Child Sacrifice to Yahweh

Presented by Rick Hillegas
A horrible truth
A horrible truth hidden by bad translation
A horrible truth hidden by bad translation & unearthed by archaeology.
Selected Bibliography...

- *Under Every Green Tree* (Susan Ackerman)
- *Late Carthaginian Child Sacrifice* (Shelby Brown)
- *Evolutionary Tanakh* (Rick Hillegas, fogfall.com)
- *Carthage, a History* (Serge Lancel)
- *Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh in Israel* (Saul M. Olyan)
- *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the other Deities in Ancient Israel* (Mark Smith)
Agenda

- Dying for religion
- Technical terms
- Early references
- Cultic law
- Shift in attitude
- End of Judah
- Christian echoes
- Q/A
Dying for Religion (terrorism) (9/11)
Dying for Religion (terrorism) (Anders Breivik)
Dying for Religion (terrorism) (Eric Robert Rudolph)
Dying for Religion (pogroms) (Hindu/Moslem mobs)
Dying for Religion
(pogroms)
(witch lynchings)
Dying for Religion
(crusades)
(Charlemagne)
Dying for Religion
(crusades)
(Innocent III)
Dying for Religion
(crusades)
(30 Years War)
Dying for Religion (human sacrifice) (Celts)
Dying for Religion (human sacrifice) (Mesoamerica)
Dying for Religion
(human sacrifice)
(children)

- Victim CAN'T consent.
Dying for Religion (human sacrifice) (children)

- Victim CAN'T consent.
- 3 year-olds CAN talk.
Dying for Religion
(human sacrifice)
(children)

- Victim CAN'T consent.
- 3 year-olds CAN talk.
- Holocaust (burnt offering).
Dying for Religion (human sacrifice) (children)

- Victim CAN'T consent.
- 3 year-olds CAN talk.
- Holocaust (burnt offering).
- To Yahweh.
Yahweh received a holocaust of children
Yahweh received a holocaust of children who were old enough to ask their parents.
Yahweh received a holocaust of children old enough to ask their parents “Why?”
Yahweh received a holocaust of children who were old enough to ask their parents “Why are you doing this to me?”
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Technical Terms
(Canaanite)
Technical Terms (Canaanite)

- ALL Canaanite-speaking peoples sacrificed children.
Technical Terms
(Canaanite)

- ALL Canaanite-speaking peoples sacrificed children.
- ONLY they did.
Technical Terms (Judean)
Technical Terms
(Molk)
Technical Terms
(Tophet)
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Early References
(KTU 1.119.29-36)

When a stalwart attacks your gate(s), a warrior your walls, your eyes to Baal lift up (saying):

O Baal, will you not drive the stalwart from our gate(s), the warrior from our walls? A bull, O Baal, will we consecrate, a vow, Baal, will we fulfil, a male (?), Baal, will we consecrate, a hitpu- sacrifice, Baal, will we fulfil.

A feast for Baal will we proclaim, to the sanctuary of Baal, will we climb, (on) the path of Baal's temple will we walk.

And Baal will hear your entreaty. He will drive the stalwart from your gate(s), the warrior from your walls.
Early References
(Genesis 22:1-19)

- Victim was a first-born son who talked.
Early References (Genesis 22:1-19)

- Victim was the first-born son who talked.
- Victim carried firewood.
Early References (Genesis 22:1-19)

- Victim was the first-born son who talked.
- Victim carried firewood.
- Priest carried fire & knife.
Early References (Genesis 22:1-19)

- Victim was the first-born son who talked.
- Victim carried firewood.
- Priest carried fire & knife.
- Victim killed by knife.
Early References
(Genesis 22:1-19)

- Victim was the first-born son and talked.
- Victim carried firewood.
- Priest carried fire & knife.
- Victim killed by knife.
- Animal substituted.
Early References (Judges 11:30-40) (fulfilling a vow)
Early References
(Micah 6:6-7)
(bland, casual reference)
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Cultic Law
(Exodus 13:1-2)

Yahweh said to Moses: "Sacrifice to me all of the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of animal. It is mine."
Cultic Law
(Exodus 22:29-30)

You shall give the firstborn of your sons to me. You shall do likewise with your cattle and with your sheep.
Cultic Law
(Exodus 13:12-13)

You shall set apart to Yahweh all that opens the womb, and every firstborn which you have that comes from an animal. The males shall be Yahweh’s. Every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck; and you shall redeem all the firstborn of man among your sons.
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- **Shift in attitude**
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Shift in Attitude

- Leviticus 18:21 forbids child sacrifice in a long list of practices that are to be punished by shunning.
- Child sacrifice is a capital offense in Leviticus 20:1-5.
- Numbers 3:12 and 8:16-18 say the Levite caste is a bulk redemption for all first-born males.
- Josiah's law book condemns the practice (Deuteronomy 12:31, 18:10).
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End of Judah

- Ezekiel (16:20-21 and 23:37) and Jeremiah (7:31, 19:4-6, and 32:35) witness child sacrifice up until the end of Judah.
- Ezekiel 20:26 explains the cultic law as a ruse which let Yahweh punish the Judeans.
End of Judah (Summary)

- The Judeans sacrificed children in the molk ritual (1 Samuel – 2 Kings).
End of Judah (Summary)

- The Judeans sacrificed children in the molk ritual (1 Samuel – 2 Kings).
- Yahweh received this sacrifice (Micah).
End of Judah (Summary)

- The Judeans sacrificed children in the molk ritual (1 Samuel – 2 Kings).
- Yahweh received this sacrifice (Micah).
- Cultic law required the sacrifice to Yahweh of first born sons or a substitution (Exodus).
End of Judah (Summary)

- The Judeans sacrificed children in the molk ritual (1 Samuel – 2 Kings).
- Yahweh received this sacrifice (Micah).
- Cultic law required the sacrifice to Yahweh of first born sons or a substitution (Exodus).
- The practice continued past year -600 (Jeremiah, Ezekiel).
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By the Christian period, the cultic requirement of child sacrifice was commuted into a temple tax on first born sons.
Christian Echoes

- The Jerusalem tophet in the valley of Ben-Hinnom became a place where garbage was burned.
- The name Ben-Hinnom became Gehenna in Aramaic and in the New Testament, that word is a synonym for fiery Hell.
Christian Echoes

- The epistles refer to the crucifixion as a sin-forgiving sacrifice.
- It is obviously the sacrifice of a first-born son.
- Clearly, cultic, mythic themes are being recycled.
Christian Echoes

• But the dots aren't connected:
  - No holocaust.
  - No parallel drawn to Abraham's sacrifice.
  - The original cultic law isn't understood (see Luke 2:22-23).
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