

Psalm 106:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,

Analysis

This verse describes the depths of Israel's idolatrous depravity. 'Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils' refers to child sacrifice to Molech and other Canaanite deities. 'Devils' (shedim, שְׁדִים) means demons or evil spirits, revealing the demonic reality behind idols (1 Corinthians 10:20). Child sacrifice was expressly forbidden (Leviticus 18:21; 20:2-5) and represented the most abhorrent violation of God's law—murdering one's own children to appease false gods. This demonstrates how far covenant-breaking can descend: from tolerating pagans to adopting their practices to murdering innocent children. When God's law is rejected, there's no bottom to human depravity.

Historical Context

Child sacrifice to Molech occurred in the Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) outside Jerusalem (2 Kings 23:10; Jeremiah 7:31; 19:5-6). Kings Ahaz and Manasseh made their sons pass through fire (2 Kings 16:3; 21:6). Josiah's reforms temporarily ended the practice, but it resumed until judgment fell. The horror of child sacrifice reveals how thoroughly Canaanite religion corrupted Israel. Jesus later used Gehenna (same valley, become the garbage dump) as imagery for hell.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does rejecting God's law lead to increasingly horrific evil?
2. What modern practices parallel ancient child sacrifice in sacrificing children for convenience or prosperity?
3. What does the reality of demons behind idols teach about spiritual warfare?

Interlinear Text

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 16:3 (Parallel theme): But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.

2 Kings 17:17 (Evil): And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

Jeremiah 7:31 (Parallel theme): And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.

1 Corinthians 10:20 (Sacrifice): But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

Deuteronomy 32:17 (Sacrifice): They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

Ezekiel 23:37 (Parallel theme): That they have committed adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they committed adultery, and have also

caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass for them through the fire, to devour them.

Isaiah 57:5 (Parallel theme): Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the clifts of the rocks?

Ezekiel 20:26 (Parallel theme): And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the LORD.

Leviticus 17:7 (Sacrifice): And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.

2 Kings 21:6 (Evil): And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

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