

# View

"...having the eyes of your heart enlightened..." Ephesians 1:18

## **"Child Sacrifice," by Russ Bowman on page 2**

## Welcome Visitors!

You are our honored guests and we are pleased that you have chosen to visit us today. Our goal is to do everything according to God's word, including respecting its silence. This is a church of Christ; we are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church and we have no earthly "headquarters." The five elders oversee this work and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily aimed at our own members, as we examine Scripture and seek to be built up in our faith in Christ. If you don't understand something, please do not hesitate to ask one of the elders. We welcome and appreciate your comments and questions on any issue and especially if you see or hear anything that you feel does not correspond to God's word. We are here to serve; please help us do that.

***Please fill out a visitor's card and put it in the collection plate. Thank You***

### Schedule

#### **The Lord's Day**

**9:30 AM – Classes**

**Auditorium: Authority**

**Room 13/14: Parenting**

**10:30 AM – Assembly**

**Speaking today: David Posey**

**2 PM Class at the Building**

**Room 13/14**

**Minor Prophets**

**5 PM (building)**

**Fruit of the Spirit**

**Weekly Young Adults Class**

**No Class Today**

**Tuesday, 10 AM**

**No Class this Week**

**Wednesday, 7 PM**

**Auditorium: Authority**

**Room 13/14: Parenting**

**Men's Saturday Morning Meeting**

**7 AM, second Saturday of the month (see Tyler Wade)**

### Information

#### **Children's Classes**

We have classes for children from 18 months and up. Please see the map in the hallway or ask any of the members which room is appropriate for you and/or your child. There are several Bible studies in progress on Sunday afternoon and evening. Check with David Posey if you have questions.

#### **Restrooms**

There are two sets of restrooms: one off the first hallway to the right of the lobby and another at the end of the first hallway to the left. Ask anyone and they'll be happy to point you in the right direction.

#### **For Small Children**

There is a special room for nursing mothers and a separate "cry room" at the rear of the auditorium. You enter them from the first hallway to the right, across from the restrooms.

#### **Online**

You can find copies of class material and archives of previous editions of the View and listen to sermons online at [www.folsomchurch.com](http://www.folsomchurch.com). Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/folsomchurch>

#### **View & Junior View**

Be sure to pick up a copy of the View and Junior View; both are sent out weekly, plus there are some hard copies printed on Sundays and available in the foyer.

### **Disclaimer**

*The opinions, interpretations and views that appear in the View are those of the author alone and do not necessarily represent the views of the elders and other members of the church of Christ at Folsom.*

# Child Sacrifice

BY RUSS BOWMAN

As the children of Israel began their trek toward the Promised Land, God began to prepare them for the godless influences of the Canaanites whom they were to displace. In the above chapter, God informs Israel that part of the reason they were to inherit the land is due to the wickedness of the people of Canaan – “*For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants*” (v.25). Thus, He warns His people about the immorality, sexual perversion, and disregard for life that had become so profound among the peoples who populated Canaan. While many of these perversions are distasteful to the point of repulsion, the peculiar activity of child sacrifice is absolutely unimaginable to most of us. And yet the warning against “*passing your children through the fire to Molech*” is repeated again and again (Lev. 18.21; 20.1f; Dt. 12.29f; 18.10). God’s passion for life had already been vividly illustrated when He had first commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering and then refused to allow him to kill his son (Gen. 22.1f). We should probably note that this event took place as Abraham was living in the midst of those who burned their children in the worship of Molech.

According to the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Vol.III, p.2074-2075), Molech was likely a god of Semitic origin, adopted as the national god of the Ammonites (under the name “Milcom” – 1 Kings 11.5f). It appears probable that there was a close connection between Baal worship and that directed toward Molech, as both are associated with the common religious rites of the various peoples living in Canaan during the Old Testament period. And the immorality and cruelty of such rituals did impact the nation of Israel for years. Solomon built a place of worship for Molech (1 Kings 11.5-7), and kings from both the northern and southern kingdoms sacrificed some of their children to Molech (2 Kings 16.3; 17.17; 21.6). Prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel denounced such practices and attributed the punishment and captivity of God’s people, in part, to their affinity for such abominations. And while there remains some discussion as to the particulars of such “worship”, there is little doubt as to its existence. Apparently Israel focused her Molech worship at a place called Topheth in the Hinnom valley, southwest of Jerusalem. Here the people would kill their children as sacrifices and then offer their bodies as burnt offerings upon an altar-pyre. Incidentally, in the ancient accounts of the Phoenician people of Carthage, the children sacrificed to Molech were burned alive. “The image of Molech was a human figure with a bull’s head and outstretched arms, ready to receive the children destined for sacrifice. The image of metal was heated red hot by a fire kindled within, and the children laid on its arms rolled off into the fiery pit below” (ISBE, Vol.III, p.2075). This practice

persisted among the people of God, in spite of reforms such as that of Josiah (2 Kings 23.10), until they were carried away into captivity by Babylon.

It’s difficult for me to envision such a practice. The thought of taking one of my little girls and cutting her throat so that I could burn her body in reverence for some lifeless image is utterly repugnant. And more so, the thought that someone could take an infant and place it upon red hot metal so that it convulses only to roll off into a pit of fire is sickening to even contemplate. And yet such were the demands of idolatry, and untold numbers of people – people not unlike us – engaged in such atrocities. Can you imagine the outcry were someone in our day to suggest such a religious activity? No one will replace “Bring Your Kids to Church Day” with “Burn Your Kids for God Day”. We’re too advanced for that – too civilized, cultured, enlightened. There’s no way we would engage in such superstitious and reprehensible nonsense. Of course, we’ll abort untold millions of babies, but we won’t burn them. Makes you wonder about our “advanced” society, doesn’t it?

But even more troubling is this consideration. All of those children, horribly slaughtered in the worship of Molech, were at least innocent victims whose unstained souls were destined for eternal reward. But what about the souls of all of the children in our day who are being sacrificed upon the altars of education, or entertainment, or athletics, or wealth? We wouldn’t kill our children for a god of stone, but we will usher them into the temple of academic pursuit or musical accomplishment or gymnastics or soccer or baseball. We’ll make sure they get their homework but won’t emphasize or encourage Bible study. They don’t miss school or practice or ball games, but they miss worship services and Bible classes. We make sure that they know the right people to secure their educational or occupational future, but we make knowing God’s family unimportant. We set their priorities for them so that they learn that all kinds of gods are more important than the true and living God. We groom them and polish them and train them and direct them to the pursuit of lifeless, vain, and empty idols. And after years of sacrificing our children, we wonder why they don’t grow up to respect the LORD and worship Him. At least the victims of Molech worship died before they became habitual idolaters of their own accord. We, on the other hand, are destining our children to their own demise as accountable, and thus doomed, individuals. I wonder, in the eyes of God, which is more abominable?

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# THE CULTURE COLUMN

From Culture Translator\*

## Dirty (Baker's) Dozen

Every year, the National Center on Sexual Exploitation releases their “Dirty Dozen” list,\* exposing entities that propagate and/or profit from sexual exploitation in one way or another. Their goal is to hold corporations to a higher standard by changing the way consumers perceive and interact with them. 2019’s list, which was released Monday, offers explanations for why each company found itself there, proof of their alleged actions, and action steps we can take as part of our demand for change. The following are the organizations on this year’s list:

1. Amazon
2. Ebsco Information Services
3. Google
4. HBO
5. Massage Envy
6. Netflix
7. The state of Nevada
8. Roku
9. Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition
10. Steam
11. Twitter
12. United Airlines

We highly recommend reading about each one’s offenses with your teenagers, asking them if they were surprised by any of the businesses listed. Do they agree with the accusations and/or the idea that a company is part of the sexploitation problem even if it only indirectly profits? Why or why not? Then ask them what they think they should do now that they have this information. Is there something the whole family can/should do?

## Celebrity Abuse

A bombshell report from the *NYT* details allegations of sexual and psychological abuse by singer-songwriter Ryan Adams. Ryan Adams might be best known in the teen world for his cover album of Taylor Swift’s *1989*, but if your child is of the indie/artsy persuasion, Adams is definitely on his/her radar. The acclaimed musician stands accused, most troublingly, of using his status as a celebrity to manipulate a 14-year-old girl into a long-distance sexual relationship. The #MeToo movement has raised questions of abuse of power and consent, which can be difficult to reconcile with how we feel about our favorite artists. Discussing the boundaries Adams reportedly crossed, as well as the

evolving definitions of consent and power dynamics in relationships, is an evergreen topic in today’s culture.

## Gaming/eSports

The post-apocalyptic theme in video games continues, and gamers are still hopping on board. *Apex Legends* is a new battle-royale-style game that dropped on February 5. According to the game’s creators, *Apex Legends* has already racked up 10 million players in its first 72 hours of release. Gaming site Kotaku comments on the features that make the game unique, saying it is “less intimidating” than competitor *Fortnite*.

February 15 marked the release of three more games in the apocalyptic genre: *Far Cry: New Eden*; *Metro: Exodus*; and *Crackdown 3*. Ask your teen if this trend is getting old and whether this trend reveals a lack of creativity or a deeper longing for the redemption and renewal that an apocalyptic event implies.

## Going Deeper

*The Good Place*, *God Friended Me*, *Russian Doll*, and now *Miracle Workers* point to a trend of TV shows that play with ideas of virtue, morality, and ethics. Not every one of these shows is a home run—in fact, most of the time, they might not even be suitable for family viewing. But the ethics conundrum is fascinating general audiences in ways we haven’t seen before. Morality is no longer the territory of theological debate and Sunday school instruction. We’re having a culture-wide conversation about how difficult it is to define what a good person is—and how it might be actually impossible to be one.

The deeper takeaway of this is twofold. It’s a wonderful thing that we’re a culture-at-large that does want to find a firmer stance on virtue. But it’s a tragedy that we’ve journeyed so far away from the starting values that inform a virtuous worldview in the first place. For centuries, men and women have debated ethics in the public square. But as Gen Z grows older, we see how highly they prize goodness, mercy, compassion and justice. We can also see that they desperately long for ways to understand and personalize these concepts in their lives. What stands out most of all is how confused and hungry this generation is for a concept of morality that stands up to scrutiny, that *makes sense*. Let’s pursue an active faith that provides real answers, holds up to difficult questions, and serves us and our children in creating a world of peace, justice, and redemption.

\*This link (<https://endsexualexploitation.org/dirtydozen-2019>) leads to a video of some comments from spokesmen from the National Center on Sex Exploitation and details on why these entities are on the list. The speeches expose the practices of the entities on the list in graphic detail. The Dirty Dozen list has had tremendous success in pressuring companies to change their practices that promote sexual exploitation.