

Hosea 13:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.

Analysis

Sin multiplied, idols kissing calves: 'And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.' Sin intensifies: יוֹסִיפוּ לַחַטֹּא (yosifu lachato, they add to sin). They make מַסֵּכָה (massekah, molten images) from silver, אֲצַבִּימִ (atsabbim, idols) according to תְּבוּנָתָם (tevu natam, their understanding). The shocking practice: men sacrificing (הַזֹּכֵחַ אָדָם, hazovchai adam) kiss אֲגָלִים (agalim, calves). This demonstrates progressive corruption: multiplying sin, self-designed worship, absurd rituals (humans kissing animal idols). Only Christ ends idolatry, directing worship to Father in truth (John 4:23-24).

Historical Context

The molten silver images references both Jeroboam's golden calves (1 Kings 12:28) and proliferating idols people crafted. 'According to their own understanding' describes autonomous worship—designing gods and rituals to suit preferences rather than submitting to divine revelation. The phrase about 'men that sacrifice kissing calves' is variously interpreted: either 'men who sacrifice' kiss calves, or 'those who sacrifice men' kiss calves (suggesting child sacrifice combined with calf worship). Either way, it's absurd: humans (image-bearers) bowing to animal

images. Archaeological finds include bull iconography and molten metal idols from this period. This demonstrates worship corruption: creating convenient gods rather than serving the true God.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does making idols 'according to their own understanding' demonstrate autonomous rebellion rather than revealed worship?
2. What does humans kissing calf idols reveal about how far idolatry inverts proper order (Creator worshiped by creation)?

Interlinear Text

וְעַתָּה הִן H6258	יוֹסֵף כֹּה more and more H3254	לְחַטֹּא א And now they sin H2398	וַיַּעַשׂ ו and have made H6213	לָהֶם H0
מַסֵּכֵי ה them molten images H4541	מִכֶּסֶף מ of their silver H3701	כְּתוּבוֹנָם according to their own understanding H8394	עֲצֵב יִם and idols H6091	
מִעֲשֵׂה ה all of it the work H4639	חֲרָשׁ יִם of the craftsmen H2796	כָּל ה H3605	לָהֶם H0	הֵם יִם H1992
אָמְרֵי יִם they say H559				
זִבְחֵי י that sacrifice H2076	אֲדָם of them Let the men H120	עֲגֻלֵּי יִם the calves H5695	יִשְׁקֹוּן: kiss H5401	

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 46:6 (Parallel theme): They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship.

1 Kings 19:18 (Parallel theme): Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

Hosea 2:8 (Parallel theme): For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal.

Jeremiah 10:4 (Parallel theme): They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

Romans 11:4 (Parallel theme): But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

