

WEAVER STUDY GUIDES

Dealing With Tyrants

Study Guide

Covenant Theology

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A lesson-by-lesson companion for reading, discussion, and written responses.

Downloadable classroom edition | 8.5 x 11 inches

Name / group

Date

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Using this guide

Read the corresponding chapter, then work through the themes, arguments, and Scripture references.

Write your responses before discussing the questions with others. Use the application pages to identify a practical next step.

The study material is retained from the existing lecture study guides. Added writing prompts provide space for your own response.

Print at Actual Size / 100% on US Letter paper. Single-sided and double-sided printing are both suitable. Lessons begin on the next available page; no blank pages are inserted.

Reading assignments refer to the September 30, 2026 edition of the companion book. Online lecture links and QR codes are collected at the end.

LESSON 1

Dealing With Tyrants - 1

January 05, 1997

Read Chapter 1 in the companion book, pages 5-28.

Major Themes

Deception as a Lawful Weapon Against Tyranny

Deception is presented as a biblically sanctioned, non-violent method for resisting entrenched wicked rulers, rooted in the lex talionis.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'The basic means for dealing with tyrants is through deception.' He cites Job 12:16 and argues that since Satan deceives, it is lawful to deceive deceivers.

Tyranny as a Perversion of God-Ordained Government

Tyranny is never divinely appointed; it is a misuse of government that oppresses the good and elevates the wicked.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'Tyranny is never a divinely appointed means of government... Tyranny oppresses the good and the righteous and the holy and punishes them.'

The Lex Talionis (Law of Retribution)

Deception against tyrants is an application of 'eye for eye' justice, giving back deceit for deceit.

Lecture support: Weaver explains: 'Deception against wickedness, deception against tyranny is part of the lex talionis of Scripture... an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a deceit for deceit.'

God's Use of Deception

God Himself uses and commands deception in Scripture, demonstrating its legitimacy in certain contexts.

Lecture support: Weaver cites 1 Samuel 16 (Samuel's ruse), 1 Kings 22 (lying spirit), Ezekiel 14 (God deceives prophets), and 2 Thessalonians 2:11 (God sends delusion).

The Principle of Not Owning Truth to Abusers

One does not owe the truth to someone who will abuse it; giving truth in such cases makes one an accomplice to sin.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'You do not owe the truth to one who is going to abuse the truth... If you give the truth to someone who is going to abuse it, then you become a partaker and an accomplice in that individual's sin.'

Deception as Protection of Life and Property

Deception is a legitimate, non-violent means to protect one's life, family, and property from wicked aggressors.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'It is a non-violent way of protecting our lives, our families, and our property. It is right to protect your life or your family or your property by use of deception.'

Limits of Deception: Truthfulness in Normal Relationships

Deception is not to be used against those to whom we owe truth, such as parents, godly authorities, and neighbors; believers are to be marked by honesty.

Lecture support: Weaver cautions: 'We cannot use what I have preached to become a liar and a deceiver... You owe the truth to your parents... to those who have lawful authority over you.'

Key Arguments

Tyranny is not ordained by God

God ordains government for good, but tyranny is a perversion that punishes the righteous and elevates the wicked.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'Tyranny is never a divinely appointed means of government... Tyranny oppresses the good and the righteous and the holy and punishes them.'

Deception is part of biblical justice (lex talionis)

Since Satan began with deception, it is just to deceive deceivers, as an eye-for-eye retribution.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'Deception against wickedness, deception against tyranny is part of the lex talionis of Scripture... an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a deceit for deceit.'

God Himself uses deception

Scripture shows God commanding or using deception (e.g., Samuel, Ahab's prophets, Ezekiel 14, 2 Thessalonians 2:11), proving it is not inherently sinful.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'God himself used deception in the Bible. I will go further. God still uses deception, and I can show it to you in black and white.'

Biblical heroes practiced deception against tyrants

Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, the midwives, Rahab, Jael, Michal, and David all used deceit against wicked rulers and were blessed by God.

Lecture support: Weaver provides multiple examples, e.g., 'Abraham lies or deceives... there is no condemnation for Abraham' and 'Rahab... that was an out-and-out lie... God not only saved Rahab physically... he saved her spiritually.'

You do not owe truth to those who will abuse it

Giving truth to someone who will use it for evil makes you an accomplice; therefore, deception is morally permissible in such cases.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'You do not owe the truth to one who is going to abuse the truth... If you give the truth to someone who is going to abuse it, then you become a partaker and an accomplice in that individual's sin.'

Deception is a non-violent means of self-defense

Deception can protect life, family, and property without resorting to violence, and is therefore a legitimate tactic.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'It is a non-violent way of protecting our lives, our families, and our property. It is right to protect your life or your family or your property by use of deception.'

Deception must be limited to dealing with evil

Deception is not a license for general dishonesty; believers must remain truthful in relationships where truth is owed.

Lecture support: Weaver warns: 'We cannot use what I have preached to become a liar and a deceiver... You owe the truth to your parents... to those who have lawful authority over you.'

Scripture References

Job 12:2

Weaver quotes this verse humorously as an aside, noting Job's sarcastic reply to his friends.

Job 12:12-16

The main text for the sermon, emphasizing that both the deceived and the deceiver are God's, setting the stage for the legitimacy of deception.

Genesis 3:1-6

The first sin came through the serpent's deception of Eve, establishing Satan as the original deceiver.

1 Timothy 2:14

Weaver references this verse to note that Eve was deceived, but Adam was not.

Revelation 12:9

Satan is identified as the one who deceives the whole world.

Revelation 13:14

The beast deceives the inhabitants of the earth through miracles.

Matthew 10:16

Jesus commands believers to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, sent as sheep among wolves, implying the need for wisdom including deception.

Psalms 24:3-4

Describes the righteous as having clean hands and not swearing deceitfully, showing the general standard of truthfulness.

Psalms 10:7

The wicked are characterized by deceit and fraud.

Psalms 36:3

The words of the wicked are iniquity and deceit.

Psalms 50:19

The wicked give their mouth to evil and frame deceit.

Psalms 55:11

Wickedness, deceit, and guile are in the streets.

1 Samuel 16:1-2

God instructs Samuel to use a sacrificial ruse to anoint David without Saul knowing, an act of deception commanded by God.

1 Samuel 15:26-29

God had rejected Saul as king, providing context for why Saul would kill Samuel if he knew of the anointing.

1 Kings 22:1-23

God sends a lying spirit to deceive Ahab's prophets so that Ahab would go to battle and be killed, showing God's use of deception.

Ezekiel 14:7-9

God declares that if a prophet is deceived, He Himself has deceived that prophet, demonstrating divine use of deception.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

God sends a strong delusion on those who reject the truth so that they believe a lie and are damned.

Genesis 12:10-20

Abram deceives Pharaoh by saying Sarai is his sister to protect his life; God plagues Pharaoh and blesses Abram.

Genesis 20:1-18

Abraham again deceives Abimelech about Sarah; God intervenes and blesses Abraham.

Genesis 26:1-12

Isaac uses the same deception about Rebekah; God blesses him with a hundredfold harvest.

Study notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the concept of lex talionis (eye for eye) apply to the use of deception against tyrants?

Consider: Weaver argues that since Satan began with deception, it is just to deceive deceivers as a form of retribution.

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2. What are the biblical examples of God using or commanding deception, and how do they shape our understanding of its morality?

Consider: Weaver cites 1 Samuel 16, 1 Kings 22, Ezekiel 14, and 2 Thessalonians 2 to show God's use of deception.

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3. How do the actions of Rahab, Jael, and the Hebrew midwives demonstrate the principle of deceiving tyrants, and what were the outcomes?

Consider: These women lied to wicked authorities to protect God's people and were blessed by God.

4. What is the difference between a tyrant and a legitimate authority, and how does that distinction affect our obligation to tell the truth?

Consider: Weaver distinguishes between tyrannical rulers and godly authorities like parents, to whom we owe truth.

5. In what practical situations today might a Christian need to use deception to protect life, family, or property?

Consider: Weaver gives illustrations of a robbery and a home invasion to show when deception is justified.

6. How can we reconcile the command to be 'harmless as doves' with the command to be 'wise as serpents' in the context of dealing with evil?

Consider: Weaver references Matthew 10:16, sending disciples as sheep among wolves, requiring serpent-like wisdom.

7. What are the dangers of misapplying the principle of deception in everyday relationships?

Consider: Weaver warns against using this teaching to lie to parents, teachers, or pastors who exercise lawful authority.

Applications

Use deception as a non-violent defense against tyranny

When facing oppressive government or wicked individuals who would abuse the truth, believers may lawfully use deception to protect life, family, and property.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'It is a non-violent way of protecting our lives, our families, and our property. It is right to protect your life or your family or your property by use of deception.'

Do not give truth to those who will abuse it

Refuse to provide information to those who intend to use it for evil, as doing so makes one an accomplice in their sin.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'You do not owe the truth to one who is going to abuse the truth... If you give the truth to someone who is going to abuse it, then you become a partaker and an accomplice in that individual's sin.'

Maintain truthfulness in normal relationships

Deception is only for dealing with tyranny and wickedness; in relationships with parents, godly authorities, and neighbors, believers must be marked by honesty and integrity.

Lecture support: Weaver cautions: 'We cannot use what I have preached to become a liar and a deceiver... You owe the truth to your parents... to those who have lawful authority over you.'

Recognize tyranny as a perversion of God's order

Understand that tyrannical government is not ordained by God and should be resisted, not passively accepted as divine will.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'Tyranny is never a divinely appointed means of government... Tyranny oppresses the good and the righteous and the holy and punishes them.'

Apply the lex talionis in resisting evil

Just as God gives back what is justly deserved, believers may use deception as a form of retribution against deceivers.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'Deception against wickedness, deception against tyranny is part of the lex talionis of Scripture... an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a deceit for deceit.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 2

Dealing With Tyrants - 2

January 12, 1997

Read Chapter 2 in the companion book, pages 29-47.

Major Themes

Avoidance as a Biblical Tactic

Avoidance is a lawful, God-given method for dealing with tyrants, demonstrated throughout Scripture by figures like Isaac, Jacob, Elijah, David, Paul, and Jesus.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Avoidance is a tactic for dealing with tyranny... staying out of the way' and provides multiple biblical examples.

Avoidance is Not Cowardice

Using avoidance does not make one a coward; it is wisdom and discretion, choosing when and how to engage conflict.

Lecture support: Weaver argues, 'It is not an act of cowardice to avoid a conflict with tyranny... avoidance is a non-violent way to prevent violence by wicked men.'

Divine Sanction of Avoidance

God himself commands and approves of avoidance, as seen when he told Joseph to flee to Egypt and Elijah to hide.

Lecture support: Weaver notes, 'God said, Joseph, you take Mary and Jesus, get out of the country... God himself ordered this tactic of avoidance.'

Protection of Life and Property

Avoidance is a legitimate means to protect one's capital, home, life, and family from tyrannical threats.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'We may lawfully practice deception and avoidance where morally necessary in order to protect our capital, our homes, our lives and our families.'

Separation from the Wicked

Godly people should not associate with tyrants, who are like bands of robbers, as Psalm 50 and Augustine indicate.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Augustine: 'Godless civil rulers are no more than bands of robbers' and cites Psalm 50:16-22.

Strategic Timing in Conflict

Avoidance allows one to choose the terms of engagement, fighting only when the situation is winnable.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'You pick your fights. It's not that you're afraid to fight. You just want to fight on your terms when the situation is winnable for you.'

Key Arguments

Avoidance is a fundamental biblical method for dealing with tyrants

Weaver argues that avoidance, like deception, is a primary tactic taught in Scripture for responding to tyranny.

Lecture support: He says, 'The second method of dealing with tyrants is what I'm going to call avoidance.'

Avoidance is not cowardice but wisdom

Weaver counters the notion that avoiding conflict is fearful, using David and Paul as examples of courageous men who practiced avoidance.

Lecture support: He asks, 'Would anyone in here suggest for a moment that David was a coward?' and lists Paul's sufferings.

God commands avoidance in certain circumstances

Weaver shows that God directly ordered avoidance for Elijah, Joseph, and others, proving its legitimacy.

Lecture support: He cites 1 Kings 17:2-3: 'Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith.'

Avoidance protects the innocent and preserves resources

Weaver argues that avoidance is a non-violent way to prevent harm and conserve strength for future action.

Lecture support: He states, 'Avoidance is a non-violent way to prevent violence by wicked men.'

Avoidance is necessary when strength is insufficient

Weaver teaches that when one lacks the power to overthrow tyranny, avoidance is a lawful and wise response.

Lecture support: He says, 'Avoidance is absolutely necessary when there is neither strength nor the resources to overthrow the tyranny.'

Jesus Christ practiced avoidance

Weaver points to Jesus avoiding Judea when the Jews sought to kill him, demonstrating that even the Son of God used this tactic.

Lecture support: He reads John 7:1: 'After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.'

Scripture References

Proverbs 1:15

Weaver introduces the sermon with this verse, advising the godly not to walk in the way of the wicked.

Psalms 50:16-22

God rebukes the wicked for hating instruction and consenting with thieves, showing why the godly should avoid them.

Genesis 26:12-33

Isaac avoids conflict with the Philistines over wells, moving away repeatedly, and God blesses him.

Genesis 27:1-4, 41

Isaac plans to bless Esau contrary to God's word; Esau plans to kill Jacob, prompting Jacob's flight.

Genesis 25:23, 27-34

God declares the elder shall serve the younger; Esau sells his birthright to Jacob.

Genesis 31:41-42

Jacob recounts Laban's mistreatment and God's intervention, leading to his departure.

Genesis 31:11-13, 20

God tells Jacob to leave Laban; Jacob steals away unawares.

Genesis 32:6-7, 11

Jacob fears Esau's approach with 400 men and prays for deliverance.

Genesis 33:12-19

Jacob deceives Esau about following him to Seir and instead goes to Succoth, avoiding him.

1 Kings 17:1-9

God tells Elijah to hide by the brook Cherith and later to go to Zarephath, avoiding Ahab.

1 Kings 18:1, 10

After three years, God tells Elijah to show himself to Ahab; Obadiah reveals Ahab sought Elijah to kill him.

1 Samuel 23:19-29

David avoids Saul in the wilderness, moving from place to place to escape capture.

1 Samuel 18:6-7

The women sing of David's military prowess, showing he was not a coward.

1 Samuel 26:7-11

David refuses to kill Saul, the Lord's anointed, and instead takes his spear and water jug.

1 Kings 18:3-4

Obadiah hides 100 prophets in caves to avoid Jezebel's persecution.

Acts 9:22-25

Saul (Paul) escapes Damascus by being lowered in a basket through the wall to avoid Jews seeking to kill him.

2 Corinthians 11:32-33

Paul clarifies he was avoiding the governor under Aretas the king, not just the Jews.

2 Corinthians 11:22-29

Paul lists his sufferings to prove his courage and dedication, countering any charge of cowardice.

John 7:1

Jesus avoided Judea because the Jews sought to kill him.

Matthew 2:13-14

An angel tells Joseph to flee to Egypt with Mary and Jesus to avoid Herod's murderous intent.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the biblical concept of avoidance challenge modern views of standing up to injustice?

Consider: Weaver argues that avoidance is a lawful, non-violent tactic, not cowardice.

2. In what situations might avoidance be more honoring to God than direct confrontation?

Consider: David avoided Saul to prevent killing the Lord's anointed; Elijah hid at God's command.

3. How can we discern when to use avoidance versus other tactics like deception or fighting?

Consider: Weaver mentions that avoidance and deception often go hand in hand, and fighting will be addressed later.

4. What does Jesus' use of avoidance teach us about the nature of courage and wisdom?

Consider: Jesus avoided Judea when his life was threatened, though he was not afraid to die.

5. How does the example of Isaac giving up his wells inform our attitude toward material possessions in the face of tyranny?

Consider: Isaac repeatedly moved rather than fight over wells, and God blessed him.

6. What are the limits of avoidance? When might it become sinful passivity?

Consider: Weaver implies avoidance is lawful when strength is insufficient, but does not address when it might be wrong.

Applications

Practice avoidance to protect your family and property

Weaver teaches that believers may lawfully avoid tyrants to safeguard their homes, capital, and lives.

Lecture support: He states, 'We may lawfully practice deception and avoidance where morally necessary in order to protect our capital, our homes, our lives and our families.'

Do not equate avoidance with cowardice

Believers should reject the cultural stigma that avoiding conflict is fearful, recognizing it as biblical wisdom.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'It is not an act of cowardice to avoid a conflict with tyranny.'

Use avoidance when you lack strength to overcome tyranny

When resources are insufficient to overthrow a tyrant, avoidance is a necessary and lawful response.

Lecture support: He states, 'Avoidance is absolutely necessary when there is neither strength nor the resources to overthrow the tyranny.'

Follow God's leading in avoidance

As God commanded Joseph and Elijah to flee, believers should seek and obey divine guidance in avoiding danger.

Lecture support: Weaver notes, 'God said, Joseph, you take Mary and Jesus, get out of the country... God himself ordered this tactic of avoidance.'

Separate from wicked rulers and their ways

Believers should not associate with tyrants, who are like bands of robbers, as Psalm 50 and Augustine indicate.

Lecture support: Weaver asks, 'Why in the world would anyone want to associate with tyrants anyhow?'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 3

Dealing With Tyrants - 3

January 19, 1997

Read Chapter 3 in the companion book, pages 49-69.

Major Themes

Tyranny is never a lawful government

Weaver argues that since God never ordained tyranny, resisting it is not rebellion; rebellion can only be against lawful authority.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'It is impossible to rebel against tyranny... because tyranny is not now or has it ever been a lawful form of government.'

God uses armed resistance and assassination to overthrow tyrants

Throughout Judges, God raises up deliverers who use force, deception, and assassination to free Israel from oppressors.

Lecture support: Examples include Ehud's assassination of Eglon, Jael's killing of Sisera, and Gideon's military campaign.

The law of retribution justifies force against tyrants

Because tyrants use force to oppress, the lex talionis (eye for eye) permits the use of force against them.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Tyrants use force of various kinds and degrees to usurp and abuse power. Therefore, force may be lawfully used against them because it is part of the law of retribution.'

Biblical heroes of faith used violent resistance

Hebrews 11 lists Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, and Samuel as faith heroes who 'waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.'

Lecture support: Weaver reads Hebrews 11:32-34 and states, 'God, in Hebrews 11, is endorsing and placing his approval upon everything that these men did.'

Assassination of tyrants is not murder

Weaver quotes Robert Morey to argue that Scripture views assassination of tyrants as just and commendable, not murder.

Lecture support: Quote: 'If one takes the biblical record seriously, assassination to remove a tyrant is not murder.'

The necessity of wisdom and timing in using force

Weaver cautions that while armed resistance is biblical, it must be used with full biblical considerations and not rashly.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'one is foolish and unwise and suicidal to attempt to use force without comprehending the full biblical considerations attached to the use of force.'

Key Arguments

Resistance to tyranny is not rebellion

Since tyranny is not a lawful government, opposing it cannot be rebellion; rebellion is only against God-ordained authority.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'Rebellion is only to lawful government. Rebellion cannot be... toward tyranny because tyranny is not now or has it ever been a lawful form of government.'

Scripture endorses armed resistance and assassination

The book of Judges and other Old Testament narratives show God raising up deliverers who used force, and Hebrews 11 commends them as faith heroes.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Ehud, Jael, Gideon, Samson, and others, and reads Hebrews 11:32-34.

Tyranny is a consequence of national sin

God allows tyrants to oppress His people as a judgment for their disobedience and idolatry.

Lecture support: Weaver reads Deuteronomy 28:15,25 and notes the pattern in Judges: 'whenever the people serve God... they're free. Whenever they disobey him... they're in bondage.'

God uses inferior means to defeat superior forces

Shamgar's ox goad, Gideon's 300 men, and Samson's jawbone demonstrate that God's blessing makes weak weapons and small numbers victorious.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'It doesn't matter how many machine guns or bombs... When God's blessing and power is upon his people, even the weakest... instruments of war become superior.'

The Declaration of Independence exemplifies biblical resistance

The American colonists documented tyranny and then used armed resistance, following the biblical pattern.

Lecture support: Weaver reads from the Declaration and says, 'This document was just written to prove the tyranny of George III.'

Assassination of tyrants is just, not murder

Because tyrants are murderers and usurpers, killing them is an act of justice, not murder.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Robert Morey: 'If one takes the biblical record seriously, assassination to remove a tyrant is not murder.'

Scripture References

2 Kings 11:13-16

Athaliah's execution ordered by Jehoiada the priest; used to show that killing a usurper is justice, not treason.

Deuteronomy 4:34

God used war and great terrors to deliver Israel from Egypt; cited as an example of God using force against a tyrant.

Deuteronomy 28:15,25-29

Curses for disobedience, including oppression by enemies; used to show that tyranny is a judgment for sin.

Proverbs 16:7

When a man's ways please the Lord, his enemies are at peace with him; the opposite is implied.

Judges 3:5-11

Othniel raised up as a deliverer who went to war against Cushan-rishathaim; example of armed resistance.

Judges 3:12-30

Ehud's assassination of Eglon; used deception and armed resistance.

Judges 3:31

Shamgar killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad; example of inferior weapon blessed by God.

Judges 4-5

Deborah, Barak, and Jael's assassination of Sisera; armed resistance and assassination.

Judges 6-8

Gideon's 300 men defeat Midian; God uses a small force to overthrow tyranny.

Judges 9:1-5,50-57

Abimelech's tyranny and death by a millstone; God's judgment on a tyrant.

Judges 10:6-16

Israel's sin leads to oppression; God initially refuses to deliver but relents.

Judges 11

Jephthah used as a deliverer; armed resistance.

Judges 13-16

Samson's acts of deception, assassination, and armed resistance against the Philistines.

1 Samuel 15:32-33

Samuel hewed Agag in pieces; mentioned as an example of armed resistance.

1 Samuel 11

Saul used armed resistance against Nahash the Ammonite.

1 Samuel 14

Jonathan used armed resistance against the Philistines.

1 Samuel 17

David used a sling and sword against Goliath.

1 Kings 18

Elijah killed the prophets of Baal with a sword.

2 Kings 9

Jehu used force against Ahab's house.

Hebrews 11:32-34

Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel listed as faith heroes who subdued kingdoms and waxed valiant in fight; New Testament endorsement of armed resistance.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the distinction between rebellion and resistance to tyranny affect our view of historical events like the American Revolution?

Consider: Weaver argues that rebellion is only against lawful government, and tyranny is never lawful.

2. In what ways do the examples of Ehud, Jael, and Samson challenge modern Christian views on the use of deception and assassination?

Consider: These biblical figures used deception and assassination, and are commended in Hebrews 11.

3. What is the relationship between national sin and the rise of tyranny, according to the pattern in Judges?

Consider: Weaver points out that Israel's disobedience led to oppression, and repentance brought deliverance.

4. How should Christians balance the biblical sanction of armed resistance with the caution to wait for God's timing and proper circumstances?

Consider: Weaver emphasizes that force is just but must be used with full biblical considerations.

5. What does Hebrews 11's inclusion of warriors like Gideon and Samson teach us about the relationship between faith and violent action?

Consider: These individuals are listed as heroes of faith for their acts of armed resistance.

6. How does the concept of lex talionis (eye for eye) apply to the use of force against modern tyrants?

Consider: Weaver argues that since tyrants use force, force may be lawfully used against them in retribution.

7. What are the dangers of applying this sermon's teaching without the 'weighty considerations' promised for the next message?

Consider: Weaver repeatedly cautions that this message is incomplete and must be paired with the following sermon.

Applications

Recognize tyranny as illegitimate and resist it biblically

Believers should understand that tyranny is not ordained by God and may be lawfully resisted through deception, avoidance, or force as circumstances permit.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'tyranny is not now or has it ever been a lawful form of government. God never ordained tyranny as a form of government.'

Trust God's power over human weaponry

When facing superior forces, believers should rely on God's blessing rather than numerical or technological advantage.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'When God's blessing and power is upon his people, even the weakest and the most inferior instruments of war become superior.'

Repentance as the first step to freedom from tyranny

National sin invites tyranny; repentance and returning to God is the prerequisite for deliverance.

Lecture support: Weaver notes the pattern in Judges: 'whenever the people serve God... they're free. Whenever they disobey him... they're in bondage.'

Exercise wisdom and patience in using force

While armed resistance is biblical, it must not be undertaken rashly; believers should wait for God's timing and proper conditions.

Lecture support: Weaver cautions, 'one is foolish and unwise and suicidal to attempt to use force without comprehending the full biblical considerations.'

View biblical warriors as models of faith

The faith of Gideon, Samson, and others included violent action against oppressors; believers should not separate faith from such acts.

Lecture support: Hebrews 11 lists them as heroes who 'waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 4

Dealing With Tyrants - 4

November 28, 2011

Read Chapter 4 in the companion book, pages 71-91.

Major Themes

Biblical Lawfulness of Violent Self-Defense

Physical force against tyranny is lawful in Scripture, but it must be preceded by careful consideration of certain factors.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Violent self-defense is a lawful and biblical method to use in dealing with tyranny. However, there are solemn and serious considerations that must be faced and dealt with before that method is employed.'

Tyranny as Divine Punishment

God often raises up tyrants as a judgment for sin, and fighting against them is futile unless God relents.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'tyranny and oppression are punishments sent by God because of our sin and because of our rebellion' and cites Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28.

Necessity of Counting the Cost

Before engaging in war, one must assess resources, strength, and the likelihood of success, as taught by Jesus in Luke 14.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Luke 14:28-32 and says, 'Our Lord is emphasizing the fact: whenever a war is to be engaged in, somebody must faithfully count the cost.'

Spiritual Condition of the People

Deliverance from tyranny requires a people weary of both oppression and their own sin, crying out to God for deliverance.

Lecture support: Weaver points to Judges 3:9, 4:3, 6:6-7, and 10:10, noting that 'the children of Israel cried unto the Lord' and confessed their sin.

God's Sovereignty in War

Success in overthrowing tyranny depends entirely on whether God is directing the effort; if He is not, failure is certain.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Exodus 33:14-15, Zechariah 4:6, and Acts 5:38-39, concluding, 'If God is in it, success is absolutely assured. If God is not in it, failure is assured.'

Civil Liberty Rooted in Spiritual Liberty

True freedom is found in Christ, and only those liberated by the Spirit will truly long for and fight for civil liberty.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Civil liberty is based upon spiritual liberty... Only people who have been liberated by the Spirit of God and by the Lord Jesus Christ, they're the ones that long after freedom.'

Key Arguments

The New Testament does not nullify Old Testament examples of physical resistance.

Weaver argues that all Scripture is profitable and that Old Testament examples are written for our learning, so the New Testament endorses the Old Testament freedom fighters.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Hebrews 11:32-34, Romans 15:4, and 1 Corinthians 10:6,11 to show that the New Testament affirms Old Testament examples.

Temporary operations are not the same as full-scale war.

Using the story of Simeon and Levi, Weaver shows that acting hastily without considering long-term consequences can endanger the entire community.

Lecture support: Jacob said, 'Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land... and I, being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me and slay me.'

No reasonable hope of winning exists when God is against you.

Weaver demonstrates from Scripture that when God raises up an enemy as punishment, resistance is futile, as seen with Nebuchadnezzar and the Assyrians.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Jeremiah 27:5-8, where God says He has given all lands into Nebuchadnezzar's hand and will punish any nation that resists.

The people must be weary of sin, not just tyranny.

Weaver argues that God will not deliver a people from oppression just so they can continue in rebellion; true deliverance requires repentance.

Lecture support: In Judges 10:10, Israel cried, 'We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.'

God's presence is the decisive factor in any conflict.

Weaver insists that without God's direction and blessing, any effort to overthrow tyranny will fail, as Gamaliel counseled in Acts 5.

Lecture support: Gamaliel said, 'If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.'

The disciples did not fight Rome because the conditions were not met.

Weaver explains that the early church lacked resources and knew God's judgment was on Jerusalem, so Christ commanded flight, not fight.

Lecture support: In Matthew 24:15-16, Jesus says, 'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation... then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains.'

Scripture References**Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

Weaver reads this passage to introduce the concept of seasons and times, relevant to the discussion of war and peace.

Hebrews 11:32-34

Weaver cites this to show that the New Testament endorses Old Testament freedom fighters as heroes of faith.

2 Timothy 3:16

Weaver notes that 'all Scripture' refers primarily to the Old Testament, which is profitable for doctrine.

Romans 15:4

Weaver quotes this to prove that Old Testament events were written for our learning and hope.

1 Corinthians 10:6, 11

Weaver uses these verses to argue that Old Testament examples, both good and bad, are for our admonition.

Genesis 34:25-30

Weaver recounts the story of Simeon and Levi's attack on Shechem to illustrate the danger of temporary operations without considering long-term consequences.

Romans 14:7

Weaver quotes this to emphasize that no one lives or dies to himself; our actions affect others.

Luke 14:28-32

Weaver cites Jesus' teaching on counting the cost before building a tower or going to war.

Leviticus 26:14-15, 17-25

Weaver reads this passage to show that tyranny and oppression are curses for disobedience.

Deuteronomy 28:15, 25-29

Weaver reads these curses to reinforce that God sends enemies as punishment for sin.

Proverbs 16:7

Weaver quotes this to show that when a man's ways please the Lord, even his enemies are at peace with him; the opposite is also true.

1 Kings 11:6-9, 14, 23-25

Weaver uses Solomon's story to illustrate that God raises up adversaries when His people sin.

Jeremiah 27:1-8

Weaver reads this to show that God gave all lands into Nebuchadnezzar's hand and commanded submission; resistance was futile.

Micah 7:7-9

Weaver quotes Micah's response of waiting on the Lord and bearing His indignation when there is no hope of winning.

Judges 3:9, 15; 4:3; 6:6-7; 10:10

Weaver cites these verses to show that deliverance came when the children of Israel cried out to the Lord, weary of tyranny and sin.

Deuteronomy 28:45-48

Weaver reads this to show that because Israel did not serve God with joy, they would serve their enemies.

Galatians 5:1

Weaver quotes Paul's exhortation to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

2 Corinthians 3:17

Weaver quotes this to show that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, linking spiritual and civil liberty.

Exodus 33:14-15

Weaver cites Moses' refusal to go without God's presence as the model for ensuring God is in the effort.

Zechariah 4:6

Weaver quotes 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts' to emphasize dependence on God.

Study notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the four considerations Weaver says must be weighed before using physical force against tyranny?

Consider: Weaver outlines these considerations throughout the sermon as essential prerequisites.

2. How does the story of Simeon and Levi illustrate the difference between a temporary operation and a full-scale war?

Consider: Weaver uses Genesis 34 to show that their hasty action endangered the whole family because they could not sustain a long-term conflict.

3. Why does Weaver say there is no reasonable hope of winning when God is not on your side?

Consider: He argues from Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28, and Jeremiah 27 that God raises up tyrants as punishment, and fighting them is futile unless God relents.

4. What does Micah 7 teach about our attitude when we cannot win against tyranny?

Consider: Weaver points to Micah's example of waiting on the Lord and bearing His indignation until He delivers.

5. According to Weaver, why must the people be tired of sin, not just tyranny, before deliverance can come?

Consider: He cites Judges 10:10 where Israel confessed their sin, and argues God will not deliver people just so they can continue rebelling.

6. How does Weaver connect spiritual liberty to civil liberty?

Consider: He uses 2 Corinthians 3:17 and Galatians 5:1 to argue that only those freed by Christ truly long for and can sustain political freedom.

7. Why does Weaver say the New Testament disciples did not attempt to overthrow Rome by force?

Consider: He explains they lacked resources and knew God's judgment was on Jerusalem, so Jesus commanded them to flee rather than fight.

8. What role does 2 Chronicles 7:14 play in Weaver's application?

Consider: He uses it to call God's people to humility, prayer, and repentance as the prerequisite for national healing.

Applications

Count the cost before engaging in conflict.

Weaver urges believers to assess their resources, strength, and ability to sustain a long-term war before initiating physical resistance.

Lecture support: He cites Luke 14:28-32 and the example of Simeon and Levi to warn against hasty, ill-considered actions.

Discern whether God is judging through tyranny.

Weaver calls for self-examination to see if oppression is a result of national or personal sin, and if so, to repent rather than fight.

Lecture support: He points to Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, and says, 'When God sovereignly raises up an enemy against us, only God can call him off.'

Wait on the Lord when there is no hope of winning.

Weaver advises using deception, avoidance, and patient endurance under God's indignation until He brings deliverance.

Lecture support: He quotes Micah 7:7-9: 'I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause.'

Seek spiritual revival as the foundation for liberty.

Weaver emphasizes that civil liberty depends on spiritual liberty, and that the Word of God must be disseminated to awaken people to both righteousness and freedom.

Lecture support: He says, 'If we want to see the people stirred, it's only the Word of God that's going to stir them.'

Ensure God's presence and direction before acting.

Weaver insists that believers must seek God's guidance and blessing before any attempt to overthrow tyranny, following Moses' example.

Lecture support: He cites Exodus 33:14-15: 'If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.'

Repent and pray for national healing.

Weaver calls God's people to humble themselves, pray, seek God's face, and turn from wicked ways as the biblical prescription for healing the land.

Lecture support: He quotes 2 Chronicles 7:14 and says, 'The problem is not really with the wicked, folks. The problem is with us.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

Online Lecture Resources

Scan a code or select the lecture link in the PDF. The original lecture identifiers and destinations are preserved.

Lesson 1: Dealing With Tyrants - 1

Lecture JW01161

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Lesson 2: Dealing With Tyrants - 2

Lecture JW01160

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Lesson 3: Dealing With Tyrants - 3

Lecture JW01159

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Lesson 4: Dealing With Tyrants - 4

Lecture JW00679

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Source information

Study material: existing Major Themes, Key Arguments, Scripture References, Discussion Questions, and Applications from the corresponding Weaver Bible College lecture records. Original lecture titles and provenance are retained in those source records.

Layout upgraded September 30, 2026. Original manuscripts, study-guide data, and previous PDFs have not been changed.