

Leviathan



INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS HOBBS

Thomas Hobbes was born in 1588 in Westport, a village near the town of Malmesbury in Wiltshire, England. Hobbes had an older brother and a sister, and his father, an uneducated vicar, did not value education for his children. When Hobbes was a child, his father left Westport after some sort of dispute, and Hobbes spent the remainder of his childhood with his father's brother, Francis, a successful local manufacturer. Hobbes was educated in both private and public schools, and he attended Hertford College, Oxford, where he studied logic and physics. Hobbes also studied at the University of Oxford; however, he left before completing his degree and later obtained a BA in 1608 from St. John's College, Cambridge. After completing school, Hobbes worked as a private tutor to the future Earl of Devonshire, and he traveled Europe under the family's employment from 1610 to 1615. After this time, Hobbes again found work as a tutor in both London and in Paris and had many prominent students, including the 3rd Earl of Devonshire and Charles II, the future King of England. Around 1640, Hobbes turned his attention to philosophy, and he circulated a pamphlet, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, which proposed many of the ideas that would later become *Leviathan*. During the English Civil War (1642–1651), anti-Royalist sentiments began to rise in England, and Hobbes, a well-known Royalist, was forced to flee to Paris. During this time, Hobbes began to prolifically write philosophy, including the Latin *Elementorum Philosophiae Sectio Teria de Cive* ("Philosophical rudiments concerning government and society") in 1642 and *Of Liberty and Necessity* in 1646. In 1651, Hobbes published *Leviathan*, and when he returned to London that same year after the end of the English Civil War, he was one of the most infamous intellectuals of the time. In 1660, at the end of the Interregnum, Charles II became King of England and awarded Hobbes a yearly pension of 100 pounds. In 1666, Hobbes was accused of atheism and blasphemy by the House of Commons (the lower house of Parliament) because of the ideas expressed in *Leviathan*, and he was banned from further publishing in England. Following this order, Hobbes took to publishing his books in Amsterdam, including English translations of Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad* and a Latin translation of *Leviathan*. In 1679, Hobbes suffered a massive stroke after falling ill with a bladder infection, and he died soon after at 91 years old.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes briefly mentions the execution of King Charles I of England and the English Civil War (1642–1651),

which pitted the Royalists (who supported the monarchy) against the Parliamentarians (who supported Parliament). Charles I was captured, tried, and found guilty of keeping tyrannical power over the people and was sentenced to death by beheading. After Charles I's execution on January 30, 1649 began the period of the Interregnum, during which time England was ruled by Parliament, not the monarchy. In 1653, Oliver Cromwell (an English general who led the charge against Charles I and the Royalists) became Lord Protector, the head of state of the new British Protectorate. Under Cromwell's rule during the Interregnum, Puritan views began to take hold in English society, which led to the suppression of Christian holidays, like Easter and Christmas. English citizens were expected to live a life of the utmost purity and piety, and forms of entertainment that were considered immoral and lewd, like gambling houses and theaters, were banned. Cromwell died in 1658, and his son, Richard, was appointed Lord Protector. Richard, however, was a poor leader and politician, and the Protectorate ended in 1659. The monarchy was restored in England when Charles I's son, Charles II, came out of exile in Europe and took back the crown in 1660.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

A major theme within Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* is the state of human beings in nature and the advent of civil society. Hobbes argues that humans in a state of nature are "nasty, brutish, and short," an opinion that dismisses Aristotle's idea of humans as naturally social and generally peaceful. The state of humans in nature and the subsequent creation of civil society is a topic that is also seen in *The Second Treatise of Government* by John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. Unlike Hobbes, however, both Locke and Rousseau's philosophies more closely align with Aristotle's view of humans in nature. Hobbes was a famous Royalist, and he is openly supportive of the monarchy and King Charles II in *Leviathan*, in which he argues monarchies are the best form of government and civil society. This staunch support of the monarchy is also a prominent theme in Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings*, in which Filmer maintains that kings and queens rule by divine power given to them by God. Hobbes contends that a monarch's power is derived from the people, not God, but he nevertheless supports a monarch's right to rule. Hobbes's *Leviathan* is first and foremost a work of political philosophy, a general area of philosophy that focuses on laws, rights, and justice—a genre that many argue began with Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Other famous works of political philosophy include *On Liberty* by John Stuart Mill and *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** Leviathan, or The Matter, Forme, and Power of a Common-wealth, Ecclesiasticall and Civill
- **When Written:** 1651
- **Where Written:** Paris, France
- **When Published:** 1651
- **Literary Period:** English Renaissance
- **Genre:** Political Philosophy
- **Point of View:** First Person

EXTRA CREDIT

Impressive Résumé. Early in Hobbes's career, before he began writing his own philosophy, he worked as an amanuensis (someone who copies the dictated words of another) for Francis Bacon, a respected English philosopher who is credited with the development of the scientific method.

In Good Company. In 1636, Hobbes met Galileo Galilei, an Italian astronomer, physicist, and philosopher who was under house arrest in Florence for heresy during the Holy Inquisition.



PLOT SUMMARY

Human life is nothing but the movement of arms and legs, Hobbes argues, and any automated machine that has “artificial life” is no different. So is the case in art and in any other work created by humankind, such as in the “great **LEVIATHAN**,” also known as a common-wealth, or state, which is itself an “Artificiall Man.” In *Leviathan*, Hobbes describes the nature of a common-wealth—how a common-wealth is made and under what circumstances it is maintained or destroyed—and he also explains the “Christian common-wealth” and the “Kingdome of Darkness.”

Hobbes begins with the basic thoughts of humankind. Human thoughts are a “Representation” or “Appearance” of some physical body known as an “Object,” which works upon one of the human sense organs to produce different representations. The production of such appearances are collectively known as the human senses, and every human thought originates in some way from the sense organs. In short, an object places pressure on one of the human sense organs, and a message is sent to the brain via the nerves. Those messages are in turn experienced as sights, sounds, odors, tastes, and textures. Objects are in constant motion, placing constant pressure on sense organs and creating constant thoughts and appearances. “Yet still the object is one thing,” Hobbes says, “the image or fancy is another.” Aristotle considered the human senses in a different way. According to Aristotle, vision is produced by a “visible species,” and hearing is produced by an “audible species,” both of which rely on an object's fancy, rather than the object itself.

According to Hobbes, when an object is removed, an image of the object is retained in the human mind, and this retained image is called imagination. As time passes, the images of objects begin to decay and deteriorate in a process known as memory, and multiple memories of many things is called experience. Imagination, memory, and experience each rely on and are limited by the human senses; therefore, no idea or concept can ever be infinite. Hobbes does admit that God's power is infinite, but this only means that God's power can never be fully comprehended by any one human being.

In nature, outside of civil society, all human beings are equal. Whenever two people desire the same object, they are said to be enemies, and the destruction of one's enemy is included in their desired end. There is no common power in nature to mediate disputes, so people are generally antisocial and aggressive, and they are forced to fight for sustenance and honor. Without the establishment of a common power, people are in a constant state of war. To escape this state of war and ensure peace, people are drawn to certain agreements or rules, which Hobbes refers to as the Laws of Nature. According to the Laws of Nature, which God gave to humankind, everyone has a right to defend their life by any means necessary; however, they must also seek peace as long as peace is reasonable. The only way to ensure peace is to forfeit one's right to violently defend their life and place that right in another through the creation of a covenant, or contract. The Laws of Nature maintain that a covenant must be honored by both parties, and a covenant can only be broken once the terms of the agreement are fulfilled or the obligation is forgiven by the person or people who desired it. There are several Laws of Nature, but each can be reduced to one simple rule: “*Do not that to another, which thou wouldest not have done thy selfe.*”

According to Hobbes, people “naturally love Liberty, and Dominion over others,” and the Laws of Nature cannot be expected to be followed without the creation of a central power to compel people to honor their covenants. Thus, people have joined together in common-wealths. A common-wealth is any number of people living together under one unified power as determined by a covenant in which the people forfeit their right to self-preservation to single person, or an assembly of people, known as the sovereign. The purpose of the common-wealth is to protect the people, or subjects, from injury and death and to work for their highest possible contentment. The sovereign is given all the rights and power of the subjects it represents, and that power can never be forfeited or usurped. A sovereign can do no injury onto its subjects, and subjects are not permitted to accuse the sovereign of any wrongdoing, nor can they punish the sovereign for any perceived offense. The sovereign alone can judge of what is necessary for the peace and defense of the common-wealth and is responsible for passing laws and decrees.

There are three major kinds of commonwealths: if the

sovereign power of a group of people is one person, it's a monarchy; if the sovereign power of a group of people is a limited assembly of people, it's an aristocracy; and if the sovereign power of a group of people is the people, it's a democracy. A common-wealth can be only one of these three, Hobbes argues, as a sovereign power can be only one of the people, some of the people, or all of the people. A common-wealth's power is directly proportional to number of people in it, and no one kind of common-wealth has any more power than the next. The only difference between the three kinds of common-wealths is how they wield their power. There are benefits and drawbacks to each kind of common-wealth, and no one form of government can ever be perfect; however, Hobbes argues that a monarchy is the best kind of common-wealth. It is impossible for monarchs to disagree with themselves over jealousy or self-interest, and a king or queen is only as good as the subjects they represent. Of course, Hobbes says, a monarch can relieve a subject of their money or property for any reason whatsoever, but the sovereign of an aristocracy or democracy has the very same power.

The sovereign has the right to appoint officers and agents to assist in the maintenance of a common-wealth, but no official can ever have more power than the sovereign. To diminish or divide the sovereign's power violates the covenant and reverts the people back to a state of nature and inevitable war. A subject's obligation to obey the sovereign lasts as long as the common-wealth stands. If the sovereign power of a common-wealth is captured in war and willingly transfers their power to the invading force, subjects of the common-wealth are obligated to obey the invading power as their own. However, if a sovereign power is captured in war and does *not* willingly transfer their power, subjects remain under the power of their sovereign and are not expected to obey the invading power. A sovereign power has the right to punish subjects if they do not follow the law, and fear of that punishment must be greater than the perceived benefit of breaking a law. The destruction of a common-wealth can come from any number of reasons but is most often the result of a sovereign who settles for less power than what they have. Power is denied through ignorance or for some benefit, but the result is always the same. To diminish or divide a sovereign's power is fundamentally against the purpose of the common-wealth. Therefore, subjects must obey their sovereign in all things—provided that obedience does not violate God or the Laws of Nature.

Hobbes considers the power of the sovereign in context with the power of God. All people are subjects of "Divine Power," even if they deny God's existence. God's laws and power are known to people in one of three ways: through natural reason (which is God's gift to all humankind), by "*Revelation*," or through the manifestation of a miracle. A Christian common-wealth is one in which the subjects believe in the supernatural power of God, but such a belief does not mean one must

abandon their natural reason and commonsense. Christian common-wealths rely on books of holy scripture that contain "Rules of Christian life," and in some common-wealths, these rules are even made into civil laws. While it is impossible to ascertain the authors of Holy Scripture with any certainty, the rules in such writings are nevertheless accepted as the "Word of God," and they carry great authority within the Christian common-wealth.

To better understand his argument, Hobbes says it is necessary to first define the terms "body" and "spirit," which are known in Holy Scripture as "*Substances, Corporeall, and Incorporeall*." A body is something that has mass and takes up space, whereas a spirit is like a ghost and is made up of something intangible, like air. To claim a substance is incorporeal is to destroy these accepted definitions, as something cannot be incorporeal *and* have a body. Thus, when Holy Scripture speaks of the "*Spirit of God*" being in the air or within another person, this is most certainly a metaphor for faith and does not mean that some intangible part of God's body exists in the body of another. Another popular misinterpretation of Holy Scripture is the belief that God's Kingdome exists in the present-day Christian Church. Hobbes argues that God's Kingdome is anywhere a covenant exists between God and the people, like what existed between God and the people of Israel. God made a covenant with Adam in the Garden of Eden (which Adam did not honor), and God also made a covenant with the Israelites through Moses to become God's "Peculiar People" on Earth. The Israelites were "Peculiar" because God was their sovereign power over and above the "Divine Power" he already claims over all of humankind. Thus, God's Kingdome cannot truly exist again until Christ's second coming, at which time Christ will establish his Kingdome—on Earth or in Heaven—under God's power through a covenant with the people.

Until Judgement Day and the creation of God's Kingdome, there is no central power to which all Christians are beholden, other than God and their individual sovereign power. As a sovereign's power can never be divided or given away, it is not lawful for the sovereign of one Christian common-wealth, for example the Pope in Rome, to claim power over the Christian subjects of another common-wealth. To do so diminishes the power of the sovereign and is counterproductive to the common-wealth as a whole. It is possible to obey both God and one's sovereign power and still be allowed entrance into God's Kingdome, Hobbes maintains, since all that is really needed for salvation is a genuine belief in Christ. Christ's Apostles ordered their converts to follow their earthly sovereigns in all things, even if that sovereign's law conflicted with God's law. In conclusion, one is obligated by God to obey their earthly sovereign until the second coming of Christ, at which time the saved will become Christ's subjects through a covenant. The misinterpretation of Holy Scripture (which Hobbes argues is rooted in the false philosophies of Aristotle) and the desire of

the Roman Catholic Church to claim unlawful authority over Christendom has thrust the common-wealth into a great “Kingdome of Darkness,” which Hobbes hopes to expose and correct through *Leviathan*.



CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Thomas Hobbes – Thomas Hobbes was an English philosopher from the 17th century, and *Leviathan* is his discourse on politics and power, both civil and ecclesiastical. Through *Leviathan*, Hobbes focuses on the state of humankind in nature, the creation of covenants and common-wealths, the nature of a sovereign’s power in relation to God’s power, and the misinterpretation of Holy Scripture and previous philosophies that has led Christianity to the “Kingdome of Darkness” and away from God. Hobbes makes many arguments in *Leviathan*, but he begins by discrediting Aristotle and the philosophies of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Hobbes moves on to the state of human beings in nature, which is synonymous with a state of war. To escape the constant fear and threat of violent death that is nature, people abandoned nature and moved into common-wealths to establish a common power and ensure their safety and contentment. Hobbes argues that once a covenant is entered, it can never be forfeited, and the subjects of a common-wealth are obligated to obey their sovereign in all things. The power of the sovereign is not to be confused with the power of God, who is the spiritual power over all humankind. While God has absolute power, his dominion over humankind does not begin until Christ’s second coming and the creation of God’s Kingdome through a covenant with the people. Until then, Hobbes maintains, a subject’s loyalties lie with their earthly sovereign, and there is no additional contract or covenant that can usurp that power. Hobbes offers *Leviathan* as a bit of sound philosophy to counteract the false philosophies of those who came before him. In Hobbes’s opinion, previous philosophers, with the exception of those espousing geometry and mathematics, do not begin their philosophies with established terms and definitions. As such, Hobbes meticulously defines and explains every term used in *Leviathan* in an effort to elevate his own philosophy to that of geometry or mathematics, thereby making it irrefutable.

Aristotle – Aristotle was an ancient Greek philosopher from the fourth century BCE. Hobbes frequently refers to Aristotle in *Leviathan* and attempts to discount several of his theories. Hobbes’s main disagreement with Aristotle is Aristotle’s philosophy of objects and the human senses. According to Aristotle, objects have an essence, or fancy, and that essence works on any one of the human senses to create a perception, or representation of said object. Hobbes is a materialist and fundamentally disagrees with Aristotle’s concept of essences. For Hobbes, an object is perceived when the object itself—not

the object’s so-called essence or fancy—comes into direct contact with the human sense organs. Hobbes argues that the Christian belief in incorporeal bodies and substances, which he contends is contradictory nonsense, is rooted in Aristotle’s philosophy and the fancy of objects, and Hobbes hopes to correct this absurdity through *Leviathan*. Hobbes also disagrees with Aristotle’s view of humankind in nature. While Aristotle argues that people are naturally social and helpful, Hobbes sees humankind in nature as naturally antisocial and violent. Perhaps most damaging, according to Hobbes, is Aristotle’s opinion of common-wealths. Aristotle argues that a democracy is the best kind of common-wealth, and he claims that a monarchy is synonymous with tyranny. Hobbes, of course, disagrees and argues instead that a monarchy is best and that a democratic assembly can be tyrannical just as easily as a monarch can.

God – According to Hobbes, God is the spiritual sovereign who has dominion over all of humankind. While Hobbes argues that God’s power is absolute, Hobbes ultimately maintains that the subjects of a common-wealth must obey their earthly sovereign before God. As God is the spiritual sovereign, his dominion does not begin until Christ’s second coming, at which time God’s Kingdome will be created and the saved will enter it through a covenant. Until Christ’s second coming and Judgement Day, Hobbes contends, the subject of a common-wealth is obligated to obey their civil, earthly sovereign, even if that sovereign’s will is against God’s law. Christ’s Apostles ordered new converts to obey their earthly sovereigns in all things; thus, Hobbes considers it God’s personal rule that one’s sovereign power is obeyed on Earth. Upon Christ’s second coming, he will become the sovereign power of God’s Kingdome; however, Christ’s power will be second to God’s. In Hobbes’s opinion, God is the creator of all things and people, even of those who don’t believe in God’s existence. While Hobbes considers many religious practices and Holy Doctrine to be absurd—an opinion which earned him a reputation of an atheist during his time—he clearly believes in the existence and power of God, which he maintains is infinite and cannot be fully comprehended by humankind.

Moses – Moses is a biblical figure in the Old Testament. Hobbes repeatedly refers to Moses at Mount Sinai, where Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt on God’s command, after which the Israelites entered into a covenant with God via Moses to be God’s “peculiar people” on Earth. According to Hobbes, the Israelites were “peculiar” because they accepted God as their civil sovereign, over and above the spiritual power God already claims over all of humankind. Hobbes refers to Moses as God’s “first Lieutenant,” which gives Moses the authority to speak God’s words. In Hobbes’s opinion, Moses was a true prophet, and the work he did on God’s behalf in Egypt, like the parting of the Red Sea, can rightly be considered miracles. Moses is the prophet who spoke to God most directly,

but, Hobbes points out, even Moses's communication with God was mediated through an angel, which supports Hobbes's argument that the voice of God cannot be comprehended by human ears.

Cardinal Bellarmine – Robert Bellarmine was a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church during the 17th century, who wrote several books of Holy Scripture. Like Theodore Beza, Hobbes offers Cardinal Bellarmine as an example of a writer of erroneous Holy Scripture. In his writings, Bellarmine argues that St. Peter was the first bishop in Rome and that all subsequent Popes are his successors. Bellarmine also argues that the Pope's power over all Christians is absolute, and that the Pope's judgements are "infallible," something that Hobbes adamantly denies.

Christ – In Christian belief, Christ is the son of God. Hobbes repeatedly refers to Christ in *Leviathan*, and he maintains that Christ, through the power of God, will serve as the sovereign of God's Kingdome on Earth. Christ sacrificed himself to redeem the sins of humankind, but upon Christ's second coming, Hobbes contends that all Christians must again repent to be redeemed and saved. According to Holy Scripture, Christ held three official offices: Savior, Counselor, and eternal King. While Christ is to be King, his power will still remain second to God. Christ was sent to the Jews to convince them to accept God and follow him, and Hobbes argues that Christ will come again. Upon Christ's second coming and Judgement Day, those who are saved will enter into God's Kingdome and eternal life, provided they accept Christ as their King, which Hobbes contends is the only thing necessary for entrance into God's Kingdome.

Cicero – Cicero was a Roman philosopher from the first century BCE. Hobbes mentions Cicero multiple times in *Leviathan*, especially Cicero's writings about an ancient judge who always asked criminals about the benefit of their illegal actions. Hobbes applies this same question to the unlawful actions discussed in *Leviathan*, especially those unlawful actions perpetrated by the Roman Catholic Church, which Hobbes maintains always benefit the Pope.

Elizabeth I – Queen Elizabeth I was sovereign queen of England and Ireland from 1558 until her death in 1603. Queen Elizabeth formally severed the Pope's power over England and was excommunicated from the Catholic Church 1570. In addition to excommunicating Queen Elizabeth, a power which Hobbes argues the Pope does not ultimately have, the Pope also released the Queen's subjects and declared her power illegitimate. Since the covenant that imbues a sovereign with power comes from the people, not the Pope, Hobbes argues that the Pope has no natural power over the sovereign of another common-wealth, even if that sovereign is Christian.

Francis Godolphin – Francis Godolphin is the dedicatee of *Leviathan*. He was a royalist and a Member of Parliament. He

was also the brother of Sidney Godolphin, Hobbes's personal friend, who died fighting the parliamentarians during the English Civil War in 1643. It is because of Hobbes's respect and admiration for Sidney that he dedicates *Leviathan* to Francis.

Sidney Godolphin – Sidney Godolphin was an English poet and Hobbes's personal friend. Godolphin was a Member of Parliament, and like Hobbes, he was a royalist. Godolphin died fighting against the parliamentarians in 1643 during the English Civil War, and it is because of Hobbes's respect for Sidney that he dedicates *Leviathan* to Sidney's brother, Francis.

Judas Iscariot – Judas was one of Christ's 12 original Disciples. Judas betrayed Christ to the Romans, which ultimately led to Christ's arrest and crucifixion. Hobbes briefly mentions Judas and his betrayal when he cites Luke 22:4: "*Satan entered into him, and thereupon that he went and communed with the Chief Priests, and Captaines, how he might betray Christ unto them.*" The word *Satan*, according to Hobbes, is meant as merely the "Enemy," who metaphorically enters Judas and makes him hostile and disloyal to Christ; it does not mean Satan is an actual person whose spirit form has entered Judas.

Matthias – Matthias is a biblical figure and Apostle from the New Testament. Matthias was the first Apostle who was not a martyr, which means he did not witness the Resurrection of Christ. Like Paul and Barnabas, Matthias was not selected as an Apostle directly by Christ. While Paul and Barnabas were selected as Apostles by the assembly of the Church of Antioch, Matthias was selected by an assembly of 120 Christians. The Acts of Apostles, the part of the New Testament that tells of Matthias's selection, was written some 80 years after Christ. For Hobbes, the further the writing of Holy Scripture gets from God and Christ, the more dubious its authorship and authority becomes.

Paul – Paul was an Apostle who taught Christ's word in the first century. Saints Paul and Luke are the only writers of the New Testament who did not live during the time of Christ. Like Barnabas, Paul was made an Apostle by the assembly at the Church of Antioch, and he is one of the biblical figures Hobbes cites frequently in *Leviathan*.

Peter – Peter is a biblical figure, saint, and one Christ's 12 Apostles. According to Cardinal Bellarmine, St. Peter was the first bishop in Rome, and all other Popes are his successors. Hobbes maintains that many people dispute this claim, and if the first bishop in Rome was the "Supreme Pastor," then that first Roman bishop was Constantine, Rome's first Emperor, not St. Peter.

Samuel – Samuel is a biblical figure from the Old Testament who plays a key role in the transfer of God's Kingdom in Israel to Saul, and later to David. Hobbes maintains that the Books of Samuel in the Old Testament were written long after the life of Samuel, which negatively affects the authority of Holy Scripture in Hobbes's opinion. As the authorship of Holy

Scripture can never be certain, one must find authority within God's message itself, not the language and stories of others.

Saul – Saul was the first king of Israel according to the Hebrew Bible. Hobbes refers to Saul, who, in the Book of Judges in the Old Testament, was affected by the “*Spirit of God*.” Hobbes maintains that such references to the “*Spirit of God*” in Holy Scripture are only metaphor for faith, as it is impossible for a physical body to manifest as a spirit and be poured or inspired into another.

Solomon – Solomon was one of the kings of Israel according to the Old Testament. Hobbes uses Solomon as an example of a civil sovereign in *Leviathan*, and Hobbes also refers to Solomon's consecration of his temple, which he blessed and offered onto the people. The consecration of Solomon's temple is the proper definition of the word, which is often misinterpreted as having to do with exorcism or the conjuring of spirits for holy practice.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Aaron – Aaron was a prophet and Moses's brother, and he was the sovereign power of the Israelites after Moses. Hobbes uses Aaron and his Golden Calf as an example of idolatry.

Abraham – Abraham is a biblical figure from the Old Testament. Abraham was the first to make a covenant with God, in which he agreed to obey God in all things. According to Hobbes, God appeared to Abraham as three angels.

Adam – Adam is a biblical figure from the Old Testament. Adam and God had a covenant in which Adam was to live forever in the Garden of Eden; however, Adam did not obey God and the covenant was voided.

Barnabas – Barnabas was one of Christ's Apostles according to the New Testament. Like Matthias and Paul, Barnabas was not selected as an Apostle by Christ and was instead selected by an assembly of people at the Church of Antioch, one of the earliest Christian churches.

Theodore Beza – Theodore Beza was a French theologian and Protestant from the 16th century, whom Hobbes offers as an example of a writer of erroneous Holy Scripture. Beza argues in his philosophy that the Kingdom of God began with Christ's Resurrection.

Constantine – Constantine was Emperor of Rome from 306 to 337, and other than Moses, he was the first Christian sovereign of a common-wealth. According to Hobbes, the New Testament was not considered civil law until Constantine ordered it so during his reign.

Henry VIII – Henry VIII was King of England from 1509 to 1547. King Henry VIII separated the Church of England from papal authority and was excommunicated by Pope Clement VII. Hobbes briefly mentions Henry VIII as an example of unlawful excommunication.

Isaiah – Isaiah was an Israelite who appears in the Old Testament. Isaiah, along with Moses and Samuel, are Hobbes's examples of true Prophets.

James VI and I – James VI and I was the King of England and Ireland from 1603 to 1625 and King of Scotland from 1567 to 1625. Hobbes briefly mentions King James as “the most wise King” who tried to unite England and Scotland.

Jacob – Jacob is a biblical figure and the grandson of Abraham. Hobbes frequently cites the Old Testament where Jacob appears, particularly the passages that are associated with angels.

John – John is one of Christ's Disciples in the New Testament. Hobbes quotes the Gospel of John multiple times in *Leviathan* and uses John and the people of Samaria as an example of the “*Imposition of hands*,” which is often used in blessings or the ordaining of a new minister.

Joshua – Joshua was Moses's assistant and the leader of the Israelites after Moses's death. According to Hobbes, the Book of Joshua in the Old Testament was written well after Joshua's time. This discrepancy is yet another dubious point of Holy Scripture for Hobbes.

Luke – Luke was a prominent Christian figure and is generally accepted as the main writer of the New Testament. Like Paul, Luke did not live during the time of Christ, which for Hobbes, gives Luke less authority than those biblical figures who lived during Christ's time, like Saint Peter.

Necho – Necho was an Egyptian king from the 6th century BCE. Necho worshipped idolatry, but still God spoke through him. Necho is Hobbes's example that all prophets are not pious, nor are they always Christian.

Nostradamus – Nostradamus was a French astronomer and seer whose 1555 book of poems, *Les Prophéties*, is said to predict the future. Hobbes uses Nostradamus as an example of a false prophet in *Leviathan*.

Plato – Plato was a Greek philosopher from the fourth century BCE and Aristotle's teacher. Like Aristotle, Plato is one of the Gentiles whose false philosophies have led to the misinterpretation of Holy Scripture.

TERMS

Author – An author is whoever owns the actions of any one person. Inanimate objects cannot be authors, nor can those lacking natural reason, like “*Children, Fools, or Mad-men*.” There are two kinds of authors: those who own the actions of another provisionally, like a lawyer or guardian, and those who own the actions of another unconditionally, like a civil sovereign. When any number of people unite in a common-wealth under a single sovereign power, those people, or subjects, are represented by a single author. A sovereign power

is the author of a subject's actions, as the subject of a common-wealth is only permitted to do those things approved by the sovereign; however, since a sovereign gathers authority and power directly from the people, the subjects are likewise the authors of everything a sovereign does.

Common-wealth – A common-wealth is any number of people united under a single sovereign power, in which the people, or subjects, forfeit their right to self-preservation and place it in a person or group of people via a covenant. There are three basic kinds of common-wealths: a monarchy is created when a group of people place their collective power in a single person, an aristocracy is created when sovereign power is placed in an assembly of people, and a democracy is created when power is placed in all the people equally. There is no one kind of common-wealth that has more power than the next, and each has unique benefits and complications; however, **Hobbes** ultimately argues that a monarchy is the best kind of common-wealth. Hobbes's purpose in penning *Leviathan* is to outline the ideal common-wealth, to illustrate how a common-wealth is created, and to explain under what circumstances and conditions a common-wealth is destroyed.

Consecration – To consecrate something is to “Offer, Give, or Dedicate” an object for some religious or holy practice. But consecration in Holy Scripture is often confused with conjuration, especially in Catholicism, in which consecration is specifically associated with exorcism and the conjuring of evil spirits. True consecration has absolutely nothing to do with exorcism, **Hobbes** maintains, and it is one of the many ways in which Christians frequently misinterpret Holy Scripture.

Covenant – A covenant is a contract that is entered into willingly by at least two parties. Every covenant is made in the eyes of **God**, and, according to the Laws of Nature, every covenant must be honored. A covenant only expires once its terms are fulfilled or the obligation is rescinded by the party who implemented it. A common-wealth, for example, is based on a covenant in which any number of people forfeit their right to self-preservation and place that right in a single sovereign power.

Craft – Craft is prudence applied to unjust ends. According to **Hobbes**, craft is frequently seen within common-wealths, and royalists in Hobbes's day viewed many of the actions of parliamentarians as craft.

Discourse – Discourse can be generally understood as the language employed to express a certain topic or debate. Human thoughts that remain within the mind are known as mental discourse, and that which is spoken is known as verbal discourse. According to **Hobbes**, discourse can never end in “absolute knowledge of fact,” because no one can ever know by discourse alone if something is true all of the time. All philosophy, including science, is the conditional knowledge drawn from discourse; therefore, sound reasoning is necessary

in discourse, and all discourse must begin with established and accepted terms and definitions.

Dreams – Dreams are imagination during sleep, which are constituted, either in whole or in part, from past perceptions and experience. Fearful dreams come from fearful objects, and the emotions and passions experienced in dreams can cause an actual response in the human body. According to **Hobbes**, the inability to discern dreams from reality is rooted in past religions that believed in nymphs, fairies, and satyrs. People often claim that **God** spoke to them in a dream, but Hobbes clarifies that such people only dreamed about God. Dreaming that God has spoken isn't to say that God has actually spoken, and Hobbes warns that people often lie.

Experience – Experience is the accumulation of sense perceptions that exist in any one person's memory. People with the most experience are often those with the most prudence, since they know the “most Signes [signs] to guesse by.” According to **Hobbes**, philosophy does not include knowledge that comes from experience or prudence, because such knowledge comes from memory, not from reason.

Fancy – The term “fancy,” as **Hobbes** uses it, is best understood in context with the philosophy of **Aristotle**. According to Aristotle, objects have an essence, or “fancy,” which sends a “visible species” to the eye, for example, or an “audible species” to the ear, and that “fancy” in turn produces some human sensation. Hobbes disagrees and argues such sensations are produced when an object—not that object's essence or “fancy”—comes into direct contact with one of the human sense organs. Hobbes argues that Aristotle's essences and the “fancy” of objects has led, at least in part, to the Christian belief in spirits and transubstantiation.

Gentile – Hobbes defines a Gentile as someone from ancient Greek or Roman society, in which numerous gods, demigods, and deities were worshipped. The Gentiles did not, for the most part, know of the natural causes of things, so they attributed everything to gods and religion. When the Gentiles were converted to Christianity, quoting Holy Scripture was no use, since they did not believe in **God**; thus, **Christ's** Apostles used natural reason to refute the Gentile's idolatry. According to **Hobbes**, there are many relics of the Gentiles that remain within the Christian Church, such as the belief in ghosts and other spirits of the dead. Additional relics include the worshipping of false images and idols, the canonizing of saints, and the belief that the Catholic Pope is the absolute sovereign power over all of Christendom. Hobbes offers his own philosophy in *Leviathan* to counter the civil and moral doctrine of the Gentiles.

Idolatry – Idolatry is worshipping or honoring an image as if that image is a body with a soul. If a subject bows before a king in civil worship and recognizes the power that king has as the sovereign, this is not idolatry; however, if the same subject

bows before a king and praises him for the weather, this is idolatry, as only **God** has power over the weather. When **Aaron** made the Golden Calf and presented it to the people for religious use without the authority of God or **Moses**, this was idolatry. Likewise, when Christians worship images that are not authorized through Holy Scripture, like cherubs, or prescribe to unauthorized practices, like transubstantiation, this, too, is idolatry.

Imagination – Imagination is the image of an object that is retained in the mind, and these retained images were known to the ancient Greeks as fancy. According to **Hobbes**, imagination is the foundation of all human acts and is “nothing but decaying sense.” Memory and imagination are the same thing, only they have different names and different considerations. Multiple memories of many things is known as experience, whereas imagination includes only those things that have already been perceived, either in whole or in part, by one of the human senses.

The Laws of Nature – The Laws of Nature are agreements or covenants that people are drawn to in order to ensure peace and avoid war. The Laws of Nature are God-given and are revealed through one’s natural ability to reason. There are several Laws of Nature, under which one is not permitted to do anything that is destructive to life. According to the Laws of Nature, one must always strive for peace as long as peace is reasonable, and they must honor all covenants they enter into. Each of the Laws of Nature can be condensed into one single rule: treat others as one would want to be treated themselves. Of course, **Hobbes** admits that one cannot expect the Laws of Nature to be followed without the creation of a central power to compel others to honor their covenants. Therefore, people moved out of nature and into civil societies and commonwealths to create this central power and ensure peace.

Martyr – Hobbes defines a martyr as someone who witnessed the Resurrection of **Christ**—not someone who dies in the name of some religious cause. The confusion as to who, and what, a martyr is exactly is an example of the widespread misinterpretation of Holy Scripture that Hobbes claims plagues Christianity.

Memory – Memory is the “decaying sense” of imagination. When the image of an object is retained in one’s imagination, that image begins to decay and degrade over time in one’s memory. Memory and imagination are the same thing, only they are known by different names, and multiple memories of many things is known as experience. According to **Hobbes**, philosophy includes only that knowledge that comes from reason, not knowledge that comes from memory, like experience and prudence.

Miracle – A miracle is a rare event that has no natural cause. What one person considers a miracle is not always a miracle to the next person. For instance, early human beings thought

rainbows and eclipses were miracles, but those with special knowledge of the natural causes of things do not see such natural phenomena as miracles. By definition, a miracle is the work of **God**, often done through the hand of another known as a prophet. When **Moses** led the Israelites out of Egypt on God’s command and parted the Red Sea, this was a miracle; however, **Hobbes** is dubious of modern miracles claimed by Christianity, such as statues that weep blood or people who claim the ability to heal with the laying on of hands.

Passions – Passions are the emotions of human beings. Different people feel different passions, and different passions come from different experiences and different levels of education. Too much passion is known as madness, and passions that predispose people to peace include the fear of death, the desire for things that are necessary for life (like food and shelter), and the hope to obtain such vital necessities.

Prophet – A prophet is someone who speaks the words of **God**, like **Moses**, **Samuel**, or **Isaiah**. According to **Hobbes**, a “true prophet” can be known by two marks: they must perform a miracle, and they must teach only Christianity. If both of these marks are not present, the prophet is not true and cannot be trusted.

Prudence – Prudence, also known as wisdom, is the assumption that “like events will follow like actions.” In short, prudence is the presumption of future events based on past experience, and when it is applied to unjust ends, it is known as craft. Prudence can be false, but it those with the most experience who have the most prudence.

Punishment – Punishment is “an Evil inflicted by publique Authority” on one who has broken the law and gone before a judge. The right to punish subjects comes from the covenant of the commonwealth, which imbues the sovereign with the power to punish those who do not conform to the law and the right to appoint judges to issue that punishment. Private revenge done onto a subject by another subject is not punishment, nor is punishment inflicted by an authority that is not made public. Any pain that an authority inflicts in the name of punishment must be in respect to the good of the commonwealth, not the evil of the crime that was committed. There are many different forms of punishment, such as corporal punishment or exile, and it is against the Laws of Nature to punish an innocent subject. According to **Hobbes**, for any covenant or law to be honored, the fear of punishment for breaking said law or covenant must be greater than the perceived reward of breaking it.

Science – Science is “the knowledge of Consequences” and is the “true Mother” of the arts and philosophy, mostly mathematics. However, since science is brought to light by the imagination of another, it has very little power. Some signs within science are certain and factual, while others are not, as the knowledge that comes from prudence is always uncertain.

An ignorance of science and the natural causes of events can lead a person to rely too much on other people's opinions or attribute supernatural causes to natural events. **Hobbes** warns that power can never be maintained through the suppression of science and reason.

Sign – A sign is the consequence of an action that was previously observed. Signs that are less observed are less certain than those signs that are observed all the time. Prudence is the presumption of future events based on the experience of past signs.

Sovereign – A sovereign is the central power of a common-wealth. A sovereign power can be either a single person, as it is in a monarchy, or it can be an assembly of people, as it is in an aristocracy or democracy. A sovereign is imbued with all the rights and power of the people through a covenant and is responsible for the safety and contentment of all the subjects of the common-wealth. The sovereign alone is responsible for the passing and enacting of all laws and regulations. While a sovereign may appoint officials to assist in the running of a common-wealth, no official authority can have more power than the sovereign. A sovereign's power cannot be usurped and is beyond all contestation. If a sovereign power is held prisoner by an invading force, that force has no claim to the subjects of a common-wealth unless the sovereign willingly forfeits their power. If at any time, a sovereign's power is divided or diminished, the covenant that joins the common-wealth is voided, and the subjects revert back to a state of nature and inevitable war. The main cause of the dissolution of common-wealths according to **Hobbes** is a sovereign power who is content with less power than they actually have. Power is forfeited in ignorance or for some perceived benefit, but the result is always the same: the sovereign is stripped of power, which is counterproductive to the common-wealth as a whole. One way in which power is stripped from a sovereign is the belief that the Pope in Rome has dominion over all Christians, even those who are subjects of another common-wealth and sovereign. A subject can obey only one sovereign power at a time, **Hobbes** argues, and subjects must obey the sovereign of their own common-wealth before any other power, including **God**.

Subject – A subject is a person within a common-wealth, who willingly forfeits their right to self-preservation to a sovereign power through a covenant. Once a subject enters into a covenant and agrees to join a common-wealth, they are not obligated to observe any other contract or power, and they cannot enter into any future covenants in which the same kind of power is transferred. The subject of a common-wealth must obey their sovereign above all others, including **God**. **Christ's** Apostles ordered converts to obey their earthly masters in all things, and it is the same for the subject of a common-wealth. Even if a sovereign's will is against **God's** will, **Hobbes** maintains that a subject can safely obey their sovereign without offending

God. **God** is the spiritual sovereign, but his dominion will not begin until **Christ's** second coming, at which time the saved will enter **God's** Kingdom through a covenant. Until then, **Hobbes** argues, a subject must obey the earthly sovereign of their common-wealth in all things.

Transubstantiation – Transubstantiation is the Christian (and especially Catholic) belief that bread and wine can be transformed into the body and blood of **Christ** through incantation. According to **Hobbes**, the practice of transubstantiation is absurd and is not rooted in Holy Scripture (it began during the reign of Pope Innocent III, 1198-1216), which makes it idolatry. Instead of Holy Scripture, transubstantiation is rooted in the philosophy of **Aristotle**, who supports the false belief that bodies can be made of incorporeal substances and spirits.

War – War, according to **Hobbes**, is battle and the intention or desire for battle. People living outside a common sovereign power are in a constant state of war, and this state of war includes every person against every person. War is inevitable in a state of nature where there is no common power to keep people in line; thus, people have abandoned nature and created common-wealths to escape the violence and war that is implicit in nature. If at any time, the power of a sovereign is divided or diminished, the common-wealth reverts back to a state of nature and inevitable war. War is one of the primary causes of the dissolution of a common-wealth, and civil war in particular is death to a common-wealth.



THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.



NATURE, WAR, AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Thomas **Hobbes's** *Leviathan*, first published in 1651, is an ambitious philosophical work that covers numerous topics, including science, religion, and politics. However, **Hobbes's** primary argument focuses on the state of humankind in nature—that is, how a human being behaves outside of civilized society. The state of humankind in nature prior to the advent of civilized society was a popular philosophical topic in **Hobbes's** day, and most philosophers based their arguments on the works of **Aristotle**, who argued that humans are naturally social and prone to working together for the common good. **Hobbes**, however, completely dismisses this idea. According to **Hobbes**, human beings outside of civilized society are not social, and they are driven solely by self-interest and the desire to stay alive by any means

necessary. Everyone has an equal right to everything in nature, which leads to a state of war and makes nature an exceedingly dangerous and violent place. Through *Leviathan*, Hobbes contends that war is an implicit part of nature, and he ultimately argues that the creation of civil society is the only way to escape the danger of nature and achieve true security and happiness.

Hobbes argues that human beings in nature are antisocial and aggressive, which makes nature a hostile place and true happiness and security impossible. The “right of nature,” according to Hobbes, “is the Liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own Nature; that is to say, of his own Life: and consequently, of doing any thing, which in his own Judgement, and Reason, hee shall conceive to the aptest means thereunto.” In other words, it is the right of everyone in nature to do whatever they must to ensure their own survival, which means one has a right to anything—and anyone—that makes that endeavor possible. In nature, one can steal and kill, as long as such actions are done to preserve one’s life. Hobbes contends that all voluntary actions of humans in nature “tend to the benefit of themselves,” and he further maintains that everyone’s conservation and contentment is “committed to [their] own care.” Hobbes does not mean to imply that humans in nature don’t interact or attempt to reach various agreements, or covenants, to preserve life and achieve happiness; however, since everyone in nature has the same rights and everyone is committed primarily to self-preservation, there is little or no obligation to others. According to Hobbes, the state of nature is one in which there is no culture, no knowledge of science, no art, and no society to speak of. In nature, there is only “continuall feare, and danger of violent death,” Hobbes says, “And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.” As everyone in nature is concerned only with themselves and often at the expense of others, there can never be any security or happiness in nature.

Furthermore, since everyone in nature is equal and after the same thing (self-preservation), and they can destroy and subdue one another in the process, Hobbes argues that war in nature is inevitable. In nature, where there is not a central power, people are in a condition that Hobbes calls “Warre; and such a warre, as is every man, against every man.” In short, there is an “everyone for themselves” mentality in nature, which makes war and nature synonymous terms. According to Hobbes, war does not consist only of actual fighting and battles; war exists “in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary.” As there can never be assurance to the contrary in nature, nature is always in a state of war. Because of this constant state of war, nothing in nature can ever be unjust, and traditional ideas of right and wrong do not exist. “Where there is not common Power,” Hobbes argues, “there is no Law: where no Law, no Injustice.” As nature lacks a common power, it will forever be in a state of

war, which again means that people in nature can never be truly secure or happy.

It is precisely this lack of security and happiness that leads people to abandon nature and create civil societies, which Hobbes refers to as common-wealths. By definition, a common-wealth is a multitude of people voluntarily joined together as one under a common power, and Hobbes’s idea of a perfect society—or at least as perfect as a society can be—is what he calls “the **Leviathan**.” In a common-wealth, one forfeits their right to self-preservation and places that right in the hands of the common power, which then imposes rules, ensures contracts and covenants are honored, and works for the safety and preservation of the people. The creation of civil society and the common-wealth effectively halts the state of war that plagues humankind in nature, Hobbes argues, and it is the only way to enjoy security and true happiness.



POWER, COMMON-WEALTHS, AND MONARCHIES

One of Thomas Hobbes’s central arguments in *Leviathan* is that people moved out of nature and into civil societies to establish a common power. Building on that argument, Hobbes outlines the ways in which a common power is established and maintained. When creating a common power, any number of people enter into a contract, or covenant, in which they agree to forfeit their right to self-preservation and give that right to a single person or group of people. This union of people joined under a single power is known as a common-wealth. If the power of a common-wealth is given to a single person, a monarchy is created; if the power of a common-wealth is given to a few people, an aristocracy is created; and if the power of a common-wealth is given to a group of people, a democracy is created. While each of these common-wealths are different, they are each imbued with the power of the people and operate to the same end: prioritizing the safety and happiness of the people. Hobbes considers each type of common-wealth and debates the ideal society, which he calls the “great **Leviathan**,” and he ultimately argues that the best type of common-wealth is a monarchy.

Whether a common-wealth is a democracy, an aristocracy, or a monarchy, each has a common power known as the sovereign, which is endowed with the power of the people to rule over said people and ensure their safety and contentment. According to Hobbes, “from this Institution of a Common-wealth are derived all the *Rights*, and *Facultyes* of him, or them, on whom the Sovereigne Power is conferred by the consent of the People assembled.” In other words, in a common-wealth, a group of people agree to give their rights and power to a single entity, which has power in proportion to the number of people in agreement. In a common-wealth, the sovereign power “is judge of what is necessary for the Peace and Defence of his Subjects.” As the subjects of a common-wealth have given up

their right to self-preservation, the sovereign power must endeavor for peace and has an obligation to ensure the personal safety of each subject. The sovereign entity has many rights and powers, including the right to make and enforce rules and the power to reward and punish subjects, and these rights are “indivisible.” Sovereign power cannot be forfeited or taken away, and it does not diminish or weaken with time. As long as a common-wealth stands, the sovereign power is absolute and is always derived directly from the people.

While Hobbes outlines multiple types of common-wealths, he ultimately argues that the best common-wealth is a monarchy. In an aristocracy or democracy, Hobbes explains, it is easy for individual members of the sovereign power to increase their “private fortune” at the expense of “publique prosperity.” On the other hand, in a monarchy, “the private interest is the same with the publique. The riches, power, and honour of a Monarch arise onely from the riches, strength and reputation of his Subjects.” In other words, a king or a queen is only as good as their subjects, which motivates a monarch to ensure the best life for their subjects. According to Hobbes, “a Monarch receiveth counsel of whom, when, and where he pleaseth; and consequently may heare the opinion of men versed in the matter about which he deliberates,” whereas a sovereign assembly receives counsel and opinions from only a limited few people and in certain circumstances. In a monarchy, Hobbes thus implies, the people have a better chance of being heard by the sovereign power than they do in a democracy or an aristocracy. Lastly, Hobbes argues that a monarchy is best because people “are subject to no other inconstancy, than that of Humane Nature; but in Assemblies, besides that of Nature, there ariseth an Inconstancy from the Number.” Hobbes maintains that it is human nature to be egocentric and put one’s own needs ahead of others’. In a monarchy, there is only one person potentially putting themselves ahead of the people; in a democracy or an aristocracy, there are more.

Despite Hobbes’s preference for monarchies, he does not pretend that monarchies are a perfect form of civil society. In fact, Hobbes argues that in a monarchy, a single subject “may be deprived of all he possesseth” simply “for the enriching of a favourite or flatterer.” The absolute power of a single person will always be fickle and prone to self-interest because, Hobbes contends, humanity as a whole will always be fickle and prone to self-interest. Hobbes wrote *Leviathan* in 1651, just a few years into the Interregnum, the period of time in England between the execution of King Charles I and the abolishment of the monarchy in 1649, and the restoration of Charles I’s son, Charles II, to the throne in 1660. During this time, the sovereign power of the common-wealth of England resided with Parliament, an assembly of people, rather than with a single monarch. While Hobbes’s argument was likely a source of controversy in his own time, he clearly supports the monarchy and argues that it is the best type of common-wealth.



RELIGION

Religion is a central theme in Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan*. The title of the book is itself a religious reference: **Leviathan** is a biblical sea creature from the Book of Job whose image is often used within Christianity as a metaphor for the power of people united as one. In the epistle dedicatory of *Leviathan* addressed to Hobbes’s friend and Member of Parliament, Mr. Francis Godolphin, Hobbes admits that his treatment of scripture will likely offend many readers, as he approaches God and holy doctrine differently than readers may be used to. Hobbes contends that scripture has largely been misinterpreted, much to the detriment of the common-wealth, and he offers a completely new approach to religion and civil society. Hobbes is critical of religion in all its forms, and his opinions earned him a reputation as an atheist in his own time; however, Hobbes nevertheless contends that religion has an important place in the common-wealth. Through *Leviathan*, Hobbes explores and debates the role and purpose of religion in civil society, and while he maintains that religion is necessary in a common-wealth, he ultimately argues that subjects of a common-wealth must honor and obey their earthly, sovereign political power above God.

Throughout much of *Leviathan*, Hobbes is quite critical of religion—especially Christianity, and Catholicism in particular—which he argues is, at times, downright ridiculous. In Hobbes’s explanation of humankind and imagination, he argues that “Fayries, and walking Ghosts” exist only “to keep in credit the use of Exorcism, of Crosses, of holy Water, and other such inventions of Ghostly men.” In other words, ghosts and other supernatural beings exist only to convince others of religious doctrine, especially Catholic doctrine, which believes in possession by demonic forces and the power of exorcism. In Hobbes’s account of reason and words, he explains insignificant speech and the abuse of words, which he refers to as “Absurdity.” Absurd words are those put together that have “no signification at all,” like “the Trinity” and “Transubstantiation.” The Trinity is a reference to Christian doctrine that maintains God is three holy beings—the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. Transubstantiation is the conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, which Hobbes argues is just as absurd as the Trinity. A single entity can never be three, and bread and wine can never be transformed into flesh and blood. According to Hobbes, the “kind of Absurdity” religious doctrine espouses “may rightly be numbered amongst the many sorts of Madnesse” and defects that plague the intellect and imagination of human beings. In his view, the nonsense and ghostly creations common in religious doctrine make it “unintelligible” to reasonable people.

Despite his rather harsh assessment of religion, Hobbes maintains that religion and God are an integral part of the human experience and of the common-wealth. Hobbes argues that human beings are each endowed with the “Right of

Nature,” which gives each person equal right to nature and to self-preservation, and this right is given to the people by God. Hobbes admits that God created Earth for the benefit of humankind; thus, everything humankind has accomplished is due to this gift. As Hobbes explains covenants, or contracts, between individual people, he says that an oath may be sworn before God in the creation of a contract. This oath, however, does nothing to strengthen the obligation. “For a Covenant, if lawfull,” Hobbes argues, “binds in the sight of God, without the Oath, as much with it.” For Hobbes, a covenant—the very foundation of a common-wealth—is always made in the eyes of God. While Hobbes argues that religion is often absurd, he maintains that “all manner of men do so believe in God, as to hold all for truth they heare him say, whether they understand it, or not; which is all the Faith and trust can possibly be had in any person whatsoever: But they do not all believe in the Doctrine of the Creed.” This belief in God, not in doctrine, guides the decisions and actions of people—and for many, God is the supreme authority and judge.

While Hobbes understands and commends this deep belief and reverence for God, he warns that such devotion can be harmful to the common-wealth. According to Hobbes, “*Temporall* and *Spirituell* Government, are but two words brought into the world, to make men see double, and mistake their *Lawfull* *Soveraign*.” Hobbes admits that God is the supreme authority and judge in Heaven; but on Earth, in a common-wealth, the sovereign power is the supreme authority and judge, regardless of the sovereign’s own religion. “There are Christians, in the Dominions of severall Princes and States; but every one of them is subject to that Common-wealth, whereof he is himself a member; and consequently, cannot be subject to the commands of any other Person,” even if that “person” is God. To hold anyone in a position of authority over the sovereign power, Hobbes argues, contradicts the purpose of the common-wealth and returns the people back to a state of war.



FEAR

Fear is present throughout most of Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan*. In 1651, when *Leviathan* was first published, England was nearing the end of the English Civil War, a 10-year conflict that pitted the “Cavaliers” (those who supported the monarchy) against the “Roundheads” (those who supported Parliament). The English Civil War saw the abolition of the monarchy, the execution of King Charles I, and the near destruction of English society. Fear and uncertainty were a daily part of life during Hobbes’s time, and that fear is reflected in the references to civil war and regicide in *Leviathan*. Fear is also reflected in many of Hobbes’s arguments. Fear is present in Hobbes’s examination of religion, and it is paramount in his argument concerning human beings, the state of nature, and the creation of civil societies and

common-wealths. Hobbes maintains that humans in a state of nature live in constant fear, and it is fear that drives people to society. Likewise, it is fear that preserves a common-wealth once it is created. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes underscores the ubiquity of fear, and he effectively argues that fear is a powerful and motivating force that binds people together as a community.

Fear is at the foundation of Hobbes’s examination of God and religion, and, Hobbes contends, it was fear that brought human beings to religion in the first place. According to Hobbes, there exists within humankind a constant fear created by an “ignorance of causes.” When nothing can be seen, and “there is nothing to accuse, either of their good, or evill fortune, but some *Power*, or *Agent Invisible*: In which sense perhaps it was, that some of the old Poets said, that the Gods were at first created by humane Feare.” Not only is fear central to Hobbes’s argument concerning religion, but he suggests that fear is likely the motivating force that brought humans to manufacture God, faith, and religion. (Hobbes’s implication that humans created God and religion in response to fear contradicts his general argument regarding religion. Hobbes argues that religion is nonsense, but he nevertheless maintains God’s existence and power. This contradiction is something Hobbes leaves unresolved.) Hobbes argues that it is natural for human beings to wonder about the causes of events and about the causes of one’s own fortune. Of course, these things aren’t always clear, and this causes “anxiety,” so “he supposes causes of them, either such as his own fancy suggesteth; or trusteth to the Authority of other men.” When no reasonable cause for events can be found, humankind creates a cause to dampen their anxiety. Ultimately, Hobbes argues that human beings turned to religion, and perhaps even created it, to answer questions and explain events and causes, thereby alleviating the anxiety and fear that comes from living in ignorance.

Just as fear is central in Hobbes’s argument regarding religion, it is also vital in his examination of human beings, nature, and civil society, which further highlights the pervasiveness of fear. In a state of nature, where everyone has an equal right to self-preservation through violence, Hobbes argues that there is “continuell feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.” The constant fear present in nature compounds one’s misery, making nature an unbearable place to live and prompting humankind’s transition to civil society. Hobbes maintains that human beings moved out of nature and created civil societies and common-wealths to get “themselves out from the miserable condition of Warre.” In a civil society, a common power is established via a contract, or covenant, that protects people and frees them of the constant fear of violent death that accompanies nature and war. The contract that establishes the common-wealth cannot be sustained, Hobbes contends, “without the feare of some coerceive Power; which in the condition of meer Nature, where

all men are equal, and judges of the justness of their own fears cannot possibly be supposed." In short, for a contract to be maintained—especially the contract that establishes a common-wealth—those involved in the contract must fear the consequences of breaking said contract.

When a common-wealth is created by acquisition, meaning it is created willingly by a group of people who otherwise fear death in nature, those people "who choose their Sovereign, do it for fear of one another, and not of him whom they Institute." Again, people choose society and a common sovereign power because they fear nature and the state of war that is implicit in it; however, it also is fear—fear of the sovereign power, fear of God, and fear of returning to a state of nature and war—that keeps people loyal and obedient to a common-wealth. Fear was a useful argument during Hobbes's day, in which fear of war and death was prominent, and he uses that fear to promote his theories and philosophies. Hobbes argues that "life itself is but motion, and can never be without desire, or fear," and his assessment of human beings in *Leviathan* reflects this assertion.



REASON, FACT, AND PHILOSOPHY

Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* is a work of political philosophy, and philosophy in general is a prominent theme within the book. Hobbes argues

that all areas of study—politics, poetry, science, and the like—fall under the greater umbrella of philosophy, and he further asserts that all philosophy is rooted in opinion, not in fact. As philosophy is not necessarily rooted in sound reason and fact, it can, according to Hobbes, be completely absurd at times. The exceptions, Hobbes maintains, are geometry and arithmetic, which are grounded in fact and are therefore infallible. Hobbes also makes a third exception to his general rule: for all his talk of philosophy resting on the flimsy foundation of opinion, Hobbes presents his own philosophy as infallible. That Hobbes frames his own philosophy in this light, and that he notes his intention to discount other philosophers, suggests that Hobbes sees his philosophy as being backed by reason and fact. Of course, that Hobbes elevates his own philosophy to the level of geometry and arithmetic may also unintentionally reaffirm his overall argument: that philosophy rests on the flimsy foundation of opinion.

According to Hobbes, (almost) all philosophies are based on opinion, not fact. In explaining the human senses, Hobbes cites Aristotle, who argued that vision and sight are achieved by a "visible species" and hearing is caused by an "audible species." In short, Aristotle claimed that human beings are able to take in and identify objects both by directly sensing the thing through one of the five senses and by sensing the essence of the thing. Hobbes disagrees. For Hobbes, "the object is one thing, the image or fancy is another." Hobbes implies that Aristotle's philosophy is only opinion, and one that is easily dispelled through a more materialist view—that an object is sensed when

the thing (not the *essence* of the thing) comes into direct contact with one of the human sense organs. In Hobbes's explanation of motion, he claims that an object will remain still forever unless something moves it "is a truth that no man doubts of"—except, of course, for Hobbes. Hobbes argues the opposite, claiming that an object is eternally in motion unless something stops it. This theory of motion is in direct opposition to popular philosophical ideas and theories, which Hobbes thereby implies are merely opinion. Hobbes also explores human imagination and says that certain philosophers claim "that Imaginations rise of themselves, and have no cause." Hobbes again disagrees. For Hobbes, imagination and thoughts must come from somewhere and are rooted in experience and memory. In other words, Hobbes maintains that one cannot imagine what they haven't sensed before in some form, either through sight, sound, taste, odor, or touch. Again, Hobbes suggests that many prior philosophies are rooted in opinion, not verifiable fact.

Unlike virtually every other type of philosophy, Hobbes argues that geometry and arithmetic are grounded in fact and are therefore indisputable. He maintains that there is no philosophy other than geometry that begins "ratiocination from the Definitions, or Explications of the names they are to use." As geometry does begin with established meanings and explanations, the conclusions drawn are therefore irrefutable. According to Hobbes, if one bases their philosophy on accepted definitions and explanations, it is easy to avoid absurdity. All people "by nature reason alike, and well, when they have good principles," Hobbes says. "For who is so stupid, as both to mistake in Geometry, and also to persist in it, when another detects his error to him?" Again, unlike other philosophies, geometry and its conclusions are indisputable. When there are indisputable rules for doing any one thing, "as in Engines, and Edifices, the rules of Geometry," Hobbes argues, "all the experience of the world cannot equal his Counsell, that has learnt, or found out the Rule." Like geometry, "engines" (or machinery) and "edifices (buildings and architecture) are based on arithmetic and fact, not opinion, and they're beyond contestation.

However, Hobbes also implicitly makes a third exception to the idea that all philosophy is based on opinion, as he presents his own political philosophy as infallible. "The skill of making, and maintaining Common-wealths, consisteth in certain Rules, as doth Arithmetique and Geometry; not (as Tennis-play) on Practise onely," Hobbes argues. While this may suggest that Hobbes's philosophy of the ideal society—"the **Leviathan**"—is therefore rooted in fact, it also may just speak to the idea that philosophy is based on opinion and therefore *is* disputable. The "certain Rules" of common-wealths that Hobbes defines and explains (for instance, that common-wealths were created to escape the violence and fear of nature, that they rely on covenants and contracts, and that they are best when ruled by

a single sovereign monarch) are, after all, just Hobbes's opinions and are disputed by the very philosophies he rejects.



SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.



LEVIATHAN

Leviathan, a sea monster from the biblical Book of Job that is usually depicted as giant crocodile, is used within Christianity as a metaphor for the power of people united as one. In Thomas Hobbes's philosophical discourse by the same name, Leviathan is symbolic of the ideal common-wealth. Hobbes mentions Leviathan several times in his book and likens the beast to the "Artificial man" that is "the great LEVIATHAN called a COMMON-WEALTH, or STATE." This analogy is exactly how Hobbes sees the ideal common-wealth: many people united under a single sovereign power, who are stronger together than they could ever be alone. On the original cover of Hobbes's book, Leviathan is depicted as a giant man whose body is made up of all the individual subjects of the common-wealth.

According to Hobbes, God made the "great power of *Leviathan*," named him "King of the Proud" and said: "*There is nothing on earth, to be compared with him. He is made so as not to be afraid. Hee seeth every high thing below him; and is King of all the children of pride.*" As Hobbes argues that a fear of violence and of God drove humankind to create the common-wealth, it is particularly noteworthy that God made Leviathan not to be afraid. As the sovereign power of a common-wealth is unmatched and gathers all its power from its subjects, Leviathan is an apt symbol for a common-wealth's strength, as there is nothing on Earth that can be rightly compared to Leviathan.



QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Penguin edition of *Leviathan* published in 1985.

The Introduction Quotes

☞ To describe the Nature of the Artificiall man, I will consider First, the *Matter* thereof, and the *Artificer*; both which is *Man*. Secondly, *How*, and by what *Covenants* it is made; what are the *Rights* and just *Power* or *Authority* of a *Sovereigne*; and what it is that *preserveth* and *dissolveth* it. Thirdly, what is a *Christian Common-wealth*. Lastly, what is the *Kingdome of Darkness*.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes:     

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 82

Explanation and Analysis

This quote, which appears during the introduction, establishes the key points Hobbes will cover in *Leviathan*. The "Artificial man" referred to here is Hobbes's theory of the ideal common-wealth, which he calls the Leviathan. Hobbes likens the ideal common-wealth to an "Artificial man" throughout the book, and it is susceptible to all of the diseases and infirmities of humankind. To illustrate his argument, Hobbes begins with the "Matter" and "Artificer," which means he will discuss the basic thoughts and actions of humankind, the very creator of the common-wealth.

After his discussion of humankind, Hobbes addresses exactly how humankind abandoned the violence and fear of nature for the safety of a common-wealth and the "Covenants," or contracts, which made such civil societies possible. He explores the establishment of a common power, or "Sovereigne," and considers under what conditions a sovereign's power is preserved or dissolved. In the third part of *Leviathan*, Hobbes considers the sovereign's power in context with God's power, and in the fourth part, he explores those things, like false philosophies and the misinterpretation of scripture, which thrust both the common-wealth and Christianity into the "Kingdome of Darkness." Hobbes's key points can get lost in the length and language of *Leviathan*, but referring back to this passage can assist readers in understanding the significance of Hobbes's many arguments.

Chapter 1 Quotes

☛☛ Yet still the object is one thing, the image or fancy is another. So that Sense in all cases, is nothing els but originall fancy, caused (as I have said) by the pressure, that is, by the motion, of externall things upon our Eyes, Eares, and other organs thereunto ordained.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), Aristotle

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 86

Explanation and Analysis

This quote appears in the chapter about objects, motion, and the human senses, and it is significant because it reflects Hobbes's rejection of Aristotle's philosophies. Hobbes refers to many philosophers throughout *Leviathan*, both directly and indirectly, but he mentions Aristotle the most. According to Aristotle, physical objects have an essence, or "fancy," which works on one of the five human senses to create a perception, but Hobbes disagrees. For Hobbes, an object is perceived by one of the human sense organs when that object, not its "fancy," comes into direct contact with a sense organ.

According to Hobbes, human sense "is nothing els but original fancy," by which he means sense is nothing but an image left in one's imagination and memory due to the "pressure" of "externall things," or objects, on the "Eyes, Eares, and other organs." Hobbes was a materialist, which means he believed in the theory that nothing exists but matter and its movement, and that belief is seen here. Hobbes's materialist views are fundamentally at odds with the essences and "fancy" Aristotle espouses, and Hobbes repeatedly brings up this particular theory, which he claims is the cause of the widespread misinterpretation of holy scripture among Christians, particularly the practice of transubstantiation and the belief in the Holy Trinity.

Chapter 2 Quotes

☛☛ For my part, when I consider, that in Dreams, I do not often, nor constantly think of the same Persons, Places, Objects, and Actions that I do waking; nor remember so long a trayne of coherent thoughts, Dreaming, as at other times; And because waking I often observe the absurdity of Dreames, but never dream of the absurdities of my waking Thoughts; I am well satisfied, that being awake, I know I dreame not; though when I dreame, I think my selfe awake.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), Aristotle

Related Themes: 

Page Number: 90

Explanation and Analysis

This passage appears in the chapter that covers human imagination and dreams, and it reflects Hobbes's general attack on what he calls "false philosophy." One of Hobbes's primary arguments in *Leviathan* is that some philosophy, primarily that which stems from Aristotle and the ancient Greeks, is false and based on opinion rather than fact. While Hobbes does not explicitly state it here, he refers to the dream argument, a popular philosophy from René Descartes, a French mathematician and Hobbes's contemporary. Descartes's dream argument claims that the human senses can never be fully trusted, since one can never truly know if they are awake or dreaming.

Hobbes, however, disagrees. For Hobbes, Descartes's dream argument is another false philosophy based on opinion rather than fact, and Hobbes uses his own dreams to explain. Hobbes claims he does not usually dream "of the same Persons, Places, Objects, and Actions" as those he meets during waking hours. He frequently notes that his dreams are absurd, but he doesn't dream about how strange his "waking Thoughts" are. Based on this, Hobbes is "well satisfied" that he knows when he is *really* awake, even though he often thinks himself awake in his dreams. Descartes's dream argument is just one of several theories and philosophies Hobbes dismisses in *Leviathan*, and since Descartes was influenced by the philosophies of Aristotle, the dream argument is yet another example of the wide-reaching impact of false philosophies and opinion. Hobbes implies that Aristotle's false philosophies, beyond just being misleading in themselves, also led to even more false philosophies from other thinkers.

☛☛ From this ignorance of how to distinguish Dreams, and other strong Fancies, from Vision and Sense, did arise the greatest part of the Religion of the Gentiles in time past, that worshipped Satyres, Fawnes, Nymphs, and the like; and now adayes the opinion that rude people have Fayries, Ghosts, and Goblins; [...] And for Fayries, and walking Ghosts, the opinion of them has I think been on purpose, either taught, or not confuted, to keep in credit the use of Exorcisme, of Crosses, of holy Water, and other such inventions of Ghostly men.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), Aristotle

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 92

Explanation and Analysis

This passage, which appears in the chapter on human imagination and dreams, further underscores the influence of false philosophies. The inability “to distinguish Dreams, and other strong Fancies from Vision and Sense” is another veiled attack on Aristotle and his philosophies, which Hobbes contends are built on opinion, not fact or sound reason. Hobbes refers to ancient Romans and Greeks, like Aristotle, as “the Gentiles” of the past, who, instead of practicing Christianity, worshipped numerous gods, “Satyres, Fawnes, Nymphs, and the like.”

This quote also highlights Hobbes’s disapproval of the Roman Catholic Church. Hobbes argues that the Gentiles’ religious beliefs led to the belief in “Fayries, Ghosts, and Goblins” that plagues the modern Christian Church. Hobbes suggests that this is especially true for Roman Catholics, whose religious practices involve “Exorcisme,” “Crosses,” and “holy Water.” Hobbes’s religious views mirror the anti-Catholic sentiments of the time. With the start of the Protestant Reformation just a century before, the Roman Inquisition was still in full swing, and Catholic authorities routinely imprisoned and tortured Christians across Europe. Hobbes’s connection of the philosophies and religious practices of the Gentiles to the modern practices of the Christian Church suggests that false philosophies and idolatrous practices of past societies have real and longstanding implications, which, according to Hobbes, must be corrected.

This passage, which appears in Hobbes’s chapter on the train and consequences of human imagination, reflects the social and political unrest of the time and also suggests that human thought is dependent upon personal experience. Hobbes wrote *Leviathan* during the last year of the English Civil War, which fundamentally changed the commonwealth of England. During the war, King Charles I was overthrown and executed, and Parliament took over as England’s sovereign power. To royalists like Hobbes, King Charles was unlawfully usurped, and the power Parliament claimed over England was illegitimate. In this quote, Hobbes illustrates how quickly the human train of thought jumps from one subject to the next, but each subject is connected and based on past experiences.

Each of Hobbes’s thoughts, while seemingly random and unguided, are the result of his country’s civil unrest. Hobbes begins his train of thought with war, which he claims earlier is death to a commonwealth, and jumps to “delivering up the King to his Enemies,” as was done to Charles I in the early days of the war. Hobbes then thinks of delivering Christ. As a king rules by divine power, delivering up Charles I to his enemies was tantamount to delivering Christ himself, just as Christ was also delivered to Pontius Pilot and the Romans during the Crucifixion. Hobbes implies here that those who delivered Charles I to his enemies—an act of “treason”—did so for a reward of “30 pence,” a negligible amount worth less than the weekly wages of an unskilled worker. (This, of course, also points to the 30 pieces of silver that Judas received for betraying Jesus to the Jewish authorities.) Hobbes’s unguided thoughts reflect his theory that all thoughts and human imagination are rooted in experience.

Chapter 3 Quotes

☛☛ For the Thought of the warre, introduced the Thought of delivering up the King to his Enemies; The Thought of that, brought in the Thought of the delivering up of Christ; and that again the Thought of 30 pence, which was the price of that treason: and thence easily followed that malicious question; and all this in a moment of time; for Thought is quick.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), Christ

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 95

Explanation and Analysis

☛☛ Whatsoever we imagine, is *Finite*. Therefore there is no Idea, or conception of anything we call *Infinite*. No man can have in his mind in Image of infinite magnitude; nor conceive infinite swiftness, infinite time, or infinite force, or infinite power. When we say any thing is infinite, we signifie onely, that we are not able to conceive the ends, and bounds of the thing named; having no Conception of the thing, but of our own inability. And therefore the Name of *God* is used, not to make us conceive him; (for he is *Incomprehensible*; and his greatnesse, and power are unconceivable;) but that we many honour him. Also because whatsoever (as I said before,) we conceive, has been perceived first by sense, either all at once, or by parts; a man can have no thought, representing any thing, not subject to sense.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 99

Explanation and Analysis

This quote, which comes from the chapter on the train of human thoughts and the consequences of imagination, reflects Hobbes's overreaching argument that God and his power are inconceivable; however, this passage also outlines Hobbes's theory as to the limitations of imagination and sovereign power. Hobbes refers to other philosophers who contend that human imagination arises from nothing and is completely original, but Hobbes argues that all human thought and imagination must first be perceived through one of the human sense organs. It is only after an object is perceived by one's senses and stored within their memory that said object can become part of one's imagination.

In this vein, Hobbes argues that no idea can ever be "*Infinite*," because the human mind can only conceive of what it has previously sensed through the sense organs, and that which is "*Infinite*" can never be fully sensed. According to this logic, Hobbes maintains that God and his omnipotence is beyond human understanding, just as it is beyond human understanding for any one sovereign power—like the Pope in Rome, for instance—to claim unlimited power over all of Christendom. The inability to comprehend what is considered "*Infinite*" has implications beyond that of human imagination, and Hobbes draws attention to this fact. For Hobbes, if "infinite power" and "infinite force" are incomprehensible to human beings as a whole, one cannot possibly claim such power over another person or group of people.

Chapter 4 Quotes

☛☛ Another, when men make a name of two Names, whose significations are contradictory and inconsistent; as this name, an *incorporeall body*, or (which is all one) an *incorporeall substance*, and a great number more. For whensoever any affirmation is false, the two names of which it is composed, put together and made one, signifie nothing at all.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God, Aristotle

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 108

Explanation and Analysis

In this quote, Hobbes identifies exactly what an abuse of speech is. An example of the abuse of speech, according to Hobbes, is the joining of two names to make one, in which the individual "significations are contradictory and inconsistent," as they are in "*incorporeall body*" and "*incorporeall substance*." By definition, a body or a substance is something made of matter that takes up space, but that which is incorporeal has no body and consists of something like air or an intangible spirit. These two words put together as one cancel each other out, and as a result, the words signify "nothing at all."

In addition, this quote reflects Hobbes's rejection of Aristotelian philosophy, as well as the anti-Catholic sentiments of the time. Hobbes repeatedly argues that the contradictory terms of "*incorporeall body*" stem back to Aristotle, who argues that objects have an essence, or "fancy," that can work on the human senses in the same way an object can. Hobbes disagrees, but Christian beliefs and practices, especially Catholicism, are rife with concepts of "*incorporeall substances*." This contradictory understanding is observed in the Holy Trinity, the belief that God is three physical beings—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Hobbes suggests that these sacred beliefs and claims also signify "nothing at all," an assertion that no doubt contributed to Hobbes's own reputation as an atheist.

Chapter 5 Quotes

☛☛ And words whereby we conceive nothing but the sound, are those we call *Absurd*, *Insignificant*, and *Non-sense*. And therefore if a man should talk to me of a *round Quadrangle*; or *accidents of Bread in Cheese*; or *Immateriall Substances*; or of *A free Subject*; *A free-Will*; or any *Free*, but free from being hindered by opposition, I should not say he were in an Error; but that his words were without meaning; that is to say, *Absurd*.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), Christ

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 113

Explanation and Analysis

This passage defines the absurdity of words and further reflects Hobbes's religious sentiments, especially his rejection of Catholic beliefs and practices, as well as the limitations of a subject within a common-wealth. Absurdity in speech is that which is "*Insignificant*, and *Non-sense*," like "a

round Quadrangle.” A quadrangle is a shape with four sides, so to describe the same shape as also being round is absurd and renders the phrase “*Insignificant*, and *Non-sense*.” The same can be said for those who speak of “*accidents of Bread in Cheese*,” which is another veiled reference to transubstantiation and the conversion of bread and wine into the physical body and blood of Christ. To claim the ability to transform bread and wine into the literal body and blood of another is, according to Hobbes, absurd, as is the belief that a substance can be incorporeal.

Hobbes ranks these religious absurdities right up there with people who speak of “*A free subject; A free-Will; or any Free*.” The subject of a common-wealth is held under the power of the sovereign. While a subject’s actions are not technically “hindered by opposition,” meaning there is no physical force being placed on a subject to impede their actions, every subject is limited to the behavior that has been approved and authorized by the sovereign power of a common-wealth in the form of laws. While a subject is certainly free to act as they please, they are not free from the consequences of their actions, which is always at the discretion of the sovereign. Therefore, to say the subject of a common-wealth is wholly free is just as absurd as it is to claim a physical body can be made of an intangible substance.

☛ But this privilege, is allayed by another; and that is, by the privilege of Absurdity; to which no living creature is subject, but man onely. And of men, those are of all most subject to it, that professe Philosophy. For it is most true that Cicero sayth of them somewhere; that there can be nothing so absurd, but may be found in the books of Philosophers. And the reason is manifest. For there is not one of them that begins his ratiocination from the Definitions, or Explications of the names they are to use; which is a method that hath been used onely in Geometry; whose Conclusions have thereby been made indisputable.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), Cicero

Related Themes: 

Page Number: 113-114

Explanation and Analysis

This passage, which appears in the chapter on reason and science, reflects Hobbes’s attack on philosophy and his attempt to elevate his own philosophy to that of geometry, the only philosophy that is “indisputable.” Hobbes has already argued that human beings are the only living

creatures capable of absurdity, and he claims that the most absurd human beings are those who “professe Philosophy.” Hobbes calls on Cicero, a Roman philosopher from the first century BCE, who apparently shares his opinion. While Cicero certainly fits the definition of the Gentiles of ancient Rome and Greece whom Hobbes sees as the worst offenders of absurdity, Hobbes often agrees with Cicero’s works and opinions.

Hobbes’s main complaint with philosophy is that philosophers usually do not provide “the Definitions, or Explications of the names they are to use,” which renders their philosophies matters of opinion, not reason or fact. To counter this in his own philosophy, and to elevate it to the study of geometry, which is rooted in such “ratiocination,” Hobbes meticulously defines and explains every term he includes in *Leviathan*, so that his own philosophy may be considered “indisputable.” Despite the fact that Hobbes believes his own philosophy to be grounded in fact and reason, his argument may just end up proving that those philosophies not rooted in numbers and shapes can never be fact and will always be a philosopher’s opinion.

Chapter 7 Quotes

☛ But by *Beleeving in*, as it is in the Creed, is meant, not trust in the Person; but Confession and acknowledgement of the Doctrine. For not onely Christians, but all manner of men do so believe in God, as to hold all for truth they heare him say, whether they understand it, or not; which is all the Faith and trust can possibly be had in any person whatsoever: But they do not all believe the Doctrine of the Creed.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes: 

Page Number: 133

Explanation and Analysis

This passage is near the end of Hobbes’s chapter on the purpose of discourse, and it is important because it underscores the difference between believing in God and believing in Christian doctrine. To be a Christian during Hobbes’s day was to believe in accepted “Doctrine,” which is the approved Holy Scripture, such as the Bible and other religious writings that are considered the official “Word of God.” For Hobbes, believing in “the Creed,” or accepted Christian doctrine, is not to trust in God; believing in “the Creed” is to trust in the dubious authorship and interpretation of Holy Scripture. Hobbes separates a belief in God from a belief in the authority of Holy Scripture, a

particularly controversial claim during the 17th century and likely the cause of Hobbes's reputation as an atheist.

Hobbes, however, does not consider such an opinion blasphemous or offensive to God. On the contrary, a belief in God in the absence of doctrine to back it up is the height of faith and is all the trust that can "possibly be had in any person whatsoever." Hobbes argues that a belief in God does not necessarily mean a belief in accepted doctrine, which Hobbes claims is largely due to the misinterpretation of Holy Scripture. To fix this problem, Hobbes offers alternative—and, he claims, correct—interpretations of Holy Scripture throughout *Leviathan*. Through correction of scripture, Hobbes illustrates exactly how one can have faith in God while still rejecting widespread Christian doctrine.

Chapter 11 Quotes

☝☝ And therefore the voluntary actions, and inclinations of all men, tend, not only to the procuring, but also to the assuring of a contented life; and differ onely in the way: which ariseth partly from the diversity of passions, in divers men; and partly from the difference of the knowledge, or opinion each one has of the causes, which produce the effect desired.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 161

Explanation and Analysis

This passage, which appears in the chapter addressing the different manners of humankind, underscores Hobbes's primary argument that all of humankind is equal, in a state of nature *and* in a common-wealth. According to Hobbes, humans in nature are in a state of perfect equality, in which no one person is above the other, unless one subdues the other with violence and war. In nature, the "voluntary actions, and inclinations of all men" are geared at obtaining a "contented," or happy, life. The only difference, Hobbes contends, is the "diversity of passions," or individual emotions, which arise from each person.

Hobbes also concedes that different people have different levels of education, experiences, and opinions, which produce a myriad of desired effects, but these differences all stem back to a similar place and similar opportunities. Therefore, there is not one person in nature who begins from a place of privilege or power, and this argument holds true in Hobbes's understanding of civil society as well. With the exception of the sovereign power, there is not one civil

subject of a common-wealth who can claim natural superiority or power over another, which is in keeping with God's laws of equality and fairness.

Chapter 12 Quotes

☝☝ And in these foure things, Opinion of Ghosts, Ignorance of second cause, Devotion towards what men fear, and Taking of things Casuall for Prognostiques, consisteth the Naturall seed of *Religion*; which by reason of the different Fancies, Judgements, and Passions of severall men, hath grown up into ceremonies so different, that those which are used by one man, are for the most part ridiculous to another.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 172-173

Explanation and Analysis

This quote appears in Hobbes's chapter on religion, and it is significant because it defines "the Naturall seed of *Religion*" and underscores Hobbes's primary argument that most religious practices and scripture are rooted in the "Passions" of men, not God. The "the Naturall seed of *Religion*," according to Hobbes, involves a few basic things: a belief in "Ghosts" and spirits; an ignorance of science and the natural causes of things; honor of that which is feared; and the mistaking of normal events for prophecy. Hobbes claims that religion, like absurdity, is peculiar to humans alone and is not found in any other living creature, and he further suggests religion is just as absurd and relies on myth, ignorance, fear, and naivety.

For Hobbes, religion is not the "Passions" of God, but those of many men, who have parlayed the very same Holy Scripture "into ceremonies so different, that those which are used by one man, are for the most part ridiculous to another." Hobbes points out the major differences in religious practices between different kinds of Christians, Catholics and Protestants in particular, but he ultimately maintains that most religious practices are the result of a misinterpretation of Holy Scripture. Through *Leviathan*, Hobbes argues that a belief in God's supernatural power does not mean one must abandon their common sense and accept absurdity, like ghosts and prophecy, as spiritual law.

●● But where God himselfe, by supernaturall Revelation, planted Religion; there he also made to himself a peculiar Kindgome; and gave Lawes, not only of behavior towards himself; but also towards one another; and thereby in the Kingdome of God, the Policy, and lawes Civill, are a part of Religion; and therefore the distinction of Temporall, and Spirituall Domination, hath there no place. It is true, that God is King of all the Earth; Yet may he be King of a peculiar, and chosen Nation.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 178

Explanation and Analysis

This passage also appears in Hobbes's explanation of religion, and it is significant because it illustrates the difference between a "Temporall," or civil, earthly sovereign, and a sovereign that is "Spirituall," or godly. While Hobbes implies that religion itself can be absurd due to humankind's passions, he nevertheless argues God's existence and absolute power. In nations where God has revealed his supernatural power, he made a "peculiar Kingdome," in which God's laws were made civil law and there was no distinction between "Temporall, and Spirituall Domination." While Hobbes doesn't explicitly state it here, he explains later that this "peculiar Kingdome" has only existed with the Israelites, who had a personal covenant with God.

Hobbes explains that the people of Israel, after fleeing captivity in Egypt, entered into a covenant with God, in which they agreed to observe God as their civil, "Temporall" sovereign, as well as their "Spirituall" sovereign. In God's Kingdome, religious law and civil law were one and the same, but this is not the case with common-wealths in general. According to Hobbes, "God is King of all the Earth," but God was King of the Israelites over and above the dominion he already claims over all humankind as a spiritual sovereign, which is why the Israelites constituted God's "peculiar Kingdome." This point again becomes important in Hobbes's discussion of the difference between civil and religious laws, as religious laws can only become civil law if approved by a civil sovereign.

●● For who is there that does not see, to whose benefit it conduceth, to have it believed, that a King hath not his Authority from Christ, unlesse a Bishop crown him? That a King, if he be a Priest, cannot Marry? That whether a Prince be born in lawfull Marriage, or not, must be judged by Authority from *Rome*? That Subjects may be freed from their Alleageance, if by the Court of *Rome*, the King be judged a Heretique? That a King (as *Chilperique* of *France*) may be deposed by a Pope (as Pope *Zachary*,) for no cause; and his Kingdome given to one of his Subjects?

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), Christ

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 182

Explanation and Analysis

This quote, which outlines the power of the Catholic Pope, further highlights the anti-Catholic sentiments of the time and Hobbes's own understanding of civil power. Despite the Protestant Reformation and the creation of the Church of England, the Catholic Pope still claimed authority and power over all of Christendom during Hobbes's day. This power was exerted through the Roman Inquisition (which led to the imprisonment and execution of countless Christian heretics) and the authority claimed over the Christian sovereigns of other common-wealths. For Hobbes, it is easy to see that the Pope alone benefits from the power he claims over the sovereigns of other independent common-wealths.

As the sovereign of a civil common-wealth, such as a king, derives his power directly from Christ and the covenant created with the people, it makes no difference if that king is crowned by a Catholic Bishop. Nor does the Pope have the authority to keep a king from marrying, even if said king is a priest. By allowing the Pope to decide which children and which marriages are legitimate, this allows the Pope to influence royal succession, which is also outside the Pope's claim to power. Furthermore, Hobbes argues that the Pope does not have the power to dissolve an existing covenant if he deems a king a heretic, as Pope Zachary did in 751 when he deposed Childeric III, the King of Francia, at the behest of a rival king. The Pope, according to Hobbes, has no natural or supernatural claim to such power, especially over the sovereign kings of common-wealths, whose own power cannot be matched or usurped.

Chapter 13 Quotes

Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man. For Warre, consisteth not in Battel lonely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known: [...] All other time is peace.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 185-186

Explanation and Analysis

This passage appears in the chapter on the condition of humankind in nature, and it is significant because it outlines Hobbes's definition of war and suggests that war is always implicit in nature. According to Hobbes, anytime in which people are living outside of the authority of a "common Power," those people are in a "condition which is called Warre," and that condition "is of every man, against every man." Without a central power to keep people in line, people are violent, aggressive, and confrontational. In Hobbes's view, this condition does not just include actual "Battell," or fighting, but it includes the desire or intention to do battle with another, which, without a central power, is all the time.

As the very definition of nature is the lack of a central power to control and mediate humankind, it can reasonably be concluded that a state of nature and a state of war are synonymous. Thus, one cannot expect to ever find peace or security in a state of nature, which is why, Hobbes ultimately argues, humankind abandoned nature and created common-wealths through covenants in which they endowed a single entity with the power to preserve the lives and rights of those subjects who entered into the covenant. By agreeing to place their natural right to self-preservation with a single power, the subjects of a common-wealth ensure their safety and reasonable contentment by ending the state of war that is nature.

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of Warre, where every man is Enemy to every man; the same is consequent to the time, wherein men live without other security, than what their own strength, and their own invention shall furnish from withal. In such a condition, there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no Culture of the Earth; [...] no Knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), Aristotle

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 186

Explanation and Analysis

This quote also appears in the chapter that explains the condition of humankind in nature, and it is significant because it reflects Hobbes's opinion that the state of humankind in nature is one of violence, fear, and discontent. Throughout history, the state of humankind in nature has been debated by numerous philosophers, including Aristotle, who believed that humankind in a state of nature is social and prone to kindness, compassion, and community. Hobbes's idea of a natural human is the exact opposite of Aristotle's, as Hobbes instead maintains that humans are naturally "solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short."

This passage outlines just how unpleasant Hobbes considers the state of nature to be. Without a centralized power to keep people in line, there is constant war, and no one has security outside of what their physical strength or imagination can produce. In this condition, there is no happiness or safety, and since there is no society, there is nothing that society offers, like "Art," "Culture," or "Knowledge." There is only constant fear and "danger of violent death," which does not paint a pretty picture of humankind in nature. Furthermore, this quote also highlights the pervasiveness of fear, which Hobbes numbers as one of the most motivating forces of humankind.

The Passions that encline men to Peace, are Feare of Death; Desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living; and a Hope by their Industry to obtain them. And Reason suggesteth convenient Articles of Peace, upon which men may be drawn to agreement. These Articles, are they, which otherwise are called the Lawes of Nature: whereof I shall speak of more particularly, in the two following chapters.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes:     

Page Number: 188

Explanation and Analysis

This passage appears near the end of Hobbes's chapter on the condition of humankind in nature, and it is significant because it introduces the Laws of Nature and underscores why humankind is opposed to war and nature. According to Hobbes, there are certain "Passions," or emotions, which every human being has that predispose them to peace, and those emotions include the fear of violent death and the desire for a better life and the things that make such a life possible. It is these "Passions" that drive humans towards peace and away from nature and a state of war.

As people are naturally drawn to certain "agreements," or "Articles," in search of peace, Hobbes refers to a group of general rules as the Laws of Nature. According to Hobbes, the Laws of Nature are based on the universal rights given to each human by God, and each person discovers these laws with their own natural reason, which is also a gift from God. The Laws of Nature, which Hobbes explains in depth over the next two chapters, are the basic laws that one must observe in order to live in peace with other human beings. Of course, since there is no central power in nature, there is no guarantee that any one person will follow the Laws of Nature; however, Hobbes maintains that the rules are nevertheless essential, and adhering to them is the only way to stop the constant fear and violence that is nature.

Chapter 14 Quotes

☞☞ The Right of Nature, which Writers commonly call *Jus Naturale*, is the Liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himselfe, for the preservation of his own Nature; that is to say, of his own Life; and consequently, of doing any thing, which in his own Judgement, and Reason, hee shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 189

Explanation and Analysis

This passage appears in the chapter that discusses contracts and the Laws of Nature, and it is important

because it outlines the universal right that each human being naturally has. *Jus Naturale* is Latin for "natural law," and it is a reference to the fundamental ideas of right and wrong inherent in each human being. This natural law, or "Right of Nature," as Hobbes calls it, is that every human being has the right to preserve their own life through any means necessary or reasonable, and that each person has a natural right to any part of nature that may make the preservation of life more likely or feasible.

As each human beings are naturally endowed with the same rights, the Laws of Nature exist so that each human being can live in peace while also observing their fundamental right of self-preservation. However, the entire point of Hobbes's argument is that without a central power to compel people to follow laws and respect others' rights, it cannot be reasonably expected that people will follow any laws, including the Laws of Nature. Thus, when people leave nature and enter into common-wealths via covenants, everyone's natural right to self-preservation is handed over to the sovereign power to ensure the greater peace and safety of the common-wealth.

☞☞ Men are freed of their Covenants two ways; by Performing; or by being Forgiven. For Performance, is the naturall end of obligation; and Forgivenessse, the restitution of liberty; as being a retransferring of that Right, in which the obligation consisted.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 198

Explanation and Analysis

This passage outlines the ways in which one is freed of the obligation of a covenant under the Laws of Nature, as well as the circumstances under which a sovereign power is freed from its obligation to a common-wealth. According to Hobbes and the Laws of Nature, one is only freed from the obligation of a covenant once the terms of said covenant are performed and fulfilled, or once the person with whom one enters the covenant rescinds the terms of the contract. In other words, the person to whom rights are transferred in the creation of a covenant cannot forfeit those rights under any circumstances and is obligated to perform them to the desired end.

As a common-wealth is created with a covenant, the same general rules hold true for a sovereign power, to which the

subjects' right to self-preservation are transferred in the creation of the covenant. For the sovereign, "Performance, is the naturall end of obligation," and the covenant never expires. As such, a sovereign power is obligated to perform the rights the subjects have transferred over to the sovereign without question, until such a time "as being a retransferring of that Right" with the creation of new covenant, at which time a subject's right to self-preservation is returned or invested in another. Then, and only then, Hobbes argues, can a sovereign be lawfully relieved of their power.

Chapter 15 Quotes

☛ And in this law of Nature, consisteth the Fountain and Original of JUSTICE. For where no Covenant hath proceeded, there hath no Right been transferred, and every man has right to every thing; and consequently, no action can be Unjust. But when a Covenant is made, then to break it is *Unjust*: and the definition of INJUSTICE, is no other than *the not Performance of Covenant*. And whatsoever is not Unjust, is *Just*.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 202

Explanation and Analysis

This passage appears in the final chapter discussing the Laws of Nature, and it is important because it underscores Hobbes's argument that accepted definitions of justice and injustice do not exist. Hobbes argues that in a state of nature, where there exists no covenants and "no Right [has] been transferred," there can be no right or wrong. In nature, "every man has a right to every thing," and because of this, nothing is ever "Unjust." In Hobbes's view, this proves that definitions and terms can never be fixed and must be defined at the outset, a contention that becomes particularly important in Hobbes's argument regarding philosophy and the knowledge of truth and fact, versus the knowledge of opinion or false assumptions.

A covenant defines that which is unjust, and without a covenant, words such as just and unjust cannot exist. From the moment a covenant is struck, to break the covenant becomes the very definition of "INJUSTICE" and must be avoided at all costs. When a common-wealth is created by a covenant, it is the sovereign's responsibility, according to the Laws of Nature, to decide what is permissible by law, which also defines that which is just or unjust. Without the covenant and the creation of the sovereign power, there can

be no established definitions of right, wrong, or injustice. As every covenant, common-wealth, and sovereign is different, this also reinforces Hobbes's argument that there can be no established definitions of justice and injustice whatsoever.

Chapter 18 Quotes

☛ Fifthly, and consequently to that which was sayd last, no man that hath Sovereigne power can justly be put to death, or otherwise in any manner by his Subjects punished. For seeing every Subject is Author of the actions of his Sovereigne; he punisheth another, for the actions committed by himselfe.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 232

Explanation and Analysis

This quote, which appears in the chapter in which Hobbes outlines the rights of the sovereign power, reflects the Law of Nature that maintains a sovereign can never be wrong or questioned. The previous rule outlined in this chapter states that no sovereign can ever be punished by a subject for a wrongdoing, and this rule continues that argument. As a sovereign can never be punished, a sovereign can never be lawfully "put to death." According to the Laws of Nature, since a sovereign is imbued with the power and rights of its subjects, a subject is technically the "Author of the actions of his Sovereigne," and it is impossible to punish "another, for the actions committed by himselfe."

This argument takes on increased weight when put into context with the political and social unrest of the common-wealth of England during Hobbes's day. During the English Civil War, King Charles I was put on trial for tyranny by his subjects and executed. Here, Hobbes implies that such an action was not only prohibited according to the Laws of Nature, he implies that the parliamentarians (those who fought against the royalists during the war) punished their rightful king for the parliamentarians' *own* tyrannous actions. In Hobbes's view, the usurpation of King Charles and the institution of Parliament as England's sovereign power violates the Laws of Nature and the initial covenant entered into by the people.

Chapter 19 Quotes

☛ Now a Monarchy, the private interest is the same with the publique. The riches, power, and honour of a Monarch arise onely from the riches, strength and reputation of his Subjects. For no King can be rich, nor glorious, nor secure; whose Subjects are either poore, or contemptible, or too weak through want, or dissention, to maintain a war against their enemies; Whereas in a Democracy, or Aristocracy, the publique prosperity conferres not so much to the private fortune of one that is corrupt, or ambitious, as doth many times a perfidious advice, a treacherous action, or a Civill warre.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 241-242

Explanation and Analysis

This passage appears in the chapter that explains the different kinds of common-wealths, and it is important because it underscores Hobbes's primary argument that a monarchy is the best kind of common-wealth. Hobbes maintains that a monarch's "private interest is the same" as the public interest, and that a monarch—a king, for example—can only be as rich, strong, and honorable as his subjects. If a king's subjects are "weak," "poore," or "contemptible," so is the king. Since no king wants to be known in such a way, a king is motivated to give his subjects the best possible life. This is not the case, Hobbes argues, in other kinds of common-wealths.

In the assemblies of aristocracies and democracies, public "prosperity" and well-being means nothing in relation "to the private fortune" of a "corrupt, or ambitious," assembly member. When the sovereign power is an assembly, Hobbes maintains that power is more susceptible to "perfidious advice," meaning a sovereign assembly is more likely to be disloyal to subjects, as the collective good of a common-wealth's subjects does not reflect on members of a sovereign assembly in quite the same way as when the sovereign is a single person. The weaknesses of a sovereign assembly make it vulnerable to "treacherous action, or a Civill warre," which Hobbes warns are death to a common-wealth. Thus, Hobbes argues, to avoid such complications, a monarchy is the absolute best kind of common-wealth.

Chapter 20 Quotes

☛ The skill of making, and maintaining Common-wealths, consisteth in certain Rules, as doth Arithmetique and Geometry; not (as Tennis-play) on Practise onely: which Rules, neither poor men have the leisure, nor men that have had the leisure, have hitherto had the curiosity, or the method to find out.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 261

Explanation and Analysis

This passage, which appears in the chapter that explains the types and dominions of power, further reflects Hobbes's attempt to elevate the political philosophy of *Leviathan* to that of "Arithmetique and Geometry," which are indisputable. This quote is quite sarcastic. Hobbes maintains that there are "certain Rules" to follow in creating the ideal common-wealth, which he refers to as "the great Leviathan," and Hobbes alone is privy to these rules. These rules do not rely on "Practise," or experience, as something like playing tennis does. Rather, the building of common-wealths relies on sound reason and knowledge of absolute facts.

"Arithmetique and Geometry" are the only philosophies that rely on solid facts and reason, and this is the same way Hobbes views the building of common-wealths. There is a correct way to do things, and a wrong way to do things, and the techniques that Hobbes establishes in *Leviathan* are, according to Hobbes at least, beyond all contestation. Hobbes implies that no other philosophers to date "have hitherto had the curiosity, or the method to" create or explain the ideal common-wealth, and Hobbes offers that method in *Leviathan*. In Hobbes's opinion, his own philosophy represents fact and reason, whereas other political philosophies offer only opinion.

Chapter 29 Quotes

☛ Of which, this is one, *That a man to obtain a Kingdome, is sometimes content with lesse Power, that to the Peace, and defence of the Common-wealth is necessarily required.*

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 364

Explanation and Analysis

This passage underscores the primary reason why a common-wealth fails. According to the Laws of Nature, a sovereign power is imbued with all the rights and powers of the subjects of a common-wealth, and that power cannot be divided or diminished; however, Hobbes maintains that sovereign powers of common-wealths, primarily kings, are “content with lesse Power” than the terms of the covenant that binds the common-wealth affords. When a king settles for less power than that which is naturally due him, it is fundamentally at odds with the very purpose of the common-wealth, and it puts the common-wealth in danger of dissolution.

According to Hobbes, there are many ways in which a king settles for less power than what he has, and this denial of power can be in ignorance of for some perceived benefit, but the end result is always the same: the power of the sovereign is diminished, and the common-wealth is left open and vulnerable. The number one way in which a king settles for less power is allowing the Pope in Rome to claim spiritual power over the Christian subjects of the king’s common-wealth. In dividing his power with the Pope, the king effectively makes his subjects beholden to two sovereigns, which violates the Laws of Nature. If a subject is beholden to both a civil and a spiritual sovereign, they become confused as to which power to obey and may not always obey their civil sovereign. Such confusion is detrimental to a common-wealth, Hobbes says, and will more than likely lead to its ultimate dissolution.

Chapter 35 Quotes

☝☝ To the contrary, I find the Kingdome of God, to signifie in most places of Scripture, a *Kingdome properly so named*, constituted by the Votes of the People of Israel in peculiar manner; wherein they chose God for their King by Covenant made with him, upon Gods promising them the possession of the land of Canaan; and but seldom metaphorically; and then it is taken for *Dominion over sinne*; (and only in the New Testament;) because such a Dominion as that, every Subject shall have in the Kingdome of God, and without prejudice to the Sovereign.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 442

Explanation and Analysis

This passage reflects Hobbes’s primary argument that God’s Kingdome is not the present-day Christian Church, as it is commonly believed to be. Hobbes claims his own interpretation of Holy Scripture indicates that God’s Kingdome is a “*Kingdome properly so named*,” which means God’s Kingdome was common-wealth created through a covenant and the “Votes of the People of Israel in peculiar manner.” The “peculiar manner” that Hobbes speaks of here is the Israelites’ agreement to make God their sovereign power, over and above the spiritual power God already claims over all of humankind.

In exchange for their individual rights and powers, God promised the people of Israel “possession of the land of Canaan,” which is the land surrounding present-day Palestine. God gave this land to the Israelites for their common-wealth, and that land and common-wealth was known as God’s Kingdome on Earth. Thus, according to Hobbes, God’s Kingdome is not the present day Christian Church, nor is it some place in Heaven. God’s Kingdome is wherever God enters into a covenant with the people and creates a common-wealth. In Hobbes’s opinion, God’s Kingdome is not to be taken “metaphorically,” and a subject can recognize God’s power and obey his rule without “prejudice to the [earthly] Sovereign.” As a subject is not beholden to the spiritual power of God until the Second Coming and the end of earthly days, this does not violate nor interfere with any earthly covenant.

Chapter 44 Quotes

☝☝ This considered, the Kingdome of Darknesse, as it is set forth in these, and other places of the Scripture, is nothing else but a *Confederacy of Deceivers, that to obtain dominion over men in this present world, endeavor by dark, and erroneous Doctrines, to extinguish in them the Light, both of Nature, and of the Gospell; and so to dis-prepare them for the Kingdome of God to come.*

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker), God

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 627-628

Explanation and Analysis

This quote, which appears in the chapter that focuses on the misinterpretation of Holy Scripture, outlines Hobbes’s definition of the “Kingdome of Darknesse.” According to

Hobbes, his definition of the Kingdome of Darkness comes directly from Holy Scripture, which has additional authority with his religious audience. The Kingdome of Darkness is simply those who seek earthly power over others “by dark, and erroneous Doctrines.” This power extinguishes “the Light, both of Nature, and of Gospell,” which means that this evil power violates both God’s law and the Laws of Nature.

The Kingdome of Darkness “dis-prepares them for the Kingdome of God to come” because to live in Darkness is to deny the power and Light of God. Without recognizing and embracing the power and Light of God, one cannot possibly be expected to be saved and forgiven, which ensures one’s entrance into God’s Kingdome on Judgement Day. The Kingdome of Darkness is often the result of misinterpretation of Holy Scripture, but it is also the result of false philosophies and corrupt political ambition. Hobbes exposes the Kingdome of Darkness through *Leviathan*, and with the correct interpretation of Holy Scripture and the Laws of Nature, he hopes to deliver the common-wealth of England from the Kingdome of Darkness.

Chapter 47 Quotes

☛ To this, and such like resemblances between the *Papacy*, and the Kingdome of *Fairies*, may be added this, that as the *Fairies* have no existence, but in the Fancies of ignorant people, rising from the Traditions of old Wives, or old Poets: so the Spirituall Power of the *Pope* (without the bounds of his own Civil Dominion) consisteth onely in the Fear that Seduced people stand in, of the Excommunication; upon hearing of false Miracles, false Traditions, and false Interpretations of the Scripture.

Related Characters: Thomas Hobbes (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 714

Explanation and Analysis

This quote occurs near the end of *Leviathan*, in the chapter on Darkness and whom it benefits, and it is significant because it highlights Hobbes’s primary argument that the Kingdome of Darkness overwhelmingly benefits the Pope in Rome. Here, Hobbes compares the Pope’s power to “the Kingdome of *Fairies*” that comes “from the Traditions of old Wives, or old Poets.” From Hobbes’s point of view, Catholicism and the power that the Pope claims is imaginary and exists only “in the Fancies of ignorant people.” This, obviously, is highly offensive to Catholics and those who believe in the Pope’s authority over all of Christendom, which again reflects the anti-Catholic sentiments of Hobbes’s time.

Hobbes contends that this false power that the Pope claims is nothing more than an attempt to secure power over the people where it does not rightly exist. By using fear and the power of the Kingdome of Darkness, the Pope has “Seduced people” with “Excommunication,” “false Miracles, false Traditions, and false Interpretations of the Scripture.” Hobbes makes this fear and false power clear through *Leviathan* and attempts to lead people into the light. The Pope’s power exists only within “the bounds of his own Civil Dominion” and extends only to the subjects of that common-wealth. The Pope does not have absolute and infinite power over the subjects of other common-wealths, and to assume that he does, according to Hobbes, makes one complicit in the creation and maintenance of the Kingdome of Darkness.



SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY: TO MY MOST HONOR'D FRIEND MR. FRANCIS GODOLPHIN OF GODOLPHIN

Hobbes dedicates *Leviathan* to Francis Godolphin and begins by mentioning Godolphin's late brother, Mr. Sidney Godolphin, whom Hobbes held in high regard. It is because of this respect that Hobbes now dedicates his discussion of common-wealths to Francis. Hobbes does not know how others will receive his book. There is a great divide in England between those who desire too much liberty and those who desire too much authority; thus, it is likely some people will find many of Hobbes's ideas upsetting.

Despite the likelihood that Hobbes's words will offend some readers (like his treatment of Holy Scripture, for instance, which Hobbes cites in unorthodox ways) he believes his book is nevertheless necessary for the advancement of civil society. Furthermore, Hobbes speaks not of specific people, but of the "Seat of Power" in an abstract way. Still, if Francis Godolphin finds that he disagrees with the ideas expressed in the following pages, he is free to tell others that Hobbes deeply honored both Francis and his brother, Sidney, and this dedication was written entirely without Godolphin's knowledge. The letter is signed in Paris by Hobbes on April 15-25, 1651.

*Francis Godolphin was an English politician and a member of Parliament. Like Hobbes, Godolphin was a Royalist, and he supported the monarchy. Godolphin's brother, Sidney, was a poet who also served as a member of Parliament. Sidney was killed in 1643 fighting for the Royalists during the English Civil War (1642-1651). Hobbes refers to the Civil War—which pitted the Royalists (those who supported the monarchy) against the Parliamentarians (those who favored a more democratic approach to government)—several times in *Leviathan*, as he does here with mention of England's political divide. This letter also identifies the purpose of Hobbes's book: to address the political nature of common-wealths, a particularly important topic of the time. The war, which was ultimately a victory for the Parliamentarians, was coming to an end, and society and government were changing rapidly.*



Hobbes is writing from Paris, not England, because, as a famous Royalist, he was forced to flee England due to his political beliefs. Hobbes knew that his book was going to offend people, especially his political opposition. As a member of Parliament, Godolphin worked closely with the very same people (the "Seat of Power") that Hobbes writes of abstractly in his book, which could potentially put Godolphin in a difficult position. In addition to Hobbes's radical ideas about government, he also has radical ideas about religion, and he was accused of being an atheist. Like his political ideas, Hobbes knows his religious views will outrage others.



THE INTRODUCTION

Hobbes claims that human life is nothing but the movement of arms and legs, and any other automated machine is no different. An engine has “artificial life”—the heart is but a “Spring,” the nerves are “Strings,” and the whole body is given motion by “Wheels.” So is the case in art and in any other work created by humankind, such as in the “great **LEVIATHAN** called a COMMON-WEALTH, or STATE, (in latine CIVITAS) which is but an Artificiall Man.” The sovereign is “an Artificiall Soul,” and the magistrates and members of the judiciary and executive government are the “artificiall Joynts.” A sovereign nation’s abilities to punish and reward citizens are the “Nerves,” and the peoples’ safety is its “Businesse.” Laws are like “artificiall Reason” and civil war is “Death.”

The purpose of Hobbes’s book is to “describe the Nature of this Artificiall man,” and he will do so in four ways. First, Hobbes will describe “Man,” who is the “Artificer” of the **Leviathan**. Then, Hobbes will describe how a Leviathan is made and under what rights and power it is maintained or destroyed. Hobbes will also discuss the “Christian Common-wealth” and the “Kingdome of Darkness.”

Hobbes cites two common sayings: “Wisedome is acquired, not by reading of Books, but of Men,” and “Nosce teipsum, Read thy self.” Adages such as these teach others that passions and thoughts are common to all of humankind and that everyone thinks, reasons, hopes, and fears. What each person thinks about, hopes, and fears is different and individual, but these basic passions at least are shared. In governing a nation—a **Leviathan**—one must read not only their self, but all of humankind, and doing so is more difficult than learning any science or language.

CHAPTER 1: OF SENSE

Hobbes first considers the thoughts of humankind, both individually and as a whole. Individually, thoughts are a “Representation” or “Apparence” of a body known as an “Object.” An object works on the eyes, ears, or other sense organs and produces different representations. The production of such “apparences” are collectively known as the human senses, and every thought of humankind originates in some way from the sense organs.

Hobbes opens with an analogy of a common-wealth as a living human being, which is a comparison he returns to throughout the book. Hobbes has a theory concerning the ideal common-wealth that he calls “Leviathan,” a reference to a powerful sea monster in the biblical Book of Job. In Christianity, the image of Leviathan is often employed to represent the power of people united, which is exactly how Hobbes sees his ideal common-wealth: many people united under a single power. As Hobbes claims civil war is “Death” to a common-wealth, it can be inferred that he believes the common-wealth of England has died secondary to the English Civil War.



England changed drastically during the Civil War (the monarchy was overthrown and King Charles I was executed), and Hobbes is offering a theory for the creation of the ideal society—one he hopes England will adopt as it rebuilds. Religion and Holy Scripture were a major part of life in 17th-century England, and Hobbes can’t offer a model for a utopian society without addressing how religion and God fits into that society. Hobbes’s reference to the “Kingdome of Darkness” suggests he will also address evil and immorality.



This passage speaks to the importance of knowledge and reason, which are important components of philosophy. Hobbes implies that politics and the building of a Leviathan (the ideal common-wealth) involves complex philosophy because it must account for all different kinds of people. One major similarity people share is fear (everyone fears something), and Hobbes argues fear is a major motivating force in everything humans do.



As Hobbes intends to describe the ideal common-wealth, he begins with humans—the individual building blocks of a common-wealth. Of Hobbes’s explanation of humans, he begins with human thoughts, the foundation of the people that make up the building blocks of the common-wealth. Hobbes wanted his philosophy to be indisputable, so he begins with the basics and makes one argument before moving on to the next.



Sense is caused by an “Externall Body, or Object,” pressing upon organs that taste, touch, see, hear, or smell. The object causes pressure on the nerves, which send messages to the brain and heart. Those messages in turn are experienced as sounds, lights and colors, odors, or textures. Qualities such as these are in the objects that cause them, and these objects—or matter—are in constant motion, repeatedly placing pressure on human sense organs. One sees (or senses the object in some other way) an object and knows the object through one’s senses. “Yet still the object is one thing,” Hobbes says, “the image or fancy is another.”

The “Philosophy-schools” of Aristotle consider the human senses in a different way. For Aristotle, vision is caused by seeing an object, which sends a “*visible species* (in English) a *visible shew, apparition, or aspect, or a being seen,*” that is then received by the eye. Hearing is much the same; an “*Audible species*” is sent to the ear. For something to be understood, Aristotle says an “*intelligible species*” makes one understand. Hobbes disagrees, and he will amend this theory and all others that are applicable to the Common-wealth.

Hobbes refers to multiple philosophers in Leviathan and often discounts their theories. Hobbes uses certain buzz words, such as “fancy” or “representation,” which are often associated with specific philosophers he hopes to discount, like Aristotle and Plato. Aristotle argued that objects contain an essence and that essence can be appreciated even in the absence of the object. Hobbes clearly disagrees, as he claims the “object is one thing,” and the “fancy [the essence] is another.” Hobbes was a materialist, which is a philosophical school that assumes matter is the basic substance of life and that everything, even one’s thoughts and conscience, is a result of the movement and interaction of matter.



Here, Hobbes explicitly mentions Aristotle and his understanding of human senses. Aristotle’s view relies on an “apparition,” or ghost of an object, which is at odds with Hobbes’s materialist philosophy. For Hobbes, the senses operate when they come into contact with actual matter and substance, not the ghost or “species” of that matter. As Hobbes lays the groundwork for his philosophy, it is easy to forget that his purpose is to describe the ideal common-wealth, and he often reminds the reader that he is working toward a greater point, as he does here.



CHAPTER 2: OF IMAGINATION

Most people believe that objects at rest stay at rest until something stirs them, but getting people to believe that an object in motion is eternally in motion unless something stops it is another matter. According to Hobbes, all people measure things and people by themselves, and they have come to learn that if they themselves are in motion, they are subject to pain and exhaustion. The “Schooles” say that an object falls down because it desires rest and is seeking a place that is most agreeable; however, Hobbes sees motion in a different way.

According to Hobbes, when a body is in motion, it moves eternally, and whatever stops a body in motion cannot do so instantly. Movement is extinguished in degrees over time, as is seen in waves that continue to roll after the wind stops. The same can be said for humankind’s thoughts; when an object is removed, an image—albeit an obscured one—is retained in the mind. This retained image is called imagination, known to the Greeks as “*Fancy*” that in turn signifies “*appareance*.” Imagination, Hobbes argues, “is nothing but *decaying sense*,” and it is found in all humans and other creatures, both sleeping and awake.

At the time, popular theories regarding objects at rest were in accordance with Aristotle’s theories of objects and motion, which Hobbes again contends are wrong. Hobbes believes objects are in constant motion unless otherwise stopped. Furthermore, Hobbes frequently points out that humans tend to act in their own self-interest, a theory that is also contrary to Aristotle’s belief that people are naturally social and caring beings.



Hobbes’s explanation of imagination as “decaying sense” is in keeping with his materialist views. The “Fancy,” or the essence of an object, is directly related to and dependent upon that object’s substance. The importance of this theory for Hobbes is that imagination—the most basic component of human thought—cannot exist without first coming into direct contact with some sort of matter or substance.



The decaying of senses in humans is not a decay of motion as much as it is “an obscuring of it.” When the past is imagined, it is vague and weak, and the object perceived is made weaker and more obscure as more time passes. The decay of imagination (meaning when the sense of an object begins to fade and pass) is called memory. Memory and imagination are the same thing, but they have different names and different considerations. Multiple memories of many things is called experience, whereas imagination is only those things a person has previously perceived through sense organs. Imagination can be broken down into two types: simple imagination and compounded imagination. For example, simple imagination is thinking about a person or a horse one has previously seen. Compounded imagination, on the other hand, is joining that same person and horse into a centaur.

Imagination during sleep are dreams, and dreams are constituted by previous perceptions, either totally or in part. Dreams vary in the people, places, objects, and actions they display, and they are often incomprehensible. As Hobbes often recognizes the ridiculousness of his dreams while awake and never dreams of how bizarre waking thoughts can be, he is satisfied that he knows he is not dreaming while awake. Nor does he think himself awake while dreaming. Different moods cause different dreams. Fearful dreams come from fearful objects, and emotions felt in dreams can cause an actual response in the human body, as do dreams of kindness or desire.

Dreams can be difficult to discern if one is not aware they have slept, as can happen to someone who dozes off in a chair without going through the nighttime rituals of getting ready for bed. This inability to differentiate dreams from vision or other senses came from religions of the past that worshipped satyrs and nymphs and believed in fairies and witches. Witchcraft isn’t true power, Hobbes claims, although witches are rightly punished. A witch believes she has power and intends to do harm; thus, she should be punished. As for ghosts, Hobbes maintains ghosts are taught to “keep in credit the use of Exorcisme, of Crosses, of holy Water, and other such inventions of Ghostly men.”

The decaying of senses cannot be the decaying of motion because Hobbes argues that an object remains in motion until stopped; thus, the object in question doesn't slow down, it simply gets farther away, thereby becoming more obscure in one's memory. Hobbes's understanding of human imagination is again founded on materialism. Both forms of imagination, simple and compounded, are based on actual objects of substance that come into direct contact with one's sense organs. This distinction is important in Hobbes's theory because it implies that imagination is not original and does not originate within a person. Instead, imagination begins with the object that is perceived.



Hobbes's description of dreams implicitly refers to and dismisses popular theories of the day related to dreams and reality, specifically those by French philosopher René Descartes (1596-1650), who argued that one's senses can never truly distinguish a dream from reality (one usually doesn't know they are dreaming as the dream itself is occurring); thus, any information one takes in by their senses (i.e., everything) is unreliable since it can't be known for sure at any given time that one is not dreaming. Hobbes implies this philosophy is absurd and believes he can reasonably distinguish between what is reality and what is a dream.



Hobbes's explanation of ghosts is a direct reference to the Catholic Church, and it mirrors the anti-Catholic sentiments of the time. While the Protestant Reformation began over 100 years earlier, the Inquisition of the Roman Catholic Church, which endeavored to maintain Papal authority throughout Europe, was in full swing. During the Inquisition, many Protestants were tortured and executed for their religious beliefs. Hobbes considers Catholic practices and rituals—exorcism, crosses, and holy water—ridiculous inventions from ridiculous men that have no basis whatsoever in God.



There is no doubt, Hobbes argues, that God has the power to make an apparition appear, but to assume that God has done so as often as humankind claims is silly. A wise person does not give credence to such absurdities, and if such superstitions (which ambitious people often use to exploit others) were removed from society, humans “would be much more fitted than they are for civill Obedience.” The “Schooles,” however, perpetuate such beliefs. Some philosophers say imagination rises without cause, and some think good thoughts are inspired by God and bad thoughts are inspired by the Devil. They argue that “the Senses receive the Species of things,” which is delivered to the senses, to the Fancy, and to the memory, but there is very little understanding to be had in the convoluted theories of the “Schooles.”

Hobbes frequently mentions the “Schooles,” by which he means certain philosophers, mostly those of ancient Greece and Rome, and those who prescribe to their theories. Hobbes spends most of his book discounting the theories of the “Schooles,” as he does earlier with Descartes, who was greatly influenced by Aristotle and Plato. Hobbes implies such philosophy is damaging to a civil society, and in Hobbes’s ideal society, he sets right those philosophies he sees as wrong. Hobbes is often critical of the “Schooles,” calling them “incomprehensible” and illogical.



CHAPTER 3: OF THE CONSEQUENCE OR TRAYNE OF IMAGINATIONS

What one person thinks at any given time is not as casual and arbitrary as it may seem. There is no imagination—that is to say no mental thought—that is not first perceived by the senses in some way. There are two kinds of mental discourse, or thoughts, and the first is “Unguided, without Designe, and inconstant.” For instance, if one thinks of civil war, they may also think of delivering a king onto his enemies, and therefore of delivering Christ as well. One may also think of 30 pence—the cost of such betrayal—and understand immediately that “Thought is quick.”

Hobbes’s explanation of mental thought is again grounded in the philosophy of materialism, as he argues that all human thoughts are in some way first perceived by the senses, which means the senses must first come into contact with an object before that object can become part of one’s imagination. Hobbes’s own unguided thoughts reflect the political unrest of his time. His mention of civil war harkens to the English Civil War, during which King Charles I was captured and executed by parliamentarians. Hobbes implies that those who captured Charles I did so for a payment of 30 pieces of silver—the amount of silver Judas got for betraying Jesus—but he also suggests that all thought, no matter how random, is connected and rooted in experience.



The second kind of mental thought is constant and “regulated by some desire.” In regulated mental thought, one’s actions are directed at obtaining said desire in some way. In other words, one may desire something they have lost, and their mind will run back again to a time or place in which they possessed the object of desire. This is called remembrance, and it can apply to any person, place, or object. At times, one “desires to know the event of an action,” which means that since a particular action caused a particular event in the past, it is reasonable to assume that “like events will follow like actions.” This assumption is called prudence or wisdom.

In Hobbes’s definition of regulated mental thought, philosophy itself is a form of such mental discourse, as philosophy endeavors to find the cause of any given action or event. In the search for the cause of any given action or event, new memories and experiences gather to build the prudence, or wisdom, that is the end result of philosophy. In this vein, philosophy as an area of study and interest is at the very foundation of human nature.



Prudence can be false; however, those people with the most experience are often the most prudent, and such expectations rarely fail. This is because those with the most experience have the “most Signs to guess by.” A sign is a consequence of an action that was previously observed, and those signs that are less observed are less certain than signs that are observed all the time. In other words, prudence is the presumption of future events based on past experience. An example again is civil war: when one has watched civil war ruin a thriving state, one can presume that other states in civil war will suffer a similar fate.

One’s thoughts will always be limited, and no idea or concept can ever be infinite. No human being can conceive an idea of “infinite magnitude” or claim “infinite power.” God, of course, has infinite power, but God’s power is inconceivable to humankind. Any thought, concept, or idea must first be perceived by some sense organ and therefore cannot be infinite. Claims to the contrary, Hobbes contends, are “absurd speeches” from “deceived Philosophers, and deceived, or deceiving Schoolmen.”

CHAPTER 4: OF SPEECH

The purpose of speech is to transfer thoughts into something verbal. God first used speech to talk to and instruct Adam, and there are four ways in which a person can abuse speech. First, one may express their thoughts incorrectly, thereby lying to themselves and others. A second abuse is the use of metaphor, which uses words in ways other than what they are intended for. Third is the telling of a lie, and the fourth abuse of language is using words to harm or insult someone else.

Speech is remembered due to the naming of things and the connections formed between them. Names can be proper—like Peter or John—or they can be common, like human, tree, or bird. Two names can be joined together in speech, and that speech is either true or false. Hobbes points out that speech, not things, is true or false; therefore, where there is no speech, there can be neither truth nor falsehood.

Hobbes’s reference to civil war again reflects the politics of the time. The English Civil War greatly changed, and in many cases devastated, English society. The king was dead, and their government completely transformed from a monarchy to a democracy led by Parliament. Hobbes implies that the Civil War will ultimately be the end of the England. This did not prove to be the case, but the Civil War did cause considerable upheaval for several years in English society.



God and, in certain circumstances, Christ, are the only exceptions to most of Hobbes’s theories. God’s power is infinite, and since people are only able to grasp and understand what is finite, people cannot fully understand God’s power. Hobbes was often accused of atheism and blasphemy because of his religious views; however, he appears to at least believe in the existence of God.



From Hobbes’s perspective, abusing speech is not necessarily a bad thing. Furthermore, one can express their thoughts incorrectly through ignorance and no fault of their own. While the abuse of speech includes those who lie or insult others with words, it also includes the use of rhetoric and persuasion through speech.



For Hobbes, the naming of things and the connections formed between them is the very foundation of philosophy, or at least it should be. This opinion is why Hobbes spends so much time laying the groundwork for his philosophy—he must name everything and explain the connections between them.



Truth consists of the right signification of things, which is called a definition, and the differences between names and definitions can be reduced to four general areas. First, a thing can be given a name or definition for its “Matter,” meaning, for instance, something is alive or not. Secondly, an object can be named and defined based on its quality, that being, among other things, that an object is moving, or long, or hot. Third, objects are considered and named in relation to people’s own bodies based on whether that thing is part of the self. Lastly, names and definitions are given to words in general, such as an affirmation, a narration, or a sermon, and such names are either negative or positive.

Names that do not fall under these four general categories are “insignificant sounds,” which are sounds that have not yet been defined. A type of “insignificant sound” is when two contradictory words are joined, such as in the phrase “incorporeal body.” When hearing speech, a human makes connections in their thoughts based on previous sense perceptions and accepted definitions in a process known as understanding; however, Hobbes warns that one must “take heed of words.” One person’s wisdom can be another’s fear, and one person’s idea of justice may be cruel to another.

CHAPTER 5: OF REASON, AND SCIENCE

When a human reasons, they conceive a sum based on the addition or subtraction of one thing to another. The same process can be applied to thoughts and words. Thoughts are nothing more than the consequences of a name, either in whole or in part, to another name, itself either in whole or in part. Numbers can be added, subtracted, multiplied, and divided; however, so can thoughts and words. Mathematicians work with numbers, geometricians work with lines and figures, and philosophers work with words and thoughts. Philosophers concerned with politics work with laws and duties that are either right or wrong in relation to private humans. Wherever there is addition and subtraction of one thing to another, there is also reason.

Reason, Hobbes says, “is nothing but *Reckoning* (that is, Adding and Subtracting) of the Consequences of generall names agreed upon, for the *marking* and *signifying* of our thoughts.” Just as in mathematics, those inexperienced in the reasoning of words and thoughts are bound to make false conclusions, and even the most practiced people can fall prey to errors. Reason in words and thoughts is not always correct, as it is in mathematics, and one person’s reason cannot be made certain. When people think themselves wiser than others in general and consider their own reason definite, this makes for an unbearable society for others.

Hobbes later contends that most philosophy does not contain truth, as most philosophy does not consist of the right signification of things. Definitions used in philosophy are either incorrect, vague, or, in Hobbes’s opinion, complete nonsense. If a particular philosophy is grounded in false definitions, or no definitions, then the entire philosophy is false. Hobbes defines each word he uses in his philosophy in an attempt to make his argument infallible and beyond dispute.



Hobbes’s reference to an “incorporeal body” is another allusion to Catholicism. Incorporeal bodies, or spiritual bodies, are central to Catholic belief, as God is often referred to as the Holy Ghost, part of the Trinity. Such a phrase is contradictory because something that is “incorporeal” is without matter; a body, by definition, has mass and takes up space. Putting these words together creates an “insignificant sound,” and to Hobbes, such phrases are nonsense.



Although it is easily lost in his lengthy explanation of humans in nature, Hobbes’s main objective in Leviathan is political philosophy. Here, Hobbes compares philosophy, particularly political philosophy, to mathematics and geometry, and in doing so he elevates the credibility and logical soundness of his own philosophy to that of arithmetic. In mathematics there are established definitions and factual answers to questions, and Hobbes attempts to extend this infallibility to his own philosophy.



Hobbes argues that words and thoughts can never be made certain in the way numbers can. Ironically, though he presents his own words and reason as if they are certain. Other philosophers have made false conclusions, but Hobbes offers truth. Hobbes believes his own reasoning definite, which he later notes is a common problem among human beings—they often think that their own reasoning is the only sound reasoning.



The purpose of reason in words and language is not to find one total sum or absolute truth; instead, reason should begin with a myriad of sums and truths and go from there. Thus, there can be no certainty in any conclusion, as there is no certainty in any of the reason in which a conclusion is grounded. When one reckons without words, it is known as an error, and an error can be either false or absurd. A simple deception in thought is an error, but an error that is inconceivable is an absurdity. For instance, when one talks to Hobbes about “*accidents of Bread in Cheese; or Immaterial Substances,*” he considers such thoughts and words absurd.

No living creature other than human beings are subject to absurdity, and no one is subject to absurdity more than philosophers. The reason for this absurdity is that philosophers do not begin with established definitions and names. Only the philosophy of geometry begins with established definitions and names, and the conclusions within geometry are therefore certain and irrefutable. The first cause of absurdity is beginning philosophy without established definitions or values, and the second is the “giving of names of *bodies*, to *accidents*; or of *accidents*, to *bodies*.” In other words, to say that faith is “*infused*, or *inspired*”; when nothing can be *powred*, or *breathed* into any thing,” is absurd.

The third cause of absurdity is the naming of “accidents” outside the body based on what occurs inside the body. For example, saying “*the sound is in the ayre*” is absurd. The fourth cause is the giving of universal names, such as claiming “that a *living creature is Genus*, or a *general thing*.” The next cause of absurdity is the naming of “accidents” in general, such as is done in claims that “the nature of a thing is its definition,” and the sixth cause is the use of metaphors and rhetoric when proper words will do. In other words, do not say “*The Proverb says this or that*” when simple speech can be used. The seventh and last cause of absurdity is naming that which signifies nothing, as in the words “*transubstantiate*” and “*consubstantiate*.”

The ability to reason is not born within each person as is the ability to sense objects and create memory, nor is reason accumulated through experience like prudence. Reason is obtained through the naming of things, established definitions, and the connections made from one name to the next. The knowledge of the consequences of one name in relation to another is known as science. Sense and memory are the knowledge of facts; however, science “is the knowledge of Consequences.” Some signs within science are certain, others are not; however, all the signs of prudence are uncertain.

Hobbes again alludes to the Catholic Church: the phrase “Immaterial Substances” is another reference to the existence of incorporeal substances taught in Catholicism, and “accidents of Bread” alludes to the Catholic practice of transubstantiation (the transformation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ), both of which Hobbes considers to be errors, or in other words, absurd.



Hobbes claims that geometry is the only sound philosophy because it begins with established definitions and terms, and he attempts to ground his own philosophy in the same practice. Hobbes’s quote here is another veiled reference to Catholicism, which often claims faith or piety is “powred [poured], or breathed into” people from Heaven via the Holy Spirit. Hobbes again says such belief is absurd and not grounded in any reason whatsoever. Only objects made of matter can truly exist; thus, one’s faith cannot be “inspired” into them.



This passage, too, is a reference to Catholicism. Transubstantiation is the conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ during the Eucharist, and consubstantiation is the Protestant belief that the bread and wine coexist with the body and blood of Christ. In Catholicism, Holy Communion (the body and blood of Christ) is that unifying substance. The idea is that in consuming the body and blood of Christ, Catholics become one under Christ, which Hobbes argues is ridiculous. A substance cannot change into another substance through incantation, he argues, and multiple bodies cannot be made one through ingesting a shared substance.



Signs of prudence are always uncertain because prudence is only an assumption of what will happen based on the consequences of past events and experiences. An assumption can never be for certain, and many signs within science are based on assumptions. Thus, Hobbes argues that even science is not infallible in the way that geometry and mathematics are.



CHAPTER 6: OF THE INTERIOUR BEGINNINGS OF VOLUNTARY MOTIONS; COMMONLY CALLED

THE PASSIONS. AND THE SPEECHES BY WHICH THEY ARE EXPRESSED.

There are two kinds of motion inside animals. One kind includes motions that are vital, like the course of blood and breathing, which are not dependent upon imagination. The other kind includes motions that are voluntary and involve the use of limbs and the desire of minds. As all voluntary motions rely on one of the senses identified in the previous chapters, the foundation of all voluntary motions is imagination.

While it is simple for uneducated people to assume there is no movement where none is visible, that is not to say that motion is not present. “These small beginnings of Motion,” Hobbes says, before a person speaks or moves, are called an endeavor. When such an endeavor is applied to something, it is known as appetite, like an appetite for food or water; and when such an endeavor is applied away from something, it is known as aversion. What people have an appetite for, they are said to love. Similarly, what people have an aversion to, they are said to hate. One cannot have an appetite for something they do not already know from experience, other than to have an appetite to try something new and unknown. On the other hand, people can have an aversion based on what they know and what they do not know.

Things that people neither love nor hate are held in contempt, which is a sort of immobility. As it is in the nature of all humans to be in constant motion, it is impossible to say that all the same sorts of things are always loved or hated. Thus, whatever sort of thing causes appetite is said to be good, and whatever sort of thing causes aversion is said to be evil. However, there is no absolute or “common Rule of Good and Evil.” In Latin, there are two words similar to good and evil, but not exact, and those words are “*Pulchrum*” (the promise of good) and “*Turpe*” (the promise of evil). Therefore, pleasure is similar to the promise of good, whereas displeasure is the promise of evil.

Hobbes goes on to define several other passions, including joy, pain, grief, anger, confidence, and kindness. He also defines curiosity, which is the desire to know something, and fear, which is like aversion, only it involves the distress of being hurt or harmed by something. Fear of an invisible power that is allowed publically is known as religion, and fear of an invisible power that is not allowed is superstition.

For Hobbes, imagination underpins all human acts, which is why he spends so much time explaining it. Without first understanding the thoughts that bring humans to civil societies and common-wealths, one can't possibly understand such civil societies.



According to Hobbes's theory, one can't desire what they don't know from experience, other than a desire to try something new. This argument is also based in Hobbes's materialist beliefs, which assume one must come into contact with an object through one of the sense organs in order to have experience and thoughts based on said object. In this vein, Hobbes implies that one cannot desire what they have never had, but they can fear it.



For Hobbes, many words—like good and evil, moral and immoral, and just and unjust—can never be adequately defined because different people consider different things evil, immoral, and unjust. This argument becomes important later in the book when Hobbes describes the nature of common-wealths. Evil, immorality, and injustice must be defined within a common-wealth, and it is up to the sovereign power to define these terms for subjects to follow.



“Passions” are similar to emotions, and these emotions, according to Hobbes, drive a person's actions. Hobbes's distinction between religion and superstition is subtle (one is authorized, the other is not) and thus makes religion seem like little more than superstition, which would have been a very controversial opinion in Hobbes's time.



Success in obtaining that which one desires is known as “felicity”; however, there is no such thing as constant happiness. As life is in constant motion, one can never expect to be without appetite or aversion. Lastly, the kind of speech that signifies something as good is known as praise, and that is all Hobbes has to say about passions and how they are expressed.

Hobbes’s contention that life is in constant motion dismisses accepted philosophies related to objects and motion, which makes Hobbes’s philosophy appear quite radical. Hobbes maintains there is no such thing as constant happiness; however, he later argues that the creation of a common-wealth is the closest one can get to true happiness.



CHAPTER 7: OF THE ENDS, OR RESOLUTIONS OF DISCOURSE

Discourse ends when one has either obtained (or not obtained) an object of appetite (or aversion) or given up all together. Regardless of the outcome, however, discourse cannot end “in absolute knowledge of fact,” because no one can know by discourse alone “that this, or that, is, has been, or will be.” According to Hobbes, knowledge from discourse is conditional, which is to know “that if This be, That is; if This has been, That has been; if This shall be, That shall be.”

For Hobbes, true knowledge is the product of discourse and experience and cannot be had in merely one or the other. This argument further discredits many forms of philosophy, as several philosophies (except for mathematics) are grounded in discourse—that is thought and conversation—not practice.



Verbal discourse begins with defined words, builds on connections between definitions, and ends with a conclusion. Science is the conditional knowledge drawn from such discourse, but if the discourse is not grounded in accepted definitions and the connections are not made in appropriate ways, the conclusion is merely opinion. Discourse not grounded in definitions is more about the person than the topic of the discourse. The resolution of ungrounded discourse, then, is belief and faith. Belief is vital in Christianity; yet, to believe is to believe the entire doctrine, not to trust in a single person. It is not only Christians, Hobbes says, but all sorts of people who believe in God. These people have belief and faith, too, they just don’t believe in the doctrine.

This passage is the crux of Hobbes’s religious argument. Although Hobbes believes in the existence of God, he does not believe in much of the Holy Scripture held to be the Word of God and therefore supreme truth in Christianity. For Hobbes, Holy Scripture, which was written by different people at different times in history, is conditional knowledge at best and cannot be reasonably accepted as fact or truth.



CHAPTER 8: OF THE VERTUES COMMONLY CALLED INTELLECTUAL: AND THEIR CONTRARY DEFECTS

Virtue is generally valued and used to compare people to one another, and virtues that are considered of the mind are commonly called intellectual virtues. These can be either natural or acquired. Natural wit comes about through experience without structured education. When imagination is slow, it is known as “stupidity,” and these discrepancies in wit are caused by individual passions.

According to Hobbes’s philosophy, a person who has a slow imagination (i.e., those who are “stupid[.]”) are simply not motivated by the right passions. Thus, Hobbes’s theory doesn’t have much to do with innate ability or aptitude. This reflects Hobbes’s belief in human equality—under the same conditions and passions, people are more or less capable of the same things.



People who notice similarities and connections where others do not are said to have “Good Wit,” or “Good Fancy,” and their ability to discern differences and similarities is said to be “good Judgement.” Someone who exercises such judgment has the virtue known as discretion. A good poem—be it an epic, drama, sonnet, or epigram—has both fancy and judgement; however, in a good history, judgement is more important. Orations of praise and invectives, which aim to honor or dishonor a certain person, rely almost completely on fancy.

People’s personal and individual thoughts vary. Personal thoughts are both clean and indecent, holy and blasphemous, and serious and light. When one’s thoughts have a specific purpose and contain much experience and memory, this is known as prudence, and prudence applied to unjust ends is called craft.

Unlike natural wit, acquired wit is obtained by instruction and method. Acquired wit is grounded in the correct use of speech and definitions and produces science. Different wits are caused by different passions, and from different passions come different bodies and different levels of education. These different passions are caused mainly by a desire for power, wealth, knowledge, and honor; however, this list can be condensed to simply power, since wealth, knowledge, and honor are merely specific types of power.

As Hobbes has defined different virtues of the mind, he also defines certain defects of the mind, including giddiness, madness, rage, and melancholy. Madness is too much passion that can be brought about by too much alcohol, and, according to some, madness and the passions that cause it can come from demons and spirits, both good and bad. Christian doctrine espouses inspiration from the Holy Spirit and likewise believes in evil possession. Hobbes challenges any academic to make the Holy Trinity or transubstantiation comprehensible. “So this kind of Absurdity,” Hobbes says, “may rightly be numbered amongst the many sorts of Madnesse.”

CHAPTER 9: OF THE SEVERALL SUBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE

According to Hobbes, there are two types of knowledge. The first kind is “*Knowledge of Fact*,” which is absolute and nothing but sense and memory. In the case of knowledge of fact (the kind of knowledge expected in a witness), one sees something (a fact) and remembers it. The second type of knowledge is “*Knowledge of the Consequence of one Affirmation to another*,” and this knowledge is conditional and includes science.

Hobbes ultimately argues that a philosopher must have “Good Wit” and “good Judgement,” as they must have the proper eloquence needed to get people to listen and trust them. In this way, Hobbes is making philosophy a genre of writing, like poetry and history, and he is defining exactly what is needed to compose reasonable and eloquent philosophy.



Craft is an abuse frequently seen in common-wealths, and Hobbes draws attention to this. Royalists in Hobbes’s day would have viewed many parliamentary acts as craft.



Hobbes’s entire philosophy and explanation of nature and society is based on power—getting power and keeping power. This power is individual (as in one person subduing another and imposing power over them), or power is more collective (like multiple people combining their individual power into one larger power, as is done within a common-wealth).



Hobbes outright calls Christian doctrine, especially that which relies on transubstantiation, incomprehensible “madnesse,” which was an incredibly controversial statement in Hobbes’s time. Even Protestants take Communion, although not under the same circumstances as Catholics. All cases of Holy Communion, however, entail consubstantiation or transubstantiation. and Hobbes considers this practice nonsense and lacking reason.



Again, Hobbes does not consider science to be hard facts; rather, science is more a collection of probabilities and likelihoods. As Hobbes’s own philosophy is rooted in fact (accepted and established definitions), he elevates his political philosophy above even that of science, which he claims can never be absolutely certain.



This collection of “*Knowledge of Fact*” is known as history, which can be further broken down into two types. Natural history is the recording of history that has no connection to humans, such as the history of animals, plants, and metals. Civil history is the recording of the history of human beings and their actions in common-wealths. This collection of science, which includes books that contain “*Demonstrations of Consequences of one Affirmation, to another*” are known as books of philosophy. The types of philosophy vary—such as natural philosophy, civil philosophy, and poetry—so Hobbes includes a table for visual reference.

Hobbes’s reference table of the many forms and branches of philosophy is comprehensive and includes every individual discipline from metaphysics to astronomy. However, only those philosophies based on mathematics and geometry are, in Hobbes’s opinion, based on fact. Therefore, Hobbes considers very few philosophies “true philosophy.” Again, as Hobbes attempts to elevate his own philosophy to “fact,” he implies that other philosophies are nothing but opinion.



CHAPTER 10: OF POWER, WORTH, DIGNITY, HONOUR, AND WORTHINESSE

Power is the means one has to “obtain some future apparent Good,” and power can be either natural or instrumental. Natural power is that which comes from the mind or body, like strength or prudence. Instrumental powers are those powers acquired by natural power or by fortune, such as wealth, friends, or “the secret working of God, which men call Good Luck.” The greatest power is the compounded power of several people united as one civil power, as it is in a common-wealth.

Power is the main idea behind the invention of the common-wealth. By joining together and combining their individual power, a common-wealth is better situated to defend itself from other larger powers that one might not be able to fight off individually. As any one person’s power will always be limited, the combining of power is the only way to grow.



To have friends, servants, and family is power, as there is strength and power in united people of any number. Wealth combined with freedom is power, because wealth and freedom lead to friends and servants; however, wealth without freedom is not power, as it exposes people to envy and jealousy. One’s reputation is power, and so is love for one’s country, but the sciences are “small Power.” Arts for public use and defense, such as the production of engines and war instruments, are power. Science is the “true Mother” of the arts (mostly mathematics), but since science is brought to light “by the hand of the Artificer,” its power is small.

The sciences are “small Power” because the sciences are not rooted in fact and are therefore uncertain. Mathematics are the “true Mother” of the arts because it is based on irrefutable numbers that do not change and does not rely on assumptions. Science, according to Hobbes, is only as good as the philosopher who studies it because science is brought to light “by the hand of the Artificer.”



The value of a person is equivalent to the worth of their power, which is dependent on the judgement of other people and is not absolute. One’s value manifests in either honor or dishonor, and one’s public worth—that being their value in the eyes of the common-wealth—is known as dignity. To pray for someone is to honor them and so is to obey them. Conversely, to disobey another is to dishonor them. To praise another, speak to them considerately, or trust them is to honor them, and to refuse such things is a dishonor.

To dishonor someone or something in the form of disobeying them is central to Hobbes’s argument, which explores power and authority figures in both religion and civil society. According to Hobbes, God commanded the people to obey their “Earthly Masters,” which means disobeying one’s sovereign power is tantamount to disobeying, and therefore dishonoring, God.



Agreeing with another's opinion is to honor them, and to disagree is to dishonor them. Honor and dishonor occur within a common-wealth just as they do outside a common-wealth; however, the common-wealth has the authority to decide what is honorable or not. A sovereign can honor a citizen with a specific title or office, and dominion and victory over others is considered honorable. Lasting good fortune is also considered honorable and is thought to be a sign of God's favor.

Actions coming from experience, discretion, wit, and science are honorable, as each of these are a form of power. Actions that come from a desire for equity are honorable, whereas opposite actions, like disregard of equality, are dishonorable. Greed for wealth and ambition for honor is in itself honorable, as long as one has the power to obtain them. Greed and ambition with no means for gain is dishonorable.

Coats of Arms and one's hereditary connections are also power, as such connections imply wealth and privilege. This honor, bestowed upon one by a common-wealth, is known as Gentry, and it includes the titles of Duke, Count, Marquis, and Baron. One's worthiness is different from their value or worth and consists of their abilities, which are known as one's aptitude or fitness. According to Hobbes, one can be worthy of wealth or a certain honorable office but lack the merit to deserve said wealth or office. "For Merit," Hobbes says, "præsupposeth a right," which he will discuss more in the chapter on contracts.

CHAPTER 11: OF THE DIFFERENCE OF MANNERS

Next, Hobbes discusses manners, by which he does not mean behaving in an appropriate way, like saluting others or practicing good hygiene. Instead, manners are the qualities people possess that allow them to live in peace and unity with others in a continual search of happiness. Happiness, or felicity, is progress to some desired end; thus, people's voluntary actions tend to be focused on obtaining that which will make their life content. These actions differ only in the passions they arise from and the knowledge and opinions that produce each passion.

According to Hobbes, each person has a desire for power that ceases only in death, and wealth and honor through the killing or subduing of another is one way to obtain such power. However, Hobbes argues, "Desire of Ease, and sensual Delight" lead people to obey a common power in the form of civil obedience. Fear of death and wounds also lead people to civil obedience, as does a desire for knowledge and peace.

The common-wealth decides what is honorable or not through the passing of laws. If something is against the law, it is considered immoral and therefore bad, and to break such a law is a dishonor. In nature, there is no centralized power to make such determinations.



In the absence of a centralized power, as there is in nature, honor is based on power and equality. In Hobbes's theory, it is not dishonorable to be a pirate, for example, and steal and pillage for wealth, as long as such behavior is not against some established law and the wealth is thought to be obtainable.



Hobbes is a royalist, and he supports a monarch's right to rule absolutely. He also supports the line of royal succession, which establishes an eternal line of worthiness for the crown. One does not have a right to be a monarch simply because they are honorable and wealthy—they must also merit that power through royal succession and blood lines.



Again, Hobbes's understanding of human behavior is grounded in self-interest. People ultimately do what they believe will make them happy, not what is best for people as a whole. This assumption again dismisses Aristotle's understanding of human nature, which argues that people are generally social and helpful in relation to others. Hobbes disagrees. To Hobbes, people are generally interested only in their own needs.



This passage is the crux of Hobbes's argument concerning the creation of civil society and common-wealths. People ultimately transitioned out of nature into common-wealths, Hobbes says, due to fear and a desire to live a life outside of that fear. By banding together in a common-wealth, people no longer have a reason to fear each other, as their power is combined and can now protect them from larger powers.



Those with a strong opinion of their wisdom who impose that wisdom on the government of a common-wealth are said to have ambition, and articulate people have a tendency to have ambition. Timidity disposes one to indecision, but eloquence implies wisdom and kindness. An ignorance of science and the causes of events can lead one to rely too much on other people's perspectives, because such people lack their own opinions. Ignorance, or a complete lack of understanding, can cause one to put trust in nonsense.

Ignorance of the causes and structure of rights and laws disposes a person to accepting custom and example as the rule, and they tend to think an act is unjust just because it is customary to punish such actions. Likewise, those who are ignorant of the cause and structure of rights and laws tend to believe an action is just simply because lawyers think so. "Right and Wrong is perpetually disputed," Hobbes says, "both by the Pen and the Sword." Those who are ignorant of distant causes believe all events are "instrumental," as such causes are the only causes they perceive. Living in ignorance of natural causes makes a person gullible, and they are apt to believe any number of impossibilities.

Anxiety over future events can give a person the desire to know about the natural causes of things, as can curiosity and a love of knowledge. Still, Hobbes argues that few people question the causes of things because of the fear that comes from ignorance itself and the "severall kinds of Powers Invisible" that have created numerous gods to fear. This fear of invisible things is called religion, and those who observe religion have formed it into laws. Such laws are infused with personal opinion and are used to govern others and obtain power.

CHAPTER 12: OF RELIGION

Since there is no "fruit of Religion" that is not also in human beings, the "seed of Religion" is also found in human beings, which is an odd quality not found in any other living thing. It is natural for humans to wonder about the causes of events and to be curious as to their own fortune, and it is natural for people to think that which has a beginning also has a cause and reason for beginning when it did. Whenever a person cannot convince themselves of the causes of things, they create a cause, either from their own opinion or from those thought to be wiser.

Hobbes repeatedly claims that being eloquent and articulate is essential in philosophy. Without the ability to command attention, one's philosophy cannot be heard and valued. Hobbes implies here that it is basically ignorance that allows people to believe in Holy Scripture. While Hobbes does not explicitly mention religion or scripture here (or in other places), religion was a major aspect of 17th-century English society, and the implication is always present.



Hobbes implies that those who buy into Holy Scripture and religious doctrine are gullible compared to those who are educated and aware of the causes of things. This perspective also implies that those who seek religion are actually seeking an understanding of natural causes. For Hobbes, there are no definite examples of right and wrong (except for those outlined by God), which is why right and wrong are "perpetually disputed" by writers ("the Pen") and nations and soldiers ("the Sword").



This passage can be understood using the example of an eclipse. A solar eclipse to an uneducated person may seem like an act of God. This assumption causes fear and keeps one from truly discovering the natural cause of a solar eclipse, which, according to Hobbes, has nothing to do with God. In this way, a fear of "Powers Invisible" (God) keeps people in ignorance and easier to control through laws.



In addition to religion, Hobbes claims that human beings are also the only creatures capable of being absurd, a similarity that makes religion appear absurd by extension. Hobbes's explanation of curiosity and the causes of events suggests that humans created religion, and therefore God, as a way to explain the unexplainable. This argument complicates Hobbes's opinion as to the existence of God. To believe in God is to believe that God created humans, not that humans created God. However, Hobbes does make a distinction between religion and God, which suggests that humans created religion but not necessarily God himself.



Wondering about the cause of certain events and one's fortune leads to anxiety, as does considering the beginnings of things, because it is impossible to discern the cause and beginning of all things. This anxiety leads to constant fear, and since one is "in the Dark" concerning the cause of events, they attribute the cause to "some *Power*, or Agent *Invisible*," like God. The substance or matter making up the invisible agent is the same as "the Soule of man," which appears in dreams and is like an apparition. Such apparitions are "nothing else but creatures of the Fancy" thought to be real, and some people honor them like they would a visible body.

People who are apt to believe in an invisible agent are likely to believe prophecy from others, especially those they believe to be wise. The "Naturall seed of *Religion*," according to Hobbes, consists of four things: belief in ghosts, the ignorance of causes, devotion to what is also feared, and the confusing of opinion for prophecy. All religions contain these four elements; however, beyond this "Naturall seed," foreign religions can seem ridiculous to even the most religious person.

These seeds of religion are received by two kinds of people: those who obey religion of their own accord, and those who obey religion based on God's commandment. The initial purpose of religion was to make others more inclined to obedience and civil society, and it consists of invisible powers and the possession of all things by one spirit or another. The Gentiles of long ago explained the world this way. Unformed matter was the god named Chaos; and the heavens, earth, wind, and fire were also known by gods. People and animals were deified, and spirits and demons—like satyrs, nymphs, furies, and fairies—were abundant.

The Gentiles of long ago attributed everything to gods and religion. Fertility was because of Venus, the arts due to Apollo, and all craft was the fault of Mercury. Prophecy was natural, and it was believed fortunes could be revealed though vague and senseless riddles that priests gave at Delphi. Other prophecies, like those from Nostradamus, have been respected throughout history. At times, the "insignificant Speeches of Mad-men" are "supposed to be possessed with a divine Spirit," and this possession is known as enthusiasm. Such enthusiasm has led to horoscopy, astrology, necromancy, and witchcraft.

According to Hobbes, visualizing a ghost or someone's soul is impossible because neither one is made up of matter; thus, there is no object to come into direct contact with the human sense organs. In this way, God in the traditional sense—composed of "the Soule of man"—cannot exist. This does not necessarily mean that God does not exist—it simply means that God does not exist in the exact way Holy Scripture claims.



In short, the "Naturall seed of Religion" relies on ignorance and fear, which people often exploit through craft. Hobbes clearly does not make a distinction between different types of religion (such as Protestantism or Catholicism, two branches of Christianity). To Hobbes, all religions are rooted in ignorance and fear and by definition must be imaginary.



The "Gentiles" Hobbes refers to here are the ancient Greeks and Romans who worshiped numerous deities. Through the lens of Hobbes's theory, people invented these gods and religions to explain the natural world and keep social order. Hobbes later uses the word "Gentiles" to describe non-Christians more broadly. A Christian believes in only one god, whereas a "Gentile" believes in many gods.



*Nostradamus (1503-1566) was a French astrologer and supposed prophet capable of precognition. He published *Les Prophéties*, a book of prophetic poetry, in 1555. Nostradamus's book has been in publication almost since its first printing and, according to some, has predicted major world events like WWII and the 9/11 terror attacks. Hobbes, however, implies Nostradamus's book is the "insignificant speech" of a "mad-man."*



Gentiles took earthquakes, meteors, and eclipses to foretell great disaster, which again illustrates how easily people can believe anything when guided by fear and ignorance. Thus, when the Gentiles began the first common-wealth to keep people obedient and safe, they did so under the laws and dictates of gods and religion because such laws were easily understood by the people. Through religion, God himself gives laws not only concerning his own worship, but the treatment of people and the kingdom as well. “God is King of all the Earth,” Hobbes says, yet God is also the king of specific nations as well. Hobbes’s discussion of the “Kingdome of God” occurs later in the book.

Religion is founded on faith in a single person, who is also believed to be a wise and holy figure; however, those people who require others to believe in a certain religion or religious law and do not believe in it themselves are called scandalous. Scandals cause misstep on the way to religious belief, as occurs with injustice, cruelty, or greed. Religion must be executed and practiced for the love of others, not for self-love or self-interest.

For something to be religious, it must also include a miracle. Wise people of sound judgement require signs to believe in any one argument, and in religion, that required sign is a miracle. Additionally, for a religion to be recognized by the “Church of Rome,” it is subject to the authority of the Pope. A king does not have the authority of God until crowned by a Bishop, and any king who is also a priest is not permitted to marry. Any born prince is judged by a Roman authority, and a king may be unseated by the Pope for any reason, or no reason at all. Thus, Hobbes says, all the changes in religion are caused by “unpleasing Priests,” in both Catholicism and Protestantism.

CHAPTER 13: OF THE NATURALL CONDITION OF MANKIND, AS CONCERNING THEIR FELICITY, AND MISERY

All people are made equal in nature. Hobbes admits that some people are stronger or quicker than others, but when considered collectively, such differences are insignificant and not enough for one person to claim superiority over another. Hobbes also admits that some people have more prudence and experience than others; however, this, too, suggests people are more equal than not, since with equal time and experience, people can claim equal prudence.

Here, Hobbes is setting up an argument that he will make later in the book, in which he claims the people of Israel had a special covenant with God that made them subjects of God above and beyond the power God naturally has over the Earth and everyone on it. This passage also explains why religion is such a major part of Hobbes’s argument, especially since he considers it a silly human invention. Regardless of how Hobbes feels about religion, his audience is overwhelmingly religious, and he, too, must put his book into terms they can understand.



In Hobbes’s opinion, most religion is scandalous, as he implies religion is largely practiced for self-love and self-interest (which is a natural human inclination according to Hobbes). Again, this would have been a very controversial comment in Hobbes’s time, and it likely contributed to his reputation as an atheist.



Hobbes is particularly critical of the clergy, especially the Pope, and Hobbes later argues that the clergy largely uses religion for their own personal gain. His description of the “Church of Rome,” or the Catholic Church, appears as the supreme power over all Christians. In this way, the Pope has power even over the sovereign kings and queens of nations (if they’re Christian), which Hobbes ultimately argues diminishes the power of the sovereign and makes them a subject of the Pope.



Hobbes argues that people are all essentially the same, which is why, in nature at least, no one can claim any power over another unless they take it by force. This belief is why only the sovereign power of a nation can be considered the supreme power, as the sovereign power is made up of the collective power of the people in a commonwealth.



A definite difference in people is that one person usually finds their own wisdom greater than the next person's, but since all people generally think this way, Hobbes considers it yet another point of similarity. An equal hope of obtaining some end arises from this equal ability. When two people desire the same object and only one can have it, those two people are enemies, and the destruction of the other is included in their desired end. In this way, the only way one can secure their own conservation is to master as many people as possible to eliminate any power that may endanger them.

In nature, people have no desire to keep company where there is no power to control them. Thus, it is in human nature to fight for three general reasons. First, people fight for competition. They invade others and use violence to master other people and animals. Secondly, people fight because of a need to defend their safety. Thirdly, people fight for glory and reputation, which includes small slights, like minor insults and affronts. People living outside an established and common power are in a state of war, and this state of war includes every person against every person. War, according to Hobbes, does not include only battle, but also the intention or desire for battle. Every other state is known as peace.

In nature, there is no industry, no certainty, and no culture. There is no knowledge of science, letters, or arts, and there is no accounting of time. In nature, there is only constant fear and the danger of violence, which makes people "solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short." It may seem strange to some that nature renders all people savage, but one must only look to their own actions in society for confirmation of such savagery. Before one travels, they arm themselves and make sure they are accompanied, and when they go to bed at night, they lock the doors of their homes. People take such precautions even with rules, laws, and officers tasked specifically with their physical safety and that of their property.

The desires and passions that produce such savagery in people is in itself no sin, nor are the actions that come from such passions. Actions are only considered a sin when they go against some established law, and such laws cannot be established without first electing someone to make and enact them. Thus, nothing in nature is unjust, as the notions of right and wrong and justice and injustice do not exist in nature. Where there is no common power, there can be no common law; and where there is no common law, there can be no injustice.

Hobbes's idea of human beings in nature is an "everyone for themselves" mentality. Each individual person represents a distinct and separate threat to one's existence, since everyone is vying for the same thing—security and sustenance. This mentality generally makes people disagreeable and violent, which also contradicts Aristotle's philosophy that people are naturally social and helpful.



In short, Hobbes contends that a state of nature and a state of war are the exact same thing. As a state of war is anything that includes even the intention or desire for battle, and there is always the intention or desire for battle in nature, nature is in a continuous state of war. This point of argument is important in context with the English Civil War and the state of England as a common-wealth. By entering into a civil war, the common-wealth of England was dissolved and has reverted back to a state of nature.



Hobbes's contention that people in nature are "solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short" is the most quoted line in all of Leviathan. The question of the state of humans in nature has always been a hot topic in philosophy, and Hobbes believes people are naturally unpleasant and violent. This opinion is contrary to other philosophers, like Aristotle (384-322 BCE), John Locke (1632-1704), and Jean-Jacque Rousseau (1712-1788), who all argue humans are naturally social and helpful.



This passage is the core of Hobbes's argument concerning the cause of humankind's transition from nature to civil society. The violence and war that plagues nature will never cease and can't be escaped because there is no common power to stop it. In short, people moved out of nature and into civil society precisely to create this power and stop the violence and endless fear that is nature.



Passions that predispose people to peace include the fear of death, the desire for things that are necessary for life (like food and shelter), and the hope to obtain such vital necessities. People are drawn to agreements or contracts that ensure peace, which Hobbes refers to as the Laws of Nature.

The Laws of Nature are not naturally existing laws that are automatically followed by all. Rather, the Laws of Nature are rules that naturally exist in nature and must be followed to make nature a peaceful place. Of course, as nature does not have a central power, these laws are generally ignored.



CHAPTER 14: OF THE FIRST AND SECOND NATURALL LAWES, AND OF CONTRACTS

It is the right of every human being in nature to use one's own power as they see fit to preserve one's life. Everyone is at liberty, which is to say their movements are not obstructed. The Laws of Nature, according to Hobbes, include a "generall Rule, found out by Reason," under which a human being is forbidden to do anything that is destructive to one's own life. It is important not to confuse "Right" with "Law": a right means that one is at liberty to do something, while a law means that one is obligated to do something.

This general rule within the Laws of Nature gives people certain rights, but it is not in itself a right. Under the Laws of Nature, one is obligated to protect and preserve their life. This is not simply a "right" one has, meaning they are allowed to defend their life if they want under certain circumstances; it is a duty that must be observed at all times. While this law is naturally occurring, it is not naturally known and must be "found out by Reason." Hobbes offers that reason in Leviathan.



Humans' natural condition is one in which everyone is at war with everyone else. Everyone is guided by the same reason—an obligation to preserve their life by any means necessary, as well as a right to anything and anyone that makes self-preservation possible or more likely. These natural rights mean there can never be any real security for human beings in nature; thus, it is a central Law of Nature that everyone must seek peace as long as peace is reasonable. If peace is deemed unreasonable, one may use every advantage possible to defend their life in a state of war.

Again, just because it is in the Laws of Nature to always seek peace does not mean that people always follow it, hence the need for a centralized power. In nature, humans are in constant competition with one another for the very same resources, and since there is no one to enforce laws, peace cannot be reasonably expected. This again comes full circle and reinforces war—if peace is not reasonable, war is.



To ensure peace, one must "lay down" their right to violently defend their life, and others must do the same. To "lay down" a right is to deny one's self the benefit of the right being forfeited. A right can be forfeited either by renouncing it or transferring it to someone else. If a right is renounced, said right is given to no one in particular; however, if a right is transferred, it is given to certain person or group of people. After a right is forfeited, the one who forfeited the right is obligated not to interfere with whoever is granted the right. The interference of a voluntary act after the fact is an injustice.

When one "lays down" their right to violently defend their life to another, they do so with the understanding that whomever they give that right to will exercise it on their behalf. The underlying idea again is this: if one is not strong enough on their own to ensure peace, they join forces with others and pool their power, thereby increasing their strength, power, and ability to protect themselves.



Whenever a right is transferred from one person to another, it is a voluntary act in which the purpose is some perceived good for the preservation of one's life. As such, there are some rights that can never be transferred to another, like the right to harm or kill another. The same can be said for imprisonment, as there is no benefit for the one who is imprisoned. Whenever a right is mutually passed from one to another, it is called a contract. In a contract is a pact, or covenant, that must be respected by both parties. When the transfer is not mutual, such as the forfeiture of a right in hopes of receiving friendship or favor in return, it is a free gift given with grace.

Covenants are made either verbally ("*I Give, I Grant*") or through inference, which can include the presence or absence of gestures and actions and even silence. As the state of nature is a state of war, it is not reasonable to expect a covenant to be honored in nature. There must be some common power over those who enter into a contract to compel them not to void the contract, as there is in civil society. To enter into a contract with savages is not possible, as there is no foundational understanding of speech and language. Nor is it possible to enter into a contract with God, as it is impossible to know if the terms are accepted.

A person is released from a covenant in one of two ways: either they perform the terms of the contract to its end, or they are forgiven the obligation by the one who transferred the right. A contract that is entered into in a state of fear is still valid, but a contract that begins under a state of torture is not, as one will do or say anything to preserve their life.

Words alone are too weak to bind people in a covenant, but this weakness is strengthened by fear of the consequences of breaking a contract. Fear of consequences comes in the form of fear of "The Power of Spirits Invisible" and of the power of those who will be offended if the contract is broken. In the absence of a common power and civil society, the only way a contract can be ensured is to swear an oath to God, but who or what one considers a god varies. An oath sworn where there is no belief in a god is not an oath. In general, the swearing of an oath does nothing to strengthen a contract, as a covenant is bound before God regardless of an oath.

The right to harm or kill someone can never be transferred to another power because it goes against the Laws of Nature, which obligate everyone to defend their life with violence if necessary. If one is obligated to protect their life, they cannot possibly give another the power to end it. In this way, imprisonment, too, violates the Laws of Nature. Imprisonment is not entered through a voluntary covenant, and it hinders one's ability to protect their life.



Hobbes argues later that only the people of Israel entered into a covenant with God, and they did it through Moses, God's first Lieutenant. Hobbes maintains that God's power, including his voice, is infinite and cannot be understood by earthly ears, even if God's voice could somehow be heard on Earth. God and his power are incomprehensible to earthly humans; thus, they cannot possibly enter into a contract with him.



According to Hobbes, people are always in some state of fear—fear of violence and death, fear of God, or fear of one's government or sovereign power—thus, fear does not void a contract. If fear did void a contract, no contract would ever be valid.



This too speaks to Hobbes's own belief in God, as he argues that all contracts and covenants are sealed before the eyes of God. The fear of God (the fear of "The Power of Spirits Invisible") can be enough to make some people honor a contract, while others require the fear of a centralized power to keep them honest. Either way, Hobbes contends that it is largely fear that keeps contracts valid—one of the few passions he considers common to all people.



CHAPTER 15: OF OTHER LAWEES OF NATURE

The third Law of Nature is that everyone must perform whatever covenants they enter into. Where there is no covenant and no one has transferred any rights, everyone has the same rights; thus, no action can ever be considered unjust. An injustice can only result when a covenant is made and broken. For a covenant to be honored, there must be some central power that compels people to perform said covenant, and the fear of punishment must be greater than the perceived reward for breaking the covenant. Therefore, if there is no common-wealth and no sovereign power, nothing is unjust.

It is impossible to deny that covenants are made and broken all the time, and such violations are an injustice; however, “Succesfull wickednesse hath obtained the name of Vertue,” Hobbes says, especially when it is in favor of a kingdom. Obtaining a kingdom by rebellion is a violation of reason, as it is a Law of Nature never to do anything that is destructive to one’s life.

The fourth Law of Nature states that one must have gratitude when receiving benefit from another, and the fifth law states one must endeavor to accommodate all of humankind. Those who accommodate others are said to be “sociable,” and those who refuse are “Stubborn” or “Intractable.” The sixth Law of Nature is that one must pardon those who repent after an offense, and the seventh law is that revenge should be about the greater good and not the evil of the deed to be punished. Revenge should never be cruel, which violates the Law of Nature.

The eighth Law of Nature is that one should never declare contempt for another by deed or word, and the ninth law emphasizes the equality of all people. In *Politiques*, Aristotle argues that some people are more worthy than others. For example, wise people, like philosophers, are more worthy than servants who do not make a living from their wit. Hobbes argues that such a belief violates reason, and he further argues that to profess such inequality is evidence of egotism and superiority.

Hobbes does not mean to imply that people in nature do not mingle or enter into covenants and agreements. On the contrary, he suggests that they do, but they simply don’t honor their contracts without a central power to keep them honest. As definitions of good or bad can’t exist without a central power to deem them so through laws, the violence that occurs in nature cannot be considered unjust.



Hobbes also does not mean to imply that covenants are always honored in common-wealths. Hobbes’s comment about “successful wickedness” being considered a virtue harkens to England’s political unrest in his day. The parliamentarians were winning the English Civil War by rebelling against Charles I and the royalists. Hobbes considers rebellion a violation of the Laws of Nature because a rebellion is an attack on a sovereign power—the same power in which the people of a common-wealth endowed their own rights to self-preservation. Thus, rebelling against one’s sovereign power with the intention of killing that sovereign is in effect killing one’s self.



Revenge that is cruel is against the Laws of Nature because the very same laws maintain that people must always be working toward peace and the greater good. Cruel revenge is neither peaceful nor in the collective interest, which is why cruelty is a violation of the Laws of Nature. Hobbes’s use of the word “sociable” reinforces his opinion that people in nature are not naturally social and agreeable, but instead are “stubborn” and “intractable.” The Laws of Nature maintain that people must be agreeable, but since there is no central power in nature, these laws cannot be enforced.



Aristotle’s Politics is an early work of political theory (around 330 BCE), which outlines the politics of ancient Greek society. Hobbes, as usual, does not agree with Aristotle’s breakdown of the social hierarchy. To Hobbes, there is no difference between a servant and a philosopher since, under the very same conditions, passions, and experience, a servant can reach the same conclusions as a philosopher.



The tenth Law of Nature states that no one person can reserve a right that is not reserved for the rest. Those who observe this law are called “Modest,” and those who do not are called “Arrogant.” The eleventh law states that any judge must acknowledge the equality of people, and the twelfth law ensures that all things that can be divided are so divided and equally distributed. The thirteenth law addresses those things that cannot be reasonably divided, in which case ownership is either granted to whoever is in first possession of the thing, or it is determined “by lot.” The fourteenth law defines “lot” as something arbitrary that is also agreed upon or as something natural, like the natural order of birth.

The fifteenth Law of Nature ensures that all who facilitate peace are allowed to do so safely, and the sixteenth law is that everyone must submit to the judgement of an arbitrator. The seventeenth law states that no one can sit in judgement over their own cause, the eighteenth ensures that all judges are impartial, and the nineteenth law deals with witnesses. It is the Law of Nature that *all* witnesses to an offense are heard and considered by the arbitrator.

There are several Laws of Nature, Hobbes says, but they can be reduced to one simple rule: “Do not that to another, which thou wouldest not have done thy selfe.” These laws are absolute and interminable. Injustice in its many forms can never be lawful, and “it can never be that Warre (war) shall preserve life, and peace destroy it.” The science of these laws and the study of what is good and evil in civil society is the only true “Moral Philosophy.”

In Hobbes’s understanding, the possession of a royal crown is decided by “lot,” which is the line of royal succession that is usually followed beginning with the first born child of a sovereign power. Of course, succession also considers whether a child is illegitimate or legitimate, which Hobbes returns to later in the book.



Hobbes returns to the nineteenth Law of Nature later in the book when he argues that the hearing of witnesses ensures innocent people are not punished, since in biblical times it was the witnesses who casted the first stone of punishment.



Hobbes implies here that his own philosophy, which studies the good and evil in civil society, is the only true “Moral Philosophy.” In this vein, all other philosophies, except those Hobbes specifically mentions (like mathematics and geometry), are actually dangerous to a common-wealth and threaten the balance of power and peace. Hobbes’s quote here again points to the English Civil War, which many felt was necessary for peace. Hobbes disagrees and claims war can never be consistent with peace.



CHAPTER 16: OF PERSONS, AUTHORS, AND THINGS PERSONATED

A person is someone, either real or imagined, who has words and actions that are either of their own will or through some contracted representative. In Greek, the word for “person” is the same for “actor,” and it is the job of a person to “personate,” both on stage and in real life. Whoever owns the actions of a person or actor is the author, but inanimate things cannot be authors, as they cannot assume any authority over actors. Nor can “Children, Fooles, or Mad-men” be authors, since they lack reason.

The word “author” is derived from the word “authority,” which implies power. Hobbes frequently discusses authors, especially those who author commands from a position of power that must be followed. Minors and those considered insane cannot be the authors of commands, nor can they be expected to always follow commands due to their inability to exercise sound reason.



Many people can become one when they are represented by a single author, but that unity is found in the author, not those who are represented. If there are multiple authors, the representative of the greatest number must be considered the only voice. There are two kinds of authors—those who own the action or actions of another and those who own the action or actions of another provisionally and vow to complete a certain action for another at a certain time or under certain circumstances. These authors are known as “sponsors,” and they are particularly useful when one must go before a judge.

An author that owns one’s actions provisionally is someone who works on behalf of another. A modern day example would be a lawyer or some authorized person who holds another’s power of attorney and makes said person’s decisions in the event they are unable to make them independently. A sovereign power, however, simply owns the actions of its subjects and is their subjects’ author at all times.



CHAPTER 17: OF THE CAUSES, GENERATION, AND DEFINITION OF A COMMON-WEALTH

As people “naturally love Liberty, and Dominion over others,” it is natural for people to restrain this love to preserve life and escape the state of war in nature. Since the Laws of Nature cannot be followed without the creation of some central power to compel people to honor covenants, people have joined together to live in common-wealths.

Again, this is the essence of Hobbes’s argument concerning people’s movement from nature to civil society. People created common-wealths to establish a central power and halt the state of war that is nature. However, the natural love humans have for freedom and power means that even in a common-wealth, covenants are not always honored.



A common-wealth is the joining of a large number of people, as only the joining of a multitude can bring security. The people of a joined multitude must be of similar appetites and similar needs to defend against a common enemy. If appetites and enemies are different, competing ideals will hinder security rather than ensure it. The security obtained from a common-wealth must be unlimited and not be restricted to any one battle or war.

In short, the power of a common-wealth cannot be provisional or good only in certain circumstances. The sovereign power of a common-wealth must have absolute power over the people at all times, otherwise that power is weakened and not fit to secure and protect the multitude.



Hobbes admits that there are creatures, like bees and ants, who live sociably with each other, and Aristotle considered such creatures political creatures. As such creatures live sociably with each other, Aristotle assumed that humans can do the same; however, Hobbes disagrees. People are in constant competition with each other for either honor or dignity, and envy and hatred are natural components of such competition. Furthermore, the agreement between bees and ants is natural, but a covenant entered into by humans is artificial, and to make that contract last, a central power is needed to compel adherence.

Again, Hobbes outright disagrees with Aristotle’s political philosophy, which assumes people are naturally social and tolerant of each other like bees. Hobbes argues that people are not naturally social, which is exactly why they need a central power to keep them in check.



A common-wealth is created to defend people from foreign invaders and ensure safety from injury and death. In other words, a multitude of people give their power to defend their lives to a single person or group of people, which in turn reduces the multitude to a voice of one and elects a single author to act in the collective best interest of the multitude. “This is the Generation of that great **LEVIATHAN**,” Hobbes says, under which everyone owes their peace and defense to the “*Immortall God*.”

The author within a common-wealth is the sovereign, and those whom the sovereign has power over are called subjects. Sovereign power is obtained either by natural force (common-wealth by institution), such as one who is born under a certain government by order of their parents or guardian and is obligated to submit, or through voluntary force (common-wealth by acquisition), as is done when a group of people voluntarily place power in a specific person or group of people. Hobbes will first discuss common-wealth by institution.

Hobbes calls the ideal common-wealth the Leviathan, which is symbolic of the power of the people united under one sovereign power. In a common-wealth, the elected sovereign power is the author of all its subjects’ actions, as every action is either allowed or disallowed through the establishment of laws. Everyone owes their peace and defense in a common-wealth to God because a common-wealth operates according to the God-given Laws of Nature.



In Hobbes’s view, a common-wealth by acquisition is a common-wealth that people voluntarily institute via a covenant. Thus, when a common-wealth is conquered by another more powerful common-wealth, it is not a common-wealth by acquisition—unless, of course, one willingly submits to the invading power and consents to hand over their power and become a subject.



CHAPTER 18: OF THE RIGHTS OF SOVERAIGNES BY INSTITUTION

A common-wealth is created when an assembly of people agree to a covenant in which a person (or persons) is to be their representative, and that representative, or sovereign power, is given all the rights and faculties of the assembly. First, since this power is contrived from a covenant, the people are not obliged to any former contracts, nor can they enter into a new contract that gives sovereign power to another person or persons. For subjects of a monarchy, a monarch cannot be dethroned or power transferred to another person or assembly. To dispose of a monarch is an injustice, and to kill a monarch is to assume a right no one person can ever have.

The power of a sovereign cannot be forfeited, either by the sovereign power itself or by the people, and anyone who disagrees with the sovereign’s right to power must agree to that right once it is decided by the majority. A sovereign can do no injury onto subjects, and subjects are not permitted to accuse a sovereign of injustice or attempt to kill or punish the sovereign in any way for any perceived offense. The sovereign alone is judge of what is necessary for the peace and defense of a common-wealth, and the sovereign also has the power to decide which doctrines are appropriate to be taught to subjects to avoid dissention and civil war.

Here, Hobbes implicitly calls out the English Civil War as an injustice. During the war, King Charles I, the rightful sovereign of England, was overthrown and executed by the parliamentarians for tyranny. In Hobbes’s view, the parliamentarians did not have the right to usurp the King’s power, nor did they have the right to execute him for tyranny. Only the sovereign power can declare what is justice and what is tyranny, and since the parliamentarians were not the sovereign power, they did not have the authority to make that call.



In a common-wealth, the sovereign is supreme power and can never break the law, which means that nothing a sovereign ever does can be considered illegal or unjust. This, of course, gives a sovereign free reign to do whatever they want to subjects. According to Hobbes, the sovereign is bound by the Laws of Nature to do what is in their subjects’ best interest; however, since there is no power above the sovereign, there is no power to enforce this law.



The sovereign power has the right to make the rules of a common-wealth, whereby every subject and their property is protected from injustice, and the sovereign power also has the right to sit in judgement over controversies. A sovereign power is responsible for doing what they see best in times of peace and war, and they are also responsible for selecting any needed counselors or ministers. The sovereign power is responsible for rewarding and punishing subjects and for keeping honor and order in the common-wealth. Lastly, the rights of a sovereign power cannot be taken away, and the power and honor of individual subjects does not exist in the presence of the sovereign power.

Once a covenant is entered, one is released from responsibility under two conditions: the terms of the covenant are fulfilled, or the one who entered into the covenant releases the other from obligation. The terms of a common-wealth are never considered fulfilled, as the purpose of the common-wealth is to offer continuous protection. If the assembly wished to release the sovereign from its obligation, the entire assembly would have to be in agreement to void the contract.



CHAPTER 19: OF THE SEVERALL KINDS OF COMMON-WEALTH BY INSTITUTION, AND OF SUCCESSION TO THE SOVERAIGNE POWER

There are three different forms of common-wealths. When a multitude of people are represented by one person, the common-wealth is a monarchy; a multitude of people represented by an assembly of people is known as a democracy; and when only part of a multitude is represented by any one power, this is called an aristocracy. There are no other common-wealths apart from these, as a sovereign power can be only one person, a group of people, or all the people of a common-wealth.

Government is often broken down into other forms as well, such as an oligarchy or sovereigns thought to practice tyranny. Hobbes argues, however, that these other forms of government fall into these three basic categories, too, since an oligarchy is technically an aristocracy and any form of government can practice tyranny.



In common-wealths where a sovereign power has already been determined, the subjects can elect no other power, as that power would be contrary to the first power and reduce the people to a state of war, which is counterproductive to the common-wealth. Such an absurdity has recently been seen in England, were a monarch succeeding from 600 years of sovereign power was dethroned.

Hobbes more directly calls out the English Civil War here. The parliamentarians claimed they dethroned King Charles I to save the common-wealth of England, but Hobbes argues they only succeeded in destroying it.



It is difficult to compare the different sovereign powers, as they differ not in power but in how they wield that power. A monarch's private interests are largely those of the public; however, this is not always the case in a democracy or an aristocracy. Also, a monarch receives counsel from many different people, but the only people permitted to join a sovereign assembly are heard in an aristocracy or a democracy. Furthermore, a monarch's actions and decisions are subject only to the fickleness of the monarch's own human nature, whereas a democracy or aristocracy must endure fickleness from any number of people.

While Hobbes does not say it explicitly, the implication here is that a monarchy is the superior form of government compared to an aristocracy or a democracy. Hobbes suggests that individual subjects have a better chance of being heard when their sovereign is one person compared to common-wealths that are ruled collectively by a group of people. Hobbes doesn't deny that any one government can be terrible at any given time; his argument is that a monarchy is less likely to act against its subjects' best interests.



It is also impossible for a monarch to disagree with themselves out of jealousy or self-interest, but the same cannot be said of a democracy or an aristocracy, in which disagreements can reach the height of civil war. Of course, a monarch does have the power to deprive any one subject of all their possessions, which Hobbes admits is problematic; however, the same authority resides in any sovereign power, not just with the monarchy. Hobbes also admits it is troublesome that an infant may come into sovereign power within a monarchy, and in such cases that power must reside with another until the monarch reaches the age of reason.

If a monarch does not have the right to pick a successor, or if the monarch dies before that successor is selected, the common-wealth dissolves and reverts back to a state of war. Therefore, the power of a monarch must exist in a line of “Artificiall Eternity” known as succession, which, in Hobbes’s opinion, is the greatest difficulty monarchies face. If a monarch dies without a successor, the people, who are now in a state of war, are incapable of electing a new monarch.

Succession is passed in a monarchy through words, and in the absence of words, succession is controlled by custom. For many monarchies, it is customary for succession to fall to the next of kin, preferably a child, followed by a sibling. It is lawful for a monarch to transfer their power to someone else, Hobbes says, as was the case with King James, the “most wise King” who tried to unite England and Scotland. Many objected to King James’s endeavor, although it likely would have prevented the civil war that is presently making both countries miserable. A foreigner can also become a sovereign power if a monarch marries a foreigner and allows the line of succession to naturally unfold, but no one argues this attempt as unlawful.

CHAPTER 20: OF DOMINION PATERNALL, AND DESPOTICALL

In a common-wealth of acquisition, a sovereign power is instituted by the multitudes, who fear death or injury without the establishment of a central power. This power is established because the multitudes fear each other, not the person or persons whom they elect to power. Dominion, or territories and people, can be acquired in one of two ways: either by generation or by conquest.

Hobbes does not pretend that a monarchy is perfect, and he contends that many things can go wrong in a monarchy, like a boy king who hasn’t yet reached the age of reason; however, he ultimately maintains a monarchy is the best option. Any terrible act that a monarch is capable of can be committed in a democracy and an aristocracy as well. Since all forms of government have the exact same power, a monarch does not represent a unique danger to a common-wealth.



Hobbes is careful to call the line of royal succession “Artificiall Eternity,” as he argues earlier that people are not able to comprehend that which does not have a definite beginning and end. In order to elect a new monarch after the death of an old one (in the event a successor has not been selected), the people would have to enter into a whole new covenant and begin an entirely new common-wealth, which would void the previous covenant.



While it is not possible for a sovereign to simply give power away, that power can be transferred to another sovereign power in the form of a new covenant or through the line of succession. Hobbes suggests here that the combining of England and Scotland is in the best interest of both common-wealths. In 1603, King James of Scotland inherited the crown of England and ruled both Scotland and England (along with both nations’ parliaments) until his death in 1625. After King James’s death, power went to Charles I, also of Scotland, who was ultimately overthrown during the English Civil War.



According to Hobbes, fear drives people to make covenants and common-wealths—fear of each other and fear of the violence of nature. A subject’s fear of the sovereign power comes after the covenant is made, not before. Thus, a subject fears a sovereign’s power, which is the collective power of the people.



Dominion by generation is also known as paternal dominion, and it is passed down from parents to their children. If one's parents are part of a common-wealth, so is their child, and that child's children, and so on. If there is no covenant, the power of dominion is with the mother, as the father of a child can only be known by a mother's word. If the mother is herself the subject of a man who also fathers her children, the power of dominion is with the father, as he has power over the mother.

Dominion by conquest, which is through victory in a war, is known as "despotically," and it signifies a master with dominion over subjects. Dominion of the victor over the vanquished is obtained when the vanquished enter into a covenant, either through words or actions, and submit to the sovereign power of the victor. This is not to say that the vanquished are held captive as prisoners. On the contrary, the vanquished are allowed the same rights and liberties afforded to all subjects.

Thus, Hobbes argues, it is not victory in war that gives the victor power over the vanquished—it is the covenant that transfers this power. Therefore, dominion, whether it be "Paternal" or "Despotically," is precisely the same. A family that is not part of a common-wealth is not unlike "a little Monarchy"; however, a family is not a proper common-wealth unless that family is of significant size. When any number of people are too weak together to defend themselves as a group, they have the right to defend themselves on their own, or flee if that is the better option.

Now, Hobbes considers what Holy Scripture says concerning the rights of a monarch and sovereign power. The children of Israel said to Moses: "Speak thou to us, and we will hear thee; but let not God speak to us, lest we die." The children of Israel were completely obedient to Moses, not God. According to Samuel, God said: "This shall be the Right of the King you will have reign over you. He shall take your sons, and set them to drive his Chariots, [...] and shall take your daughters to make perfumes, to be his Cookes, and Bakers. [...] He shall take your fields, [...] and you shall be his servants." This passage, too, reflects the absolute power of the sovereign.

It is Hobbes's understanding from reason and scripture that the sovereign power—whether that power is placed in a monarch, a democratic body, or an aristocratic body—is as great as can be conceived by any one person. Life will never be without inconveniences, Hobbes admits, and a common-wealth is no different. The making and keeping of a common-wealth involves "certain Rules," just as in arithmetic and geometry.

Hobbes's understanding of paternal power places power with the mother, which dismisses traditional opinions of familial power that are often patriarchal. Hobbes is not the only philosopher to see women as the supreme paternal power, as the same view is expressed in John Locke's Second Treatise of Government (1689).



Hobbes argues that any subject of one common-wealth held prisoner by another common-wealth is not a subject of their captor until the subject willingly agrees to submit to that power. Thus, one who is captured is not necessarily conquered, as it is expected they would escape to save their life if given the chance.



According to Hobbes, it is not the type of power that differentiates paternal power from despotic power; it is the size of the assembly that contributes to the power of the sovereign. In a common-wealth, a minor child is subject to the sovereign power by way of their parents, mainly their mother. As the sovereign power of a minor child is their mother, they are held by proxy by the same sovereign power that has power over their mother.



Hobbes frequently cites the Bible to prove his points and support his arguments, as he does here through Exodus 20:19 and 1 Samuel 8:11 and 12, both of the Old Testament. As Hobbes's audience was overwhelmingly Christian, he appeals to what they know: the Bible. Through the Bible, Hobbes makes it known that the people of Israel were completely obedient to Moses as God's representation on Earth, thus lending authority to his argument that the sovereign must have complete power over subjects.



Again, Hobbes is attempting to elevate his political philosophy to that of mathematics and geometry—meaning Hobbes believes his philosophy to be infallible. If Hobbes's theory is followed, he implies a successful common-wealth will be the product every time. Of course, this success includes certain inconveniences and can never be perfect.



CHAPTER 21: OF THE LIBERTY OF SUBJECTS

Liberty, or freedom, signifies “the absence of Opposition.” Therefore, one who is free is able to do what is in their own strength and ability to do without interference. Hobbes explains that Fear and Liberty can exist together, giving the example of someone who throws their possessions overboard when they fear the ship is sinking. In this scenario, there is a willingness to throw one’s possessions overboard; thus, the action is not hindered or interfered with in some way and is therefore free. The same can be said for someone who pays a debt for fear of imprisonment. It is fear that compels one to willingly do something, and this is generally the case within a common-wealth. Subjects fear the established laws, even though they are technically at liberty to break them.

Liberty and necessity are also consistent, much like the water of a river that has both the ability (liberty) and the need (necessity) to flow in a certain direction. The same is seen in people’s voluntary actions, which arise from one’s own liberty and will; however, since every action is connected to every other action in a “continuall chaine,” voluntary actions also come from necessity.

The sovereign power can never be abolished or limited, as nothing the sovereign does to a subject can ever be considered an injury or injustice. This is because the subject is author of everything the sovereign does. In this vein, a sovereign can even put a subject to death, and such an action is not considered wrong or immoral.

The liberty that writers praise in past common-wealths is praise for the liberty of the sovereign power, not the liberty of individual people. The people of Athens and Rome were free, Hobbes explains. Still, no one had the liberty to resist the sovereign power, and this holds true in all common-wealths, be it a monarchy, a democracy, or an aristocracy. In each type of common-wealth, the freedom is the same.

In Hobbes’s theory, just because one is compelled to do something out of fear does not mean they are not free. There is nothing that hinders a free individual from breaking the law; it is usually the fear of punishment by the sovereign power that deters such actions. Therefore, a person is at perfect liberty to break the law in a common-wealth—meaning no one is holding them down—but they will be subjected to the sovereign’s power if caught.



Again, Hobbes argues that all of life is motion, and that each motion is connected to the next in a “continuall chaine” of motion that never stops, unless something hinders it. In a common-wealth, it is fear of the sovereign power that hinders this constant chain of motion.



Subjects are the author of everything a sovereign does because a sovereign gathers its power from the people. If a sovereign uses its power against its subjects, it is tantamount to the subjects using power unto themselves, so such treatment cannot be considered unjust. Hobbes says earlier that the sovereign is the author of the people, but that power comes from the people and is therefore theirs as well. In this way, power between a sovereign and its subjects is a symbiotic relationship.



This passage harkens back to Hobbes’s argument that a monarchy is the best form of government. Hobbes demonstrates here that one’s liberty is exactly the same in all forms of government (meaning freedom is always dependent on the sovereign power), so no one form of government offers any more freedom than the next. People often assume subjects have more liberty in a democracy because they are ruled by the people, but Hobbes argues this isn’t actually the case.



It is easy for people to be confused by the word “liberty” and to conflate their private liberties with those of the public. In the Western world, opinions of common-wealths come from Aristotle and Cicero, and such men assumed that subjects of a sovereign assembly are free and that subjects of a monarchy are slaves. In Aristotle’s *Politiques*, he says: “*In democracy, Liberty is to be supposed; for ‘tis commonly held, that no man is Free in any other Government.*” Thus, the West has been taught to hate monarchies from such writers.

True liberty means that a subject can refuse to do certain things, even if those things are commanded by the sovereign power; however, one’s submission to a common-wealth includes both obligation *and* liberty. In other words, while one may be obligated to perform a certain action, they still have the liberty not to do it. Subjects of a common-wealth have freedom to defend their own bodies, even if the act against them is lawful, and subjects can never be obliged to hurt or kill themselves. Furthermore, when subjects are questioned by the sovereign power regarding a crime they may have committed, said subjects cannot be obliged to accuse and incriminate themselves.

A subject has a right to refuse the sovereign power’s commands if the refusal does not affect the reasons why the common-wealth was created in the first place. If a certain refusal affects the purpose of the common-wealth, a subject is not free to refuse. For instance, a subject may refuse to fight in a war, even if the sovereign has the power to punish said refusal with death. However, no one is at liberty to refuse to fight for the common-wealth in defense of another power. To refuse the common-wealth in the service of another diminishes the power of the common-wealth and destroys the very reason for government.

In instances where there are no established laws, a subject is at liberty to behave as he or she pleases. If there is controversy between a subject and the sovereign power, the subject has a right to sue the sovereign, just as if the sovereign is any other subject. However, if the sovereign demands anything by way of their power, there can be no action of law, as everything the sovereign does is derived of the power and authority of subjects. In short, if an action is brought against the sovereign, it is brought against the subject, too.

This passage is an example of Hobbes’s agreement that philosophy is based on opinion, not fact, and that such opinions can be biased and damaging to common-wealths. Because of the opinions of Aristotle and Cicero, who believed only in democracies, Hobbes claims monarchies have been given a bad reputation so to speak. Just because Aristotle and Cicero believed democracies are best, Hobbes implies, doesn’t mean they actually are.



The subject of a common-wealth has the freedom to defend their body and the right not to self-incriminate during questioning of a crime because these things go against the Laws of Nature. The Laws of Nature guarantee one’s right to preserve their life under any circumstances, and, depending on the crime, self-incrimination could put one’s life in jeopardy if it is a capital offense.



If one’s sovereign power invades another common-wealth with the intention of waging war and conquering it, a subject may refuse to fight, even if it is against the law; however, if one’s common-wealth is invaded by another sovereign power, a subject is not at liberty to refuse to fight, as the common-wealth and the covenant is in danger. Since the covenant of a common-wealth is entered into willingly, it can be reasonably assumed that a subject does not want that power destroyed.



Again, since the sovereign draws its power from its subjects, sovereign and subject are considered one and the same, and the sovereign cannot act against the subject. However, Hobbes implies the sovereign power can act either as an individual or as the sovereign power. For example, if a monarch is acting as an individual without claiming the power of the people, there is recourse for misdeeds; however, anything done under the sovereign power of the people is always just.



A subject's obligation to the sovereign power lasts as long as the common-wealth, and the right to protect one's self in nature is a right that can never be taken away. Thus, the end of protection of a sovereign power signals the end of obedience. If a subject is taken prisoner by another power during war, they are at liberty to become a subject of the power who takes them; however, if one is imprisoned and not given the choice, they are not bound by any covenant and can escape by any means necessary.

If a sovereign power is captured in war and gives up power for themselves and their heirs, their subjects are released from obligation to the former sovereign power and are obligated to the new, invading power. However, if a sovereign power is held prisoner and does *not* give up power freely, a subject is likewise not obligated to obey the invading power.

The key to Hobbes's understanding of covenants and common-wealths is consent. No one can become a subject of a common-wealth without submitting freely and willingly handing their innate rights over to the sovereign power.



A common-wealth is only considered conquered at the point the sovereign power transfers power willingly to the invading common-wealth. As the sovereign willingly passes power over in such an instance, the transfer is lawful and subjects are held in the power of the invading sovereign.



CHAPTER 22: OF SYSTEMES SUBJECT, POLITICALL, AND PRIVATE

Systems within a common-wealth are either political or private. Political systems are made by authority of the common-wealth's sovereign power. Private systems, on the other hand, are those made by subjects themselves. Private systems that are allowed by the sovereign power are lawful, but all other private systems are unlawful. In lawful political systems, the power of the representative of a system is limited and only exists under the power of the sovereign. The limits of the power given to the representative are noted by the sovereign and in common laws.

If the representative of a political body is one person, whatever that person does to violate the laws of a sovereign power is *not* the act of all subjects in the body politic. If the representative of a political body is an assembly, whatever that assembly does to violate the laws or letters of the sovereign is the act of the body politic—but only those subjects who voted on said violation. If the representative of a political body is a single person and borrows money through a covenant, that person alone is responsible for repayment. Conversely, when the representative is an assembly, and the assembly owes a debt, the debt is only owed by those who voted in favor of it. If a debt is owed by the entire assembly, the assembly must pay from its available common funds.

A sovereign can appoint a representative to a specific group of people—such as a state, city, or province within a larger common-wealth—but that representative's power is limited to that group within the greater common-wealth. Such a system is considered lawful and political. A private system that is not sanctioned by the common-wealth is not political, but this does not mean said system is illegal. An organized sports team, for instance, is a system. A sports team is usually not illegal, but it does not wield any political power over subjects.



The acts of a representative are not the acts of the entire body politic because a representative only represents a certain number of the body politic and therefore cannot be representative of the common-wealth as a whole. Only the sovereign power can represent the common-wealth as a whole and act on behalf of the entire common-wealth because the sovereign is imbued with the power and individual rights of every subject in the common-wealth.



In certain circumstances, protesting against the body politic is lawful, but it is never lawful to protest against the sovereign power. There are many kinds of political bodies, and they differ by their stated business and their limitations. In a province, colony, or town, the body politic is an assembly of people and all resolutions come from a majority vote; however, that power is still limited by the sovereign power. If a member of a body politic feels they have been injured by the body politic itself, decision in such a case belongs to the sovereign and any judge they ordain.

Political bodies made to govern people and trade goods can be made indefinite or for a short time, but they are still limited by the sovereign power. If any political body is given absolute power over the people, there are two sovereign powers, which cannot happen within a common-wealth. An example of a private body that is both regular and lawful is a family, in which the father or mother is the master of the family. Still, a father or mother only rules their family within the confines of the sovereign power. A private body that is regular but unlawful is one in which people unite themselves into one body without the authority to so, such as a group of thieves or beggars who unite to ease their stealing and begging.

If the sovereign power is part of an assembly, and any number of that assembly attempts to persuade the rest without authority of the sovereign, it is an unlawful conspiracy because the assembly is being manipulated for the private interests of a select few. If the private interests of one member of the assembly are debated by the assembly as a whole, this is not unlawful, as it involves the entire assembly.

If a private member of a common-wealth has more servants than the common-wealth has subjects, this is considered an unlawful faction. Since the common-wealth is responsible for protecting all members, a single member does not require a force of their own. This also applies to factions within religion, be they Catholic or Protestant, as it is contrary to the establishment of the common-wealth to take power away from the sovereign.

It is lawful to protest against the body politic if that body politic only represents part of the common-wealth. For instance, it is lawful to protest against the representative of a city or province of common-wealth, because that representative stands for only part of the common-wealth. The sovereign power, on the other hand, represents that entire common-wealth. As one cannot protest against their self, they cannot protest the sovereign.



Power given to the representatives of common-wealths must be subordinate to the sovereign power so the sovereign power always has supreme power at any given time. If a representative is given more power than a sovereign, it would make subjects of the common-wealth loyal to the representative, not the sovereign, and the common-wealth would automatically dissolve and revert to a state of nature and subsequently war.



In England, the sovereign power (the monarch) is part of an assembly (Parliament). In the case of the English Civil War, in which parliamentarians overthrew King Charles I, Hobbes implies such an action was not lawful. Thus, Hobbes considers the government instituted by parliamentarians in England after the war illegitimate.



Here, Hobbes compares religion, especially Catholicism, to an unlawful faction and implies that it is unlawful for the Catholic Pope to claim authority over other Christian sovereigns in the name of religion.



CHAPTER 23: OF THE PUBLIQUE MINISTERS OF SOVERAIGN POWER

In the previous chapters, Hobbes discussed the similarities of Common-wealths, and he will now discuss the “parts Organicall, which are Publique Ministers.” A public minister is a person who is employed by the sovereign power to conduct some business on behalf of the common-wealth. A public minister may be given administration of the entire common-wealth or of part of it. A public minister that is given administration of an entire common-wealth is known as Regent or Protector, and such a minister may be employed by an “Infant King, during his minority.” In such cases, a Regent or Protector rules on behalf of the sovereign power.

When a public minister is given administration of a part or province of a common-wealth, that minister is known as a governor or viceroy, and the power they have is dependent upon the will of the sovereign. Other public ministers are given administration of specific business at home or abroad, such as administration of a common-wealth’s “Oeconomy” (their rents, fines, and revenues) or militia (the soldiers, forts, armies, arms, and all things related). Other public ministers are given administration of the education and instruction of the common-wealth, and others are employed to serve as judges and represent the sovereign power.

In cases in which a member of a common-wealth is tried by a judge and a controversy arises, their disagreement may be heard by another judge, as both the judge and judged are members of the common-wealth and subjects of the sovereign power. In such instances, the sovereign power may hear the case or appoint a second judge. If the sovereign power hears the case, their decision is final.

Public ministers employed by the sovereign power have authority to apprehend, judge, punish, and imprison subjects of a common-wealth. Public ministers who work abroad on behalf of the common-wealth are known as ambassadors. Anyone sent abroad by the authority of a private political body belonging to a troubled common-wealth is not a public or private minister of the common-wealth, as the author of their actions is not the common-wealth as a whole. Similarly, if an ambassador is sent aboard by a monarch for reasons personal to that monarch, the common-wealth is not the author of that action either.

After the English Civil War and the execution of King Charles I, Parliament elected Oliver Cromwell, a parliamentarian soldier and member of Parliament, to Lord Protector, England’s Regent, in 1653. Cromwell served as Regent until his death in 1658, at which time his son was appointed the next Lord Protector of England. Under the reign of Cromwell’s son, Charles II (the son of Charles I) was brought out of exile and restored to the throne as England’s sovereign power.



The power given to any public minister is always at the discretion of the sovereign and cannot exceed or match the power of the sovereign. This way, all public ministers are held to the power of the sovereign and cannot act independent of the sovereign. For instance, if a minister is given charge of the “Oeconomy” (the economy) their power is limited to economics and does not extend to other areas, like education or foreign policy.



The sovereign power’s decisions are final because there is not a higher power to appeal to. If a subject disagrees with a judge’s decision, they can appeal to the power above the judge—the sovereign. As there is no power above a sovereign, there is no appeal to be made.



The actions of a public minister are only considered the actions of a common-wealth if said minister represents the whole common-wealth at the behest of a sovereign. The authority a public minister claims is endowed in them by the sovereign power. If the sovereign power rescinds that power, a public minister has no right to represent the people, either within the common-wealth or abroad.



CHAPTER 24: OF THE NUTRITION, AND PROCREATION OF A COMMON-WEALTH

The nutrition of a common-wealth consists of the distribution of materials necessary for life coming from both land and sea, and such materials must be distributed in accordance with “propriety.” The first law of distribution is the division of land, and the sovereign power is to assign each subject a portion of land that is “agreeable to Equity, and the Common Good.” A subject may exclude any other subject from the rights of their personal land, but they cannot exclude the sovereign power.

Hobbes admits that a sovereign power may distribute materials in pursuit of private passions and rather than in the best interest of the common-wealth, which is technically a breach of the Law of Nature; however, this breach does not authorize a subject to make war on the sovereign power, accuse the sovereign of injustice, or insult the sovereign in any way, as every action of the sovereign is but the action of the subjects

In the distribution of materials, the common-wealth may retain a portion of land for the public use of the common-wealth. But to do so, Hobbes says, is in “vaine,” as “the nature of men being as it is” often leads to the destruction of the common-wealth. All distribution of land inside the common-wealth belongs to the sovereign, but giving each subject a portion of land is not enough to sustain the common-wealth. Thus, subjects may redistribute whatever they can spare through exchange or mutual covenant.

Money is the blood of the common-wealth, and the public can use money in two ways. First, the common-wealth can use money by placing it into public coffers. Secondly, the common-wealth can use money by removing it from the public coffers and applying it as public payment.

The “children” or “procreation” of a common-wealth are known as colonies, in which any number of subjects are sent by the sovereign under the authority of a governor to a foreign country. Said country may be void of people, or it can be populated by inhabitants that are then subdued by war. A colony’s rights after it is established are authorized exclusively by the sovereign power.

As nature is a state of equity, the common-wealth must also be state of equity—with the exception of the sovereign power, of course. The distribution of land in accordance with “propriety” ensures that no one person is given more land than the next, as this would give the larger landowner more power than smaller landowners.



Again, since the sovereign is imbued with the power of the subjects it represents, anything the sovereign does is technically the actions of its subjects. Thus, it is against the Law of Nature for the sovereign to act in any way that is not in the best interest of the common-wealth.



Hobbes implies that it is not in a human’s nature to share or work well with others, which is why retaining land for public use can be detrimental to the common-wealth. Subjects of a common-wealth have the right to make profits from the land allotted to them by the common-wealth by selling either their land or the resources that come from that land.



As Hobbes draws a parallel between a common-wealth and an “artificiall man,” the money of a common-wealth is analogous to blood in a human body. In this way, money keeps a common-wealth viable and alive, just as blood does in a human body.



While Hobbes doesn’t explicitly state it, he is referring here to English colonization. In 1607, England sent the first settlers to America and since then has colonized over 90% of the world’s countries.



CHAPTER 25: OF COUNSELL

A command is when one says to another: “Do this,” or “Do that.” A command benefits the one who makes the command, and it is given for no other reason than the will of the commander. Counsel, on the other hand, is when one says to another: “Do this,” or “Do that,” but they say it for the benefit of the one they counsel. Another difference between commands and counsel is that one who is commanded is obligated to do something, whereas one who receives counsel is not obligated to follow said counsel.

“EXHORTATION, and DEHORTATION,” Hobbes explains, is “*Counsell vehemently pressed.*” Counsel under exhortation and dehortation is for the benefit of the counselor, not the one seeking counsel. Such behavior is a contradiction to a counselor’s duties, as, by definition, a counselor has a duty to regard the benefit of the one who seeks their counsel.

The difference between command and counsel can also be seen in Holy Scripture. “*Sell all though hast; give it to the poore; and follow me*” is an example of counsel, since the reason to give said counsel is the benefit of the people. “*Go into the Village over against you, and you shall find an Asse tyed, and her Colt; loose her, and bring her to me*” is a command, since it benefits the one who makes the command.

There is also a difference to be found between “apt, and inept Counsellours,” Hobbes says. The virtues and defects of a single counselor are the same as the virtues and defects of the intellectual that Hobbes outlines earlier in the book; however, a “good Counsellour” is one whose ends and interests are the same as those whom they counsel. A good counselor also makes their advice known in clear and understandable speech that does not rely on inference or assumption. Yet a counselor can only be deemed “good” if they give advice in business they are well-versed and studied in.

If there are fail-safe procedures in the doing of any one thing, as there are “in Engines, and Edifices, [and] the rules of Geometry,” Hobbes says, “all the experience in the world cannot equall his Counsell, that has learnt, or found out the Rule.” Additionally, If a counselor wishes to give counsel to a common-wealth, it is necessary that the counselor speak the same language as the common-wealth. And lastly, if any one person or entity such as a common-wealth has more than one counselor, it is best to hear them separately, so they do not influence or encourage each other. In short, one who does business with the help of many informed and experienced counselors does it better than those who do not seek counsel.

A command is usually given by a sovereign power (or any public minster with power over a subject) and cannot be refused. Counsel, however, is similar to the advice given by a sponsor or lawyer. In the event of counsel, a subject is not required to follow the advice given. A command given by a sovereign is never counsel and must always be followed.



Here, Hobbes implies that counsel via exhortation is not lawful, as such counsel is not in the best interest of the subject being counselled. On the other hand, a command that is given using fear or exhortation by a sovereign power is lawful and must still be followed.



Again, as Hobbes’s audience is overwhelmingly Christian, the inclusion of Holy Scripture in Leviathan puts Hobbes’s argument into terms his audience is familiar with and can easily understand. Here, Hobbes cites Matthew 19:21 and 21:2 to illustrate his argument.



As there is not one accepted definition of “good” (what is considered good in any given common-wealth is up to the sovereign power), Hobbes specifically defines what a “good” counsellor does in relation to the common-wealth. A good counselor must be well-versed in their field, meaning they must have plenty of experience and prudence with which to advise another.



Experience does not necessarily mean one has learned all the rules of any given field, which is why Hobbes argues that philosophers, or anyone else claiming to have knowledge over others, must have both practical experience and knowledge from books and study. Either books or experience alone are insufficient. A sound counselor, like a sound philosopher, must have both knowledge through education and experience.



CHAPTER 26: OF CIVILL LAWES

By civil laws, Hobbes means those laws one is obligated to follow as a subject of a common-wealth. To be clear, Hobbes does not mean the laws of a specific common-wealth, but of *any* common-wealth. He does not wish to talk about laws imposed here or there; rather, he wishes to speak of civil laws in the same way Aristotle, Cicero, and Plato did, without the professional study of law. Law in general is command, not counsel, and Hobbes defines civil law as “*those Rules, which the Common-wealth hath commanded him, by Word, Writing, or other sufficient Sign of the Will, to make use of, for the Distinction of Right, and Wrong; that is to say, of what is contrary, and what is not contrary to the Rule.*”

The legislator in a common-wealth is the sovereign power, and that power makes the laws. Furthermore, the sovereign power—be that power a single monarch or a democratic assembly—is not subject to civil law. The Laws of Nature are equally contained within civil laws. The laws of nature, which consist of “Equity, Justice, Gratitude, and other morall Vertues” are not laws but qualities that promote peace and obedience. It is only after a common-wealth is established that such qualities become civil law.

If the sovereign power of one common-wealth takes over the subjects of another common-wealth and then governs by the same laws as the defeated sovereign, the authority of law does not rest with the power of the one who first made the law, but with the authority of the sovereign who commands it now. Any law that is made by a sovereign power must also be written and made known; otherwise, it is not a law. This rule does not apply to the unwritten Laws of Nature (which can be condensed into the following: “*Do not that to another, which thou thinkest unreasonable to be done by another to thy selfe*”) that should be known and followed by all.

However, it is not enough that a law is written and known—there must also be some sign that said law comes directly from the sovereign power. A law must be “verified,” Hobbes says, not merely “authorized.” Verification is the “Testimony and Record” of the law, not the authority, because authority can be in the sovereign’s command only. Laws are verified by judges appointed by the sovereign power, and said judges tell others what is law when they hear their controversies. However, in the case of crimes against written laws, everyone must be adequately educated beforehand, since one may behave differently if a certain act or behavior is unlawful.

Hobbes does not wish to talk about the subtle nuances of law, which are convoluted and complex. Rather, Hobbes is concerned with the general laws expected of a subject by a sovereign power, which are similar to and consistent with the Laws of Nature, which endow each living person with certain rights. Hobbes is concerned with those rights and laws universal to all people and common-wealths, not the individual laws of a certain common-wealths.



The Laws of Nature outline certain rights that every person is endowed with by the power of God, which, if followed, will ensure peace, either in nature or a common-wealth. The Laws of Nature maintain that everyone is equal and no one person is held above the next, unless that person is the sovereign power of a common-wealth and imbued with the collective power of the people.



Hobbes says earlier that the Laws of Nature are discovered by reason; however, the laws enforced by a sovereign must be made publically known or said laws are not enforceable, as people cannot be expected to follow a law that they are not aware of. If a sovereign power makes every effort to make a law known and a subject still breaks the law in ignorance, that subject is guilty.



If one knows that a certain act is against the law, it is likely they will not commit said act. On the other hand, if they think something legal, they will likely go ahead and do it. Thus, if a law is not sufficiently known, it cannot be enforced. A law must also be “verified” so that a subject knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that the sovereign, and not some other entity, is the author of said law. Verification becomes a larger part of Hobbes’s argument in the section of Leviathan that deals with Holy Scripture and authority.



Subjects of a common-wealth are obligated to do their best to educate themselves of any written law that may be applicable to their behavior and actions, but the interpretation of the law depends on the sovereign power. According to Hobbes, all laws must be interpreted. Laws are vague, and even short, written laws can be misinterpreted. Thus, there can't "be any knot in the Law [...] to undo it by." The interpretation of the law is not left to writers and philosophers. Instead, the law is interpreted by judges during the sentencing of each individual case. Any given sentence does not bind that judge or any other judge to similar sentences under similar circumstances.

When one speaks of the "letter of the law," they mean the actual words that make up the written law. Words, however, are ambiguous and can be interpreted in different ways, which is where the "sentence of the law" and judges come in. A "good" judge is not merely someone who is well versed in laws; a "good" judge must also know the laws of nature and have the "right understanding" of equity. This knowledge does not come from reading books and philosophers—this knowledge comes from reason. A "good" judge must have "Contempt of unnecessary Riches," and they must be free of passions (no fear, hate, love, anger). A "good" judge has patience to listen, interest to hear, and memory to retain facts.

Laws can be divided many different ways by many different people and political bodies. For example, laws can be either natural or positive. Natural laws have been laws since the beginning of time, and they are also known as moral laws because they involve moral virtues, like justice and equity. Positive laws are those imposed by the sovereign power. Laws can also be either fundamental or not fundamental. A fundamental law is one that will destroy a common-wealth if it is taken away or not followed, whereas a law that is not a fundamental law will not destroy a common-wealth if taken away or not followed.

CHAPTER 27: OF CRIMES, EXCUSES, AND EXTENUATIONS

To sin is not merely to break a law; to break a law is also to hold a legislator (the sovereign power) in contempt. A crime is a sin that consists of breaking any law of the common-wealth. A crime is always a sin, Hobbes says, but a sin is not always a crime. Where there is no civil law forbidding a certain behavior or action, there can be no crime. Pleading ignorance of any given law is not sufficient excuse for committing a crime, unless said law has not been adequately professed and made known. Likewise, ignorance of the sovereign power is not an acceptable excuse for breaking the law, since everyone should know the power under which they live.

Hobbes returns to the idea of knots and the untying of knots at the end of Leviathan, which can be both beneficial and detrimental to a common-wealth. The untying of a knot here is a bad thing. In writing a law, a sovereign must be sure there can be no alternative interpretations of a law. If a law is interpreted other than the way in which it was intended, the knot is untied, and the sovereign loses power because of it.



Just as a "good" counselor or philosopher is rooted in both practice and study, a "good" judge must also have education and experience; however, they must have the "right understanding" of equity in accordance with the Laws of Nature and the common-wealth. A judge must adhere to the rules of equality within the Laws of Nature, but a judge must also be well-versed in what is considered "good" or "moral" in any given common-wealth as defined by the sovereign power.



Natural laws are those included in the Laws of Nature and are bestowed upon all of humankind by God. Upon the creation of a common-wealth, the Laws of Nature become civil law and those positive laws imposed by the sovereign are added to these new civil laws. Whether a law is natural or positive, if it is enforced by a sovereign power, a subject is obligated to follow it.



A crime is always a sin because the presence of a law indicates that a specific action is wrong and immoral. A sin that is not against the law—for example, neglecting to honor one's mother or father—is not illegal, but it is still a sin. Sins that are not against the law do not count against one's morality, as only the sovereign power, not God, is authorized within a common-wealth to determine what is good or bad.



Most people violate the law due to a “defect in Reason” in one of three ways: they assume “false Principles” and believe an unjust act is just, they misinterpret the law of nature because of a “false teacher,” or they make the wrong inferences from principles taught to them by true teachers. Crime is also caused by passions—lust, ambition, love, and hate—but rarely by fear.

According to Hobbes, fear keeps people in line and prevents them from breaking laws; it does not cause them to break laws. Thus, fear is rarely an acceptable reason for breaking a law. Crime is not always committed maliciously, but regardless of the reason, subjects are still responsible when they break the law, except in few circumstances.



Not all crimes are equal, and some crimes have extenuating circumstances that can be excused. However, to be wholly excused from a law, one must prove they were not obligated to follow it in the first place. For example, when one is completely impoverished and cannot sustain their life in any way other than to steal, such a crime is excused. A crime that comes from a sudden and unexpected rise in passions is not as great as a crime that is premediated, and crimes against the common-wealth are always thought greater than crimes committed against a private subject. Crimes involving bribery or the giving of false testimony are considered greater than other crimes, as are crimes that involve defrauding the common-wealth.

An impoverished person who breaks the law in order to survive is excused of their crime because of the Law of Nature, which obligates people to do whatever is necessary to sustain life. In the case of an impoverished person stealing to survive, their crime is excused because it was done in an effort to sustain life. Crimes against the common-wealth are never tolerated, as crimes against the common-wealth are akin to crimes committed against one’s self, which is technically a violation of the Laws of Nature.



CHAPTER 28: OF PUNISHMENTS, AND REWARDS

Hobbes defines punishment as “an Evil inflicted by publique Authority” on someone who has broken the law and gone before a judge. The right to punish subjects comes from the covenant of the common-wealth, which imbues the sovereign with the power to punish those who do not conform to the law and the right to appoint judges to issue that punishment. Private revenge done onto a subject by another subject is not punishment, nor is punishment inflicted by the authority that is not made public. Any pain that is inflicted by the authority in the name of punishment must be in respect to the good of the common-wealth, not the evil of the crime that was committed.

As all punishment must be issued for the good of the common-wealth, cruel and unusual punishment is not lawful because cruelty does not benefit the common-wealth in any way. Punishment afflicted in privacy (like the secret torture of a subject or an enemy of the common-wealth) is also unlawful. Punishment is meant to deter others from breaking the law through fear; if that punishment is not done publicly, it cannot be considered a deterrent



If punishment is inflicted directly on the body, as in wounds or a deprivation of some kind (like food or air), it is known as corporal punishment. Capital punishment is punishment by death, which may include torture, and pecuniary punishment deprives one of money, land, and any other valuable assets. There is also imprisonment, which deprives one of their liberty for a time, and exile, which is punishment by forced relocation. It is against the Law of Nature, Hobbes argues, to punish an innocent subject; however, it is not against the Law of Nature if innocents are harmed during a state of war, since it is within the Law of Nature to make war in the first place.

Harm and injury are expected in a state of war, and one is able to defend their life with any force necessary; thus, it is not against the Law of Nature when an innocent subject is killed or harmed during a state of war. In a state of war, the sovereign power is dissolved, and the subject automatically takes back the power they forfeited to the sovereign. Hobbes’s definition of corporal punishment includes the physical harm of another, but it also includes harm done to the body through other means, like starvation or waterboarding.



Just as there is punishment for breaking laws, there is also reward for adhering to the laws of a common-wealth. A reward can be either a gift or some additional covenant, such as salary or wages for some service performed. Any benefit that is given by the sovereign by way of fear is not a reward and should not be practiced by sovereign power. Salaries are either certain and come from the public coffers (as in a subject who is paid a certain wage for doing a certain job for the common-wealth), or salary is casual and comes from the execution of some office. Casual salaries can cause trouble for the common-wealth, especially in government, where salaries can be made to benefit a certain judge or minister.

Hobbes has thus far explained the nature of humans and the power of the common-wealth, which he has compared to **Leviathan** from the Book of Job. God, having made the “great power of *Leviathan*,” named him “King of the Proud” and said: “*There is nothing on earth, to be compared with him. He is made so as not to be afraid. Hee seeth every high thing below him; and is King of all the children of pride.*” In the following chapters, Hobbes will discuss the “diseases” and “mortality” of Leviathan, as well as the Laws of Nature that Leviathan must obey.

According to Hobbes, certain jobs and titles within a common-wealth are forms of reward, such as honoring a subject as a judge or a governor. However, if that position is accepted through fear (such as a subject who is coerced into accepting a position as a judge to benefit the sovereign or certain subjects within a common-wealth), it is not a reward and should not be practiced. Hobbes does not mean to say such practices do not occur in common-wealths; he only claims such practices are not advisable.



In the Book of Job, Leviathan is a giant sea monster that is usually depicted as a large crocodile. Leviathan is often used within Christianity as a metaphor for the shared power of people unified as one. This is exactly how Hobbes sees the ideal common-wealth, hence the name “the great Leviathan.” There are also implications of fear in Hobbes’s included Bible verse (Job 41:34). Leviathan is never afraid, which is an important distinction since fear drives people to common-wealths in the first place.



CHAPTER 29: OF THOSE THINGS THAT WEAKEN, OR TEND TO THE DISSOLUTION OF A COMMON-WEALTH

The dissolution of a common-wealth is usually due to the “Imperfect Institution” from which it comes, and these “infirmities” or “diseases” resemble those of the human body. One such infirmity is when a sovereign power is content with less power than what they actually possess to defend and protect a common-wealth. Power can be denied by ignorance, or it can be denied intentionally for some benefit to the sovereign power. Disease in the common-wealth is also caused by the belief that individual subjects can determine good actions from bad actions. As a common-wealth is not a state of nature, only the sovereign power and civil laws can determine good actions from bad. Similarly, assuming that what is against one’s conscience must be a sin is also damaging to the common-wealth. It is up to the common-wealth, not a subject’s conscience, to determine what actions are sinful.

Again, Hobbes draws a parallel between a living body and a common-wealth, which suggests that a common-wealth vulnerable to all the things a body is. A common-wealth is an “Imperfect Institution” because it is made up of people, who are imperfect by nature. According to Hobbes, humans are by nature self-centered and violent, which are two of the “diseases” that can bring down a common-wealth. For instance, if a sovereign power acts only in their own best interest (as people are wont to do) and ignores its subjects’ needs, a common-wealth cannot stand.



The belief that faith is obtained by “*supernaturall Inspiration*” and not “*Study and Reason*” is also damaging to a common-wealth, and so is holding a sovereign power subject to civil laws. A sovereign power is not a subject of the common-wealth; thus, a sovereign power cannot be held to the same laws as a subject. Furthermore, if every subject is given absolute right to their own goods and property that exclude the rights of the sovereign, it is also detrimental to a common-wealth’s health. Exclusion of the sovereign confuses the sovereign’s position of power over subjects and begins to slowly dissolve the balance of power.

The dividing of a sovereign power is also harmful to the common-wealth and is fundamentally against the purpose of the common-wealth. To divide a power is to destroy the unity of the common-wealth and the covenant that binds them together as one. The imitation of other common-wealths, such as those belonging to the Greeks and the Romans, is also harmful to the health and maintenance of a common-wealth, as such societies believed the killing of a king lawful if said king was deemed a tyrant.

Just as some doctors claim every person has three souls, some people argue that a common-wealth, too, has more than one soul. In some cases, there are two common-wealths inhabited by the same subjects. But, Hobbes says, “a Kingdome divided in it selfe” cannot stand. The distinction between a “*Temporall*” common-wealth and a “*Ghostly*” common-wealth gives every subject two masters, and one cannot follow two masters at one time without contradicting one or the other. In this “disease,” there is an “unnaturall spirit” that acts on the nerves of the soul and brain of the common-wealth that is bound to result in oppression and war.

A common-wealth that is too large can also be harmful, as large common-wealths require large armies and corporations, which are like “many lesser Common-wealths in the bowels of a greater, like wormes in the entrayles of a natural man.” In war, if the common-wealth is not the victor, the common-wealth is automatically dissolved.

With Hobbes’s reference to “supernaturall Inspiration,” he implies that religion can be damaging to a common-wealth if one’s faith is not a product of “Study and Reason.” Hobbes argues one should not blindly submit to the faith of another, but should instead acquire faith independently through the study of scripture and one’s own ability to reason. According to Hobbes, one who blindly follows the faith of another will believe anything, which is not in the best interest of the common-wealth.



The Greeks and Romans lived in democracies, not monarchies, and they believed democracies to be the height of freedom. As a royalist, Hobbes does not believe in regicide (the killing of king) regardless of the reason; thus, it is not advisable to look to a democratic common-wealth for guidance in maintaining a monarchy.



According to Plato’s theory of the human soul, a single person has three souls: the logos, which is the logical part of the human mind; the thymos, which deals with emotion; and eros, which is one’s desires. Plato considered each of these souls to be an essence, which, as a materialist, Hobbes again disagrees with. The self cannot be divided into the three parts, just as the power of a sovereign cannot be reduced or divided. The two kingdoms Hobbes speaks of here are the common-wealth and the Kingdome of God. As one cannot inhabit both kingdoms at once, one’s loyalty must remain with an earthly sovereign power.



Hobbes again refers to a common-wealth as a human body and claims a large army or too many corporations can clog “the bowels” of a common-wealth. A large army or corporation can rise up and seize power from the sovereign, which voids the covenant and reverts the common-wealth back to a state of nature.



CHAPTER 30: OF THE OFFICE OF THE SOVERAIGN REPRESENTATIVE

The sovereign exists for the safety of the subjects of the common-wealth, and the sovereign is obligated by the Laws of Nature to serve the common-wealth to the absolute best of their ability. This care is not given on an individual level, but in general, through example and the execution of sound laws. If a sovereign's rights are taken away, the common-wealth dissolves; thus, it is the duty of the office of the sovereign to ensure and maintain these rights.

Subjects of a common-wealth should be taught not to envy the government of neighboring nations. What flourishes in one kind of common-wealth, for example, an aristocracy, is not what is best for a monarchy or a democracy. Furthermore, subjects should also be taught not to envy their fellow subjects, so they will not give honor to another that is reserved only for the sovereign. Subjects must also be taught not to dispute the sovereign power, and there should be days set aside, as there is with the Sabbath, to spend time learning one's duty to the common-wealth and sovereign power.

It is necessary for the safety of the people of a common-wealth that justice is administered by the sovereign equally to all subjects. Breaking a law is always a crime against the common-wealth, and at times, a crime can also be against an individual subject. When a crime is done onto the common-wealth, it can be pardoned without worry of equity; however, when a crime is committed onto a single subject, that crime cannot be pardoned without the permission of the injured party.

Inequality between people of a common-wealth comes from acts of the sovereign, which is why equal taxes are important for equality of subjects. If a subject is not able to support themselves by their own labor, they should be provided for by the common-wealth and not left to rely on the charity of others. An able-bodied subject, however, is not permitted to be idle and must work toward the common good of the common-wealth.

As the sovereign's power is the collective power of the people (the people willingly hand their power of self-preservation to the sovereign), the sovereign is obligated by the Law of Nature to exercise that right on behalf of the people who gave up said power. This power can only go back to the people if the common-wealth is dissolved.



This passage motions back to Hobbes's warning about ancient Greek and Roman society, in which people lived in democracies and generally disapproved of monarchies. The favored political philosophy of Hobbes's time was that of Aristotle and Plato (both Greeks), and Hobbes argues that the Greek model of society cannot be used to inform monarchies, as the two societies do not compute. In a common-wealth, no one should be held above the sovereign, not even God; thus, Hobbes implies the Sabbath would be better spent learning about the sovereign.



Justice must be administered by the sovereign equally to all people because the Laws of Nature maintain that all people are equal. A crime done unto the common-wealth is done unto the entire common-wealth; therefore, to pardon a crime done unto everyone does not show favoritism. However, to pardon a crime done unto an individual person implies favoritism of the subject who committed the crime.



If a sovereign does not treat its subjects equally, it cannot be expected that subjects will treat each other equally, since the sovereign sets the example for behavior in a common-wealth. Providing for those unable to provide for themselves is also in accordance with the Laws of Nature, which maintain that people must always work toward the common and shared good of people.



A good sovereign makes good laws, but a good law is more than a just law, since no law can ever be unjust. A law is good if it is warranted and in the best interest of the common-wealth. The purpose of laws is not to keep people from making voluntary actions but to keep them from hurting themselves or others through poor decisions and sudden desires. An articulate and eloquent sovereign is most helpful in the declaration of laws and legislation, and in punishment and the rewarding of subjects as well.

It is also the sovereign's duty to appoint good counselors for the betterment of the common-wealth and to seek their counsel when necessary. Good council does not come from lot or birth, and good council does not come only from the rich. There must be a method to the study of politics, as there is in the study of geometry, so the education that future counselors have is sound and grounded in reason. Just as it is best to receive counsel by a single counselor rather than an assembly, it is likewise best for a counselor to give counsel apart from an assembly.

The sovereign must also appoint a commander of the Army, and if said commander is not popular among subjects, the commander cannot be loved or feared as they should to be an effective leader. But a commander's popularity can be dangerous to the sovereign if the sovereign is not also popular, Hobbes warns. The sovereign's popularity is of no threat to a popular commander, whose soldiers are not likely to side against the sovereign no matter how much they love a commander.

CHAPTER 31: OF THE KINGDOME OF GOD BY NATURE

Hobbes begins this chapter with a short recap of the main points he has made thus far. The condition of nature is one of war, and the Laws of Nature function to avoid this war. Without a sovereign power, a common-wealth cannot stand, and the subjects of a common-wealth must be obedient to the sovereign in all ways, provided that obedience does not violate the "Lawes of God." Thus, it is necessary to also know the laws of God, so one does not offend God with too much obedience to the sovereign or offend the common-wealth with too much obedience to God.

A sovereign's actions can never be considered unjust, as the sovereign is the sole judge of what is just or unjust in any given common-wealth. A law should keep a subject in line, as they should fear the punishment of committing any given crime. If a subject does not fear a sovereign's punishment, a sovereign's power is ineffective.



A sovereign's choice of counselors must be equitable (come from every class of people), just as the common-wealth itself must be equitable in accordance with the Laws of Nature. Again, Hobbes implies that political philosophy should be elevated to the level of geometry, because, in Hobbes's opinion, politics are grounded in facts, like mathematics, that must be learned and followed by any given political counselor.



According to Hobbes, there is a fine line between an Army commander who is loved too much and one who is not loved enough. Obviously, a commander who is not respected will not be followed as well as one who is. On the other hand, subjects should never respect another power more than the sovereign, as this could lead a subject to obey their commander over their sovereign.



Hobbes argues that geometry is an infallible philosophy because it establishes the terms and definitions of one step before moving onto the next. As each step is grounded in fact, each argument the philosophy makes is therefore absolute. Hobbes follows the very same structure in Leviathan and frequently recaps his points for good measure. As Hobbes grounds each argument in definitions, he reasons that his philosophy, like geometry, is infallible.



All people are subjects of “Divine Power,” even if they deny the existence of God. “[M]en may shake off their Ease,” Hobbes says, “but not their Yoke.” For scripture says: “*God is King though the Nations be angry; and he that sitteth on the Cherubins, though the earth be moved.*” Those who believe in God’s power and reign are said to be his subjects, while all others are enemies.

Laws must be sufficiently made known to subjects, and God’s laws are no different. God declares his laws in three ways: through “*Naturall Reason*,” by “*Revelation*,” and by the voice of another through the manifestation of a miracle. In other words, Hobbes explains, God’s laws are declared through “*Right Reason, Sense Supernaturall, and Faith*.” Furthermore, there is what Hobbes’s calls a “two-fold Kingdome” of God. One kingdom is natural, and the other is prophetic. God’s natural kingdom is ruled by the “natural Dictate of Right Reason,” whereas the prophetic kingdom is ruled by holy prophets. Hobbes will speak only of God’s natural kingdom.

God gathers his sovereign power from his omnipotence, or “*Irresistible Power*.” Punishment is generally understood to come from sin; however, the right to afflict punishment comes from God’s power, not the sin. This distinction explains why sinners sometimes prosper and good people suffer. God’s “*Divine Lawes, or Dictates of Natural Reason*,” outline the duties of his subjects, to each other and to God, and these laws include the Laws of Nature defined earlier in the book and the moral virtues of “*Equity, Justice, Mercy, [and] Humility*.” These laws are dictated to God’s subjects via their own natural ability to reason and do not require the actual words of God.

Honor consists of one’s opinion of a higher power or the goodness of another, and it is the duty of all God’s subjects to honor God, which means they must hold the highest possible opinion of him. Furthermore, this honor must be expressed through outward signs known as worship. Honor comes from passions such as love, hope, and fear, and worship comes in the form of praise and blessing. Worship can be either natural (meaning it is spontaneous, like saying a prayer or giving thanks), or it is arbitrary and ordered by institution and custom.

Hobbes implies that God has supreme power over people, even if they don’t believe in God or practice religion. In this sense, God is the metaphorical “Yoke” that binds everyone, even if a person casts it off. To prove his point, Hobbes quotes Psalms 96:1 and 98:1, which gives his argument authority in the eyes of his religious audience.



According to Hobbes, the Laws of Nature and the laws of God are one and the same because the Laws of Nature entail the rights that God gave to humans. The Laws of Nature are not naturally known but are learned through reason. Reason is God’s gift to humankind, and everything one discovers with said reason is thereby God’s gift. Hobbes’s argument is focused on nature and humans (God’s natural kingdom), not Heaven (God’s prophetic kingdom).



Hobbes says earlier in the book that the Laws of Nature can be boiled down to what basically amounts to the Golden Rule, which is to treat everyone as one would want to be treated. This belief in turn aligns with the moral virtues of “Equity, Justice, Mercy, [and] Humility.” God doesn’t actually communicate these laws through words and commands; instead, God gives humans the ability to reason so they can figure such laws out by themselves.



Hobbes implies that worship ordered by institution and custom, as worship is in organized religions like Catholicism and Protestantism, is arbitrary and has nothing to do with God, other than being done in his name. Thus, worship that is spontaneous, independent, and not affiliated with any one church or institution is closer to God.



Subjects of God are to honor God's existence, as it is impossible to honor that which does not exist. God must be understood as the cause of the world and all things in it. To deny the creation of the world and claim the world has existed eternally is also to deny God. Similarly, to ease one's fear and love of God is to dishonor God, as fear and love are central to honor. It is also a dishonor to claim God is "Finite" in any way. If it is possible to attribute more to God, it should always be done, and "Finite" implies more can be attributed.

Refusing to swear by God is likewise a sign of honor, and so is speaking of God with consideration. Prayers and offerings of thanks that are well composed impart more honor than prayers that are "light" or "Plebeian." God can be worshiped and honored in secret, but he must also be worshipped and honored in public and in full view of others. However, obedience to the Laws of Nature is the greatest possible form of worship and honor there is.

CHAPTER 32: OF THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN POLITTIQUES

Next, Hobbes will discuss the Christian common-wealth, which is a common-wealth that depends on the "Supernatural Revelations of the Will of God." Believing in the supernatural power of God does not mean to abandon one's senses or rational experience, as those, too, are gifts from God. In a Christian common-wealth, when something cannot be understood by reason and natural science, it is thought to be due to the mystery of God. When God speaks to a subject, it is done immediately or through another person. God speaking immediately can only be understood by those God has actually spoken to. God has spoken through others in the form of Holy Scripture as told by the Apostles and Prophets.

For one to say God spoke to them in a dream is only to say that they dreamed God spoke—it does not mean God has actually spoken. Similarly, one who claims to have a vision of God may just mistake their dreams for a vision. God has the ability to speak through dreams, visions, and voice, but no one is obliged to believe others who say God has spoken to them, since people often lie.

Again, fear is central to one's obedience to God, just as fear is central to one's obedience to a sovereign power. As fear keeps one obedient, it is often encouraged and utilized within religion and Holy Scripture, which illustrates how ubiquitous and motivating fear can be. As God is omnipotent and has infinite power, he can never be described and understood in finite terms. Thus, human beings, who can only understand that which is finite, can never fully understand God's power.



Obedience to the Laws of Nature is the greatest form of worship because the Laws of Nature are rooted in morality, equality, and humility, which are also God's laws. Prayers that are "Plebian" are those written by non-Christians. A plebeian is generally considered to be uncultured, and here, a plebeian is also unversed in God.



According to Hobbes, the revelations of the will of God are always supernatural, unless something is revealed to someone through their natural reason. God himself is supernatural; thus, his revelations are as well. According to Hobbes, God has only spoken to Adam and Moses using direct words. Otherwise, God always speaks through another person, like Moses or an Angel, because human beings are not able to hear and understand the voice of God.



Hobbes implies that God can speak to people in dreams and visions. Since God is omnipotent, he can do whatever he wants; however, Hobbes implies that he doesn't believe that God often—or ever—speaks to subjects through dreams or visions.



For those who have never heard the voice of God, either through visions, dreams, or voice, can turn to Holy Scripture to know what they are supposed to obey. However, it is common for one prophet to deceive another, so Hobbes offers two marks that together indicate a “true Prophet.” One mark is the performing of a miracle, and the other is the teaching of only the established religion and no other. Both of these marks must be present together for a prophet to be considered true. For example, if a prophet performs a miracle and then entices subjects to follow a strange god, they are not a true prophet.

In saying that a “true Prophet” must perform a miracle and teach the established religion, Hobbes effectively implies that there has never been a “true Prophet” that is not already indicated in the Bible. In this vein, Hobbes calls into question all the modern Christian figures who are said to have performed miracles by the Catholic Church.



CHAPTER 33: OF THE NUMBER, ANTIQUITY, SCOPE, AUTHORITY, AND INTERPRETERS OF THE BOOKS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

Books of Holy Scripture include those that contain “Rules of Christian life,” and since these rules are also laws, it is necessary to determine which laws must be followed in a common-wealth. Scripture does not determine which laws a Christian ruler must follow, but scripture does indicate those laws that should not be followed. God is the “Sovereign [Sovereign] of all Sovereigns” and therefore should be obeyed; however, a subject must also know *when* and *what* God commanded, which cannot be known without “supernaturall revelation.” Thus, Hobbes acknowledges only the Old Testament as Holy Scripture, as it has been acknowledged as such by the Church of England.

In saying that he only acknowledges the Old Testament as Holy Scripture, Hobbes suggests that the New Testament is not the official Word of God. As so much time has passed since biblical times, no one can say with any certainty what exactly happened, unless the Holy Scripture is verified as coming from God. As the Church of England verifies the Old Testament as such, it has more authority, according to Hobbes.



The original writers of many books of Holy Scripture are not sufficiently known. The Pentateuch (the first five books of the bible) were supposedly written by Moses, but Hobbes disagrees. In chapter six of Deuteronomy, it is noted “*that no man knoweth of [Moses’s] sepulcher to this day,*” which indicates the day in which the words were written were not Moses’s. Thus, Moses was not alive at the time and could not be the author of the words.

For Hobbes, many books of Holy Scripture are lacking authority. Hobbes implies that anyone could have written the Old Testament, and exactly who wrote it can never be known for certain. In such circumstances, one must find authority within the scripture itself, which Hobbes spends most of this chapter doing.



The Book of Joshua, too, was written after Joshua’s time. The Book of Joshua speaks of the 12 stones Joshua set in Jordan and says, “*They are there unto this day,*” which suggests considerable time has passed between Joshua’s placing of the stones and the writing of the Book of Joshua. Similarly, the Book of Judges and the Book of Ruth were written after their time, as were the Books of Samuel, which claim Samuel made an edict to Israel “*to this day.*” These words again imply that the words were written long after Samuel’s time.

According to Hobbes, since the authorship of the Bible can never be known, its authority will always be in question and should be approached with caution. One must use their reason to find authority within Holy Scripture and find proof of God’s existence instead of taking someone’s word for it.



Those who wrote the New Testament lived in the age of Christ, and each of them knew Christ and served as his disciple, except for St. Paul and St. Luke. The Books of the New Testament, however, were acknowledged by the Church long after the time of the Apostles. The Old Testament, on the other hand, comes from no later than the time of Esdras, who retrieved lost scripture under God's direction. When the New Testament was collected and approved by the Church, there could not have been any real way of definitively knowing who each book was written by.

Even though the books of Holy Scripture were written by different people at different times, they are still thought to be imbued with the "same Spirit" and work to the same end: to set forth the laws of God. The question of where Holy Scripture gets its authority is much disputed by different branches of Christianity, but since scripture does not differ all that much from the Laws of Nature, it is considered the law of God and carries his authority.

While Hobbes disputes the authorship of the Old Testament, he emphasizes that it is thought to have been written during the correct time period, which is more than can be said for the New Testament. The New Testament was compiled hundreds of years after Christ. St. Paul, who is thought to be the author of the Epistles, lived some 50 years after Christ.



The Bible generally preaches the same things required by the Laws of Nature: equality, morality, and humility. Thus, both the Bible and the Laws of Nature carry the same authority because they are both imbued with the "same Spirit" of God.



CHAPTER 34: OF THE SIGNIFICATION OF SPIRIT, ANGEL, AND INSPIRATION IN THE BOOKS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

As the basis for all reason is the accepted and known definitions of words, words common to Holy Scripture must also be defined if they are to be understood, which Hobbes will try to do now. He begins with the words "body" and "spirit," which in scripture are known as "*Substances, Corporeall, and Incorporeall.*"

"Body" is generally accepted to indicate that which takes up space and is not imagined. A body is something that exists and is real, and it is made up of a substance that is subject to change and can be hot, cold, a certain color, or a certain smell. As "substance" and "body" indicate roughly the same thing, to say a substance or body is "incorporeall" is to destroy both words and render them nonsense. In common language, aerial substances, such as "*Spirits,*" are not the same as bodies; although, a spirit is present inside a body and gives it life.

Hobbes applies the same model to his religious argument as his political argument, so he is positioning his religious argument as infallible as well. The distinction between a "body" and a "spirit" is an important one for Hobbes because a body is made up of a tangible substance, whereas a spirit is composed of something akin to air.



The phrase "incorporeall body" is a contradiction in terms because the word "body" denotes substance and matter, whereas the word "incorporeall" denotes that which has no substance. To Hobbes, such a phrase is "incomprehensible speech" and has no real meaning.



In common language, a “Spirit” is often a ghost, or “invisible Body,” and it can also indicate the wisdom or madness of a person. Spirit can also indicate the “*Spirit of God*,” but Hobbes argues that such a spirit is beyond human understanding. The “*Spirit of God*” is God himself, and since God himself is inconceivable to human beings, so is his spirit. In Holy Scripture, God is sometimes described as the wind or like breath, as in the Book of Genesis: “*The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters.*” God’s spirit produces motion, which is not possible of an incorporeal substance.

God’s spirit is also described in Holy Scripture as living inside others, as Joseph says in the Book of Genesis: “*Can we find such a man as this, in whom is the Spirit of God?*” And the spirit of God is also said in scripture to affect passions, as it does to Saul in the Book of Judges. “*The Spirit of God came upon Saul, and his Anger [...] was kindled greatly.*”

God’s spirit is also said to give life in scripture. “*God made man of the dust of the Earth, and breathed into his nostrills the breath of life, and man was made a living soul.*” Or, God’s spirit can give authority. “*I will take of the Spirit, which is upon thee, and will put it upon them, and they shall bear the burthen of the people with thee.*” When Christ’s disciples saw him walking on water, they assumed he was a spirit or ghost, but Christ had a body that took up space. A ghost, or spirit, is “*no where*,” which is to say it is “*nothing*.”

An angel is generally a “*Messenger*,” and most often is a “*Messenger of God*,” who usually manifests in a dream or a vision. While it is not stated in scripture, it is generally thought that angels are spirits (either good or evil), and God raises them supernaturally to indicate his will. However, angels are mentioned in the Old Testament, and they can only be understood as something raised by God to signify his presence. This is seen in the Book of Genesis, when Jacob says: “*The Angel of the Lord appeared to mee in my sleep*,” and the Angel said: “*I am the God of Bethel.*”

In the Book of Exodus, the angel appears as a “*pillar of cloud*” and a “*pillar of fire*.” The angel is no less a sign of God if it appears as a cloud or a person. Thus, it is an angel’s use, not its shape, which is important. There are many angels in the Old Testament, and nowhere is it stated that an angel is permanent or incorporeal. To those who truly understand the words “*Substance*” and “*Incorporeall*” know that such words are contradictions and cannot exist within each other.

God’s spirit is beyond human understanding because God himself is beyond human understanding. Hobbes repeatedly claims that God is infinite and humans are only able to understand that which has a definite beginning and end. Thus, God can never be fully understood. While Hobbes does not claim to completely understand God, Hobbes does imply that God cannot exist as an “incorporeall substance.”



Since Hobbes does not believe God exists as an incorporeal substance, he does not believe that God can enter into the body of another. To Hobbes, the scripture he cites here is metaphor only and does not represent the true physical qualities of God.



Just as Christ was not a ghost when he was witnessed walking on water, Hobbes implies that God is not a ghost either. Hobbes again cites Genesis 2:7 (which he does earlier as well) and implies that it is impossible to breathe life into another as it is described here, just as it is impossible to give authority to another by dividing God’s spirit, which is the same as his body. For Hobbes, a body must be made of matter, anything less is nonsense, or “nothing.”



Hobbes argues earlier that those who encounter God or angels through dreams have simply dreamt about God or angels and have not necessarily encountered them. Hobbes’s mention of the Old Testament (in which he finds the most authority of any biblical text) suggests that he does believe God has the power to appear as an angel in dreams; however, this does not mean that God has actually done it.



Hobbes’s admission that the angels in the Old Testament are neither permanent nor incorporeal is an important one. Hobbes does not argue that angels do not exist (they must exist if they are mentioned in the Old Testament); he simply implies it is impossible for something to exist as intangible matter.



The word “INSPIRATION” requires some explanation as well, since it says in the Book of Genesis that “God *inspired* into man the breath of life,” but this is surely meant as a metaphor and not that the lungs are actually filled with the breath of God. According to scripture, the “inspiration” of God is God’s power working in a way human beings are incapable of understanding, not actual air or breath.

Hobbes again returns to the idea of faith and the Holy Spirit being inspired into someone by God, which Hobbes claims is a physical impossibility. For Hobbes, Holy Scripture is not meant to be taken literally. Instead, Holy Scripture is only metaphor and should be read as such.



CHAPTER 35: OF THE SIGNIFICATION IN SCRIPTURE OF KINGDOME OF GOD, OF HOLY, SACRED, AND SACRAMENT

Most writings about the Kingdome of God, especially sermons and other homilies, assume that the Kingdome of God is one of eternal happiness in Heaven, but Hobbes disagrees. In Hobbes’s interpretation of the very same scripture, the Kingdome of God is *any* kingdom so named and created by the votes of the Israelites, in which they enter into a direct covenant with God, wherein he promises them eternal salvation. However, Hobbes points out, this covenant is not usually metaphorical.

This passage reflects one of Hobbes’s primary arguments regarding God and religion, which is that God’s Kingdome is not of the present world. For Hobbes, God’s Kingdome is created through a covenant, just like any other common-wealth, and a covenant cannot be created unless the terms are willingly accepted by both parties. Thus, to enter into a covenant with God, there must be direct communication with God.



Beginning with creation, God has reigned “naturally,” which is to say “by his might,” or by command through his own voice. God spoke to Adam when he commanded Adam to stay away from the Tree of Knowledge, and in the Book of Genesis, God speaks to Abraham: “*I will establish my Covenant between me, and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee.*”

God reigns “naturally,” which is to say he rules by his power through the Laws of Nature, and since all humans are subject to the Laws of Nature, all humans are God’s subjects. Hobbes has already stated that the Laws of Nature are communicated through natural reason, not words; however, God did speak to some people, like Abraham, more directly and institute an additional covenant above and beyond the Laws of Nature.



This covenant is again seen in the Book of Exodus with Moses at the Foot of Mount Sinai, in which God commands Moses to say to the people of Israel: “*If you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then yee shall be a peculiar people to me, for all the Earth is mine; And yee shall be unto me a Sacerdotall Kingdome, and an holy Nation.*” Hobbes’s interpretation of the word “peculiar” assumes that the people are special in their covenant with God. Since the whole world belongs to God, only those who also share a pact with him are out of the ordinary.

Here, Hobbes cites Exodus 19:5, in which God enters into a covenant with the people of Israel through Moses. In this covenant, the Israelites become unified as one in God’s Kingdome (a common-wealth); however, this covenant extends only to the people of Israel, not the world at large. The whole world already belongs to God—meaning the whole world is subject to the Laws of Nature—but the Israelites are God’s subjects in addition to this universal power.



Hobbes also considers the title “holy Nation” to signify a nation that is especially God’s, above and beyond those God holds by natural right. All the earth belongs to God, but every nation is not holy. The “Nation of Jews” is holy, however, which means the Kingdome of God is a common-wealth, in which God’s law is instituted as civil law and God is the sovereign power.

God as King is reflected in many places in Holy Scripture. In the Book of Samuel, God says to Samuel after the people of Israel ask for a king: *“Hearken unto the voice of the People, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.”* It is clear that God is King of the people, not Samuel. God as King is also seen in the New Testament, when the angel Gabriel says of Christ: *“He shall be great, and be called the Son of the most High, and the Lord shall give him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his Kingdome there shall be no end.”*

For Hobbes, God’s Kingdome is a “Civill Kingdome” that is based on a covenant between God and the people. The king of any given nation is the public king, and that king represents his subjects; however, God was the Holy King of Israel, and the Jews were his subjects. It is understood that which is Holy belongs to God—like a “Holy day,” a “Holy house,” or a “Holy man”—and the same goes for a “Holy nation.” There are degrees of holiness, and some things are nearer to God than others. A sacrament is something consecrated for God’s service that is used to signify one’s admission into the Kingdome of God to become one of God’s “peculiar people.” That sign is circumcision in the Old Testament and baptism in the New Testament, but both represent one’s loyalty and “implies an oath” to God.

CHAPTER 36: OF THE WORD OF GOD, AND OF PROPHETS

Any word that is spoken by God or about God is considered to be the “Word of God” in scripture. In this way, the “Word of God” must be *all* scripture, since all scripture is about God. For instance, when God says to Moses: *“I am the Lord thy God,”* these words are considered the “Word of God.” And, when it is written: *“God spake these words and said,”* these words, too, are the “Word of God.” Hobbes disagrees and argues that while God’s words to Moses can be considered the “Word of God,” some words in the Bible are only “holy History.”

This passage further explains the special pact the Jews have with God above and beyond those instituted through the Laws of Nature. Popular opinion assumes that God’s Kingdome is the present-day Christian Church, but Hobbes argues here that God’s Kingdome is a common-wealth in which God’s law (the Laws of Nature) are civil law and God is the sovereign power, like the covenant the Israelites entered into in Exodus 19:5.



Hobbes ultimately argues that God, or Christ through God’s power as his son, is the sovereign power of God’s Kingdome. However, God, or Christ, is only the sovereign power of the common-wealth that was created by his covenant with the Israelites. Thus, Hobbes argues, God is not the sovereign power of every other Christian person on earth.



Hobbes argues that a sacrament, like circumcision or baptism, is only an oath one swears to God, and he further implies that such an oath alone does not make a person one of God’s “peculiar people.” In swearing an oath to God, one has no way of knowing if God has accepted the terms of their oath; therefore, there can be no agreement and no covenant. Again, to truly be part of God’s Kingdome and to accept God as one’s sovereign power, there must be direct communication with God, either with God himself or through a representative, like Moses. This argument is crucial in Leviathan, as it suggests that one is beholden to their earthly sovereign before God.



This passage points back to Hobbes’s argument about authority and authorship. As God’s Lieutenant, Moses has the authority to claim God’s words, therefore making those words the “Word of God.” However, words randomly attributed to God in the Bible or elsewhere do not carry the same authority; thus, such words cannot be the “Word of God” and instead are “holy History.”



The “Word of God,” then, can be understood as either metaphorical or proper. Proper words are those that are spoken directly by God, whereas metaphorical words are those that refer to God’s wisdom and power in creating the world. For example, in Hebrews 11:3, “*The worlds were framed by the Word of God.*” The “Word of God” is also used to produce a certain effect. God’s words have the power to affirm, command, or promise, as they do in Matthew 24:35. “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Words shall not pass away.*”

God’s words are also used for their attention to reason and equity; however, such words need not be spoken by God or his prophets. For instance, the words of Pharaoh Necho, an Idolater, to King Josiah were said to come from the mouth of God. Josiah did not heed the Pharaoh’s—or God’s—words, and Josiah later died in battle. Examples of equity in the holy canon are too many to name, Hobbes says, but they can be found in Psalm 36:31, Jeremiah 31:33, and Deuteronomy 30:11 and 14.

A prophet is someone who speaks God’s words, like Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, and Elijah. The Prophets made certain predictions as the name suggests, but they were also “Gods [sic] Spokesmen.” In terms of prophets in general, there are many fakes who claim to divine past or future events, and Hobbes discusses such prophets in an earlier chapter. For Hobbes’s purposes now, he is concerned only with those prophets who actually spoke to God.

It is reasonable to ask exactly how God spoke to his Prophets. If it is assumed that God spoke using “voice and language,” is it also assumed that God has “a tongue, or other organs, as a man?” The manner that God spoke to Adam and Eve is not known, but he appeared to Abraham as the ghost of three angels. “*Jacob dreamed that he saw a ladder,*” and Lot was visited by the ghost of two angels. Only Moses spoke more directly to God, and even that was mediated by angels.

Of the prophets in the Old Testament, some are “supreme” and others are “subordinate.” The supreme is Moses, and everyone else follows down a subordinate line. As the supreme, Moses is the prophet who spoke to God most directly, and Hobbes finds no evidence that proves God spoke supernaturally to subordinate prophets. Thus, God spoke to subordinate prophets “by the Spirit.” In fact, Moses was not the only prophet in his time: “*The Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto Moses, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it to the seventy Elders.*”

Again, Hobbes implies that Holy Scripture has largely been misinterpreted as literal when it is in fact metaphorical. In this vein, much of what Christians have accepted as the “Word of God” in Holy Scripture is only hearsay and cannot be verified as God’s actual words. Such an assertion was highly controversial in Hobbes’s day and was considered sacrilegious.



An Idolater is someone who worships a false god. Pharaoh Necho was an Egyptian King from the 6th century BCE and was not a Christian, but God still spoke through him. Hobbes’s main point here is that God does not speak only through his prophets or those thought to be “holy” in a Christian sense. Hobbes lists scripture that proves his point because he knows that his audience is very familiar with the Bible and that the book carries weight and authority.



For Hobbes, there is a difference between “the Prophets,” like Moses and Samuel, and those who claim to be prophets. In this way, Hobbes implies that all prophets other than Moses, Samuel, and the like, are imposters who are not “God’s Spokesmen.”



Hobbes’s point here is that God is not a human in the traditional sense, and God doesn’t necessarily communicate using words and human speech organs. God is supernatural, Hobbes argues, and he communicates supernaturally. In most cases, God conjures an angel to communicate for him, which suggests that God’s voice perhaps cannot be understood by human ears.



In claiming that God spoke to subordinate prophets “by the Spirit,” Hobbes means that God spoke to lesser prophets metaphorically through Moses and their faith in God’s existence. God spoke to Moses most directly (through “a cloud”), and Moses in turn spoke those words to “seventy Elders,” or subordinate prophets.



Everyone should consider the probability of *any* given prophet, which is exactly what God expects and what happens in the Old Testament. Everyone has the ability to use reason to decide if any given prophecy is true or false. In the absence of a miracle, each individual person must decide exactly who is a “Sovereign Prophet”—that is, who is “Gods Viceregent on Earth”—based on reason alone.

Hobbes implies it is probable that Moses was actually speaking the “Word of God,” and the words then spoken by the 70 lesser prophets were sound, too. However, beyond this, Hobbes suggests that the probability of a true prophet is less likely, and at times even impossible. Moses was “Gods Viceregent on Earth” (Hobbes calls Moses “God’s Lieutenant”), but Moses was the only one. Hobbes says there has not been a real miracle since the time of Christ, so it is not reasonable to say there has been a true prophet since then either.



CHAPTER 37: OF MIRACLES, AND THEIR USE

A miracle, also called a wonder, is some action prompted by God that causes admiration in others. The general purpose of miracles is to signify God’s commandment, and in scripture, miracles are often called signs. A miracle is rare, and it has no known natural cause. For instance, a horse or cow that begins to speak would be a miracle. A talking horse is odd, and therefore rare, and such a horse has no natural cause. The first time a rainbow was witnessed, it was thought to be a miracle and a sign from God. Now, rainbows are common and have a known cause, so they no longer appear as miracles.

What one person considers a miracle is not always a miracle to the next person. Consider a solar or lunar eclipse, Hobbes says. Many people have taken such events as miracles; however, there are others with special knowledge of the natural causes of eclipses. While a solar eclipse is decidedly not a miracle, God’s works in Egypt done by Moses’s hand “were properly Miracles.” By definition, a miracle “*is a work of God, [...] done for the making manifest to his elect, the mission of an extraordinary Minister for their salvation.*”

According to this definition, a miracle is not performed by way of the prophet’s virtue but by God through the prophet. It can also be assumed from this definition that a miracle cannot be performed by any angel, devil, or ghostly spirit. In Holy Scripture, there is magic that seems like miracles. For instance, when Moses’s rod hits the ground in the Book of Exodus, it becomes a serpent. This seems like a miracle, but it isn’t.

In comparing a rainbow to a miracle, Hobbes implies that many things people consider to be miracles aren’t really miracles—their natural causes simply haven’t been identified yet. This isn’t to say that miracles don’t exist. Hobbes simply argues miracles are only true a small fraction of the time. When God spoke to Moses, it was a miracle, as was Christ’s presence on Earth; however, Hobbes questions the validity of more modern claims of miracles.



An eclipse has a natural cause—the movement of the earth, moon, and sun—so an eclipse cannot be a true miracle. Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt on God’s command and parted the Red Sea with the power of God; thus, the work God did in Egypt through Moses is an example of a true, or “proper,” miracle. As very few instances fit Hobbes’s definition of a miracle, there have been very few proper miracles.



Hobbes further narrows the definition of a miracle, but he still observes God’s law of equity. A miracle is not something that happens only to the holiest people. Consider Hobbes’s previous example of the Egyptian Pharaoh Necho, who spoke the words of God, which, by definition, is a miracle. This harkens back to the Laws of Nature, which assume everyone is equal.



According to Hobbes, people are prone to deception when it comes to miracles and are likely to believe in “false Miracles.” Hobbes again points out what God says to Moses in Deuteronomy. Through Moses, God warns the people not to accept those prophets who teach religions other than that professed by “Gods Lieutenant” (Moses), and he further warns against any prediction that seems unlikely. One is always free to believe or not believe any miracle they choose, as that is their right. But, Hobbes says, at some point, one must submit to “Gods Lieutenant” and “Head of the Church,” which he will discuss more in the upcoming chapters.

This passage, too, speaks to the natural reason that God gave every human. In giving everyone reason, God expects them to use it and decide for themselves what is true or not. Only “God’s Lieutenant” has the authority to confirm a true miracle, as God’s Lieutenant serves as God’s proxy on Earth. Hobbes implies that Moses, with the exception of Christ, was the last true Lieutenant.



CHAPTER 38: OF THE SIGNIFICATION IN SCRIPTURE OF ETERNALL LIFE, HELL, SALVATION, THE WORLD TO COME, AND REDEMPTION

According to Hobbes, “*Eternall life is greater reward, than the life present; and Eternall torment a greater punishment than the death of Nature.*” Adam was created by God in a similar state. In the Garden of Eden, Adam was to enjoy life everlasting—as long as he ate from the Tree of Life, not the Tree of Knowledge. Of course, Adam disobeyed God and ate from the Tree of Knowledge and was promptly ejected from Paradise.

Hobbes argues that fear of punishment is what compels people to follow rules, and the fear of that punishment must be greater than the benefit of breaking said rule. Adam, living only in Paradise, did not know what he would lose if he disobeyed God; thus, Adam easily broke the covenant. Adam did not sufficiently fear God’s punishment.



As for the physical place where humankind will enjoy eternal life, Holy Scripture suggests this place is on Earth, not in Heaven. This is implied in the Book of Revelations. “*I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her husband.*” Hobbes argues that after the Resurrection, humans will live forever in “the Heavens,” but in this sense, “Heavens” is a remote place on Earth. Strictly speaking, the “Kingdome of Heaven” means only a Kingdome belonging to the King of Heaven—it does not necessarily mean that place is in Heaven.

Hobbes again argues that scripture has largely been misinterpreted and what is usually thought to be literal is actually metaphorical. For Hobbes, “Heaven” is not a place that exists in the sky—it’s a metaphor for a specific place on Earth that exists due to a specific covenant with God, much like the covenant shared between God and the Israelites. Hobbes’s point is reflected in Revelations 21:2, in which John sees “the Holy City, New Jerusalem.” The “Holy City” is on Earth, not in “Heaven.”



According to Holy Scripture, no one goes to Heaven. In John 3:13, it is stated that “*no man hath ascended into Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of man, that is in Heaven.*” In short, only God and Jesus Christ have ascended into Heaven. Furthermore, St. Peter says that after God’s coming, “*we according to the promise look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*” It is clear, Hobbes argues, that Heaven is meant to be on Earth.

Hobbes’s claim that no one other than God or Christ has ever ascended to Heaven again contradicts traditional Christian doctrine that assumes all believers go to Heaven after death, as long as they repent their sins and are saved. Hobbes instead argues that Heaven will be at some future time a common-wealth on Earth.



After God's coming, even nonbelievers and those thought to be enemies of God will have a place on Earth. This place for God's enemies is usually understood as being "under ground," like a "bottomless pit" of fire and torture; however, Holy Scripture offers various descriptions of this place for God's enemies. Hobbes cites Job 26:5 as an example: "Behold the Giants groan under water, and they that dwell with them." He also references Revelation 21:8, in which the sinners and murderers "shall have their Part 1n the Lake that burneth with Fire, and Brimstone; which is the second Death." Here, sinners are underwater, not underground.

God's enemies are also punished in scripture with eternal darkness. In Exodus 10:23, the Egyptians "saw not one another, neither rose any man from his place for three days; but all the Children of Israel had light in their dwellings." As there is not one accepted definition of Hell, it is clear, Hobbes maintains, that Hell is a metaphorical place, not one with any true existence either on Earth or below. The Devil and all his demons are likewise metaphorical.

Salvation is to be forgiven, saved, and protected against all evil, sickness, and death, which, Hobbes says again, will be on Earth. In the Book of Isaiah, Jerusalem is a place where "the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." In Holy Scripture, there are three kinds of worlds mentioned: "the Old World, the Present World, and the World to come." St. Peter speaks of the Old World with Noah and the flood, and Christ speaks of the present World in John 18:36, noting, "My Kingdome is not of this World."

Redemption is available for the guilty who seek forgiveness and pay restitution. To pay restitution for some sin does not take the away sin. A sin can only be taken away by God upon payment of a penalty, which, in the Old Testament, is usually a form of sacrifice. Christ sacrificed himself to redeem the sins of humankind, and when God makes his next coming, all humans must repent; however, their redemption will come at a cost.

Just as Hobbes argues that Heaven in the traditional sense is largely a metaphor, he argues the same for Hell. Hell is usually understood as "under ground" or some "bottomless pit" of fire, but Hobbes argues Hell is none of those things, and he uses the Bible and Holy Scripture to prove his point. Hell cannot be a place of fire and torture if it is described as "under water" in the Book of Job or as a "Lake that burneth with Fire" in the Book of Revelations.



Again, Hobbes's claim that Hell and the Devil do not exist contradicts widely accepted Christian doctrine and was considered by many to be blasphemous. For many, if the Devil does not exist, God cannot exist either, and Hobbes's claims were easily misinterpreted. For Hobbes, however, Hell is any place that includes eternal torture.



Holy scripture talks of three worlds, yet Hobbes only mentions two (the Old World in the Old Testament and the Present World in the New Testament), which implies the "World to come" will only arrive with God's (or Christ's) second coming. Thus, Heaven will be part of this "World to come," which must be on Earth.



Hobbes again deviates from accepted Christian doctrine when he implies it is not enough for salvation to simply repent one's sins. Sinners must also make some accepted sacrifice as restitution for their sins, as Christ did when he died for the sins of humankind. Hobbes implies that the second coming involves a new sacrifice and therefore a new agreement or covenant with God.



CHAPTER 39: OF THE SIGNIFICATION IN SCRIPTURE OF THE WORD CHURCH

In Holy Scripture, the word “Church” means many things. It is sometimes a temple, or “Gods House,” in which any number of Christians gather to publicly perform holy rituals. In Corinthians 14:34, it reads: “Let your women keep silence in the Churches.” But, Hobbes says, this, too, is most certainly a metaphor. The temple in this case is not a building but a way to distinguish between true Christians and those who worship false gods. Church is sometimes meant as “Christs house” as well, and the Greeks called it the “Lords house.”

A “Church” is citizens assembled, and when that assembly is ordered by law by some authority, it is a “Lawfull Church.” In some Holy Scripture, Christ is the “Head of the Church.” Yet in some Holy Scripture, a person is a church, like in Matthew 18:17: “Tell it to the Church, and if hee neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee as a Gentile, or Publican.” Hobbes defines a church as people gathered under the Christian faith and “united in the person of one Sovereign [Sovereign]; at whose command they ought to assemble, and without whose authority they ought not to assemble.”

In all common-wealths, any assembly that is not authorized by the “Civil Sovereign [Sovereign]” is unlawful. Thus, any unauthorized church assembled within in a common-wealth is “unlawfull Assembly.” Furthermore, there does not exist on Earth any “universall Church” to which every Christian is bound by covenant, as there is no common power that all common-wealths are subject to. Every citizen of a common-wealth is subject to the Sovereign Power of that common-wealth only and cannot be held by any other master. “Temporall and Spirituall Government,” Hobbes argues, “make men see double, and mistake their Lawfull Sovereign.” Simply put, there can be “no other Government in this life” but the sovereign power of a common-wealth.

Just as Heaven and Hell are not literal places, Hobbes extends to this same argument to churches in general. In Hobbes’s view, a church is not only a physical structure in which people worship God; it is a metaphor used to describe those people who truly believe in the power of God. Hobbes’s interpretation opens up the accepted definition of “church” to include people as well as structures.



Here, Hobbes makes the distinction that a church can only be considered lawful if its assembly is ordered by some authority, like the sovereign power of a common-wealth. In a Christian church, God, Christ, or some appointed person like Moses, is believed to be the sovereign power of the church, but Hobbes points out that the church exists as part of a greater common-wealth that itself has an earthly sovereign power.



There are many different types of Christians (like Catholics and Protestants) and not one of them is bound to any one sovereign power by covenant, other than the covenant that exists within their respective common-wealths. In other words, every Christian cannot be made a subject of a central power—the Catholic Pope, for example—as each Christian has already accepted the civil sovereign of their common-wealth as supreme power. As the Laws of Nature maintain that the civil sovereign must be obeyed, people cannot be expected to follow the command of two sovereigns: one “Temporall,” or earthly, and the other “Spirituall,” or godly. Therefore, Hobbes argues one’s earthly sovereign must be obeyed over God or God’s representative.



CHAPTER 40: OF THE RIGHTS OF THE KINGDOME OF GOD, IN ABRAHAM, MOSES, THE HIGH PRIESTS, AND THE KINGS OF JUDAH

Abraham was the first to make a covenant with God, and in this contract, Abraham agreed to obey God in all things. Hobbes argues there are some important points to be taken from Abraham’s covenant with God. For instance, God spoke to Abraham only; thus, the covenant was with Abraham only. To correct this, God said: “All the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him, For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.” Still, Abraham only had power to command “his own people.”

The distinction that Abraham only had dominion over “his own people” is an important one for Hobbes, a Protestant. Catholics often view the Pope as God’s sovereign on Earth. Hobbes ultimately argues this isn’t true, but even if the Pope was God’s sovereign, that would make the Pope sovereign only to “his own people” (i.e., Catholics), not all Christians everywhere.



This same covenant with God was later renewed, first with Isaac and later with Jacob; however, the covenant was not renewed again after that until the Israelites were freed. Then, the covenant was with Moses at the Foot of Mount Sinai. This contract between God and Moses marks the beginning of the “Peculiar Kingdome of God.” The first Lieutenant of this Kingdome was Moses, and then succession moved down the line to Aaron and his heirs.

According to Hobbes, the people were not required to take Moses as God’s Lieutenant. As God spoke to Moses, not the people, the people were not commanded by God to accept Moses. In John 5:31, Christ says: “*If I bear witness on my self, my witness is not true.*” If Christ says this of his own witness, Hobbes asks, then what of Moses’s? Under God’s command, Moses was the sovereign power of the Jews, and after Moses’s time, Aaron was sovereign.

In Moses’s time, there were no false prophets, as every prophet was authorized by Moses and had the “Spirit of God.” Numbers 11:25 explains, “*God came down in a cloud, and took of the Spirit that was upon Moses, and gave it to the Seventy Elders.*” While there were many prophets, they were all subordinate to Moses. After the time of Moses and Aaron, sovereign Power went to the High Priest, starting with Joshua. After Joshua, however, there was no one until Saul. The Book of Judges says: “*there was in those dayes no King in Israel.*”

The Kings of Israel had authority in all things religious and civil. This sovereign power was divine, but it was also made by covenant. When the people of Israel say to Samuel, “*make us a King to judge us,*” Samuel is angry, but God says: “*they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected mee, that I should not reign over them.*” With this rejection, there is no authority in the High Priest, except that which was allowed by the King.

During the Jews’ captivity, they did not belong to a common-wealth. After the Jews were freed, they entered into a covenant with God; however, that contract made no promise of obedience to any king. So, as far as the Old Testament is concerned, it can be concluded that whoever was the sovereign power of the common-wealth of the Jews was also God’s “Supreme Authority” on Earth.

Here, Hobbes is tracing the line of succession of God’s Lieutenants on Earth. Hobbes doesn’t begin with Moses, but Moses is the most important. The Catholic Church claims the Pope is God’s sovereign on Earth through this very same line of succession, but Hobbes ultimately argues that line, beyond Moses and a few others, can never be certain.



Again, Hobbes is tracing the line of succession of God’s Lieutenant, but God’s Lieutenant only has sovereign power over the people if the people in turn accept and submit to that power. The Jews accepted Moses and later Aaron, but not all Christians have accepted the Catholic Pope as this power in modernity.



Just as there is no sovereign power in Israel in the Book of Judges, Hobbes implies there is no spiritual sovereign power on Earth presently. As such, humans are beholden to their earthly, civil sovereign before they can be subjects of any given spiritual power, like the Pope.



Hobbes’s point here is that the authority of the High Priest is given by God through a covenant. God has this authority by way of his power, but also because he was the civil sovereign, as well as the spiritual sovereign, of the Israelites. Thus, God’s High Priest only has authority in any given common-wealth if the civil sovereign decrees it.



This passage again speaks to the distinction between a civil sovereign and a spiritual sovereign. For the Israelites, God’s Lieutenant or High Priest was the civil and spiritual sovereign, but this was a unique case in this one “peculiar” common-wealth and does not extend in a broader sense to all common-wealths in general.



CHAPTER 41: OF THE OFFICE OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR

In Holy Scripture, Christ is said to hold three official offices. Christ is a “Saviour,” “Counsellor,” and lastly, the “eternall King.” In Christ’s office as Savior, he paid the ransom for humankind’s sins when he sacrificed his life. As Christ paid the ransom, he cannot be the King of the same people he saved. “My Kingdome is not of this world,” Christ says in John 18:36. And, perhaps even more convincing, is John 12:47, in which Christ says: “I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.”

The very purpose of Christ’s coming was to act as a counselor unto the people and convince them to follow God and renew the covenant. Up to this point, there was nothing unlawful in Christ’s plea to the people of Israel, whose common-wealth at that time was under Caesar’s rule. At the time, the Jews expected a Savior to come. If such an expectation was unlawful, Hobbes says, the people would not have had it. Furthermore, Christ told the Jews his Kingdome was elsewhere and taught them to obey their earthly king in the meantime, whomever that may be.

In keeping with the third part of his office, Christ is to be King, but his power will be second to God’s: “The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” Thus, Hobbes argues, Christ represents God to the people, just as Moses did, and every Lieutenant thereafter.

This passage, too, reflects Hobbes’s argument that, despite popular opinion, the Kingdome of God is not the earthly Christian Church of the present day. God’s Kingdome, which is also Christ’s Kingdome, is “not of this world.” Therefore, Hobbes argues that God’s Kingdome cannot possibly be the current Christian Church or anyone in it.



Caesar ruled the Roman Republic (a common-wealth) from 49 to 44 BCE, and he was the sovereign power of the people. Christ wanted the people to renew their covenant with God, but that covenant obligated the people to obey their civil sovereign in all things, not God. This argument is important for Hobbes, who dismisses claims that God is a Christian’s sovereign power over their earthly, civil sovereign.



Hobbes argues that Moses was God’s Lieutenant on Earth and served as spiritual and civil sovereign power to the Israelites, just as Christ will to all Christians upon his second coming and the establishment of his Kingdome. Until then, Hobbes implies there is no such Lieutenant on Earth.



CHAPTER 42: OF POWER ECCLESIASTICALL

To understand what “POWER ECCLESIASTICALL” is and who has it, Hobbes says one must understand the time both before and after the “Conversion of Kings,” before which Christianity was not allowed. Before Christ’s Ascension and the later Conversion of Kings, the Apostles had ecclesiastical power, which means they were ordained to preach Christianity and convert others. After the Apostles, ecclesiastical power was again given to “Ministers of God,” or those ordained with the Holy Spirit and authorized to teach and preach God’s Word.

Christianity was not allowed in Rome prior to 313 CE. Constantine, who ruled Rome from 306 to 337 CE, was the first Roman Emperor to adhere to Christian teachings, and he converted to Christianity in 337, the same year he died. By beginning with the “Conversion of Kings” and Christ’s Ascension to Heaven, Hobbes is able to trace the line of succession of God’s ministers through time to establish authority.



According to popular Christian belief, the “Person of God” is born three times. St. John says: “*There be three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these Three are One.*” These three are known in Holy Scripture as the “Trinity.” Hobbes, however, argues three can never be one, and in this case, the Trinity more rightly signifies “three Persons.” God represented by Moses is one person, and God represented by Christ is another. God represented by the Apostles is collectively a third, and in no way are any of these individual men one, other than their shared love for God, which can be said for many.

In short, ecclesiastical power is the power to teach God’s Word, and Hobbes uses Christ’s power as proof of his argument. As Christ’s Kingdome is not of this world, his ministers can’t command obedience in Christ’s name, unless that minister is also a sovereign king. Christ was sent to the Jews to convince them to return to God and accept Christ as King but not until Judgement day. The time between Christ’s Ascension and the Resurrection is called a “Regeneration,” not a reign. In Matthew 19:28, Christ says: “*You that have followed me in the Regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, you shall also sit upon twelve Thrones.*” Clearly, Hobbes explains, Christ was not King during this time.

The purpose of Christ’s ministers on this Earth is to convert others to Christianity, but this conversion is not a command, and it is not compulsory. In 2 Corinthians 1:24, St. Paul says: “*Wee have no Dominion over your Faith, but are Helpers of your Joy.*” Hobbes questions what one is to do if their sovereign power, such as a king or a senate, forbids their subjects to believe in Christ. To forbid one to believe or not believe in any one thing is ineffective, Hobbes says, because one’s faith is a gift from God, and it cannot be taken by any one person or persons.

A sovereign king can tell his subjects what to do and forbid public gatherings and practices associated with Christianity, but a king cannot change what is in his subjects’ hearts. If one is made to renounce Christ “on pain of death,” but Christ really does live in their heart, one can lie without any affront to Christ or the sovereign power, since the Law of Nature says a person cannot be forced to confess something that endangers their life. Plainly put, those who die as martyrs die needlessly.

The Holy Trinity is another sacred belief in Christianity that Hobbes argues has been largely misinterpreted. Popular Christian belief holds that God is three beings—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—but Hobbes maintains it is impossible for one to be three. Instead, Hobbes contends that the Holy Trinity is really three separate people (or groups of people, as is the case with the Apostles), who are authorized by God and have “Ecclesiastical,” or spiritual, power.



Hobbes contends that only certain people have ecclesiastical power and are authorized to preach God’s Word, but even this power is limited, and, like all other forms of power, it exists only as allowed by the civil sovereign of a common-wealth. Moses was the civil sovereign of the Israelites, and Christ will be the civil sovereign of his Kindgome after the second coming. Until then, however, Hobbes argues that supreme power is one’s earthly sovereign, not God or one of his Lieutenants.



Again, Hobbes draws a clear distinction between ecclesiastical power and sovereign power. Ecclesiastical power is not obligatory, whereas sovereign power is. As such, no one person can command anyone to believe or not believe in any god, even if that command is given by one’s sovereign power.



A sovereign power cannot order subjects to believe or disbelieve in God, just as God himself could not order the Israelites to believe in him. The Israelites had to come to God via a covenant, and it is the same for any other Christian.



The true definition of a martyr, Hobbes says, is one who witnessed Christ's Resurrection, not someone who dies rather than cast away their love for Christ. In Acts 1:22, St. Peter asks: "must one be ordained to be a Martyr (that is a Witness) with us of his Resurrection." In this definition of the word martyr, even if one did witness Christ's Resurrection, this does not obligate them to die for the same cause.

The Apostles, like Christ, were sent to preach God's Word, which makes them similar to a herald, or a crier, or another such person who delivers messages for a king. In such situations, a herald cannot command anyone to do anything and neither could the Apostles. The Apostles were also sent to teach. In the Book of Mark 16:15 it reads: "Goe into all the world, and Preach the Gospel to every creature."

Those accepting of God's Word can be baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," which is a sign that a subject will be loyal to God and those appointed by him. Baptism is a type of covenant, but true authority is with an "Earthly Sovereign [sovereign]" until Judgement Day.

Within ecclesiastical power is the power to give the "Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven" to another and allow entrance into God's Kingdome. On the flipside, one with ecclesiastical power can deny the keys to one and excommunicate another. To excommunicate is to ban someone from their church, after which other Christians are instructed to avoid them. However, a church has no power to keep anyone out of an assembly, since all places are under dominion of the common-wealth and sovereign power.

If an Apostate is excommunicated, it means nothing and has no effect. Excommunication only matters to those who believe in Christ, and it is practiced as punishment for some transgression. According to I Corinthians 5:11, "if any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one yee are not to eat." In short, those who are found guilty of such sins are excommunicated.

Hobbes's definition of the word martyr again suggests that scripture has been largely misinterpreted, as a martyr is usually defined as someone who is killed for their religious beliefs. In this way, Hobbes implies that most Holy Scripture, and the terms and definitions involved in it, have been misinterpreted.



This passage again underscores the limitations of ecclesiastical power. As messengers of God, Christ and the Apostles did not wield the same power as God. In this vein, if God does have a Lieutenant on Earth now—the Catholic Pope, for instance—the power of that messenger is also limited and cannot be compulsory.



Again, Hobbes discounts the idea that God is three people (the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) as is assumed with the Holy Trinity. For Hobbes, one body can never be divided into three; however, the power of one body can be given to three different people.



Hobbes again underscores the limitations of ecclesiastical power. While one with ecclesiastical power can technically excommunicate a member of a church and deny their entrance into God's Kingdome, that banishment is not really enforceable until God's second coming. In an earthly common-wealth, only the sovereign power has the authority to ban someone from an assembly.



In order to be excommunicated, one must first believe in God. An Apostate is someone who does not believe in religious doctrine. If one does not believe that God's Kingdome exists and does not wish to enter into a covenant to become part of it, it is no punishment to ban them from it.



For one to be excommunicated, they must first be a member of a Christian church. As all churches are equal in power, no one church has authority to excommunicate the members of another. Furthermore, Hobbes argues, if a sovereign power—for instance, a Prince—is a member of a Christian church, that Prince cannot be excommunicated. According to the Law of Nature, a Prince’s subjects are obligated to be in his presence when he commands it, and they can never refuse to sit and eat with him.

To recap, the power of excommunication can only go as far as the power of Apostles, which is to teach God’s Word and to convert others to his way to ensure “Salvation in the world to come.” Before civil sovereigns became Christians, St Paul visited Jews at their synagogue. In Acts 17:2-3, St. Paul “reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, [...] and that this Jesus whom he preached was the Christ.” St. Paul had no authority over the Jews other than to interpret Holy Scripture as he was ordered to do by Christ.

When attempting to convert Gentiles, quoting Holy Scripture was no use, as they did not believe in Christ. Thus, the Apostles used “Reason to confute [the Gentiles’] Idolatry.” In short, the Apostles persuaded the nonbelievers, and when they did, the Gentiles were converted to nothing but a belief in what the Apostles taught. This belief is reflected in the Old Testament when Christ says to the Jews: “Search the Scriptures; for in them yee thinke to have eternall life, and they are they that testifie of me.”

A piece of writing can be said to be “*Canonically*” in two ways. The word “Canon” signifies a “Rule” by which one guides their actions. When these “Rules” are given by a teacher or counselor to a student or friend, such words do not have the power to compel one to any given action or behavior. However, when such “Rules” are given to someone who is compelled by another to obey them, they become “Laws.”

The first piece of Holy Scripture to become law was the Ten Commandments, which God gave to Moses on tablets of stone. God delivered the Commandments to Moses, and Moses delivered them to the people. The laws that God dictated to Israel’s magistrates are known as “Judicall Law,” and Moses also delivered these laws. When Moses delivered God’s Word, these words became laws by way of Moses’s covenant with the people.

Hobbes implicitly argues here that the Pope does not have the authority to excommunicate the sovereign power of another country. Henry VIII and Elizabeth I of England were both excommunicated by the Pope, but Hobbes argues the Pope never had the ecclesiastical power to do such a thing in the first place. An excommunicated Christian must be shunned by other Christians; however, it is not possible for subjects to shun their sovereign power.



St. Paul’s ecclesiastical power over the Jews was limited, and Hobbes argues that the ecclesiastical power of any religious entity or body is also limited. Christ ordered the Apostles to preach obedience to earthly, civil sovereigns, not to obey God above all others. Thus, a Christian in England cannot possibly be expected to obey the ecclesiastical power of the Pope over their sovereign king or queen.



The reason the Apostles used and the Gentiles accepted is the very same reason God has given to all of humankind. Through this reason, the Gentiles abandoned their “Idolatry,” or false gods, and accepted the true God. This belief, however, is more applicable to one’s “eternall life,” not their present earthly life. Thus, to accept God is not to reject one’s earthly, civil sovereign.



“Canonically” writings, or writings that are accepted into the canon of Holy Scripture, are viewed as either “rules” or “laws.” A “rule” is a recommendation made by a teacher to a student, like honoring one’s mother and father. However, a “law” is Holy Scripture made decree by a civil sovereign, like civil laws against murder.



As God’s Lieutenant on Earth, Moses was the sovereign power of the Israelites and therefore had the power to make the Ten Commandments into law. However, this power only extended over the Israelites because they agreed to the covenant.



Moses added different laws as the Israelites readied themselves for the land of Promise, and these are known as “Second Laws.” In Deuteronomy 29:1, it is written: *“The words of a Covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the Children of Israel, besides the Covenant which he made with them in Horeb.”* Moses made each King of Israel keep a copy of the laws, but, Hobbes says, Moses was also the “Civill Sovereign [sovereign].”

There were no other laws instituted until after the captivity of the Jews, after which they entered into a covenant with Moses to accept the “Law of God.” The Old Testament was not law until this covenant, which in effect formed the common-wealth of the Jews. The New Testament, on the other hand, was not considered law until sovereign Christians deemed it so, beginning with Constantine.

But, for the New Testament to be law wherever a common-wealth forbids it contradicts the very nature of a law. Thus, whenever any “Rule” is offered that the sovereign has not endorsed, such “Rule” can only be counsel, not compulsion. In common-wealths where God’s Word goes against the established laws, God’s Word cannot be followed. Of course, Hobbes says, while God’s Word cannot be put into practice or discussed with others in such instances, it may be secretly honored.

Again, the purpose of Christ’s command to the Apostles was to spread word of his Kingdome, not in this world but the next. The Apostles were to teach the people and baptize them as believers, but they did not have power to make Christ’s command into law. Instead, they taught obedience to established laws. As only a sovereign power in the civil sense can make any “Rule” into law, the Holy Scripture within the New Testament can only be considered “Law” in those common-wealths where a sovereign power has willed it so.

Therefore, ecclesiastical power is limited in many ways. In Acts 15:28, the Apostles say to the Elders: *“It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burthen then these necessary things.”* Those necessary things, according to Hobbes, are to repent, be baptized, follow the Commandments, and believe in God’s Word.

Again, Moses had the power to make God’s laws into civil laws because he was the sovereign power of the Israelites. This distinction is important to Hobbes’s argument because it supports his contention that God’s law is only civil law when it is decreed by an earthly, civil sovereign.



Constantine was the first civil sovereign (other than Moses) to accept and follow Christianity. Constantine ruled the Roman Empire from 306 to 337 and marks the “Conversion of Kings” Hobbes refers to earlier in the chapter. As a Christian, Constantine was the first to make Holy Scripture into law, in all other instances, scripture is merely “rule.”



Again, Hobbes implies that a sovereign power can never compel a subject to disbelieve in God, even if a sovereign can make the public worship or following of God’s laws illegal. God’s law states that everyone must obey their earthly sovereign in all ways, but a sovereign can never take away the gift of faith.



This again illustrates the limitations of ecclesiastical power. Holy scripture can only be elevated from “Rule” to “Law” in those common-wealths where the civil sovereign has deemed it so, and this power is limited to that specific common-wealth. For example, while the Pope is the civil sovereign of Vatican City, the Pope is not the civil sovereign of England and cannot impose laws on Christians there.



The “necessary things” Hobbes lists here are the only things a Christian must observe to gain entrance into God’s Kingdome, and each of these things can be done while also obeying one’s civil, earthly sovereign.



Ecclesiastical officers during the time of the Apostles were either “Magisterial” or “Ministerial.” “Magisterial” officers preached to nonbelievers and administered sacraments to those they already converted. “Ministerial” officers included the deacons who saw to the operational needs of the church. The first Magisterial officers were the Apostles, who were chosen by Christ to be martyrs—that is, to witness his Resurrection. The first non-martyr Apostle was Matthias, who was chosen by an assembly of 120 Christians, and then there was Paul and Barnabas, who, by the Church of Antioch, were made Apostles.

A bishop is an “overseer” of the church, and the first Christian bishops were the Apostles. After the Apostles instituted the Elders, they, too, were known as bishops, as was any pastor, teacher, or doctor whose calling was Christ. As Apostles, Matthias, Paul, and Barnabas were authorized by the people, not Christ. Countless bishops were authorized in much the same way, as is reflected in Acts 14:23, which says “*they ordained Elders in every Church.*” This remains common practice even today, as new bishops are elected in Rome.

A minister is someone who voluntarily does business for another. Pastors within a church are known as “*The Ministers of the Word,*” and deacons are responsible for “*Serving of Tables,*” which means they serve the congregation. The very first deacons were selected by the Disciples, not the Apostles, which can be seen in Acts 6:3. “*Brethren looke you out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and of Wisdome, whom we may appoint over this business.*”

According to Numbers 18:20, God said to Aaron: “*Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part amongst them.*” Thus, the maintenance and support of ministers must come from public revenue in the form of tithes and offerings. Judas Iscariot had a purse to maintain Christ, and many of the Apostles, who were also fishermen, worked in their trade to earn money to keep them. Whenever the Apostles went out to preach, Christ did not allow them to carry any money.

Hobbes makes a distinction between two types of ecclesiastical officers—those who have the power to teach and those who don’t. The first ecclesiastical officers with the power to teach were given this power by a covenant with Christ, and afterward, they were selected by an assembly of people. The Church of Antioch was one of the earliest Christian churches (located near present-day Turkey), and the assembly imbued Paul and Barnabas with the same power through their own covenant.



In Hobbes’s view, bishops who were authorized directly by Christ or God had more authority than those who were authorized after Christ’s Resurrection by countless church assemblies. Thus, the Pope, having been authorized by the people, not God or Christ directly, does not have the same authority claimed by early Apostles.



Hobbes again makes a distinction between ministers and deacons. Ministers have the ecclesiastical power to teach and preach, but a deacon does not. This distinction becomes increasingly important in Hobbes’s explanation of the public’s duty to financially support their ministers. Hobbes implies it is not the public’s duty to support deacons in the same way.



Again, Hobbes is using scripture to illustrate his point that ministers are supposed to be kept financially by the communities they serve. This point seems somewhat unimportant here, but Hobbes comes back to it at the end of Leviathan. Hobbes argues that this public support is motive for some clergy to exploit the people and the church.



After the Ascension of Christ, Christians everywhere “lived in Common” with the money earned from their land and possessions, and they supported the Apostles with their offerings. 1 Corinthians 9:14 reads: “*Even so hath the Lord appointed, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.*” Thus, Hobbes argues, it can be concluded that a church’s ministers should be maintained by the people of that church. This maintenance can be determined by each church member individually or by the entire assembly; however, to determine by entire assembly is impossible, as the assembly lacks the power to make a law. So, in common-wealths where the sovereign power does not make laws to determine a minister’s maintenance, or salary, it relies on charity.

A sovereign power of a common-wealth who is also a Christian has the right to appoint ministers. The sovereign power is the “Supreme Pastor” of their subjects, and they have the power to teach and ordain as they please. Before the Conversion of Kings, ministers and other pastors were selected and appointed by an assembly. Suppose a Christian sovereign, such as a king, passes his authority to ordain ministers within his common-wealth to another sovereign power, like the Pope in Rome. In doing so, the Christian sovereign robs himself of power.

In a common-wealth, all ministers and pastors preach and teach under the authority given to them by the sovereign power, meaning a minister’s authority is “*Jure Civili.*” The sovereign power, however, derives their own authority to teach and preach Christianity from God, which means a sovereign’s authority is “*Jure Divino.*” As every sovereign power is also the “Supreme Pastor,” they can preach, teach, baptize, and administer the sacraments. Just because a sovereign power has the ability to do such things does mean they actually do them, Hobbes says. A sovereign is much too busy with the common-wealth; thus, they appoint others below them as ministers. Christ never baptized anyone, Hobbes says, but sent his Apostles and Disciples instead.

The “Imposition of Hands” is an ancient ceremony performed publicly by the Jews, in which it is made clear who, or what, is being blessed or condemned, as Jacob does when he blesses Joseph’s children. Jacob “*laid his right Hand on Ephraim the younger, and his left Hand on Manasseh the first born.*” In Leviticus 24:14, God orders all the blasphemers to “*Lay their Hands on his head, and that all the congregation should stone him.*” Christ, too, performs this ceremony in Matthew 19:13: “*They brought unto him little children, that hee should Put his Hands on them, and Pray.*”

As no church assembly can ever have the power to make scripture law, a church assembly cannot determine a minister’s salary, and the minister must rely on charity. If the sovereign power of a common-wealth is also a Christian, that sovereign can deem any given minister’s salary as a law. Again, Hobbes later comes back to this fact and argues that Christian sovereigns can abuse this power and command higher salaries for certain ministers, like the bishops of Rome.



Hobbes implies that it makes very little sense for a sovereign power to allocate any part of its power to another power, like to the Pope in Rome. In giving the Pope some of its power, a sovereign diminishes its own power, which is counterproductive to the covenant that creates it. The purpose of a common-wealth is to create a sovereign with as much power as possible. If the sovereign gives some of that power away, it isn’t as powerful as it could be.



*A sovereign’s power to preach is “*Jure Divino,*” meaning it is divine and comes directly from God. A minister’s ecclesiastical power, on the other hand, comes from the sovereign power and is “*Jure Civili,*” meaning their power is civil, not divine. This is an important distinction because it again illustrates that a minister can never have the ecclesiastical power to excommunicate a sovereign from the Christian Church.*



With Hobbes’s explanation of the “Imposition of Hands,” he implies that to lay hands on another in a spiritual sense does not always imply a miracle or the transfer of power, as is often assumed in popular Christian doctrine. Jacob lays his hands on the children to bless them, and God orders nonbelievers to lay their own hands on their heads to identify themselves. Christ, too, lays his hands on others to pray, not necessarily to heal or ordain.



The Apostles, too, “Laid Hands” on those they ordained or prayed with. In Acts 8:17, Peter and John go to the people of Samaria and “Laid their Hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” The purpose of such a ceremony, especially when ordaining a minister, is to designate the one who is receiving the power. In the case of a sovereign power, they have always had the power to teach and ordain others; thus, there is no need for the “Imposition of Hands.”

A sovereign power may transfer the management of religious matters to the Pope, or they can transfers the management of religious matters to one minister or assembly within their own dominion. As the power of the Pope in Rome is universally accepted, Hobbes thinks it proper to discuss Cardinal Bellarmine and his books, *De Summo Pontifice*. The first of Cardinal Bellarmine’s books discusses the best form of government, which Bellarmine claims is a mix of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Bellarmine claims that the best government for a church is also a mix of the three; however, he says that mix should be mostly monarchical.

Hobbes says he has already discussed that a monarchy is the best form of government, but he argues that a church’s form of government makes very little difference. It is not the purpose of a church to govern by order and command. On the contrary, the purpose of a church is to guide others and persuade through Holy Scripture. Furthermore, the Pope’s power in common-wealths that are not his own is that of a “Schoolmaster only,” not a “Master of Family.”

In his second book, Cardinal Bellarmine argues that St. Peter was the first bishop in Rome and that all other Popes are his successors. Many people, Hobbes says, dispute this claim. If the first bishop in Rome was the “Supreme Pastor,” that first Roman bishop was Constantine, Rome’s first Emperor, not St. Peter. Bellarmine’s third book argues whether the Pope is the Antichrist. Hobbes, however, can find no evidence to support this argument. The Jews expected a Messiah in the Old Testament, which opened them up to imposters and false prophets. The word Antichrist is properly defined as someone who claims to be Christ but isn’t; or, as someone who denies Jesus is himself the Christ. As the Pope in Rome has done neither of these two things, he cannot be rightly called the Antichrist.

According to Hobbes, a sovereign power does not require another power—like the Pope, for instance—to lay hands on them and imbue them with the ecclesiastical power of a minister. A sovereign has already been given this power by God, so only God can take this power away.



*A cardinal is a high-ranking bishop of the Catholic Church (the Pope is selected from a conclave of cardinals), and Cardinal Bellarmine was a particularly important cardinal who served the Pope until Bellarmine’s death in 1621. Bellarmine wrote a treatise entitled *De Summo Pontifice*, in which he argued that all sovereigns of the world should be held under the ecclesiastical power of the Catholic Pope.*



According to Hobbes, the Pope only has power over his own common-wealth (Vatican City in Rome) and cannot claim power over any other sovereign or common-wealth. For instance, the Pope has no authority over the sovereign power of England or its subjects. Thus, the Pope can only guide such subjects like a “Schoolmaster” or teacher and cannot command them like a “Master” to his servants.



*Other than Moses, Constantine was the first Christian sovereign in Rome; thus, Hobbes implies that the Pope comes from a succession that begins with Constantine, not St. Peter as Cardinal Bellarmine and the Catholic Church maintain. In this light, Hobbes throws the entire succession and appointment of Popes and their authority into question. During the 16th century, many Protestants claimed the Pope was the Antichrist. Bellarmine’s third book, *Antichrist*, argues that the Pope is definitively not the Antichrist. In this case, Hobbes agrees with Bellarmine and finds no evidence to support such a claim.*



In Cardinal Bellarmine's forth book, he argues that the Pope's "Judgements are Infallible" and that Christ gave ecclesiastical power to the Pope in Rome. Bellarmine turns to Holy Scripture to prove his point. In Luke 22:31, Christ says to Simon: "*Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired you that hee may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith faile not, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren.*" In Bellarmine's interpretation, Christ promises that Simon's faith will not fail as long as that faith follows that as defined by the Pope. Hobbes argues Bellarmine's interpretation is wrong.

The sovereign power alone has complete authority to define how Holy Scripture is interpreted, not the Pope. As for the Pope's infallibility of judgement, Cardinal Bellarmine again cites Holy Scripture and John 16:13. "*When the Spirit of truth is come, hee will lead you into all truth.*" The implied "truth" here, Hobbes argues, is truth as it relates to salvation, not *all* truth in general. Thus, the Pope's judgement concerning salvation is likely sound, but his judgement can never be completely foolproof. Even with this distinction, the Pope's judgement concerning salvation is no more infallible than the judgement of any other devout Christian.

It has never been claimed by the church or the Pope that the Pope is the sovereign power over all the world's Christians. Thus, all Christians are not obligated to obey the Pope. The sovereign power of a common-wealth has dominion over everyone in their common-wealth, including the Christians. Therefore, if the Pope claims to have jurisdiction over all the Christians in the world, he teaches those Christians to disobey their sovereign power, which directly contradicts the lessons taught by the Apostles in Holy Scripture.

To prove the Pope has power to institute laws, Cardinal Bellarmine cites Deuteronomy 7:12: "*The man that will doe presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest, (that standeth to Minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the Judge,) even that man shall die, and thou shalt put away the evill from Israel!*" Through numerous biblical passages, Bellarmine maintains that Christ gave ecclesiastical power to the Pope and no one else, but Hobbes disagrees. It is only Christian sovereigns who can claim power to govern from God or Christ. Any minister who has ecclesiastical power derives that power from the sovereign. "All lawful Power is of God," Hobbes contends, but the absolute power of a Pope is not lawful.

In Hobbes's own interpretation of Holy Scripture, Christ only gives ecclesiastical power to his Apostles, anyone else—including the Pope in Rome—is given their ecclesiastical power by the assembly of people in which they serve. Hobbes does argue that the Pope's power to act as minister onto his own subjects is given to him by the divine power of God; however, that power does not extend beyond the subjects of the Pope's own common-wealth.



As the Pope is only the sovereign power of his own common-wealth, he has no say in how Holy Scripture is interpreted in other common-wealths. Hobbes does not mean to say that there is no truth in the Pope's words and judgement. Hobbes simply argues that it's impossible for a person's judgment to be "infallible." Judgement and reason can be certain in very few circumstances (geometry for one), and no one person can claim to be right all the time.



In Hobbes's view, no Christian living outside the common-wealth of the Pope can be beholden to the Pope's power. Thus, a Christian living in England is beholden to England's sovereign power, even if that Christian is a Catholic. Hobbes argues there is no covenant that obligates all Christians to a single power; thus, all Christians are obligated to follow their individual civil sovereigns.



Hobbes does not dispute that the Pope has the power to institute laws; however, the Pope only has the power to institute laws within his own common-wealth. Hobbes argues that ecclesiastical power is given to every Christian sovereign, not just the Pope, by the divine power of God. As Hobbes points out earlier, a sovereign's ecclesiastical power is "Jure Divino," whereas as a minister's ecclesiastical power is "Jure Civili" and comes from the sovereign power. In this way, all "lawful Power is of God," but the total power of Pope proposed by Bellarmine is not lawful.



Whether Christ gave power only to the Pope, or to other ministers, too, is a moot argument, Hobbes implies, if it is considered outside common-wealths where the Pope is the sovereign power. A Pope only has the power to make laws if he is also the sovereign power of that common-wealth. If the Pope is not sovereign power, neither he, nor any other minister (unless they are the sovereign power), has power to make laws.

According to Hobbes, Christ gave the Apostles and his Disciples the power to preach God's Word; however, Christ did not give them power to command the people. All ministers and bishops (unless they are the sovereign power) get their power to preach and ordain from the sovereign power of the common-wealth in which they belong. This can be seen in Numbers 11, in which God commands Moses to select 70 Elders and infuse them with Moses's spirit. As God's Lieutenant, Moses was the sovereign power of the common-wealth of the Jews, and Moses gave the power to preach and ordain to the 70 Elders when he infused them with his spirit.

Cardinal Bellarmine claims the Church is like a monarchy and the Pope is the monarch, but Hobbes again disagrees. The Pope's power is "Didactical" only, and does not extend past this limitation. A Pope can never have jurisdiction, Hobbes argues, in the dominion of another sovereign power. A sovereign's right to power is derived from the covenant of the people. If a Pope claims supreme power over the Christians in any given common-wealth, he dismisses the contract that joins them together.

If the Pope has absolute power, which is to say he has been granted such power by a sovereign, the Pope can depose princes and kings whenever he wants for whatever he wants. This is the precise argument offered by Cardinal Bellarmine and many others, Hobbes says, and Popes have historically put such power into practice. For instance, Pope Innocent III and the fourth Council of Lateran decried that any king under the Pope's command was to rid their kingdom of heretics within one year or face excommunication. People cannot be expected to serve two different masters, Hobbes argues. To avoid this conflict, sovereign powers must keep all their power exclusively, including religious matters, or sovereign powers should give all their power to the Pope. To divide power is to destroy it and the common-wealth.

In Hobbes's estimation, the sovereign power of any given common-wealth has the authority to make laws in that common-wealth only. As the Pope has dominion over the subjects of Vatican City in Rome only, the power of the Pope cannot extend to people living in other common-wealths.



Hobbes claims that the ecclesiastical power of a Christian sovereign comes from God. As the sovereign power of the Jews, Moses's ecclesiastical power comes from God, but the ecclesiastical power of the 70 Elders comes from Moses. Hobbes does not dispute that the Pope's ecclesiastical power comes from God. What Hobbes does dispute is that the Pope's power, like Moses's, is limited and cannot extend beyond the people of his common-wealth.



Hobbes's claims that the Pope's power is "Didactical," by which he means that the Pope's power is purely ecclesiastical and is meant for teaching purposes only. Unless, of course, the Pope is operating in his own common-wealth, in which he is also the sovereign power. Otherwise, in other sovereigns' dominions, the Pope's word can only be counsel, not law.



Again, since the purpose of a common-wealth is to create a sovereign that is as powerful as possible, it does not make much sense for the sovereign to give any of that power away. In doing so, Hobbes maintains, the common-wealth is technically destroyed. Placing the Pope in a position of authority over all Christian sovereigns diminishes their power and dissolves their original covenants, in which case their subjects cannot be obligated to obey the Pope either. In short, Hobbes maintains it is impossible for the Pope to claim any power over other Christian sovereigns.



Cardinal Bellarmine argues that the “Civill Power” of a sovereign is subject to the “Spiritual Power” of the Pope. Even if this were true, Hobbes says, that still doesn’t mean that the sovereign is obligated to obey the Pope. What Bellarmine means to say in his argument concerning the “Spiritual Power” of the Pope is that Pope has authority to command a sovereign power, and this, Hobbes implies, can never be.

In Hobbes’s opinion, having “Spiritual Power” over someone is not the same as having “Civil Power” over them. Spiritual power, like the power God has over Christians, does not technically exist until one becomes a spirit and enters into God’s Kingdome. Thus, even if the Pope had spiritual power over a sovereign, this power is ineffective in an earthly, civil sense.



The Pope may very well be Christ’s only true minister, Hobbes says, but the Pope’s power doesn’t exist until Christ’s second coming. And even then, the power wouldn’t belong to the Pope of the present day, but to St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles, who will be the Judges in Christ’s Kingdome. Cardinal Bellarmine also argues that a spiritual common-wealth can take over a civil common-wealth if that common-wealth cannot rightly defend itself. Hobbes again disagrees.

Again, Hobbes sees a clear difference between spiritual power and civil power. The Pope only has authority in a spiritual world—not in the civil, earthly world that currently exists. In Hobbes’s opinion, there can be no crossover between the earthly, civil world and the spiritual world of God. The earthly civil world exists until Christ’s second coming, and only then can the spiritual world begin.



According to Hobbes, there is no such thing as a “Spiritual Common-wealth,” at least not in this world. A “Spiritual Common-wealth” is just like the Kingdome of Christ, which even Christ says doesn’t exist in this world. Christ’s Kingdome will exist in the next world, after the Resurrection. A spiritual body cannot rise until the death of a natural body, Hobbes argues. Therefore, there can be no “Spiritual Common-wealth” for those who are still alive.

Again, Hobbes argues that the Pope can claim no spiritual authority over Christians of other common-wealths while they are still alive. In their earthly existence, Christians are beholden to their earthly sovereign only, not the Pope or even God. One’s spiritual authority only has power over them once a subject has died.



Cardinal Bellarmine also argues that it is unlawful for Christians to obey a heretical king, and that the Pope has the authority to decide what constitutes heresy. Hobbes claims this argument is categorically false. It goes against the Law of Nature for subjects of a common-wealth to disobey their sovereign power. Furthermore, it is the sovereign power, not the Pope, who has the authority to decide what is or isn’t considered heretical in a common-wealth.

Again, according to the Laws of Nature, only a sovereign has the power to decide what is heretical. The Laws of Nature also dictate that human beings must always obey their sovereign power. As God gave the Laws of Nature to humankind, Hobbes implies that Bellarmine’s claims of the Pope’s absolute power violate God’s laws as well as the Laws of Nature.



Hobbes examines several more examples of the Holy Scripture offered by Cardinal Bellarmine to prove his argument, and Hobbes’s conclusion each time is the same. A Pope can never have absolute power over people, unless he is also the sovereign power of a common-wealth. And, perhaps most importantly, a Pope can never have dominion over another sovereign power or the people residing in said sovereign’s common-wealth.

This passage recaps the heart of Hobbes’s argument: the Pope does not have authority over those outside his own common-wealth. For example, the Pope does not have dominion over the Christians of England, nor does the Pope have dominion over England’s sovereign, even if that sovereign is a Christian.



CHAPTER 43: OF WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR A MANS RECEPTION INTO THE KINGDOME OF HEAVEN

The most frequent cause of civil unrest and war in Christian common-wealths arises from the difficulty that comes from trying to obey God *and* a sovereign power when their laws are contradictory to one another. Many people believe that when two commands are received, and one of them comes from God, God must be obeyed—even if that command goes against the sovereign power. The trick to avoiding such difficulty, Hobbes maintains, is knowing what is and is not necessary for one's acceptance into Christ's Kingdome.

The command of a sovereign power can be obeyed without forfeiting one's salvation. To disobey the sovereign for any reason is unjust, Hobbes argues, and his own proof is again Holy Scripture: "Servants obey your Masters in all things." Therefore, to avoid punishment in this world *and* the next, it is best to obey one's sovereign power.

There are but two virtues required for salvation and acceptance into Christ's Kingdome. The first is to have faith in Christ, and the second is to obey laws. Hobbes argues that each and every human being is disobedient in some way, beginning with Adam's disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Thus, all that is really necessary to ensure one's salvation is faith in Christ. Heaven is shut only to sinners. Those who are disobedient and repent are granted entrance to Christ's Kingdome.

Next, Hobbes considers whom Christians must have faith in to ensure their salvation. Moses and the other prophets had faith in God, and the Apostles and the Disciples had faith in Christ. Afterwards, people believed in the words of Moses, and they had faith in what Moses said as Christ's "Supreme Pastor." In a common-wealth, Hobbes says, the sovereign power is the "Supreme Pastor." Different people believe any given religious doctrine or piece of Holy Scripture for different reasons. Faith is God's gift, and it works differently in everyone.

Hobbes implies that it isn't necessary for one's salvation to always obey God over their sovereign power. Instead, Hobbes argues one can hold their sovereign power above God without offending God. Hobbes repeatedly argues that God commanded all Christians through the Apostles to obey their earthly sovereigns, which means obeying one's sovereign even when a sovereign's law goes against God.



In situations in which a sovereign's will goes against God's, Christians usually want to obey God; however, Hobbes argues doing so is actually the greater offense in God's eyes. God commanded all Christians to obey their sovereigns, and they must always do so.



Salvation, or entrance into Christ's Kingdome, is granted to all Christians who believe in Christ and repent their sins. Hobbes repeatedly illustrates that the subject of a common-wealth can be commanded by a sovereign to follow certain laws (even if those laws are against God); however, a sovereign cannot force a subject to believe or disbelieve in God.



Hobbes again implies that there is not a universal definition of faith that all people follow. Different people have faith in different pieces of Holy Scripture for different reasons. For example, Hobbes finds more authority in in the scripture of the Old Testament, but many others find the same authority in the New Testament. These differences are a matter of individual faith and cannot be reconciled.



In Christian faith, the Bible is considered the “Word of God,” but the reasons why the Bible is believed to be the “Word of God” differ greatly and are quite disputed. It is reasonable to say that Christians do not *know* that Holy Scripture is the “Word of God”; they *believe* that Holy Scripture is the “Word of God,” which means they also believe in God. Hobbes again quotes Holy Scripture, this time Romans 10:14-15: “*How shall they beleeve in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they Preach, except they be sent?*” The answer for Hobbes is faith. Faith allows one to believe in that which they cannot prove.

Teaching Holy Scripture is often the cause of faith, but not everyone who is taught Holy Scripture believes. Again, Hobbes claims that faith is God’s gift, and God does not give it to everyone. Therefore, Hobbes argues, the only virtue necessary for salvation and entry into Christ’s Kingdome is the faith that “JESUS IS THE CHRIST.” This, too, is reflected in Holy Scripture. In John 11:26, Christ says: “*Whosoever liveth and bleeveth in mee, shall not die eternally.*”

There is, of course, the “Allegorical” parts of Holy Scripture that claim that “*They shall be saved, but so as by fire, or through fire.*” But, Hobbes says, there is nothing in Holy Scripture that defines the fires of Hell as an actual place. Hobbes points out that it may also be reasonable for one to say that belief in God’s omnipotence and his role as creator is every bit as important to salvation as belief that Jesus is the Christ. To counter such an assumption, Hobbes maintains that God’s omnipotence and the creation is implied within one’s belief in Jesus. One cannot possibly believe that Christ is the Messiah without also believing Christ is the son of the all-powerful God.

Next, Hobbes cites several passages of Holy Scripture that reflect his argument that faith and obedience are necessary for salvation and entrance into Christ’s Kingdom. He begins with Acts 2:37: “*Repent, and be Baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” He also cites Mark 1:15: “*The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdome of God is at hand, Repent and Beleeve the Evangile.*”

Like many branches of philosophy, Hobbes argues that questions involving religion and faith can never be answered with any real certainty and will always rely largely on opinion. As Holy Scripture can never in itself be considered fact, the power of a sovereign is required to make any piece of Holy Scripture into civil law.



Again, Hobbes reiterates that the only thing necessary for a Christian to gain entrance into Christ’s Kingdome is a belief in Christ. In other words, one’s salvation is not dependent upon obeying God over the sovereign when the sovereign’s will conflicts with God’s. In such cases, a Christian should obey the sovereign—they will still be admitted to Christ’s Kingdome as long as they are true believers.



This passage further reduces all other arguments regarding the requirements of salvation into Hobbes’s opinion that a belief in Christ is all that is needed to gain entrance into Christ’s Kingdome. As God’s power is implied in the belief in Christ, Hobbes maintains that belief in God is not explicitly required. The belief in Hell is not needed to gain entrance into Christ’s Kingdome either, Hobbes implies, because there is no real evidence to suggest Hell exists in the first place.



In both passages Hobbes cites, the belief in Christ is all that is needed for salvation. To repent and be baptized is to believe in Christ and accept him as one’s savior, which ensures their entrance into Christ’s Kingdome. In these biblical passages, there is no mention of obeying God, only the belief in Christ.



It is possible to reconcile one's obedience to God with their obedience to their sovereign power, even if that sovereign is not a Christian. If one's sovereign is a Christian, such a sovereign already allows Holy Scripture and likely considers it law. Furthermore, obedience to civil laws is commanded by the Laws of Nature, which are the Laws of God. But, supposing a Christian sovereign misinterprets Holy Scripture and passes a law that is contrary to God's Word, obeying a sovereign over God will not hinder one's salvation. St. Paul said everyone must obey their teachers and follow commands; however, St. Paul also said that one must only believe a "lawfull Teacher." If a sovereign's interpretation of a Holy Scripture is against the Law of God, that teacher is not lawful and need not be believed, even if they must be obeyed.

And if the sovereign power is not a Christian, one can still obey the sovereign without offending God, even if that sovereign requires subjects to publicly renounce God. Faith is "internall, and invisible," Hobbes says, and God does not expect one to put their life on the line to prove their faith to nonbelievers.

Again, Hobbes argues that a sovereign power must always be obeyed over God, even if the sovereign's will is against God's. To obey a sovereign who goes against the will of God is not to disobey God, Hobbes contends. On the contrary, since God commanded all Christians obey their earthly sovereigns, this includes obeying a sovereign that is technically wrong. To obey a sovereign who does not believe in God does not mean that a subject must also reject God.



A Christian subject can follow a non-Christian sovereign and still believe in Christ. A sovereign has the power to make and enforce laws, but they do not have the power to dictate faith. Faith is a gift from God and cannot be infringed upon by any earthly power. Furthermore, the Laws of Nature (which are given by God) ensure that one cannot be forced to put their life on their line to believe one thing or another.



CHAPTER 44: OF SPIRITUALL DARKNESS FROM MISINTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE

There is another king of power named in Holy Scripture that is neither civil nor divine. Holy Scripture refers to the "Power of Darkness," such as "the Rulers of the Darknesse of the world," "the Kingdome of Satan," and "the Principality of Beelzebub over Dæmons." This Darkness, like Hell, is allegorical, and Hobbes defines it as: "a Confederacy of Deceivers, that to obtain dominion over men in this present world, endeavor by dark, and erroneous Doctrines, to extinguish in the them the Light, both of Nature, and the Gospell; as so to dis-prepare them for the Kingdome of God to come."

The modern church, Hobbes says, is not yet out of darkness, and he claims there are four major causes. First, darkness is caused by "putting out the light of Scripture," which is the ignorance of Holy Scripture. Secondly, darkness is caused by the "Dæmonology of the Heathen Poets," who write of demons, and ghosts, and fairies. The third cause of darkness is mixing Holy Scripture with the philosophies of the ancient Greeks, particularly Aristotle. Fourth, darkness is caused by mixing false traditions with dubious history. In this chapter, Hobbes will first talk of the abuse of Holy Scripture.

The "Power of Darkness" is another metaphor, much like the metaphor of Hell and the Devil. The "Power of Darkness," according to Hobbes, is anything, or anyone, who threatens to put out the true light of God. This "darkness" can exist in people who actively work against God's will, or it can involve the misinterpretation of scripture, which Hobbes contends is widespread across Christendom.



Again, Hobbes argues that most Christians misinterpret Holy Scripture, which throws Christianity into darkness. Throughout Leviathan, Hobbes offers alternative interpretations of scripture that he believes will help to lift Christianity out of this darkness. He also hopes to lift Christianity out of darkness by correcting the biased philosophies of Aristotle and revealing the true course of biblical history. Furthermore, Hobbes categorically disagrees with "Heathen Poets" who perpetuate false ideas about demons and the Devil.



The “greatest, and main abuse” of Holy Scripture is the belief that the Kingdome of God is the Church, which Hobbes has already demonstrated is false. The Kingdome of God began with the Jews and God’s covenant with his “Peculiar People.” There has not been another common-wealth on Earth with God as the sovereign power since the Jews were freed from their captivity in Egypt. The Kingdome of God will not appear until the Second Coming, and the only covenant Christians belong to now is with their sovereign power.

The erroneous belief that the Church is God’s Kingdome leads to a belief there is a single person or persons through whom Christ speaks from Heaven and gives laws to all of Christendom. This person is commonly known as the Pope, and the institution of the Pope is the cause of yet another erroneous belief—that a Christian monarch must be crowned by a bishop for their power to be official. Yet another erroneous belief is that all pastors, deacons, and ministers are each “Clergy,” and that their maintenance must be kept through tithes and offerings. This leads the people of a common-wealth to pay double taxes—one to the common-wealth and one to the Clergy.

From the mistaken belief that the Church is God’s Kingdome comes the distinction between civil laws and canonical laws. Civil law is the work of a sovereign, whereas canon is law passed by the Pope in the very same common-wealth. Yet another abuse of Holy Scripture is mistaking consecration for conjuration. In Holy Scripture, the word “Consecrate” is to “Offer, Give, or Dedicate,” which is not the same as conjuring some spirit through seemingly holy practices. For example, consider transubstantiation—“*This is my Body*” and “*This is my Blood*.” Wine and bread are supposedly turned to blood and flesh by way of a charm performed by a minister, but transubstantiation was not establish until the reign of Innocent III (1198-1216 CE).

There are many texts that contain these errors and mistaken beliefs, Hobbes explains, such as the works of Cardinal Bellarmine. Included in this list of erroneous texts are the works of Theodore Beza, although it is less clear whom Beza considers the supreme ecclesiastical power. Beza maintains that the Kingdome of God began with Christ’s Resurrection, and he uses Mark 9:1 to argue his point: “*Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not tast of death, till they have seene the Kingdome of God come with power.*” But, Hobbes says, all this scripture proves is that the Kingdome of God is not of the present world.

Hobbes implies here that widespread misinterpretation of scripture and the belief that the present-day Christian Church is God’s Kingdome is the number one abuse of Holy Scripture that has thrown Christianity into darkness. Hobbes makes this point several times, but it is nevertheless important—a Christian’s obligation to God begins after the Second Coming. Prior to the Second Coming, a Christian is obligated to their sovereign power.



Hobbes argues earlier that only a minister has the ecclesiastical power to preach and teach God’s Word, which implies only ministers, not lesser officers like pastors or deacons, should rely on the tithes and offerings of a congregation. Expecting a congregation to maintain all officers is excessive, Hobbes implies, and is a strain on the common-wealth. Hobbes’s primary argument, however, is that the Pope should not have power over a sovereign in any capacity. To allow the Pope such power is to diminish the common-wealth and further thrust Christianity into darkness.



Canonical laws as they are passed by the Pope can never be instituted in a common-wealth where the Pope is not also the sovereign power. Only the sovereign has the power to make a law, even if that law comes from Holy Scripture. Thus, canonical law can have no real authority in a common-wealth that does not already belong to the Pope. Hobbes again implies that the Christian practice of transubstantiation is nonsense and does not come from God. In Hobbes’s view, Holy Communion can only be bread and wine dedicated or offered in the name of Christ, it can never be magically transformed into Christ’s blood and body by a minister.



Theodore Beza was a French Protestant and theologian who lived in the 1500s. Beza was active during the Protestant Reformation, and, like Hobbes, he did not believe in the ecclesiastical power of the Pope. While Beza’s argument aligns more with Hobbes’s own argument, all Beza really proves is that Christ’s Kingdome is not of this Earth. Beza does not, like Bellarmine and Hobbes, acknowledge who the supreme ecclesiastical power is.



Hobbes moves on to consecration in Holy Scripture, another abuse that he claims has nothing to do whatsoever with exorcism. For instance, when Solomon, the first King of Israel, consecrated his temple, he stood before the people of Israel, blessed them, thanked God, and then prayed unto the people that they might accept his temple. Never anywhere is there any mention of excising ghosts or evil spirits.

Next, Hobbes considers the separation of soul and body, after which the soul lives in eternal life. There are different places in Holy Scripture that prove this argument, such a Solomon's words in Ecclesiastes 12:7, "*Then shall the Dust return to Dust, as it was, and the Spirit shall return to God that gave it,*" or Ecclesiastes 9:5, "*The living know they shall die, but the dead know not any thing.*"

In the New Testament, eternal life is often attributed to the sinners. "*Everlasting fire, Everlasting torments, Everlasting punishments,*" which Hobbes also dismisses, so he stops to revisit what he has already shown to be true. First, the Kingdome of God, or the Kingdome of Christ (which Christ rules by God's order), will not begin until Judgement Day, on which day those who are faithful to Christ will rise again in their "spirituall Bodies" and be Christ's subjects for all eternity. In Eternal life, the saved will not eat, drink, marry, or feel any desire of the flesh, and they will live in everlasting joy.

On Judgement Day, the righteous who still live will immediately transform into their "spirituall Bodies" and join the others in Christ's Kingdome, wherever that may be. However, nowhere in Holy Scripture does it indicate that sinners who do not repent or those who deny Christ are ever turned into a spiritual Body. "*Eternal Torments*" are spoken of in generalities of fire and death. Therefore, on Judgement Day, it can be assumed that the wicked will be left to "live as they did," giving into hunger, thirst, and other desires and needs of the flesh, while the believers live in eternal bliss and happiness.

When St. Paul speaks of the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians, he says the body is "*Sown in Corruption, raised in Incorruption; sown in Dishonor, raised in Honour; sown in Weaknesse, raised in Power; sown a Natturall body, raised a Spirituall body.*" But, Hobbes says, the same is not said for bodies sent for punishment. Upon this absence scripture is the founding of Purgatory, as it is argued by Cardinal Bellarmine.

In Christianity, especially Catholicism, consecration is associated with exorcism, or the conjuring of an evil spirit through holy practices. Hobbes implies that this is a misinterpretation that thrusts Christianity into darkness. True consecration is to offer something or someone in the name of God, not the excision of an evil spirit.



Again, Hobbes argues that the spirit can only exist after the body had died and entered into eternal life in God's Kingdome, which cannot happen until Christ's second coming. Thus, an earthly body cannot be held to the spiritual power of God or Christ.



In Hobbes's view, only those who repent and believe in Christ are given everlasting life in Christ's Kingdome. Sinners are held in a different state. One's spiritual body rises in Christ's Kingdome only if one is saved. As a spiritual body, all desires of the flesh—hunger, thirst, and lust—all fade and the subject lives an eternal life free from carnal desires. This freedom from the desires of the flesh is the everlasting joy Hobbes speaks of.



Again, since sinners do not repent and profess their belief in Christ, sinners are not transformed into their spiritual bodies on Judgement Day. Thus, a sinner is not given eternal life with freedom from carnal pleasures, and this is essentially their punishment. Sinners live their life as before, and when their life is over, their soul does not live on in eternity. There is not, Hobbes contends, some literal Hell in which sinners burn for all eternity.



Hobbes implies that Bellarmine's argument is weak and depends on assumption rather than fact. As those who are saved are held in eternal joy in Christ's Kingdome, Bellarmine assumes that sinners are held in eternal torture, but Hobbes maintains there is no scripture to support this assertion.



Cardinal Bellarmine alleges other places within the New Testament that also prove the existence of Purgatory. For example, Matthew 12:32. “Whosoever speaketh a word against the Sonne of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, nor in the world to come.” This passage goes a long way to proving Hobbes’s claim that the Kingdome of God is not of this world; however, it does not prove the existence of Purgatory or indicate a specific place.

Another piece of Holy Scripture thought by Bellarmine and others to prove the existence of Purgatory is I Corinthians, in which it says: “They themselves shall be saved; but as through Fire.” It is assumed that the “Fire” here is Purgatory, however these words are but an allusion to Zechariah 13:9, which speaks of the power of the Messiah, not Purgatory. There is also Matthew 13:9. “I will bring the third art through the Fire, and will Refine them.” But this passage, too, refers to Judgement Day and the power of Christ the Messiah, not Purgatory.

Hobbes ultimately argues that Hell is a metaphor, and its existence cannot be proven in the scripture cited by Cardinal Bellarmine. In fact, Hobbes argues that Bellarmine’s selected scripture proves Hobbes’s theory before it proves his own, and it is further evidence of the misinterpretation of Holy Scripture that thrusts Christianity into darkness.



Again, Hobbes maintains that interpretations of Hell and Purgatory in Holy Scripture are merely misinterpretations of Christ’s power on Judgement Day. Thus, Hell and Purgatory (Purgatory being some literal place one goes while awaiting entrance to Heaven) are merely metaphorical and do not exist in this world or the next.



CHAPTER 45: OF DÆMONOLOGY, AND OTHER RELIQUES OF THE RELIGION OF THE GENTILES

Demons are the immaterial spirits or ghosts of the dead, and Demonology is the study of such spirits by priests, poets, and philosophers. The word “Dæmon” has been around for ages and was used by Hesiod and the ancient poets. Early on, the word demon included the ghosts of both good and evil spirits, but now the word generally denotes an evil spirit that is possessed by the Devil. From Holy Scripture, it can be gathered that the Jews believed demons to be real, and not simply “Idols of the braine.”

If demons and ghosts do not exist, it is reasonable to ask why Christ didn’t just say so, but Hobbes has an answer for this, too. When Christ says, “A Spirit hath not flesh and bone,” he shows there are spirits, but he doesn’t necessarily deny they have bodies—only that those bodies are not made of flesh and bone. Furthermore, when St. Paul says: “We shall rise Spirituall Bodies,” he, too, implies a ghost has an actual body.

If Christ speaks to the Devil and commands him to exit the body of a person, and by “the Devil,” Christ means some infirmity or disease such as lunacy, this speech is not improper. But it is improper to speak of “the Devil” as some sort of ghost or spirit without a body. Holy Scripture, in fact, does not even teach that spirits are incorporeal in the first place. For instance, in Matthew 4:1, when God descends upon Christ as a Dove, Christ is “led up by the Spirit into the Wilderness.” The “Spirit” here is the Holy Ghost, and since Christ and the Holy Ghost are one and the same (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit), the “Spirit” here is not incorporeal.

Hesiod was a Greek poet who lived around 700 BCE, therefore demonology has nothing whatsoever to do with Christ or Christianity specifically. Hobbes believe demons, ghosts, and evil spirits to be “Idols of the braine,” which means such spirits are imagination only. The Jews did believe in demons and evil spirits, but Hobbes does not mean to say this is proof of their existence.



Christ does not simply say that demons and ghosts do not exist because God gave each human being reason, and he expects them to use it. God did not explicitly state every little thing he wanted humans to know. Instead, God game humans the ability to decipher for themselves what is true and what is false.



For Hobbes, a spiritual body must have mass and take up space, otherwise it cannot be rightly called a body. Since the Devil is a metaphor, it is not improper to speak of the Devil like some sort of disease or infirmity, but it’s impossible to claim that the Devil exists without some sort of tangible body. Any spirit rightly has some tangible body, Hobbes contends, including the Holy Spirit, and to claim otherwise is to misinterpret Holy Scripture and lead Christianity into metaphorical darkness and ignorance.



Hobbes's next example is St. Luke, who says of Judas Iscariot that "*Satan entered into him, and thereupon that he went and communed with the Chief Priests, and Captaines, how he might betray Christ unto them.*" But the word "Satan" here is meant as merely the "Enemy," who metaphorically enters Judas and makes him hostile and disloyal to Christ.

God did not expressly state "Immateriall Spirits" and possession of one's body by another spiritual body do not exist because he left human beings to exercise their own "Industry, and Reason" to come to the same conclusions. Still, a belief in incorporeal sprits persists in the Church. However, if one looks back to the "Primitive Church," they will find that that the "Casting out of Devills" was much different. In the "Primitive Church," the "Casting out of Devills" was done onto the insane. Thus, demons come not from a "change of Nature; but of Names."

Hobbes also considers the worshiping of images not instituted by Moses in the Old Testament or by Christ in the New Testament as another relic of the Gentiles. St. Paul says, "*Wee know that an Idol is Nothing,*" but Gentiles are fond of such images. Such images that pass for idols include the Cherubs often superimposed over the Ark of God. There are no Cherubs in the Old or New Testaments, yet people worship such images as religious. Hobbes has already defined "Honor" as outward acts of admiration and obedience, and he now defines "Worship" as the inward acts that achieve the same ends. For example, to fear or desire someone is a form of worship.

Next, Hobbes defines idolatry, which is to worship and honor an image as if that image is a body with a soul. If one bows to a king in civil worship and recognizes the power said king has over his subjects, this is not idolatry. However, if that same person bows to the king and asks him for good weather, this is idolatry, as only God has the power to affect the weather. If a king forces a subject to worship an image under pain of death, this is not idolatry either, since a king cannot force a subject to genuinely honor anything.

Again, Hobbes argues that Satan did not literally enter into Judas. Just as God cannot enter into another, neither can the Devil. However, the presence of the Devil can exist metaphorically, which is not to say the Devil is an actual body that exists in the same way as God or Christ.



Again, Hobbes argues that God's gift of reason is the trick to understanding what is true within Holy Scripture and that which is meant to be a metaphor. The "Primitive Church" is the Church as it existed in the Old Testament, and in the Old Testament, the Devil is viewed as a metaphor, like the cause of mental illness, not an actual spirit that can be infused into another.



Like Demonology, Hobbes considers worshiping certain images a leftover practice from early poets and non-Christians. Hobbes argues that such images, like the images of Cherubs, have nothing to do with God, and their worship is therefore idolatrous. Praying before a Cherub is not worship in the true sense of the word; however, Hobbes maintains that fearing the power of God or Christ is an acceptable form of worship.



In Hobbes's view, it is idolatry to worship any image in a spiritual way that is not approved by God—and these approved images have already been given to the people through Moses and Christ. Thus, the worship of any other image is unauthorized and idolatrous.



When Aaron made the Golden Calf for religious use and presented it to the people without God or Moses's authority, this, too, was idolatry. Gentiles throughout history have worshiped Jupiter and others as gods, which is also idolatry since such gods were made by humans, not God. The same can also be said of the Eucharist, or Holy Communion. If by the words "This is my Body," Christ meant all bread everywhere blessed by a Priest is his body, it is not idolatry. But since no mention of turning Christ's body into bread can be found anywhere else in Holy Scripture, the Eucharist is created by humans and is therefore idolatry.

Next, Hobbes discusses the worship of Saints and relics, which can be found in the Church of Rome to this day. Hobbes maintains that Saints and relics are not included in God's Word; thus, they are also a "humane institution." Again, God never mentioned Cherubs or a "Brazen Serpent," but he did say: "Thou shalt not make thy selfe any graven Image." This brings the painting of angels and even God himself into question, since there is no way of knowing what God or his angels look like. Painted images of God and angels are not idols, but imagination, and they can only be used to worship God.

Hobbes argues that idolatry is all over the Roman Church in the form of statues and images of Saints, Apostles, and the Virgin Mary. Pastors have allowed this practice to continue because they hope that they, too, will be made into an image and worshipped as a Saint after their death. The Canonizing of Saints, which is another relic of Gentiles, has been practiced since Rome was an ancient common-wealth. Another practice of the "Roman Heathen" is the "PONTIFEX MAXIMUS," which bestows the Pope with supreme authority and robs the sovereign of power.

The Greeks and Romans also carried "Images in Procession," which means they carried their Idols around on a chariot, just as is done today with Popes who are carried on a platform under a canopy. Involved in these processions is the burning of candles and torches before godly images. Caligula, for example, was carried from Misenum to Rome, along with burning torches and animals offered up for sacrifice. Other religious practices of "Heathens" include "Holy Water," "Saturnalia," and dancing around "May-poles," none of which can be rightly termed as God's Word.

This section also outlines Holy Scripture that has been largely misinterpreted and therefore further thrusts Christianity into darkness. It is easy to see that Aaron's use of the Golden Calf was idolatry, but Hobbes contends the popular interpretation of Holy Communion is idolatry as well, a particularly controversial statement in Hobbes's day or even contemporary times. As Holy Communion was invented by humankind and not instituted by Moses or Christ, it is technically idolatry.



Catholic churches, which exist under the dominion of the Church of Rome, each have a relic that is worshiped like God, and such relics are usually the physical remains of a Saint. As Hobbes contends that most Saints, or prophets, are not true prophets, it is likely that the relic being worship in any given Catholic church is not really holy, which makes the relic and the Saint idolatrous, like any "graven Image" not authorized by God, such as Cherubs or snakes.



Hobbes equates the supreme power of the Pope and the Canonizing of Saints as additional relics of "heathen" Gentiles that are not rooted in the power of God. As the power of the Pope and that used to Canonize Saints does not come directly from God, it does not carry any Christian authority, and this false power cannot under any circumstances trump the power of the sovereign of a common-wealth.



Hobbes attributes much of the pomp and circumstance surrounding the Pope to "Heathen" practices, which means such practices come from Gentiles (non-Christians), not from God. In this way, Hobbes dismisses the supposed absolute power of the Pope, just as Hobbes dismisses other Christian practices which have no basis in God's Word, like blessing someone with Holy Water or Saturnalia, a Roman festival and precursor to Christmas.



CHAPTER 46: OF DARKNESS FROM VAIN PHILOSOPHY, AND FABULOUS TRADITIONS

Philosophy is knowledge that comes from reasoning, like a Geometrician's study of lines and figures, or an Astronomer's study of the sun and stars. Philosophy does not include knowledge that comes from experience or prudence, as such knowledge comes from memory not reason. A false conclusion is not philosophy, nor is any supernatural revelation. Philosophy is not merely the studying of books on a certain topic; it must include the observation of cause-and-effect relationships.

Philosophy has been around for ages in many civilizations. The "Savages of America" have good morals and even use basic mathematics, but this does not make them philosophers. The Athenians in Greece were known to publicly debate philosophy, and philosophers each had a specific public place where they debated with others. Plato had public walks known as "Academia," and Aristotle used the Temple of Lyceum. From Athens, this philosophical discourse spread across Europe and Africa to nearly every common-wealth.

But not all philosophy came from Athens. Geometry, for instance, did not originate with Plato, although he only allowed students into his school if they were already Geometricians. As all of Nature works by motion, and one cannot expect to understand Nature without an understanding of lines and shapes. The moral philosophy of the Athenians, however, was but "their own Passions," and their logic was nothing but "Captions of Words." The most absurd examples of ancient philosophy, according to Hobbes, are Aristotle's *Metaphysiques*, his *Politiques*, and his *Ethiques*.

Now, Hobbes turns to the particular "Tenants of Vain Philosophy" that universities and churches espouse, which are rooted partly in Aristotle and partly in poor understanding. According to Hobbes, all philosophies must rely on a "Philosophia prima," which are accepted definitions of certain things, like "Body, Time, Place, Matter, Forme, [...] Quality, Motion, Action, Passion," and many other things relating to Nature. The explanations and definitions of such things is called Metaphysics, most of which is according to Aristotle, who argued objects have "Abstract Essences, and Substantiall Formes."

To understand the way in which Aristotle employs "Essences Abstract, or Substantiall Formes," one must first understand exactly what these words signify. An abstract essence does not have a body of substance, whereas any form that is substantial must have some sort of tangible body. Thus, to say "a Man, is, a living Body" is to say that the man and body are one and the same, not two separate entities (one made of substance, the other of an abstract essence).

As philosophy must include the observation of cause-and-effects relationships and not just the study of books, a philosopher is not merely someone who takes the word of previous philosophers (like Aristotle) without looking for their own conclusions. To blindly accept previous philosophers' theories is to further thrust Christianity into darkness.



Hobbes considers Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies to be particularly damaging to Christianity, and he therefore implies their philosophies in particular should be approached with caution and skepticism. The Western world is saturated in their philosophies, however, and weeding it out is time consuming and complicated.



Again, Hobbes believes the Aristotle's philosophy in particular is absurd and damaging to Christian common-wealths. Hobbes considers Aristotle's and Plato's philosophies particularly absurd when compared to geometry's sound theories. Still, Aristotle's philosophies (which are nothing but opinion and Aristotle's own passions and emotions) are taught over geometry, which is the basis for all of nature.



In this section, Hobbes implies that the misinterpretation of Holy Scripture (like the belief in incorporeal substances, for example) is rooted in Aristotle's philosophies, which are espoused far and wide in universities and churches. These false philosophies contribute to the darkness overtaking Christianity, and Hobbes hopes to correct these falsehoods and bring Christianity into the light.



Aristotle's idea of abstract essences and substantial forms aligns with understanding of incorporeal substances in Christianity. Just as Hobbes argues an incorporeal substance cannot exist, he likewise claims that an abstract essence of a substantial form cannot exist in the way Aristotle claims.



Using this idea of “*Separated Essences*” that is predicated on Aristotle’s false philosophy, citizens of common-wealths all over the world have been frightened into disobeying their sovereign power. It is from this very same philosophy that people believe the soul of a person who is long dead can be seen as a spectral ghost, that a piece of bread can be turned into the flesh of another through incantation, or that faith and wisdom can be “*poured into*” or “*blown into*” someone from Heaven. This, Hobbes says, is just a short list of the fallacies that have been brought to the church by Aristotle’s “*Essences*.”

Aristotle’s “*Essences*” laid the foundation for a whole host of additional incongruities to enter the Church. As such intangible substances are thought to be real, they need some place to be, which accounts for the invention of Hell and Purgatory. But how an object without substance can feel pain and torment in the fires of Hell is again incomprehensible. Motion is defined as a “*change of Place*,” yet an incorporeal substance cannot have “*place*,” as it does not have a physical body to take up space.

Aristotle’s accounting of time and eternity, too, makes little sense. The Greeks believed eternity to be the present time standing still, not an endless procession of time that goes on indefinitely without end. Aristotle’s philosophy also gave way to the belief that a body can be divided and be in multiple places at once. Physics, which is the knowledge of the natural causes of events, also has no place in Aristotle’s philosophy. Aristotelian logic professes heavy objects sink because of a desire to get to the center of the Earth, as if an object made of stone or metal can have passions and a favorite place of rest.

Aristotle’s understanding of the human senses also relies on “*Apparitions*” and “*Essences*,” neither of which can come into direct contact with any of the human sense organs. Aristotle’s moral and civil philosophy is even more ridiculous, Hobbes argues. For instance, if one breaks the law, this is not an injustice, because God made the law *and* caused the actions of the person who broke the law. Aristotle also argues there can never be general rules of good and bad because each person and their opinions are individual. This is not the case in a common-wealth, in which there is agreement on what is good and bad (lawful and unlawful) based on their shared covenant.

Another form of erroneous philosophy the Church practices is denying the Clergy the ability to marry. This rule does nothing but make marriage appear obscene and immoral and is likely based on a misinterpretation of Holy Scripture. Christ says that those in his Kingdome “*shall neither Marry, nor bee given in Marriage, but shall bee as the Angels in heaven*.” But this passage speaks of the spirit after Judgement Day, not of the body in this world.

In this section, Hobbes explicitly blames Aristotle for the misinterpretation of Holy Scripture. Without Aristotle’s philosophies to plant such absurd ideas, Hobbes argues Christians would not misinterpret Holy Scripture the way they often do. In correcting the falsehoods in Aristotle’s philosophies, Hobbes again hopes to also correct the misinterpretations of scripture that throw Christianity into darkness.



Hobbes again proves that Aristotle’s philosophies regarding the “essences” of objects are incorrect. Something that does not have a body cannot feel pain or endure torture, so it is impossible for a spiritual body to suffer eternally in Hell. Furthermore, since an “essence” does not take up space, it does not need to dwell in a literal place (Hell).



This section further discounts the philosophies of the ancient Greeks. Aristotle’s teacher, Plato, argues in several of his works that a body is made up of three souls, which Hobbes implies is the basis for the Christian belief that God is made up of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Hobbes instead argues that one person, even God, can never be three, and that the Holy Trinity more rightly refers to three separate and distinct people.



Hobbes says earlier that Aristotle argues the visual image of an object is made by a visual “apparition” or “essence,” but Hobbes again claims this is impossible. The human sense organs must come into contact with an object directly, not an “apparition” or “essence” of an object. In Hobbes’s opinion, humans cannot sense an “essence” or “apparition” because an essence has no mass or body with which to come into contact with the sense organs.



Again, Hobbes implies that popular Christian doctrine is rooted in a misinterpretation of Holy Scripture, not in God’s actual word. Just because a spirit is not subjected to the desires of the flesh does not mean that a priest is does not experience such desires, and Hobbes argues it is not God’s intention to deprive clergy of marriage and therefore sex.



According to Aristotle's civil philosophy, all common-wealths that are not democracies are governed by tyrants. In this vein, a monarch is a tyrant, and an aristocracy is a group of tyrants, and true liberty can only be achieved through democracy. This assumption is false, as Hobbes has already demonstrated that any government, including a democracy, can hold tyrannical power over the people.

It is also erroneous civil philosophy (although it was not learned from Aristotle or Cicero) to extend the law's power beyond actions to the private thoughts and consciences of individual people, as in done in the "Inquisition." In such circumstances, subjects of common-wealths are punished if they truthfully admit their thoughts (if those thoughts are contrary to the Inquisition), or they are forced to lie and admit that which they do not believe to avoid punishment.

Error is also the result when a private citizen, without the authority of the sovereign power of a common-wealth, independently interprets the law. This error wasn't drawn from Aristotle either, but it is still damaging to a common-wealth. And, Hobbes points out, there is no difference between Holy Scripture and civil law if the sovereign power has made Holy Scripture the law in a specific common-wealth. Errors in common-wealths also arise when anyone but the sovereign power decides when, and to whom, preaching of the Gospel is appropriate. For instance, if Hobbes is in America "amongst the Idolaters," should he have to wait for "Orders from Rome" to preach the true Gospel to them?

The last error Hobbes discusses is that of "false, or uncertain History," like the stories of miracles, ghosts, Hell, and Purgatory that make up the traditions of the Church. If such traditions are not reflected in God's Word, they can be nothing but old wives' tales. With the propagation of false tradition also comes the suppression of that which is true. In such cases, one who has neither authority nor education is held as a competent judge of truth. This suppression is absurd, and it has no rational reason. It is not possible for true philosophy to be contrary to religion if they are both true.

This section reflects Hobbes's primary argument that a monarchy is the best form of civil of government. Aristotle was biased and favored a democracy, but this does not mean a democracy is the best form of government.



Hobbes repeatedly argues that a sovereign power cannot force a subject to believe or disbelieve in God or Holy Scripture, yet this is exactly the practice that the Catholic Church employed during the Inquisition. During this time, subjects were forced to accept the power of the Pope under pain of death. This practice, according to Hobbes, violates God and the Law of Nature.



According to Hobbes, only the sovereign has the power to interpret laws, and only the sovereign has the power to interpret Holy Scripture and make said scripture into civil law. Thus, the Pope cannot be given authority to interpret laws or scripture in the common-wealth of another sovereign power, and to do so is to diminish the power of the sovereign and dissolve the common-wealth. Hobbes's reference to the "Idolaters" of America is an allusion to the Puritans who first colonized the country, and he implies that such Christians do not follow the true Word of God.



While Hobbes does not explicitly state it, he alludes here to the suppression of Galileo, an astronomer and mathematician who claimed the Earth revolves around the Sun. Galileo's claim was technically the truth, but since the Catholic Church believed God to be the center of the universe, not the sun, Galileo was deemed a heretic, imprisoned, and silenced. In this way, false history has also thrust Christianity into darkness.



CHAPTER 47: OF THE BENEFIT THAT PROCEEDETH FROM SUCH DARKNESSE, AND TO WHOM IT ACCREWETH

Cicero writes about a judge in ancient times who always asked criminals, “*Cui bono?*” The judge’s question asks what benefit the illegal action had for the accused criminal, and Hobbes applies this same question to the false religious doctrine that plagues Christendom. He first considers the incorrect belief that the Church is God’s Kingdome on Earth. It is through this belief that the Pope became “*Pontifex Maximus,*” and even after some churches renounced the Pope and became the Presbytery, they still kept the false doctrine of the church as God’s Kingdome. “*Cui bono?*” Hobbes asks. Because it benefits both the Roman and Presbyterian clergy, he answers.

The proof of this benefit to the clergy can be seen within the false doctrines themselves. For example, the infallibility of the Pope and the belief that the Pope cannot error obviously benefits the Pope. Clergymen are exempt from the laws of a common-wealth and are subjects of the Pope before the sovereign power; however, they are maintained by the common-wealth’s public coffers, which also benefits the clergy.

The belief that marriage is a holy sacrament that can be performed only by clergy allows the Church to decide which children are legitimate, and this subsequently allows the church to control the succession of kings, which again benefits the clergy. Holy Confession, too, benefits the clergy, as it gives the clergy “better intelligence” than the sovereign power. False belief in transubstantiation, absolution, Purgatory, demons, and exorcism also benefit the clergy, as such beliefs allow the Pope and other clergymen to gain more power through awe and fear.

Thus, by asking “*Cui bono,*” Hobbes is able to demonstrate that “the Authors of all this Spirituall Darknesse” are the Pope and clergy of both the Roman and Presbyterian churches. Teachers, too, can be named responsible, as the preaching of false doctrine is impossible without them. However, Hobbes mostly blames those who, in the beginning, used their power to push false doctrine and give false power to the Pope.

Hobbes argues that the clergy benefit from the false doctrine followed in both the Catholic and Presbyterian churches because such beliefs assume that the church assembly must maintain the clergy through charity and offerings. As such false doctrine supports the clergy financially, they have many reasons to allow it and perpetuate it.



As the clergy are also subjects of a common-wealth, Hobbes suggests that it isn’t fair for clergymen not to be held to the same sovereign power as the rest of the subjects, especially since the clergy is financially supported by the very same subjects. This practice does not adhere to the rules of equity within the Laws of Nature and is therefore against God’s will.



In this section, Hobbes specifically disproves those false beliefs that exist to benefit the clergy only. Such false beliefs are not rooted in the Word of God; thus, there is no reason for Christians as a whole to continue adhering to such doctrine. Observing false doctrine, Hobbes stresses, further thrusts Christianity into darkness and away from God’s true light.



In short, Hobbes blames the Catholic Church specifically for pushing the false power of the Pope. While the Presbyterian Church is complicit in propagating the false doctrine of God’s Kingdome on Earth, it was the Catholics in particular who threatened the power of Christian sovereigns with the absolute power of the Pope.



In the beginning, the people obeyed the Apostles because they revered them, not because they were obligated to do so. In the time after the Apostles, when the clergy assembled to decide what Holy Scripture to teach, they resolved to teach only that which was approved by their assemblies. This new clergy compelled Christians to believe their doctrine, and if anyone refused, they were excommunicated. This power that the clergy had over the people “was the first knot upon their Liberty.”

As the number of clergy increased, the head clergyman of any given city or province was given authority over the other clergymen and called a “Bishop,” which “was a second knot on Christian Liberty.” Then, the Bishop in Rome named himself “Pontifex Maximus” of all clergy and Christian sovereigns, and the “third and last knot” was tied. This process can also be seen in reverse through the dissolution of the power of the Roman Catholic Church in England.

First, Queen Elizabeth severed the Pope’s power over England. The bishops, who once derived their power from the Pope, functioned under the authority of the Queen, which “untied the first knot.” More recently, Hobbes says, the Presbyterians succeeded in the creation of Episcopacy, and this untied the second knot. Immediately afterward, this power was taken from the Presbyterians, and all that is left to follow are the “Primitive Christians,” which, Hobbes says, is probably best.

Following the religious doctrine of “Primitive Christians” is best because no power should be held over one’s conscience, except for the power of God. Furthermore, the doctrine of “Primitive Christians” is best because it is ridiculous to teach people the dangers of errors only to demand that the same people follow someone else’s reason and ignore their own God-given ability to do the same. True power can only be maintained through the same means it was attained—through “Wisdom, Humility, Clearness of Doctrine, and sincerity of Conversation.”

Power cannot be maintained by suppression of science and reason, nor can it be maintained by obscure language or holy frauds. From the time the Bishop in Rome declared himself supreme “by pretence of Succession to St. Peter,” the entire “Kingdom of Darknesse” can be rightly compared to a “Kingdom of Fairies,” like those found in English myths and old wives’ tales. In this vein, the Pope is little more than the “Ghost of the deceased Roman Empire,” as the Papacy was born “out of the Ruines of that Heathen Power.”

After the Apostles, Christians believed in the approved doctrine because they were forced to, not because they admired and honored the clergy as they did the Apostles. Since this belief was forced, Hobbes implies that it was not freely believed; thus, it “was the first knot upon [the people’s] Liberty.”



The authority given to city bishops over the other clergy was the first step in the creation of the Roman Pope, which ultimately affected the people’s freedom by diminishing the power of the sovereign. These “knots” were untied when the sovereign power of England officially rejected the power of the Pope.



Prior to Queen Elizabeth’s severing of the Pope’s power, England’s bishops derived their power from the Pope. In the absence of the Pope’s power, that power went back to Elizabeth and the commonwealth, and the same bishops derived their power from Elizabeth. The second knot was untied when Elizabeth’s father, Henry VIII, created the Episcopacy and abandoned the Catholic Church.



With the untying of the first and second knots, all that remains is the knot tied by the “Primitive Christians” of the Old Testament; however, Hobbes argues that this is how it should be. “Primitive Christians” of the Old Testament worshiped God for the right reasons—among them wisdom and humility—and Hobbes contends this is the best place to start to keep Christian doctrine out of the darkness.



Hobbes implies that the power of the Roman Catholic Church cannot be continued through the suppression of truth (like that expressed by Galileo), nor through the false power of the Pope. According to Hobbes, the Pope did not succeed from the same line as St. Peter, and the Pope’s power is therefore illegitimate. The Pope’s power comes from the “Heathen” beliefs of Gentiles, not the Word of God.



The Catholic Church uses Latin, a language that is not used by any other nation on Earth. And what is Latin, Hobbes asks, “but the Ghost of the Old Romane Language?” Another resemblance of the Papacy to the “Kingdome of Fairies” is that fairies, like Popes, only exist “in the Fancies of ignorant people.” Thus, it was not difficult for Henry VIII or Queen Elizabeth to be cast out by the Pope. However, Hobbes warns, “this Spirit of Rome” is still present England, since it is not only the Roman Church that believes God’s Kingdome is the Church. As long as this belief endures, it continues at the expense of the civil common-wealth.

Again, Hobbes implies that the Roman Catholic Church is rooted in the beliefs of Gentiles, not the Word of God. Hobbes’s proof is the Church’s use of a Roman language and its resemblance to fairytales rather than Holy Scripture. Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth were both excommunicated by the Pope, but since neither one of them recognized the power of the Pope in the first place, their excommunication was not difficult. However, as Protestants also believe the Christian Church is God’s Kingdome on Earth, earthly sovereigns and common-wealths will still be robbed of power as Christians will likely always believe God should be obeyed before their sovereign power.



A REVIEW, AND CONCLUSION

Sound reasoning is necessary in all discourse and discussion. Without reason, one’s conclusions are hasty and unfair. “Powerful Eloquence” is also necessary, without which reason has very little effect. According to Hobbes, “Reason, and Eloquence” can stand together, which is what he hopes he has done in writing this book. Regarding the Laws of Nature that Hobbes explains early in the book, he would like to also add that everyone is obligated by Nature to protect during war the same sovereign power they are protected by in peacetime.

In Hobbes’s review and conclusion, he quickly recaps his most important arguments and adds to them. A philosopher must be articulate and express their theories with “eloquence,” which is what Hobbes has attempted to do in Leviathan. Hobbes’s addition here of a subject’s obligation to protect their sovereign power again implies that a sovereign cannot be overthrown by subjects in a civil war.



And, due to some recently printed books about the English Civil War, Hobbes wants to remind everyone that a subject is obliged to a conqueror when—and only when—that subject freely submits to that conqueror and agrees to be their subject. A conquest is not victory in war; a conquest is winning power over the subjects of another sovereign power. Thus, if one is killed, they are not conquered, nor are they conquered if they are held prisoner in chains.

Here, Hobbes implies that those English subjects who did not support the English Civil War are not automatically beholden to the sovereign power instituted by the parliamentarians. As this government was not instituted through a covenant with the people, it is illegitimate.



In Chapter 29, Hobbes discusses the causes of the dissolution of a common-wealth, to which he would like add that people will always justify the war that brings their power. A tyrant is nothing more than a name for a sovereign power, whether that power is one person or many people. Hobbes believes that to tolerate a hatred of tyranny is simply to tolerate a hatred of common-wealths, and he argues it is another “evill seed” on the maintenance of civil society.

Many believe that since the sovereign power of the parliamentarians is an assembly of people (Parliament), this form of government cannot be tyrannical. Hobbes disagrees and again reiterates that a tyrant can be either a single person or an assembly of people.



Hobbes has demonstrated that the Jews and God entered into a covenant in which God was made their sovereign power by contract. The Jews were God's "Peculiar People" and differed from others on Earth because God ruled them by consent, not by his natural power. In God's Kingdome, Moses was Lieutenant on Earth and was appointed by God to punish those who broke the rules.

In a common-wealth, the punishment of those who break the law is usually executed by someone appointed by the sovereign power, like a guard or soldier; however, in Israel, the people executed the punishment, usually by stoning, and it was always the witnesses that threw the first stone. This practice ensured that all witnesses were heard before an accused criminal was punished.

In Chapter 36, Hobbes says it is not known in what manner God spoke to Moses. However, Hobbes does not mean to say that God *did not* speak to Moses through visions or dreams. What Hobbes means is that God could not have spoken to Moses in a "Face to Face" or "Mouth to Mouth" way, as one cannot possibly understand the infinite and raw power that is "Divine Nature."

As for Hobbes's use of Holy Scripture and doctrine, he believes his principles are sound and his rationale is solid, as he has grounded sovereigns' rights and subjects' obligation and freedom according to the Law of Nature, which no one should be ignorant of. There is nothing in Hobbes's entire book that he considers to be contrary to God's Word, proper manners, or the public good. Thus, he believes his philosophy should be taught in all universities to counter the civil and moral doctrine of the Gentiles.

Again, Hobbes makes it clear that the Jews as God's "Peculiar People" had a covenant with God above and beyond the natural power God has over all human beings. Thus, God was also their sovereign power, which cannot be said about any other common-wealth on Earth. Thus, one always has an obligation to obey their sovereign above God.



Not only did this practice in Israel ensure that all witnesses were heard before a criminal was punished, it also ensured that innocents were not punished. As witnesses were tasked with throwing the first stone, if there are no witnesses (or victims), there was no crime to punish.



Once again, Hobbes does not mean to imply that God did not speak to Moses whatsoever, he simply means that God could not have spoken to Moses in the traditional way. Thus, Hobbes does not reject religion and God, he only rejects Christian doctrine as it is usually interpreted.



Many people in Hobbes's day considered his treatment of Holy Scripture and doctrine blasphemous, but Hobbes argues this is only due to the broader misinterpretation of Holy Scripture. Hobbes's interpretation of scripture is rooted in the Laws of Nature, which are God's laws and cannot be sacrilegious. As this is merely a case of false interpretation—of Holy Scripture and past philosophies—Hobbes offers his own to correct this gross misinterpretation.





HOW TO CITE

To cite this LitChart:

MLA

Rosewall, Kim. "Leviathan." *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 21 Apr 2020. Web. 29 Apr 2020.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Rosewall, Kim. "Leviathan." LitCharts LLC, April 21, 2020. Retrieved April 29, 2020. <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/leviathan>.

To cite any of the quotes from *Leviathan* covered in the Quotes section of this LitChart:

MLA

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Penguin. 1985.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. London: Penguin. 1985.