

**Title:** Open Door/ Trap Door  
**Pastor:** Fred May  
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**Time:** 19:15

### Revelation 3:8

...See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it...

## THE CHALLENGE IN STRATEGIC ADVANCE

### Luke 10:7c

<sup>7C</sup> Do not move around from house to house.

## 1. GIBEONITE DECEPTION

### Joshua 9:1-6

<sup>1</sup> Now when all the kings west of the Jordan heard about these things—those in the hill country, in the western foothills, and along the entire coast of the Great Sea as far as Lebanon (the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites)-

<sup>2</sup> they came together to make war against Joshua and Israel.

<sup>3</sup> However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, <sup>4</sup> they resorted to a ruse: They went as a delegation whose donkeys were loaded with worn-out sacks and old wineskins, cracked and mended.

<sup>5</sup> The men put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes. All the bread of their food supply was dry and moldy.

<sup>6</sup> Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us."

### Joshua 9:14-15

<sup>14</sup>The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.

a) Israel gathered data but FAILED -

- to inquire as to GOD's strategy
- to track progress against greater vision
- to guard against the seductive power of delayed success

b) Designed to induce

- COMPLACENCY through frustration, humiliation, & despair
- confusion
- Unfair trade of SPIRITUAL for CARNAL strategy.

## 2. PAUL IN ASIA

### Acts 16:6-7

<sup>6</sup> Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.

<sup>7</sup> When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

**The Holy Spirit = CEO of God's Strategic Command Centre**

## 3. JESUS AND THE TRAP DOORS

### Matthew 22:15-18

<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words.

<sup>16</sup> They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. "Teacher," they said, "we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are.

<sup>17</sup> Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

<sup>18</sup> But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me?"

### Matthew 22:18 NKJV

<sup>18</sup> But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test Me, you hypocrites?"

- The conspiratorial purpose (of entrapment) = Flattery → Accusation → Labelling → Discrimination → Marginalisation → Destruction

## 4. NEHEMIAH'S WALL

### Nehemiah 2:9

<sup>9</sup> So I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates and gave them the king's letters. The king had also sent army officers and cavalry with me.

### Nehemiah 4:6-9

<sup>6</sup> So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.

<sup>7</sup> But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the men of Ashdod heard that the repairs to Jerusalem's walls had gone ahead and that the gaps were being closed, they were very angry.

<sup>8</sup> They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble against it.

<sup>9</sup> But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.

### Nehemiah 6:1-13

<sup>1</sup> When word came to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a gap was left in it—though up to that time I had not set the doors in the gates

<sup>2</sup> Sanballat and Geshem sent me this message: "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages on the plain of Ono." But they were scheming to harm me;

<sup>3</sup> so I sent messengers to them with this reply: "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?"

<sup>4</sup> Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I gave them the same answer.

<sup>5</sup> Then, the fifth time, Sanballat sent his aide to me with the same message, and in his hand was an unsealed letter

<sup>6</sup> in which was written: "It is reported among the nations—and Geshem says it is true—that you and the Jews are plotting to revolt, and therefore you are building the wall. Moreover, according to these reports you are about to become their king

<sup>7</sup> and have even appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem: 'There is a king in Judah!' Now this report will get back to the king; so come, let us confer together."

<sup>8</sup> I sent him this reply: "Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are just making it up out of your head."

<sup>9</sup> They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed." But I prayed, "Now strengthen my hands."

<sup>10</sup> One day I went to the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was shut in at his home. He said, "Let us meet in the house of God, inside the temple, and let us close the temple doors, because men are coming to kill you—by night they are coming to kill you."

<sup>11</sup> But I said, "Should a man like me run away? Or should one like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!"

<sup>12</sup> I realized that God had not sent him, but that he had prophesied against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. <sup>13</sup> He had been hired to intimidate me so that I would commit a sin by doing this, and then they would give me a bad name to discredit me

- Envy & malice = conspiracy
- Prayerful response

### Romans 16:19b

<sup>19b</sup> ....but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.

- It's okay to be NAÏVE & GULLIBLE
- Alert, compliant, synchronized
- Letting seemingly good opportunities go in favour of GOD's greater purpose