

Breaking Strongholds Over Cities & Nations

"Nations await the rising of the Lord's army. We can defeat strongholds - individual by individual, then by groups, cities, regions and nations. We must neither quail at the enormity of the task nor rush foolishly in where the Holy Spirit has not led. We must develop more discipline and corporateness than we have ever known. Self-disciplined behavior must replace our personal desires."

It is now time that we, as intercessors, pray and believe that God will touch entire cities and nations by His mighty power. God has given us the authority to do this in prayer. Remember that earth is the Lords and everything in it. God's army of intercessors must arise. There are essential keys to apply personally and corporately in order to see major strongholds broken. **What are these keys in seeing the strongholds broken over cities and regions?**

There is much satanic counterattack when you war against corporate strongholds. You must first know how to deal with strongholds in your own life and in others. The satanic attack comes through your own personal strongholds. You must give the enemy no open doors. If God is calling you to enter into spiritual warfare on this level, you must answer the question, *"What are corporate and regional strongholds?* Here is a good definition by John Sandford: *"Corporate mental strongholds - the devil's most cogent and frequently employed device for controlling every kind of nation - are practiced ways of thinking, feeling or acting that we share with a larger group, or with mankind as a whole."*

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." (Colossians 2:8)

People develop in the mentality they share with others, and these form strongholds over nations. They are extremely powerful. We have been in many nations where these corporate strongholds rule. We have seen difficulties in the missionaries working there. These difficulties manifest in relational problems, depression, discouragement, hopelessness, and many other things. We can feel the heaviness of these spirits almost immediately entering a country. We must realize that principalities and powers are controlling these areas of the world, and that these corporate strongholds are much more powerful than personal strongholds. We read in Ephesians 6:12, *"Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places"*

The world forces of darkness rule multitudes through corporate mental strongholds. They use all the demonic lies found in personal strongholds, but they have much more power. We can see the reality of this power whenever we see groups of people doing violent things that an individual would not do alone. For example, a youth gang will rape or kill a woman where an individual would not. World demonic rulers will kill and destroy homes because of ethnic hatred. Hitler and his men killed millions of Jews without any guilt. Corporate strongholds can destroy guilt. The stronghold of homosexuality has deceived multitudes of people into thinking that being gay is alright. *"Whenever people begin to think in wrong ways, the enemy moves strongholds over their minds, clamps them into place like a helmet and takes them captive to do all manner of evils that none of them in their rightful minds would ever have allowed."*

The devil takes people captive. He wants to imprison whole nations and people groups. The Holy Spirit wants to set people free. The more we are aware of how the enemy controls whole groups of peoples and even nations, the more we can be used by God to demolish principalities. It is the strength of God that will do it and not our own human ability. It is important to realize that we can never destroy these corporate strongholds alone. They are too powerful. *"Individuals fight individuals. Armies fight armies. When warring against a principality and the strongholds it employs, we are battling not only the principality but multitudes of demons as well - hundreds or thousands of them. No individual believer, nor even an entire army, will be able to eradicate such a stronghold as drugs or homosexuality or ethnic hatred. These are too ancient, too powerful and too entrenched in the minds and hearts of many. We may deliver many from a stronghold, but we can't defeat*

strongholds over regions until entire masses of people hate it, repent, forgive and ask for forgiveness, and bring it to death on the cross."

"Let the godly ones exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute on them the judgment written; this is an honor for all His godly ones. Praise the Lord!" (Psalm 149:5-9)

Rules of Warfare in Breaking Strongholds over Cities and Nations

- **The Holy Spirit must guide you** - Make sure that the Holy Spirit is calling you to this level of warfare. God's army must be well trained and mature spiritually. Ask yourself several questions: Is God asking you to help break an individual stronghold or a group, region, or even a national stronghold? If it is more than an individual, who are you to do it with? What prayer groups have the same vision? Are you supposed to set individuals or groups free from homosexuality, drugs, alcohol, etc.? Is it your church or several prayer groups in your city? Is the group you are praying with united and mature spiritually? Are you sure that God is calling you?

"They charge like warriors; they scale walls like soldiers. They all march in line, not swerving from their course. They do not jostle each other; each marches straight ahead. They plunge through defenses without breaking rank." (Joel 2:7-8)

- **Make sure you have enough prayer warriors** - Breaking strongholds in cities, regions and nations require armies to match the size of the battle. "I hope the day comes, however, when sufficient numbers of Christians have been trained and united to tackle and ring down strongholds and their wielders, and to set entire regions free. Can you imagine an army one hundred thousand strong, or even hundreds of thousands strong, standing in determination to bring down the stronghold of homosexuality over our nations? Or abortion, or racial prejudice, or the rights movement that corrupts our court system, or opportunism in politics, or the sexual revolution?"

"What king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?" (Luke 14:31)

- **Seek God's strategy** - Seek the Lord's guidance many times before taking action. Make sure that there is persistent prayer and that you have good strong leadership. Watch carefully for strongholds in your own life that might surface. Deal with them quickly when they arise. Know your identity in Christ. Satan will often accuse you of the same problem and tap into your personal strongholds. Find out about the history of a person, group, or nation under the control of a stronghold. Wars are won by battle plans. It is essential to know your plan of action.

"But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations." (Psalm 33:11)

- **Saturate the region with worship, praise and thanksgiving** - Understand the power of worship and thanksgiving in defeating the enemy. When going to a nation, I often spend much time in worship and praise. I often bring praise music with me. I will worship God on the balcony, traveling by train, riding in the car or prayerwalking. I know that this is one of my greatest weapons of war and so I try to cultivate it whenever I can.

"He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God." (Psalm 50:23)

- **Exercise discernment and persist in prayer** - There needs to be a lot of spirit-led prayer and intercession throughout the whole process of breaking strongholds. Timing is important. The devil will try to maintain his hold over nations and cities. Listen to Him for guidance. Proceed carefully at His direction. Ask God to give your group a spirit of wisdom and revelation.

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened..." (Ephesians 1:17-18)

- **Pray God's Word over the territory** - God's Word is powerful in breaking the hold of the enemy over the land. Bathing the region in intercession through strategically praying the Word erodes the power of the enemy and defeats him. Remember that Jesus came against the enemy by quoting the Word of God. God's Word is like fire that shatters the deep-seated strongholds of the enemy.

"'Is not my word like fire', declares the Lords, 'and like a hammer that breaks a rock to pieces?'" (Jeremiah 23:29)

- **Prepare for the devil's counterattack** - Walk in holiness, and maintain a close relationship with the Lord. Have no unconfessed sin. Realize that the devil looks for an area in your life that he can attack. Maintain balance in your life in Sabbath, rest, fellowship and exercise. Fill your life with worship and praise.

"Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength' seek his face always." (Psalm 105:2-4)

"When will great numbers of men arise in prayer, and in righteous fury, bring down the strongholds of aggression that kill and maim men and women and children? Someday it will happen. Scriptural prophecy will not be denied. How long will our Lord have to wait patiently while we dilly-dally in our own petty concerns. I pray that God's men and women will arise and learn the arts of warfare that will heal the nations!" Quotes by John Sandford