

Amos 1:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border:

Analysis

Amos addresses Ammon: "Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border." Ammon's atrocity—killing pregnant women to expand territory—demonstrates war's brutality and human depravity apart from divine grace. The phrase "ripped up" describes horrific violence against the most vulnerable. This crime combined several evils: murder, violence against women and children, and territorial greed. God's judgment falls because He values life from conception (Psalm 139:13-16, Jeremiah 1:5, Luke 1:41-44). The Reformed doctrine of total depravity doesn't mean all people are maximally evil but that sin affects every aspect of human nature, making us capable of horrific evil apart from restraining grace.

Historical Context

Ammon, descendants of Lot through incest (Genesis 19:30-38), frequently warred with Israel. The referenced atrocity likely occurred during border conflicts in Gilead (Transjordan). Ancient Near Eastern warfare often targeted civilians deliberately—genocide, rape, and brutality were commonplace. God's judgment on

such atrocities demonstrates His universal moral law and compassion for victims, regardless of ethnicity.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's condemnation of killing unborn children inform Christian pro-life engagement?
2. What does Ammon's judgment teach about God's view of violence against vulnerable populations?

Interlinear Text

כֹּה	אָמַר	יְהוָה	עַל	שְׁלֹשָׁה	פְּשָׁעֵי י	בְּנֵי
H3541	Thus saith	the LORD	H5921	For three	transgressions	of the children
	H559	H3068		H7969	H6588	H1121
עַמּוֹן	וְעַל	אַרְבָּעָה	לֹא	אֲשִׁיבֵנּוּ	עַל	
of Ammon	H5921	and for four	H3808	I will not turn away	H5921	
H5983		H702		H7725		
		בְּקֶעֱם		הָרִוּת	הַגִּלְעָד	
		the punishment thereof because they have ripped up		the women with child	of Gilead	
		H1234		H2030	H1568	
לְמַעַן	הִרְחִיב	יְהוָה	אֶת	גְּבוּלָם:		
H4616	that they might enlarge	H853	their border	H1366		
	H7337					

Additional Cross-References

Hosea 13:16 (Parallel theme): Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.

Isaiah 5:8 (Parallel theme): Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!

Ezekiel 35:10 (References Lord): Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the LORD was there:

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