



# CHRISTIAN POLITICS & CIVIL PHILOSOPHY

*An Interpretation of Hobbes's Leviathan*

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**SANFORD W. WOOD**

CHRISTIAN  
POLITICS  
AND  
CIVIL  
PHILOSOPHY  
AN INTERPRETATION OF  
HOBBES'S LEVIATHAN  
SANFORD W. WOOD

*Non est potestas Super Terram quae Comparetur ei*



INDIES UNITED PUBLISHING HOUSE, LLC

This study was written as a doctoral dissertation, and submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Vanderbilt University in June 1968.

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Cover Design: Danielle Johnston

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ISBN: 978-1-64456-497-4 [Paperback]

ISBN: 978-1-64456-498-1 [Mobi]

ISBN: 978-1-64456-499-8 [ePub]

Library of Congress Control Number: 2022940472

Printed in the United States of America



INDIES UNITED PUBLISHING HOUSE, LLC  
P.O. BOX 3071  
QUINCY, IL 62305-3071  
[indiesunited.net](http://indiesunited.net)

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# PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the over-all coherence of the moral and political teaching of *Leviathan*. The method employed is two-fold: it consists primarily in textual exposition; it consists secondarily in an examination of alternative interpretations (which are limited to recent English works on Hobbes). The contents of this study may be summarized as follows:

The Introduction attempts to clarify the distinction between Christian politics and civil philosophy. This distinction is based on Hobbes's recognition of two independent and complementary sources of truth, divine revelation and natural reason.

Chapter 1 discusses Hobbes's theory of obligation as a prelude to a detailed examination of his political thought. Hobbes believes that all goods are relative, and thus that all obligations must be self-imposed. That is, a person is obliged to perform an action only if he has consented to perform it, or has been commanded to perform it by someone whom he has consented to obey.

Chapter 2 examines the principles of Christian politics that Hobbes discovers in the Bible (which is, he believes, the only assured repository of divine revelation). He finds that Christian rulers have a general obligation to provide for their subjects' well-being; but in the performance of this obligation they are accountable to God alone. They are not obliged to recognize the claims of church and private conscience to sit in judgment of the civil law. Christian subjects, on their part, have a general obligation to obey the civil law: but if they should be commanded to deny the foundation of their faith, their obligation of obedience is at an end.

Chapter 3 turns to civil philosophy and the argument for absolute sovereignty. Hobbes claims that absolute sovereignty is the most reliable way for most men to provide for their wants. What most men want is security and comfort. These are to be obtained only where there is a sovereign strong enough to control the power struggle toward which men naturally tend. Such a sovereign must be absolute, that is, one to whom subjects owe unlimited obedience. The argument for absolute sovereignty, as Hobbes develops it, does not depend on the social contract, but is meant to apply equally well to states that originate by contract, by conquest, or in some other way.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the duties of sovereign and subject in a civil commonwealth. The subject has a general obligation to obey the civil law, based on his acceptance of the sovereign's authority. But though this authorization of the sovereign is unconditional, there are certain limits of obligation inherent in human nature. The sovereign, however, is not obliged to respect these limits. Indeed, the

civil sovereign has no obligations whatever, though prudence recommends consideration for his subjects' well-being.

The Conclusion focuses on the topic of civil disobedience in order to tie together Hobbes's Christian politics and civil philosophy. Hobbes teaches that a subject is free to disobey the civil law whenever he cannot have a sufficient motive to obey it. Thus, the ordinary subject is excused from obligation whenever he is commanded to do something that would destroy his life or make it miserable. Similarly, the Christian subject who has a genuine belief in divine sanctions, cannot be motivated to obey any law that would jeopardize his eternal salvation; and where his motivation ceases his obligation ceases also. The sovereign, for his part, is not obliged to respect his subjects' scruples, for he has received his authority unconditionally; he may in good conscience punish those who have disobeyed him for their own conscience's sake.

*Leviathan* is usually acknowledged to be the best presentation of Hobbes's political ideas, and I see no reason to dispute this view. He apparently so regarded it. Though he was not a man to disparage his own works, he indicated in various subtle ways the inferiority of *De Cive*. For example, in his controversy with Bishop Bramhall over determinism, Hobbes mentions some objections which Bramhall had made to *De Cive*, and which he had never answered. He explains as follows

I did indeed intend to have answered those exceptions... But shortly after, intending to write in English, and publish my thoughts concerning Civil Doctrine in that book which I entitled *Leviathan*, I thought his objections would by the clearness of my method fall off without an answer.[1]

I see here an implicit admission of the inferiority of *De Cive*, at least in clarity of method, a matter of no small importance to Hobbes. And from my own reading of *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, I find some improvement in the presentation in *Leviathan*, though the political doctrine is basically the same in the two. The proof of this statement, however, lies beyond the scope of this present work. Suffice it to say that I do not choose to dispute the prevalent view which accords first place among Hobbes's expositions of his political thought to *Leviathan*. [2]

In my exposition of Hobbes I do not consciously follow anyone's interpretation, though I confess to sharing many of the views of Howard Warrender[3] and F. C. Hood[4]. My principal concern in interpreting *Leviathan* is to be faithful to the text, though I acknowledge my debt to many who have interpreted it before me. Occasionally I will refer to Hobbes's other writings, particularly the later controversial writings, in order to clarify some disputed point.

Besides exposition, I devote much time to pointing out what seem to me to be the errors of other views. In this I have focused on the work currently being done in English. It has seemed better to me to try to be comprehensive in regard to one body of literature, than to pick out (for example) various German, French, and English works on Hobbes, drawn from several periods, and throw them all

together in a crazy jumble. So I have confined myself to the English literature, consulting a few of the older standard texts (such as Robertson[5] and Taylor[6]), but dealing mostly with material that has come out in the last ten or fifteen years. The one exception I have made is the inclusion of Raymond Polin[7], because of frequent reference to him in the English literature.

Somewhere, in the work now being done on Hobbes in Italian, Polish, and other languages inaccessible to me, there may be an interpretation similar to the one I give below. But so far as I know, my approach is unique. Of course, not everything I say is original; indeed, much of it has been said before. But I do claim originality in my explanation of Hobbes's theory of obligation, in my analysis of the role of the civil covenant in his account of sovereignty, and in my distinction between the sovereign as artificial person and as natural person exercising supreme authority. Principally, however, any claim of merit for this work must rest upon the success or failure of my attempt to demonstrate the overall coherence of the moral and political teaching of *Leviathan*.

Before turning to this task, I must express gratitude to those whose aid and encouragement have made possible whatever measure of merit this work is due: to Dr. Samuel Stumpf, who guided me in my initial study of Hobbes; to Dr. John Lachs, who assumed the role of guide upon Dr. Stumpf's leaving Vanderbilt; to the Relm Foundation, which provided me with a generous fellowship; to my colleague Dr. Ellis Sandoz, who was instrumental in my securing this fellowship; and to my wife and children, who have borne with patience the neglect and inconvenience occasioned by my completion of this study. "Benefits oblige," says Hobbes, "and obligation is thralldom; and unrequiteable obligation perpetual thralldom". I fear that I shall never be able to repay these debts; but I must, at least, acknowledge them.

## Preface Footnotes

- [1] *Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* in *The English Works*, ed. by Sir William Molesworth (London: John Bohn; Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1839-45), V, 26
- [2] For a well-argued defense of this position, see F. C. Hood, *The Divine Politics of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), ch. iv
- [3] *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; 1957)
- [4] *Divine Politics*
- [5] G. C. Robertson, *Hobbes* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood & Sons, 1886)
- [6] A. E. Taylor, *Thomas Hobbes* (New York: Dodge Publishing Co, n.d.); “The Ethical Doctrine of Hobbes”, *Philosophy*, XIII (1938)
- [7] *Politique et philosophie chez Thomas Hobbes* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1953)

# INTRODUCTION

*Leviathan* is a house of many rooms. It deals with such diverse matters as the scholastic theory of universals and the Biblical doctrine of repentance. To interpret it in any coherent fashion requires that many of these minor topics be simply ignored as being inconsequential to the dominant theme of the work. According to the statement of its author, *Leviathan* is primarily a political treatise. [1] Considered as such, its focal point is the defense of absolute sovereignty. Secondly, *Leviathan* is a moral treatise. In this capacity it offers a novel answer to the question, “What makes an action obligatory?” The common background of the moral and political theories is a theory of human nature which has strictly a subsidiary function in the plan of the work, in spite of the interest it has frequently generated on its own account. The political and moral theories, together with the theory of human nature, constitute the substance of *Leviathan* as a philosophical work. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the coherence of these theories.

Besides being a philosophical treatise, *Leviathan* is also a political pamphlet. It was, as Hobbes says, “occasioned by the disorders of the present time”. [2] Although the philosophical content of *Leviathan* has a significance that transcends the political context of mid-seventeenth-century England, we will very likely misunderstand the book as a whole if we divorce it from that context. The context was, specifically, the English Civil War. [3] According to Hobbes, the war was primarily the result of attempts to place limits on the authority of the king. [4] The arguments for limited monarchy fell into two general categories, civil and ecclesiastical. The latter argument was the simpler of the two: it alleged the existence of an authority apart from the civil authority to which, as God's agent, Christians owed their ultimate allegiance. The arguments of the former sort were of several varieties, but they shared a common principle: they all looked to the origin of sovereignty as a key to the explanation of its nature and limits. Since the different types of origination – covenant, conquest, the extension of patriarchal power – were associated with different types of sovereignty, it became the business of the devotees of one particular type to argue that their type was prior, the others derivative.

Hobbes replies that sovereignty is one and the same, always and everywhere. This is the philosophical principle to which he appeals in answering the previously-mentioned civil and ecclesiastical arguments. His answers are skillful applications of this principle to different situations; and his opponents are effectively rebutted (or so it seems to him) because he is able, to a large extent, to grant their premises while denying their conclusions. Thus, in reply to the ecclesiastics, he admits that God's agent is to be obeyed above all others; but he

maintains that in a Christian commonwealth God's agent is the civil sovereign, and consequently there is no separation of civil and ecclesiastical power. Similarly, in reply to those who trace sovereignty to its origin in order to determine its nature, Hobbes grants that this is a wholly legitimate procedure; but he finds that however sovereignty originates, its nature is the same, that is, unlimited and indivisible.

To the two sorts of arguments, ecclesiastical and civil, which *Leviathan* is supposed to answer, correspond two different methodologies. One is Biblical exegesis, the other is reasoning from definitions and principles of human nature. The application of the former to political matters produces Christian politics; the application of the latter produces civil philosophy.[5] No small part of the confusion that seems to pervade *Leviathan* is due to the fact that Hobbes does not clearly separate his exposition of Christian politics from his exposition of civil philosophy. Furthermore, the philosophical theories proper – the theories of sovereignty and obligation – are not discussed apart from their application to Christian politics and civil philosophy, but must be gleaned from them.

Hobbes's methodology[6] is very important; from mis-understanding of it has resulted serious misunderstanding of the content of his thought. Despite this importance, *Leviathan* does not contain a clear presentation of methodology. Fragmentary references to the nature of philosophy are scattered about here and there, supplemented by equally scattered comments on the role of reason. Hobbes sometimes speak about procedure, but usually in the form of comments in retrospect. To make matters worse, these various comments are sometimes at odds with what he actually does. His view of the proper method to be followed in political theory must therefore be pieced together as best it can be. In my “piecing” I will try to balance what he says by what he does.

Let us begin with the definition of philosophy which occurs near the end of *Leviathan*.

BY PHILOSOPHY is understood the knowledge acquired by reasoning, from the manner of the generation of anything, to the properties: or from the properties, to some possible way of generation of the same; to the end to be able to produce, as far as matter, and human force permit, such effects, as human life requireth.[7]

Science is defined in very similar terms near the beginning of the book.[8] Of philosophy/science thus understood, Hobbes's favorite example is geometry, “which is the only science that it hath pleased God hitherto to bestow on mankind”.[9] The method of geometry consists in drawing out the consequences of definitions. Because its method is demonstrative, its conclusions are indisputable.[10] Such is the model of what philosophy must be: it contains no truths but those which are “general, eternal, and immutable”.[11]

Several problems are involved in such a conception of philosophy. First in regard to the definitions from which the demonstration is to begin – are they to be arbitrary or customary? From what is to be gathered from his scattered

references to this problem, Hobbes apparently thought they were somewhere in-between. Definitions are not to be simply made up, without any reference to conventional usage. But conventional usage is very imprecise, and sometimes incoherent. So the philosopher must take this conventional usage and render it as precise as possible, being guided in this by the etymology of the term.[12]

A more serious problem concerns the adequacy of such a conception of philosophy. Hobbes claims to follow in his civil philosophy the model of philosophy he has set up for himself. Thus, he begins with precise definitions of basic terms such as "law" and "justice", and elaborates the consequence of these terms. But he does more than this. In the conclusion of *Leviathan* he says that his civil philosophy is based, among other things, "upon the known natural inclinations of mankind".[13] Here is an appeal to experience which seems to have no place in his conception of philosophy. Indeed, he says explicitly at one point that his definition of philosophy makes it evident "that we are not to account as any part thereof, that original knowledge called experience".[14] Yet the appeal to experience is quite obviously there, and forms one of the most interesting parts of his theory. So far as I know, Hobbes never removed the obscurity from his thought concerning the relation of experience to philosophy. On the one hand, he clearly recognized that his civil philosophy must be based on experience. On the other hand, he apparently felt this to be a weakness; for to the extent that it was based on experience, to that extent it was less than certain. [15] In his discussions of methodology, consequently, he was inclined to minimize the empirical elements and emphasize the deductive ones, particularly when he had occasion to contrast the wisdom of his views with the follies of traditional philosophy.[16]

Although Hobbes sometimes seems to speak the language of rationalism, one must be careful not to give this a traditional interpretation. He says, for example, that besides divine revelation, reason is the only source of "truth of doctrine"[17]; but he does not mean thereby that the mind possesses innate principles. Nor does he believe that reason is a faculty, though he sometimes uses language that would suggest such an interpretation.[18] In his more careful statements Hobbes speaks not of reason but of reasoning; and he explains it as a process by which we infer consequences from definitions.[19] Furthermore, he specifically rejects the claim that reason is normative: those who "clamour and demand right reason for judge" seldom mean anything other than that their own reason should be taken as the standard, which is "as intolerable in the society of men, as it is in play after trump is turned, to use for trump on every occasion, that suite whereof they have most in their hand." [20]

If the preceding analysis is correct, the elements that constitute the methodology of Hobbes's civil philosophy are, in summary, three: (1) precise definition of political terminology; (2) investigation of man's natural inclinations; (3) reasoning as the means whereby the consequences of the first two may be known. A fuller explication of these ideas must await the chapters devoted to civil philosophy.

What is not a part of common experience or is not amenable to demonstration, does not fall within the scope of natural knowledge. Hobbes believes that man's natural knowledge of things divine is very slight; it encompasses little more than the knowledge that God is the first cause of the world.[21] What lies beyond this is not available to man *qua* man, nor to the philosopher *qua* philosopher. But Hobbes does not infer from this that he is consigned to silence about the things of God; still less does he infer that such things do not exist. What cannot be known by natural reason may nevertheless be known by supernatural revelation. Strictly speaking, however, only the direct recipient of divine revelation receives knowledge thereby. Those less fortunately situated must accept someone else's testimony of what God has revealed; and the information they acquire thereby is more appropriately called faith than knowledge. Hobbes, for reasons he never makes completely clear, accepts the Bible as the record of God's revelation to man. When, therefore, he discusses Christian politics, he speaks not as philosopher but as Biblical exegete.[22]

Although the truths contained in the Bible are not drawn from experience or reason, they are not in conflict with either: "we are not to renounce our senses, and experience; nor, that which is the undoubted word of God, our natural reason." [23] Reasoning is as important a tool in understanding the Bible as in understanding anything else: for the Bible must be interpreted. Hobbes has unkind words for contemporary controversialists who attempt to construct scriptural proofs by citing a series of isolated texts. The good exegete, he says, must strive for the sense of the whole.[24]

Though there is no conflict between reason and revelation, there may be some things in Scripture which are above reason,

that is to say, which cannot by natural reason be either demonstrated, or confuted... Therefore, when any thing therein written is too hard for our examination, we are bidden to captivate our understanding to the words: and not to labour in sifting out a philosophical truth by logic, of such mysteries as are not comprehensible, nor fall under any rule of natural science. For it is with the mysteries of our religion, as with wholesome pills for the sick; which swallowed whole, have the virtue to cure; but chewed, are for the most part cast up again without effect.[25]

Illustrative of this view is Hobbes's doctrine of God. We can know by natural reason, he says, that there must be a God as first cause of the world.[26] And we can know from Scripture how he is related to us: as "Father, King, and Lord". [27] But we cannot know what God is in himself. His nature is incomprehensible; and it is the better part of piety as well as wisdom simply to acknowledge the incomprehensibility of God, rather than giving absurd explanations after the manner of the scholastics.[28] Thus, when the Scriptures say that God is a spirit, or attribute to him any characteristic other than negative or superlative ones ("infinite", "most high"), we are to take it as a sign of honor, not as a description of his nature.[29]

Hobbes's scriptural arguments are frequently taken to be of little value, and are even judged to be insincere. As for their value, the answer depends on what is meant by the question. Their intrinsic religious value is probably slight. Though some of Hobbes's scriptural interpretations, such as his view of the resurrection, [30] have been judged exegetically sound by subsequent divines,[31] most of his doctrines have been found to be more curious than profitable.[32] However, the value of the scriptural arguments for the political task he had set himself was, in his eyes, considerable. One of the major parts of this task was to show Christians that there is no conflict between their religious and civil duties; and to show this, an appeal to scripture was necessary. Furthermore, Hobbes placed more confidence in his scriptural than in his philosophical arguments. Near the end of the philosophical arguments, he says that it is possible to discover principles which would make commonwealths everlasting, except for the danger of external violence.

And such are those which I have in this discourse set forth... But supposing that these of mine are not such principles of reason; yet I am sure they are principles from authority of Scripture...[33]

As for the allegation of insincerity, I believe it to be mistaken. *Leviathan* impresses me as the work of an honest man. This impression is based on the tone of the whole work, and cannot really be proved by citing isolated passages. Each reader of *Leviathan* must be left to judge for himself what were the intentions of its author. But the allegation of insincerity has frequently been supported by arguments purporting to show that what Hobbes says as philosopher is incompatible with what he says as Biblical exegete. No small part of my task in this study will be to show the coherence of his scriptural and philosophical principles.[34]

My analysis of the purpose and program of *Leviathan* has shown that it is planned as a simultaneous campaign on two fronts. On one front the enemy consists of lawyers, Parliamentarians, etc., who urge limitation on the King in the name of the people;[35] here the plan of defense is civil philosophy. On the other front the enemy is the divines who urge limitation on the King in the name of God; here the plan of defense is Christian politics. From the two fronts the campaign may indeed seem uncoordinated, but that is because those on the fronts do not see the master-plan of the general who is directing the campaign. To discover that master-plan -- such is the task before us. Hobbes's own procedure has contributed to making this task more difficult; it makes the section on Christian politics appear as an unnecessary and perhaps irrelevant appendix, added to what was already a completed work. But I do not think this is the case; and to show that it is not the case I intend to reverse Hobbes's procedure and discuss Christian politics first. No violence to his thought will be done thereby. His own procedure is apparently governed by the assumption of an artificial position, from which he proceeds by stages to his real position. He says in the Preface to *De Cive*: "In this book thou shalt find briefly described the duties of men, first as men; then as subjects; lastly, as Christians." [36] Hobbes

supposes men subject to successive layers of duties, which we can successively imagine away until we get to a dutiless man. But he does not believe that men as we actually find them are without duties. We can, then, just as well begin with the actual dutiful Christian as with the hypothetical dutiless man. Before we talk about either, however, we need to find out what Hobbes means by duty.

From the foregoing considerations emerges the plan of this study. Chapter One will be an examination of Hobbes's theory of duty or obligation (he uses the terms interchangeably). The focal point of the chapter will be his novel answer to the question, "What makes an action obligatory?". In Chapter Two I will try to elucidate certain theological concepts which complement the prior discussion of obligation; and I will expound Hobbes's Christian politics so far as this is possible without giving a detailed analysis of the nature of sovereignty. Chapter Three will begin with Hobbes's philosophical analysis of absolute sovereignty, then show how this analysis is to be applied to commonwealths of varying origin. In Chapter Four I will exhibit the pattern of rights and duties in the civil commonwealth; and I will discuss in this connection the problems of the dual status of the civil sovereign and the dual status of the laws of nature. Throughout my exposition I will complement textual evidence with criticisms of alternative interpretations. Where it seems to me that Hobbes is in error I will suggest modifications that will bring the errant passage into harmony with the teaching of the whole. Finally in the Conclusion I will return to the central question of the coherence of the moral and political teaching of *Leviathan*, and I will try to tie all the loose ends into a neat knot.

#### Introduction Footnotes

- [1] See, for example, the Introduction and the Conclusion, passim.
- [2] *Leviathan*, ed. by Michael Oakeshott (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, n.d.) p. 467. I have taken my quotations from Oakeshott's rather than Molesworth's edition of *Leviathan* because of the more general availability of the former. On all points on which I have compared the two, the text has been identical.
- [3] See *Six Lessons to the Professors of the Mathematics* in *English Works*, VII, 335
- [4] See *Behemoth* in *English Works*, VI, 167-69
- [5] See *Leviathan* chs. xxxii and ix respectively.
- [6] The term "methodology" here is to be taken in an epistemological sense. I am not referring to the manner in which Hobbes wrote *Leviathan*, but to his views on the proper method for discovering truth in moral and political questions.
- [7] *Leviathan*, p. 435
- [8] *Ibid.* p. 29
- [9] *Ibid.*, p, 21
- [10] *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 27
- [11] *Ibid.*, pp. 435-36
- [12] See *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 29, 242; *Six Lessons* in *English Works*, VII, 225-26
- [13] *Ibid.*, p. 466
- [14] *Ibid.*, p. 435
- [15] *Ibid.*, pp. 435-36
- [16] See *ibid.*, pp. 27-28, 438
- [17] *Ibid.*, p. 466
- [18] See *ibid.*, p. 22
- [19] *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 247
- [20] *Ibid.*, p. 26
- [21] *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71
- [22] *Ibid.*, ch. xxxii, passim; p. 387

- [23] *Ibid.*, p. 242. Hobbes acknowledges that what is often called “Christianity” is unreasonable. But he claims that the Bible in itself contains nothing contrary to reason, and that the unreasonableness of “Christianity” is due to corruptions of the Biblical teaching. He lists four causes of this corruption: (1) ignorance of the Bible; (2) acceptance of the “demonology of the heathen poets” into the Christian faith; (3) “mixing with the Scripture divers relics of the religion, and much of the vain and erroneous philosophy, of the Greeks, especially of Aristotle”; (4) uncritical acceptance of dubious traditions as historically true. (*Leviathan*, p 398.)
- [24] *Leviathan*, p. 396
- [25] *Ibid.*, pp. 242-43
- [26] *Ibid.*, pp. 68, 70-71
- [27] *Ibid.*, p. 238
- [28] *Ibid.*, p. 239
- [29] *Ibid.*, pp. 71, 238, 257. In his later controversial writings, Hobbes took the position that God was corporeal. As his critics pointed out, this position involves him in self-contradiction. In *Leviathan* Hobbes denies that God can be identified with the world or any part of it; (p. 237) he also denies that there can be any body which is not a part of the world. (p. 256) If to this be added the proposition that God is a body, the result is an explicit contradiction. Critics have used such arguments as this as the basis for attributing to Hobbes an intention to deny God’s existence, (See, for example, Polin, *Politique*, p. xv; Leo Strauss, “On the Basis of Hobbes’s Political Philosophy” in *What is Political Philosophy? and Other Studies* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1959 pp. 182-83) But similar charges came to the surface while he was yet alive, and he specifically repudiated it. “Atheism by consequence” he called it and he deemed it unfair. A man is an atheist, according to Hobbes, because he denies in his heart that God exists, not because his philosophical doctrines seem to imply such a denial. Hobbes claims that he never denied God in his heart. (*An Answer to Bishop Bramhall in English Works*, IV, 383-84. See Willis B. Glover, “God and Thomas Hobbes” in *Hobbes Studies*, ed. by K. C. Brown (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 145) Whatever may have inclined him in his old age to maintain the corporeality of God, the position of *Leviathan*, that God’s nature is incomprehensible, is more consistent with his skeptical beliefs about the limits of human knowledge. (See M. M. Goldsmith, *Hobbes’s Science of Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 250.) The position of *Leviathan* is also more consistent with the traditional Christian teaching that God is wholly other than the world, while the allegation of God’s corporeality tends to blur this distinction (See Glover, “God and Hobbes”, p. 144.)
- [30] *Leviathan*, pp. 294-95
- [31] See Glover, “God and Hobbes”, pp. 166-67
- [32] Hood, *Divine Politics*, p. 235
- [33] *Leviathan*, pp 220-21
- [34] The charge of insincerity in regard to Hobbes’s scriptural arguments has been made by numerous critics, most notably in recent years by Leo Strauss. According to Strauss, “Hobbes with double intention becomes an interpreter of the Bible, in the first place in order to make use of the authority of the Scriptures for his own theory, and next and particularly in order to shake the authority of the Scriptures themselves.” (*The Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, trans. by Elsa M. Sinclair (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), p. 71. See also Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953) p. 198; “On the Basis”, 9. 187.) This interpretation is criticized by Willis B. Glover in “God and Thomas Hobbes”, pp. 146-47. Glover’s entire article provides good insight into the question of Hobbes’s sincerity. (See also Hood, *Divine Politics*, pp. 1-2, 235.)
- [35] This is a simplification. The actual appeals for limitations to the King’s power were made to several sources, both customary and popular; and the supporting arguments were frequently interchanged. For example, Parliamentary limitations on the King’s power of taxation were urged on the basis of Parliament’s customary role in levying taxes. Similarly, legal limitations

on the arbitrary power of the King were urged on the basis of an alleged origin of the common law. But regardless of how these alleged limitations were supposed to have originated, Hobbes believes that his civil philosophy provides a sufficient refutation of them all.

[36] *English Works*, II, ix. Though my quotations are from the English edition, I have retained the more familiar Latin title, *De Cive*, rather than use the cumbersome title which appears in the *English Works: Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society*.