

# Leviathan

by Thomas Hobbes

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## Summary:

Leviathan, written by Thomas Hobbes in 1651, is a philosophical treatise on the structure of society and legitimate government. Hobbes argues that the only way to avoid the dangerous and chaotic state of nature is to submit to the authority of an absolute sovereign. He believes that the only way to ensure peace and security is to create a strong central government with the power to enforce laws and maintain order. Hobbes also argues that the sovereign should have absolute power, and that citizens should be willing to give up some of their freedoms in order to ensure the stability of the state.

Hobbes begins by describing the state of nature, which he believes is a state of war. He argues that in this state, there is no justice or morality, and that individuals are driven by their own selfish desires. He believes that in this state, life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." He then argues that the only way to escape this state is to create a strong central government with the power to enforce laws and maintain order. He believes that this government should have absolute power, and that citizens should be willing to give up some of their freedoms in order to ensure the stability of the state.

Hobbes then goes on to discuss the nature of sovereignty and the different forms of government. He argues that the only legitimate form of government is a monarchy, and that the monarch should have absolute power. He also argues that the government should be based on a social contract, in which citizens agree to give up some of their freedoms in exchange for protection and security. He believes that this contract should be enforced by the sovereign, and that citizens should be willing to obey the laws of the state.

Finally, Hobbes discusses the nature of justice and morality. He argues that justice is based on the laws of the state, and that citizens should be willing to obey these laws in order to maintain order and peace. He also argues that morality is based on the laws of nature, and that individuals should strive to act in accordance with these laws in order to ensure the stability of society.

Leviathan is an important philosophical work that has had a lasting impact on political thought. Hobbes's arguments about the need for a strong central government and the importance of the social contract have been influential in the development of modern political systems. His ideas about justice, morality, and the nature of sovereignty have also been influential in shaping modern political thought.

## Main ideas:

**#1. *People are naturally in a state of war: Hobbes argues that in the absence of a strong central authority, people are in a state of war with each other, driven by their own self-interest and a desire for power.***

Thomas Hobbes argued that in the absence of a strong central authority, people are in a state of war with each other. He believed that in this state of nature, people are driven by their own self-interest and a desire for power. Hobbes argued that this state of war is a natural condition of mankind, and that it is only through the establishment of a strong central authority that peace and order can be maintained. He argued that without such an authority, people would be in a constant state of conflict, and that this would lead to a life that is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."

Hobbes believed that the only way to escape this state of war was to create a strong central authority that could impose laws and regulations on the people. He argued that this authority should be absolute, and that it should be able to

enforce its laws without fear of resistance or rebellion. He argued that this would create a stable and orderly society, and that it would be the only way to ensure peace and security. Hobbes argued that this strong central authority should be a monarchy, and that it should be given absolute power to ensure that its laws are followed.

**#2. *People form a social contract to escape the state of war: To escape this state of war, people form a social contract, in which they agree to give up some of their rights and freedoms in exchange for the protection of a sovereign power.***

In order to escape the state of war, people form a social contract in which they agree to give up some of their rights and freedoms in exchange for the protection of a sovereign power. This sovereign power is responsible for protecting the people from external threats, as well as from each other. The social contract is a way for people to come together and form a society in which they can live peacefully and securely. It is a way for people to create a system of laws and regulations that will ensure that everyone is treated fairly and that their rights are respected. By forming a social contract, people can create a society in which they can live in harmony and security.

The social contract is a way for people to come together and form a society in which they can live peacefully and securely. It is a way for people to create a system of laws and regulations that will ensure that everyone is treated fairly and that their rights are respected. By forming a social contract, people can create a society in which they can live in harmony and security. This social contract is the foundation of a civil society, and it is the basis for the rule of law. It is the basis for a government that is responsible for protecting the rights of its citizens and ensuring that justice is served.

**#3. *The sovereign power is absolute: The sovereign power is absolute, meaning that it has the right to make and enforce laws, and to punish those who break them.***

The sovereign power is absolute, meaning that it has the right to make and enforce laws, and to punish those who break them. This power is not limited by any other authority, and it is the ultimate source of all authority in the state. The sovereign is the highest authority in the state, and its decisions are binding on all citizens. It is the ultimate source of justice, and its decisions are final and cannot be challenged. The sovereign is the ultimate source of order and stability in the state, and its decisions are respected and obeyed by all citizens.

The sovereign power is also absolute in that it is not subject to any external authority. It is not bound by any other laws or regulations, and it is not accountable to any other body. The sovereign is the ultimate source of authority in the state, and its decisions are binding on all citizens. It is the ultimate source of justice, and its decisions are final and cannot be challenged. The sovereign is the ultimate source of order and stability in the state, and its decisions are respected and obeyed by all citizens.

**#4. *The sovereign power is responsible for protecting the people: The sovereign power is responsible for protecting the people from external threats, as well as from each other.***

The sovereign power is responsible for protecting the people from external threats, such as foreign invasions, as well as from internal threats, such as civil unrest or crime. The sovereign power is also responsible for providing the people with the necessary resources to live a safe and secure life. This includes providing access to food, shelter, healthcare, education, and other basic necessities. The sovereign power is also responsible for ensuring that the laws of the land are enforced and that justice is served. In addition, the sovereign power is responsible for protecting the rights of the people, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to a fair trial. Finally, the sovereign power is responsible for ensuring that the people are able to exercise their rights without fear of retribution or oppression.

The sovereign power is the ultimate authority in a state and is responsible for protecting the people from harm. This includes protecting them from external threats, such as foreign invasions, as well as from internal threats, such as civil unrest or crime. The sovereign power is also responsible for providing the people with the necessary resources to live a safe and secure life. This includes providing access to food, shelter, healthcare, education, and other basic necessities. The sovereign power is also responsible for ensuring that the laws of the land are enforced and that justice is served. In

addition, the sovereign power is responsible for protecting the rights of the people, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to a fair trial. Finally, the sovereign power is responsible for ensuring that the people are able to exercise their rights without fear of retribution or oppression.

**#5. *People have a right to self-preservation: People have a right to self-preservation, meaning that they have the right to do whatever is necessary to protect themselves from harm.***

Thomas Hobbes wrote in his book Leviathan that people have a right to self-preservation. He argued that this right is fundamental and that it is the basis for all other rights. He argued that people have the right to do whatever is necessary to protect themselves from harm, even if it means taking action against another person or group. He argued that this right is so important that it should be respected by all people, regardless of their social or political status.

Hobbes argued that this right to self-preservation is a natural right, meaning that it is inherent in all people and does not need to be granted by any government or authority. He argued that this right is so important that it should be respected by all people, regardless of their social or political status. He argued that this right is the basis for all other rights, and that it should be protected and respected by all.

Hobbes argument for the right to self-preservation is still relevant today. In many countries, people are still denied basic rights and freedoms, and the right to self-preservation is often overlooked. It is important to remember that people have the right to protect themselves from harm, and that this right should be respected and protected by all.

**#6. *People have a right to property: People have a right to property, meaning that they have the right to own and control their own possessions.***

Thomas Hobbes wrote in his book Leviathan that people have a right to property. He argued that this right is fundamental to human nature and is necessary for the preservation of life. He believed that without the right to own and control ones own possessions, life would be chaotic and dangerous. He argued that the right to property is essential for the protection of life and liberty, and that it is a necessary part of a just and orderly society.

Hobbes argued that the right to property is a natural right, meaning that it is inherent in human nature and is not granted by any government or authority. He believed that it is a fundamental right that should be respected and protected by all societies. He argued that the right to property is essential for the protection of life and liberty, and that it is a necessary part of a just and orderly society.

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**#7. *People have a right to freedom of speech: People have a right to freedom of speech, meaning that they have the right to express their opinions without fear of punishment.***

People have a right to freedom of speech, which is a fundamental right that is essential to a functioning democracy. This right allows individuals to express their opinions without fear of punishment or retribution. It is a cornerstone of a free society, and it is essential for the protection of individual rights and liberties. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right that allows individuals to express their opinions without fear of censorship or retribution. It is essential for the protection of individual rights and liberties, and it is a cornerstone of a free society. It is also essential for the functioning of a democracy, as it allows for the free exchange of ideas and opinions. Without freedom of speech, individuals would be unable to express their opinions and ideas, and the functioning of a democracy would be severely hindered.

Thomas Hobbes, in his book Leviathan, argued that freedom of speech is a fundamental right that is essential for the

functioning of a democracy. He argued that without freedom of speech, individuals would be unable to express their opinions and ideas, and the functioning of a democracy would be severely hindered. He also argued that freedom of speech is essential for the protection of individual rights and liberties, and it is a cornerstone of a free society. He argued that without freedom of speech, individuals would be unable to express their opinions and ideas, and the functioning of a democracy would be severely hindered.

**#8. *People have a right to freedom of religion: People have a right to freedom of religion, meaning that they have the right to practice their own religion without interference from the state.***

People have a right to freedom of religion, which is a fundamental right of all individuals. This right allows individuals to practice their own religion without interference from the state. It is a right that is protected by the law and is essential for the protection of religious minorities. This right is also important for the protection of religious freedom and the right to practice one's own beliefs without fear of persecution.

Thomas Hobbes, in his book *Leviathan*, argued that the right to freedom of religion is a natural right that should be respected by the state. He argued that the state should not interfere in the practice of religion, and that individuals should be free to practice their own religion without fear of persecution. He also argued that the state should not impose its own religious beliefs on its citizens, and that individuals should be free to practice their own religion without interference from the state.

The right to freedom of religion is an important right that should be respected and protected by the state. It is essential for the protection of religious minorities and for the protection of religious freedom. It is also important for the protection of individuals' right to practice their own beliefs without fear of persecution.

**#9. *People have a right to justice: People have a right to justice, meaning that they have the right to be treated fairly and to have their grievances addressed.***

People have a right to justice, meaning that they have the right to be treated fairly and to have their grievances addressed. This right is fundamental to any society, as it ensures that individuals are not taken advantage of and that their rights are respected. In Thomas Hobbes' book *Leviathan*, he argues that justice is essential for the preservation of a society, as it is the only way to ensure that people are not taken advantage of and that their rights are respected. He also argues that justice is necessary for the maintenance of a peaceful society, as it ensures that people are not wronged and that their grievances are addressed.

Hobbes also argues that justice is necessary for the maintenance of a just society, as it ensures that people are not treated unfairly and that their rights are respected. He further argues that justice is necessary for the maintenance of a stable society, as it ensures that people are not taken advantage of and that their grievances are addressed. In this way, justice is essential for the preservation of a society, as it ensures that people are not wronged and that their rights are respected.

**#10. *People have a duty to obey the laws of the sovereign: People have a duty to obey the laws of the sovereign, meaning that they must abide by the laws of the state or face punishment.***

People have a duty to obey the laws of the sovereign. This means that they must abide by the laws of the state or face punishment. This is an important concept in Thomas Hobbes' book *Leviathan*, where he argues that people must obey the laws of the sovereign in order to maintain a peaceful and orderly society. He believes that without this duty, society would be in chaos and people would be in a state of nature, where they would be in constant conflict with each other. This duty to obey the laws of the sovereign is essential for the preservation of peace and order in society.

Hobbes also argues that the sovereign has the right to make and enforce laws, and that people must obey them. He believes that the sovereign is the only one who can make laws that are binding on all citizens, and that it is the duty of the citizens to obey them. He also argues that the sovereign has the right to punish those who disobey the laws, and

that this is necessary in order to maintain order and peace in society. This duty to obey the laws of the sovereign is essential for the preservation of peace and order in society.

**#11. *People have a duty to respect the rights of others: People have a duty to respect the rights of others, meaning that they must not infringe upon the rights of others or cause them harm.***

People have a duty to respect the rights of others. This means that they must not infringe upon the rights of others or cause them harm. This is a fundamental principle of justice, as outlined by Thomas Hobbes in his book Leviathan. According to Hobbes, people have a right to their own life, liberty, and property, and it is the duty of others to respect these rights. This means that people should not take away the life, liberty, or property of another person without their consent. Furthermore, people should not use their power or influence to oppress or exploit others.

Respecting the rights of others is essential for a peaceful and just society. When people respect the rights of others, they are more likely to cooperate and work together for the common good. This creates a more harmonious and equitable society, where everyone can live in peace and security. Respect for the rights of others is also essential for protecting the vulnerable and ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and with dignity.

Therefore, it is important that people recognize their duty to respect the rights of others. This means that they should not infringe upon the rights of others or cause them harm. It also means that they should use their power and influence to protect the rights of others and ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect.

**#12. *People have a duty to contribute to the common good: People have a duty to contribute to the common good, meaning that they must work together to ensure the well-being of the state.***

People have a duty to contribute to the common good. This means that individuals must work together to ensure the well-being of the state. As Thomas Hobbes wrote in his book Leviathan, "The only way to erect such a common power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners, and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort, as that by their own industry, and by the fruits of the earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly, is to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will."

In other words, people must come together and agree to a common set of laws and regulations that will benefit the entire state. This is the only way to ensure that everyone is safe and secure, and that the state can thrive. By working together, people can create a better society for everyone.

**#13. *People have a duty to be loyal to the sovereign: People have a duty to be loyal to the sovereign, meaning that they must support the state and its laws.***

People have a duty to be loyal to the sovereign. This means that they must support the state and its laws, and not act in a way that undermines the authority of the sovereign. This loyalty is essential for the stability of the state, as it ensures that citizens will abide by the laws and regulations set forth by the sovereign. Without this loyalty, the state would be unable to function properly, as citizens would be free to act in whatever way they pleased. Furthermore, loyalty to the sovereign is a sign of respect for the authority of the state, and it is important for citizens to show this respect in order to maintain a healthy relationship between the state and its citizens.

Loyalty to the sovereign is also important for the protection of citizens. By following the laws and regulations set forth by the sovereign, citizens can be sure that their rights and freedoms will be respected and protected. This is especially important in times of crisis, when the state may need to take drastic measures to protect its citizens. By showing loyalty to the sovereign, citizens can be sure that their rights and freedoms will be respected and protected, even in times of crisis.

Finally, loyalty to the sovereign is a sign of patriotism. By showing loyalty to the state, citizens can demonstrate their

commitment to their country and their willingness to do what is necessary to protect it. This is an important part of being a good citizen, and it is essential for the stability and prosperity of any nation.

**#14. *People have a duty to be honest: People have a duty to be honest, meaning that they must not lie or deceive others.***

People have a duty to be honest, meaning that they must not lie or deceive others. This is an important moral principle that has been recognized throughout history. In his book *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes argued that honesty is essential for the preservation of society. He wrote that "no man can be trusted to keep his promises, or his word, unless he be obliged to do so by the fear of some evil greater than the benefit he expects by the breach of his faith." In other words, if people are not honest, then society will break down and chaos will ensue.

Honesty is also important for personal relationships. People need to be able to trust each other in order to build strong relationships. If someone lies or deceives another person, then that person will not be able to trust them. This can lead to a breakdown in communication and a lack of trust between people.

Honesty is also important for maintaining one's own integrity. People who lie or deceive others are not living up to their own moral standards. They are not being true to themselves and are not living up to their own expectations. This can lead to feelings of guilt and shame, which can have a negative impact on one's mental health.

Overall, it is clear that people have a duty to be honest. Honesty is essential for the preservation of society, for building strong relationships, and for maintaining one's own integrity. People should strive to be honest in all aspects of their lives in order to ensure that they are living up to their own moral standards.

**#15. *People have a duty to be reasonable: People have a duty to be reasonable, meaning that they must act in a way that is reasonable and just.***

People have a duty to be reasonable, meaning that they must act in a way that is reasonable and just. This means that they must think through their decisions and actions, and consider the consequences of their choices. They must also take into account the interests of others, and act in a way that is fair and equitable. People should strive to be reasonable in all aspects of their lives, from their personal relationships to their professional lives. This means that they should be open to different perspectives, and be willing to compromise when necessary. People should also be willing to listen to others and take their opinions into account when making decisions. By being reasonable, people can ensure that their decisions are based on sound reasoning and are in the best interests of all involved.

**#16. *People have a duty to be tolerant: People have a duty to be tolerant, meaning that they must respect the beliefs and opinions of others.***

People have a duty to be tolerant of the beliefs and opinions of others. This means that we must accept and respect the views of those who may disagree with us, even if we do not agree with them. We must be open to hearing different perspectives and be willing to engage in dialogue with those who have different beliefs. We must also be willing to accept that our own beliefs may be wrong and that we may need to adjust them in light of new information or evidence. This is the only way to ensure that we are truly tolerant of others and that we are not simply imposing our own views on them.

Thomas Hobbes, in his book *Leviathan*, argued that tolerance is essential for a peaceful society. He argued that if people are not tolerant of each other, then it is likely that conflict and violence will arise. He believed that it was the duty of individuals to be tolerant of each other, and that this was the only way to ensure a peaceful and harmonious society. He argued that it was not enough to simply tolerate each other, but that we must also be willing to engage in dialogue and to listen to each others perspectives.

Tolerance is an essential part of any society, and it is our duty to be tolerant of others. We must be willing to accept and

respect the beliefs and opinions of those who may disagree with us, and to engage in dialogue with them. We must also be willing to adjust our own beliefs in light of new information or evidence. This is the only way to ensure that we are truly tolerant of others and that we are not simply imposing our own views on them.

**#17. *People have a duty to be courageous: People have a duty to be courageous, meaning that they must be willing to stand up for what is right and just.***

People have a duty to be courageous, meaning that they must be willing to stand up for what is right and just. This is a concept that Thomas Hobbes discussed in his book *Leviathan*. He argued that people have a moral obligation to be brave and to take action when faced with injustice. He believed that courage was essential for a society to function properly, as it allows people to stand up for their beliefs and to challenge those in power. Courage is also necessary for individuals to be able to make difficult decisions and to take risks in order to achieve their goals.

Hobbes argued that courage is not only a moral obligation, but also a practical one. He believed that without courage, people would be unable to make progress and to create a better society. He argued that courage is essential for people to be able to stand up for their rights and to challenge those in power. He also argued that courage is necessary for people to be able to make difficult decisions and to take risks in order to achieve their goals.

In conclusion, people have a duty to be courageous. This is a concept that Thomas Hobbes discussed in his book *Leviathan*. He argued that courage is essential for a society to function properly, as it allows people to stand up for their beliefs and to challenge those in power. He also argued that courage is necessary for individuals to be able to make difficult decisions and to take risks in order to achieve their goals. Courage is not only a moral obligation, but also a practical one, and it is essential for people to be able to make progress and to create a better society.

**#18. *People have a duty to be prudent: People have a duty to be prudent, meaning that they must think carefully before acting.***

People have a duty to be prudent. This means that they must think carefully before acting, considering the potential consequences of their actions. They must also be aware of the potential risks and rewards of their decisions, and weigh them carefully before making a decision. This is especially important when it comes to decisions that could have a significant impact on their lives or the lives of others. People must also be aware of the potential for harm that their decisions could cause, and take steps to minimize or avoid such harm.

This idea is central to Thomas Hobbes work, *Leviathan*. In it, he argues that people have a duty to be prudent in order to protect themselves and others from harm. He also argues that people should be aware of the potential consequences of their actions, and take steps to minimize or avoid them. This is especially important in situations where the consequences could be severe, such as in matters of war or politics.

Being prudent is an important part of being a responsible citizen. It is essential for people to think carefully before acting, and to consider the potential consequences of their decisions. This is especially important in situations where the consequences could be severe, and where the potential for harm is high. By being prudent, people can help to ensure that their decisions are beneficial, and that they do not cause harm to themselves or others.

**#19. *People have a duty to be temperate: People have a duty to be temperate, meaning that they must not be excessive in their behavior.***

People have a duty to be temperate, meaning that they must not be excessive in their behavior. This means that they should not indulge in activities that are harmful to themselves or to others, such as drinking too much alcohol, taking drugs, or engaging in reckless behavior. They should also strive to maintain a balanced lifestyle, avoiding extremes in any area of their life. This includes eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and getting enough sleep. Additionally, they should strive to maintain a positive attitude and outlook on life, avoiding negative thoughts and emotions. Finally, they should strive to be mindful of their actions and words, avoiding any behavior that could be seen as disrespectful or

hurtful to others.

Being temperate is an important part of living a healthy and fulfilling life. It helps to ensure that we are able to make the most of our time and resources, and that we are able to maintain healthy relationships with those around us. It also helps to ensure that we are able to make wise decisions and to live in a way that is beneficial to ourselves and to others. By being temperate, we can ensure that we are living a life that is in line with our values and beliefs.

**#20. *People have a duty to be charitable: People have a duty to be charitable, meaning that they must be generous and kind to those in need.***

People have a duty to be charitable, meaning that they must be generous and kind to those in need. This is an important part of being a good citizen and a responsible member of society. Charity is not just about giving money, but also about giving time and energy to help those in need. It is about providing support and assistance to those who are struggling and in need of help. It is about showing compassion and understanding to those who are suffering and in need of comfort. Charity is about being generous and kind to those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Thomas Hobbes, in his book *Leviathan*, argued that charity is an important part of being a good citizen. He argued that it is our duty to help those in need, and that it is our responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to the basic necessities of life. He argued that charity is not just about giving money, but also about giving time and energy to help those in need. He argued that charity is about showing compassion and understanding to those who are suffering and in need of comfort.

In conclusion, people have a duty to be charitable. This means that they must be generous and kind to those in need. It is our responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to the basic necessities of life, and to show compassion and understanding to those who are suffering and in need of comfort. Charity is an important part of being a good citizen and a responsible member of society.