

Part 3, Paper 70, The Evolution of Human, Melchizedek

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

government evolution, survival conflict, early leaders, military organization, collective survival, family fear, trade influence, clan dynamics, hereditary rule, secret societies, natural justice, trial by ordeal, ancient fines, death penalty, societal traditions

SPEAKERS

John, Sarah



John 00:00

Ever wonder how we went from, like, wandering bands of humans to, you know, the massive governments we have today? It's



Sarah 00:05

a journey, that's for sure. That's



John 00:07

what we're diving into today, right? Going way, way back, to see how government, like, even became a thing,



Sarah 00:13

exactly. And it's amazing how much of what we take for granted, laws, leaders came from, well, conflict really makes



John 00:22

sense. If you think about it, early humans always kind of on the verge of someone take out the trash, yeah. Except it's more like someone fend off that saber tooth tiger, right?



- S** Sarah 00:30
Exactly. And this source, the Urantia Book, it really gets into that whole survival of the fittest, but also, like survival of the most organized thing. Okay, so
- J** John 00:39
are we saying war made civilization? Well, not to
- S** Sarah 00:43
say war is good, obviously, but the need to organize for it. That's what pushed early humans to, you know, create structures, systems. Wait. So,
- J** John 00:51
like, the first battle plans led to the first city plans. Is that what you're saying,
- S** Sarah 00:56
kinda, to win a fight, you need, what a leader, some kind of chain of chain of command, so everyone's not just running around, like, well, like a bunch of disorganized early humans, uh huh, precisely. But think about it, that need for like, a clear leader, disciplined warriors, even making sure everyone's weapons are somewhat similar, so you can actually fight as a unit. Oh,
- J** John 01:19
so instead of, like, Grog brought a pointy stick again to the mammoth hunt. It's more like, okay, everyone's got their bronze tip spears. Let's do this exactly.
- S** Sarah 01:28
And those innovations, they didn't just stay on the battlefield. They like, bled into how these societies ran themselves day to day. So we're
- J** John 01:36
scarily good at this whole fighting thing. Maybe that teamwork would work for, I don't know, farming,
- S** Sarah 01:40
that's the thing, right? And you know, what's even wilder, this source suggests that even during

that's the thing, right? And you know, what's even wilder, this source suggests that even dance, like artistic dance, might have come from military drills, those synchronized moves evolving over time. Well,

 John 01:50
makes you think twice about the next ballet you see, right, right?

 Sarah 01:53
But to your point, we know war isn't the answer now, but thinking about its historical role, how do we, like, tap into that same innovation, that cooperation without, you know, the bloodshed? Yeah, it's

 John 02:08
good question, okay, but let's back up to before things got organized. Shall we before we had kings and queens and all that? It was just

 Sarah 02:15
hordes, pretty much. Yeah, not exactly a recipe for a stable government, just

 John 02:19
like a mass of people roaming around. How do you even start to build a society from

 Sarah 02:23
that right? So our source talks about this time where leadership was almost like non-existent. Take the Bushmen of Africa. Even today, they manage without chiefs in their groups really.

 John 02:34
How does that even work?

 Sarah 02:35
It's all about survival. You know, collective survival. If the group doesn't succeed, no one

 John 02:40



John 02:40

does. Makes sense, but something had to change, right? Like, how do we go from these hordes to actual settled communities with, like, rules,



Sarah 02:50

two words, family and fear? Okay, so family I get



John 02:55

but fear.



Sarah 02:56

Think about it, the family unit. It's driven by that need to reproduce, raise kids, right? That's the first building block. But then fear of outsiders, fear of like running out of resources, fear of constant fighting. So you band together for safety exactly, first into clans, then those clans become tribes, safety in



John 03:13

numbers, especially when everyone's carrying spears, I bet. But it wasn't all fighting, right? This source also mentions like trade that helped bring these early societies together too. Absolutely,



Sarah 03:22

fear might be the initial push, but shared economic interests, those were vital for keeping the peace, at least within the group, right,



John 03:30

right? Instead of, let's go steal their stuff, it's more like, Hey, you want to trade. We've got extra mammoth tusks over here. You've got those cool shells. It's



Sarah 03:38

early globalization. You know, tribes realizing, hey, working together, at least sometimes it benefits everyone.



John 03:44

A mammoth tusk in the hand is worth two in the other tribe's territory.

S Sarah 03:49

Something like that, right? And this even like influenced language, a shared language, even if it's just for bartering, meant less misunderstanding, less chance of things going wrong, this

J John 04:01

chance of accidentally starting a war. Because you thought they said trade, but they really said invade. So good business deals. The original peace treaty, I like it, okay, but we've got these tribes. They're trading, but let's be real, disagreements still happen. What kept things from like total chaos all the time? That's

S Sarah 04:20

where things get really interesting. That's where the clans come in, clans,

J John 04:24

right? So, like, smaller tribes within the larger tribe, where they just, like, based on who was related to

S Sarah 04:30

whom, family was huge, yeah, like tracing your lineage all the way back to some shared ancestor. But it wasn't just blood. Clans could form around, like, dialects, shared religious beliefs, even just a shared fear of the same enemy.

J John 04:43

We're all terrified of those giant spider people over there. Let's form a clan, right?

S Sarah 04:47

Strength and shared terror, I guess you could say so. How

J John 04:50

did this whole clan system like? How did it affect leadership? You've got the tribe as a whole, but then all these small groups inside it, right? And

S

Sarah 04:58

that dynamic is fascinating. To have your clan heads, often chosen through the mother's side of the family, all about keeping the peace within the clan. Then you've got your tribal chief, usually a war leader, establishing his line through the father's side. They were responsible for everyone's safety, but also usually looking for the next place to, you know, conquer.

J

John 05:19

Oh boy. So two very different leadership styles often clashing. Oh, yeah.

S

Sarah 05:24

But here's the thing, early humans learn the hard way when it came to war, one decisive leader way more effective than a council trying to make decisions. It's like war kind of forced those early societies to figure out, hey, maybe one voice at the top makes things run smoother, at least when it comes to, you know, not getting wiped out by the tribe next door.

J

John 05:44

So much for ancient democracy, I guess. But those councils, the clan leaders, they didn't just disappear entirely, right? No,

S

Sarah 05:48

they stuck around. But instead of being the main decision makers, they morphed into like advisors, you know, the king's inner circle, offering wisdom and probably a healthy dose of Well, back in my day,

J

John 06:01

we didn't rush into battle without consulting the spirits that failed a five day weather forecast,

S

Sarah 06:06

exactly. But as these societies got bigger, more complex, that old way of doing things, it just couldn't keep up. Our source is pretty clear about that, to really run a state effectively, to keep order, you needed a leader who could well lead without having to ask permission from a committee every five minutes.

J

John 06:25

So less bureaucracy in the early days. Makes sense, I guess. But how did those chiefs, those

so less bureaucracy in the early days. Makes sense, I guess. But how did these chiefs, these warlords? How did they become kings? That's a big jump, it

S

Sarah 06:33

is, and it's fascinating how it happened. Brute strength played a part, sure, especially at the beginning, but the real turning point when kingship got all mixed up with, well, the divine, ah, so

J

John 06:43

it's not just about who's the toughest, it's who the gods like best. Exactly

S

Sarah 06:47

that idea that a king was chosen by the gods, that they had this like right to rule, it was powerful stuff, great

J

John 06:55

for PR, right? Don't mess with me. I've got the gods on speed dial, right?

S

Sarah 06:58

And it wasn't just about keeping power, though, that was definitely a perk. Remember all that chaos we talked out with succession when a chief died before it was clear who was next in line? Yeah, not exactly a recipe for a stable society. Exactly hereditary rule, passing the throne down the line, usually father to son. Well, it solved that problem. It's

J

John 07:17

all about family, even back then, yeah, you will respect my authority. I inherited it from my father, who inherited it from his father, who got it

S

Sarah 07:25

straight from the big guy upstairs. And this whole reverence for the king, this belief that they were practically untouchable, led to some strange customs. Our source mentions how some of these early kings, they were kept isolated like too sacred for ordinary people to even look at, Wait,

J

John 07:41



John 07:41

seriously, like ancient celebrities hiding from the paparazzi, kinda



Sarah 07:46

and because the king was off being all mystical and whatnot, someone had to, you know, actually run things. That's where we get prime ministers. They were basically stand ins for kings who were considered too holy or maybe too worried about getting assassinated to risk being seen in public too often. Wow.



John 08:02

Okay, so we've got kings, we've got councils turned advisors. But something's still missing from this picture of early government, right? What about like, law and order? How did they deal with people who just didn't want to follow the rules?



Sarah 08:15

That's where we get to the good stuff. That's where the secret societies come in.



John 08:19

Finally, secret handshakes, weird rituals, maybe a human sacrifice thrown in for good measure, maybe



Sarah 08:26

not that dramatic, though they definitely knew how to put on a show. But here's the thing, these societies, they weren't just about being mysterious. They were crucial for keeping order, for shaping how people behaved. Okay,



John 08:38

I'm listening. How does a group that meets in like a cave somewhere, end up influencing an entire tribe.



Sarah 08:46

It's all about what they did. For one they were in charge of initiating young men into adulthood. No fancy schools back then, right? These societies, they provided the education, the laws, the customs, the skills you needed to actually function in that



John 08:58

tribe. So like part school, part fraternity, part vigilante squad, you're getting it. They



Sarah 09:03

were enforcers, making sure people stuck to those taboos that kept society running. Respect your elders, don't steal. And this one was big. No stealing wives from other tribes, boys



John 09:14

will be boys wasn't exactly a valid defense, I'm guessing. Nope,



Sarah 09:17

especially when exile from the tribe was a very real consequence,



John 09:21

right? Because nothing says fun time like wandering the wilderness alone with a grumbling stomach and a spear that's gone blunt



Sarah 09:27

Exactly. And remember how we were talking about King's consolidating power? Well, these secret societies, with their oaths of loyalty and their networks of, shall we say, informants, they had influence even over a king



John 09:41

checks and balances ancient style. I bet that made some rulers nervous. Probably



Sarah 09:45

did, because these groups, they could sway a public opinion. They could even, like, mobilize against a leader they thought was becoming a tyrant or, you know, just incompetent. Wow.



John 09:55

It's amazing how these ideas about power, about how to keep it in check. I. They go back that far, they

S

Sarah 10:01

really do. But we can't forget about the women in all of this. Our source also talks about the rise of women's secret societies. These were all about preparing young women for marriage, for motherhood, so

J

John 10:12

inch and finishing schools. But instead of learning how to play the lute and speak politely, it's more like here's how to appease the rain god so our crops don't die Exactly.

S

Sarah 10:21

It shows how these societies, for both men and women, they weren't just about rules. They were about passing down knowledge, making sure their traditions survived.

J

John 10:29

The whole hidden layer of society working behind the scenes, which makes me wonder, were these secret societies with their focus on custom and tradition? Were they the ones who started writing those rules down, like turning them into actual laws.

S

Sarah 10:42

It's an interesting thought, but it was probably more of a gradual thing. Remember those mores we talked about, those deeply ingrained customs that everyone just knew right,

J

John 10:52

like society's original rule book, but, you know, without needing to print it out

S

Sarah 10:56

exactly, but as things got more complex, those unwritten rules. They needed an update. They needed to be formalized, written down, so everyone was, at least in theory, on the same page. That's how Moore's transitioned into what we'd recognize as laws,

J

John 11:12

from unspoken customs to written law. Rah, it's like the evolution of justice itself, really. It

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Sarah 11:17

really is. Yeah. And as those laws, like developed so did the whole idea of what was even considered wrong in the first place. You know, we might think, well, stealing, that's always been bad. But was it as bad as, say, insulting the Chiefs hunting skills? I don't know. Yeah,

J

John 11:32

gotta keep those hunters happy when your next meal depends on it. Exactly.

S

Sarah 11:35

It was all about survival back then, those early taboos, the ones that became laws. They were all about protecting the tribe, right? Murder, theft, even adultery. These weren't just bad behavior. They were seen as like ripping apart the very fabric of the tribe.

J

John 11:51

So high stakes for messing up, which makes me wonder what did happen when someone crossed the line. I'm guessing they didn't just get sent to their cave without any dinner.

S

Sarah 11:59

Not quite our source, the Urantia Book. It talks about this thing, natural justice and well, let's just say it wasn't pretty early humans. They were big on payback,

J

John 12:08

an eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, brutal, but I guess effective for its time. It

S

Sarah 12:13

was revenge that was the norm. But here's where it gets interesting. Even in those like vengeance fueled societies, there's a shift towards a more, I don't know, a more communal approach to justice. Instead of individuals or families feuding all the time, tribes started taking on that responsibility themselves.

J

John 12:31

So from personal vendettas to something resembling a court system, yeah,

- S** Sarah 12:35
exactly. Our source talks about how these blood feuds, these endless cycles of revenge, they became a problem for the whole tribe to deal with, and that is a huge change in how humans, like govern themselves. So
- J** John 12:48
what did these early trials look like? Were they like banging a gavel made out of a giant bone?
- S** Sarah 12:53
Probably not that formal, though. I'm sure they had their moments. The source mentions these things, trials by ordeal. You ever heard of those?
- J** John 13:00
Oh, yeah. Like walking on hot coals or sticking your hand in boiling water. If you're innocent, the gods will protect you, or something like that, right?
- S** Sarah 13:07
Not exactly what you'd call the scientific method. And it's even crazier, the source even gives this example from the Old Testament, where a husband he suspects his wife of cheating, so she's forced to drink this, I don't even know what to call it, this concoction, if she gets sick, she's guilty, if not well, because she's lucky to be alive, makes you appreciate
- J** John 13:26
a good jury trial, doesn't it? But were punishments always about pain, or were there, like, other options back then,
- S** Sarah 13:33
as tribes got more settled, the idea of, like, paying for your crime, that became a thing.
- J** John 13:38
Ancient fines. Did they take mammoth tusks as payment? Livestock
- S** Sarah 13:42

was big, and believe or not, sometimes even women were exchanged. Sounds crazy, now, I know, but the thinking was a crime, especially murder. It created this imbalance you had to, like, make up for it, either with a life or something considered equally valuable,

J John 13:57

grim math. But I guess it made a certain kind of sense back then, it did.

S Sarah 14:02

But like everything ideas about justice, they evolved. Our source points to the Hebrews. They were among the first to move away from this whole blood money thing. They believe some acts like murder, they required a more, well more permanent solution. The

J John 14:16

death penalty still a heavy topic all these years later, it is, and

S Sarah 14:20

it marks a big shift. It's not about balance anymore or even revenge. It's about saying this act, this is so damaging to us, to who we are as a people, that it requires the ultimate consequence. But amidst all this talk of laws and punishments, it's interesting, isn't it, the secret societies, they never really went away.

J John 14:37

It's true, we still have them, though. I'm guessing the initiation rituals are a bit tamer these days. Why do you think we're so drawn to these secretive groups? Yeah, even now,

S Sarah 14:47

it's like it's built into us, isn't it, that need to belong, to be part of something with its own rituals, its own traditions. But those early societies with all their secrets and influence, they didn't just disappear. They changed. They. Came the guilds, the charities, the organizations we see all around us. It's like this direct line from our past to the present. You know,

J John 15:06

it's true. It's like we started this whole deep dive wondering how government even came to be. And it turns out, so much of it, it goes back to these really basic human needs, for safety, for belonging, for figuring out how to live together without, you know, driving each other crazy and making mistakes along the way. Oh, definitely making mistakes, but learning from them,

hopefully. Yeah, which is a good reminder, I think, that the whole story of government, it's not over. It's still being written, yeah, and who knows what those chapters ahead are gonna look like?



Sarah 15:37

That's the fun part. We get to find out together, right? Yeah?