



Child sacrifice

In the world of ancient Israel, child sacrifice was a reality in pagan religion. So much so that God warned his people to have nothing to do with the practice even before they entered the Promised Land (Leviticus 18:21; 20:25).

"Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire!"

(Deuteronomy 18:10)

This horrific practice did, however, take place in Israel in both the northern and southern kingdoms. It was also part of the reason why God sent his people into exile (2 Kings 16:3; 17:17; 21:6; Ezekiel 16:20-21).

While we today can recoil at the thought of taking your own offspring and laying them on the altar of a pagan god such as Molech, the question can be raised whether the danger and temptation to commit child sacrifice is not becoming stronger as our society drifts from its Christian moorings. Children today are also being sacrificed to idols of one's own making.

One can of course point to the radical Muslim practice of honour killing. The January 2012 conviction in a Canadian court of first degree murder for a father and son killing four women in the name of family honour brought this issue to the forefront. Three teenaged girls and the father's first wife were sacrificed for the sake of "honour." It is a reality that honour killings are occurring more often than they are identified in the press as such.

One need not, however, turn to radical Islam for child sacrifice. Western society is practising it much more than is generally acknowledged. The widespread evil of abortion comes to mind.

Abortion

There are parallels between the ancient pagan practice of child sacrifice to the god Molech and the current practice of abortion. In both instances, the child whether before or after birth is offered up to a false god. In the case of abortions today, they are often done on the altar of secular feminist ideals such as having the right to decide what to do with one's own body (denying that the unborn child is a separate human being). Or an abortion can be carried out in submission to the god of convenience; a human sacrifice is made in the name of easy living, for children are often considered a nuisance. According to one study, one fifth of all abortions in the United States were carried out on married women, often at the instigation of the husband.

Another parallel to ancient pagan child sacrifice relates to the fact that abortions are often carried out to hide an unexpected pregnancy due to an illicit promiscuous relationship. In the case of ancient Israel, it is likely that prostitution with Molech's priests formed part of the worship of this god. The fact that child sacrifice is listed with sexual sins in Leviticus 18 can point in this direction. Furthermore, cult prostitution was a widespread feature of pagan ancient near eastern religion. In the case of Molech worship, children born of religious prostitution could have been given to the priests for sacrifice. It would have been a convenient way to dispose of the unwanted fruits of religious sexual relations. So today, not a few engage in extramarital sex without worrying too much about a possible pregnancy since abortion is perceived as a way out.

There is evidence that abortion in ancient times also served as a means of population control. More specifically, among the social elite, child sacrifice helped to keep the size of the family down and so helped consolidate their wealth since it would have to be divided among less people in the next generation. Among the poor, child sacrifice would have helped keep poverty at bay. Today,

abortion is used in China as a means of population control. Enormous pressure, social and financial, is placed on couples who already have a child to abort a subsequent pregnancy. Abortions are frequently forced upon unwilling mothers.

While modern abortions parallel the physical killing of offspring as in ancient child sacrifice, there is another insidious way in which children today are essentially being robbed of their very life. Children's lives are being tampered with where they are often most vulnerable. They are at risk as never before to lose their childhood and sexual innocence.

Robbing children of their innocence and life

The trend in education is to include ever more so-called sex education in the primary grades. In the name of political correctness and inclusiveness, more and more children's books depict homosexual "families" and other gay themes as if this is perfectly normal. As I write this article, Ontario's liberal government is pushing Bill 13 which, in the name of being anti-bullying (a commendable cause), is advancing a radical sex education agenda. If passed in its present form, schools will be forced to promote sexual tolerance by supporting pupils who want to organize activities such as gay-straight clubs.

Force-feeding young children and teens this type of sex education and trying to mould their minds according to the unbiblical and unnatural moral dictates of the gay lobby is at best most confusing for them. Indeed, since children and teens are at a very vulnerable age, it is immoral and irresponsible for educators to teach those in their care to question their sexual or gender identity, as if the gender that God gave them is not a sufficient indicator of what his expectations are.

One's sexual identity is critical to how one views oneself. It lies, in a sense, at the very heart of one's life. As Dr. Miriam Grossman's 2009 book *You're Teaching My Child What?* demonstrates, the last thing children and teens need are what the so-called sex education experts are calling for. At that age they are not ready to logically reason out this area of life. Neurological science has shown that the teen brain cannot make responsible rational decisions when it comes to sexuality since the brain wiring is not yet complete. The poor decisions that teens do make when it comes to sex is not due to lack of information but to lack of judgment. Only time and maturation will solve that limitation. Encouraging sexual freedom and sin puts children's health and possibly lives at risk. Misguided ideology is driving much sex education and not sound science. Grossman makes this clear in her study.

Young lives are being ruined. Children and teens are being robbed of their sexual innocence and the chance to grow up in a normal way, gradually realizing their identity as a boy or girl without being pushed into adult problems. The gay agenda in particular, with its influential input in sex education, is sacrificing children on the altar of their cause and current political correctness. The repercussion for the students can be devastating and lifelong. This is basically a form of child sacrifice. The perverse ideology driving the gay lobby seeks to socially engineer society into new directions, regardless of the price children must pay.

Our children as a living sacrifice

Children are a great gift of God. Their lives are to be protected and nurtured. Christian parents may be God's instruments in giving them life – physical life, but they may also be God's instruments for giving them life in Christ. Believing fathers and mothers may offer their children up to God as a thank offering, just as they offer themselves to God's service.

The Lord our God exhorts us through the Apostle Paul to offer ourselves

"as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will."

(cf. 1 Peter 2:5)

To offer *living* sacrifices – alive to God, that is the holy challenge we face with respect to our children as we live in a neo-pagan culture of death and moral bankruptcy. We may seek to bring up our children in the fear of the Lord, offering them to him who is the Giver of life, for life now and forever. What a wonderful and life-enhancing privilege!

Cornelis Van Dam

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