

# ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah  
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## Understanding Torah Society

Part 1 – An Introduction

### ***Mattithyah (Matthew) 22:39***

***“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”***

One question that seems to arise in nearly any discussion of Torah communal living is what type of structure, i.e., what type of government, is called for according to Scripture. Please consider what Mike Donnelly, an attorney with Home School Legal Defense Association, has to say about government and society: “State and society are not necessarily – in fact are not usually – synonymous. Indeed, a government’s interest in expanding its power may very well be at odds with the people’s interest in freedom.”<sup>1</sup> Surprising as it may seem, the respective government of any given society is nearly always at odds with, or in opposition to, the society which it governs. This is true whether one is discussing a political (state) government or some type of religious government. A respective government and society may not begin this way, i.e., be at odds with one another, but given enough time the government will become an entity unto itself wholly separate from the society which it governs. When this happens the government becomes a society unto itself. Thus, the governmental society will see the society-at-large as a threat and attempt to regulate it to its own end, attempting to make the society-at-large its slave.

Seeing that society and government are not synonymous may be such a new concept to many that it may take some serious contemplation to see the validity of this position. However, once one does see it, then one can begin to grasp what one finds in the Torah for a Torah based society, which in fact does not call for any government at all. What? We will make every attempt to thoroughly examine this question and show that a society based solely upon Torah does not need any government, yea, cannot have any government to function properly. That is, government in the common human sense of understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> Donnelly, Mike. “A first: Homeschooling on agenda of global rights conference.” *Home School Court Report*, Nov/Dec 2011, 28-31. Print.

This is more than just a matter of semantics, even though there are plenty of questions involving semantics that will need to be addressed in this study. Let us begin with the following passage about kings from the Torah.

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 17:14***

***“When you have come into the land which YHWH your Elohim gives you, and shall possess it, and shall dwell therein, and shall say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are round about me;”***

Yes, YHWH through His Torah does provide for Israel to set a king over themselves. One might say, “Well, isn’t that a form of government?” And he would be correct in thinking such a thing. However, just because Torah provides for something like a king, does not mean that Israel should actually have such a thing like a king. It is important to note that it is Israel who decides to set a king over herself, not YHWH. YHWH does not need to decide to be the king over Israel since He is already her king. Let us prayerfully consider YHWH’s view on the matter of Israel setting a king over herself.

***Sh’muel Aleph (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel) 8:7***

***And YHWH said to Sh’muel, “Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not be king over them.”***

For Israel to decide to have a human king is to reject the kingship of YHWH. Now, honestly, is that the direction that Israel should want to go? I would think not. So, whether a human king is government or not government is really a moot point since YHWH has shown us that He does not want Israel to go in the direction of having a human king. Then why did YHWH give such a commandment? The answer is a simple one, for the same reason for which He gave the commandment of divorce.

***Mattithyah (Matthew) 19:8***

***He said unto them, “Moshe for your hardness of heart allowed you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it has not been so.”***

Just because Torah allows for something does not mean that one should actually do it. A man is to love and care for his wife. He is not supposed to divorce her. Torah allows for divorce because man’s heart is sometimes hard. Likewise, the need for a human king is not the way that Israel should go, as she is supposed to have only one King, YHWH. However, because of this same problem, hardness of heart, YHWH has allowed Israel to set over herself a human king. However, Israel would be better off not to have a human king! Notice what YHWH has Sh’muel tell the people of Israel concerning what will happen if they decide to set a human king over themselves.

***Sh’muel Aleph (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel) 8:10-17***

***10 And Sh’muel told all the words of YHWH unto the people that asked of him a king.***

**11 And he said, "This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them unto him, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots;**

**12 and he will appoint them unto him for captains of thousands, and captains of fifties; and he will set some to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and the instruments of his chariots.**

**13 And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.**

**14 And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.**

**15 And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.**

**16 And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.**

**17 He will take the tenth of your flocks: and you shall be his servants."**

This passage shows us exactly why Israel should not have a human king, because then Israel is serving that man rather than serving YHWH. Notice this human king takes whatever he wants from the people. Furthermore, this king takes the best that they have. Remember, YHWH states in His Torah that we are to give our best to Him.

#### ***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 18:4***

***"The first-fruits of your grain, of your new wine, and of your oil, and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give Him [YHWH]."***

If the king is taking it for himself, then one cannot give his best to YHWH. Are you beginning to see how human government interferes with a society based upon Torah?

To help us in our paradigm shift, let us take a closer look at modern governments based upon a western model.

In modern developed nations government has been defined as governing three aspects of society: 1) it is the only legal means to enforce order; 2) it decides who gets what, when, and how; and 3) it provides those things that an individual cannot provide for himself, called *public goods*. First, let us consider the question of order in the context of Torah. According to YHWH as recorded in Scripture, order is provided by Torah with each person living Torah to the best of his ability. Order is each man under his own tree and eating from his own vine.

#### ***Micah 4:4***

***But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of YHWH Tzava'ot has spoken it.***

We will deal more fully with this passage later, but for now, suffice it to say that each person has his own property and is providing his own food and is secure that no one else will come and take that which belongs to him for any reason (including and especially no government seizing

that which is his). Each man is living in shalom (peace) with YHWH, with himself, and with his neighbor.

Order is not forced upon anyone by a government, but rather, order is the natural outflow of the condition of each person's heart and his personal choices which he makes within the context of Torah. Namely, he chooses to let his neighbor live according to his own relationship with his Creator. No man attempts to be a god over another person. There is no "lording it over" others by anyone, something which Yeshua taught us that His followers should not be involved in doing. One would think that this "lording it over" should include one who is doing it, as well as those who would elevate another so he could do it, i.e., which is what is done in modern day elections.

***Mattithyah (Matthew) 20:25-26***

***25 But Yeshua called them unto Himself, and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.***

***26 It shall not be so among you; but whosoever would become great among you shall be your servant."***

Since, according to Yeshua, no man is to lord it over his brother, we are to serve one another in the love of Mashiach. Therefore, proper Torah society is based upon servitude rather than upon a hierarchal system of bureaucracy. As we continue on in this study, the reader will begin to see the significance of this and how it develops in everyday life.

The idea in the second definition states that it is the government who rightfully decides who gets what, when, and how, as well as how much. According to the standard human government model, if you earn something, then it is the government who rightfully decides how much of what you earned or made that you are allowed to keep (if any at all). It uses the threat of force to enforce this upon the people, convincing them through propaganda that they are doing so voluntarily for the good of all.

No man or group of men has any right or authority to take another man's property. According to Torah, it is called stealing. This is what the government typically does to support itself as well as a means to control the masses of people under it. As long as Torah is not being violated, no man or group of men have the right or authority to decide who gets what, when, or how, for another individual. However, when Torah is violated, then there may be restitution called for, which we will deal with in a later part of this study.

Please consider the following example. If one man has ten acres and he decides that for his purposes he wants to cut down every single one of the trees standing on his own property, then another group (like environmentalists) has no right to come in and force him not to cut them down. The group who has done this is violating Torah by bullying the owner of the property through use of unlawful force. We use the term "unlawful" in this sense because it is against Torah, even though it may be according to the laws of man.

Once again the passage quoted above from Micah 4:4 comes into focus. Every man is on his own property and he is unafraid from his neighbor. Now that is a society worth having and working towards!

The third idea is that it is the government which is to provide those things that a person cannot provide for himself, namely, public goods. Public goods commonly consist of six categories: 1) order, 2) defense, 3) public health, 4) infrastructure, 5) education, and 6) social welfare. We will discuss each of these, but let us ask ourselves this question: Is there such a thing as “public goods?” Or, are these items simply things which have been taken away from individuals (by force) and given to other individuals who have not worked for them? Granted, there are moments in which tragedy strikes an individual in which he needs help. Torah even provides for this as we shall discuss below. But for the norm, it is YHWH who provides for Israel and for each and every individual within her, each according to each person’s ability. Not every person has the same ability. Some have a greater ability and some have a lesser ability. Should the one who has the greater ability be penalized? Should the one who has the lesser ability be rewarded? Not according to Torah! Scripture teaches us that it is YHWH who decides who gets what talents and abilities and how much of that talent and ability (Matthew 25). Furthermore, in the parable of the talents, each was rewarded according to how he used that ability. The one with more ability got more reward and the one with less ability got less reward. This is how our Creator has ordered it. Who is man to decide that this is not right or fair?

To forcibly take from one individual and give to another is to “play god” and is an act of idolatry as well as rebellion against YHWH. Whatever a person owns is his to do with as YHWH leads him to do. The exception to this is, of course, the tithe, which actually does not belong to the individual, but rather, to YHWH. It certainly does not belong to some human king. We shall discuss this more fully in another part of this study.

If YHWH chooses to give more to one and less to another, who is man to attempt to take from the one who has more and give it to the one who has less? Does man think he knows better than YHWH?

When looking at the political spectrum there are commonly three items examined in order to place one in the political spectrum, which are 1) order, 2) freedom, and 3) equality. For example, a person who places these three in order of importance as listed above would be seen as a conservative. If a person placed them in the order of importance as 1) equality, 2) freedom, 3) order, then such a person would be seen as a liberal. Before we move on, we need to define these three terms, not as is commonly understood, but as one would understand them with a foundation upon Torah.

We will examine freedom first. Freedom is not the ability to do as one pleases, but rather it is the ability to obey one’s Creator – fully and completely.

**Romans 6:16**

***Do you not know, that to whom you present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?***

If a person is serving a human government, then he is a slave of that same human government. If a person is serving YHWH, then he is a servant of the Most High!

**Yochanan (John) 8:32**

***“and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”***

Every person is a slave and the one is a slave to the one whom he obeys. Either he is a slave of the lusts of the flesh or he is a slave to his Creator. His actions reveal the reality of who he obeys. Remember, no man can serve two masters!

**Mattithyah (Matthew) 6:24**

***“No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”***

Therefore, freedom is having the ability to choose to obey one's Creator from a heart of love and allowing one's neighbor to do the same without attempting to dictate (force) his neighbor into doing it in exactly the same manner as his own convictions dictate to him. Freedom, then, is two-fold. It is receiving it, i.e., having it personally, which comes from YHWH. And secondly, it is giving it, that is, letting others receive it in the same manner as one has received it!

We have already spoken about order and will do so even more in this study. However, one other item should be addressed here. Order does not equal uniformity. Order is not every man doing exactly the same thing in exactly the same way. Rather, true order is every man obeying YHWH in a way that is pleasing to YHWH. If that is not pleasing to a particular individual, then he does not have the interests of YHWH in mind.

**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:5**

***“and you shall love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.”***

The third item is equality. There is a lot of discussion and emphasis about equality in our world today. The majority of that discussion simply misses the mark. As was pointed out above, YHWH did not create every person equal. Therefore, individuals should not be focused in such a way as to attempt to make everyone equal. Rather, one needs to focus upon equal access. Equal access is not even close to being the same as equality. Equal access is about having equal access to health care, education, and justice. If these things are not provided free of charge, then there is no equal access. The tithes one pays are to provide these services to all regardless of whether a person uses them or not. Furthermore, these things are to be of equal access to the native born and the stranger within our gates.

***Shemot (Exodus) 12:49***

***One Torah shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourns among you.***

Union Army General Carl Schurz (1829-1906), a naturalized U.S. citizen who was German born and later became secretary of the interior under President Hayes stated, "If you want to be free, there is but one way; it is to guarantee an equally full measure of liberty to all your neighbors. There is no other."

General Schurz was correct and completely in line with Torah with the above statement. If an individual desires to be free, then that freedom which he desires, he must grant to his neighbor. This is the same idea in which Yeshua teaches that each person shall be judged in the same manner in which he judges others. It is also the basis of the Golden Rule.

***Mattithyah (Matthew) 7:12***

***"All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, even so do you also unto them: for this is the Torah and the prophets."***

It is the same principle found throughout each of these ideas, that is, each person must have equal access to all of Torah regardless of his station in life.

The next portion of this study will deal with public goods.

May YHWH grant each one of us a perfect understanding of His nation.

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