

*Extracts and facts about slavery from various chapters of the book:*

There are twenty-seven million slaves alive today.

They are also invisible. Because slavery is illegal in all countries and banned by international conventions, it has become a hidden crime.

Around 1790 BC, the Code of Hammurabi introduced the legal status of a slave. The Code laid out the first complete legal system and reveals the early inter-relationship of religion, law, and slavery in its prologue

At their pinnacle, the Greek city-states had large numbers of slaves. Around 400 BC, Athens and its companion port city of Piraeus contained around 60,000 citizens, 25,000 non-citizens, and 70,000 slaves.....the work of Plato was building a solid rationalization for slavery based on the inherent inferiority of “barbarians.” His pupil Aristotle enlarged this justification, arguing that slavery was good for both slave and master, since each were achieving their true function.

Between 320 AD and 1453 AD, slavery was a large part of the Byzantine Empire’s economy. The expansion by force of the Empire flooded Constantinople with slaves.....The emergence of agricultural surplus and ruling elites had established the three main supports of institutionalized slavery: an armed military that could use violence to enslave, a business market for slaves, and a religious elite that provided divine approval for slavery.

By 1888, when the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade finally came to an end with the abolition of slavery in Brazil, between eleven and twenty-eight million people had been taken from Africa

Internationally, the first agreement abolishing slavery dates to the League of Nations “Slavery Convention” of 1926. The convention defined slavery as “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.” It declared slavery a “crime against humanity” and the slave trader an enemy over whom any state could hold criminal jurisdiction. Some twenty years later, in 1948, the United Nations passed the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” which stated: “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.”

The true nature of slavery does not exist in the “packaging” or justifications for slavery. The key to defining it is to look closely at the core characteristics of an enslaved person’s life. Across human history, these are the same. Slaves have lost free will, are under violent control, are economically exploited, and are paid nothing. They may be kidnapped or captured, tricked, or born into slavery, and the contextual explanation of why they end up in a state of violent control may be political, racial, religious, mythological, gender-based, ethnic, or combinations of these, but the essence of slavery is controlling people through violence and using them to make money.

Another important question is: “Can this person walk away, or are they under violent control?” And of all the core characteristics, violent control is the most important: it is the foundation of all slavery. After violent control is established slavery can then take any one of many forms, including debt bondage slavery, contract slavery, slavery linked to religious practices, or state-sponsored forced labor.

Slavery can therefore be defined as a relationship in which one person is controlled by another through violence, the threat of violence, or psychological coercion has lost free will and free movement, is exploited economically, and is paid nothing beyond subsistence.

Slaves are used to produce many of our basic commodities. Originating from numerous different countries, there are documented cases of slavery in our carpets, cocoa, cotton, timber, beef..... One attempt to tackle this problem, and remove slave labor from the cocoa supply chain, is the Cocoa Protocol. Established in 2001, it brings together the global chocolate industry, several anti-slavery groups, labor unions, and the ILO. Covering all cocoa-growing regions worldwide, the Protocol serves as a treaty between all the groups and is the first treaty to be struck between an entire industry and the anti-slavery movement.....

Slavery not only ruins the lives of slaves, but is a major cause of a depressed economy, low levels of literacy, and shorter lifespans, for all citizens in poor countries.

As Gillian Blackell explains, “the unequal status of women in families and society, the feminization of poverty and harmful stereotypes of

women as property, commodities, servants and sexual objects are among some of the root causes of trafficking in women.”

Caste discrimination shapes all political, economic, and social relations. The people of the lowest caste, the dalit, are segregated, and denied access to land, education, and employment.

..... race and ethnicity do play a role in slavery’s supply and demand. So too does religion. In numerous countries around the world, religion forms the dividing line between slaves and free without wholly defining the system of bondage. Beyond its role in creating social exclusions and economic vulnerabilities, as in India’s Hindu caste system, or in shaping ritual slavery, as in Ghana and India, religion is a weapon for traffickers and slaveholders adept at applying its doctrines.....

Human slavery was born in conflict, and wars still unleash slavery on threatened populations today. Almost every war generates slavery..... Around the world, slavery grows quickly amid the chaos of armed conflict, environmental destruction and natural disaster, because this chaos brings with it economic crisis and violence – two of slavery’s key ingredients.

Around the world, environmental and human rights issues are closely linked. Just as they are used across the armed conflicts of a region’s political landscape, so slaves are used to destroy the natural landscape of a region.

Some slaves are diagnosed with a PTSD-variant termed Complex PTSD which acknowledges that there has been a prolonged period of total control exerted over the victim by another person.

Slavery is ripe for extinction. By ending it, we can achieve in our lifetimes something that makes landing on the moon seem a minor historical footnote. However, there is no simple solution to stopping slavery in every country or village. Ending slavery in America and the UK will be different to ending slavery in India, Ghana, or Thailand. It is integrated into the local as well as the global economy, and every country will need to build a unique set of responses. Japan, for example, has the resources it needs to eradicate slavery very quickly inside the country, but has an extreme shortage of political will. Poor countries may have the

best will in the world, but not enough money to take on the slaveholders. But around the world, slaves are being liberated. And each time a slave comes to freedom, we learn another lesson about how slavery can end. By understanding the social, cultural, political, economic, and sometimes religious packaging that is wrapped around slavery in different countries, we can adapt general patterns to each unique setting.