

Hosea 7:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned.

Analysis

Mixed identity: 'Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned.' Two metaphors describe compromised identity. First, לָלַךְ (balal, mixed/mingled) among peoples—losing distinctiveness through assimilation. Second, עֲגָה בִּלְיִי הַפֻּכָה (ugah beli hafukhah, cake not turned)—bread cooked one side, raw the other; useless, half-baked. Israel sought to be like nations (political alliances, pagan worship) while maintaining covenant identity—impossible hybrid. This half-hearted commitment satisfies neither God nor world. Jesus condemns lukewarm commitment (Revelation 3:15-16). Only wholehearted devotion to Christ suffices (Matthew 6:24)—no mixing, no half-measures.

Historical Context

Northern Israel's compromise manifested in syncretistic worship (mixing YHWH and Baal), foreign alliances (courting Egypt and Assyria alternately), cultural assimilation (adopting pagan practices). They wanted covenant benefits without covenant obligations, divine blessing without exclusive loyalty. The 'cake not turned' perfectly illustrates: appearing religious on visible side while corrupt underneath, or attempting to serve both God and nations. This failed strategy hastened destruction—pleasing neither God (who demands exclusive worship) nor nations (who saw them as unreliable). Church history shows similar patterns: attempting to be both worldly and godly produces neither cultural influence nor spiritual vitality.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does attempting to mix covenant faith with worldly values produce 'half-baked' Christianity that satisfies neither God nor world?
2. What areas of contemporary Christian life reflect 'cake not turned' compromise—appearing godly in some respects while worldly in others?

Interlinear Text

אֶפְרַיִם	בְּעַמּוֹ יִם	הָ וַא	יִתְבּוֹלֵ ל	אֶפְרַיִם	הָ ה
Ephraim	himself among the people	H1931	he hath mixed	Ephraim	H1961
H669	H5971		H1101	H669	
הָ עֵגָה	בִּלְיָ	הַפּוּכָה:			
is a cake	H1097	not turned			
H5692		H2015			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 106:35 (Parallel theme): But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works.

Ezra 9:12 (Parallel theme): Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever.

Malachi 2:11 (Parallel theme): Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the

holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

Ezra 9:1 (Parallel theme): Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.

1 Kings 18:21 (Parallel theme): And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

Matthew 6:24 (Parallel theme): No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Hosea 9:3 (Parallel theme): They shall not dwell in the LORD'S land; but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean things in Assyria.

Hosea 5:13 (Parallel theme): When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.

Hosea 5:7 (Parallel theme): They have dealt treacherously against the LORD: for they have begotten strange children: now shall a month devour them with their portions.

Zephaniah 1:5 (Parallel theme): And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham;