



# Storming Fortresses

For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh,  
but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:4

Vol. 20; No. 9

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September, 2001

## *Thought Provokers:*

The entry fee into the kingdom of God is nothing; the annual subscription is all we possess.

**Henry Drummond**

The Bible is the statute book of God's Kingdom.

**Ezekiel Hopkins**

God cannot be withstood by man's incompetence or by Satan's enmity.

**Watchman Nee**

## Of Politics and Politicians:

Or  
Do We Vote and For Whom Do We Vote?  
Part II

By  
**Murray McLeod-Boyle**

### **Christians and Politics**

With this introduction, let us turn our attention to the issue of God's view on politics. As noted earlier, many Christians see politics as an area with which Christians should not be concerned. Others call for political action, but denying God the right to speak, they can only propose what may, at best, be called "baptised humanism." At any rate, the consequence of these differing ideas is the same. The true humanists are left to rule unfettered and unhindered.

### **Kingdom**

So, What is God's view on politics?

To understand this topic we must start with a Biblical view of the Kingdom. Does the Bible speak of a kingdom? Yes, it does. Clearly, the Bible speaks of the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven—terms that are synonymous.<sup>1</sup> As the very term suggests, a kingdom must necessarily deal with a king and with politics (laws, principles, codification, and enforcement). In essence then, this very simple thought gives us a great clue. If God inaugurated a kingdom, then He is obviously interested in politics and in kingship.

We will not spend time elaborating on this as most

Christians have little problem with the idea that the Bible speaks about kingdom. We may go further. Few, if any, Christians deny that the Bible speaks about God's Kingdom. The

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1. See: Matthew 4:17; Mark 4:30; Luke 10:9-11; John 3:3-5; Acts 14:22; James 2:5; 2 Thessalonians 1:5. On the point that the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are synonyms, see the synoptic parallels in Matthew 11:11 (heaven) and Luke 7:28 (God).

STORMING FORTRESSES is published monthly by REFORMATION MINISTRIES, a non-denominational organisation committed to maintaining and implementing Biblical truth as reasserted by the Reformers.

Subscriptions run from July 1 to June 30. Pro rata rates apply at other times. Current rates are as follows:

- \$40.00 Australia and New Zealand, (GST. Incl.)
- \$75.00 United States of America,
- \$ 60.00 All Other Countries.

Amounts payable in Australian currency. Cheques made payable to:

REFORMATION MINISTRIES,  
PO Box 1656,  
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problem is in understanding the make-up and scope of that Kingdom and of any rival kingdoms.

### Pluralism and Dualism: The False View.

One of the first errors made by many Christians in this area is the adoption of a pluralistic view in regard to the concept of kingdom. This is not surprising given that “dualism” is such a prevalent belief in Christian circles today. Basically, as we move further from the truth we need to corrupt more theology in order to give the appearance of truth. This is akin to the liar who must tell more lies to cover the previous lies et cetera, et cetera. First came dualism, a belief system that divides spirit and matter—assigning matter as evil and spirit as good. This is seen most

clearly in Gnosticism, but can be readily seen today in many Christians. It is apparent when people distort texts so as to find the spiritual or hidden meaning, all the while passing over the plain and literal meaning of the text. This “spiritualising” lead to introspection, which in turn lead to a withdrawal from the physical and material realities clearly stated in Scripture. Thus, when James asks, “What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you?” he does not receive an answer that is remotely close to correct. Instead of agreeing with James—*Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members* (James 4:1)—they replied, ‘the devil made me do it.’ Enter pluralism.

In this pluralistic view there are two kingdoms. The Kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world or Satan. These two kingdoms are equal in power and stand as the ultimate source of good and evil, respectively.

With this view entrenched in their thinking, these Christians then begin to formulate their political theory. *Apriori* they deny any real relevance to the physical realm. Thanks to their dualism, they are convinced that the physical is passing and that it is of no consequence. Thus introspection increases—me and Jesus on the inside!<sup>2</sup> Thanks to their pluralism, they can blame someone else for their failures and still maintain a favourable expectation of making heaven.<sup>3</sup>

The next tenet in this metaphysical conundrum is to state that God is only concerned with the former kingdom and not the latter. Then grace is added. As we are saved by grace and

not by law we are able to jettison the Old Testament with its gross stories and bloody rites. Having achieved this, they then cling to the belief that grace and anarchy are identical. Thus, these Christians end up with a magnificent chameleonic feat. They are able to claim the cross of Christ to save them, but deny any responsibility to take part in the reality of this world at the command of Christ. The end result is that we have a group of Christians that are indistinguishable from genuine, *bona fide*, run-of-the-mill, pagans.

The greater atrocity in all this is that these people slight God’s Kingdom. By their very belief they turn Kingdom living into a paganism which God declares unacceptable.

So, “What does this have to do with politics?” you ask. Very simply, these Christians deny that God has anything to say to anyone, especially the pagans. If God is only concerned with His Kingdom, then He cannot be at all concerned with the pagans. Likewise, if it is only spirit that is of consequence then deeds of the flesh matter little.

Application! These Christians do not and will not care about politics, nor will they care about the future. They have no present plan to affect the future. All they have is jelly where their bones should be and an extremely perverted view of the Kingdom. *To them, the future is something from which they must be saved, rather than something over which, in the Biblical sense, they should take dominion.*

At this point we encounter the very paradox intrinsic to this belief

2. With the rise in this belief has come the rise in political correctness, in terms such as “open and affirming, in the call for tolerance and last but by no means least, the constant phrase, ‘that is being judgemental!’”

3. This theology, if it can be called that, has strong links to the psychology of our age. The “rapture generation”, as Rushdoony would call them, has sought escape from responsibility of all types. In the world, psychology and psychiatry seek to push the blame for gross acts of non-self-discipline (sin) to others—familial or societal. In Christianity, the “rapture generation” retreat to the inner self, withdraw from the world, and blame the devil. It all amounts to the same treachery, namely, an unwillingness to live in God’s good world how, when, and where He determines. Rebellion by any other name...!

system. Two things are evident in the position outlined. One is that God's Kingdom is white-anted from within. God's Kingdom is filled with the type of unrighteousness He everywhere decries. Second, and more important, is the paradox. If, as this position declares, God is only concerned with His Kingdom and not with any rival kingdom, then these people, at the very least, should be calling for a Christian government to rule the Christians. This is the logical extension of their argument, is it not? So why do we not hear these people calling for Christian governments for the Christians? Simple! This is why they, by necessary consequence, adopt introspection and throw out the Old Testament. The logic is perfectly clear to us as well as to them. Thus they must find a way of wriggling out from under the most obvious claims that Christ has made upon them. Consequently, their relationship with Christ is internalised and God's law code is denied.

In short, the only real answer is that these people are not concerned with God and His Kingdom. Therefore, they invent a system that helps ease their conscience and relieve them of any responsibility in the political sphere or any sphere for that matter.<sup>4</sup>

With this false<sup>5</sup> view in mind, let us contemplate Scripture's teaching with regard to politics and the Kingdom. At this point we are going to beg your indulgence. As this issue is important, we are going to take the

unusual step of quoting the Scriptures, as well as other sources, at length. We, in a sense, are forcing people to adopt the Berean attitude (Acts 17:11). We hope to show, by reading the texts, that the modern concept has no Biblical warrant. Thus we ask you to kindly bear with us.

## Two Kingdoms. Yes or No?

The first area to be discussed is that of "Pluralism" or the belief in two ultimate kingdoms: one good, the other bad. In other words, we look at the concept that there is the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Both of which are equal in power, right, and sovereignty.

For our purposes, we have defined "kingdom" as a legitimate rule over an established geographical area. By legitimate rule, we have in mind a legal rule. Thus the question is: Does the Bible teach that there are two kingdoms - one good, the other bad?

In response, we would posit that the Scriptures nowhere teach anything that remotely resembles this. Does the Bible speak of other kingdoms? Yes, it does. First, however, it must be understood that these kingdoms are never spoken about as absolute or enduring. Second, they are usually attributed to kings of the earth.

### Rebel or Ruler?

*The Scriptures recognise one*

*kingdom.* That is God's Kingdom. Nothing is attributed to Satan in terms of a legitimate rule. Rather, the texts deal with the activities of a rebel.

To illustrate this, we would like to refer to a battlefield concept. During World War 2 an Austrian Corporal living in and running the kingdom of Germany invaded several other kingdoms. To do this he crossed borders that delineated the kingdoms' geographical bounds. Having crossed borders, he toppled governments—a government being the centrally located person or persons that rule. In other words, he violated their sovereignty. To stop this slaughter, rulers in other kingdoms (sovereigns and sovereignties) sent men to repel the invader. He was driven back into his own territory and, *generally speaking*, the kingdoms that he had invaded were given back their boundaries and their rule. In short, they regained their sovereignty.

Now compare this with the Vietnam War. In this instance, what we saw were rebels from within a single sovereignty trying to topple the ruling powers because they did not agree with those powers.<sup>6</sup> This is why we had guerrilla warfare for the most part. One side had marked territory, infrastructure et cetera. These could be attacked and targeted. They could be shot at, blown up, and assailed. Such assets belonged to the established kingdom. The true kingdom.

On the other side were the rebels.

4. To highlight this we refer to a conversation with a minister. He disagreed with the idea that God's Law should be applied to the secular realm. This he saw as an error. Yet when he was asked if God's law should apply to the Church, he concurred. In this scheme murder, adultery, thievery, homosexuality, rape, false worship, idolatry and the like are sins that only Christians can be guilty of. If God is not concerned with the ungodly and His Law does not apply to the ungodly, then they can never be judged as guilty of transgressing it. Thus, hell will have a vacancy sign outside as it will be an empty place.

5. The above mentioned error is not the only one, but you will find some of these tenets in every false view.

6. "In the Vietnam War the insurgent guerrilla movement that fought the South Vietnamese government and its ally ... was known to its enemies as the Viet Cong.... Most of the insurgents were South Vietnamese, but the movement depended increasingly on North Vietnamese aid and troops." *The 1997 Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia* (TM) Copyright (c) 1997 by Grolier Interactive Inc.

What did they have? Nothing. Well, they had poorly designed black pyjamas. These were of the kingdom, but rebelled against the kingdom. They sought to overthrow the kingdom that had created and nurtured them. They imbibed a different philosophy and wreaked havoc. They may have had a leader, but they did not have a recognised sovereign. In a very loose fashion we may say that they constituted a kingdom, but they did not have legal right or title to the geographical area that they claimed and over which they fought.

Returning to our subject, we must understand that the Scriptures speak of this second type of situation. God created and ruled all. His Kingdom alone is recognised. Our adversary, the Devil, rebelled against God's rule. In other words, he started a guerrilla campaign. He has no recognised title as sovereign, no legal right to God's domain. He is simply a rebel. He has turned against his creator with singular intent—to sit on God's throne.

### One Kingdom and a Vanquished Enemy: Some Evidence

It is notable that the Scriptures never ascribe to Satan a true kingdom—rule and geographical bounds. Satan is a type of Cain or Cain is a type of Satan. He is a transgressor of God's covenant; a murderer cast out of God's presence, and condemned to wander.<sup>7</sup> The only significant difference is that Cain's end is unknown. Satan's is not.

To prove this we first turn to the parallel accounts given in the Synoptic Gospels:

**Matthew 12:25-29:** And knowing their thoughts He [Jesus] said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or

house divided against itself shall not stand. "And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? "And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. "Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.

**Mark 3:23-27:** And He [Jesus] called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? "And if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. "And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand "And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! "But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house.

**Luke 11:17-22:** But He [Jesus] knew their thoughts, and said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house *divided* against itself falls. "And if Satan also is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. "And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges. "But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. "When a strong *man*, fully armed, guards his own homestead, his possessions are undisturbed; but when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied, and distributes his plunder.

Of importance—we must note this well—these texts constitute the

only place in Scripture in which Satan is said to have a kingdom. Both Matthew and Luke attribute the kingdom to Satan. In Mark's account, he simply uses the kingdom analogy.

So how must we view this? First, we need to note that the crux of the text is about divided household's and kingdoms not being able to stand. The Pharisees had just accused Jesus of casting out a demon by the power of demons. Jesus retorts by saying that this is utter nonsense. A power divided against itself cannot stand. The very concept is ludicrous.

Therefore, what is said about Satan having a kingdom is given only as an analogy. If Satan's kingdom is divided against itself it is finished. Thus says our Lord and Christ.

Next comes the implication of Jesus' question, "By whom do your sons cast them [demons] out?" Jesus recognises that the sons of Israel had at times exorcised demons. By what power had they done this. They would claim that it was by the power of God. So too, Jesus implies that He acts by the power of God. Indeed, Jesus proves the ludicrous position which the Pharisees have taken. If the Sons of Israel drive demons out by the power of God, why do they accuse Jesus of using another power? Particularly, when they know that the very concept they have espoused, demons being driven out by the power of demons, is inconceivable. Thus, the Pharisees, much to their chagrin, have actually affirmed that Jesus is acting as God's agent. Jesus casts out demons by the power of God.

This then leads us to the third and more important point. Jesus states plainly that if He drives out demons by the finger of God (Luke) or by the Spirit of God (Matthew), then the Kingdom of God has arrived. So what does this mean? Simply, Jesus is declaring that Satan's time is limited. The clock is ticking and there is

<sup>7</sup> On this point, see Satan's response to God's question in Job 1:6-7 cf. 1 Peter 5:8.

no injury time or time on period.

If Satan's kingdom is divided, it is finished. If God's Kingdom has come, Satan's kingdom is finished. What Jesus, our Lord and Christ, shows us is that the murdering wanderer has been banished. What little power and property this rebel possessed is about to be taken away.

Now, we must understand that Satan does possess things. These constitute earthly dominions and souls. What also must be understood is that he only has them by default. Since the fall, men have shared the same rebellious disposition as Satan. Thus, we may say that both are "cut from the same cloth." Hence, when evil men rule they do so in the same manner as Satan. This is why Jesus, when speaking to the Jews, said, "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*; for he is a liar, and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

So our text is not saying that Satan does not possess anything. Nor is our text affirming that Satan has a kingdom in terms of rule and territory. The text is a declaration which states that Satan is about to be brought to nought. This is reinforced with stunning clarity in Jesus' concluding remarks. Jesus pictures a strong man, "armed to the teeth," as William Hendriksen translates it. He is in charge. He is at peace. Then along comes a Stronger Man and dispossesses the strong man. The Stronger Man then divides the booty and the spoils.

Jesus claims to be that Stronger Man. He is the Incarnate Son of God. He has proven this by overthrowing Satan's power and casting out the demon. The demon could not stay when Jesus commanded it to go. Satan may have been screaming at his henchman to "hang on", but it was to no

avail. Our Lord and Christ commanded. Therefore, the demon was compelled to leave.

Christ Jesus had come *ipso facto* the Kingdom had come. The rebel may have had his time of victory. He may have gathered his booty. However, the great King has said, "Enough!" His Son has arrived to destroy the rebel and his followers and to set the captives free.

Thus, this text can never be used to imply that Satan has a kingdom in the same manner with which we understand God to have a Kingdom.

### One Kingdom and a Victorious Christ: Some Evidence

Moving on, we now turn to the Gospel of John. Three texts here are significant:

**John 12:31:** Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out.

**John 14:30:** I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me;

**John 16:11:** and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

In each of these texts Satan is referred to as the ruler of the world. Again, many would take these texts to uphold the erroneous view that Satan has a kingdom that stands equally with that of God's Kingdom. Is this so? By no means.

We need to understand that those who often hold to these beliefs have never really stopped to read the text and understand its true intent.

### The World

First, we need to discern what is meant by the term "world". Some months ago we heard a reasonably good sermon on Christianity versus

the world. The great disappointment was that, in typical fashion, the term "world" was never explained. Now this failure must be corrected if Christians are going to take their proper place *in this world* but *be not of the world*.

Biblically the term "world", which translates the Greek *κοσμος* (*cosmos*), has a wide range of meanings. It can be used as the sum total of earth; to contrast earth with heaven; to refer to all above the animals; to designate the home of mankind, et cetera. Philosophically, it can be used to refer to the whole universe—which is the meaning closest to our usage of the word "cosmos."

Standing outside of these usages, which refer mainly to the physical aspects, is the ethical usage. Biblically, "the world" is not only a physical reality but it is an ethical system which is opposed to God. Bauer writes:

*the world*, and everything that belongs to it, appears as that which is hostile to God, i.e. lost in sin, wholly at odds with anything divine, ruined and depraved. ...The Christian must have nothing to do with this world of sin and separation from God: instead of desiring it ... one is ...to *keep oneself unstained by the world* Js 1:27. ...Also in Paul: God and world in opposition ... *the spirit of the world* and *the Spirit that comes from God*. ... The world is condemned by God; but also the object of the divine plan of salvation. The Christian is dead as far as this world is concerned: ... *through Christ the world has been crucified for me, and I have been (crucified) to the world*. ...The use of *κοσμος* [*cosmos*] in this sense is even further developed in John. The *κοσμος* stands in opposition to God. ...Neither Christ himself, nor his own belong in any way to the 'world'. Rather Christ has chosen them 'out of the world', even though for the present they must still live 'in the world' All the trouble that they must undergo because of this, means nothing compared with the victorious conviction that Christ (and the be-

lievers with him) has overcome 'the world'.<sup>8</sup>

Clearly, what many of the Biblical writers are condemning is this ethical system that opposes God, and not the physical world itself. The common belief that the physical world is evil and something to be shunned is nothing short of a full blown return to the Gnostic heresy of dualism.<sup>9</sup>

It is pathetic to view so much of Christendom running about, scared to engage in certain activities, for fear of curtailing any progress in sanctification. This is the mistaken belief that contact with the world will corrupt. Therefore, we only use shopping trolleys that have been prayed over or doused with 'holy water'. Yes, we exaggerate, but the reality is not all that different. To illustrate. People will not listen to the dreaded "rock" music because it is of the world. Yet they will sing choruses that often assert theological errors. What is the difference? If a rock group sings a wholesome song (it does happen now and then!) and a church choir sings error, why do we tolerate the latter and denounce the former? Is it not because we have adopted the erroneous sacred /secular view of the world.

Therefore, in returning to our texts we understand that John is stating that the Devil is the chief exponent of this anti-God movement. There is no geographical rule attributed to our Adversary. He is simply a wanderer who propagates anti-God sentiment wherever he goes.

### Satan's Judgement, Now!

Second, we are obliged to look carefully at the reality that the text clearly portrays. Note well, John 12:31 and 16:11 state that the ruler of the world is said to be judged. So even if the readership disagrees with what is said under the first point, it is extremely difficult to attribute anything substantial to Satan in light of these other statements.

In John 12:31, Jesus states two consequences of *a single action*. First, "Now judgment is upon the world." Second, "Now Satan shall be cast out." The insurmountable hurdle for those that claim this text as proof Satan has a kingdom, is the fact that this text has just divested Satan of everything. If Satan's kingdom is the world, then he just lost it. Jesus says it is under judgement, now!<sup>10</sup> If Satan is the ruler, then a general election must be held. Jesus has evicted (cast out) the leader of the opposition, now!

Next we turn to the word "now." It is obvious to our astute readers that the term "now" occurs twice, whilst the text says "shall be cast out," which clearly implies a future event.

To find an answer to this we must look at that "future event" or what we earlier termed an "action." John 12:32 records Jesus saying, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."<sup>11</sup> When does the judgement of the world and the casting out of the ruler happen? It happens when our Christ and Lord, in obedience to our beloved Father, lays down His life upon the cross.

In terms of our text, these events are drawing ever closer.<sup>12</sup> This is the "now." For us this may be strange, but the Greek word used can refer to immediate time either side of the statement. In fact, we use "now" in this way to. We can say to someone, "I am leaving now." when we do not leave for another ten minutes. Thus Jesus declares that the present time is the "now." He has arrived at a critical juncture. History, present events, and future hopes all collide at this point. This time, now, is the hour for which Jesus came.

The irony in this is that what Satan sees as his greatest victory, the death of Jesus, turns out instead to be the *tour de force* on our Saviour's part that mortally wounds our adversary.

Hence, there is no joy in this text for those who erroneously posit that Satan has a kingdom—a legal rule over a geographic are.

John's position is further reinforced in 16:11. Jesus is speaking to his disciples about the post resurrection outpouring of the Holy Spirit. More particularly, He outlines the role of the Holy Spirit. He shall convict of sin, righteousness, and judgement. It is this third point that is of interest to us. The judgement concerns the judgement of the ruler of this world. Once more we are confronted by plain words that should dispel any lingering doubts as far as a kingdom of evil is concerned.

First, if the ruler of evil is judged, then all of that ilk are judged. This is a "lock, stock and barrel" situation. No exceptions. Thus, the evil is ren-

8. Bauer, Walter, Gingrich, F. Wilbur, and Danker, Frederick W., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 1979. Italics original. Text references removed. Abbreviations completed.

9. This is just one more ancient heresy that our "open and affirming", tolerant, and politically correct churches will not address.

10. The implication is clear. To be judged, one must be under authority.

11. The use of "if" is emphatic, not tentative or uncertain. "And I, *When* I be lifted up." See: RSV, NRSV, and NIV.

12. Note that 12:27 records Jesus as asking to be saved from this "hour." He then acknowledges that it is for this very hour that He came. So our immediate context is that of Jesus preparing for His crucifixion.

dered powerless. It is hauled before the Judge for sentence.

Second, the term “judged” in the Greek appears in the perfect tense. In Greek this tense implies a past completed action that has a present reality. In common usage, emphasis either falls upon the action or the result of the action. As an example, one we have used before, think to the usage of Old Testament texts by the New Testament writers. They introduce these texts with, “It is written.” Such sayings are usually in the perfect tense. The action of writing is acknowledged as a past action, however, the emphasis falls upon the fact that the text is still a binding authority in the present.

So, in our text Jesus acknowledges that once He is crucified, resurrected and ascended, the Holy Spirit will come. This coming will reinforce the judgement of and victory over the evil one. The past action still stands in force today. Our Father did not give Satan the possibility of “parole” or of “time off for good behaviour.” He decreed death! Satan is now on death row. Mortally wounded. Losing power. In retreat.

With consummate clarity, John again confirms the idea that Satan is vanquished. No kingdom. No power. No territory.

Last of all we quickly turn to John 14:30. Here Jesus speaks of the ruler of the world as “coming.” The best interpretation of this text understands this “coming” as the evil cohort that Judas has assembled to come and arrest Jesus. This is a plan hatched by their master and they intend to see it through.

This understanding fits the context very well and is not strained at any point. Contextually, Jesus and his disciples are in the upper room fellowshiping in the Passover / Lord’s Supper. Judas has been sent out to complete his betrayal. The gar-

den scene is drawing near. Jesus says He will not speak much more with the disciples. All this indicates that the end is near.

Thus, our position in regard to the coming of the ruler of the world.

Before leaving this text we note one more thing. Jesus says that, “the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.” Whilst this last phrase is variously translated, the point of interest for us is that Satan has nothing over Christ Jesus our redeemer. If the translation of the NASB stands, then it means that Satan has no inheritance in Christ. He is outside of Christ. If it is taken to mean that the Devil has no power over Christ, then again the superiority of Christ is underscored. Finally, it could be a reference to Jesus’ sinlessness. After death comes the judgement. All stand before the judgement seat. Sinners are condemned. If this be the case, then Jesus is saying, in colloquial terms, ‘The Devil has no dirt on Me!’ At My death he can accuse me, but he will not achieve a conviction. I am sinless.

In any of these instances, one thing is clear, namely, the superiority of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.

## Rebel In Retreat

Continuing our survey, we now pay heed to the references found in the Epistles. Paul’s mention in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 is another well known and oft referred to text.

Paul says:

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Again we focus on how the adversary is described. Paul refers to him as the “god of this world.” In context, Paul’s appellation is not to be seen as a title that equates in any way with our God and Father. In Greek, the word for “god” has the same range of meaning as does our English term. It can be used to refer to any deity. Understanding the term depends on understanding what the user means by it.

To illustrate quickly. The (theological) Liberals had great success in infiltrating the Church because they used our “God Language” and filled it with different meaning. Thus people readily listened because they naturally thought that the Liberal used the word in the same way they did. Paul’s usage here is similar. The attribute he ascribes to this “god” is the ability to blind.

Furthermore, we must note that a literal rendering of the text would be the “god of this age.” Once more we are faced with the fact that no territory is seen to be in the possession of Satan. The term “age” is used to designate a space of time. Particularly, it is nearly always used to highlight the ethical nature of the age it describes.<sup>13</sup> Thus this text once more demonstrates that the intent of the Biblical writers is to focus upon an ethical force opposed to God.

Before moving on, it should be pointed out that this text, in keeping with those already viewed, highlights the power of Christ and the inability of Satan to hold anything to which Christ lays claim. Whilst this is not specifically stated, it is certainly implied. The “god of this age” can only blind the “perishing.” He cannot blind or veil the Gospel to those whom Christ makes alive. Why? “For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glo-

<sup>13</sup>. Note the contrast in Matthew 12:32. See also: Matthew 13:22; Romans 12:2; 1 Timothy 6:17; and 2 Timothy 4:10

ry of God in the face of Christ” (v 6).

The last text we shall look at in this regard is Ephesians 2:1-2. There we read:

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

This text contains vital evidence for our discussion. Satan is called the prince or ruler of the power of the air. The point to note is that whilst the term “ruler” is used, the domain allocated is the “air.” This sits very well with the “wanderer” concept spoken of earlier. Cast out of heaven, Satan and his evil cohort have no home. This text seems to support the fact that these evil spirit’s domain is the lower heavens (Compare Ephesians 6:12). If this is indeed true, then it drives one more nail into the coffin for the belief that Satan has a kingdom here on earth—a legitimate rule over a geographical area.

Our text, therefore, reaffirms the idea of an ethical force opposed to God. This is reinforced by the terms “course of this world” and “spirit ...

of disobedience.” The term “course” is an interpretation more than a translation. Although it is accurate, the literal “age of this world” helps to see the intent clearly. We have noted how both “age” and “cosmos” are used in the sense of an ethical force. Paul, addressing Christians, states that they “used to walk” in this manner. The implication, of course, being that the unregenerate still walk in that manner. In other words, these people conduct their affairs according to the ethics of this fallen world. Thus, they are sons of disobedience. Not sons by birth, but sons in the ethical sense. They are murderers and liars like their father the devil. Put plainly, although they were born (created) of God, they now (fallen) dance to the tune played by the devil.

It is in this sense that Satan is the “ruler of the power of the air.”

Again, it is appropriate that we consider the text’s emphasis upon the supremacy of Christ. We were, according to Paul, dead in trespass and sin. The ungodly are still dead in trespass in sin. They are still under the sway of the devil. We are not. What is the difference? “God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we

were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ” (vv. 4, 5).

What Satan has by default, he cannot hold. Struggle as he may to retain the souls of men, he is powerless when confronted by the command of God.

Thus we ask the rhetorical question. Does it seem that the Scriptures uphold the belief that Satan has a kingdom that equates with the Kingdom of God?! The answer can only be a resounding, No!

### **One Kingdom. Time to Rethink Politics**

Therefore, on the basis of this study, we are forced to conclude that there is not, in the technical sense, a kingdom of Satan. In light of this, Christians who stay away from politics on these grounds really do need to rethink their position. If there is no opposition kingdom and only a band of rebels, then this will have an impact on how we approach politics. Why? Because all of a sudden politics is not an unholy and non-Christian area. It does not belong to any other kingdom. It belongs to God.