

why does God allow SLAVERY?

« **LAW** » vs. « **GRACE** »
« **SLAVES** » vs. « **SERVANTS** »
« **SLAVES** » vs. « **WORKERS** »

*“For he shall have judgment without mercy,
which has showed no mercy;
and mercy rejoices against judgment”* (Jam 2:13)...

“Anyone who beats their male or female slave with a rod must be punished if the slave dies as a direct result, but they are not to be punished if the slave recovers after a day or two, since the slave is their property... When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth” (Exo 21:20-21, 26-27)...

“And masters, do the same for your slaves. Give up your use of threats, because you know that He who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him” (Eph 6:9)...

Many people wrote extensively about the subject and the Internet is inundated with articles and commentaries about the history of slavery and its evolvement over the years from the beginning of times even before the written history can trace such practice. I am the least qualified to give it its due. My humble contribution in this study is to show that it is purely a disgraceful and disgusting “**MANMADE**” exploitation in its jam-packed scope and practice.

Although slavery was abolished and is universally banned by all countries, it still shows its cruel and ugly face through all kinds of discrimination, intimidation, inequality, xenophobia and racism. The purpose of my focusing mainly on Christians in this study is because critics and skeptics accuse Judeo-Christian God of condoning and encouraging slavery. Slavery and human trafficking are rampant all over the world in one form or another, especially in Asia, South America and Africa nowadays.

For the purpose of this study, the reader should ignore what evolved in the last four centuries in the practice of “*Slavery*”. Slavery was and is neither biblical nor moral. That does not mean a better scenario took place before that period. Critics say that God instituted and approved of the practice of slavery, it is far from him because the Old Testament is full of guidelines, restrictions and boundaries, although I admit some passages with regard to cause and effect seem cruel in scope of punishment.

On the sidelines of this painful subject, the paws and claws of the many aspects of the “**Manmade**” slavery shows its lethal weapon in the fact that every nation under the sun, with no exception whatsoever, celebrates a designated independence day, which proves that at one time or another, these nations were occupied, colonized, enslaved and almost annihilated by the conqueror.

And now back to our subject. These are few biblical passages of general guidelines to digest:

“These are the laws you are to set before them: “If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for

six years. But in the seventh year, he shall go free, without paying anything. If he comes alone, he is to go free alone; but if he has a wife when he comes, she is to go with him. If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the woman and her children shall belong to her master, and only the man shall go free. "But if the servant declares, 'I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,' then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life. "If a man sells his daughter as a servant, she is not to go free as male servants do. If she does not please the master who has selected her for himself, he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to foreigners, because he has broken faith with her. If he selects her for his son, he must grant her the rights of a daughter. If he marries another woman, he must not deprive the first one of her food, clothing and marital rights. If he does not provide her with these three things, she is to go free, without any payment of money. Anyone who strikes a person with a fatal blow is to be put to death. However, if it is not done intentionally, but God lets it happen, they are to flee to a place I will designate. But if anyone schemes and kills someone deliberately, that person is to be taken from my altar and put to death... Anyone who kidnaps someone is to be put to death, whether the victim has been sold or is still in the kidnapper's possession" (Exo 21:1-16)...

"You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your countrymen or one of your aliens who is in your land in your towns. You shall give him his wages on his day before the sun sets, for he is poor and sets his heart on it; so that he will not cry against you to the Lord and it become sin in you" (Deut 24:14-15)...

"Now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our children like their children. Yet behold, we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters are forced into bondage already, and we are helpless because our fields and vineyards belong to others" (Neh 5:5)...

According to slave owners and traders, a slave is not a person; he/she is a commodity; he/she has no records beside those of his owner, and he/she has no rights. Contrary to what critics and skeptics want us to believe, God emphasizes the slave's identity and dignity and outlines the slave's rights, duties and responsibilities: *"Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear and sincerity of heart, just as you would show to Christ... Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (Eph 6:5; 1Pet 2:18)...* **conforming in line with the importance and understanding of this command:** *"Wives, submit to your husbands, as to the Lord... Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph 5:22-25)...*

To our chagrin, the majority of the atrocities perpetrated against slaves and the promotion of slave trade, mostly in the last four centuries and before, was committed by so-called Christian slave hunters, importers, exporters, traffickers and owners, who supposedly experienced God's salvation and freedom in Jesus Christ from the slavery of sin and who were required and expected to be pioneers in eradicating slavery; but they decided to be ungodly and sinful determined to enslave other human beings. Through their self-righteousness, distinction, superiority and greed: *"... who trusted in their own righteousness and viewed others with contempt" (Luk 18:9)...* and who say: *"Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am holier than you" (Isa 65:5)...* they utterly overlooked God's precepts and commands thus cementing the notion and the claims of skeptics and critics that God condones slavery and even endorse it:

“...*Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen*” (Neh 9:29)...
“*For although they knew God (and pretended to be devout Christians like the Pharisees), they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and darkened in their foolish hearts... Furthermore, since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, he gave them up to a depraved mind, to do what should not be done... I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spoke, they did not hear: and they did evil in my sight And chose that in which I did not delight*” (Rom 1:21, 28; Isa 66:4)...

Some of Muslim scholars are famous for issuing “*Fatwas*” (=religious rulings/opinions/edicts)” for anything and everything their co-religionist governments and believers need to validate an act, action or endeavor, whether godly or ungodly. The Christian clergy surpassed any other religion in concocting all kinds of writs and encyclicals to justify slavery as a necessary and positive evil. They made sure to laud the legal and commercial aspect, need and practice of slavery that lack all godliness and ethical ramifications, thus confusing what is godly, what is legal, what is ethical and what is morally and humanly sound. In this regard, I believe this passage of Ezekiel makes figuratively allusion to these Christian Clergy:

“*Her priests (The Christian clergy) do violence to my law and profane my holy things; they do not distinguish between the holy and the common; they teach that there is no difference between the unclean and the clean... Her officials (All the Christian denominations) within her are like wolves tearing their prey; they shed blood and kill people to make unjust gain... The people of the land practice extortion and commit robbery; they oppress the poor and needy and mistreat the foreigner, denying them justice*” (Eze 22:26-29)...

Have the mostly Christian human traders ever read the word of God regarding slavery? Have they ever heeded God’s warnings and death sentences? “*He/she who kidnaps a man/woman (or enslave a man/woman against their will or mistreat them), whether he/she sells him/her or he/she is found in his/her possession, shall surely be put to death*” (Exo 21:16)... God allowed an economically fair, practical and equitable slavery and not the instituted cruel and inhuman slavery practiced by humans on humans. How then skeptics claim that the God of the Bible approves of and condones slavery?

No wonder God emphatically says to them: “*That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the meek... and who say: “We may buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes” (Amos 2:7; 8:6)... and who: “Cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine to drink” (Joel 3:3)... “Thus says the Lord God: “Yet in this you have blasphemed me by acting treacherously against me” (Paraphrased Eze 20:27)...*

God also says to them: “*Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? And against whom have you raised your voice and haughtily lifted up your eyes?” (Isa 37:23)... “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him/her unpunished who takes his name in vain” (Exo 20:7)... “Keep my commands and follow them. I am the Lord. Do not profane my holy name, for I must be acknowledged as holy by the whole wide world. I am the Lord, who made you holy and who brought you out of the bondage of sin to be your God. I am the Lord” (Paraphrased Lev 22:31-33)...*

We should blame ourselves for the mayhem because we, Christians, have caused it and now we cry wolf: “*O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemy blaspheme your name forever?” (Psa 74:10)... Why blame the critics and skeptic when we, Christians, have given and still give them all kinds of ammunitions to attack God by our non Christlike behaviors? “Because by your deeds you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme” (Paraphrased 2Sam 12:14)... Does not*

Paul confirm that: *“The Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles (=all non true Christians and critics) because of you (us)”* (Rom 2:24)...

Voluntary slavery and involuntary enslaved persons were and are treated as commodities, which contradict the biblical, the ethical as well as the natural justice that deals with human dignity and brotherhood. Those so-called Christians, especially in the USA and Europe, forgot that those slaves were created like them: *“In the image of God”* (Gen 1:27)... and of whom God said: *“Even on the male and female servants I will pour out my Spirit in those days... For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free, and we were all given one Spirit to drink”* (Joel 2:29; 1Cor 12:13)... SO: *“Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven”* (Col 4:1)... *“You shall not rule over him/her with severity, but are to revere your God”* (Lev 25:43)... *“Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother/sister beloved, especially to me, but how much more unto you, both in the flesh, and in the Lord”* (Philn 1:16)...

They paid no heed to the fact that the services and labor of a man/woman may be lawfully sought, bought and sold but not the human himself, especially the enslaved, the disenfranchised, the needy and the deprived of his will and destiny. Labor is the consequence of Adam and Eve’s infamous fall: *“And unto Adam he said: “...Cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of thy life... In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground... and that: “You are your brother/sister’ keeper”* (Gen 3:17 & 19; 4:9)... *“Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously each against his brother/sister so as to profane the covenant of our fathers?”* (Mal 2:10)...

Lately, few Christian associations and organizations, that were once slavers, came out of their dark closets and mastered the courage to publicly contrite and to ask for forgiveness for their unchristian role in slaving others. Such admission took place recently on April 18th, 2017 at Georgetown University where Jesuits apologized for their roles in slaving 272 individuals back in the days. These are two excerpts of what the speakers said: (All quotes are from Catholic New York... Pub. April 27th, 2017)

Jesuit Fr. Timothy Kesicki, president of the Jesuit conference of Canada and the United States: *“Today the Society of Jesus, who helped to establish Georgetown University and whose leaders enslaved and mercilessly sold your ancestors, stands before you to say that we have greatly sinned... We pray with you today because we have greatly sinned and because we are profoundly sorry.”*

President John J. DeGioia: *“Slavery remains the original evil of our republic... The university “was complicit in” that evil, “a sin that tore apart families”... “through great violence, (it) denied and rejected the dignity and humanity of our fellow sisters and brothers. We lay this truth bare, in sorrowful apology and communal reckoning.”*

Not everyone is an emperor, king, queen, ruler, owner, employer or rich. One master and the rest are in the subjugation of bondage of citizenship, affiliation, appointment, employment and relationships: *“Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey, whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?”* (Rom 6:16)...

We are all social slaves to our rulers, convictions, beliefs, lifestyles, professions, desires and each other. There are plenty of sweet and sour aspects and facets of slavery in marriages and relationships. In short, within the concept of this parable: *“The older brother said to his father: “I’ve been slaving for you”* (Prodigal son parable Luk 15:29)... we are all steward “slaves” of the one and only just Master, the

Almighty God, who distinguishably and appropriately rewards the good and the bad according to our deeds: *“Knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he/she will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free... There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus”* (Eph 6:8; Gal 3:28)...

As a fact of our life, there are countless incidents of domestic violence and killing, whether between husbands and wives, parents and children as well between siblings, etc. contrary to God’s clear commands. Some relationships thrive on violent and bondage sex within and without marriage. Some chooses to forcefully rape and sexually violate involuntary participants regardless of age or gender. Does that mean that God condones and encourages violence in these relationships? Does bondage sex and domestic violence make of marriage a bad institution? The answer is no and no because all these crafted perpetrated acts are **“MANMADE”**.

Those same Christian clergy, together with their counterpart in Judaism and Islam, circulate to this day the misinterpreted, controversial and unfounded story about the curse placed on Canaan, the grandson of Noah and the son of Ham, by Noah: *“Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren”* (Gen 9:25)... and that since Ham in Hebrew means dark/tanned, then the descendants of the servant of servants Canaan, son of Ham, are dark-skinned, saying that is why the majority of slaves in the new world, including but not limited to those acquired during the last 2000 years from conquests, invasions and wars, were and are Africans in origin. Although slavery of the past four centuries was based on skin color mostly from impoverished countries of Africa, the fact remains it is a mere coincidence that has no relation to Canaan or Ham, because slavery was not biblically based on race or skin color but on social needs and markets’ economics.

In conclusion, Adam and Eve sinned because of pride and greed; Cain killed his brother Abel because of jealousy and greed; Jacob fought with Esau in the womb and conned Esau stealing his birthright because of status and greed; Joseph was sold by his brothers because of jealousy and envy; Herod decapitated John the Baptist because of lust and vengeance. Judah sold Christ for 30 pieces of silver because of greed. All these are mere faces of slavery to sin. It seems as if the Old Testament paints God as an always angry God giving 611 commandments and sanctions because: *“They are darkened in their understanding and alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of their hearts”* (Eph 4:18)...

When Christ came, he fulfilled all the requirements of the Mosaic Law on the cross and he introduced a new covenant to humanity called “Grace” substituting the 611 commandments and reducing them to two: *“The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength”. The second is this: “Love your neighbor as yourself”. There is no commandment greater than these”* (Mar 12:29-31)...

Apparently the God of the Old Testament seems always angry and full of wrath in contrast to the God of the New Testament who seems forgiving and loving in Jesus Christ. Officially, all the Christian denominations seem to condemn slavery, but Christians are the predominant traders of human trafficking and enslaving in greed and for all ill-gotten gains: *“Better is a little with righteousness than great income with injustice”* (Prov 16:8)...

“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent” (Act 17:29-30)... I strongly believe that

the God of the Old and New Testament will shower his punishment on all those abominations perpetrated by Christians in his due time. Christians' sin will be greater than those who do not know Christ.

No wonder Friedrich Nietzsche eloquently said: *“In truth, there was only one Christian and he died on the cross”*. What happened to: *“Do to others as you would have them do to you”* (Luk 6:31)... I pray and hope that each and every one of us makes every effort to eradicate slavery and human trafficking because it is not Christlike, it is ungodly, it is illegal, it is unethical and it is immoral and heed: *“What shall it profit a man/woman, if he/she shall gain the whole world, and lose his/her own soul?”* (Mar 8:36)...

***“Awake you that sleep,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ shall give you light”*** (Eph 5:14)...