

Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas
Fredericksburg Bible Church

107 East Austin

Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

830-997-8834 jthomas@fbgbible.org

C1037 – October 20, 2010 – Micah 3:1-4 – Sins Of Injustice

Tonight we're going to come to chapter 3. We've just concluded the first cycle of cursing and blessing. So tonight we're going to plunge into the second cycle of cursing and blessing so we want to review. Why do we divide Micah into these three cycles? It has to do with a repeated phrase. If you were with us five or six weeks ago we commented that if you study Micah carefully you'll find that this phrase is demarcating cycles of cursing and blessing. The first one is in Micah 1:2. Verse 1 is introductory, but in verse 2 he begins with the phrase, **Hear, O peoples, all of you; Listen, O earth and all it contains,** that word **hear**, *shema*, is the word he uses. It's to grab the attention of the addressees. And the addressees of this address are the peoples of all the earth. And what we said this turns out to be is a summoning of all the pagan nations of the earth to come for jury duty. They're going to enter into the court and hear the case against Samaria and Jerusalem. Those were two capital cities. Samaria was the capital of the northern kingdom, Jerusalem was the capital of the southern kingdom. And the two capital cities were the central places of corruption. Throughout history you will always find that the center of government is the center of corruption and vice. Why? Because Satan is not stupid. Satan therefore centers his activity on the most influential areas and from there it will be disseminated. So today you will find him at work in two areas, primarily, the capital of a nation and the universities. Why the universities? Because the universities are where the ideas are passed on to the next generation of political leadership. And so always these two areas have to be watched very closely by the Christian. If you want to know what's next go to the university professor and listen to his worldview. Then you'll know what the worldview of the political leadership will be in the next generation. Take the major universities of the 1960's and 70's and look at the professors. What were they? They were socialists. So what has been the increasing trend in political leadership? Socialism.

Socialism is an idea, ironically, spawned from a mishandling of the Book of Daniel. It came down through the philosopher George Hegel and worked its way into the politics of Karl Marx. It's a distorted view of Daniel, it envisions a great future on the horizon, a utopia, just like Daniel, but the means of bringing in that utopia is the works of man; man by revolution will bring in a new world order. And if you teach this for a few generations in the university, if you sow the seed, you get the plants. And we have to watch the plants grow. Satan is clever, he's the prince of the power of the air and what is the air but the place where all the ideas float around and infect. So Satan majors on corrupting the ideas of man in the university and it's by this mechanism that he rules the world. Always the ideas are the most subversive evil. It's not in what most people think is the evil; the homosexuality, the murder, the theft, those are evil, no question about it, but they are coming out of theologically evil ideas. And that's what we learned with chapter 1-2, chapter 1 describes the theological evil that was being disseminated through the two capital cities, it was the evil of idolatry. The consequence was destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem. Samaria is described in 1:2-8 and Jerusalem is described in 1:9-15. Then chapter 2:1-11 describes the social evil that keeps breaking out of the theological evil, the sins of theft. The leadership were stealing property from the average citizen, utilizing the powers of eminent domain which do not rightly belong to man and for that God, who has the rights of eminent domain, was going to take their property and give it to the Assyrians and Babylonians. It was national disaster on the horizon. But finally, in 2:12-13 there is hope for the nation Israel. Finally, at the end of this dark tunnel of cursing there is blessing because they will believe in their Messiah, Jesus; finally they are going to heed His word and flee to the wilderness fortress of Petra. Finally they are going to nationally confess their national sin of crucifying Him and finally He is going to return to earth, destroy the armies of Anti-Christ and lead the remnant of believing Israel up to Jerusalem and issue in the Millennial Kingdom. That's the first cursing-blessing cycle.

The thing to learn is the relationship of theological evil to social evil. Theological evil is the root, social evil is the fruit. Micah 1 describes the theological evil of idolatry, a violation of the first and greatest commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength" and in chapter 2 the social evil that naturally follows, a violation of the second greatest commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Always in this order, theological evil first, social evil second, theological evil the root, social evil the fruit. So the corrective to social evil is what? Do you go on a crusade against abortion? It's not wrong to go on a crusade against abortion. But how do you maximize your effectiveness? You don't go picketing against abortion, you solve the underlying theological problem, get people straightened out theologically. And to do that takes three basic steps. First, you have to proclaim the gospel clearly so people can believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Without gospel proclamation all you can do is try to reform people, try to better society. The second thing you have to do, once you've proclaimed the gospel and people have believed is the new believers have to be trained in the truth. You can be a believer and be an idiot, theologically speaking. And usually that's the case because pastors and teachers are not training people in the truth. Just because someone's a believer don't think they're full of truth and lovers of truth. Being full of the truth comes with training, years of training in the Scriptures. That's why Paul says, pray that men come to salvation *and* to a knowledge of the truth. He didn't just say just pray for their salvation, he said pray that they will come to a knowledge of the truth. So first salvation, then training. Finally, the third thing that has to happen is dissemination. It has to go out from you, from your marriage, from your family into surrounding society. And after several generations of faithfully doing this the social evil will start to fade out because the theological evil is fading out. But you can't solve the social evils just by running around involving yourself in crusade after crusade. People have to get properly oriented to God.

Now tonight we come to chapter 3 and chapter 3 introduces us to the second cycle of cursing-blessing. So we're back to cursing and verse 1 tips us off to the second cycle with the same words that introduced the first cycle. **And I said, "Hear now, heads of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel.** Again, this is to grab our attention. The difference here is that in the first cycle it was to grab the attention of the "nations," commanding them to **hear**, now it's a command to the **heads of Jacob And rulers of Israel to hear.** Who are the **heads** and the **rulers**? They're obviously involved in the leadership but who are they? Turn to Exod 18:25. In the Book of Exodus a nation is born. God says in Hosea 11:1, "Out of Egypt I called My son." Egypt being the womb out of which the son Israel was born. Before that you have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jacob has 12 sons and they go down to Egypt. They were just a family of 70 people but they grew over 400 years in Egypt to

over 2 million and came out a nation. Now with a new nation you need two things, probably more but just two are highlighted tonight. You need law and you need leadership. What happens if you don't have law? You have chaos, society falls into disarray, you have no stability in life. So you need law to govern. They're going to get their Law at Mt Sinai. The Law is the Constitution of the nation Israel. And Exod 20, the Ten Commandments is the basis of Israel's Constitution. All the other laws that follow stem from those Ten Commandments. Second you need leadership. You can put a law out there but if there's no one to enforce the law, if there's no one to judge according to the law then again you'll have chaos. So they had Moses. But can Moses govern the problems of 2 million people? Moses can't govern the problems of 2,000 people. Moses is just one man. He's limited. So Moses is going to have to appoint other leaders.

Now all of this presupposes the 4th divine institution. What's the 4th divine institution? Human government. Human's governing over other humans. Has the human race always had human government? When was the first human government given? It surprises many people to know that for the first 1600 years of world history there was no human government. At Creation you don't see human government instituted. Who's the government? God is the government. "In the day you eat of it you shall surely die." God ruled directly over human affairs. Then at the Fall did God institute human government? We have evidence that a government was instituted but not a human government. What's the evidence in Genesis 3 of government? God put two cherubim at the entrance to the garden. And what were they holding? The sword. That's the first use of "sword" in the Bible and always and forever afterwards in Scripture the "sword" signifies a creature government. Whoever has the sword has the right to govern. It's a symbol of capital punishment. People don't like capital punishment but capital punishment is the fundamental basis of government. If a government does not have the right to capitally punish its citizens then it basically cannot control society. So the "sword" in Scripture is linked in with government and the right to take life as fundamental. And in Gen 3 who has the power of the "sword?" Cherubim, the angels. So we had an angelic government. Angels ruling over men from the Fall down to the time of the Flood, that's 1600 years. Men did not have the right to judge other men. Men did not have the right to execute other men. Men did not have the right to make laws. All of that was in the hands of the angels. Now that arrangement failed and so we come to a new

arrangement after the Flood. So let's look at it, Gen 9. In vv 1-4 we have the new diet for man, man can now eat meat. Man didn't eat meat for the first 1600 years of world history, man was vegetarian, all the nutrients man needed in the pre-Flood world were available through vegetation. After the Flood the environment changed and the food was depleted so man needed meat. We don't know all the details of why but we speculate that the nutritional value of food was so depleted that we now need meat protein. And in verse 5, here's the institution of human government. "Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from *every* man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man." There's the basic right of capital punishment. If a man murders a man then that man must be killed. Verse 6, "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed," never had man had this right before, this basic right of government. Now people don't like capital punishment for a number of reasons. Some people don't like it because it's misapplied. There are innocent people that get charged with a capital crime and then they're executed and ten years later they turn up the evidence that they were innocent and because of a failure in the justice system people say we ought to do away with capital punishment all together. Now in one sense they're right, there are flaws in the justice system. We're not denying that. But should we throw out the whole thing just because we make mistakes? Maybe we ought to get rid of policemen because they give the wrong car a ticket every once in awhile. You can't throw the baby out with the bathwater or you'll have to overthrow every authority in society and then you're the authority and we have to overthrow you. So it's a self-refuting idea. Besides, the Lord Jesus was executed by a failure in the justice system wasn't He? Jesus Christ was innocent and yet Jesus Christ came under a misapplication of Gen 9:6. Did God know that would happen? Absolutely. He put the sword in the hands of men knowing that through a misapplication of it would be the crucifixion of His own Son and salvation for the world. How wonderful is our God. He takes evil and uses it for good. Don't ever question that principle because you can't see as far as God can see. God says I'm for capital punishment, verse 6, "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed. For in the image of God He made man." Why capital punishment? Because man is made in God's image. No other creature is made in God's image. Only man. Man is the highest revelation of God, Jesus Christ *par excellence*. So to destroy a man is to destroy God's image. And God says, we can't have people in My image running around destroying other people in

My image, therefore to stop it, the man in My image who does so must be destroyed.

So the 4th divine institution of human government is back of everything we say tonight. Now come to Exod 18:25 again. Moses is appointing human leaders, the **heads**, the **rulers**.ⁱ He's inside of the 4th divine institution. It says, "Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. ²⁶They judged the people at all times;" Now notice verse 26, they judged the people at all times. What's their function? Their function is to judge, this is the justice branch of the new nation being established. What did we say every nation must have? You have to have law and leadership. So here's the judicial leadership. And they were referred to as the **heads**. Why do you think they used the term **heads** for the justice department? It's a metaphor. What's the head on the human body? It's the part that directs the body. It decides which way the body goes. Now it's very interesting that the OT uses this terminology of the justice department. They recognized how critically important the justice branch of government was, to the point they referred to it as the **head**, inferring that the direction the justice department took would direct the whole nation down a certain track. It's interesting that, as biblical as the writers of our Constitution were, and they were very biblical, when they separated the powers of government into three branches; legislative, executive and judicial, that they wrote far less about the limitations of the judicial branch than they did the legislative or executive. For example, you'll notice with the judiciary in our country that the justices are not elected for terms, they're appointed for life! Once they get on the bench they're there for life. We can't vote them out. But the legislative and executive we can vote out. Now why is this difference in our Constitution? It's because our founding fathers considered the judiciary the least dangerous branch of government. And yet the OT referred to this branch of government as the **head**, that this branch had the power to direct the entire course of a nation! And that's precisely what has happened in our country and it's precisely what happened in OT Israel. The judicial branch became the branch of government that most threatened liberty.

Now let's think about this third branch of government, the judiciary. Let's look at their function and role in the nation Israel. First, if you're going to judge matters what's the first thing you have to have? An external, agreed

upon standard by which to judge. Why do we say external? You may have your conscience but then comes the problem of I have mine and what if our consciences don't agree? So you have to have an external standard. If you don't have an external standard by which to judge how are you going to judge something? The idea of judgment being that you have an issue and you want to be able to cut it in half, be able to discern between two ideas. But how do you do that if you don't have an agreed upon standard external to yourself? So a corollary to judging is there must be an external, agreed upon standard by which to judge.

Second point, where did these judges get the external standard? We already said God is going to give the standard at Mt Sinai. We call it the Mosaic Law but we don't mean that it originated with Moses. Moses was the one up on Mt Sinai when the Law was given but God gave the Law. The Mosaic Law is unique in that it did not originate with man. It's the only Constitution ever written that wasn't written by man, it was written by God.ⁱⁱ That ought to tell us it's a very important document. It's revelatory of God's character. It's revelatory of God's thinking on matters. So we might want to pay attention to it. There just might be some wisdom in the OT laws. And the Reformers and Puritans and many of the founders of our country recognized the wisdom in Israel's Constitution and built much of it into our Constitution.

Now the third thing: if first the judges have to have an external, agreed upon standard by which to judge and God provided that at Mt Sinai what's the third thing we have to have? Judges who know the law. If they don't know the law they're going to wind up legislating from the bench and generating legislation isn't the job of the justice department, it's the job of the legislative department. So they're going to have to go to law school and study their constitution, which is God's word, to the point that they understand His law and how one law relates to another law so they don't distort justice. So these guys were like law students today. They're supposed to go in and study the Constitution and then the cases and decisions that followed so they can become experts on deciding these kinds of questions and administering justice. Today I'm told they don't study the Constitution in American Law schools and it's to our great detriment. So a primary role or function of the **heads** and **rulers** of Israel is to study and train in their Constitution.

The fourth thing is the actual administration of justice in the courtroom. So turn to Deuteronomy 1:15, there's some instruction here to the justice department. It came through Moses. He says, "So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and appointed them heads over you, leaders of thousands and of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and officers for your tribes. ¹⁶"Then I charged your judges at that time, saying, 'Hear *the cases* between your fellow countrymen, and judge righteously between a man and his fellow countryman, or the alien who is with him. ¹⁷'You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.'" Notice verse 17, there's a tendency among man, because man is fallen, to show partiality in judgment. And Moses warned them, there are men that are low on the totem pole in society and there are men who are high on the totem pole in society; don't let that get in the way of your judgment. Judge strictly according to the standard of the Mosaic Law code given by God at Mount Sinai. Forget the men involved, what are the issues? That's why it says in verse 17, "for the judgment is God's," the judge was merely looked upon as administering God's judgment. He was not inventing a judgment, he was not inventing a law and if he showed partiality to, say an important man in society, then what would he have done? He would have legislated from the bench. And he says, don't do that, the judgment is not yours, "the judgment is God's." When a man legislates from the bench the judgment has become man's and not God's. God says don't do that, you just administer justice, don't take the reigns.

Now this brings us to the fifth point about the justice system in the OT and for this point let's turn to Ps 82. If a judge showed partiality, say he showed favoritism to the big businessman and he didn't give a fair trial to an orphan or a widow, why was that such a big deal? What would distorting justice over and over ultimately cause in society? Notice verse 1 because this is what was going on and the Psalmist is going to tell us the ultimate reason this was so destructive, "God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers. ²How long will you judge unjustly And show partiality to the wicked? Selah." See, it was going on, all the injustice in the courts. Verse 3 he commands, "Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute. ⁴Rescue the weak and needy; Deliver *them* out of the hand of the wicked." Over and over he's saying there's a problem in your courts that you need to correct. Administer justice in the courts according to My standard

in the word of God. But they were distorting it. Now look at the consequences in verse 5, “They do not know nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness;” Notice that expression, they do not understand; They walk about in darkness. What’s that a description of? A blind person. And who’s blind? Everybody who doesn’t get justice and everybody who distorts justice. When justice is distorted a whole society will go blind. It destroys the ability to see issues correctly. Let’s see why this is so terrible. What have we said so far? We said God is the source of the law, men are the judges; they’re to judge according to the law. So let’s say a judge is paid off, the law warned against this, the law said that if you take a bribe it distorts justice and blinds people. What does it blind people to? The nature of the person who wrote the Law. See where this is headed? If you cut people off from the true intent of the law you cut people off from the person who wrote the Law. You keep people away from who God is. This is what’s so fatal about distorting justice in the OT. The judge who distorted justice not only distorted justice, he also distorted the picture of God who authored the justice. He kept people away from God. That’s what Jesus said in the NT to the rulers. He said it’s the blind leading the blind around here! What’s wrong with you people. You built all your traditions and by doing that you nullified the law and you kept people from God. He was pretty upset about it. And it’s the same thing today when you have a pastor or teacher and he gets up and he preaches his sermon and in the sermon he misrepresents God’s word. What has he just done? He hasn’t just misrepresented God’s word, he’s misrepresented God Himself. That’s why it’s such a serious task to teach the word of God. And that’s why you ought to always check out what I say.

That’s the fifth point we’re making here and that is if the judges did not rule justly, according to the standard given by God then it blinded people to who God is. So the law had this revelatory function of showing the lawgiver’s character and they were cutting that off. Look at Micah 3.

In verse 1 you’ll see this very thing is the issue. **And I said, “Hear now, heads of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know justice?”** What did we say about the judges? They were to study the law; they were to **know justice**, that verb means “to be familiar with” the law and how to administer it justly. That’s not the easiest thing because the word of God in the Law was a large corpus of literature and you have to know how each part relates to every other part. These cases can sometimes get

hairy. So they were to know that law, to **know justice**. But observe verse 2, **You who hate good and love evil**. Of all the people in society who should love good and hate evil you'd think it would be the people in the justice department. Yet it was just the opposite. Why would you go into a field of justice to deliberately distort justice? Yet that's what they do! They **hate the good and love the evil**. I will never understand why in our legal system, if you have a client who comes to you and hires you to be his attorney and defend him in a court of law and in the process of listening to the client he reveals that he's guilty of the crime, why you would ever get up and defend that criminal? The only way you can do that is if you **hate good and love evil**. Now they say, oh, you're supposed to give everyone a fair trial. Excuse me but what do you mean by fair? How is deliberately perverting justice fair? I don't think that's justice. If someone broke the law they should come under the penalty of the law. And Lord knows there's a lot of perversion of justice going on in our society.

Now if the **good** is the Mosaic Law, which it is, it's the standard by which they're to judge in the courtroom and if they hate it then what do they ultimately hate? They hate the word of God. And we know they did. In Jeremiah's day the rulers ripped the word of God into tiny pieces and threw it in the fire (Jer 36). They burned the word of God. That's how much they hated the word of God. In Amos' day they outlawed the word of God. They filed it under a hate crimes bill and said if you bring the word of God around here you'll be banished (Amos 7:12-13). There was no lack of hate for the word of God in ancient times. In modern times the story is no different. At the time leading up to the Reformation, in the 1300-1400's the word of God was forbidden to be in any other language than Latin. When William Tyndale's English Bible was published in 1536 it was a forbidden book. Why? Because they didn't want people to have the word of God in a language they could read. It was hated. And today in America the word of God is hated. You know of the hate crimes bill that's been passed through the Senate, I think it was attached to some other bill. Now if you say homosexuality is a sin like murder or lying then you just might be thrown in jail. But if you don't say homosexuality is a sin then you're loving evil and hating good, you're against God. Now who would you rather be against, men who classify the word of God as hate literature or God who says "let God be found true and every man a liar?" It may cost you a lot but do you love the Lord your God? Or do you love men who hate God, who want Him out of their thinking, whom God gave over

to a depraved mind, who are filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossips, slanderers, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.” (Rom 1:28-32). There are only two sides here. And there’s no middle ground. Either God is ultimate and we love Him or man is ultimate and we love him. Are we going to love God, the good or are we going to love man, the evil. The men in Micah 3:2 loved evil. Look what they did at the end of verse 2.

**Who tear off their skin from them And their flesh from their bones,
³Who eat the flesh of my people, Strip off their skin from them, Break
their bones And chop *them* up as for the pot And as meat in a kettle.**

This is what a corrupt justice department does to people, they treat them like animals. If you’re a hunter you know what verse 2 is a description of. It’s field dressing an animal. You tear off their skin from the flesh and then you tear the flesh off the bone and then you go cut it up and throw it in the kettle and have dinner. That’s a picture of what the justice department does to people when it starts legislating from the bench. We don’t have to go far to see this in our own country. Go to Roe v Wade in 1973 where abortion was legalized. They made mincemeat out of 50 million babies. 50 million. That sounds a little bit like verse 3 doesn’t it? Strip off their skin, break their bones, chop them up as meat in a kettle. Yeah, that’s what they do to babies in abortion clinics. It’s a fine description. Suck them out of mommy into a pile of pureed remains, and then you stand there and stare at body parts, tiny hands and feet, they account for all of them and then send the tissue off for scientific experiments. That’s what the elite judges of society did by a decision based on positivistic law. That’s where the evil is, in the philosophy of law undergirding the decision. The idea of positivistic law is that the judges are the elite of society, they’re so great intellectually that they can get in every American’s brain and know what they want and considering that they say we should legislate from the bench to make laws that most people want, this is a democracy. That’s what they were doing in Roe v Wade. They were trying to bring about the next stage in human evolution. Man is progressively moving toward higher and higher ideals. And the judges are key to this progress. So they make decisions that move us forward in the upward development of

man. Now we have a superior ethic. Friend they're blind. And we have to live in the wake of this disaster. We have blind people legislating from the bench. We have people who hate good and love evil. And they rule society, the Supreme Court in this country has become an oligarchy. Oligarchy meaning "rule by a few" and there are a few who sit on that bench who rule. And you can't vote them out this November, uh, uh, they're appointed for life! And that's what's so frustrating. They're the heads, they're directing the course of our country just as these judges did in Israel. And they're making mincemeat out of people. And if you don't think this is the issue just wait till the next Supreme Court appointment. When they have the hearings they'll always ask, always, do you think Roe v Wade was decided correctly? That is always the issue because that decision tells everybody your legal philosophy. Do you believe in legislating from the bench to bring in a progressive society in the upward development of humanity or do you believe in the stagnant constitutional law and the principles this country was founded on? These Israeli judges were the progressives, they didn't believe the Mosaic Constitution, they hated it, they ripped it to shreds on a daily basis, just like many Supreme Court justices do in our courts on a daily basis, they hate the Constitution.

Now verse 4, **Then they will cry out to the LORD**, this is the judges. When are they going to cry out to the Lord? When the whole system begins to cave in, when the whole society decays into total chaos and the military has been defeated and the enemy is within the gates, **Then they will cry out to the LORD But He will not answer them. Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time Because they have practiced evil deeds.** In other words, here come the Assyrians, 722BC, here come the Babylonians, 586BC, and when the whole society begins to crumble, when they're wealth, their homes, their luxury items are being destroyed and the enemy is making mincemeat out of them, because the Assyrians literally did peel the flesh off your body, they did it with knives and they did it while you were alive. And so what they did to the people through the justice department will now be done to them by their enemies. And when it's happening **Then they will cry out to the LORD, But He will not answer them.** This is unanswered prayer. Why isn't the Lord going to answer them? They're remorseful, they're having a big cry session, why won't the Lord answer them? Because it's all a big temper tantrum. That's all it is. They're having a pity party because poor me, I've lost everything, I've lost my wealth, I've lost my house, I've lost my

family, waa, waa, waa. It's just a big temper tantrum. There's no genuine repentance here. There's remorse, yes, but it's remorse for the wrong thing! They should have been remorseful for the injustice they caused in their society, for failing miserably to lead the nation in the proper direction, in accordance with the Mosaic Constitution, to give justice to the feeble and righteousness to the destitute. But no, it's all selfish remorse. So no, LORD's not going to **answer them**.

Now this is what I mean when we talk about the difference between someone who is like David and commits one or two sins versus someone like Saul who has a whole pile of sins. David and Saul are contrasted in the Scriptures. David got with the program and when he realized his sin he said, Lord, against you and you only have I sinned. He didn't say, Lord, I've lost everything and my reputation in society is shot and Lord, please restore me. He had lost his reputation in society but that wasn't the focus. The focus was against you Lord, I've sinned, and against you only. Until we come to that point we are just wasting our breath and tears. The Lord's not interested in a big temper tantrum. The Lord is interested in us facing up to Him, turning to Him in genuine repentance over violating His word. Now what happens with a person like Saul or the nation at this time is they've sinned and not confessed and sinned and not confessed and sinned and not confessed and it has gone on and on until it has developed into a habitual sin pattern. All the verbs of verse 2 are habitual. They continually hated good and loved evil, it was habitual. And once these patterns get embedded it's almost impossible for a person to confess their sin. They're trying to confess their sin in verse 4, they're crying out to the Lord but it's all about themselves. There's no genuine repentance. They're not at all interested in studying the word of God and correcting the justice system. They could care less about that. And it just shows you, you can have a believer who puts on a big show, has a big falling out, his whole world falls in around him and suddenly it's God and Jesus and all the rest of it and oh, they're coming back to God and they're serious this time and did you see how sincere they were and how broken they were and yet in most cases it's nothing more than verse 4, it's a big fake. I'm not saying it's never genuine, I'm just saying that when a person has been running from God so long and they're in habitual sin pattern about 95% of the time they're not really interested in coming back to God. They're interested maybe in you showing them pity, they're interested in a handout, they're interested in few

good showings, but they're not interested in getting back into fellowship and studying the word of God. That's the last thing on these people's minds.

So instead of answering them what is the Lord going to do? **Instead He will hide His face from them at that time Because they have practiced evil deeds.** The Lord doesn't want to look at them. The Lord doesn't enjoy watching His people get turned into mincemeat by the enemy. But they hid their face from the afflicted and destitute and widowed and fatherless so the Lord will Hide His face from them when they come under affliction. It's divine judgment and it's not pleasant.

Finally, what can we learn from this? Don't let your sin progress this far. We each have sin patterns in our families and we need to isolate them, understand them and realize that our children are going to tend in that direction. So you're going to want to detect those early on and point them out, help your kids get straightened out. This is why it's good to know your family history, it can help you detect these things before they get going. Once they get going they're hard to stop and most of the habitual sin patterns we have such a problem with in later life started when we were kids or teenagers.

The second thing we can learn is that we have to manage our sin. Don't sin and sin and sin without confessing. Sin blinds the eyes and darkens the mind, it destroys your ability to perceive God correctly and then you get into these habitual sin patterns that are so hard to get out of. So if you sin, and we shouldn't sin, Christ came to die for our sin, but if we do we should confess it. Remember, in confession you may have done something that involved your wife, your kids, your whole family, your church, but when you confess, you're not confessing that you sinned against them. You're confessing that you sinned against God. You violated His standards. We're not minimizing the effects on them; we're just saying that genuine confession is directed toward God not man and that has to be our focus if we're really going to get restored.

¹ The heads and rulers are described in Deuteronomy 20:9 as military personnel, high ranking officers in the military. In first Chronicles 24:31 the heads are the priestly families. In first Kings 8:1, the heads are the elderly men of the various families. In second Kings 25:18 the head is the chief priest.

ii There are four sources of law as far as I'm aware. First, God can be the source of law, directly. Meaning God speaks His will into history in human language which is captured by man. The example is the Mosaic Law given on Mt Sinai. In that case we have Law coming out of His attribute of holiness. Justice and righteousness are therefore derivative of His attribute of holiness. Righteousness being the standard of His character and justice being the application of that standard. So here we have one example in history, the Mosaic Law is the only Law that God ever gave directly into history in human language. Second, God as the source of law, but this time indirectly. In other words men look at the OT Mosaic Law that God gave directly and they base their laws on these laws, making it indirect. So they recognize the wisdom of God's law and they're going to bring that wisdom over into the law their writing. So the source here is ultimately God, but it's indirect because God isn't speaking another law into history, man is just taking God's law and using it as a base. An example of this is the U.S. Constitution because the writers of that document were consciously basing it on the Mosaic Law. All the legal textbooks of the late 1700's have in the margins references to the OT Law. The third source of law is man. Man can generate law out of human reason and experience. In this case we're rejecting God as the source of law and turning to man as ultimate. As an example we have France. France in the 1700's was dominated by Voltaire and the men of the Enlightenment. They started with man. They published a document called the Rights of Man. It sounds fine but it had no base. The supreme being was the sovereignty of the nation, the general will of the people. So man replaced God as supreme. To demonstrate this they put a pretty girl on their shoulders and marched her right into the church of Notre Dame proclaiming her as the 'goddess of reason.' That's 1789, the result of which was a bloodbath. Finally, the fourth source of law is nature. In this case what happens in nature is right. And our sense of justice needs to be conformed to nature. If I see a baby slaughtered and I think that's wrong what's really wrong is the way I'm thinking. So I need to change the way I think so that whatever happens in nature is by definition right. I know of no other source of law than these four; God directly, God indirectly, man or nature, those are the options.

[Back To The Top](#)

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2010