

Questions About Helping Muslim Slaves

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Is it possible to purchase Muslim slaves and set them free and return them to their families that love them?

Answer:

Short answer: **Don't buy people.** It may feel like the fastest way to free someone, but purchasing a person typically **fuels trafficking, breaks the law, and puts you and the victim at enormous risk.** There are safer, legal, and effective ways to rescue, reunite, and restore people who are enslaved — including Muslim victims — without becoming part of the problem.

Why buying a person is a bad idea

- **It's illegal in nearly every country.** Purchasing a person is facilitation of human trafficking and can lead to criminal prosecution.
- **It funds traffickers.** Money you give to traffickers is immediately re-invested in kidnapping, recruitment, corruption, or further exploitation.
- **It endangers the victim.** Traffickers may demand more ransom; the person's "release" via purchase can be staged to extract repeated payments, or the trafficker may retaliate.
- **It undermines long-term rescue.** Buying a person bypasses the legal system and often prevents proper documentation, medical care, legal protection, and safe reintegration.
- **It may prevent prosecution.** Law enforcement needs evidence to arrest and dismantle trafficking networks; private purchases can destroy that chain of evidence.

Here are some ways the United States government says Americans can help fight human trafficking and modern slavery — including how you as an individual or church-based ministry can be involved. I'm highlighting specific steps and resources.

What the U.S. Government Says You Can Do

- Rather than "buying out" victims, coordinate through legitimate organisations and legal channels (which the U.S. emphasises).
- Support reintegration and safe housing by funding or partnering with vetted organisations rather than informal or unofficial rescue attempts.
- Advocate for ethical trade and ask your networks (business, church) to avoid goods produced by forced labor — a way of reducing demand.

There *are* indications that the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), which is the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is operating in Pakistan and involved in relief and development efforts; however, I could **not** find a published source that confirms ADRA is specifically running a program dedicated to “freeing Muslim slaves” in Pakistan.

Here’s a summary of what *is* known, what remains unclear.

What we do know

- ADRA says it “delivers relief and development to individuals in more than 118 countries.”
- There is an ADRA article noting work in Pakistan: e.g., “From Palmy to Pakistan — a ministry of prayer and preaching” mentions that many Christian families in Pakistan’s brick kilns are trapped in a cycle of servitude.
- In the “List of Antislavery Organisations” (EndSlaveryNow) ADRA is listed under “Forced labour, Bonded labour, Child labour” for global operations including Pakistan.

What we do not find clear evidence for

- A documented ADRA initiative publicly declared as “freeing Muslim slaves” (i.e., specifically freeing enslaved Muslim individuals or families) in Pakistan.
- Details of how many people freed, how the operation runs, what legal rescue or rehabilitation services are provided by ADRA in that specific context.

Why this distinction matters

- It’s one thing for an NGO to be **present** and doing relief/development; another to be actively **rescue-freeing** enslaved people. Those are significantly different operations involving legal, security, and logistical risks.
- Also, “slavery” in Pakistan often takes the form of **bonded labour** or debt servitude (especially in brick kiln industries), which is **illegal** yet still widely practiced.