



Taste of Chavruta — 5772 — 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?*

### 3. Levitical authority

#### Exodus 40:12-16

<sup>12</sup>You shall bring Aaron and his sons forward to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and wash them with the water.

<sup>13</sup>Put the sacral vestments on Aaron, and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve Me as priest. <sup>14</sup>Then bring his sons forward, put tunics on them, <sup>15</sup>and anoint them as you have anointed their father, that they may serve Me as priests. This their anointing shall serve them for everlasting priesthood throughout the ages. <sup>16</sup>This Moses did; just as the Lord had commanded him, so he did.

#### שמות מ':י"ב-ט"ז

<sup>12</sup>וְהִקְרַבְתָּ אֶת-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת-בָּנָיו אֶל-פֶּתַח  
אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְרַחֲצָתָ אֹתָם בַּמַּיִם: <sup>13</sup>וְהִלַּבְשָׁתָ  
אֶת-אַהֲרֹן אֵת בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּמִשְׁחָתָ אֹתוֹ  
וְקִדַּשְׁתָּ אֹתוֹ וְכִהֵן לִי: <sup>14</sup>וְאֶת-בָּנָיו תִּקְרִיב  
וְהִלַּבְשָׁתָ אֹתָם כְּתֹנֶת: <sup>15</sup>וּמִשְׁחָתָ אֹתָם  
כַּאֲשֶׁר מִשְׁחָתָ אֶת-אַבְיָהֶם וְכִהְנוּ לִי  
וְהָיְתָה לְהִיָּת לָהֶם מִשְׁחָתָם לְכֹהֲנֵת עוֹלָם  
לְדֹרֹתָם: <sup>16</sup>וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְיָ  
אֹתוֹ כִּן עָשָׂה:

Translation: JPS, 1999

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First, that we have granted to God, and by this present charter have confirmed for us and our heirs in perpetuity, that the English Church shall be free, and shall have its rights undiminished, and its liberties unimpaired.

**Magna Carta (1215), clause 1, [www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/magnacarta.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/magnacarta.asp)**

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And of all plagues with which mankind are curst,  
Ecclesiastic tyranny's the worst.

**Daniel Defoe (1660-1731), *The True-Born Englishman* (1701)**

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*Archbishop:* Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law? Will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established in England? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges, as by law do or shall appertain to them or any of them?

*Queen:* All this I promise to do.

**From the Coronation Oath of Queen Elizabeth II, [www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk)**

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### 3. Levitical authority

**Points to consider**

According to this text, what is the source of the priests' authority?

What authority do the priests (kohanim) wield today in your community?

What, in your opinion, is the role of religious leadership in today's world?