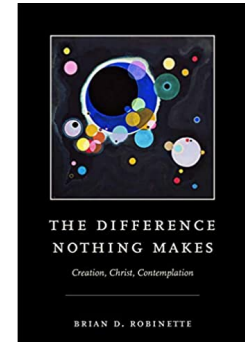


Excerpt Page from Brian Robinette and from Naomi Klein & Astra Taylor Proper 21A — September 27, 2026

Brief excerpt from Brian Robinette's The Difference Nothing Makes (Notre Dame Press, 2023, pages 83-84) citing today's Second Reading to contrast the God of Jesus with the typical Gods of imperialistic and nationalistic cultures (the God we were taught?).

What is most striking about the way God's creative will shows up in our world is that it does not necessarily seem like power at all. In fact, it may very well appear to us as weakness, at least if our understanding of power is predetermined by notions of force, prestige, appropriation, and iron-clad security. Little wonder, then, that when the creative Word of God appears within such a system of coordinates it is perceivable only under the aspect of contradiction, as "foolishness" and "infirmity." The Philippians hymn captures this paradoxical quality quite precisely as it describes the manifestation of Christ in kenotic ["self-emptying"] terms. Whereas a cosmic despot maintains power through a series of relationships rooted in subordination — a merely regional transcendence enclosed within a violent-sacral order — the appearance of Christ assumes the "form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:6-8). As Paul notes elsewhere, "Power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9).

What needs clarification is that such weakness is not without its own peculiar efficacy. The "self-emptying" of God in Christ is not the absence of power; it is its radical incidence — or better yet, it is true power, and the signature of its efficacy is "unbinding" and "unloosing," of "setting captives free." Such gracious efficacy is the precise point of Paul's discussion of "the principalities and powers" that the cross and resurrection unmask and throw into confusion (Eph. 6:12). The power of empire, the power of acquisition, the power of prestige, even the power of death: all are shown to have no *real* power in the end. The principalities and powers are deflated by the cross, outwitted and subverted by a gracious operation in which the Logos of God freely assumes the form of a slave. God inhabits the place of human infirmity, becomes identified with the poor, the naked, the ousted, the subjected — the scapegoat. What was once thought to be the highest or most powerful within an implacable social system is demystified and exposed as vanity. As Stanislas Breton puts it, the self-emptying of God in Christ reveals "the literally enormous distance between the true God who is Nothing and these diversely named principalities that share among themselves the empire of being" (*The Word and the Cross*, 40). This distance means that the true God, who is Nothing other than the crucified God, cannot be implicated in any power based upon violence and prestige. God is not the highest term in any sacred-social order, circumscribed therein. Indeed, compared to such, Christian faith can only (and rightly) be described as atheistic.



The new book by Naomi Klein and Astra Taylor, End Times Fascism: And the Fight for the Living World (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2026), thoroughly describes how the billionaire oligarchs of today (our own President among them) see themselves like gods in believing they can outlast the 'end-of-the-world' crises they themselves are creating. Here's a section about the need for the rest of us to band together in ending their perceived impunity from any consequences (page 311, 316):

No Law for God Men

While there's much that can be accomplished to advance the cause of disarmament at the state and national levels, ending the plague of elite power and impunity ultimately requires cross-border collaboration: binding commitments, tough oversight, and new forms of diplomacy. End times fascists know this, which is why they are so determined to destroy the border-spanning legal regimes, international institutions, and brave individuals that threaten to hold them accountable.

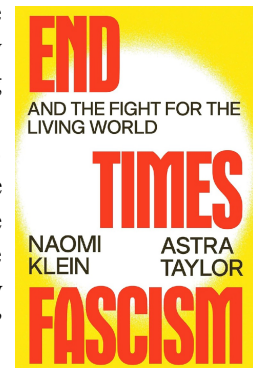
"He who saves his Country does not violate any Law," Trump posted soon after returning to the White House, using a phrase attributed to Napoleon to declare himself untouchable. It's a position validated by the Supreme Court, which granted him immunity for "official acts," and by his attorney general, who granted him and his acquisitive family immunity from tax audits. The US president is part of a global clique that imagines themselves wielding what Stephen Miller calls "supreme power," and who, consequently, feel themselves supremely entitled. Entitled to abduct foreign leaders, steal other countries' resources, snatch

immigrants off the street, fleece the state, and even kill protesters.

We saw this after the killings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minnesota when both Vance and Miller falsely declared that federal agents have absolute “immunity.” And we heard it when MAGA influencers began openly declaring international law “fake” or, to quote the popular podcaster Matt Walsh, “fake and gay.” They didn’t know it, of course, but they were directly echoing the Australian fanatic Denis Michael Rohan, when he said at his trial for causing irreparable damage to al-Aqsa Mosque [on Mt. Zion in 1969], “I am above the earthly court.”

The hostility to structures of accountability illustrates why fascist regimes become more violent, desperate, and dangerous the longer they hold power. The more laws they break out in the open, the more the law itself must be demonized and destroyed, along with the people daring to enforce it. . . .

There are no guarantees, of course, that justice will arrive for today’s end times fascists. But it will never come if we don’t fight for it, through whatever channels are available and even when the pressure is immense. So it is heartening that, despite the escalating threats, the International Criminal Court’s 125 member countries have refused to cave to US blackmail and acquiesce to Washington’s demands. Instead, they issued an official statement: “We renew our resolve to stand united against impunity.”



And the closing paragraphs of the book:

As we have seen in these pages, fascism is always a warped response to real crises. And end times fascism is a response to real planetary-scale crises. The responses it proposes — mass sacrifices of humans and non-humans alike — are monstrous and must be purged from our body politic.

To achieve this, we have to figure out how to address the underlying crises contemporary fascism feeds off of. Because boundaries *are* being crossed. Limits *are* being exceeded. Walls *are* being hit. Fascists want us to believe that what is hitting the wall is the human story: it’s over, so make sure you are among the chosen who transcend to the next world. Pray to your God for salvation. Implant the chip, merge with the machines. Militarize and purify your bunkered nation. Arm yourself to the hilt and hide behind your fortune. Don’t worry about the humans, the animals, the trees, the rivers and reefs that won’t make it.

But they are wrong. It’s not the human story that is hitting the wall. Rather, it is the story we have been trapped inside of. The one about how greed must be the engine of civilization. About how growth can go on forever. About how there are always more efficiencies to be found, more workers to be rationalized, more resources to be sacrificed, more people, places, and planets to colonize. These myths are hitting the wall of reality and much will have to change as a result. “In order to make earthly planetary survival possible,” writes the scholar of policing Robyn Maynard, “some versions of this world need to end” (*Rehearsals for Living*, 25).

The versions that need to end should be clear by now. Unlimited violence. Unconstrained exploitation. Insatiable wealth. Unchecked dominance. Those are the drives that make coexistence impossible. Looking forward, two paths beckon. We can abandon and betray this world, or we can break with capitalism and build new economic and political systems that honor life and prioritize care and repair.

Thankfully we are not starting from scratch. Our movement ancestors have left us maps to earthly Zions where everyone is welcome, to inclusive futures where peace and safety are core principles. Not the post-human future desired by end times fascists, but a post-capitalist and pro-(all of) life one. Deeply democratic, socialist, feminist, multiracial, multispecies, internationalist, generous, courageous, and animate. Embodied and sensory, proudly earthbound.

We can already glimpse this future on the streets where neighbors are picking up laundry and dropping off dinner for strangers hiding from ICE. We can see it, too, in the canvasser knocking on a door to talk about free buses and rent freezes and the polluting data center down the road. It’s visible in the mass protests against genocide, against billionaires turning entire cities and beloved islands into their decadent personal playgrounds, and in the block-by-block planning for the next hurricane or flood — making sure there are strong arms to push the wheelchairs and plans to bring water and supplies to those who need them. We can hear it in the word *neighbor* growing to expand to include thousands of people we have never met and who have yet to arrive.

We didn’t choose to be born into a fight quite so fateful, but we have reached a choice point. We can either follow end times fascists into oblivion, or we can commit to building the unruly, boundary-crossing movement they so deeply fear. One that wrests away their weapons, holds them accountable for their crimes, and defends the paradise of here.