

***Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas***  
***Fredericksburg Bible Church***  
*107 East Austin*  
*Fredericksburg, Texas 78624*  
*830-997-8834    [jthomas@fbgbible.org](mailto:jthomas@fbgbible.org)*

**C1001 – January 6, 2010 – Hosea 8:1-6 – The Nation's Failure To  
Learn Loyalty: Politics & Religion**

Alright, let's return to our study of the book of Hosea. We've had several weeks off so we want to get back into the prophecy. Hosea is a book of prophecy. It fits in the *nabiiim* and the *nabiiim* are the second section of the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrews had three sections; first the *torah*, which are the books of law, they cover the character of God and the law of God. What God is like and what is God's will? Second the *kethubim* and the *kethubim* are the books of wisdom, they teach you how to handle the details of life, how do I handle problems on the job, how do I handle problems in marriage, how do I handle problems with my family, issues that amplify aspects of the divine institutions. Third, they had the *nabiiim* and the *nabiiim* are the prophets and the prophets do contain prophecy but that's not the big idea you want to pull out. The big idea of the *nabiiim* is conviction of sin, conviction of sin that results in genuine confession of sin that results in restoration to fellowship so the nation can be in a position to advance in sanctification, to move forward in spiritual growth. This is the objective of the books of the *nabiiim*. So the application is that when you are down and when you are struggling with a sin problem in your life, the place to go is the *nabiiim*; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel are the major *nabiiim* and Hosea, Joel, Amos, etc...these are the minor *nabiiim*, in the sense they contain less material than the three major *nabiiim*. So you have fifteen books in the OT that are all part of the *nabiiim* and they are all aimed at conviction of sin, so if you're having a difficult sin problem those are the books you ought to read.

Hosea was written during the period of the Disciplinary Truths of the Kingdoms. The kingdom had been a monarchy under David and Solomon but the kingdom divided so now you had two kingdoms, one in the south, Judah, and one in the north, Israel. Hosea is primarily concerned with the northern

kingdom of Israel. They were in a period of rapid spiritual decline; the southern kingdom declined too but at a slower pace and the difference there has primarily to do with the Davidic Covenant. The line of kings in the north had divine authorization through the Covenant word of YHWH, so they had a more stable kingdom; they were a little more with it than the south. The north had the potential under their first king, Jeroboam I, to have an eternal kingdom but Jeroboam couldn't trust the Lord. He hadn't built the word of God into his soul and he failed to trust and therefore he resorted to human view point gimmicks to get security and he separated his people from Jerusalem, from the bible teachers, the Levites and set up his own political-religious system. And because of their theological departure from the Lord they decayed rapidly, then whole society plunged into chaos, social chaos, political instability, murder, theft, you name it, it was a mess... and that's when Hosea comes into the picture. Hosea is dealing with a nation that is a mess. So his book isn't about how to deal with one sin, this is about how to deal with a whole pile of sins, how to get out of negative sin patterns, that type of thing. So Hosea's contribution to our doctrine of sanctification is in the area of deep, deep carnality. How does God the Holy Spirit convict us of sin when we're way out of it? How do we get out of deep, deep carnality? What are the mechanics of falling into this? Those kinds of questions are what we're dealing with in Hosea's book.

A second thing Hosea contributes to is our doctrine of God. All books of the Bible contribute to our doctrine of God but Hosea is unique in that it stresses really strong the personality of God. The way it does it is by bringing out two attributes of God that almost appear to contradict; the holiness of God on one hand and the love of God on the other. Oftentimes in Church History people have said Christianity is contradictory because it holds that God is both loving and holy. And how do you get those together? Either God must loosen his standard of holiness to lovingly accept people as they are or His standard of holiness remains intact and His love just fails to accept anyone. The answer to that is neither is compromised. There's not a contradiction. The answer is disclosed in the OT that somehow God is going to provide the solution, and the NT opens with that solution, the Lord Jesus Christ. He solves the dilemma by meeting God's standard of holiness perfectly, thereby releasing His love to accept sinners on the basis of Christ's death. And so there's no contradiction ultimately in Hosea's theology. Hosea is just pointing out that God is a person, God is not an IBM computer in the sky that spits

out impersonal data. God is very concerned with His people and God can be extremely angry at His people to the point He'll say, I'm going to cream you, I'm going to totally annihilate you and when you see that, that's His holiness. And then, lo and behold, in the very next verse He'll show you His real strong love. I'll bring you back to Me, I'll plant you in My land and you'll flourish forever. And the resolution to this kind of back and forth is ultimately found in the cross work of Jesus Christ. He's the answer.

We said that Hos 1-3 is a sketch using the marriage of Hosea to the prostitute Gomer to parallel the marriage of God to the prostitution nation Israel. It may not be the prettiest picture but it communicates. God's number one aim is not to write a pretty story but to communicate to man. And if you were here for that section hopefully you picked up some marital tips, but surely you picked up on the fact that God is much more concerned about communicating truth to people than writing a pretty book of piety that dances around issues.

Now we're working with Hos 4-10 and this is written according to the *rib* format. The *rib* is the lawsuit taken up by God against His nation so the book deals with God's discipline within His own household under court proceedings. Turn to chapter 4 to see the introduction to the case. Verse 1, "Listen to the word of the Lord, O sons of Israel, For the Lord has a case against the inhabitants of the land, Because there is no faithfulness or kindness Or knowledge of God in the land." That is a general statement of theological evil. Remember, theological evil always precedes social evil. That is a principle that ultimately when all is said and done, you can go on all the crusades to fix society, you can start a fund for abused women, you can give to help needy children, but the root of the problem isn't those social issues, the root of the problem is theological in nature. People are in rebellion against God and the social problems are merely a manifestation of their rebellion. And so verse 1 is theological evil in Israel and verse 2 is the social evil that breaks out of the theological evil; "swearing, deception, murder, stealing and adultery." That is a general statement made at the introduction of the case and now we're in chapter 8 and we're looking at the details of the social sins that break out of the theological evil in the land of Israel.

We've dealt considerably with the theological evil, their failure to know God in every detail of life, their failure to learn loyalty to him and now we're

watching the fallout of that failure in the social sphere. Loyalty to God is the chief aim of sanctification and God had sent prophet after prophet to train that nation to learn loyalty to Him and after 700 years they had failed to learn loyalty and therefore you begin to see the nation crack into pieces and the social chaos becomes the order of the day. And this same principle works, generally speaking, in all nations that go negative volition to God and they kick God to the curb. When a nation does that, eventually that nation is going to fall apart all around you. It doesn't matter how great the economy is, it doesn't matter how strong the military is, it doesn't matter how educated society has become, once a nation abandons God, God abandons the nation.

The nation Israel is at that point, ~755-715BC, that's the ~time frame. Hosea ministered for about 50 years and during those 50 years God is gradually letting the nation go and the nation was nearing total collapse. To handle the problems they were facing they turned to human gimmicks. The book of Hosea could very well be one of the most thorough treatments on the failure of human gimmicks to solve problems. Gimmicks seem to work for awhile but then the weakness in the foundation begins to split open and the whole thing crumbles and then you're back to square one. So we're in training not to buy into human gimmicks but to apply the word of God to solve problems, only the word of God will get you out of a jam, only the word of God is sufficient. When we buy into a gimmick we're saying the word of God is insufficient, I've got to add my gimmick over here and it's just a manifestation of the fact that we haven't learned loyalty to Him, we don't really know Him.

Tonight, Hosea 8:1-4. Tonight we get to see another gimmick the nation turns to in time of trouble. Verse 1, **Put the trumpet to your lips!** Now the **trumpet** there is the shofar, the ram's horn, this instrument was used for a number of purposes. One of them was simply to signal the congregation to gather to the tabernacle. That's a benign use. The second one was a little more serious. It was an alarm to alert the 12 camps or tribes that it was time to pack up and move out. The Shekinah Glory, the visible manifestation of God was dwelling with them in much of the OT and before Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem they had tabernacle which was sort of a makeshift tent, and it was moveable. When Shekinah Glory would move out, the twelve camps of Israel pack their bags and follow Him to the next camping spot. The shofar was used to signal that. The third use of the shofar was the most serious, it was to announce war was imminent<sup>i</sup> and that's the usage here.

Verse 1 says, **Like an eagle *the enemy comes* against the house of the LORD, Because they have transgressed My covenant And rebelled against My law.** Look at these words. Where is this quote from? Doesn't this remind us you of the rib format, the blessing and cursing motif of Lev 26 and Deut 28? Anybody use their cheat sheet and find the cross reference to the eagle in the OT? Deut 28:49, hold your place in Hosea and turn to Deut 28:49. The prophet Hosea, as he brings the case against Israel is not just using slick rhetoric in the court to get a favorable decision; he's picking up this language right out of the treaty. This is contract language, this is God's language and he's pronouncing the judgment that was written in the original contract. This from the cursing section, verse 49, "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose tongue you shall not understand," notice it's the cursing of foreign invasion, a rapid military strike. That at the end of the verse by the way, the mention of foreign tongues associated with foreign invaders, is one of the main ideas of tongues in Acts 2 Pentecost. The nation Israel just committed an atrocity; they just crucified their own Messiah. What do you think was coming next? The tongues wasn't some great blessing like our Charismatic friends wish for. Tongues were a sign of foreign invasion. The Holy Spirit had just invaded and they weren't ready for him at all. 37 years later what foreign army did the Lord bring against Israel in AD70 and send into exile? Rome. Titus led the Roman army and they tore Jerusalem to shreds, destroyed the Temple. What's the point of tongues after that? There is no lasting purpose. It was a sign gift. A sign to the nation Israel that they better get with it spiritually or that was it, they were going to get creamed. And they didn't listen and so they got creamed. So what's God warning of here in Hosea. The exact same thing. Get with the program Israel or you're going to get a big spanking, My nation Assyria is going to cream you and you're going to go into Exile. Assyria is the **eagle**. Why the **eagle**?

The **eagle** here is the *neshet*, and the *neshet* is not necessarily the **eagle**, it can be an **eagle**, in some contexts it is, but generally speaking it's a vulture. A vulture is a scavenger bird; what do vultures eat? Dead flesh. They fly around at high altitude and with their excellent eyesight they search for carrion. Why do you think God used the scavenger bird as a metaphor for an enemy nation that attacks Israel? What does this communicate about Israel's spiritual condition? Dead flesh. They're a rotten, stinking, putrid nation. And this is God's people, this is the way God describes His own people - as

carrion, they are totally out of it. They haven't learned loyalty to Him. They have failed and they have failed miserably, they are in deep carnality and now God is going to send the vultures in against Israel.

Now look at verse 2. Verse 2 is a very real expose of what it looks like to be in deep, deep carnality. You see it in various people in the Bible, you see it in Saul, you see it in others, **2They cry out to Me, "My God, we of Israel know You!"** Now that's obviously a cry of desperation. They are in dire straits at this point. The Assyrian army is poised and ready to swoop in and kill them, rape their women, pillage their homes, slaughter their little babies. It's going to be rough treatment. But remember, always remember, because it's these things in the OT that get people all upset about God. What kind of a God do you serve that would do that to His own people? That's a hateful, vengeful God. There are two things we need to have squared away when we get this objection. One we need to remember that God's own discipline can be very severe. God doesn't take it lightly when we rebel against His word. God has marked out a destiny for each one of us to be conformed to the image of Christ. And He is going to get us there come hell or high water. So the discipline you as a believer can face can be very severe. But there's a second thing. Is it really cruel discipline? There's no question it's severe; God's unleashing military warfare that's going to decimate 90% of the population. Men, women, babies, the whole nine yards. It's severe but is it cruel? Why do we say it's not cruel discipline? Because it's predictable discipline. This was all laid out in the Torah. If you curse Me, I will curse you. These verses come right out of Deut 28:45 and 49. It's right there in black and white. God is a holy God; He sets boundaries and they knew the boundaries. You can't just do whatever you want and get away with it. That's not the way a proper Father-Son relationship works. A proper father-son relationship works when a father lays out very clearly what are the boundaries to this relationship and if you cross the boundaries there are going to be very definite consequences. That's good parenting. Good parenting isn't do whatever you want kid. All that communicates is that I don't care enough about you to discipline you so you'll get some character. A good parent is always interested in building character in his children and discipline is an indispensable means of building character. And God used discipline to build character in His nation. That's why the discipline. But it's not cruel discipline; He told them all well in advance. They knew the consequences going in. It was no surprise at all, that's what He said He was going to do and now He's doing it.

And now they go into their bawling because He's doing what He said He would do. God says you can bawl and yell and weep all you want but you still haven't turned to Me. All you want is the discipline to stop; stop the discipline, stop the discipline, we don't like the paddle and we see the Assyrian army and we're wetting our pants over here. But you haven't said I confess my sin to you Lord, I have sinned against You. And there is a world of difference between a believer lying there crying and throwing a fit because God is sending discipline and a believer crying unto God with a genuine heart of confession.

Now the crying and yelling doesn't impress God, it doesn't impress Him in the least until you get down and get to the heart of the issue with 1 John 1:9 and there is no other way to turn off the discipline. And they haven't done that. It's obvious from the next verse this is all a big fake, **we know you O Lord**, yeah, yeah, that is the biggest load of bull, and if you knew Him you wouldn't be getting disciplined. But you don't know Him and that's the whole point, and verse 3 is the proof, **Israel has rejected the good**. Literally there's no definite article there, it just says, **Israel has rejected—good**. **The enemy will pursue him**. This is God's answer to their cry. How does he answer it? He answers it by saying you're full of hot air. You say you know Me but you reject good. So how is it that you know Me? Now what is **the good** they've **rejected**? The **good** is the Law of verse 1, the Covenant, the 613 Laws of Moses. They had laws for every area of life. They cover sanitation, how to keep a clean environment, they cover education, how to educate your children, they cover marriage, how to love your wife, they cover property rights, inheritance, they carry military ops, how to carry out war and a hundred other things. They didn't have to ask God, what is your will in the area of marriage? What is your will for raising my children? It was all laid out in the Law of Moses. And it was all **good**; it's was all a reflection of the righteous character of God. There's nothing wrong with the Law when it's understood properly. It was God's will for their life. Whoever said the Law of Moses was bad doesn't read the Bible very closely. The law is good and holy. It may not be for the church, it may have been for Israel, that's true, but it wasn't bad, it was good.

The second thing about the good Law is that it's one of the means of sanctification. Always in sanctification you must have Law and Grace. Law is



the standard; grace is the enablement to meet the standard. Both are required. Sanctification can't go anywhere unless you have both of these elements. If you have just Law for example, (say we just have the standard of the word of God, God's will for our life), but we don't have the enablement to reach the standard then after awhile we get tired of trying to reach the standard because it's so high and we can never reach it and so we fail and fail and fail and finally we get tired of failing. We start to contract the law down, make it simpler, make it lower and after awhile we've missed the whole intent of the law and we're legalists. Don't drink, don't dance, don't stay out past 9:30. This is the legalist.

The other extreme is to say its all grace. God will accept whatever I do. So if we swing this way and now we stress grace but we don't like law, now we don't have a standard, there aren't any controls, and we can do whatever we want and just call it grace. This will never result in growth because there's no content, no will of God for our lives and now we can't please God because we don't even know what pleases Him. And this is the licentious man. He sins and sins and sins and says its grace, grace, grace. Boloney! It's not grace, it's sin. So licentiousness and legalism are both wrong.

The answer is there is law and there is grace and when we recognize the standard for what it is and live by the grace required to attain it then that contributes toward **the good**, our sanctification advances.

They're crying we know you Lord, we know the law but their actions are totally reverse. They're full of hot air, and the Lord knows that. The Lord knows our heart and the Lord knows when we're just looking for an easy out. The Lord knows when we're crying out to Him whether we're really interested in Him or whether we're really just interested in escaping the discipline. I imagine when this country falls to pieces a million Christians are going to be just like v 2. When the economy goes down the drain and the socialistic programs take over then they're going to start crying out, God, how can you let this happen to us, we know you! And God's going to say you guys are so full of hot air, you don't know Me, you are more interested in church growth programs, hot rock music and all the rest of the boloney. You have not come to me with genuine hearts seeking to know Me. You just want me to fix your broken economy, that's all there is to it, you just want your toys back. It's this same empty cry, they're just words, and they mean nothing. To see



the principle in the NT turn to Tit 1:16. “They profess to know God, but by *their* deeds they deny *Him*, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.” See what talks? What really talks is actions, deeds, they show all. You can say all the right religious words, we love God and we love Jesus and we sing praise and worship for an hour five times a week. Who cares says God, I could care less, what I care about is whether you put the word of God into action, not this hot air nonsense. Living the word of God. But Israel has rejected the word of God and God says, **the enemy will pursue.**

We’ve just covered the general condition of the nation Israel, now he’s going to get specific; he’s going to go into the charges in vv 4-6. These verses cover two great sins of the nation. One is their sin in the area of politics and the other is their sin in the area of religion. But in the end they’re linked. Hosea says they’re not separate, they’re linked, you can’t keep them apart and you sin in both areas. Hos 8:4, **They have set up kings, but not by Me; They have appointed princes, but I did not know it.** This gets into their history that started back around 930BC. Back then you had Rehoboam take over in the south after Solomon. Solomon was Rehoboam’s daddy and he taught him the book of Proverbs but Rehoboam didn’t care about Proverbs. It shows you a son, even a well-taught son can reject the word of God and when Rehoboam got in office he made some serious political blunders. He was one of the biggest political idiots a country ever saw. I can honestly say it would be on par with a lot of things that are happening in this country right now. Just like this administration, he rejected all the people that had political experience and brought in all his high school buddies. They were all 35-40 years old by this time, but they had no wisdom in the area of politics. The long and the short of it is that he said some very crude things that got ten of the tribes pretty upset and so they broke off, they seceded from the union. So now they had two kingdoms. The guy who came in to reign over them was Jeroboam.

Now Jeroboam was a divinely authorized king. So Jeroboam had every right to form a separate political kingdom. That is recorded in 1 Kgs 11-12. So we know at least the first king of the northern kingdom received what we call prophetic approval. The prophets were the king-makers; remember this is why the Gospels do not begin with Jesus; they begin with John the Baptist. John the Baptist is a prophet, the prophet must precede the king; that always

is a pattern in Scripture. Who anointed David? The prophet Samuel. Who anointed Saul? The prophet Samuel. It was always a prophet that pointed out the king and anointed him. In fact the word “anointing” is the word from which we get Messiah, the Christ. So Jeroboam started out fine but He rebelled against the Lord. He lost his dynasty. Then other kings came, some were anointed by the prophets, but most of them were not. And if you compare the dynasties of the northern kingdom with the dynasties of the southern kingdom you’ll find a striking contrast. In the south you read of only one dynasty. In the north you read of nine dynasties. That speaks volumes of the stability of those two kingdoms. By the time you get to Hosea you have a new dynasty every other week. One guy will come in and assassinate the king and enthrone himself, three weeks later another guy will knock him off and jump on the throne and its political chaos, political intrigue, political conspiracy, no stability. Why? Because none of these guys were anointed by the prophets, they’re all self-appointed. God didn’t set up those kings, God didn’t recognize them and neither did the prophets. That’s the political sin this verse is condemning.

The second sin is the religious sin at the end of verse 4, **With their silver and gold they have made idols for themselves**, To get thinking along the right path: who gave them the silver and the gold? Who opened the trade routes to Israel about 50 years before this was written? God through the prophet Jonah. So God gave them an economic boom. And how do they repay Him? Do they attribute the boom to God? They attribute it to idols, false projections of their imagination. Violation of the very first commandment, thou shalt have no other god’s before Me. Same thing they did at Mt Sinai they’re doing again.

Let’s continue the end of the verse, **That they might be cut off**. Verse 5, **He has rejected your calf, O Samaria, saying, “My anger burns against them!” How long will they be incapable of innocence? <sup>6</sup>For from Israel is even this! A craftsman made it, so it is not God; Surely the calf of Samaria will be broken to pieces**. So the second sin is idolatry, false human viewpoint religion. This was the second big mistake Jeroboam made. Now after the kingdom was divided into two kingdoms they were to have two kingdoms but one religion. And Jeroboam got to thinking, hmm, how is that going to work. The religion is centered in Jerusalem and Jerusalem is not in my kingdom. Jerusalem is in the southern kingdom and

if I let my boys go down to Jerusalem they're going to transfer their loyalty to Rehoboam in the south. So to solve his problem and consolidate his kingdom he goes to a gimmick. He doesn't trust the Lord to consolidate, he trusts in his religious gimmick. He says we're going to have our own worship system up here boys, there's no reason to go up to Jerusalem and the Temple. I've made you one on our back porch. So he set up the golden **calf** at Dan and Bethel and that was his substitute religion. We go back to Egypt, which is a total rejection of God's redemption in the Exodus. So God was pretty bent about it and the northern kingdom was cut off at that point from any hope of an eternal kingdom. To have a kingdom they're going to have to come back under the house of David and share in that kingdom.

So they set up this idolatrous religion. Now the logic of how you get into idolatry is traced very clearly in the Scriptures under the doctrine of deep, deep carnality. Idolatry is the fourth step down. So let's review our six steps of deep carnality and see how we can get into the fourth idolatry. Remember, there's a difference between deep, deep carnality and just plain carnality. Carnality is just being out of fellowship and then you confess and get restored to fellowship. David is the model. David wasn't out of it very long; he got back with it when he was convicted of sin. He confessed and was restored. Now deep, deep carnality is when you get out of fellowship and you stay out of fellowship and you begin to develop habitual sin patterns in your soul as you reinforce your negative volition to the word of God and that destroys your view of God which makes it difficult to confess. That's deep, deep carnality. It doesn't happen overnight. It takes a period of intense negative rebellion to decline into this kind of carnality and you'll decline step by step and there's a sequence to the decline. It's always the same sequence and so if you see yourself somewhere in this sequence you'll at least know where you are.

*The first step is the rejection of the knowledge of God.* Most of this comes from exegesis of Rom 1. The first step starts off very simply as we suppress known truth. God makes Himself known to all men through creation; all men know God and this knowledge can be suppressed. How you can detect this is to ask yourself am I giving thanks to God for all things? Am I giving thanks to God for the rain, am I giving thanks for the crops, am I giving thanks for the oxygen I breathe. Thanksgiving is sort of a barometer for detecting whether we're with it or not in this area. If you're giving thanks you're probably okay, if you're not you need to get into this area and start thinking about all that

God provides for us, His ever constant care and provision. If we're not recognizing that and giving thanks to Him then we go to the second step. There's a negative consequence of this. This is sin and there are wages of sin.

*The wages here are that the mind begins to darken.* This is step two, darkening of the mind means re-orientation of the ultimate presupposition for interpreting reality. Now God and His word are not ultimate but man and His thoughts are ultimate. So that now man's theories begin to control how the mind handles the data. Rather than every piece of data being interpreted in light of God's personal sovereignty what we're doing is we're thinking that the universe is just there and the universe is run by laws of nature. And math is math whether or not God exists; language is language whether or not God exists. The Bible, that's religion. These other areas are neutral areas of investigation, we think, but our thinking is damaged, there is no neutrality in any area of life. If math is math whether or not God exists then math could not possibly be the creation of God. And that is a far cry from neutrality. So when we're thinking that there are such things as laws of nature then our minds are screwed up. There are no such things as laws of nature; there are laws of God in nature but not laws of nature. God is the author of laws in nature and therefore every piece of data is His piece of data and is a testimony to Him. At this second stage we're blinded to that.

To detect if this is you: you're not taking in the word of God, you're not interested in the word of God, you're turned off by the word of God, you may go because you have to or because of habit and you could care less about what the Bible teaches. And you're beginning to get angry at those Christians who take the word of God so seriously and you're criticizing them of blocking the church's progress by making such an issue about creation, about sin, about literal interpretation; can't we all get along. That's a hallmark feature that you're in spiritual rebellion and your mind is being darkened.

*The third step is demonic influence.* At this point you're really buying into the pagan ideas in our culture. You are convinced that man basically has the answers. The answers are found on the university campus in psychology classes, science classes, math classes, sociology classes. At this point you're very attracted to these ideas and if the guy or gal has a Ph.D. after their name they're an expert and they are the one's who really know and so you listen to them. They have the answers. The Bible says those answers are

ultimately sourced in demons. So at this stage you're rapidly re-organizing the data according to a new absolute. The demonic influence is powerful and widespread in our world, the demons hold sway which is why Satan is called "the god of this world" and the "prince of the power of the air," and what's the air but where all the ideas float around so this is his major operation to infiltrate people's thinking.

*Level four or the fourth step is outright idolatry.* This is when we're projecting the new thought form out into an image. Now the pagan ideas are deeply held to and our minds have been re-programmed on the map level and we have a new worldview that is thoroughly pagan. So with idolatry we've created a new image in our heart and we're projecting that image. The image is fundamentally the Continuity of Being, that all is one, neo-Darwinian evolution, man is a part of nature and only differs in degree and that concept is an all encompassing principles of the universe, independent of God. When we're at this step what's happening is we're sure the word of God is wrong, it has errors, in our hearts we seriously do not think the word of God is really true, God isn't really in control of history, history is going where man shapes it to go.

Now this is what he's saying about the idols in verse 6, **A craftsman made it, so it is not God;** He's saying they're projecting out of their minds a vision of God. The Israelites at this time worshipped Baal through the Golden Calf. So put yourself in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC and take a tour of the northern kingdom. You're in the city of Dan and there's this golden calf and your tour guide is pointing this out. What would we think as 21<sup>st</sup> century Americans? I'm in a museum here, look at this art. What a wonderful display of their artistry? That's not a display of their art? That's a display of their heart. That's a picture of their theology. The golden calf is a depiction of their theology? Exactly. The art, the music, the literature, the philosophy, they all express how men think. As the Scriptures say, as a man thinketh, so is he. And all you have to do is walk into a culture and look at their art, listen to their music, read their philosophy and by doing that you're peering right into the soul of that culture. You're learning how they think about God, man and nature.

Now, the way the Israelites thought was that here I have constructed the golden calf. At this time the golden calf was the depiction of Baal. Baal was

their ultimate presupposition; Baal was Nature Forces, capital N, capital F. Now the idea of Nature Forces equaling God is a pagan idea and it's an idea that they first crafted in their heart. Then they expressed it by crafting the golden calf. This is what goes on. This is a thing about idolatry that you don't want to miss. The NT warns us to guard ourselves against idolatry. So if you're idea of idolatry is just someone worshipping a rock then you have a very naïve view of idolatry. Idolatry starts in the mind, it's an image in the heart of man, it's an absolute or set of absolutes in the mind of man that is then projected in some tangible way, whether it's an evolutionary chart showing common descent, a totem pole or a golden calf. It makes no difference at all; fundamentally it's the same thing. It's an expression of how men think; it's an absolute, it's god. Hosea says, it is not God, you made it, you crafted it and if you crafted it you can uncraft it, you can knock it down. It has no substance. It's just a mental projection. So that's the fourth step down.

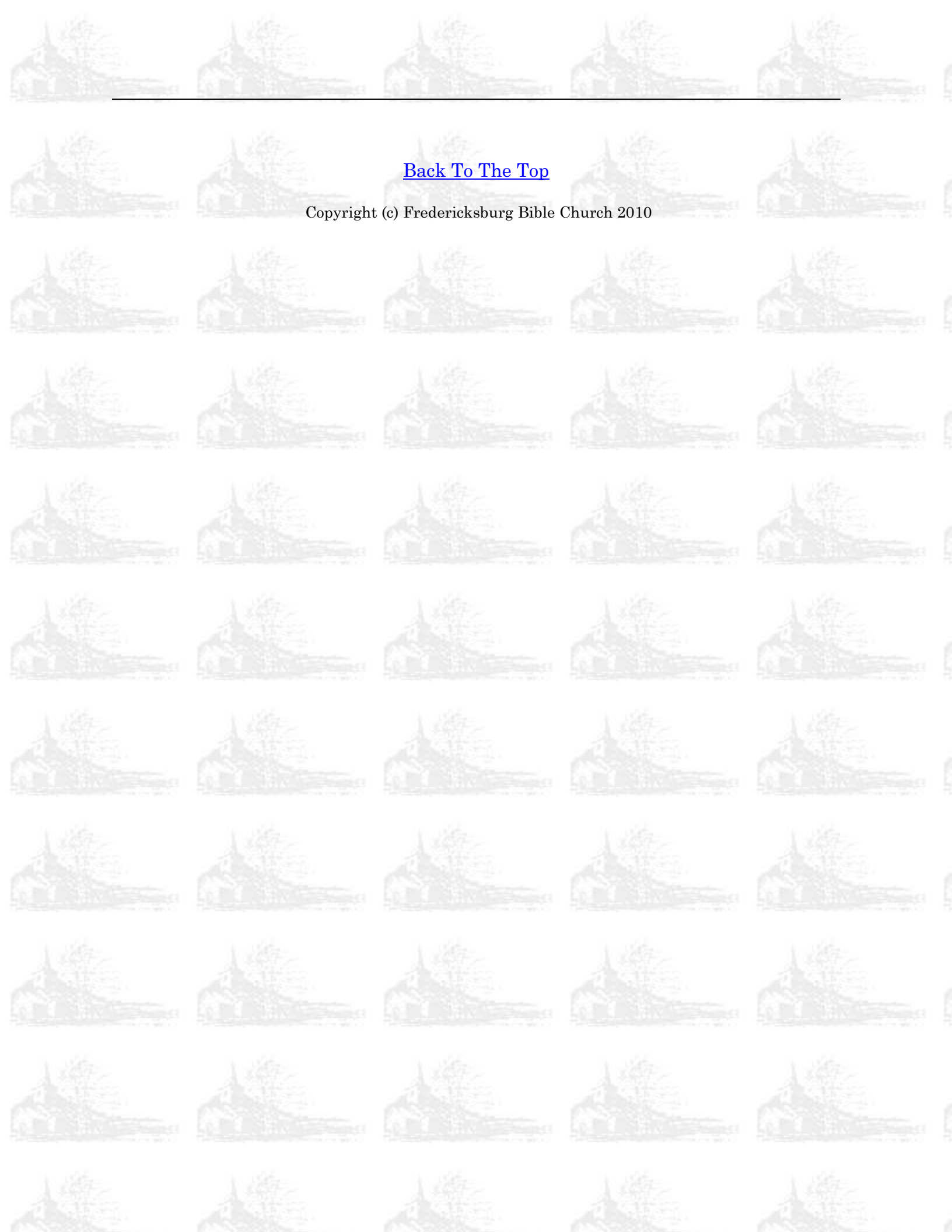
Briefly, *the fifth step is the social chaos* that eventually breaks out. The behavior that is naturally associated with demonically inspired idolatries. When the mind is warped like this and the demonic infiltration has occurred then the natural by-product is chaos in the heart. And chaos in the individual heart leads to chaos in society; murder, theft, deceit, etc...

The sixth and final step is God cuts off His *divine protection*. This is for believers only, of course. This is a severe form of discipline. This is where God turned Israel over to foreign enemies to defeat them. The parallel for the NT believer is the forces of darkness, God authorizes the demonic forces to come in and severely discipline the believer and this is for his own good. This actually is designed to jump start the believer to confess his sin and get restored. So though the demonic forces mean it for evil, God means it for good.

Alright, next time we'll go into further charges, this time the political sin of verse 4 and the religious sin of vv 4-6. They're in deep carnality and war is at hand, it's not going to help to just go into a fit, there's got to be genuine heart confession to get restored and get the discipline turned off.

---

<sup>1</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Map on Lining Papers. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1510.



---

[Back To The Top](#)

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2010