

## Are We Passing Our Children Through the Fire?

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. When the Israelites were led out of Egypt, they were led into a wilderness which bordered the land of Canaan where many heathens and idol worshipers lived. The Lord knew that the Israelites would have to face the idol worshiping inhabitants of the land of Canaan. The Israelites needed to be prepared to stand up against and to resist the wicked influences of the inhabitants of Canaan.
- B. The book of Leviticus records many laws designed to prepare the Israelites for a life of faithfulness. One such law addressed the worshiping of the god Molech. Consider the following passages: Leviticus 18:21 and 20:1-5.
- C. When we consider how horrific were the practices used in worshiping Molech, we begin to understand why such idolatry was so hated by God.
  - 1. **Molech (king).** The fire-god Molech was the tutelary deity of the children of Ammon, and essentially identical with the Moabitish Chemosh. Fire-gods appear to have been common to all the Canaanite, Syrian and Arab tribes, who worshiped the destructive element under an outward symbol, with the most inhuman rites. According to Jewish tradition, the image of Molech was of brass, hollow within, and was situated without Jerusalem. ‘His face was (that) of a calf, and his hands stretched forth like a man who opens his hands to receive (something) of his neighbor. And they kindled it with fire, and the priests took the babe and put it into the hands of Molech, and the babe gave up the ghost.’” (Smith’s Bible Dictionary)
  - 2. “In this horrendous pagan practice, the worshiper would kiss his child and then place the child in the red-hot arms of the idol, inside of which was a continually burning fire. To muffle the screams of the children who were ‘passing through the fire,’ onlookers would frenetically beat loud drums. In fact, Topheth, at the southeast end of the valley, takes its very name from the root word *toph*, meaning drum.” (Meeting God in Holy Places, F. Lagard Smith, Harvest House Publishers, pg 32)
- D. This practice of passing one’s children through the fire did not come from the mind of God, but from the mind of wicked men. Jeremiah wrote, “*And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.*” (Jeremiah 7:31, NKJV)
- E. The practice of worshiping the god Molech seems to have been introduced by Solomon. I Kings 11:7 reads, “*Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the*

*abomination of the people of Ammon.*” (I Kings 11:7, NKJV)

- F. There were other kings who lead the children of Israel in passing their children through the fire.
  - 1. King Ahaz passed his children through the fire. (II Kings 16:3)
  - 2. King Manasseh passed his children through the fire. (II Chronicles 33:6)
- G. Thankfully, King Josiah tried to rid Judah of this horrific practice. (II Kings 23:3,10-14,16-20,25)
- H. Sadly, the righteousness of King Josiah was not enough to stay off God’s wrath from the nation of Judah. II Kings 23:26 reads, *“Nevertheless the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him.”* (II Kings 23:26, NKJV)
- I. The thought of passing one’s children through the fire should sicken us all. Just as this thought did not come from the mind of God, never should such a thought come from our minds.
- J. We must exercise great caution and concern for our children lest we become guilty of passing them through the fire of a false god.
- K. It is the purpose of the this lesson to show how we can become guilty of passing our children through the fire of a false god.

**I. KEEPING YOUR CHILDREN OUT OF THE FIRE.**

- A. Avoid the fire of rebellion.
  - 1. Command your children in the way of the Lord.
    - a. Abraham commanded his children. (Genesis 18:19)
    - b. Proverbs 6:20-24 - {Consider the benefits of instructing your children.}
  - 2. Discipline your children as instructed by the Lord.
    - a. Do not be afraid of disciplining your children.
    - b. Consider the wise words of Solomon.
      - (1) Proverbs 13:34 - *“He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.”* (NKJV)
      - (2) Proverbs 22:15 - *“Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.”* (NKJV)



in the site of God.

3. Peter said, *“Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”* (Acts 10:34-35, NKJV)
  4. If you do not teach your children to love, to forgive, and to not be prejudice, then you will be passing them through the fire of hatred and bigotry.
- D. Avoid the fire of ignorance.
1. Raise up the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)
  2. Instruct them in the way of righteousness.
    - a. A father is to instruct his son. (Proverbs 13:1 - *“A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.”* NKJV)
    - b. Consider the example established by Moses. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)
  3. Teach them God’s word and show them how to study so that they can rightly divide the word of God. (II Timothy 2:15)
  4. If you do not teach your children the word of the Lord and how to live by that word, then you will be passing them through the fire of ignorance.
- E. Avoid the fire of worldliness.
1. Keep your children away from worldly influences. Paul wrote, *“Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’”* (I Corinthians 15:33, NKJV)
  2. Set standards and guidelines for whom your children can have as friends. Consider the example of Solomon who warned his sons about running with bad or wicked company. (Proverbs 1:10-18)
  3. Keep control over what your child watches on television and at the movies. (Cf. Psalms 101:3 - *“I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me.”* NKJV)
  4. Keep control over what your children listens to on the radio.
  5. If you do not keep your children from worldly influences, then you will be passing them through the fire of worldliness.
- F. Avoid the fire of hypocrisy.
1. Live the life that you teach your children to live. Children are sharp. They will see and take notice if you are not practicing what you preach.

2. Set the right example by avoiding hypocrisy. Show your children a genuine and sincere love for the Lord and His word.
  3. Consider the example of the hypocritical Pharisees. (Matthew 23:13-36)
  4. If you do not teach your children to practice what they preach in serving God and other areas of life, then you will be passing them through the fire of hypocrisy.
- G. Avoid the fire of indifference.
1. Show your children that you love the Lord and that you love serving Him.
    - a. Jesus said, *“Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’”* (Matthew 22:37, NKJV)
    - b. Jesus also said, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”* (John 14:15, NKJV)
  2. Parents who do not care about serving the Lord, about taking a stand for what is right, and about studying God’s word will raise up children who will possess the same level of indifference.
    - a. Solomon wrote, *“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.”* (Proverbs 22:6, NKJV)
    - b. The inverse of this promise is also true: If you train up a child in the way he should not go, then when he is old, he will continue in that same path.
  3. If you do not teach your children to love the Lord and to love serving the Lord, then you will be passing them through the fire of indifference.

**CONCLUSION.**

- A. When we think about what some of the Israelites did to their children, it makes us sick. However, we must work to make certain that we are not passing our children through the fire.
- B. Children are a blessing from the Lord and are given to us to raise up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If we fail in fulfilling our responsibilities in this area, then we are no different than the wicked Israelites.

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by John M. Duvall – Lawton, OK