

Hostile Takeover

“Burn their idols. Don’t ever long for the silver and gold on these idols or take any of it for yourselves. It might be a trap for you. Besides, these idols are disgusting to the Lord your God. Never bring a disgusting idol into your house. If you do, you and the idol will be destroyed. [...] It must be destroyed.” (Deuteronomy 7:25-26, God’s Word Translation)

That sounds like a very clear and unambiguous charge to Israel, which Moses was giving to the people on the brink of finally taking possession of the Promised Land after forty long desert-years. The Hebrews were to drive out and destroy physical enemies to take possession of physical land. That was part of God’s punishment for those opposing His people for a long time. But Israel also were to destroy their enemy’s idols completely and never ever make use of it. Interestingly also the particular warning to neither desire nor take the silver and gold covering those idols, as it could easily become a trap.

- You might be surprised but reading those verses made me think immediately about modern-day hostile takeovers that are so commonplace in our economies today. Once, when I was conducting a seminar on Biblical Economics for business people, a US economic expert (decorated with a doctorate, professorship and practical accomplishments in his field) conducted a course on Successful Business at the same time in the same hotel. Mind you, our approach to the same topic couldn’t have been more opposed. Targeting managing directors, senior managers, and strategic advisors his topics were “using offensive strategies to secure competitive position”, “initiatives to capitalize on competitor weaknesses”, “end-run offensives”, “guerilla offensives”, “choosing who to attack”, and so forth, all reminiscent of Israel’s charge to taking possession of the Promised Land.
- Modern-day hostile takeovers are indeed pushing the enemy (competitors) out of their territory (market) to lay hold of their silver and gold (profit) that’s covering their idols (business for the sole purpose of making money). Sadly many Christians have no qualms when engaging in and approving of it! However, considering such course of action justified based on God’s charge to Israel is a dangerous abuse of Scriptures. Ever since Jesus finishing His redemptive work, the “warfare-mode” for believers has changed notably.

“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 6:12, NLT-SE)

- Thus hostile takeovers in Kingdom-terms no longer mean taking away physical territories (companies, markets, countries, etc.) and destroying physical enemies (competitors, foreigners, other tribes, etc.), but overcoming Satan’s control established through evil, corrupt, ruthless, competitive and destructive attitudes, behaviors, decisions, rules, laws, and regulations, or in short the godless, dark world system instead. We do that by acting in the opposite, the light, applying God’s laws and principles instead of those that are well accepted, promoted and applied as norm by an unbelieving, God-opposing world.
- God warned Israel that money and idols are enemy tools that will lead to swift destruction. That has not changed. Today in private, corporate and national context, where we consider money our security and answer to everything, and assets, savings, investments, insurances, education, titles, worldly wisdom, alliances, partnerships, etc. our safety net, we too are in danger of being destroyed by them. Instead of allowing the enemy to take us over by luring us with all these idols, we are to overcome the evil cohorts and mighty powers of this dark world that rule through fear by teaming up with our God Almighty.