

A Different Take on: The Kingdom is Taken by Force

Having just produced teaching about the Kingdom functioning on surrender¹, not force, it's appropriate to address the notion that "the Kingdom is taken by force". That teaching is contradictory to the way the Kingdom operates, so what's going on? Where does it come from?

Here's where it comes from:

Matthew 11:12 (NKJV) – *And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.*

That rendition of the NT Greek came from the KJV English translation when it superseded the Roman Catholic Latin Bible in England through by order of King James VI in 1611. It is now extensive in versions written in our language that are available at the present time.²

But, is that the only way to translate the Greek into English? If it is, then force is needed to enter the Kingdom. If not, what else could it mean?

Here's a few different translations of the same 1st century text:

Matthew 11:12 (AMPC) – *And from the days of John the Baptist until the present time, the kingdom of heaven has endured violent assault, and violent men seize it by force [as a precious prize—a share in the heavenly kingdom is sought with most ardent zeal and intense exertion].*

Matthew 11:12 (CJB) – *From the time of Yochanan the Immerser until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been suffering violence; yes, violent ones are trying to snatch it away.*

Matthew 11:12 (ISV) – *From the days of John the Baptist until the present, the kingdom from heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people have been attacking it.*

Matthew 11:12 (EXB) – *Since the time [From the days] John the Baptist came until now, the kingdom of heaven has been going forward in strength [advancing forcefully; or subject to violence; suffering violent attacks], and forceful [or violent] people have been trying to take it by force [lay hold of it; or attack it].*

Matthew 11:12 (NIV) – *From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been raiding it.*

Matthew 11:12 (OJB) – *From the days of Yochanan of the tevilah of teshuva until now, the Malchut HaShomayim has been under violent attack and the violent seize it with coercion.*

Matthew 11:12 (NCV) – *Since the time John the Baptist came until now, the kingdom of heaven has been going forward in strength, and people have been trying to take it by force.*

Matthew 11:12 (NTE) – *From the time of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has been forcing its way in – and the men of force are trying to grab it!*

Matthew 11:12 (VOICE) – *When John the Baptist came, the kingdom of heaven began to break in upon us, and those in power are trying to clamp down on it*

Notice the variations in what I have listed? That indicates that the KJV rendition is not the only way to understand the text. The inference from that is that the common understanding is not necessarily correct.

We already know that most biblical texts can be translated in various ways according to the knowledge, understanding and worldview of the translators. That always causes us to be cautious about what we read in the Bible.

1 – "The Kingdom Functions on Surrender" canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Kingdom-Functions-on-Surrender.pdf

2 – e.g. KJ21, ASV, BRG, CSB, ESV, RSV, WEB, NRSVA, etc. www.biblegateway.com/verse/en/Matthew%2011%3A12

The problem has always been that translators (and the readers) are trying to understand what was written to people thousands of years ago. As we don't know their idioms and nuances of language, we're at a huge disadvantage when the Bible is attempted to be understood

To overcome that difficulty, some Bible teachers have stated that we should take the Bible at face value (i.e. literally) and accept what's written there without trying to really understand it. That's very simplistic, and is only useful for those who want to be in religion, not those who want to understand the heart and mind of the Trinity.

Our plumbline in this matter is this: As sons, everything we believe must align with Father's heart and mind, and if it doesn't, it should be rejected. As he's continually revealing his heart and mind to those who communicate with him and hear from him, we have today, a much better understanding of what we should believe.

In regard to this article's topic, force has no place in the Kingdom. That's because the Kingdom always applies resistance to any force applied against it or within it. That means **the understanding that comes from KJV's translation of Matthew 11:12 is anti-Kingdom**. We must therefore concur with other translations of the verse that indicate violence was being done against the Kingdom to prevent it from being re-established. Notice in Jesus' statement in that verse that he was referring to the time from John the Baptist to that point in time. He wasn't setting up a standard of force for us to operate by in the 21st century. However, even today, violence is still directed towards the Kingdom to stop it advancing to fill the Earth, as Father has planned.

There is, therefore, no justification for the 'power gospel' and aggressive 'spiritual' activity that occurs with Pentecostals and Charismatics. Having been in both those systems and operated aggressively in the distant past myself, I can now see why it didn't sit with me in the first place – it's not how Father operates.

Believe It or Not! The choice is yours

Whatever you choose to believe won't negatively impact Father's relationship with you

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)