

from The Law by Frédéric Bastiat (1850)

“We hold from God the gift which includes all others. This gift is life - physical, intellectual, and moral life.

But life cannot maintain itself alone. The Creator of life has entrusted us with the responsibility of preserving, developing, and perfecting it. In order that we may accomplish this, He has provided us with a collection of marvelous faculties. And He has put us in the midst of a variety of natural resources. By the application of our faculties to these natural resources we convert them into products, and use them. This process is necessary in order that life may run its appointed course.

Life, faculties, production - in other words, individuality, liberty, property - this is man. And in spite of the cunning of artful political leaders, these three gifts from God precede all human legislation, and are superior to it. Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place.

What, then, is law? It is the collective organization of the individual right to lawful defense.

Each of us has a natural right - from God - to defend his person, his liberty, and his property. These are the three basic requirements of life, and the preservation of any one of them is completely dependent upon the preservation of the other two. For what are our faculties but the extension of our individuality? And what is property but an extension of our faculties? If every person has the right to defend even by force - his person, his liberty, and his property, then it follows that a group of men have the right to organize and support a common force to protect these rights constantly. Thus the principle of collective right - its reason for existing, its lawfulness - is based on individual right. And the common force that protects this collective right cannot logically have any other purpose or any other mission than that for which it acts as a substitute. Thus, since an individual cannot lawfully use force against the person, liberty, or property of another individual, then the common force - for the same reason - cannot lawfully be used to destroy the person, liberty, or property of individuals or groups.

Such a perversion of force would be, in both cases, contrary to our premise. Force has been given to us to defend our own individual rights.

Who will dare to say that force has been given to us to destroy the equal rights of our brothers? Since no individual acting separately can lawfully use force to destroy the rights of others, does it not logically follow that the same principle also applies to the common force that is nothing more than the organized combination of the individual forces?

If this is true, then nothing can be more evident than this: The law is the organization of the natural right of lawful defense. It is the substitution of a common force for individual forces. And this common force is to do only what the individual forces have a natural and lawful right to do: to protect persons, liberties, and properties; to maintain the right of each, and to cause justice to reign over us all.”

from the farewell address of President George Washington (1796)

“Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and citizens. The mere Politician, equally with the pious man ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity.

Let it simply be asked: where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.”

from a letter to Massachusetts Militia by John Adams (1798)

“Because We have no Government armed with Power capable of contending with human Passions unbridled by morality and Religion. Avarice, Ambition, Revenge or Gallantry, would break the strongest Cords of our Constitution as a Whale goes through a Net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

from "Free Markets and Human Freedom" by Dr. Dean Russell

"If there's no free market, however, there's no possibility of a free press, or elections to change leaders, or any of the other freedoms we enjoy. For all freedoms (repeat **all**) depend on the existence of private ownership of the means of production in a free market economy, where production is directed by the desires of the owners to earn a profit."

from "Majority Rule Equals Tyranny" by Walter E. Williams

"The Founding Fathers held a deep abhorrence for democracy and majority rule. In fact, the word democracy appears nowhere in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution. In Federalist No. 10, James Madison wrote, "Measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority." John Adams predicted, "Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide." Edmund Randolph said, "That in tracing these evils to their origin, every man had found it in the turbulence and follies of democracy." Chief Justice John Marshall observed, "Between a balanced republic and a democracy, the difference is like that between order and chaos."

Throughout our Constitution are impediments to the tyranny of majority rule. Two houses of Congress pose one obstacle to majority rule. Fifty-one senators can block the wishes of 435 representatives and 49 senators. The president can veto the wishes of 535 members of Congress. It takes two-thirds of both houses of Congress to override a presidential veto. To change the Constitution, an amendment must be proposed, which requires not a majority but a two-thirds vote of both houses, and enacted, which requires ratification by three-fourths of state legislatures. Finally, the Electoral College is yet another measure that thwarts majority rule.

Despite a public consensus on the issue - resulting from miseducation - there's nothing just or fair about majority rule. In fact, one of the primary dangers of majority rule is that it confers an aura of legitimacy and respectability to acts that would otherwise be deemed tyrannical. Think about it. How many decisions in your life would you like made through majority rule? What about what car we purchase, where

we live and whether we should have ham or turkey for Thanksgiving dinner? I am sure you would deem it tyranny if these decisions were made by a majority vote.”

The quotes I just copied explain themselves very clearly - not much interpretation is needed.

In the Torah, secular government for God's people is almost not mentioned. Each tribe (and smaller family units) were given authority to rule themselves, but they were accountable to the Torah as the Law of the land. In the books of Joshua and Judges, some glimpses into secular government are seen, and always in terms of the tribes, not an overriding centralized government. YHVH gives specific instructions for secular rule:

Deuteronomy 17:14-20

“When you come to the land that YHVH your God is giving you, possess it and dwell in it, and you say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations around me,’ you will indeed set over yourselves a king, whom YHVH your God chooses. One from among your brothers will be appointed as king over you - you may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. Only he should not multiply horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to multiply horses, because YHVH has said to you, ‘You must never go back that way again.’ Nor should he multiply wives for himself, so that his heart does not turn aside, nor multiply much silver and gold for himself.

Now when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself a copy of this Torah on a scroll, from what is before the Levitical kohanim. It will remain with him, and he will read in it all the days of his life, in order to learn to fear YHVH his God and keep all the words of this Torah and these statutes. Then his heart will not be exalted above his brothers, and he will not turn from the commandment to the right or to the left - so that he may prolong his days in his kingship, he and his sons, in the midst of Israel.”

A king, or any centralized secular government, is totally accountable for obedience to the Torah.

This desire for powerful centralized government finally happened after the last Judge - Samuel. His sons were NOT obeying Torah, and that caused dissension.

1 Samuel 8:1-22

Now when Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges over Israel. The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second Abijah - they were judges in Beersheba. His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain - they took bribes and perverted justice.

Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, "Behold, you have grown old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us - like all the nations." But the matter was displeasing in Samuel's eyes when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to YHVH.

Then YHVH said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you. For they have not rejected you, rather **they have rejected Me from being king over them**. Like all the deeds that they have done since the day I brought them out of Egypt to this day - forsaking Me and worshiping other gods - so they are doing to you also. So now, listen to their voice. However, you must earnestly forewarn them, and declare to them the rulings of the king who will reign over them."

Now Samuel reported all the words of YHVH to the people who were asking him for a king. "This will be the practice of the king that will reign over you," he said.

- "He will draft your sons and assign them as his charioteers and horsemen, and they will run before his chariots.
- He will appoint them as commanders of thousands and captains of fifties,
- also some to plow his fields, reap his harvest,
- make his weapons of war and the equipment for his chariots.
- Also he will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks and bakers.
- He will seize the best of your fields, vineyards and olive groves, and give them to his courtiers.
- He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage and give it to his officials and slaves.
- He will also take your male and female servants,

- your best young men and your donkeys and make them do his work.
- He will also take the tenth of your flocks.
- Then you yourselves will become his slaves.

When the day comes and you cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, YHVH will not answer you on that day.”

But the people refused to listen to Samuel, and they said, “No! But a king should be over us! So we may become like all the nations - having our king who will judge us, go out before us and fight our battles.”

After Samuel heard all the words of the people, he reported them back in the hearing of YHVH. YHVH said to Samuel, “Listen to their voice and appoint a king to reign for them.” So Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Go, each one to his town.”

Secular government should be minimal - go back to the instructions from Yitro, the father-in-law of Moses, in *Exodus 18:20-21* where he gave a way for designating authority, specifically for “judges” - but it covers all secular government. The services of government - the bureaucracy - use regulations to remove individual authority over private ownership.

LIBERTY is the condition of being free from restriction or control. It is the right and power to act, believe, or express oneself in a manner of one's own choosing. It is the condition of being physically and legally free from confinement, servitude, or forced labor. It is being free from tyranny.

In other words, LIBERTY requires very limited government!

How can you have freedom or liberty if you cannot have any possibility of owning private land? What would you be fighting FOR if you cannot own anything of significance like your home or your land?

Liberty itself is not free; the price includes constant watching over it, to be sure no one or no company or no government takes it away by deceit or power. And, of course, don't give it away!

Study the Torah reading for this week, especially *Genesis 47:13-26*.

During the seven years of plenty and the seven years of drought in Egypt (during the time of Joseph), Egypt was the great economic and political power in North Africa and the western part of the Middle East.

Joseph had to deal with Egyptians who did not heed his warnings, and so these Egyptians used up everything of theirs from the prosperous years before the drought years came.

Verses 13-14 describe the start of the famine, and how Joseph sold food to the Egyptians (for the Pharaoh), because they had not saved for themselves - they had already used up all the extra from the prosperous previous seven years. Most people now had to buy food and seed from the government, but that's okay - they needed the food now and the seed to plant, and they had the money - AT FIRST.

Verses 15-17 continue with the next year of the famine. Now the Egyptians had no money to buy food, and no crops to sell - after all, it was a drought! They needed the food, and they had the livestock, so they traded that for food. Poor planning on their part DID constitute an emergency - for themselves. This was not a loan (there is no pawn shop for livestock) - it was a sale. The livestock now belonged to the government, so the Egyptians could not possibly plant any crops of their own or raise any livestock of their own.

Verses 18-20 begin the next year, and the Egyptians have nothing left to sell for food, except their land and THEMSELVES! Their land now belongs completely to Pharaoh, and they now belong completely to Pharaoh. This was not a mortgage - it was a purchase. Their land now belonged to the government. Since they had no land, they had absolutely no way to make any money to buy food. They no longer had any freedom, they had no liberty. They did the only possible action that remained - they sold themselves to the government. Now they could hope for nothing unless it came from the government.

In verse 21, Joseph moved the Egyptians from the country into the cities. There is no reason for the people to live in the country, because it was no longer their land. They would become merely tenant farmers. It

was now easier to have absolute control over them if they were contained in the cities, in direct view of their new government overseers.

Verse 22 explains that the priests (who were part of the government) did not lose their money or their land, etc, because they were protected by the government (Pharaoh), even though they served no useful purpose for the people, and only served to increase the government's control over the people. They still had liberty as long as they agreed to the direction the government took.

Verse 23 describes the contract of the Egyptians with their government now. The government will merely tax them at twenty percent (fifth part) of their income; the people can keep eighty percent for themselves! However, a significant part of that eighty percent must go for planting for the next year, and for buying any other goods they need, not to mention it is also for their food. And yet, they were grateful that the government had destroyed their lives and taken away all their individual freedom - their liberty. So, in verse 26, Joseph made it a law that Pharaoh should have the fifth part, except the land of the priests. It was now permanent - not even the supreme court of that day could undo this.

The people of Egypt had not individually planned well for their future, so they wanted security from the government - they were willing to give up their freedom, their liberty, and their property, for security - for someone else to plan for them and take care of them. This action was not God's plan - this was man's lack of planning, and lack of faith in God and His representative (Joseph).

The great thing about freedom is that you are totally in control;
the sad thing about freedom is that you are totally in control.

Even though it is often a real hassle to protect and maintain, don't give up your individual freedom. Don't trade it for security and comfort - in the end that is slavery.