**Hobbes’ View on the State of Nature**

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) was an English philosopher who wrote an important book called *Leviathan* in 1651. In this book, he explained his ideas about human beings and how society should be organized. One of his most famous ideas is about the **“state of nature.”**

**What is the State of Nature?**

The state of nature is a situation where there is no government, no laws, no police, and no authority to control people. Hobbes imagined what life would be like if humans lived without a state or ruler.

He believed that in this condition, every person would have complete freedom to do whatever they wanted. There would be no rules to stop people from taking what they wanted or fighting others.

**Human Nature in the State of Nature**

Hobbes thought that human beings are naturally selfish, fearful, and competitive. People want to survive, gain power, and protect themselves. But since everyone has these same desires, conflict will always arise.

For example:

* If two people want the same food, land, or property, they will fight over it.
* If someone feels unsafe, they may attack first to protect themselves.
* People will not trust each other because there is no law to punish cheating, stealing, or violence.

According to Hobbes, this constant fear and fighting would make life very hard.

**“Life is Nasty, Brutish, and Short”**

Hobbes described the state of nature with his famous line: in such a condition, human life would be “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”

* *Solitary* – people would live alone because they cannot trust others.
* *Poor* – no one could build wealth, as there would always be the threat of theft.
* *Nasty and brutish* – violence would be common.
* *Short* – many would die young because of war and insecurity.

**Why People Leave the State of Nature**

Hobbes believed that no one actually wants to live in fear all the time. Even though humans are selfish, they are also reasonable. Reason tells them that if they all agree to follow certain rules, they can live more safely.

Therefore, people would give up some of their freedom to gain protection. For example, they might agree not to steal or kill, as long as others also promise the same.

**The Social Contract and the Sovereign**

This agreement is called a **social contract.** People make a contract with each other to live peacefully. But to make sure the contract is followed, there must be a powerful authority, called the **sovereign.**

The sovereign could be a king or a government, but it must be strong enough to keep peace and prevent people from breaking the rules. Hobbes argued that without such a ruler, society would collapse back into the dangerous state of nature.

**Conclusion**

In simple words, Hobbes believed the state of nature was a condition of chaos, fear, and constant fighting because humans are selfish and competitive. To escape this, people agree to form a society and create a strong government that can protect them. Without this government, life would remain violent and insecure.