

Jeremiah 7:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

A detailed description of family idolatry follows: 'The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven.' This shows systematic, multigenerational involvement in pagan worship. The 'queen of heaven' (likely Ishtar/Astarte) received cakes and offerings. The phrase 'pour out drink offerings unto other gods' indicates comprehensive apostasy—not just neglecting Yahweh but actively worshiping false gods. The participation of children, fathers, and mothers shows how thoroughly idolatry permeated family life. This illustrates covenant breaking at the most basic unit of society.

Historical Context

Worship of the 'queen of heaven' was widespread in the ancient Near East. Jeremiah 44:15-19 reveals that after Jerusalem's fall, Jewish refugees in Egypt continued this practice, showing its deep-rooted nature.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does family-based idolatry demonstrate the importance of household discipleship and worship?
2. What modern equivalents of 'queen of heaven' worship compete for family devotion today?
3. What is the relationship between private family practices and public covenant faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

בָּאָשָׁא	אֶת	מִבְאָרָה	יְמָם	וְקָבּוֹת	עֵץ	יְמָם	מְלָקֶט	יְמָם	בָּבִן	יְמָם
The children	gather		wood	and the fathers			kindle		H853	the fire
H1121	H3950		H6086		H1		H1197		H853	H784
לְמַלְכָת	כְּתָם	לְעַשְׂתָה	וְתַּבְצֵלָה	וְתַּבְצֵלָה	לְשָׁוֹתָה	וְתַּבְצֵלָה	לְמַלְכָת	כְּתָם	לְמַלְכָת	וְתַּבְצֵלָה
and the women	knead		their dough		to make		cakes	to the queen		
H802	H3888		H1217		H6213		H3561		H4446	
לְמַעַן	אֶחָרָה	יְמָם	לְאֱלֹהָה	יְמָם	גְּסִכִּים					
of heaven	and to pour out		drink offerings				gods	unto other		H4616
H8064	H5258		H5262				H430	H312		
בְּכָעָסָנוּ:										
that they may provoke me to anger										
H3707										

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 19:13 (Sacrifice): And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

1 Kings 14:9 (References God): But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back:

1 Corinthians 10:22 (Parallel theme): Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

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