

## **SLAVERY IN ISLAM**

Slavery started with the Arab traders. They sold the Africans first because they said we Black Africans were not worshipping their type of God and that they were bastards. Many of the African countries had to convert with force for them to trade with these Arabs. There is still slavery going on in Arab countries to this day. Before the Africans ask the western world for reparations, they shouldn't forget to take some from the oil-rich Islamic and Arab states. Moslems and Arabs must stop using slavery to convince the Black Africans to convert to Islam. Islam has harmed the Africans. Mohammad himself had slaves, they would ONLY be released when they had converted to Islam, that was one way they could gain their freedom.

### **ABSTRACT**

Islam institutionalized slavery. Muhammad began to take slaves after he moved to Medina, and had power. Slaves were usually taken in raids on nearby Arab tribes, or war, either through offensive or defensive actions. Islam allows the taking of slaves as "booty", or reward for fighting. This has led to numerous "jihads" by Muslim states and tribes to attack other non-Muslim groups and obtain slaves. Islamic jurisprudence laid down regulations for the proper treatment of slaves. However, abuses have occurred throughout history.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The West is familiar with the history of slavery in the new world. It was sinful and terrible, and it lasted for several hundred years. And it was abolished mainly through the efforts of Christians in England (Wilberforce, Clarkson) and America (the Abolitionists, primarily Protestant).

However, few people in the west know about Islam and slavery. Most would be surprised that Islam authorizes the taking of slaves as spoils of war. From the days that Muhammad drew his sword to rob and conquer non-Muslims to this very day, Muslims have been taking non-Muslims, and even other black Muslims, as slaves.

Muslims were enslaving black Africans long before any slave ships sailed for the New World. Muslims were taking and making slaves all over the lands they had conquered. Later, when slave ships were loaded with black slaves, often, a Muslim slave broker had the human cargo all ready to go. American slavers rarely had to go into inland to capture slaves, they were already waiting there, courtesy of some Muslim ruler, and/or slave broker! In many cases, if the black slaves were not sent to the New World, they were sent to the Mideast to be enslaved by Arabs, or kept by other black Muslims as slaves.

### **THE RIGHTS OF SLAVES UNDER ISLAM**

According to the Hughes Dictionary of Islam, slaves had few civil or legal rights. For example:

- a) Muslim men were allowed to have sex anytime with females slaves - Sura 4:3, 4:29, 33:49.
- b) Slaves are as helpless before their masters as idols are before God - Sura 16:77
- c) According to Islamic Tradition, people at the time of their capture were either to be killed, or enslaved. Shows you that they were at the bottom of the barrel to start with.

- d) According to Islamic jurisprudence, slaves were merchandise. The sales of slaves was in accordance with the sale of animals.
- e) Muhammad ordered that some slaves who were freed by their master be RE-ENSLAVED!
- f) It is permissible under Islamic law to whip slaves.
- g) According to Islam, a Muslim could not be put to death for murdering a slave. Ref. 2:178 and the Jalalayn confirm this.
- h) According to Islam, the testimony of slaves is not admissible in court. Ibn Timiyya and Bukhari state this.
- i) According to Islamic jurisprudence, slaves cannot choose their own marriage mate. - Ibn Hazm, vol. 6, part 9.
- j) According to Islamic jurisprudence, slaves can be forced to marry who their masters want. - Malik ibn Anas, vol. 2, page 155.

### **WHO COULD BE MADE SLAVES UNDER ISLAM?**

- 1) Islam allows Muslims to make slaves out of anyone who is captured during war.
- 2) Islam allows for the children of slaves to be raised as slaves
- 3) Like #1, Islam allows for Christians and Jews to be made into slaves if they are captured in war. After Muslim armies attacked and conquered Spain, they took thousands of slaves back to Damascus. The key prize was 1000 virgins as slaves. They were forced to go all the way back to Damascus.
- 4) Christians and Jews, who had made a treaty with the ruling Muslims could be made into slaves if they did not pay the "protection" tax. This paying for 'protection' was just like paying a Mafia racketeer! This allowed Muslim rulers to extort money from non-Muslim people.

### **POST MUHAMMAD SLAVERY**

#### **WHERE DID MANY OF THE MUSLIM'S SLAVES COME FROM?**

Although Muslims took slaves from all over the lands they conquered, many of the Muslim slaves were black Africans. They were forced to do the harshest labor.

There was a famous black slave revolt in Iraq where thousands of black slaves revolted and killed tens of thousands of Arabs in Basrah. These slaves were forced to work in the large Muslim saltpeter mines. During their revolt, they conquered the city of Basrah, in Iraq. They conquered city after city, and they couldn't be stopped. Their uprising and drive for freedom lasted for about 11 years. ["The History of Islam", Robert Payne, p.185.]

As the Muslim armies continued to conquer land, they acquired many slaves. Bernard Lewis in "The Arabs in History" writes: "polytheists and idolaters were seen primarily as sources of slaves."

In the early years of the Arab conquests, vast numbers of slaves were acquired by capture. C.E. Bosworth in "The Islamic Dynasties" writes: "the use of this labor enabled the Arabs to live on the conquered land as a rentier class and to exploit some of the economic potential of the rich Fertile Crescent."

Ibn Warraq writes: "Arabs were deeply involved in the vast network of slave trading - they scoured the slave markets of China, India, and Southeast Asia. There were Turkish slaves from Central Asia, slaves from the Byzantine Empire, white slaves from Central and East Europe, and Black slaves from West and East Africa. Every city in the Islamic world had its slave market."

## **ABUSES OF SLAVES IN MODERN ISLAM TODAY**

Muhammad did say that slaves should be treated fairly. But they were still a Muslim's property. Just as abuses occurred under Christianity, so too, many abuses occurred, and still occur under Islam. The difference between the two is that Islam ordains the taking of slaves during war, thus perpetuating slavery. Christianity does not. In slavery's perpetual existence, Islam has seen great abuses of slaves.

Everyone knows about the abuses of slaves in the new world. What do you know about the abuses of slaves under Islam? I found two very good books on slavery and Islam.

- 1) "Slavery and Muslim Society in Africa", by Allan Fisher, pub in 1971
- 2) "The Slave Trade Today" by Sean O'Callaghan, pub in 1961.

Both books really opened my eyes to how terrible slavery under Islam really is. I use the present tense, because it is obvious that these abuses continue to this day.

I also have a number of other references concerning slavery in Islam. A general survey is Hughes Dictionary of Islam. It notes a few basic points:

- a) Slaves have no civil liberty, but are entirely under the authority of their owners.
- b) Slavery is in complete harmony with the spirit of Islam. Islam did make life better for the average slave, but Muhammad intended it to be a perpetual institution.
- c) Hughes also says that it is a righteous act to free a slave. I just find it hard to understand that the god who told Muhammad to take slaves later tells him it's good to free slaves?

In 'The Slave Trade Today', Sean O'Callaghan toured the Mideast and Africa and covertly visited many slave markets. Since Islam allows for slavery and slave trading, he was able to see much of the real world of Islamic slavery. Remember O'Callaghan saw this less than 40 years ago. This probably still continues today, albeit more discreetly.

In Djibouti he writes:

"Ten boys were ranged in a circle on the dais (used to display the slaves), their buttocks toward us. They were all naked, and I saw with horror that five had been castrated. The (slave dealer) said that usually 10% of the boys are castrated, being purchased by Saudi homosexuals, or by Yemenis, who own harems, as guards." p 75

"Why had the girls (female slaves who had just been sold) had accepted their fate without a murmur, the boys howled and cried?" "Simple" said the Somali, we tell the girls from a very early age - 7 or 8 that they are made for love, at age NINE we let them practice with each other, and a year later with the boys".

In Aden he writes:

"The Yemeni told me that the girls (slave girls used as prostitutes) were encouraged to have children, especially by white men. For if a slave girl had a white child, she was given a bonus of 20 pounds when the child was taken from her". As you can see, the child of a slave remained a slave, the owner could sell the child and make money. This sale is allowable under Islamic law.

"Only one offense was severely punished; attempting to escape from the harem... The wretched girl was stripped and spread eagle in the courtyard...punishment was administer by a eunuch, a huge powerful Negro who seemed to enjoy his task. 70 lashes were given."

"Because of this (the fact that eunuchs can perform sexually), the eunuch often has his penis removed as well as his testicles"! This is also legal under Islamic law, since it is preparing the slave for service.

In Saudi Arabia he writes:

'The slave population was estimated at 450,000"! ....Slave auctions are no longer held regularly, only in an alley in Mecca."

'I was awakened by shouts and screams coming from the courtyard. Rushing to the window I looked down to see a dozen slaves being herded through a door at the far end of the yard. They were being driven in like cattle by three hefty guards armed with long lashed whips. Even as I watched, one of the poor wretches, a Sudanese girl with huge breasts, received a savage lash across her naked buttocks let out a shriek of agony'

'As the next slave was led in, a murmur of excitement went up among the buyers and they crowded closer around the rostrum. He was a slender boy of about 12 years old with beautiful classical Arab features. Although much has been written about Arab brotherhood and solidarity, I knew that the Arab has no compunction in enslaving his fellows should they fall into his hands.

The boy was naked and tried to cover his privates with his little hands and he ran up the steps of the rostrum.....there is an age old saying among the Bedouin: "A goat for use, a girl for enjoyment, but a boy for ecstasy". He (the now purchased slave boy) was claimed by a tall bearded Arab who led him from the rostrum with an arm around his waist".

This is just a portion of what O'Callaghan saw. This happens because Islam has made it legal for slavery. Yes, some of this is against Islam, but because Islam has made it into an institution, abuses will occur.

It is also noted that as the slaves get too old to perform service or sexually satisfy their masters, their masters 'manumits' the slaves. Now, aged, worn out, they are put out on the streets to fend for themselves. These ex-slaves are left to fend for themselves. Their former owner has committed a great, righteousness act in freeing a slave! He gets rid of the burdensome slave, and gets a bonus in heaven. What a religion!

In Fisher's book, other observations are recorded:

In Mecca:

"We take note of 20 tall Negroes in turbans walking near the Kaba. They are eunuch slaves and are employed as police in the great Mosque. There are about 50 of them all together."

"The streets are full of slaves... we see a few old slave women. They are recognized by the poverty of clothing... but we see nothing of the younger women slaves who are kept in the houses of the city."

"As we move along we see two or three very old men and women who look like black skeletons. If we go to the mosque at sunrise we shall see some of these, if we go at sunset they will be there too, and if we pass by at midnight, we shall see them there still .. Sleeping on the stones in their rags. They have no home but the mosque, and no food but what they receive in alms; (they were) turned out to seek the bounty of Allah, as their masters would say."

Speaking of how Saudi obtains so many black slaves: "they (the slave traders) pose as Muslim missionaries who guide their compatriots (black African Muslims), to the Holy Places of Islam, to make the Pilgrimage, and be instructed in the Quran in Arabic." Once transported, they are made into slaves.

"So with the connivance of the Saudi authorities the ancient trade in black ivory is perpetuated in our time in spite of the international conventions".

Fisher also notes that white slaves are most highly prized.

Another interesting comment I've come across is that there were regions in black Africa that Muslim missionaries wouldn't go into. The reason is that if those blacks became Muslim, they could no longer enslave them. So, the Muslims banned spreading the word of Islam among certain black tribes. It was from these tribes that local Muslim rulers would harvest slaves, and sell them throughout the Islamic world.

Time and time again, slavery in Islam is abused. The west has finished with slavery, Islam continues it, and with that, the abuses go on.

A recent article on the slavery in Sudan is found in Newsweek, Oct. 12, 1992. Since that time, there have been numerous articles written by every form of press on Islamic slavery in Sudan. Basically, southern Sudanese, who are not Muslim, are attacked, and rounded up, and sold into slavery. Anyone willing to do a search at a library could find these articles quite easily.

Lastly, I remember watching a Tony Brown's Journal show. It covered the slavery existing in Muslim lands today, the torture of slaves, the hobbling by breaking the young boys ankles, the seizure of Negro lands by Arabs, etc. Anyone is able to call the show and order this tape. A Negro Muslim from Mauritania was on the show. He described what the Arabs in Mauritania were doing to the Negroes (all Muslim) there. Recent human rights publications have also stated that the same is happening in Mali. Arab Muslims are forcibly taking land, and enslaving Negro Muslims there.

A group of Negro pastors in the US, formed a group to combat Islamic slavery amongst the blacks, both Muslim and non-Muslim in Africa. The information on this can be found in the August 1997 issue of Charisma magazine, and in the 11-17-97 issue of Christianity. The group is called "Harambee" and is affiliated with the Loveland Church in Los Angeles, CA.

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