

Hosea 11:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.

Analysis

Calling the wayward: 'As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.' The more prophets called (קְרָאוּ לָהֶם, qare'u lahem), the more they departed (הַלְכוּ מִפְנֵיכֶם, halkhu mippneihem—literally 'went from their faces'). They sacrificed to Ba'alim (בָּאֲלִים, Ba'alm, Baals) and burned incense to Pesilim (פְּסִילִים, pesilim, graven images). This demonstrates perverse response: prophetic warnings producing hardened defiance rather than repentance. The phenomenon of hardening appears throughout Scripture (Pharaoh, Israelites). Only Spirit-regeneration produces soft, responsive hearts (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

Historical Context

Despite continuous prophetic ministry (Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Micah), northern Israel persisted in Baal worship. The 'calling' describes prophetic proclamation urging return to YHWH. The response: deliberate turning away—not ignorance but willful rebellion. Baal worship, Canaanite fertility religion, proved persistently attractive despite prophetic condemnation. Archaeological evidence shows Baal cult objects widespread in 8th century Israel. This demonstrates that hearing truth doesn't guarantee receiving truth—hardened hearts resist even clearest proclamation. Jesus encountered similar response: teaching Truth yet rejected (John 8:40-47).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Why does repeated calling sometimes produce hardened resistance rather than responsive repentance?
2. What does this verse teach about human responsibility despite divine calling —that hearing truth doesn't remove accountability for rejecting it?

Interlinear Text

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| לְבָעֵל יְמִינֵה מִפְנִימֵה וְקָרְאָה |
| As they called | H0 | H3651 | them so they went | from them | unto Baalim |
| H7121 | | | H1980 | H6440 | H1168 |
| they sacrificed | to graven images | and burned incense | | | |
| H2076 | H6456 | H6999 | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 18:15 (Parallel theme): Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up;

Hosea 2:13 (Parallel theme): And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgat me, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 65:7 (Parallel theme): Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and

blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

Hosea 11:7 (Parallel theme): And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him.

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