



# 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

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The transition from Old Testament to New Testament is best summed up in one word, escalation! "Escalation." Remember it. Cherish it.

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Our Redeemer and Lord, having been given all rule and authority (Matthew 28:18), openly declares that this rule is to be shared by His people. His new humanity is to subdue the nations.

## Of Politics and Politicians

Or

Do We Vote and For Whom Do We Vote?  
Part III

By

Murray McLeod-Boyle

Let us now turn to the other important issues raised in the false view stated earlier. Let us focus on two key areas. First, does God rule only His people? Second, is God concerned with the actions of the ungodly?

In seeking answers to these questions, we again beg the reader's indulgence. Of necessity we once more seek to put the texts of Scripture before you so that you see the truth for yourself.

### **The Extent of God's Rule**

Does God only rule His people? Let us turn to the Scriptures. We see that

God rules His people in texts like:

**Deuteronomy 33:5:** And He was king in Jeshurun,<sup>1</sup> When the heads of the people were gathered, The tribes of Israel together.

**Judges 8:23:** But Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you."

**Isaiah 43:15:** I am the LORD, your Holy One, The Creator of Israel, your King.

**Isaiah 44:6:** Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.

**Psalms 149:2:** Let Israel be glad in his Maker; Let the sons of Zion rejoice in their King.

However, this is only half the story. The Scriptures do not cease with this single declaration. No, they move on to declare the sovereignty of God's rule over all.

Texts, such as—

**Psalms 22:28:** For the kingdom is the LORD'S,

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1. Jeshurun is a poetic variant for Israel.

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And He rules over the nations†.

**Psalm 47:2, 7-8:** For the LORD Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth.... For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm. God reigns over the nations†, God sits on His holy throne.

**Psalm 93:1-2:** The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The LORD has clothed and girded Himself with strength; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved. Thy throne is established from of old; Thou art from everlasting.

**Psalm 95:3:** For the LORD is a great God, And a great King above all gods.

**Psalm 96:10:** Say among the nations†, “The LORD reigns; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity.”

**Psalm 97:1:** The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice; Let the many islands be glad.

**Psalm 100:1:** Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth

**1 Chronicles 16:31:** Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; And let them say among the nations†, “The LORD reigns.”

**Daniel 4:17:** This sentence is by the decree of the *angelic* watchers, And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes, And sets over it the lowliest of men.”

**Daniel 7:27:** Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.

**Malachi 1:14:** But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock, and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord, for I am a great King,” says the LORD of hosts, “and My name is feared among the nations†.”<sup>2</sup>

—make it abundantly clear that God’s rule extends beyond Israel to all nations, to all peoples.

### Escalation Not Diminution

It is a very difficult task to read the Scriptures and not be convinced that God’s rule is over all. Despite this difficulty, some Christians seem to be able to achieve it with great ease. Right now they would be saying to themselves, “Well, Murray old

son, old bean, this is quite impressive, but you know, you have only given us Old Testament texts. We live in the New Testament era. Things have changed, you know!”

Yes, indeed! Things have changed. Massive changes have taken place in transition from Old testament to New Testament. So great are these changes that things will never be the same again! That is right, the changes are so great that things will never be the same again!!

Yet these changes are not what most people perceive them to be. The common perception is as outlined in the little criticism above. That is, the Old Testament laws, precepts et cetera, have all fallen by the wayside. It is the modern heresy of saying that the Old Testament God was unloving and unlovable until Jesus the “New Age” God came along to help us understand Him. This “new” God then implemented new rules, a new way of living, a new way of salvation, a new way of ...!

Rubbish! The transition from Old Testament to New Testament is best summed up in one word, escalation! “Escalation.” Remember it. Cherish it. “Why ‘escalation’?” you ask. Simple. It does justice to what the Scriptures teach.

When Jesus Christ came heralding the Kingdom of God, we passed from shadow to reality. We did not move from reality to shadow. The movement was one of escalation, not diminution. To illustrate in modern concepts, it was a movement from bicycle to motor bike, renting to home ownership, bark humpy to townhouse. Everything that was foreshadowed was brought to reality. Now this meant that changes had to take place. In this regard we particularly

<sup>2</sup> Texts marked with a † indicate that the Hebrew word “goyim” stands behind the English word “nations.” We have highlighted the use of this word as this term is the standard term used to refer to those outside Israel. In Greek, the term “ethnay” is used in exactly the same way. These terms are important as they refer to the ethical realm and not the geographical realm. Thus they are used of those who do not walk according to the Spirit of God, but who walk according to the spirit of this age.

note the passing of the law—the ceremonial law, that is. The form of these statutes had to go. The reality was here and therefore there was no longer any room for the shadow. This is one of the themes brought out so clearly in Hebrews. The shadow avails not when the reality is come. What does the blood of a bull avail when God's eternal Son has shed his blood to provide a covering? When the reality is come, the shadow must pass.<sup>3</sup> Think here of an acting chairman. He rightly exercises the power granted, but when the elected chairman returns, he loses his power. It would be wrong for him to continue to try and exert any authority. It would be equally wrong for members to appeal to him for decisions. In similar vein, we note that Hebrews describes Moses as a faithful servant. However, this faithful servant had to stand aside when the Son came. Shadow to reality. Servant to Son. Escalation!

At this juncture we come head to head with the modern error. Simply because one part of the law disappeared by necessity, it does not automatically follow that the rest of the law, the character of God, or the extent of His rule also changed. Yet this is how the modern "New Testament" Christian perceives these changes. Consequently, they are reductionists. They diminish the New Testament. Their movement is from reality to shadow. Their theological wagon is stuck in reverse.

So let us view the New Testament texts. The first New Testament text we will look at is Zechariah 9:9,

which reads:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout *in triumph*, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Oops! Did we say New Testament? Yes, we did, for that is what we meant. This quotation is used in the New Testament and attributed to Christ. Matthew 21:4-5, reads:

Now this took place that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'behold your king is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

In similar manner John 12:14-15 records: "And Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, 'Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey's colt.'"

The Second New Testament text is found in Psalm 2. There we read:

Why are the nations in an uproar, And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed: "Let us tear their fetters apart, and cast away their cords from us!" He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury: "But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy moun-

tain." "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee. 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Thy possession. 'Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware.'" Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. Worship the LORD with reverence, And rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, lest He become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

In this text the sovereignty and superiority of the LORD'S anointed is clearly shown. The nations (goyim) are in uproar They rail against God and his anointed. Yet despite their ferocity they are told to, "simmer down!" These people are under the delusion that they hold ultimate control. Our text says otherwise. The King rules. He is placed there by God—the One who sits (rules) in the heavens.

Who is this King? According to Acts 4:24-28 it is none other than Jesus Christ. Says Luke:

And when they heard *this*, they [the Apostles] lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is Thou who DIDST MAKE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM, who by the Holy Spirit, *through* the mouth of our father David Thy servant, didst say, 'WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS? 'THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RUL-

3. We are speaking here of mode not requirement. This in itself is something which the moderns do not understand. Blood is still needed to make propitiation (requirement). The blood comes from a different source, Jesus not bulls (mode). In other words, the law requiring a blood covering for sin did not fall, the mode in which the offering was made did. The once shed blood of Jesus the Son of God replaced the oft shed blood of animals.

This aspect must be understood. Another example can be found in the general argument over the application of the law. Many of the antinomian persuasion will say that the law was a school master to bring us to Christ. They will then argue that the law is therefore not binding on sinner or saint. However, such an emphasis is a contradiction. First, the regenerate saint will walk in accord with the righteous standards set by God (law). Second, if the sinner has not come to Christ, then he is still under the tutelage of the law.

ERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD, AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST.’ “For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur.

This account shows that Jesus was the one whom God did anoint. It shows that the phrase “the Gentiles” is to be understood in terms of those opposed to God and not necessarily in terms of ethnicity.

John also refers to this Psalm in the Apocalypse. In Revelation 19:11-16, he writes:

And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it *is* called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes *are* a flame of fire, and upon His head *are* many diadems; and He has a name written *upon Him* which no one knows except Himself. And *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white *and* clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and **He will rule them with a rod of iron**; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

This time the point of contact is Psalm 2:9—the fact that the LORD’S anointed will rule with a rod of iron. In context, there is little doubt that it is Jesus Christ who is in view. He is the one who is “Faithful and True.” He *is* the Word. He is the one that is

described as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

With these texts in place there can be no doubt that Jesus Christ is King in Israel (the Church) or ruler over all. Both of these Old Testament texts are lifted from the prophets’ mouth and applied directly to Jesus Christ. If the Old Testament is irrelevant, then someone certainly forgot to tell Matthew, Luke, and John. They did not hold a reductionist view point. They saw these texts as moving from shadow to reality. These texts were so legitimate that they could be applied to Jesus Christ without modification or comment. These texts did not belong to a different God, a different Kingdom, or a different order. No, they belonged to our God, His Kingdom, and to the present and future order. The use of these texts illuminates this whole debate. What God declared Himself to be through the prophets (the Old Testament), His Son declares Him to be now (the New Testament). The only difference, as noted, is that there is an escalation.

Therefore, it is preposterous to try and reject the principle of God’s sovereignty simply because (some of) the texts are found in the Old Testament.

For the true “doubting Thomas” we add this one final reference. It is another use of Psalm 2:9. It is recorded by the Apostle John in Revelation 2:27. Here, the rule is applied to redeemed man. It is given to those that “hold fast” and who “overcome.” “Hang on a moment, didn’t you just say that these texts applied to Christ. Why, then are you now applying them to redeemed man?” Very good question. We are applying these texts to redeemed man, because this is exactly what the text does.

You see, this text differs little

from those already cited. What is fundamentally different is that it is Jesus Christ Himself that quotes these words. Revelation 2:18 begins the Message to the Church at Thyatira. It opens with:

...The Son of God ...says this....

Our Redeemer and Lord, having been given all rule and authority (Matthew 28:18), openly declares that this rule is to be shared by His people. His new humanity is to subdue the nations. As ambassadors the preachers go forth and proclaim the message of our King: ‘Thus says our Lord and King, Jesus, “Rulers of the earth submit or be dashed to pieces”’

Earlier in our study we looked at Ephesians chapter 2. We would like to quote from that text again. Ephesians 2:4-10 states:

But **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** (by grace you have been saved), **and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places**, in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**<sup>4</sup>

What these text confirm is that we share Christ’s rule. Escalation!

The anointed King shares his power with His people. The change is positive. Having taken all power, the King invests that power in His peo-

<sup>4</sup> Bold added. For those who miss the point, here it is. For us to be able to share Christ’s rule, Christ must rule. He is able to apply this Psalm to us because it speaks of Him, our covenant head. What is rightfully His, He shares with His people.

ple. Their estate is improved. Their lot made better. The dominated become the dominators. The paupers become princes. The captives are set free. The blind receive sight. This is an escalation of all that was promised and foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

Jesus did not think that the Old Testament was reduced to nothing. He did not believe that His coming stripped the Old Testament of ethical and moral force. Jesus did not believe that His coming made the Old Testament into a list of “examples to follow and sins to avoid.” On the contrary, He said, “You know that King spoken of in the Psalm. The Anointed of God that would subdue nations and rule with an iron sceptre. That King is Me. I am He. Rulers of the earth take note!”

Jesus did not diminish the Old Testament. Neither did he introduce anarchy and antinomianism as the New Testament way of life. Rather, he introduced the fullness of Kingdom life. What Israel had in seed, Jesus brought to flower. What was lacking, Christ completed. Thus New Testament life is Old Testament life. The fullness has come. The shadow has disappeared in the full light of the Son.

*Escalation, not diminution.*

### **Israel, Our Example**

In support of this we would like to quote two further texts.

First, we note Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 10:6 and 11:

Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved...Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

These words, to the present writ-

er’s bewilderment, are often passed over in debates concerning the relevance of the Old Testament or in debates regarding the relationship of Old Testament to New. It is a source of concern as these texts are so very, very clear.

What happened in Israel happened as examples for us. By recording Israel’s history, disobedience, and consequent judgement, Yahweh held out to posterity a vivid colour picture, as it were, on which His standards were clearly visible. Our God did not leave us in a position where we had to second guess everything. Israel’s history was there to clearly show and demonstrate covenant operation.

The issue for us is this. What good is an example if the circumstance exemplified is no longer relevant? Of what use is an example of obedience to the law (to God), if law has passed away and we now live by grace (autocracy, antinomianism)?

These were given as examples to teach us how we should live in God’s Kingdom. They can be examples to us because the reality they portray is still relevant. There is escalation. With the Christ came better blood, better sacrifice, and better covenant. The consequence of this was to require a better obedience.

We are sure that you have sat in Bible studies where some saint has prattled on about how “thick” the Israelites were. “Boy, weren’t these guys dumb! They had the prophets and a pretty temple and they still messed up real bad.” The next question should be, Are you doing any better? Escalation! We have the greater responsibility. The history of Israel is not in the Bible so we can “pay-out” on them. It is there to teach us not to do as they did. Is the lesson sinking in!!?

Therefore, we urge, do not dare to criticise a Samson when you will not

write a letter to your local politician objecting to abortion. Do not presume to criticise the driving style of Jehu son of Nimshi (2 Kings 9:20) when you have received excessive speeding or parking tickets and you adorn your old unroadworthy car with fish stickers. Do not mock their failings when you yourself will not address the areas of false worship in your church.

Learn from their examples and do better. Much, much, better. This is why those example exist. They are not there for humour. They are there that we might honour God with the obedience that is due Him.

The New Testament does not absolve us of this responsibility. It knows nothing of anarchy or antinomianism as a way of participating in Kingdom life. Rather, it holds out the whole Old Testament as a means of learning how to obey God and implement His rule in this world. We have the better sacrifice. The better blood. The better covenant. Therefore, our obedience *must* be better.

### **Repent. Now!**

The second text is found in Acts 17:30. Paul says:

Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent.<sup>5</sup>

Paul’s words are instructive. However we may understand the phrase “overlooked<sup>6</sup> the times of ignorance”, one thing is certain—*God no longer overlooks*. This text reinforces the idea of escalation. With the coming of Christ, God’s universal rule and His claims over man are restated in the strongest possible terms.

If the critics are right, then this text should be saying that now is the time of ignorance. Now is the time to “let your hair down”. After all, God

<sup>5</sup>. See also Acts 14:16 and Romans 3:25.

has relaxed His standard. Jesus threw off the shackle of the law. He did away with holiness. Grace abounds and therefore everything is acceptable.

Not so. The Apostle rejects such sentiment as error. He says, "The honeymoon is over. Whatever God may have overlooked (forborne), He will no longer overlook (forebear).

Therefore submit to Him. Know this. He will judge the world. He has appointed a Judge. He has appointed the day. Repent or perish."

### Conclusion

This is the escalation. The Gospel has gone global. God's rule over all is brought to the fore. No man stands outside God's requirements. *Not*

*even the politicians.*

Thus it is time to stop all this foolishness concerning the legitimacy of the Old Testament texts. It is time to accept that we have the same obligation as Israel—to **acknowledge Yahweh as King and ruler over all.** Period. Full stop!

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<sup>6</sup> We noted earlier in our study that God cannot simply overlook sin. However, He can show forbearance. It is this forbearance that is in view. As God focused on Israel in the Old Testament dispensation, He showed forbearance to the gentiles. Now that the Gospel has gone global the Gentiles fall under the same responsibility Israel did. All are to repent. All are to abide by God's commands.