

Slavery and Abortion

Exodus 21:1-11, Leviticus 25:23-55



**The wicked flee when no one pursues,
but the
righteous
are bold
as a lion.**

Proverbs 28:1 ESV

SLAVERY and ABORTION

The common denominator between slavery and abortion is that in both cases, human beings are viewed as mere chattel, or property.

They are sub-human.



New Testament Passages on Slavery

Ephesians 6:5

Bondservants, obey your earthly masters.

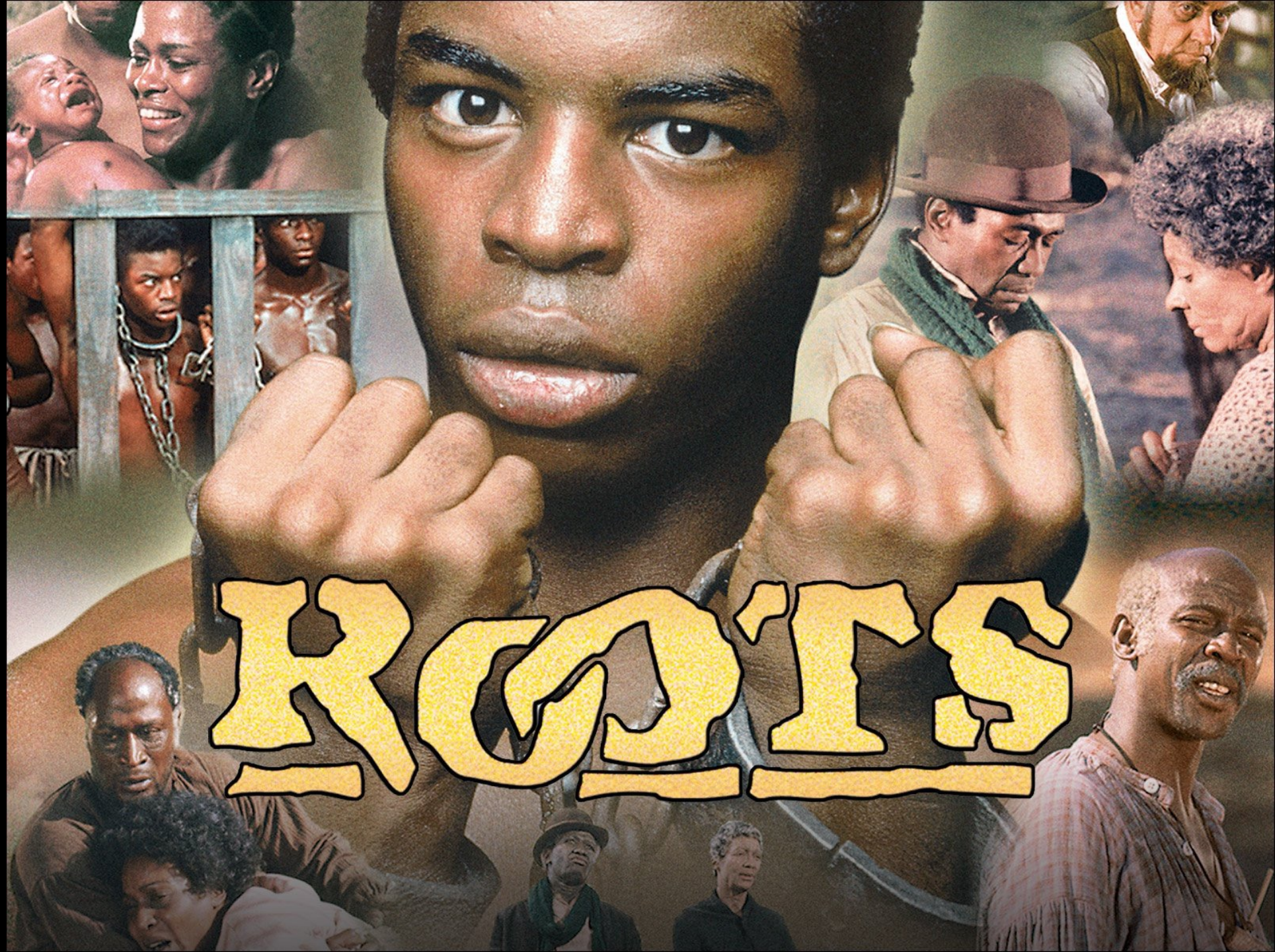
Colossians 3:22

Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters.

1 Peter 2:18

Servants, be subject to your masters.





Boyz n the Hood

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No, it does not.

Biblical instruction that allows for certain evil practices in certain contexts isn't necessarily biblical approval. We must interpret them in relation to everything else the Scriptures say.



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Even though the Bible permitted slavery, the New Testament actually served as a philosophical and theological foundation for the abolition of slavery.



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- When set free, the former slave was to be well-provided for. (Deuteronomy 15:13-14)



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- Married slaves could not be separated. (Exodus 21:3)
- Any master who injured his slave had to immediately free him. (Exodus 21:20-21, 26)
- The Old Testament commanded the death penalty for kidnapping, and if a master caused his slave's death, the master was subject to capital punishment. (Ex. 21:16)



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- Foreign slaves, along with the Hebrew household, had a day of rest each week. (Ex. 20:10, Deut. 5:14)
- All these rules applied to non-Hebrew slaves as well, except for the duration of their slavery. Enemies of Israel were not set free.



“Indentured Servitude”

Definition:

A form of labor in which a person is contracted to work without salary for a specific number of years.

The contract, called an “indenture”, may be entered “voluntarily” for purported eventual compensation or debt repayment, or it may be imposed “involuntarily” as a judicial punishment.



1. An Impoverished Israelite

Leviticus 25:35-37

If your brother becomes poor and cannot maintain himself with you, you shall support him as though he were a stranger and a sojourner, and he shall live with you.

Take no interest from him or profit, but fear your God, that your brother may live beside you. You shall not lend him your money at interest, nor give him your food for profit.



1. An Impoverished Israelite

Leviticus 25:39-43

If your brother becomes poor beside you and sells himself to you, you shall not make him serve as a slave: he shall be with you as a hired worker and as a sojourner. He shall serve with you until the year of the jubilee. Then he shall go out from you, he and his children with him, and go back to his own clan and return to the possession of his fathers. For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. You shall not rule over him ruthlessly but shall fear your God.



2. The Alien from Another Country

Leviticus 25:44

As for your male and female slaves whom you may have: you may buy male and female slaves from among the nations that are around you.



Who are these “nations” (goi'im)?

Exodus 34:24 For I will cast out nations before you and enlarge your borders;

Leviticus 18:24 Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean...”

Leviticus 18:28 ...the land [will] vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation that was before you.

(In each case, these were Israel's enemies.)



3. An Israelite who sells himself to a foreigner

Leviticus 25:47-51

If a stranger or sojourner with you becomes rich, and your brother beside him becomes poor and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner with you or to a member of the stranger's clan, then after he is sold he may be redeemed. One of his brothers may redeem him, or his uncle or his cousin may redeem him, or a close relative from his clan may redeem him.



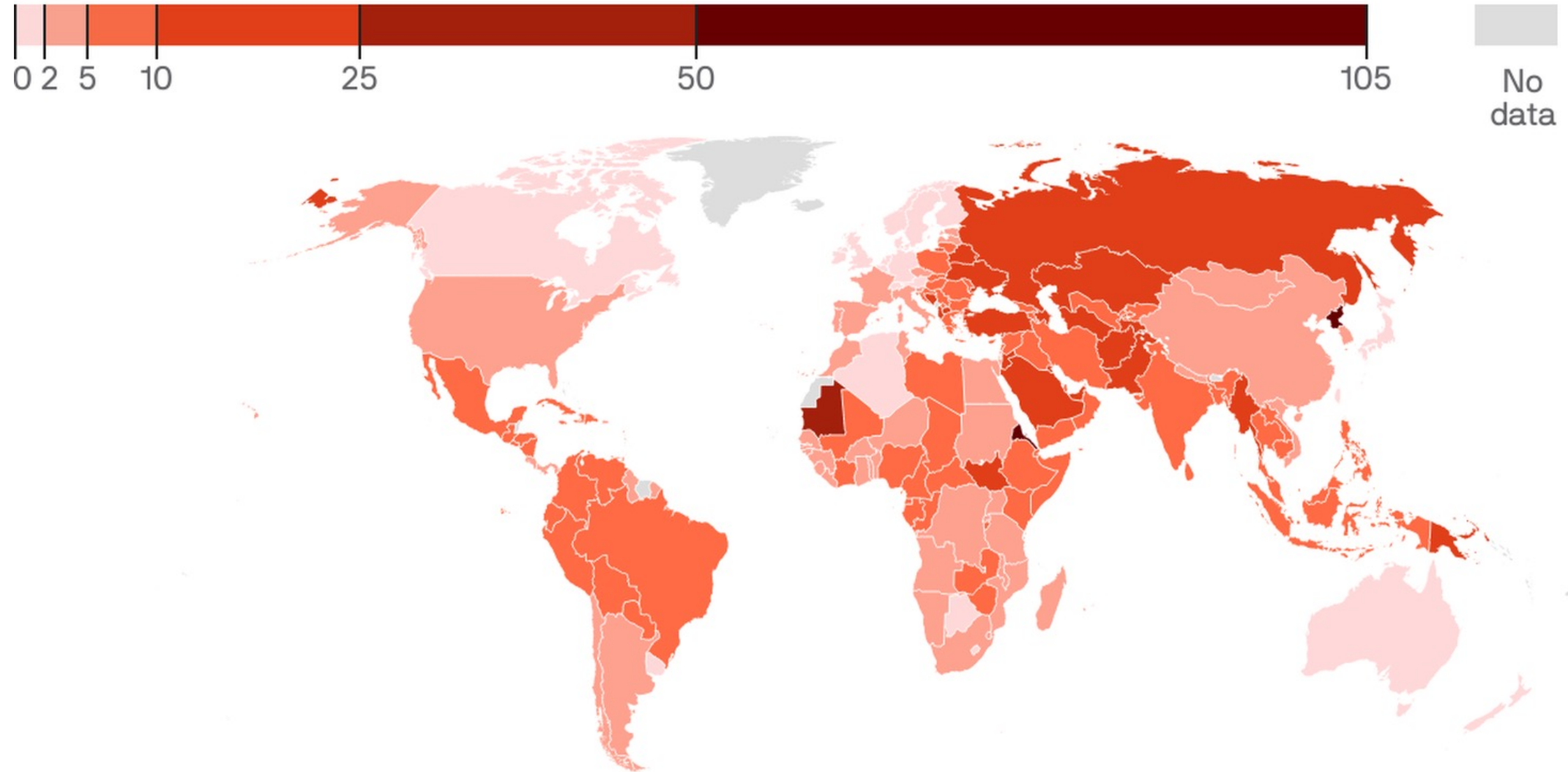
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Or if he grows rich he may redeem himself. He shall calculate with his buyer from the year when he sold himself to him until the year of jubilee, and the price of his sale shall vary with the number of years. The time he was with his owner shall be rated as the time of a hired worker. If there are still many years left, he shall pay proportionately for his redemption some of his sale price.



Estimated prevalence of modern slavery in 2021

Estimated enslaved people per 1,000



Global Estimates of Modern Slavery (2022)

50 million people still live in slavery –
(in forced labor and forced marriage).

And roughly a quarter of them are children.





Sadly, it's true, that southern plantation owners used the Bible to justify their cruel slavery.

But they used it inappropriately. They didn't interpret it properly, according to the rules. They didn't apply the grammatical, historical method of Bible interpretation.



Philemon 17-18

So if you consider me your partner, receive him (Onesimus) as you would receive me. If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account.



Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.



1 Corinthians 7:21-23

Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) For he who was called in the Lord as a bondservant is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise he who was free when called is a bondservant of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men.



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- The gospel abolishes the assumptions & prejudices that make slavery possible.



2 Corinthians 5:14-16 (Gospel)

For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.



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From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh.



That means we don't assign the value of anyone's life based on their:

- Race
- Gender
- Size or age
- Location
- Economic status
- Mental or physical abilities
- Degree of self-sufficiency



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1. Many argue that Jesus never said anything about abortion.



2. We do know that Jesus had a high view of Scripture. He referred to it as the word of God, that cannot be broken.



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Psalm 139:13

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.



3. Christians have always been against abortion. This isn't new.

“You shall not procure and abortion, nor destroy a newborn child.”

- The Didache (1st Century)



4. We have the 6th Commandment.

Exodus 20:13

You shall not murder.



Key Issues:

1. “What constitutes a human life?”
2. “Does an unborn child meet those criteria?”



“Human development begins at fertilization. This highly specialized, [stem cell] marked the beginning of each of us as a unique individual.”

- Keith L. Moore, *The Developing Human Clinically Oriented Embryology*



“Whether a being is a member of a given species is something that can be determined scientifically, by an examination of the nature of the chromosomes in the cells of living organisms.

In this sense, there is no doubt that from the first moments of its existence, an embryo conceived from human sperm and eggs is a human being.”

- Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics*



4 Characteristics Common to All Pre-born Children

1. Complete: All the information that needs to be there is there. It just needs time to grow.
2. Unique: DNA proves that the pre-born child is genetically distinct from the mother.
3. Living: The laws of biology tell us that the pre-born child is alive because it is growing, developing, and undergoing metabolism and responding to stimuli.
4. Human: The scientific law of biogenesis states that living things reproduce after their own kind. That is, complete and unique living human beings.



1858, Virginia Supreme Court: “In the eyes of the law, the slave is not a person.”

1881, American Law Review: “An Indian is not a person with Constitutional rights.”

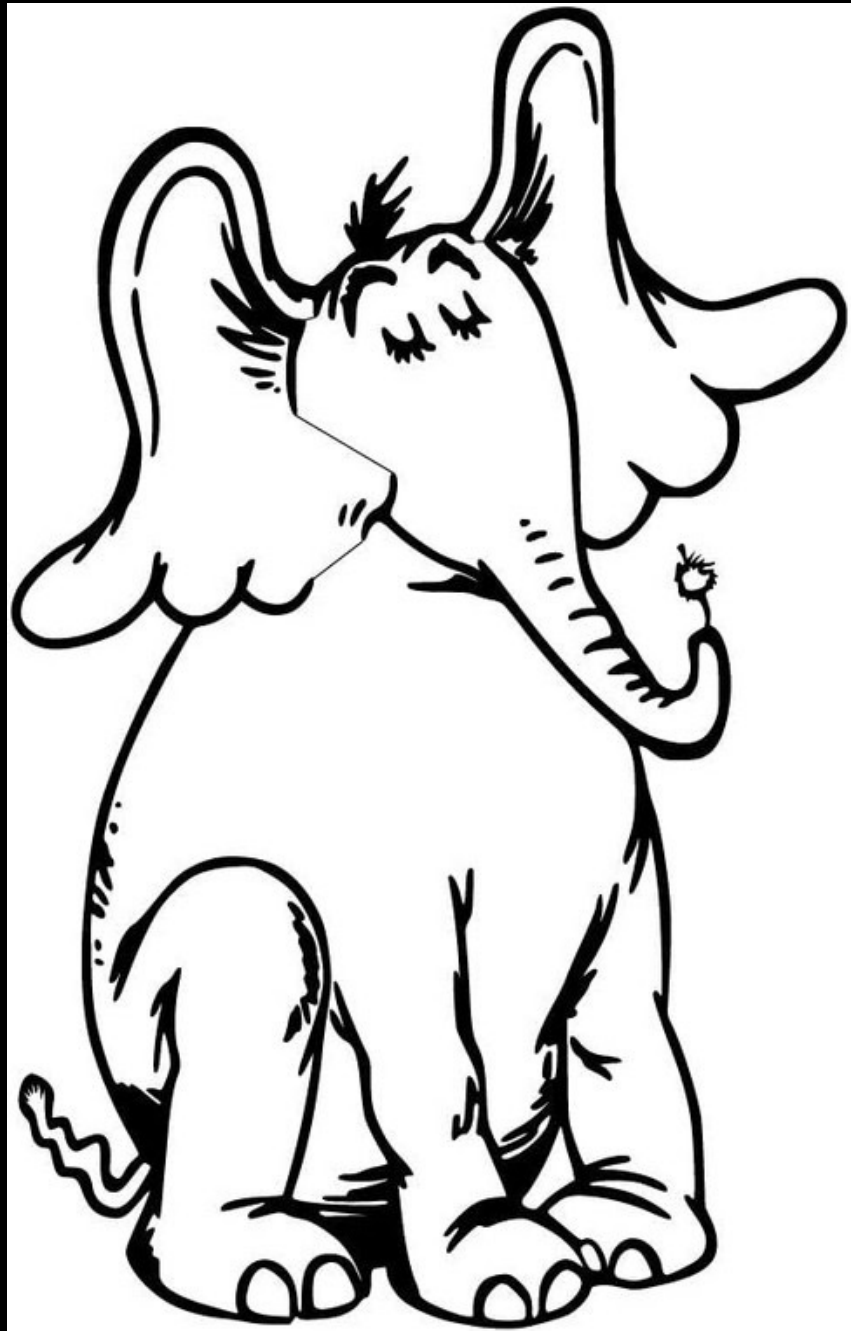
1928, Supreme Court of Canada: “The meaning of ‘qualified persons’ does not include women.”

1936, German Supreme Court: “We refuse to recognize Jews as legal ‘persons’.

1997, Supreme Court of Canada: “The law of Canada does not recognize the unborn child as a legal person possessing rights.”



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