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**C0943 – November 11, 2009 – Hosea 6:4-11 – The Nation's Failure
To Learn Loyalty**

Alright, let's open our Bible to Hos 6. Again, the book of 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. Second the *kethubim* and the *kethubim* are the books of wisdom, they teach you how to handle the details of life like how I handle problems on the job, how I handle problems in marriage, how I handle problems with my family, practical every day issues. 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., 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 sin problem those are the books you ought to read. If on the other hand, you're just facing situations in life about how to handle this problem or that problem on the job or in the family, then the *kethubim* are the books to read, books like Proverbs, Song of Solomon, they all give practical advice or wisdom to handle these kinds of situations.

Last time we saw the famous prophecy that Hosea gave in Hos 5:15-6:3, that despite the chaos the nation Israel was facing toward the end of her kingdom

there was a glimmer of hope in her future. Their near future was doom and gloom. God was going to spank the nation through the rod of the Assyrian army but in the end, after a long period of abandonment, the nation would confess her sin and the confession is Hos 6:1-3. The future nation Israel will say these words when they realize they nailed her Messiah to the cross and they will seek the knowledge of God and so finally Jesus, their Messiah will return and they will enjoy everlasting fellowship. This all happens on the last three days of the Tribulation.

Now tonight we begin with Hos 6:4. God is appealing to the nation through His prosecuting attorney, Hosea. In the lawsuit format, beginning in chapter 4, is the *rib* format. Up to this point he's introduced the lawsuit in general terms. Now you are going to see the personal infinite God frustrated with the nation's refusal to respond to His advances. And what these verses show is the deep personality of our God, that God, when He addresses us, addresses us with emotion. God has emotion, God has intellect, God has will and God has these things because God is a person. He's not a robot. If He were a robot all we would have is a computer sitting in heaven just spitting out data, very impersonal. But God is not a computer; God is a person who responds, often quite violently toward His people.

And you're going to see this beginning in Hos 6:4. You will see God Himself desperate to get His people to respond to His love. God is in a marriage with the nation Israel and He is the perfect husband and He has initiated with her continually. He has given Himself to her continually. He has showered her with His love and with His grace and yet she has not responded to His advances; she has gone negative volition to her right God and she has responded to other gods. You see in Hosea the tremendous personality of God in ways you never see in any other OT book. By way of parallel God is very involved and very interested in our lives as NT believers. He pursues you, He comes after you, He loves you and He wants you to respond to Him. He doesn't just sit back and say, oh well, believer so and so doesn't want to respond to Me. God is very concerned that you respond to Him. So concerned that He will discipline you, often very severely. God's discipline always comes out of His love. Therefore if you are experiencing God's discipline you are experiencing God's love and it shows He cares enough about you to expend His time and energy on getting you in shape for your eternal destiny.

So watch for God's reaction to the people of Israel. **⁴What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? For your loyalty is like a morning cloud And like the dew which goes away early.** **⁵Therefore I have hewn *them* in pieces by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of My mouth; And the judgments on you are *like* the light that goes forth.** **⁶For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.** **⁷But like Adam they have transgressed the covenant; There they have dealt treacherously against Me.** **⁸Gilead is a city of wrongdoers, Tracked with bloody *footprints*.** **⁹And as raiders wait for a man, So a band of priests murder on the way to Shechem; Surely they have committed crime.** **¹⁰In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing; Ephraim's harlotry is there, Israel has defiled itself.** **¹¹Also, O Judah, there is a harvest appointed for you, When I restore the fortunes of My people.**

Now, basically the rest of chapter 6 divides into two parts, vv 4-7 and vv 8-11. Vv 4-7 deal with a general principle we've covered so we'll review and vv 8-11 the consequences of violating the general principle. So let's look at vv 4-7, the general principle.

Hos 6:4, **What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah?** Now there are two things happening with these questions. One is that when God is asking man questions it's not because He doesn't have the answers. God is omniscient. So if you only think about these questions from the side that God doesn't know what to do you'll miss half the point. The point when God asks man a question is that man has something to think about and God is using a question to get man to think it out. So the first thing is that God is saying, alright, reflect on what I've done with you in the past, all the things I've tried to get you straightened out. Then come back and tell me what you think would have worked. Point being God had tried everything and the nation still didn't respond. The second thing about the question is you hear the desperation in God's voice. You can hear it in the tone. What am I going to do with you? I've tried this, I've tried that, I've worked with you people and you haven't responded positively to Me. That's the gist of what this is saying. God's frustrated we would say. Frustration is the finite human analog to what's going on here in the Godhead. There's frustration and anyone of you who is a parent, who has had to work with a

difficult child knows exactly what this is saying. I've tried everything with you kid, I've given you every opportunity, I've done this, I've done that and you're still a mess. Now what am I going to do with you? It's frustrating.

Now to appreciate why God is frustrated let's go back to our doctrine of sanctification and quickly review the basics of this doctrine so we can get the background of this passage. The doctrine of sanctification we divide into five parts: Phases, Aim, Dimensions, Means and Enemies. PADME if you need an acronym. Let's start with the Phases. We always start with the Phases. There are three phases. Phase one is positional sanctification, for the nation Israel this is the Abrahamic Covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant defined Israel's position as God's chosen people. God chose Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the twelve tribes and promised them a land, seed and worldwide blessing. That is their position. No other nation has that position. It's a position God gave them and therefore, it's a position they have by God's grace. So the Abrahamic Covenant is a covenant of grace and that forever defines Israel's position. Phase two is experiential sanctification, this is the Mosaic Covenant. This is what God wanted Israel to do for Him and the details of what God wanted them to do are the 613 Laws of Moses. But God didn't just out of the blue one day say, obey Me. He said, I have demonstrated grace, I have given you the Abrahamic Covenant, I have delivered you from Egypt, now will you obey the Mosaic Covenant? And the nation said, yes, we will. And so those laws of Moses governed the experience of the nation Israel. There was blessing and there was cursing, that's all experience. Phase three is the nation Israel's ultimate sanctification, which is the New Covenant that replaces the Mosaic Covenant. Eventually, the nation will realize that they can't obey the Mosaic Covenant in the flesh and therefore they will have to turn to a righteousness external to them, found in the Messiah and when they do that God will give them a new heart and will put His Spirit within them as a part of the New Covenant. Then they'll obey. So three phases, the details there are for Israel, there are parallels for you and I as Church saints; we have an analog to each of the three phases.

So we move on to the second part of the doctrine of sanctification and that's the Aim of Sanctification. What's the aim? The aim of sanctification is Deut 6:5, "Though shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength." What it means is loyalty, loyalty to God in every area of life, thinking God's thoughts after Him. Now the Hebrew word for "love" is *chesed*.

And *chesed* is a word that means covenantal love, love inside a covenant, it's the word used of a man and a woman in marriage. The aim of sanctification for the nation Israel was loyalty to God inside the Mosaic contract. The aim of sanctification is that our experience will conform to our position, that we'll learn loyalty to God. This is where our passage is focusing in Hos 6, the aim.

Next, we come to the means. How do we grow spiritually? How do we learn loyalty to Him? There are two means God uses. One is law, the other is grace. He uses law in the sense of law as the revealed will of God for our lives. You have to know what the will of God is or you can't grow. How could you possibly grow if you don't even know what God requires of you? So you have to have God's will for your life. The nation Israel had it in the 613 laws of Moses and you have it too very clearly in the NT. Galatians calls it the law of Christ. 1 Corinthians 9 calls it the law of Christ. Don't think you're not under law as a NT believer. You are under a law; it's just not the Law of Moses. But there is the Law of Christ in the NT and you are under that. That's what God wants you to do, that's the standard he wants you to meet.

But you say I can't meet it. Right, that's why there's the second means comes in, which is grace. Grace is the enablement to meet the standard. Keep those together, don't try to take law without grace because people who are all law and no grace are legalists, they think you can please God by doing good, and I'm not going to smoke and I'm not going to drink and I'm not going to drive over 55mph and if I stay inside these guidelines then I'll please God and grow spiritually. Wrong! You're not going to grow at all; all you are doing is works of the flesh. A pagan can do the same works of the flesh and obviously they don't have any spirituality. True spirituality requires means and the means is grace. But don't fall off the other side of the ledge because some believers take the grace and leave out the law and for these people it's all grace, grace, grace to the total exclusion of law and these are your licentious types and they're just as bad as the legalist types. They sin and sin and sin and oh, it's covered by the blood of Jesus. And so they're the type that abuse grace, they're licentious, and obviously they're not going to grow.

Now you have to keep both law and grace in the equation to grow. They are both required. We are clearly under the Law of Christ, but we can't meet the law of Christ in our flesh, we have to depend on God's grace. So God has made certain provisions for the believer that enable us to meet the standard.

God has, for example, given us 1 John 1:9 as a recovery mechanism when we get out of fellowship. God has also given us the Holy Spirit. Philippians says He is at work in us both to do and to will His good pleasure. So He's at work in us. Rom 8, those led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God and so these and other provisions God has made for us enable us to reach the standard such that when all is said and done it's not our fruit in Gal 5, it's the fruit of the Spirit.

Then, you have two dimensions of sanctification, you have the existential present and that's either you're in fellowship or your out of fellowship. At any moment you're in one of those two states, and the other is the long-term growth and that's the fact that you may be in and out of fellowship but over the long haul there should be an upward trend to your growth. You should be spending more time in fellowship as you grow such that you are able to look back ten years and say, hey, I remember being way back there and acting like an idiot. And you should be able to say that again another ten years from now. If you can't say that then you've stalled out. So in the long-term dimension there should be growth that is noticeable and that should encourage you to keep going. Two dimensions.

Finally there are enemies of sanctification; the world, the flesh and the devil, and the beautiful thing about all these enemies is that ultimately they work together for good. God allows certain pressures from these three directions to come the believer's way in order to train us to depend on Him, and that helps us grow.

Now, with that background let's go to Hos 6:4 and see why God is acting the way he's acting. **4What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah?** Now notice both kingdoms are in view. We're in the 8th century BC and the kingdoms were divided and so you had two Jewish kingdoms, one in the north, that's **Ephraim**, they're the main target, but also **Judah**, they were in the south. And God says what am I supposed to do with you two? That phrase looks back at the long-term dimension of their sanctification. Here they are, the nation was brought out of Egypt 1445BC at the Exodus, they went to Mt Sinai and received the law of God for their nation, the Law of Moses. And now here it is 750BC, it's been 700 years and for 700 years God the Holy Spirit has been working with them trying to get

the nation to generate some *chesed* love, some loyalty to God so when the tough times come they can stand up under the pressure and trust God.

But He's obviously frustrated with them. He says what am I going to do, what kind of pressures, what kind of lessons do I bring into your life to get this point across? Why? **For your *chesed* is like a morning cloud And like the dew which goes away early.** And it's a picture that is readily understood by anyone. Just look out on your lawn when the ground cools off during the night, the moisture in the air begins to condense and, if you have a wind, then clouds will form and you'll get this **morning cloud** or fog. If you don't have wind then the water will just settle in little droplets on the grass and you'll get **dew**. But regardless of what the wind's doing you'll get some formation of visible water vapor in the morning, whether it's fog or dew it doesn't make any difference as far as the principle goes. The principle is that it will always burn off. And what is it that burns it off? The heat of the sun. And so what is God saying here? He's saying your *chesed* is just like that morning cloud, apply a little heat and you vaporize. It's the same for a believer who can't stand pressure. He goes around giving his glowing testimony, how great he is and what great spiritual experiences he had but when it comes to the day in, day out living the Christian life he can't make it. Just as soon as a little pressure comes on he disappears, he evaporates.

So you can see God responds to this. For 700 years He's been working with the nation to develop some substance in them, some national character and all He's got is dew. You'd be pretty upset too if you put in all those resources and this is all you got out of it. This is put in there to teach us a lesson. Don't waste your time fooling around in the Christian life looking for some big experience to define your existence. Get with God's program of sanctification and learn loyalty to His word. See, God doesn't like it when believers don't get with His program. God is interested in developing character in you and character in me on His terms. When we don't what is God going to do?

Verse 5 tells us what God is going to do? You've got no character here so watch God's response. The verbs are prophetic perfects, by the way, so they're not past tense, they're future tense so you'll have to correct that translation. Here it is corrected. **Therefore I will hew *them* in pieces by the prophets; I will slay *them* by the words of My mouth;** Now Hosea writes this between 750-721BC so the prophets that ministered in that time were

Isaiah, Amos, Hosea and Micah. Those are the prophets and probably some unnamed others, but they are the one's who used the word of God as a sword to hew the nation into pieces. And you say that's not a very friendly gesture. No, it's not. But that's what God told them to do and that's what they did. They literally went in with the word of God and preached the word of God over and over and over until the nation was so negative in volition to the word of God there was nothing left to do but judge. Now that is one function of the word of God when a people become so negative to the word of God. God will say, alright, keep on preaching the word of God, they're not going to listen to it but I want you to keep on preaching it. Why? To harden them to the point of judgment. See, the word of God is going to win, one way or the other the word of God is going to be victorious. The word of God saves and the word of God judges. And I suggest you get with it and respond to the word of God positively and be saved. But the nation didn't get with it. God says I've worked with you people for 700 years, you haven't learned loyalty to Me, therefore My prophets are going to hew you into pieces with more preaching of the word of God. Now this is the function of the word of God as a sword so we want to develop that idea.

Let's turn to Isa 49:2 to see in fact the word of God is a sword. This prophesied by the prophet Isaiah of the Messiah, "He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a select arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver." And we could go on but the point in the context is that the Messiah, when He comes with the word of God, will convict the world of sin. We have in Isa 49:2 the use of the word of God as a sword to convict the nations.

Now turn to Rev 2:12. Rev 2 is written to the seven churches and in these letters the Lord Jesus Christ is giving reports on the churches. This is one of his functions in the present age, to walk into churches and write up reports as to how they're doing. Verse 12, "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword," that's Jesus Christ, "says this: ¹³I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and

to commit *acts of immorality*. ¹⁵So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.” Now that’s a warning to these believers at the church that if they don’t get this straightened out then a disciplinary stroke is going to be leveled. The word of God serves this function of disciplining believers.

Now Heb 4:12. We read this one every week but let’s go through it again. I can’t figure why believers think the word of God is a flower rather than a sword, but that’s typical mentality, it’s just a pretty sing song. I don’t know where this flower business comes from but I do read of the word of God as a sword. Verse 12, “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” So why do you think the word of God has this function of cutting? Why is it so invasive? To convict us of sin. That’s the point of the author of Hebrews, that’s the point of Hosea. The word of God convicts and so the nation is going to hear the word by the mouth of the prophet and it’s going to go right down in that little heart of theirs and convict and they’re conscience is going to say no and so the prophets will speak more of the word and it will convict and they’re conscience will say no and eventually the conscience is completely turned off. They’ve destroyed it and the only thing left is judgment, end of verse 5, **And the judgments on you are like the light that goes forth**. In other words, that’s the metaphor still of v 4, the dew on the ground and the sun comes up and burns it off, that’s the light, the light is the judgment that’s coming and when it does the nation just disappears.
Disciplinary judgment

Hos 6:6 **For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings**. Now this is a statement made a number of times in the gospels but nobody ever understands it. It can be confusing on the surface. Here’s the issue. Should verse 6 be interpreted as meaning God wants loyalty to Him without the sacrifice or that He wants loyalty before sacrifice? The licentious believer says, aha, here we have it that God was never interested in the legal system of sacrifices and therefore it’s all grace and law has no place whatsoever, it’s just all grace. Now that is a misinterpretation. We know it’s wrongheaded because Leviticus instructed them to sacrifice. So what it’s saying is that loyalty takes precedence over

sacrifice. To see the origin of this expression **I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice** turn to 1 Sam 15.

Now this is when Saul was king. And here the prophet is ordering King Saul in vv 1-9 to go to Holy War against the Amalekites. The Amalekites were a nasty group of people. These people were ruthless; they amounted to a big street gang. And at this point in history God's plan was to exterminate them. Saul is going to be the one called to eliminate them from history. There are certain groups of people, once they go against God to a certain degree, they are garbage. We can't be self-righteous about this; it could happen to us nationally speaking. But God seems to allow a people so much grace and then that is it, period! Here's one of the cases in history. He says in verses 3-4, you go and commit Holy War against them. If you want to read about holy war, the rules of engagement of holy war are given in Deut 20:16-18. The rules of engagement in Holy War were different than non-holy war. There's two sets of military rules given in Deut 20, and the rules of Holy War are total extinction. We covered the moral dilemma of holy war before; how can a loving God ever give the military orders that God gave, to go in to kill every man, woman, child and beast. Why was this total extinction, total genocide? He who reads the heart gives a preliminary viewing of final judgment. The order is given to Saul and he goes to attack, verse 6. And the battle goes on but then verse 8, "And he captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword." So he obeyed *most* of the military order in the engagement proceedings, except he took the king alive. Then verse 9 adds a few other infractions. "But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly; but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly." At verse 10 the word gets to the prophet Samuel, "The word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, ¹¹"I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands." So the Lord is pretty bent that Saul didn't obey orders. Verse 18, Samuel's in the middle of the rebuke, "...the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated.' ¹⁹"Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was evil in the sight of the LORD?" What's the deal Saul, why did you break the chain of command? Verse 20, "Then Saul said to Samuel, "I did obey the voice of the LORD, and went on the

mission on which the LORD sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. ²¹“But the people took *some* of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal.” Ah, so it was partial obedience. Saul did partial obedience; he brings back the good stuff, only the choicest stuff, we’re going to sacrifice it to the Lord, we’re going to give God a present. Verse 22, “Samuel said, “Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,” and that right there is the origin of Hosea’s verbage. Hosea isn’t saying anything new. He’s saying you guys are Saul types. You break the chain of command. You can sacrifice all day long but when the Lord says annihilate that stuff, you didn’t do it and you kept it to sacrifice to Him. Think about what you just did. That stuff is already His, he said destroy it, so don’t try and give it to Him. It’s not yours to give. Get in line, get under His authority, obey. That’s the key issue. Now just to be thorough, look at v 23. I want you to see how serious it is to break rank. Most Christians have it that the really bad sins are the sex sins and the lying sins and all that overt stuff that’s real bad. Look at verse 23, “For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from *being* king.” Now that’s pretty serious. When you rebel, when I rebel against the Lord’s command in the Scripture He says it’s as the sin of sorcery, it’s idolatry. Why? Because we’ve made ourselves bigger than Him. We’ve put our authority above His authority. And if you want to see a real man of God in this passage look down at what Samuel does in verse 32, “Then Samuel said, “Bring me Agag, the king of the Amalekites.” And Agag came to him cheerfully. And Agag said, “Surely the bitterness of death is past.” ³³But Samuel said, “As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women.” And Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the LORD at Gilgal.” Now there’s a powerful believer. He’s got orders from God, he obeys orders.

Back to Hosea 6. Did Israel obey orders? Verse 7, **But like Adam they have transgressed the covenant; There they have dealt treacherously against Me.** Now what’s obvious from this verse is Israel did not obey orders; they did not learn authority orientation; they did not learn loyalty to God. What’s not obvious is exactly what this verse means. There’s a difficulty here in translation. There are three ways you can take this and they hinge on two words **Adam**, *adamah* and **There**, *sam*. Now *adamah* can be one of three

things, it can be the first man, it can be man collective man, mankind in Adam, or it can be a city in the Jordan valley. Verse 8 gets you to tend toward it being a city because it mentions Gilead and verse 9 mentions Shechem and that would probably be the way to go if v 7 is connected to vv 8-11. But if v 7 is connected to vv 4-6 then probably it's not the city but either Adam, the first man or mankind collectively in Adam, both of which are very close ideas. Probably what's being said here is that Israel is like Adam; Israel transgressed the command of God like Adam transgressed the command of God. Both Adam and the nation had the command of God, they knew the command of God and they deliberately violated the command of God. If that's the case then the second word, **There**, *sam*, should be translated "Behold," Behold they have dealt treacherously against Me, so it's an expression of astonishment. Now here's the point of why God is astonished, this is more of the personality of God coming out. Here's the Hebrew people down in Egypt, God multiplies them into a nation, supernaturally, despite Pharaoh's measures to stop Israel's growth God increases their population; population increase in the Bible is always a sign of blessing. God leads them through the wilderness to Mt Sinai. God gives them His law. And He says, will you obey Me, I've done all this for you, I multiplied you, I raised up Moses to deliver you, I led you out by a Mighty hand, I have done all this for you out of My grace. Now will you obey Me? You have this position as a nation, My chosen people, but they didn't appreciate the position God gave them, they didn't appreciate positional truth, they didn't appreciate grace. And they acted **treacherously against** Him. And so God says I'm astonished, after all I've done for you, you would treat Me this way. And it's the same way when you and I violate His commandments in the NT Law of Christ. Every time we violate His commands, every time we break the chain of command it's an act of treachery against Him. Don't think oh, I just did a little thing; it's not a little thing. When you sin God is astonished. He's shocked that after all He has done for you in electing you in Christ, giving you the 30-40 things He instantly gives you at the moment of salvation, all out of His grace and then you turn around and spit on Him, that's treacherous. And God violently responds to you every time you sin.

That's the point you have to get across when you think about Law. We grow up in a society where if you break the law, say your out on HWY290 and you go 85mph, you get pulled over, and you get a ticket. Why? Because you broke statute 101.5.d. You violated this piece of paper. Now we have to get away

from that idea of law, that's not the biblical idea of law, that's the pagan idea of law. The biblical idea of law is that you violated a Person's character. You're attacking God. Law is not just a piece of paper. And until you realize that every time you break the law of Christ you're attacking the Person of Christ you'll never get what law is really all about. Law is about revelation of God's character. The Law expresses who He is. And that's why it says in v 7, **you have dealt treacherously against Me.** It doesn't say you dealt treacherously against a piece of paper. It says you dealt treacherously against Me. Me is a person. And that's the point of biblical law, always behind the law is the Lawgiver, and when we violate the law it's a violation of the Person behind the law.

And now we come to the results in vv 8-11. We've looked at the general principle, the principle being that the nation Israel failed to learn loyalty to God, they had seven centuries to learn it, and they didn't learn it. Now we see the results of not learning it. Verse 8, **Gilead is a city of wrongdoers, Tracked with bloody footprints.** ⁹**And as raiders wait for a man, So a band of priests murder on the way to Shechem; Surely they have committed crime.** Now what that is talking about is two places in the northern kingdom where you have a lot of murder going on. **Gilead**, which isn't really a city, **Gilead** is a region; it's the entire region east of the Jordan River. We'd say it's the entire eastern division of Israel's kingdom. The other place is **Shechem** and it's the big city over on the western side of the Jordan River. So it's representative of the western division of Israel's kingdoms. So the point isn't to say you've got two bad cities, two towns with a lot of blood spilled in them. The point is to say the entire western and eastern halves of Israel are full of murder. So we have God's desire for the nation to learn loyalty to Him, learn loyalty to the word of God in Moses, some of that word is "Thou shalt not murder." Obviously they failed, murder is rampant. They've polluted the soil with blood. Incidentally, you read this throughout the OT, that the blood pollutes the soil as far as God is concerned. And that's why you read that the ground cries out because of the blood and that's the cries of the people whose murders were unsolved. They've never been solved and they polluted the land. And the principal in the NT is that the atonement of Jesus Christ was also made for the soil. Why? Because it's polluted and it has to be restored. The basis of that is the cross of Christ. And that's why when you come to the Millennial Kingdom the earth is restored, He reworks

things and that shows the pollution of this world is being handled by Jesus Christ. Until then the people's blood still cries.

Let's turn to Exod 21:12, a very important passage about life and taking life in the Bible. "He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death. ¹³"But if he did not lie in wait *for him*, but God let *him* fall into his hand, then I will appoint you a place to which he may flee. ¹⁴"If, however, a man acts presumptuously toward his neighbor, so as to kill him craftily, you are to take him *even* from My altar, that he may die." Now this sentence, and I always like this because this occurs right after the Ten Commandments, people say, well, the Bible says thou shalt not kill, therefore no capital punishment and then one chapter later it says capital punishment is authorized for murder, so whatever the Ten Commandments are saying they're not saying no capital punishment. But notice there's something in there in verse 13, that is the case of accidental manslaughter, "I will appoint thee a place where he shall flee," In the OT Law there is an interesting point that comes out of all this that we haven't got time to go into but the point is this, that if you killed someone you were either punished by capital punishment or nothing. You either were capitally punished because you pre-meditated the murder or zero. In other words, a fine is never given for murder in the Bible.

Now why is this; there's a reason. The price of life is infinite and therefore fining someone for murder is pricing the life equal to the fine. So the OT Law, unlike other ancient law codes, where if you killed a person in the lower class and you were upper class, you paid the family a dime and that was it. The Bible doesn't put a monetary value on life, and that's why capital punishment is in the Scripture. The only thing that can pay for a life is another life; and that goes for the most deformed child. The most deformed child is as much in the image of God as you and I are, so don't get this system where we grade every one and separate into strata. There is one strata of the human race, red, yellow, black, white, deformed, sick, healthy, retarded, old young, male, female, we are all equal in the sight of God, we are all equally made in the image of God. There's not a particle of difference. So we have the concept that life is infinitely valuable and cannot be paid for, except by another life.

Now these people in Hos 6:8-9, look at what they're doing. **Gilead is a city of wrongdoers. wrongdoers** is two words in the Hebrew, *paal awen*, the

wrong doers or those who do wrong. That construction in the original indicates a professional occupation. What it's saying is they're professional murderers. People hire them out to murder! This is their vocation; it's how they make a living. One of the greatest misunderstandings about OT Israel I think could be cleared up very easily if we had a time machine and we could go back and get plopped down in their society and hang around for about two weeks. Then we'd see that the holy land wasn't that holy. Verse 8 doesn't say it's holy land it says its **bloody** land. Look at that. Murder was rampant.

Verse 9, and we'll see this brings it a little closer to home, **And as raiders wait for a man, So a band of priests murder on the way to Shechem.** Now what's going on here is you have **Shechem**, and as we said in Exod 21 if there was an accidental manslaughter the man who accidentally killed another man would be sent to a refuge city and as long as he stayed in the refuge city he would be safe. It was a harbor of protection and he could live out his days in the refuge city. Well, **Shechem** was one of the refuge cities. So what's happened is we've had an accidental manslaughter and the man is being taken to **Shechem**, the refuge city, but behind closed doors the family of the man that was killed has plotted to murder him, so they hired out the **priests**, the **priests** of all people, to **murder him on the way to Shechem.** The OT law provided a safe haven for this man who accidentally killed and yet the people said once again, we defy God's authority in the Law and we take the Law into our own hands. What we have in v 9 is pre-meditated murder and this brings us to the principle of 1 John 3:15. What's behind murder? Is it the knife or the gun behind the murder? Absolutely not, that's just an instrument. I can just as well use my fist to murder you. So what's behind a murder? A mind, an intelligence. Pre-meditated murder requires design; it requires careful study of the subject, careful planning and a lot of patience. You've got to have all that together to be successful. And so murder isn't going to go away if we take away guns, guns aren't the problem, people are the problem and here it is in 1 John 3:15. And this was written to believers, the verse doesn't say they don't have eternal life, it says they don't have eternal life abiding in them which is a different concept. Verse 15, "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer;" Now how can John say that? If I hate someone I'm a murderer? Absolutely. Why? Because what is the spirit of hatred? That I wish my brother wasn't there. I murder them in the mental attitude. So a city could be filled with people that have the mental attitude of hatred and it would be just as sinful in God's sight as a city that

literally carried out the mental attitude sin into the overt act. So just because the murder statistics are better for one city than another doesn't mean a thing as far as God's concerned. The mental attitude sins are just as evil. And this is all a working out of their failure to learn loyalty to God. Because if they had learned loyalty to Him they would have the same evaluation of life as Him. They would respect what God said that life is worth. God has put such a price tag on people that the only way it could be illustrated was to have His own Son, Jesus Christ dramatically put to death on the cross for all of our lives, just to make it plain that this is the price tag God has put on every member of the human race.

We're out of time so verse 10, we've seen before the concept: the nation was married to God at Mt Sinai, they were in a contract, they violated the contract and prostituted themselves out to foreign gods, Baal, the Ashtoreth and so forth. And **Judah**, verse 11, don't think I overlook you, you're next in line, **there is a harvest appointed for you**. And the end of verse 11 goes with chapter 7:1 so we'll leave that for next week. But today the failure to meet the aim of sanctification, the failure to learn loyalty to God and the results of that in OT Israel which by way of parallel match that of the believer in the NT Church.

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