

Jeremiah 44:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?

Analysis

Did we make her cakes to worship her...without our men? —(בְּלֹא־אֲשֵׁנָה)

The Hebrew construction is defensive: "Was it apart from our men?" The women shift responsibility to male authorization, claiming they acted with husbands' knowledge (v.15 confirms this). **Cakes** (קְנָהִים, kawwanim) were ritual offerings stamped with the Queen of Heaven's image, part of organized cult worship.

This verse exposes household idolatry's dynamics: women often administered domestic religious rituals, but with patriarchal approval. The argument reveals both genders' culpability—neither can claim innocence by blaming the other. The **drink offerings** (נְסָקִים, nesakim)—libations poured out—represent comprehensive devotion: baked goods and liquids, domestic labor and agricultural produce, all consecrated to a false deity.

Historical Context

Archaeological evidence from Judah shows numerous female figurines and domestic altars from the 7th-6th centuries BC. The 'Queen of Heaven' (likely Astarte/Ishtar) worship involved household rituals conducted primarily by women but requiring male consent in a patriarchal society. Stamped ritual cakes for deity worship are attested throughout ancient Near Eastern cultures.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 – Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do family structures enable or restrain idolatry in the household?
2. What does shared guilt between spouses reveal about marriage's spiritual unity?
3. Why does religious activity (baking, rituals) not equal true worship if directed toward false gods?

Interlinear Text

בְּשָׁמָם יְמִים לְמַלְלָתְךָ מִקְטָרִים אָנוּ חֲנוּ וְכָי
H5388 H587 And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven
H6999 H4446 H8064

אֲנָשׁ יָנוּ בְּמִבְלָעֵד יְפַסֵּה לְהַנְּסִיכִים וְיְפַסֵּה
and poured out H0 drink offerings unto her without our men
H5258 H5262 H1107 H582

ל ה יבש ג לם עצב ה פוגים ל ה עש ינו unto her did we make her cakes to worship and poured out H0 H2561 H6087 H5258 H6213

בְּשִׁכְיָמִן

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 7:18 (Sacrifice): The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.

Jeremiah 44:15 (Parallel theme): Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying,

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