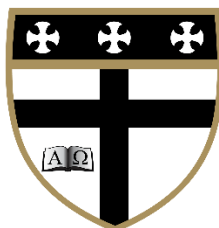


# **The Whitefield Seminary Papers**

“Law & Religion Forum”

Volume 2, Apostolate Paper # 38



## **A HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH**

**“The New Testament Apocalypse and the Wars of King David”<sup>1</sup>**

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by

Roderick O. Ford, Litt.D., LL.D.

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<sup>1</sup> Roderick O. Ford, *The Apostolate Papers* (unpublished research papers, 2015 to 2022). [www.roderickford.org](http://www.roderickford.org).

# “The New Testament Apocalypse and the Wars of King David”<sup>2</sup>

by

Roderick O. Ford, D.Litt. (Law & Religion)



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<sup>2</sup> Roderick O. Ford, *The Apostolate Papers* (unpublished research papers, 2015 to 2022). [www.roderickford.org](http://www.roderickford.org).

## Introduction

The House of Abraham was distinguished for its penchant to establish “justice and judgment,” and, thereby, to be a blessing to all nations.<sup>3</sup> To Abraham’s descendants Judah and the Kingdom of Judah belongs the *eternal scepter* of the Messiah, for, as the Patriarch Jacob prophesied, “[t]he scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.”<sup>4</sup>

In the Old Testament, that *scepter* was passed to King David and to the House of David; and in the New Testament, Jesus Christ, as the Son of David, claimed that same scepter for himself, i.e., “until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.” The Christian religion is therefore a messianic Davidic religion that extends from the kingdom of David, which was established, as the Scripture says, through warfare and the shedding of blood.

Though the Kingdom of Jesus Christ—i.e., his holy Church—is often construed to be a bastion of love and peace; in reality, Jesus himself launched all out warfare, stating:

**Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.**

For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’

Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

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<sup>3</sup> Genesis 18: 18-19, stating:

Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

<sup>4</sup> Genesis 49: 10.

Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.<sup>5</sup>

The sword which David wielded against the Philistines and the many enemies of Israel was a prophetic prefiguration of the sword of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of David, which he wields against his enemies event today, and in the future, final battle of Armageddon in the Book of Revelation.

The *eternal scepter* of the Kingdom of Judah has thus become the inheritance of Jesus Christ and his Church. Like Abraham, it is distinguished by its penchant “to do justice and judgment.” For, as Augustine says when describing the nature of Christians and the Church, “[n]ow, he does judgment and justice who lives aright. But he lives aright who yields obedience to God when He commands.... Therefore to do justice and judgment is of God.... Therefore ‘in the midst of the earth, that is, while our soul is up in this earthly body, judgment and justice are to be done.... He, therefore, who perseveringly does judgment and justice in the midst of the earth shall not be condemned when the extremes of the earth shall be judged.’”<sup>6</sup>

And furthermore, in the same discussion, when speaking about the earthly duties of kingly government upon earth, Augustine wrote in *The City of God* that “[a]nd giveth,” [Hannah] saith, ‘strength to our kings,’ that He may not condemn them in judging. **He giveth them strength whereby as kings they rule the flesh, and conquer the world in Him who hath poured out His blood for them.**”<sup>7</sup> Thus the saints, the Church, and the whole body of Christ reigns through the establishing “justice and judgment” upon the earth.

It thus goes without saying the Christian lawyers, judges, legislators, and government officials are on the front lines of this “Christian” project,<sup>8</sup> which, since its Hebrew and Jewish beginnings in the Kingdom of David, is mired in conflict, strife, and warfare— both spiritual and physical—to be consummated in the last battle of Armageddon.

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<sup>5</sup> Matthew 10: 34-39.

<sup>6</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), pp. 577-578.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 578.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., Roderick Ford, *Jesus Master of Law: A Juridical Science of Christianity and the Law of Equity* (Tampa, FL.: Xlibris Pub., 2015).

## Chapter One:

### “Jesus was a Son of David”<sup>9</sup>

The first-century Jews, as well as Jesus of Nazareth himself, identified “Christ” or the promised prophetic “Messiah” to be the “Son of David.”

Significantly, the first-century Jewish faithful understood this “Christ” to be the same messianic figure in the Book of Psalms<sup>10</sup> as well as the “Messiah the Prince” who was thus described in the Book of Daniel<sup>11</sup> as

one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power, all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

In the New Testament, Jesus of Nazareth adopted these same descriptions of the Messiah to himself,<sup>12</sup> thereby acknowledging himself to be the Christ, the Messiah of God.

Although Jesus was called the “Son of David,” he also made it clear that, as the Christ, he was also King David’s “Lord.” For example, in the New Testament, Jesus Christ referenced Psalm 110: 1 in one of his disputations with the Pharisees, to wit:

**Luke 20: 41-44 (NKJV)  
Whose Son is the Messiah?**

41 And He said to them, “How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David?”

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<sup>9</sup> The other Hebrew kings were also “sons of David” and they also prophetically symbolized the “Christ,” because they were also known as the “Lord’s Anointed.” See, e.g., St. Augustine, *The City of God*, supra, p. 590.

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., Psalm 110.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel 7: 13.

<sup>12</sup> Matthew 26:64 (NIV)(“But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”)

42 Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms:  
‘The Lord said to my Lord,  
“Sit at My right hand,  
43 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” ’  
44 Therefore David calls Him ‘Lord’; how is He then his Son?”

In the New Testament Gospels, Jesus of Nazareth is also often referred to as, among other descriptions, the “Son of David.”<sup>13</sup> In the first Gospel, that of Matthew’s, in the first verse of the first chapter, Jesus is described as “Christ the son of David.”<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, in Reformed theology, the life, ministry, and kingship of King David—and as well as *all* of the Jewish kings who sat on David’s throne—<sup>15</sup> in the Old Testament prefigures the life, ministry, and kingship of Jesus of Nazareth—the “Son of David and Messiah”—in the New Testament.

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<sup>13</sup> Luke 18: 35 – 43 (“Son of David, have mercy on me!”); Matthew 21: 9 (“Hosanna to the Son of David!”)

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 1: 1. See, also, “Why Is Jesus Called the Son of David,” <https://christ.org/questions-and-answers/why-is-jesus-called-the-son-of-david/>, stating:

Jesus is called the Son of David in part because he is believed to be of Davidic decent from David the great king of ancient Israel. Christ is called the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. Therefore, in order for Jesus to be a literal descendant (and therefore a son) of David, Mary must have been of Davidic descent. Because David was king of Israel, his descendents, under the patriarchal order, were entitled to the throne. It is also significant that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the City of David. In this sense Jesus shared a “geographical sonship” with the great King David.

<sup>15</sup> The other Hebrew kings prophetically symbolized the “Christ,” because they were also known as the “Lord’s Anointed.” To this very point, Augustine of Hippo writes in *The City of God*, supra, p. 590, the following:

For **while all the kings are called His christs**, who were consecrated with the mystical chrism, not only **from king David downwards, but even from that Saul** who first was anointed king of that same people, David himself indeed calling him the Lord’s christ, **yet there was one true Christ, whose figure they bore by the prophetic unction**, who, according to the opinion of men, who thought he was to be understood as come in David or in Solomon, was long delayed, but who, according as God had disposed, was to come in His own time.

But because, as Augustine of Hippo has observed, these other kings were generally very earthly and sinful, within them “are scarcely found ... through certain enigmatic words or actions of theirs, what may pertain to Christ and the Church, either in Judah or Israel.” St. Augustine, *The City of God*, supra, p. 605. Therefore, instead of focusing on the whole like of Jewish and Israelitish kings, for the purpose of drawing a prophetic parallel between Jesus of Nazareth and the throne of the Jewish kings at Jerusalem, most Christian theologians focus mainly upon the reign of King David himself. Thus, Jesus is known as the “Son of David.”klojno

## Chapter Two: “The Wars of King David”

Since Jesus Christ is described as “the Son of David” throughout the New Testament, we might construe certain aspects of David’s life and leadership to be emblematic of Christ’s own life and leadership— especially, David’s warfare.

We now know that David, the son of Jesse of the tribe of Judah, a shepherd boy, and daring warrior, fought very many *battles* and *wars*, which are describe below in the following re-print:

### “KING DAVID’S BATTLE MAP”<sup>16</sup>

by  
Biblestudy.org

King David's **first military** battle listed in the Bible occurs when he is but a youth. He slays Goliath the Philistine giant with nothing more than a slingshot, a few stones, and a simple but profound faith in God (1Samuel 17:26). He conducts, when he is a little older, **a campaign against the Philistines** and wins a victory against them.

““And there was **war again**. And David went out and fought with the Philistines, and killed them with a great slaughter. And they fled from him’ (1Samuel 19:8).”

David, sometime later, **invades the land** populated by the Geshurites, Gezrites, and the Amalekites. This area lies south of the city of Ziklag. His attack is successful and he wins a victory, although the battle itself is quite brutal and bloody.

And David and his men went up and **invaded the Geshurites**, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites, for they were the inhabitants of the land from the past days, as one comes into Shur, even into the land of Egypt.

And David struck the land, and did not keep alive man nor woman, and took away the sheep and the oxen and the donkeys and the camels and the clothing, and returned and came to Achish (1Samuel 27:8 - 9, HBFV).

#### **David's Wives Taken**

One day the city of Ziklag is attacked by the Amalekites. It is burnt to the ground and all the women of the city become prisoners. Among the female captives are two of king's wives, Ahinoam and Abigail. He asks God, through the High Priest's ephod (the Urim and Thummim), if he would be

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.biblestudy.org/maps/map-of-military-victories-of-king-david.html>

victorious if he launched a military campaign against those who raided the city. After receiving an affirmative answer, he collects 600 men and goes after the Amalekites.

David, with the help of a young Egyptian slave, finds out where those who attacked Ziklag are locating. The Amalekites are soon attacked and routed. All the people who were taken as prisoners are freed and a great amount of spoil comes to Israel. In fact, so much was taken from the Amalekites that not only Israel's fighting men but also at least thirteen cities shared in the spoils of victory!

And nothing was lacking to them, from the small to the great, even to sons and daughters, and from the spoil, even to all that they had taken to themselves (1Samuel 30:19).

### **Attacking Jebus**

David rallies all Israel to attack the city of Jebus. He takes the city, renames it Jerusalem, and makes it his capital in celebration of his victory.

And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus, where the Jebusites were the people of the land. And the people of Jebus said to David, "You shall not come in here." But David took the stronghold of Zion, which is the city of David. (1Chronicles 11:4 - 5).

The Philistines, upon finding out that David is King of Israel, attack him.

The Lord, however, is behind him and gives him a decisive victory over his enemies (2Samuel 5:17 - 21). Sometime after, however, the Philistines fight him again, but this time with the Moabites, Zobah, Syria, and Edom. They are all conquered, with some of them becoming his servants (2Samuel 8:2, 6, 14).

### **Misunderstanding Leads to War**

One of David's military battles is the result of a foreign ruler totally misunderstanding one of his actions and causing a war that did not need to happen.

It all started when Nahash, the Ammonite ruler, died. David, who was his friend, sends messengers to Ammon to convey his condolences. King Nahash's son Hanun, who now is the ruler of the Ammonites, receives the messengers. Ammonite leaders, however, convince Hanun that the messengers are really spies sent to explore the area so that an attack can be launched.

Hanun mistreats the emissaries and send them back. Soon afterwards, the Ammonites realize the mistake they made and that they have unnecessarily made themselves enemies of Israel. They hire 20,000 extra soldiers to help protect themselves. This, however, is to no avail, as Israel attacks the Ammonite capital and is victorious against both the Ammonites and their Syrian allies (2Samuel 10).

### **The Greatest Enemy**

King David will go to war with Israel's greatest enemy, the Philistines, four more times and win each battle. (2 Samuel 21:15, 18 - 20).



Unfortunately, this account leaves out the internal civil conflicts, battles, and skirmishes that occurred between:

- King Saul and David the renegade (1 Samuel 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26);
- The battles between the House of Saul and the House of David (2 Samuel 2:1-30); and,
- King David and his son Absalom (2 Samuel 18: 1- 33).

May Christians rightfully conclude that these battles and wars prefigured the spiritual warfare to be waged by Jesus Christ and his Church (i.e., kingdom of saints) during our present times and (or) during the end times as recounted in the Book of Revelation?

## Chapter Three:

### “The Psalms’ Prophetic Interpretation of David’s Warfare”

In the Book of Psalms, we find that King David himself interpreted his many battles and wars to be “holy wars.” In these psalms— 73 of these 150 psalms were written by David himself— are many references to David’s battles, wars, and ultimate dependence upon, and praise toward, the LORD God for his victories, to wit:

#### I. Psalm 3: 7-8

“Arise, O LORD!  
Deliver me, O my God!  
Strike all my enemies on the jaw;  
Break the teeth of the wicked.  
From the LORD comes deliverance.  
May your blessings be on your people.”<sup>17</sup>

#### II. Psalm 5: 8, 10-11

“Lead me, O LORD, in your  
Righteousness  
Because of my enemies—  
Make straight your way before me....  
Declare them guilty, O God!  
Let their intrigues be their downfall.  
Banish them for their many sins,  
For they have rebelled against you.”<sup>18</sup>

#### III. Psalm 6: 9-10

“The LORD has heard my cry for mercy;  
The LORD accepts my prayer.  
All my enemies will be ashamed and dismayed;

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<sup>17</sup> Psalm 3: 7-8.

<sup>18</sup> Psalm 5: 8, 10-11.

They will turn back in sudden disgrace.”<sup>19</sup>

#### **IV. Psalm 7: 1- 17**

“O Lord my God, I take refuge in you; save and deliver me from all who pursue me, or they will tear me like a lion and rip me to pieces with no one to rescue me....

God is a righteous judge,  
A God who expresses his wrath every day....<sup>20</sup>

#### **V. Psalm 9: 3-8**

“My enemies turn back;  
They stumble and perish before you.  
For you have upheld my right and my cause;  
You have sat on your throne, judging righteously.  
You have rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked;  
You have blotted out their name for ever and ever.  
Endless ruin has overtaken the enemy,  
You have uprooted their cities;  
Even the memory of them has perished.  
The LORD reigns forever;  
He has established his throne for judgment.  
He will judge the world in righteousness;  
He will govern the peoples with justice.”<sup>21</sup>

#### **VI. Psalm 9: 13-20**

“O Lord, see how my enemies persecute me!

“Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death,  
that I may declare your praises in the gates of Daughter Zion,  
and there rejoice in your salvation.

“The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug;  
their feet are caught in the net they have hidden.

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<sup>19</sup> Psalm 6: 9-10.

<sup>20</sup> Psalm 7: 1, 11. [See also the entire Psalm 7: 1-17].

<sup>21</sup> Psalm 9: 3-8.

“The Lord is known by his acts of justice;  
the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.[a]

“The wicked go down to the realm of the dead,  
all the nations that forget God.

“But God will never forget the needy;  
the hope of the afflicted will never perish.

“Arise, Lord, do not let mortals triumph;  
let the nations be judged in your presence.

“Strike them with terror, Lord;  
let the nations know they are only mortal.”<sup>22</sup>

## **VII. Psalm 110: 5-6**

“The Lord is at your right hand;  
he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead  
and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.”<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, according to King David’s own words, he believed that his many battles and wars were “holy wars” that he waged as the “LORD’s anointed.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Psalm 9: 13-20.

<sup>23</sup> Psalm 110: 5-6.

<sup>24</sup> King David held a deeply-held conviction that the anointed King of Israel was “the Lord’s Anointed.”

For this reason, when King Saul, as the anointed king of Israel, was still alive, David had twice refused to kill him, even though King Saul had wrongfully desired to murder David, stating “The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD’s anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the LORD” (1 Samuel 24:6) and “Don’t destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the LORD’s anointed and be guiltless?” (1 Samuel 26: 9).

From these passages, we find that David understood that the duty and role of the King of Israel were to perform the assignments and duties given to him from the LORD God himself.

When, therefore, David received word—supposedly good news that King Saul had died—from the young Amalekite messenger, who admitted that, after having been instructed to do so by King Saul himself, said: “I stood over him [i.e., King Saul] and killed him,” David nevertheless ordered that this young man be put to death, stating, “Your blood be on your own head. Your own mouth testified against you when you said, ‘I killed the LORD’s anointed.’” (2 Samuel 1: 1-15).

## Chapter Four:

### “King David’s Wars Prefigured the New Testament Apocalypse”

There is an allegorical nexus between **the battles and wars of King David** as stated in the Book of Second Samuel (as outlined in Chapter Two, above), and **the ultimate battles of Jesus Christ, the Son of King David**, as stated in the Book of Revelation, which describes Christ’s ultimate subjugation of, and victory over, the nations. For example, the Book of Revelation, states, in so many words, the following:

#### Revelation 14: 14-20

##### “Harvesting the Earth and Trampling the Winepress”

14 I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like a son of man with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.

15 Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

16 So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.

17 Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle.

18 Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.”

19 The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s wrath.

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Therefore, when David was anointed king over Judah (2 Samuel 2: 1-6) and, later, king over all of Israel (2 Samuel 5: 1-4), he believed that, like King Saul, he was the “LORD’s anointed,” thus giving him supreme authority, howsoever imperfect he might be, to carry out the will and laws of the LORD God.

This is also evident in the several Psalms of David. In the book of First Chronicles, King David is described as having “set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun for the ministry of prophesy, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals,” and so from this ministry we have inherited the 150 psalms that are recorded in the Book of Psalms.

20 They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.

#### **Revelation 16: 1**

##### **“The Seven Bowls of God’s Wrath”**

1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, ‘Go, pour out the seven bowls of God’s wrath on the earth.’”

#### **Revelation 19: 11- 15**

##### **“The Heavenly Warrior Defeats the Beast”**

11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called **Faithful and True**. With justice he judges and wages war.

12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.

13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is **the Word of God**.

14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

#### **Revelation 19: 16- 21**

##### **“King of Kings and Lord of Lords”**

16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God,

18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and the mighty, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, great and small.”

19 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army.

20 But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

21 The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

#### **Revelation 22: 1- 5**

##### **“The Rivers of Life”**

22 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> down the middle of the

great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

<sup>3</sup> No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

<sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

<sup>5</sup> There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Perhaps the most clearest prophetic reference of this apocalyptic warfare to be carried on by the Messiah is given by King David himself within his Psalm 110, to wit:

**Psalm 110**  
**Of David. A psalm.**

1 The Lord says to my lord:

“Sit at my right hand  
until I make your enemies  
a footstool for your feet.”

2 The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion, saying,

“Rule in the midst of your enemies!”

3 Your troops will be willing  
on your day of battle.

Arrayed in holy splendor,  
your young men will come to you  
like dew from the morning’s womb.

4 The Lord has sworn  
and will not change his mind:

“You are a priest forever,  
in the order of Melchizedek.”

5 The Lord is at your right hand;  
he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

6 He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead  
and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.

7 He will drink from a brook along the way,  
and so he will lift his head high.

Now this passage of Scripture describes two “lords.” First, there is in this passage the LORD God of Israel, and, second, there is the another person who is called the “my Lord (KJV)” or “my lord” (NIV).

Hence, as this Psalm 110 states, the LORD God shall put the “enemies” of this second “Lord” under his feet.

This second Lord shall “rule in the midst of his enemies.”

This second Lord shall reign with “troops” and shall prevail over his enemies in “a day of battle.”

And this second Lord shall “crush kings on the day of his wrath” and shall “judge the nations,” while also “crushing the rulers of the whole earth.”

Finally, as we have discussed in Chapter One, above, Jesus of Nazareth himself referenced Psalm 110 in his explanation of the relationship of King David to himself, i.e., the Christ.<sup>25</sup> Thus, Jesus of Nazareth himself links Psalm 110 to himself, being the same Christ who is revealed to the Apostle John on the Island of Patmos where the Book of Revelation was composed.

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<sup>25</sup> Luke 20: 41-44 (NKJV)(“Whose Son is the Messiah?”)



## **Chapter Five:**

### **“King David’s Wars Prefigured Present-day Christian Spiritual Warfare”**

The battles and warfare of King David against his many enemies prefigured the current and present-day struggle, strife, battles, and warfare of the Christian saints and the holy Church of Jesus Christ in this present world. For, as Augustine of Hippo has observed, “that His enemies also are put under His feet doth not yet appear; it is being done, it will appear at last: yea, this is now believed, afterward it shall be seen.”<sup>26</sup>

A general description of the current struggles and warfare of the Church is clearly described in the Book of Revelation. It is symbolized as, and called, “Gog and Magog.”<sup>27</sup>

Gog and Magog present the persecution of the Christian saints during the end times; for “this persecution, occurring while the final judgment is imminent, shall be the last which shall be endured by the holy Church throughout the world, the whole city of Christ being assailed by the whole city of the devil, as each exists on earth... and there [the holy Church] shall be encompassed by the savage persecution of all its enemies; for they too shall exist along with it in all nations—that is, it shall be straitened, and hard pressed, and shut up in the straits of tribulation, but shall not desert its military duty, which is signified by the word ‘camp.’”<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, like King David and his earthly kingdom of Judah, the holy Church of Jesus Christ reigns upon the earth amidst strife, battles, and warfare with its enemies.

When did Christ’s warfare, and hence the warfare involving his Church, begin? In Reformed theology, both Christ’s reign, and the Church’s reigning with him, commenced at “the time of His first coming.... Therefore the Church even

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<sup>26</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God*, supra, p. 599.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 729; Revelation 20: 8

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 729 – 730.

now is the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly, even now His saints reign with Him....”<sup>29</sup>

This is that “Thousand Year” reign that is referenced in the Book of Revelation.<sup>30</sup> During this period—which literally is not exact one thousand years but rather a “very long interval of time”—the Church is to reign but not without challenge, resistance, martyrdom, and persecution.

For, as Augustine says, “[i]t is then of this *kingdom militant*, in which conflict with the enemy is still maintained, and war carried on with warring lusts... until we come to that most peaceful kingdom in which we still reign without an enemy.”<sup>31</sup> And, furthermore, writes Augustine, “wherever the Church shall be—and it shall be in all nations... — there also shall be the camp of the saints and the beloved city... it shall be straitened, and hard pressed, and shut up in the straits of tribulation, but shall not desert its military duty, which is signified by the word ‘camp.’”<sup>32</sup>

From this existential condition of the Church of Jesus Christ we may better understand the strife, military campaigns, and kingship of King David in the Old Testament. This paper extrapolates further from Augustinian and Reformed theology and suggests that King David’s many wars and military campaigns both prefigured and symbolized the many “spiritual” wars and “spiritual” military campaigns of the present-day “camp” of the saints of Jesus Christ.

Indeed, “[i]n the progress of the city of God through the ages,” wrote Augustine of Hippo, “therefore, David first reigned in the earthly Jerusalem **as a shadow** of that which was to come.”<sup>33</sup>

For just as David did not enjoy his throne without first waging warfare in order to gain and secure it, so too did Jesus Christ not enjoy his throne without first waging warfare—beginning with his earthly ministry during which time he

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 725-726.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.; Revelation 20: 1-15.

<sup>31</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1950), p. 726.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 730.

<sup>33</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 595.

established his Church, as recounted in the New Testament and fully explained in the Book of Revelation.

## Chapter Six:

### “*Resist Not Evil*”—A New Type of Christian Warfare”

In Reformed theology, the method of Jesus Christ’s warfare is highly unorthodox because love—*agape love*—is center-stage in Christ’s doctrine to “*resist not evil?*” (Matthew 5:39).<sup>34</sup>

But does this phrase “*resist not evil,*” in a Christian sense, require the Christian faithful to display a callous indifference towards, or to present no other forms of resistance to, falsehood, evil, exploitation, and wrongdoing?

In Reformed theology, the phrase “resist not evil” actually means “resist evil through passive non-violence”; and (or) “passive resistance”; and (or) “passive righteous indignation”; and (or) “peaceful petition through civil and reasoned discourse.” In making a defense of this theological position, Reformed theologians may reference the theology of Augustine of Hippo, who wrote:

The things which are done by the Saints in the New Testament profit for examples of understanding those Scriptures which are modelled into the form of precepts. Thus we read in Luke; Whoso smiteth thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also. (Luke 6:29.) Now there is no example of patience more perfect than that of the Lord; yet He, when He was smitten, said not, ‘Behold the other cheek,’ but, **If I have spoken amiss, accuse me wherein it is amiss; but if well, why smitest thou me? (John 18:23)** hereby showing us that that **turning of the other cheek should be in the heart.**<sup>35</sup>

Since this “turning of the other cheek” takes place “in the heart” only, Jesus of Nazareth thus instituted a much more mature and complete interpretation of the

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<sup>34</sup> See, e.g., Algernon Sidney Crapsey, “Jesus’ Method of Government,” *Religion and Politics* (New York, N.Y.: Thomas Whittaker Publisher, 1905), pp. 78-99 (“The doctrine of Jesus is not the doctrine of passive obedience; it is the doctrine of **passive resistance**. And it is this doctrine of **passive resistance** that is the great original doctrine that Jesus has contributed to moral science.”). From this doctrine of passive resistance emerged a final acknowledgment of various human rights, such as “right of conscience,” “freedom of speech,” and the constitutional “right to peacefully petition government for the redress of grievances.” I believe these ideas came to fruition in 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century England through the various Puritan movements. In the United States, this idea of passive resistance greatly influence the Civil Rights Movement. See, e.g., James M. Washington, *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York, N.Y.: HarperOne Pub., 2003).

<sup>35</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Catena aurea, commentary on the four Gospels; collected out of the works of the Fathers* (Toronto, Canada: Univ. of Toronto, 1874).

Mosaic law of retribution (Matthew 5: 38- 39)—not a changing of it, but a *perfection* of it. See, e.g., Matthew 5:17; 7: 11-12. Stated differently, the “retribution” that Jesus authorized was designed to effectuate moral uplift and moral improvement.

But in any event, some combination of “physical warfare” and “spiritual warfare” would remain the constant existential state of the saints.

Throughout the Old Testament, from Abram’s taking up arms against several kings who kidnapped his nephew Lot and kinsmen, to Moses’s confrontations with Pharaoh the king of Egypt, to the prophetic ministries of Jeremiah, Elijah, and Daniel, the conflict between Good (God’s will, law) and Evil (demonic civil and political forces)-- “**physical warfare**” and (or) “**spiritual warfare**”—remained the constant existential **state of the warfare of the saints** in the present world.

## CONCLUSION

In Reformed theology, the present-day Church and its Head, Jesus Christ, are at war—a spiritual war that has both temporal and spiritual implications.

In the Old Testament, this warfare against evil and injustice was commenced in the Book of Genesis and invested in the House of Abraham and his seed, which would be known “to do justice and judgment” and to bless all nations of the earth.<sup>36</sup> That mantle passed through the Prophet Samuel to Kings Saul and David, and, finally, to the House of David, whose Heir was the man, Christ Jesus.

The battles and warfare of King David against his many enemies prefigured the current and present-day struggle, strife, battles, and warfare of the Christian saints and the holy Church of Jesus Christ in this present world.

As Augustine of Hippo has written, “[i]t is then of this *kingdom militant*, in which conflict with the enemy is still maintained, and war carried on with warring lusts... until we come to that most peaceful kingdom in which we still reign without an enemy.”<sup>37</sup> The temporal implication is that all of humanity is presently divided along the lines of two “camps”<sup>38</sup>—the city of man and the city of God.<sup>39</sup>

## THE END

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<sup>36</sup> Genesis 18: 18-19, stating:

Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

<sup>37</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1950), p. 726.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 730 (“And, furthermore, writes Augustine, “wherever the Church shall be— and it shall be in all nations... — there also shall be **the camp of the saints** and the beloved city... it shall be straitened, and hard pressed, and shut up in the straits of tribulation, but shall not desert its military duty, which is signified by the word ‘**camp**.’”)

<sup>39</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God*, *supra*, p. 441 (“[Y]et there are no more than two kinds of human society, which we may justly call two cities, according to the language of our Scripture. The one consists of those who wish to live after the flesh, the other of those who wish to live after the spirit; and when they severally achieve what they wish, they live in peace, each after their kind.”).

