

# **Commentary: ‘Our God Reigns’ and the reign of God**

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As the composer of the old standard hymn “Our God Reigns,” I have become aware there is much confusion about how God reigns.

Jesus dealt with the reign of God often. He made it clear God does not reign the way kings on earth reign. Jesus’ kingdom is in the world, yes, but not of the world. He did pray, “Thy kingdom come ... on earth as it is in heaven,” but it does not come by might. His kingdom is not like the ones we see in England, Russia, Iran or even the United States.

## **The character of Jesus’ kingdom**

Jesus fled when the crowds tried to make him king of Israel. He had his followers disarm, not others, but themselves. He chose not to use the Romans to advance his kingdom. He did not cozy-up to Herod or Caesar, or even to the Jewish zealots.

He foresaw the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D. by three legions of Roman soldiers. He tried to pacify his people, but they would not hear of it. He knew the Romans eventually would withdraw to Italy.

Jesus rode into Jerusalem that last time, humble, on the back of the foal of a donkey, not on a huge Roman warhorse.

In Revelation 5:5, we see the lion of the tribe of Judah was victorious and worthy to open the seven seals on the scroll. However, when John turns, he sees “a lamb, standing as if slain.” The lamb has seven horns and seven eyes, “which are God’s seven spirits, sent out into the whole earth.”

Clearly, the lamb is not a lion, but a lamb that was slain.

God conquers, but not in the ways of earthly kings. God is gentle, loving, kind, long-suffering, self-effacing, full of grace and truth. This is not weakness, but awesome power.

The lamb's weapons are deep prayer, communication, negotiation, large-heartedness, self-giving, adaptation, compromise, love and forgiveness.

God is more like the bishop's housekeeper, the pope's driver, the foot-washer at the dinner, the waitress at the wedding feast. God is the log in the fireplace, not the poker.

## God's reign in and through us



Our God Reigns by Leonard E. Smith. A pdf of the hymn is [available here](#).

We have the leverage over events of men and nations. Prayers actually get heard. Orders are given, angels are dispatched, healings fly across the sky, food appears, inventions burst forth, chance meetings occur, the phone

rings, emails arrive and fresh ideas appear.

Jesus said "Ask and you shall receive." He meant it.

"Christ in you, the hope of glory" is more than poetry. It is a fact of life. Christ is in you. Speak to him. He will say, "Yes." Christ in you is more real than you in you.

Let's not miss what is already here. The Father sustains us, Jesus our shepherd is with us, the Holy Spirit lives in us, leading us into all truth. In fact, "in him we live, and move and have our being."

"The increase of his government and peace will never cease." The New Jerusalem John saw descending has landed on earth. Jesus called it "the kingdom of God." We just need to open our eyes to see it.

When we finally see God's deep humility and meekness, kindness and love, we will fall down and weep that we appealed to Caesar for help and drifted so far away for our true shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep.

*Lenny Smith is the author and composer of '[Our God Reigns](#).' You can hear Smith, his wife Marian and their five children singing 'Our God Reigns' [here](#), and can find Smith's new album Deep Calls to Deep [here](#). This article is republished by permission from [Nashville Christian Family Magazine](#), where it first appeared. The views expressed are those solely of the author.*