



## Lesson 4 — Extortion by Princes

*What the prophets say about state terror · Monastery Upgrade*

**Method note.** Every verse below was retrieved from the BSB text and verified against the verse index before being quoted — the same citation gate the *isaiah-54-17* app enforces on model output. No reference appears here that does not resolve to a real address.

### The diagnostic

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The anchor is Jeremiah 22:17, the climax of the oracle against King Jehoiakim of Judah:

*"But your eyes and heart are set on nothing except your own dishonest gain, on shedding innocent blood, on practicing oppression and extortion."*

Jeremiah 22:17 · BSB

Three charges, in a deliberate order:

**dishonest gain → innocent blood → oppression and extortion**

The money comes first. In the prophets' diagnostic, extortion is not a side effect of tyranny — it is the engine. The violence exists to protect the extraction.

The full charge sheet (Jeremiah 22:13–19) is economic before it is violent: forced labor without wages to build a vanity palace (v13); the contrast with his father Josiah, who "defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well" (v16); then the triad (v17); then the sentence — no royal lamentation, "the burial of a donkey," dragged outside the gates (v18–19).



### China — the mob

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*"This is what the Lord GOD says: 'Bring a mob against them and consign them to terror and plunder.'"*

Ezekiel 23:46 · BSB

The Red Guard pattern: the state does not wield the violence directly — it *releases* a mob and aims it. Plausible deniability as statecraft, twenty-six centuries before the term existed.

Jeremiah 22:13 supplies the economic layer: the palace built by unpaid labor. The camp economy — extraction disguised as reform. And Psalms 94:5 names the surveillance condition: *"They crush Your people, O LORD; they oppress Your heritage."* Not watching. Crushing.

## **Russia — the blood**

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*"and also for the innocent blood he had shed. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood."*

2 Kings 24:4 · BSB — on Manasseh

Quantity as the message. The purge is communication: the number *is* the terror. (See Cross-Domain Analysis #6 — the number before the name.)

*"Their feet run to evil; they are swift to shed innocent blood."*

Isaiah 59:7 · BSB

The expeditionary version: the same feet, abroad. And underneath both, Jeremiah's triad again — the expropriation engine. Ask who was enriched by each wave of blood and the pattern completes itself.

## **Iran — the princes**

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Ezekiel 23:46 again: the Basij are the same released-mob technology as the Red Guards, different century. The verse keeps working because the tactic keeps working.

*"haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood"*

Proverbs 6:17 · BSB — among the seven things the LORD hates

Terror by intermediary: the proxy's hands, the patron's will. The hands stay technically clean while the blood still sheds.

*"For this is what the Lord GOD says: 'Enough, O princes of Israel! Cease your violence and oppression, and do what is just and right.'"*

Ezekiel 45:9 · BSB

The only verse in this set addressed directly to rulers *as rulers* — the morality-police pattern: legislating virtue while practicing violence. The corruption is in the office, not the office-holder.

## The through-line

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All three regimes map onto Jeremiah's triad, but each leads with a different element: **China with the mob** (Ezekiel 23:46), **Russia with the blood** (Isaiah 59:7), **Iran with the princes** (Ezekiel 45:9). Same engine — dishonest gain first — different bodywork.

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*The prophets' question is never "which regime is cruelest." It is "who's getting paid." Answer that, and the rest of the pattern fills itself in.*