



Faith in Action to End Slavery



Bahá'í Resources on Human Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery

The Bahá'í sacred writings explicitly prohibit slavery, and the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith emphasize the promotion of equality, justice and unity. Here are ways you can join the movement to end human trafficking and modern-day slavery.

Developments in Bahá'í History

Bahá'u'lláh, the prophet-founder of the Bahá'í Faith, lived in nineteenth-century Persia and was born into a family that held slaves. In 1839, at age 22, he inherited his father's slaves and freed them. Years later, after founding the Bahá'í Faith, he wrote a tablet (formal letter) to Queen Victoria of Britain in which, among other things, he praised her abolition of slavery.

Excerpts from the Bahá'í Sacred Writings

"It is forbidden you to trade in slaves, be they men or women. It is not for him who is himself a servant to buy another of God's servants, and this hath been prohibited in His Holy Tablet. Thus, by His mercy, hath the commandment been recorded by the Pen of justice. Let no man exalt himself above another; all are but bondslaves before the Lord, and all exemplify the truth that there is none other God but Him. He, verily, is the All-Wise, Whose wisdom encompasseth all things."

~ Bahá'u'lláh

"We have been informed that thou hast forbidden the trading in slaves, both men and women. This, verily, is what God hath enjoined in this wondrous Revelation. God hath, truly, destined a reward for thee, because of this. He, verily, will pay the doer of good his due recompense, wert thou to follow what hath been sent unto thee by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed."

~ Bahá'u'lláh (in a tablet addressed to Queen Victoria)

"You must show forth that which will be conducive to the welfare and tranquility of the helpless ones of the world. Gird up the loins of effort; perchance the slaves may be emancipated from bondage and find freedom. In this day, the cry of justice is raised and the lamentation of equity is heard."

~ Bahá'u'lláh

If thine eyes be turned towards mercy, forsake the things that profit thee and cleave unto that which will profit mankind. And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbor that which thou chooseth for thyself.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

Blessed is the ruler who succoureth the captive, and the rich one who careth for the poor, and the just one who secureth from the wrong doer the rights of the downtrodden, and happy the trustee who observeth that which the Ordainer, the Ancient of Days hath prescribed unto him.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

The entire human race are servants of the Lord of might and glory, as He hath brought the whole creation under the purview of His gracious utterance, and hath enjoined upon us to show forth love and affection, wisdom and compassion, faithfulness and unity towards all, without any discrimination.

~ `Abdu'l-Bahá

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer to the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

O CHILDREN OF MEN! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy. O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind. O God! Establish the Most Great Peace. Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together. O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

~ `Abdu'l-Bahá

Taking Action

Devotional Gatherings: partner with Bahá'ís and others in your local community, including interfaith groups, to host a devotional gathering on the theme of human trafficking. Invite neighbors, friends, and coworkers to come together to pray for justice and healing for all those who have been affected by human trafficking and for an end to the scourge of modern-day slavery.

Children's Classes and Junior Youth Groups: work with young people in your community to create spaces for children and youth to learn and dialogue about trafficking in an age-appropriate way. Empower them to inform and protect themselves and others, and to help end this injustice.

Other Community Efforts: partner with others to hold awareness-raising activities, such as workshops, discussion groups, book clubs and film screenings which can make use of educational videos (find a video here: www.freetheslaves.net/videos) and books that educate around human trafficking (find a book here: www.freetheslaves.net/books). Local agencies in your community, such as homeless youth shelters, may also be able to use volunteers to better serve vulnerable populations.