407-244-5130 GreaterOrlandoHTTF@gmail.com	Jill B. Cohen 407-244-5129
Tampa, Florida	Tampa Bay Rescue and Restore	Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking	Giselle Rodriguez 727-442-3064 gissellefcabt@gmail.com	N/A
Jacksonville, Florida	Northeast Florida Human Trafficking Coalition	Jacksonville Sheriff's Office	Scott Dingee 904-306-2102 scott.dingee@jaxsheriff.org	Jessica "Lori" Armstrong 904-633-0322 Jessica.Armstrong@jax.ufl.edu
Georgia (Statewide coalition)	Georgia Rescue & Restore	Emory University School of Law, Barton Child Law Policy Center	Kirsten Widner 404-712-1233 kwidner@emory.edu	N/A
Kentucky (Statewide coalition)	Kentucky Rescue & Restore Coalition www.rescueandrestoreky.org	Catholic Charities of Louisville	Marissa Castellanos 502-974-4947 mcastellanos@archlou.org	N/A
Greater Baton Rouge, Louisiana	Middle District Human Trafficking Task Force	Healing Place Serve	Charity Trahan 225-810-6460 charity.traban@hpserve.org	N/A
Maryland (Statewide Coalition)	Maryland Rescue & Restore Coalition marylandcoalition.org	The Samaritan Women	Melissa Yao 410-852-3999 myao@marylandcoalition.org	N/A
Detroit, Michigan	Michigan Rescue and Restore Coalition michiganrescueandrestore.com	Global Project for Hope, Help and Healing	Richard Sands 734-771-7251 michiganrescueandrestore@gmail.com	N/A
St. Louis, Missouri	St. Louis Rescue and Restore Coalition https://sites.google.com/site/rescueandrestore/	International Institute of St. Louis	Suzanne LeLaurin 314-773-9090 x150 laurins@iistl.org	N/A
Central Missouri	Central Missouri Stop Human Trafficking Coalition www.stophumantraffickingmo.com	Central Missouri Stop Human Trafficking Coalition	Nanette Ward 866-590-5959 nanettew@stophumantraffickingmo.com	N/A

⁴² Reprinted from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/coalition_list.html. Last updated August 17, 2012; check the web site for updates.

Las Vegas, Nevada	Southern Nevada Human Trafficking Task Force	Las Vegas Metro Police	Lou Pascoe 702-828-8451 g2842p@lvmpd.com	Stacey Cramer, Salvation Army 702-649-8240 stacey.cramer@usw.salvationarmy.org
North Carolina (Statewide coalition)	NCCAHT North Carolina Coalition Against Human Trafficking	Legal Aid of North Carolina	Caitlin Ryland 919-856-2180 x113 caithlr@legalaidnc.org	N/A
Cincinnati, Ohio	End Slavery Cincinnati www.endslavercincinnati.org	Salvation Army	Erin Meyer 513-762-5658 erin.meyer@use.salvationarmy.org	N/A
Columbus, Ohio	Central Ohio Rescue and Restore Coalition www.centralohiorescueandrestore.org	The Salvation Army in Central Ohio	Trisha Smouse 614-358-2614 trisha.smouse@use.salvationarmy.org	614-285-4357 (24-hour hotline)
Dayton, Ohio	Abolition Ohio, the Rescue & Restore Coalition in the Miami Valley academic.dayton.edu/HumanRights/abolition_ohio.htm	Abolition Ohio	Anthony Talbott 937-229-4326 abolitionohio@gmail.com	N/A
Toledo, Ohio	Lucas County Human Trafficking Coalition	University of Toledo	Celia Williamson 419-530-4084 celia.williamson@utoledo.edu	N/A
Oklahoma (Statewide coalition)	Oklahomans Against Trafficking Humans (OATH)	Oklahomans Against Trafficking Humans (OATH)	Mark Elam 405-418-8445 or 1-800-995-0128 Markelam07@yahoo.com	N/A
Oregon (Statewide)	Oregonians Against Trafficking Humans (OATH) www.oregonoath.org	Multnomah County Sheriff's Office	Chris Killmer 503-221-1689 x107 ckillmer@ics-law.org	Keith Bickford (law enforcement) keith.bickford@mcsos
Puerto Rico	Alianza de Puerto Rico Contra la Trata Humana, Inc. (Puerto Rico Alliance Against Human Trafficking)	Alianza de Puerto Rico Contra la Trata Humana, Inc.	Alberto R. Lázaro, President 787-594-1094 alberto.lazaro@prcontralatrata.org	Karla Gonzalez, Executive Director 787-528-1550 Karla.Gonzalez@prcontralatrata.org
Chattanooga, Tennessee	Greater Chattanooga Coalition Against Human Trafficking (GCAHT) secondlifechattanooga.org/the-coalition/	Second Life of Chattanooga	Terri Self 423-994-4857 tsel@secondlifechattanooga.org	N/A
Nashville, Tennessee	Nashville Rescue and Restore Coalition	N/A	Dawn Gerhart 615-473-3168 dcmgerhart@gmail.com	N/A
Houston, Texas	Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition	Houston Rescue and Restore	Maria Trujillo 713-874-0290	N/A
Washington (Statewide coalition)	Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network	International Rescue Committee (IRC)	Kathleen Morris 206-623-2105	N/A



Farmworker protests organized by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. Photo by Marie. License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en>

about t'ruah



Mission Statement

T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights is an organization of rabbis from all streams of Judaism that acts on the Jewish imperative to respect and protect the human rights of all people. Grounded in Torah and our Jewish historical experience and guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we advocate for human rights in Israel and North America. T'ruah continues the historic work of Rabbis for Human Rights-North America, which was founded in 2002 and renamed T'ruah in January 2013.

What We Do

- We mobilize rabbis and their communities to protect human rights in the United States, Canada, Israel, and the occupied territories.** This work includes engaging rabbis and Jewish communities in advocating to their elected officials; helping rabbis to testify in state legislatures about bills that affect human rights; and advocating for policies in the U.S., Canada, and Israel that protect the human rights of all residents.
- We train rabbis and rabbinical students to be strong human rights leaders.** Through our summer fellowship, a select cohort of rabbinical/cantorial students gain the experience and skills to be human rights leaders. Through our year-in-Israel program, more than 60 students studying in Jerusalem participate in monthly human rights experiences and reflection sessions. We run webinars and in-person seminars for rabbis to learn to write and place op-eds, and to bring human rights issues to their communities.
- We promote rabbis and cantors as moral voices on the most crucial issues of the day.** We place op-eds and media stories that feature rabbis bringing Jewish values to current human rights concerns. We have testified to the Senate and to federal agencies about issues ranging from solitary confinement to human trafficking to discrimination against American Muslims.

notes

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