REMOVING STRONGHOLDS (series)

**6— REMOVING GENERATIONAL STRONGHOLDS**

**Mark 11:23 (NKJV)** For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, **he will have whatever he says.**

**2 Corinthians 10:3–5 (NKJV)** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. **4** For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down **strongholds**, **5** 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.

**SEVEN (formerly FIVE) MAJOR STRONGHOLDS**

1. **DEMONIC STRONGHOLDS**
2. **SPOKEN STRONGHOLDS**
   1. **Mouth spoken**
   2. **Heart spoken**
3. **BEHAVIORAL STRONGHOLDS**
4. **ATTITUDINAL STRONGHOLDS**
5. **BELIEF STRONGHOLDS**
6. **(new) GENERATIONAL STRONGHOLDS**
7. **(new) TERRITORIAL STRONGHOLDS**

**6— REMOVING GENERATIONAL STRONGHOLDS**

**SOME PEOPLE CALL THESE “GENERATIONAL CURSES”**

**Exodus 20:4–5 (NKJV)** “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; **5** you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,

**LET ME GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE OF A GENERATIONAL CURSE… ELI THE HIGH PRIEST**

**1 Samuel 2:27–33 (NKJV)** Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, “Thus says the Lord: ‘Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh’s house? **28** Did I not choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to offer upon My altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before Me? And did I not give to the house of your father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire? **29** Why do you kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling place, and honor your sons more than Me, to make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel My people?’ **30** Therefore the Lord God of Israel says: ‘I said indeed that your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.’ But now the Lord says: ‘Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. **31** Behold, the days are coming that I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father’s house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. **32** And you will see an enemy in My dwelling place, despite all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be an old man in your house forever. **33** But any of your men whom I do not cut off from My altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart. And all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age.

**Luke 12:48 (NKJV)** “For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required.”

**SO THAT’S A “GENERATIONAL CURSE”… BUT I THINK MOST OF THE TIME WE’RE DEALING WITH WHAT I’M CALLING “GENERATIONAL STRONGHOLDS”**

**LET ME SHOW YOU SOME SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES OF THESE**

**HERE ARE TWO KINGS OF JUDAH… DESCENDENTS OF DAVID**

**2 Kings 21:19–23 (NKJV)** Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king… **Verse 20** And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done. **21** So he walked in all the ways that his father had walked; and he served the idols that his father had served, and worshiped them. **22** He forsook the Lord God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the Lord. **23** Then the servants of Amon conspired against him, and killed the king in his own house.

**2 Kings 24:8–9 (NKJV)** Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother’s name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. **9** And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done.

**LET ME SHOW YOU AN EXAMPLE OF A KING WHO BUILT STRONGHOLDS, AND HOW IT RUINED THE KINGS AFTER HIM**

**1 Kings 11:26–40 (NKJV)** Then Solomon’s servant, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zereda, whose mother’s name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king. **27** And this is what caused him to rebel against the king: Solomon had built the Millo and repaired the damages to the City of David his father. **28** The man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor; and Solomon, seeing that the young man was industrious, made him the officer over all the labor force of the house of Joseph. **29** Now it happened at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite met him on the way; and he had clothed himself with a new garment, and the two were alone in the field. **30** Then Ahijah took hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. **31** And he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you **32** (but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), **33** because they have forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do what is right in My eyes and keep My statutes and My judgments, as did his father David. **34** However I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and My statutes. **35** But I will take the kingdom out of his son’s hand and give it to you—ten tribes. **36** And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there. **37** So I will take you, and you shall reign over all your heart desires, and you shall be king over Israel. **38** **Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build for you an enduring house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you.** **39** And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, but not forever.’ ” **40** Solomon therefore sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

**1 Kings 12:26–33 (NKJV)** And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: **27** If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.” **28** Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” **29** And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. **30** Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. **31** He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi. **32** Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made. **33** So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.

**REFERENCES TO "JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT WHO MADE ISRAEL SIN"**

**1 Kings 15:33–34 (NKJV)** In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah became king over all Israel in Tirzah, and reigned twenty-four years. **34** He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin.

**1 Kings 16:25–26 (NKJV)** Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all who were before him. **26** For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols.

**1 Kings 22:51–52 (NKJV)** Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. **52** He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin;

**YOU GET THE IDEA**

**THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL HAD A TOTAL OF 19 KINGS… THE FIRST KING BUILT STRONGHOLDS THAT REMOVED HIM FROM GOD’S BLESSING… AND BROUGHT JUDGMENT UPON HIM… AND NOT ONE OF THE SUCCEEDING 18 KINGS REPENTED AND PULLED THEM DOWN**

**SOME OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH OBEYED GOD… BUT THEY DID NOT REMOVE THE HIGH PLACES**

**2 Kings 12:1–3 (NKJV)** In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Zibiah of Beersheba. **2** Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the Lord all the days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him. **3** But the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

**GOD GAVE CREDIT FOR WHAT JEHOASH DID DO**

**2 Kings 15:1–5 (NKJV)** In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah the son of Amaziah, king of Judah, became king. **2** He was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem. **3** And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done, **4** except that the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. **5** Then the Lord struck the king, so that he was a leper until the day of his death; so he dwelt in an isolated house. And Jotham the king’s son was over the royal house, judging the people of the land.

**BUT THANK GOD SOME KINGS DID RIGHT… AND REMOVED THE HIGH PLACES**

**2 Chronicles 33:21–34:7 (NKJV)** Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. **22** But he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done; for Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and served them. **23** And he did not humble himself before the Lord, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more. **24** Then his servants conspired against him, and killed him in his own house. **25** But the people of the land executed all those who had conspired against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place. **34:1** Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. **2** And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. **3** For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images. **4** They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which were above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them and scattered it on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. **5** He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. **6** And so he did in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes. **7** When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

**DAVID ESTABLISHED STRONGHOLDS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**.

**EX – My parents established a stronghold of righteousness for our family… tombstone now reads… “BEGAN A GODLY HERITAGE.”**

... and some personally walked in the ways of their fathers... but did not remove the high places, so the blessing and favor of God was limited.

One (or a few) kings of Judah removed the high places and cleared out all the idols (TV shows, movies, music, perverse conversation and jokes, gossiping, impulsive spending, not paying debts, not building up savings when they can but blowing everything, not serving the Lord but living life for pleasures.

**EX** - A church where every pastor for years fell into immorality (Santa Ana?)

**EX** - A 2000 U.S. Senate report shows that children with an incarcerated parent are six times more likely to be incarcerated at some point in their lives.

**HOW DO YOU BREAK THE CYCLE?**

1. **RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS A STRONGHOLD**

**2 Kings 1:9–15 (NKJV)** Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. So he went up to him; and there he was, sitting on the top of a hill. And he spoke to him: “Man of God, the king has said, ‘Come down!’ ” **10** So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.” And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. **11** Then he sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty men. And he answered and said to him: “Man of God, thus has the king said, ‘Come down quickly!’ ” **12** So Elijah answered and said to them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.” And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. **13** Again, he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and pleaded with him, and said to him: “Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight. **14** Look, fire has come down from heaven and burned up the first two captains of fifties with their fifties. But let my life now be precious in your sight.” **15** And the angel of the Lord said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he arose and went down with him to the king.

1. **DO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO CHANGE IT**

**Deuteronomy 17:14–20 (NKJV)** “When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,’ **15** you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. **16** But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’ **17** Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. **18** “Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. **19** And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, **20** that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

**Revelation 1:5–6 (NKJV)** and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, **6** and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

**2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV)** if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

**Philippians 2:12–13 (NCV)** My dear friends, you have always obeyed God when I was with you. It is even more important that you obey now while I am away from you. Keep on working to complete your salvation with fear and trembling, **13** because God is working in you to help you want to do and be able to do what pleases him.

**Mark 11:23 (NKJV)** For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, **he will have whatever he says.**

**2 Corinthians 10:4 (NKJV)** For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down **strongholds**

Solomon assumed the role of king and walked in the ways of his father for a while... but then started compromising... didn’t keep reading and hearing the Word (Deut 17)... and started building strongholds (temples of foreign gods).

**EX** - Years ago I heard the story of a traveling minister (K.E.H.) who would go minister regularly in a certain church... the people were nice, but something was blocking a move of God... God was moving in other churches he’d go to... people being saved... healed... filled with the Spirit... many people coming... but when he’d go back to this particular church... though he’d pray and prepare the same... and preach the same... there was something blocking the move of God. But then one time he went back to preach there, and there was freedom.... people were receiving the Word of God... so after the service was over, the pastor of that church asked, “Do you notice any difference in our church this time?” And he told him the story of how he fasted and prayed... saw the demon... commanded it to go... and everything changed.

**MANY—IF NOT MOST—GENERATIONAL STRONGHOLDS HAVE DEMONIC INFLUENCE**

**EX** – Rick Renner’s story about the couple’s hands being crippled

**Mark 9:25 (NKJV)** When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!”

**EX** – I know of a family who had several family members die of exactly the same illness.

**EX** – Generation after generation experience divorce… children out of wedlock…