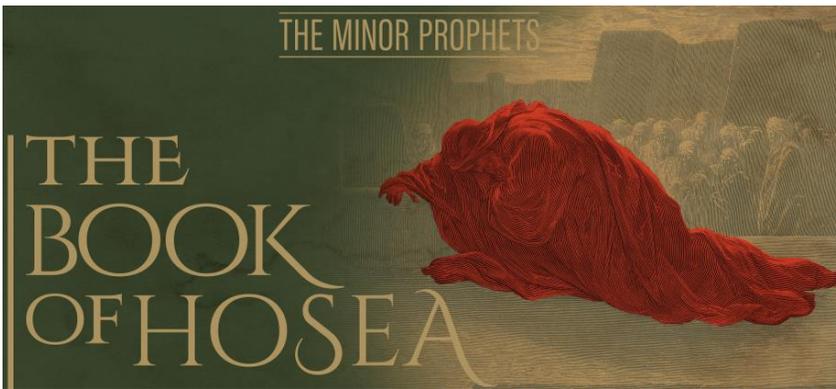


HOSEA

Faithful Love for the Unfaithful Lover

A St. Paul's Lutheran Bible Study



Perhaps there are no greater perversions in the Bible than the perversion in Hosea 13:2. They [Ephraim] were sacrificing live babies to dead idol gods. Yes, they were killing live babies while kissing a golden calf. Hear this again; they were killing human beings – sacrificing their offspring to metal objects from whose lifeless form they also begged help. *(Note: This was not the first time that Israel had done such perverted things. See also: Deut. 12:31, Jeremiah 32:35, and 2 Kings 17:17.)*

But what would possess a group of people to do such perverted things? What rationale would lead someone to think that this was a good idea? Simply stated, it functions like this:

- 1) The parents recognize the harshness of life – that they may not be able to make it if they do not get a good crop/harvest.
- 2) The parents believe that there is a higher power that can give them a good crop. That higher deity was Baal.
- 3) Baal had the capacity to give a good crop if he was well-pleased.
- 4) And so, the parents could give an offering to Baal in exchange for a good crop.
- 5) However, if several crop seasons were bad – meaning that the ongoing offerings were not yielding the desired crops – then the parents had to up the ante. In other words, the price of the offering needed to be updated to get Baal to cough out a greater blessing.

But how does a family/parents get to the point of sacrificing a child? Consider the following rationale on the next page:

HOSEA 13:1-16

Author:

Hosea the Prophet

Date:

740-715 BC

Place:

Israel

Purpose:

Israel was like an unfaithful wife. She was attracted away from her husband (the Lord) to other lovers (idols). In the book of Hosea, the Lord calls Israel back to Himself. It is a call for Israel to forsake her unfaithfulness and be restored in the Lord's faithfulness.

Other:

Hosea is the most quoted book of the Minor Prophets in the New Testament.

- 6) If the family would not get a good crop from Baal, then they all would suffer and die from starvation. Baal would get them all!
- 7) And so, if Baal is eventually going to kill the whole family through starvation via bad crops because he is not entirely pleased, then why not beat Baal to the punch? Why not just get death and suffering out of the way and give up a child to Baal to show the family's ultimate devotion to Baal?
- 8) By giving up their child, the parents would at least feel in control, know that they sacrificed a premium gift to Baal, and then feel as if they saved a portion of their family. It was better to be missing a child with Baal happy than everyone dead because of an angry Baal. And so, sacrificing a child to Baal was not evil but good – it preserved the family and ensured the continuation of good crops.

Does this sound familiar? It should. This same kind of rationale exists in America today with the abortion industry. There is nothing new under the sun. For example, consider the following reasons why abortion is supposedly good:

- 1) An abortion is sometimes necessary to make sure a parent can be the best possible parent to the kids they already have. An abortion is compassionate because it ensures the welfare of the current family.
- 2) It is better to abort a child with complications in the womb than to suffer and die from fetal defects outside the womb.
- 3) Unwanted pregnancies will overload the foster care system, so it is better to abort a child and save them from the suffering of foster care and save the foster care system.
- 4) The physical, mental, and financial cost of having a child is too much for some people; therefore, since having a child will lead to impoverished, marginalized, and vulnerable people, it is better to abort. Abortion is a solution; it keeps the living from being enslaved.

Tragically, there is a direct parallel between the child sacrifices of the Old Testament and the current abortions in America. This is especially true since most abortions are not conducted to 'save the mother's life' or in the 'case of rape.' Instead, most abortions are done with the mindset of 'protecting for physical, economic, and mental security.' In the case of Ephraim and modern-day abortion advocates, the end supposedly justifies the means (*e.g., the wicked rationale believes: something bad becomes good, if it leads to a good future.*)

Where do the scriptures disagree with all the sentiments above? What makes life valuable? Does a cultural norm, a legal decision, a mother's choice, or suitable DNA make life valuable? Does a positive end justify the means of abortion? Tragically, if humanity is in charge of discerning the value of life, well... history has shown us that humanity has failed consistently (*i.e., genocide, abortion, euthanasia, etc.*). Alas, life is not valuable because of the created's opinions and schemes. Instead, life is valuable because the Creator says so. Indeed, life from the womb to the deathbed is valuable, precious, and treasurable to the Lord because every life - no matter how big or small - is one He considered worthwhile to bleed and die for. That is right; only a false god would demand the sacrifice of a created being for its well-being, whereas the True God gives His life for the initiated – the Creator dying for the created.

