

Consider each analogy in this text and what it implies about child sacrifice:

became a snare (106:36)  
shed innocent blood (106:38)  
polluted the land (106:38)  
they became unclean (106:39)  
played the harlot (106:39)

To whom or what does the Psalmist say the children are sacrificed (check a couple different translations of 106:37; cf. Deut 32:17; 1 Cor. 10:20)? What concerns does this raise?

6. God (a) outlawed child sacrifice, making it punishable by death, (b) called it a profane abomination that deserves his direct opposition, (c) exiled Judah, in part, because of this sin; and (d) said the act is done in service to demons, not himself.

Now, let's consider if these texts are relevant to the abortion debate. Let me ask it this way: How confident are you that God makes a distinction between the killing of post-birth children and the preborn? If you believe God sees these acts as utterly different, what leads you to that conclusion?

Or could it be that he sees both acts the same? If so, what would that imply about God's view of abortion?

7. Read 1 Peter 3:18. If indeed abortion is a sin like child sacrifice, how is the substitutionary death of Jesus on behalf of sinners good news?

# Sermon Notes

"Persuading Others on Behalf of the Preborn"  
January 23, 2022

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of 1-23-2022

## Getting Started:

1. Don't assume everyone in your group is uniformly for or against abortion. What would be some basic ground rules for discussion on this topic that would both honor Christ and one another?

## Digging Deeper:

2. God has always been very concerned about how we protect and care for the most vulnerable and weakest among us (Deut 24:17; Ps 82:3-4; Jer 22:16; Jas 1:27). It's not hard to argue that the preborn fit that category, as those who cannot speak for nor defend themselves.

As an example of God's concern for the defenseless, I want us to consider God's revulsion toward ritual child sacrifice in the Old Testament. Some would argue that these texts are irrelevant in the debate over abortion, but let's examine them before we determine that relevance.

Compare the following texts. Take note of the repeated phrases. How does God feel about child sacrifice?

Jeremiah 7:31; 19:4-5; 32:35

Ezekiel 16:20-21

3. Child sacrifice was strictly forbidden by the Mosaic Law. What words or phrases or consequences in these texts reveal God's view of this practice?

Leviticus 18:21; 20:2-5

Deuteronomy 12:31; 18:9-12

4. The Ammonite god Molech (derived from Hebrew *melek*, "king," but substitutes the vowels from *boshet* "shame") is especially associated with the practice of child sacrifice (2 Kings 23:10). At least in some places an image of the god was heated and the bodies of children who had just been slain were placed in its arms. This gives rise to the oft-repeated phrase "made their sons and daughters to pass through the fire" (2 Kings 17:17) or "to burn their sons and daughters in the fire" (Jer. 7:31). Some scholars believe this "pass through fire to Molech" is merely a form of dedication of the child to the deity's service without actually killing the child. But Jeremiah calls such dedications "burnt offerings" (Jer. 19:5); Ezekiel calls the act "slaughter" and says the children were given to the deity as food (Ezek 23:37-39). Hence, these offerings must be considered actual sacrifices.

For thought and discussion: What would motivate this? What do you think the ancient Israelites were hoping to gain in exchange for this costly sacrifice?

5. It was this practice along with other pagan practices that Kings Ahaz and Manasseh (2 Chronicles 28:2-3; 33:6) instituted in Judah that led to Judah's demise (2 Kings 24:3-4). After reading these texts, consider the analysis given in Psalm 106:35-42.