



## Taste of Chavruta — 5772 — Authority

### Introduction to *Taste of Chavruta*

**Chavruta learning** (learning in pairs) is one of the oldest and most powerful Jewish learning techniques. The *Limmud Chavruta Project*, now an international collaboration, is also one of Limmud's oldest and best-loved traditions, at Limmud Conference in the UK and at Limmudim around the world. Teams from around the world put together a Chavruta source book, filled to the brim with traditional and modern Jewish and secular readings for study which hundreds of Limmudniks use for studying in pairs. It is a wonderful, formative experience, opening people's eyes to new concepts and ideas, and helping people to forge life-long friendships.

Now, you can continue the Limmud chavruta experience into your daily life!

Try studying it at home, with your family, with colleagues at work during a break, with friends, during your commute, or by Skype or internet.

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### Authority

**This year (2011-2012/5772)**, spread over 10 months (October-July), Taste of Chavruta will be investigating the theme of **Authority**.

## KEY QUESTIONS:

- *What sorts of authority are there in ancient and modern Judaism? What about in modern society?*
  - *What is the source of these authorities?*
- *How do we deal with conflicts between Jewish and secular authorities?*
- *How do we reconcile subservience to earthly authorities with acknowledging that God's authority is ultimate?*

## 1. Divine authority

### Psalm 96:2-10

<sup>2</sup>Sing to the Lord, bless His name,  
proclaim His victory day after day.  
<sup>3</sup>Tell of His glory among the nations,  
His wondrous deeds, among all the  
peoples.  
<sup>4</sup>For the Lord is great and much acclaimed,  
He is held in awe by all divine beings.  
<sup>5</sup>All the gods of the peoples are mere idols,  
but the Lord made the heavens.  
<sup>6</sup>Glory and majesty are before Him;  
strength and splendour in His temple.  
<sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the  
peoples,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.  
<sup>8</sup>Ascribe to the Lord the glory of His name,  
bring tribute and enter His courts.  
<sup>9</sup>Bow down to the Lord majestic in holiness;  
tremble in His presence, all the earth!  
<sup>10</sup>Declare among the nations, "The Lord is  
king!"  
the world stands firm; it cannot be  
shaken;  
He judges the peoples with equity.

תְּהִלִּים צ"ו:ב-י"  
בְּשִׁירוֹ לַיהוָה בְּרַכּוּ שְׁמוֹ  
בַּשָּׁרוֹ מִיּוֹם-לְיוֹם יְשׁוּעָתוֹ:  
יְסַפְּרוּ בַּגּוֹיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ  
בְּכָל-הָעַמִּים גַּלְאוֹתָיו:  
כִּי גָדוֹל יְיָ וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד  
נֹרָא הוּא עַל-כָּל-אֱלֹהִים:  
הֲכִי אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים אֱלִילִים  
וְיֵי שָׁמַיִם עָשָׂה:  
הַזֹּדֶה־דָר לְפָנָיו  
עַז וְתַפְאֶרֶת בְּמִקְדָּשׁוֹ:  
הִבּוֹ לַיהוָה מִשְׁפָּחוֹת עַמִּים  
הִבּוֹ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז:  
הִבּוֹ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ  
שְׂאוֹ-מִנְחָה וּבֵאוּ לְחֻצְרוֹתָיו:  
הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוָה בְּהִדְרַת-קִדְשׁוֹ  
חִילוֹ מִפְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ:  
אָמְרוּ בַּגּוֹיִם אֱי מֶלֶךְ  
אֶף-תִּכּוֹן תִּבְל בַּל-תִּמּוֹט  
יָדִין עַמִּים בְּמִישָׁרִים:

Translation: JPS, 1999

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In the Name of Almighty God, the Swiss Confederation, with the intent of strengthening the alliance of the Confederates and of maintaining and furthering the unity, strength and honour of the Swiss nation, has adopted the following Federal Constitution...

### *Swiss Federal Constitution of 1874*

(translation from Wikisource)

[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Swiss\\_Federal\\_Constitution\\_of\\_1874](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Swiss_Federal_Constitution_of_1874)

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### Points to consider

What attributes does this text give that makes God a fitting ruler? In what ways do these qualities differ from a human ruler?

Is there any room in this text for earthly authority, subordinate to God?

As well as the Swiss, what other governments or monarchies in the past and today derive their authority from Divine mandate?