

Bastiat, The Law & the Wisdom of Sages Past

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“Be careful with the government, for they befriend a person only for their own needs. They appear to be friends when it is beneficial to them, but they do not stand by a person at the time of his distress.” Avot 2:3

“Experience has shown, that even under the best forms of government those entrusted with power have, in time, and by slow operations, perverted it into tyranny.”

American President Thomas Jefferson

When plunder becomes a way of life for a group of men living together in society, they create for themselves, in the course of time, a legal system that authorizes it and a moral code that glorifies it
Frederic Bastiat



What is the purpose of government? Government is supposed to be an agreement between peoples of a common community to charge a certain number of their members to look after and administer the needs of the general public.

Essentially, government is supposed to be by the people and for the people. Government is supposed to be a mutual agreement, between governed and governors, under which either party should have the right and ability to change the terms of said agreement at will, all for the sake of the betterment of the community, and of the individual.

The members of the community who serve to administrate public services should have every right to stay in office, leave office, or be removed from office, all in accordance to the will of the community. Indeed, every individual should have the right to equally decide whether or not the rules decided upon by the community should equally apply to him. If an individual is not willing to live by the laws of the community, said individual should have the right and freedom to relocate and to live elsewhere, in accordance to his conscience. This is the way things should be, but are not.

Torah believes that one of the seven universal laws for all mankind is the establish courts and governments of justice. Justice is here the key, not the letter of the law! Yet, as we know, today we are inundated with one government after another that prides itself for standing upon its laws. Yet, few take into consideration just how unjust many said laws are, and how unjust many such societies have become. Instead of rising to serve communal needs, governments rise to power and stay in power, usually by their ruthless repression of any and all who government interprets to be a threat to their power.

“As long as it is admitted that the law may be diverted from its true purpose, that it may violate property instead of protecting it, then everyone will want to participate in making the law, either to protect himself against plunder or to use it for plunder.” Frederic Bastiat

With rare and few exceptions, government seek to serve themselves. They look at the populace as their chattel, to be dealt with as best serves government, not the people. Individuals may have their rights, true, but while all have rights, some have more rights than others. As George Orwell so prophetically wrote in “Animal Farm,” ***all [men] are created equal, yet some are more equal than others.*** This is the reality of government.

Righteous government does not exist because of the lack of righteous individuals within the greater community. When individuals are of a lower moral caliber, then what they expect from those in power is also of a lower moral caliber. Essentially, we get the government that mirrors ourselves. We get the government that we deserve. Woe to us when we are bad, for then our government is bad, and this in turn converts life into a living hell. Such has it been since the beginning, and with very rare exceptions from time to time, this is how things continue to be to this very day.

“The worst thing that can happen to a good cause is.. to be ineptly defended.”
Frederic Bastiat

Governments becomes ravenous animals that seek to devour. Very few are those who act any different. In the beginning God creates us in a Garden. Since then we have been kicked out of the Garden and until today we live in the jungle. The rules of the jungles of men are the same as the rules of the jungles of animals. The big cat rules, the smaller and weaker animals are the prey of the stronger. As it is in the natural world of beasts, so too is it in the natural world of man-beasts.

“The state is that great fiction by which everyone tries to live at the expense of everyone else.” Frederic Bastiat

Knowing this, Rabban Gamaliel wisely warns us, to not rely upon the promises and smiles of governmental authorities. If government needs something from a private individual, they will lavish upon him all types of incentives to persuade him to do their bidding. Yet, once his purpose has been achieved, and he is no longer necessary, such a person is cast off and thrown on to the trash heap of insignificance. This usage and disposal of individuals happens everywhere, in every place where there is government established by unrighteous men, meant to serve the few, at the expense of the many.

Wisdom dictates to a man that which is in his best interests. Animals stay alive in the jungle by instinctively recognizing a predator and keepings its distance from it. As it is in the jungle of animals, so too is it within the jungle of men. Wise men avoid both politics and politicians.

Involvement with politics and politicians should only be with the recognition of the predator nature of the beast. Sometimes it is necessary to tangle in the jungle. When necessary, one must do what one must, especially when entire segments of the general community are in need, and can benefit thereby. Yet, one should make one's involvement like a strike of lightning, meaning, one should be in and out in a flash. Anyone sticking around politics or politicians for any longer stand an ever-growing change of becoming seduced by a very dark spirit that serves to bring out the very worst in human nature.

Learn wisdom and live. Ignore wisdom and die. This is the law of the jungle, be it the jungle of beasts or the jungle of man.

“Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place.” Frederic Bastiat

Wisely did the great Sage speak. Draw close to government if you must, when you must, but then draw back as quickly and as quietly as you can.

Do not stick around, for if you do, you will eventually find yourself underneath the bottom of another's boot.

One should never deceive oneself into believing that one still has value beyond one's worth. This has been proven wrong, time and time again.

“Once for all, liberty consists not only in the right granted, but in the power given to man, to exercise, to develop his faculties under the empire of JUSTICE, and under the protection of law. And this is no vain distinction, there is deep meaning to it, and its consequences are not to be estimated.” Frederic Bastiat

Note: for more about **Frederic Bastiat**, please read his book, **“The Law,”** readily available on Amazon.com.

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