

Psalm 106:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

Analysis

This verse expands on child sacrifice's horror. 'They shed innocent blood' emphasizes the victims' innocence. 'Even the blood of their sons and of their daughters' personalizes the tragedy—these were their own children. 'Whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan' identifies the false gods as Canaanite deities like Molech, Baal, and Asherah. 'And the land was polluted with blood' uses chaneph (חַנֵּף), meaning profaned, defiled, or polluted. Bloodshed pollutes land, crying out for justice (Genesis 4:10; Numbers 35:33-34). Israel's land became defiled through murder, especially of innocent children, requiring purging through judgment (exile). Innocent blood demands justice.

Historical Context

Jeremiah denounced child sacrifice, declaring God never commanded it nor did it enter His mind (Jeremiah 7:31; 19:5). The prophets identified it as a primary reason for exile. God's patience endured this abomination for generations before bringing judgment. The pollution of the land parallels how Adam's sin corrupted creation (Genesis 3:17-18; Romans 8:20-22). Only exile and restoration could purge the land's defilement, pointing to Christ's blood that ultimately cleanses from all sin.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 – Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does innocent bloodshed defile a land and cry out for justice?
2. What contemporary shedding of innocent blood pollutes our land?
3. How does Christ's innocent blood shed on the cross cleanse defilement and satisfy justice?

Interlinear Text

בְּנָתִיחָם	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
And shed	blood	innocent	blood	of their sons	and of their daughters
H8210	H1818	H5355	H1818	H1121	H1323
אֲשֶׁר	whom they sacrificed	unto the idols	לְעֵצֶב	כְּתָעֵל	תַּפְתִּיחָן
H834	H2076	H6091	H3667	H2610	H776

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 35:33 (Blood): So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.

Deuteronomy 21:9 (Blood): So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.

Isaiah 24:5 (Parallel theme): The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

Isaiah 26:21 (Blood): For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

Isaiah 1:15 (Blood): And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Jeremiah 2:34 (Blood): Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these.

Ezekiel 22:3 (Blood): Then say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD, The city sheddeth blood in the midst of it, that her time may come, and maketh idols against herself to defile herself.

Ezekiel 7:23 (Blood): Make a chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.

2 Kings 24:4 (Blood): And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the LORD would not pardon.

2 Kings 21:16 (Blood): Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.