

## Jeremiah 39

**Read Jeremiah 39:1-4:** Zedekiah was a puppet king put in place by Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah had a godly dad, but now he was living for himself. He had his 11 years in office, with all of the horsepower of Babylon behind him. Even so, this was not satisfying. He decided that he did not like that arrangement either. Sin is not any more fun than righteousness in the long run. Ask any drug addict or prostitute or mobster. It all loses its appeal. In the 11<sup>th</sup> year he was captured and faced unspeakable consequences. Like Judas Iscariot, deciding to go along with the world was a horrible choice that led to disaster. It would not be righteous if the people were good and suffered because of a bad king. They were suitable for each other; because they both had abandoned God and were living for themselves. Ultimately, following our lusts is to create our own trap.

### Siegeworks

God gives us freedom; but that often leads to disappointment and loss. This chapter describes the final fall of the people of God. More importantly, it teaches us a little bit about the things that defeat us. Nebuchadnezzar had a siege around the defended cities of Judah for two years. Jerusalem was not the only castle with walls in the land. Other cities with walls in Judah were: Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoah, Bethzur, Soco, Adullam, Gath, Mereshah, Ziph, Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron. When the people were attacked, they re-located to the closest defended city. People on open ground would be wiped out.





A siege is the strategy to surround a city, and choke off of all supplies and reinforcements and escape attempts. The idea is to weaken your opponent before you have to fight him. This explains the cruelty of war tactics. Starvation and disease is described in detail in Lamentations. The people could hardly stand up and walk around, much less do battle. A siege could last a few days to many years.

### Psychological Warfare

Psy Ops has been part of warfare since the beginning. The weakening of a person physically may not be as important as changing their resolve and willingness to fight. History is full of invaders that used intimidation to make their job much easier. Psy Ops is typically carried out using propaganda, and chipping away at common support for a cause, showcasing the dire results of hanging on to the notion of resistance. Psy Ops includes a lot of scary images and noises and various forms of intimidation. One good example is the historical figure that Count Dracula was based on.

Count Dracula **Vlad Tepes**, a 15th-century prince from the dark, forested mountains of Eastern Europe. The prince was bestowed with the surname "Tepes" ("Impaler") based on his fondness for impaling victims. It was his father from whom he proudly took the name "Dracula" ("Son of the Dragon"). Tepes was no vampire, although one historic account details how he drank a victim's blood. When investigating sensational history, it's easy to find grossly exaggerated tales that obscure the facts. In the rare case of Vlad Tepes, little exaggeration is needed. Tens of thousands of people were tortured, maimed or died by his hand or command. This isn't in dispute. Opposing armies would travel down many miles of approaching roads seeing impaled bodies on stakes as they approached his land, decreasing their resolve and confidence as they approached.

The Vikings would pull apart their captive's body parts while they were alive, as did many dark figures over history. The idea was making sure that nobody wanted to fight you. The people of the land would shudder in fear as they approached their land, making victory far easier. They frequently just ran away. Winning a battle does not get any easier than that.

These techniques are not confined to midlevel warlords. We are very much influenced by propaganda today. Much of the military victory is won in the minds of the people publicly, instead of on the battlefield. Psychological warfare includes three types of propaganda:

White Propaganda- Includes accusations full of omissions pertaining to key issues, and over-emphasis on the agenda. It ignores the context or basic human necessities involved.

Grey Propaganda-Includes a distortion of the facts and inflates a racial or ethnic bias which cannot be proven wrong. Examples include Hitlers' blaming the Jews on the weak German economy after the Ottoman Empire had fallen. It included the idea of Aryan supremacy and weakness of Jews and other races. Today, the Woke Agenda is a perfect example of grey propaganda to move conservative Caucasians and others away from traditional voting patterns.

Black Propaganda- This methodology includes outright lies and falsifications, and it is inheritably deceitful. The enemies of Israel currently fire upon Israel, and then hide in mosques and schools and hospitals taunting the Jews to fire upon children and innocent bystanders. This insincere approach has been very effective at encouraging US officials to restrain the IDF from fully executing their military strategy. The end result is to report to the world how Israel is killing children and innocent bystanders.

Terrorism- Terrorism is a disruption of daily economic activity. Most wars produce local famines and economic collapses from preoccupation and disruption and fear of daily economic necessities. It is to cripple people emotionally; and essentially stops the economy. It is to sway public opinion. The US News is more than happy to carry any battles in Israel as though they were covering a large area of the land.

All of these techniques are not confined to wars and politics. They exemplify what believers face daily.

## Spiritual Warfare

We are characterized as Christian soldiers. Satan carries out much of his warfare in our mind. During the Vietnamese War Hanoi Hannah had three radio broadcasts per day. She put together messages intended to frighten and shame US fighters. She broadcasted all of the popular 1960's anti-war rock songs, and then reported on US soldiers killed in battle or those who were newly imprisoned. They captured US soldiers and forced them to say that the US was there under false pretenses.

Our eyes and ears are considered gates of propaganda entry potential breaching the mind. Satan sells the attractions of illicit relationships as being fun. He omits how it destroys our sense of self, our family and all that we have. Not only are we told to make use of God's protections. The enemy has his own strongholds too.

There are actually castles and walls and places of advancement and retreat in the Kingdom of Darkness. There are also levels of authority and resistance. I have heard from people who have sat in the Oval Office, that it became obvious to them that this is not the real seat of power.

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. (2 Corinthians 10:3-6)*

*Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince. (Daniel 10:20-21)*

As Christian soldiers, we have known vulnerabilities that can be exploited. We have prescribed protections available.

*If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." (Genesis 4:7)*

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places . Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit,*

*which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, (Ephesians 6:10-19)*

- What happens when we do not strap our protections down with the belt of truth? When we lie to ourselves, we cannot keep it all together. Nothing is held in its proper place, and our protections do not function. A liar loses track of what is true and what is false. You frequently see people who volunteer stories to cover their guilty conscience...even when what they are describing seems irrelevant. Truth breeds conviction. If we have a guilty conscience, we are not going to fight for anything. Satan's lures to little indiscretions on our part are just enough for us to feel inadequate to carry the mantle.
- Having a breastplate of righteousness keeps us from losing heart. Fighting evil apart from drawing close to God is like fighting for the Moral Majority. There is no power or life-changing force to it. It's just a salvo of slogans and a war of personal values.
- Being shod with the gospel of truth is to know the truth and be confident enough to stand on it. I have seen so many Christians fall to their vices because they are not consistently in the full counsel of God's word. They have a losing pattern of moral failure and repentance...but a refusal to open each day in the word, chapter by chapter. For them, the scriptures are only a place to retreat...not a place to move forward and gain strength.
- The shield of faith is designed for the fiery arrows of the enemy. We live behind enemy lines in a post-Christian era. The enemy's propaganda machine is firing upon us daily. We can end up fighting the wrong war. It is either all about us or it's about Jesus. Jesus is our shield and great reward. *After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."* (Genesis 15:1)
- Our helmet of salvation is to put on the mind of Christ. The battle field is our hope and our zeal for God's Kingdom. The enemies psy ops is assaulting us daily, telling us to turn tail and run...or at least just shrink back and shut up. At the least, we can easily become indifferent to Kingdom issues right in front of us.
- The sword of the Spirit is our only offensive weapon that tears down the enemies strongholds. The power is in the word. Jesus only quoted his father.

**Read Jeremiah 39:5-10:** The final result of sin is to be caught, and to be unable to escape our own messes. Everything that we have built up gets destroyed. We feel guilty, and we are judged by those around us.

Zedekiah was captured as he abandoned his people in an escape attempt. His sons and soldiers were killed in front of his face. Then his eyes were gauged out. Jerusalem was burned to the ground, and Zedekiah was carried off in chains to Babylon.

**Read Jeremiah 39:11-18:** God made sure that the Babylonian King took special care of Jeremiah and freed him. God also returned the favor to Ebed –Melech for saving Jeremiah's life from the pit.

*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! <sup>34</sup> "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" <sup>35</sup> "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?" (Romans 11)*