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They Knead Dough and Make Cakes for the Queen of Heaven 7: 16-20

They make dough and make cakes for the Queen of Heaven DIG: Why do you think God forbids Yirmeyahu to pray for Judah? What is the point of mentioning men, women and children involved in this idolatrous worship? Who is really being hurt by this practice? How do you think the LORD personally feels about this idolatry? Is He immune to being hurt by this?

REFLECT: How is the Queen of Heaven worshiped today? Put yourself in God's place. How would you feel (or have felt) if your spouse was unfaithful in your marriage? Would you try to woo her (him) back (Hosea 3)? What kind of commitment would that take?

609/608 BC early in the reign of Jehoiakim

If you see any brother of sister commit a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray and God will give them life . . . but there is a sin that leads to death (First Yochanan 5:16a).

In **the Temple** Sermon (**to see link click Cb – Jeremiah's Temple Sermon**) **Jeremiah** was ordered by **ADONAI not to pray** for **his people** because **they** were under judgment **(7:16).** This is the first of three times **(11:14** and **14:11) the prophet** is commanded **not to pray for his** own **people.** The reason **Jeremiah** was told not to **pray** for **them** is because **they** were guilty of praying to **the Queen of Heaven** (see the commentary on **Exodus Dk – You Shall Have No Other Gods Before Me**). **Their** incurable spiritual sickness had reached the point where **they** were beyond help: **So Ha'Shem** told **Jeremiah, "Do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them."** More than that, **"Do not plead with Me, for I will not listen to you,** at least not now and not under the present conditions**" (7:16).**

There may very well be times when we should no longer pray for certain people

since they have already been given up in this life to the judgment of **God**, and their lot is irreversible (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Em – Whoever Blasphemes Against the Holy Spirit Will Never Be Forgiven**). It would appear that this is what **John** is saying in **First Yochanan 5:16a**. In practical terms, however, since we seldom (if ever) know if such is the case, we should probably not withhold our prayers on behalf of anyone. Who knows if the present blasphemer and persecutor of **ADONAI** may experience **His** mercy in the same manner as Rabbi Sha'ul did?[121] The point above being because **YHVH** is omnipotent, **He** knew **they** were reprobate.

YHVH appeals to **His prophet's** sense of justice and judgment. **God's** prohibition to **pray** for **this people** is fully justified by the facts: **Do you not see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? Jewish** homes, where **ADONAI's** name was to be loved and honored and trusted **(Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Joshua 24:15b)**, had become exactly like the homes of the Gentiles. **The children gather wood, the father lights the fire, and the women knead the dough and make cakes for the Queen of Heaven. They pour out drink offerings to other gods to arouse My anger (7:17-18).** If both **the father** and **the mother** deliberately and persistently teach **their** evil ways to **their children**, there is little, if any, chance of **them** growing up to be **children of God**.

Once again this showed that the reforms of Josiah were merely external (see **Ai – Josiah Ruled For 31 Years from 640 to 609 BC**). They reached the idol centers, the high places and the places of human sacrifice, but his reform movement didn't reach the mothers' and wives' kitchens. This idol worship involved the whole family: **The children gather wood, the father lights the fire, and the women knead the dough.** Small **cakes impressed with her image** were offered in **her** honor. **The mother** laid **them** on **the Queens'** altar and the whole family would congregate around to worship **the Queen of Heaven (44:19a)**.

The Queen of Heaven had different names in different societies. In Egypt **she** was called **Isis**. This worship involved temple prostitution in the Canaanite and Babylonian form **(Genesis 38:1** and hinted at in **Deuteronomy 23:18)** and sometimes homosexuality **(First Kings 14:24, 15:12** and **22:46).** In Babylon **she** was called **Ishtar**, the Mother Goddess and **Queen of Heaven**, and the spouse of the god Bel-Marduk. Before marriage each woman had to prostitute herself to strangers at the sanctuary of **Ishtar. She was one of many gods (Jeremiah 19:13, 32:19; Zephaniah 1:5).** The worship of **Ishtar** along with other Mesopotamian gods was popular in **Y'hudah** in the days of Manasseh **(Second Kings 21, 23:4-14).**

In a nearby valley nicknamed "Slaughter," **the Judeans** participated in the horrifying rites of child sacrifice (see **Cz – Judah is Like a Broken Jar**). **The Jews** must have believed that **they** appeased **Ha'Shem** by partaking in those rituals that were associated with the worship of Ba'al and Molech **(Second Kings 23:10)**. Eventually **Yerushalayim herself** would become a place of slaughter because of her rejection of **ADONAI**.[122]

They worshiped under a system known as the mystery religions. For over a thousand years these religions influenced western culture and we still have remnants now operating in Europe and in the Roman Catholic Church all over the world. There are many forms of this mystery religion, but they can all be traced back to a single origin in the Tower of Babel (see the commentary on **Genesis Dl – The Tower of Babel**). In **Revelation 17:5** we can see the final form of world religion . . . **MYSTERY BABYLON** (see the commentary on **Revelation Dd – I Saw**

a Woman Holding a Golden Cup in Her Hand, Filled with the Filth of Her Adulteries), the mother of all false religions.

Why did **the Israelites pour out drink offerings to other gods (44:19b)?** This will be the first of several times in this book where **Jeremiah** says **the Jews** did something to **provoke ADONAI** to anger **(8:19, 11:17, 25:36)**. **The hardened hearts and closed eyes** of **the Israelites** had caused **them** to worship idols. In **Jeremiah 5:21, ADONAI** calls **them, "You foolish and senseless people, who have eyes but do not see, who have ears but do not hear." God** had revealed the righteous demands of **His** covenant, promising both blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience, yet **the people** ignored **Him**. Though they were suffering in exile, they needed to realize that it was not that that **God of Isra'el** was not powerful, nor was he incapable of ruling in a foreign land; but it was that **they** were being punished for **their** sins for not keeping the Covenant. They were choosing to **refuse to repent** of **their** sinful ways. This is exactly what will happen in the Great Tribulation: **Men gnawed their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done (Rev 16:10b-11).**

But this will backfire on **them. Am I the One they are provoking?** declares **ADONAI. Are they not rather harming themselves, to their own shame? Therefore this is what Adonai ELOHIM** says: **My anger and My wrath will be poured out on this place – on man and beast, on the trees of the field and on the crops of your land – and it will burn and not be quenched (7:19-20).** Sin always takes you further than you want to go and costs you more than you wanted to pay. **They** were so persistent in **their** wickedness that **they** were beyond the possibility of repentance. It was precisely for this reason that **YHVH** forbid **Jeremiah** to **pray for them**, and in the prohibition the certainty of judgment was made clear. In that light, it is easy to understand the oracle that follows in **7:21-28**.[123]

Today the Roman Church worships Mary as **the Queen of Heaven**. The titles given to Mary are in themselves a revelation of Roman Catholic sentiment toward her. She is called: Mother of God, Queen of the Apostles, Queen of the Angels, The Door of Paradise, The Gate of Heaven, Our Life, Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, and last but not least, **the Queen of Heaven**.

All those titles are false. Let us just consider two of them. When she is called "Queen of the Apostles," is that an apostolic doctrine? Where is it found? Certainly

not in Scripture. When did the apostles elect Mary their queen? Or when was she appointed by **God** to be their queen?

The title **Queen of Heaven** is equally false or even worse. On November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII declared that Mary's body was raised from the grave three days after she died, that her body and her soul were reunited and that she was taken up and enthroned as **Queen of Heaven** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Mr – The Ascension of Jesus)**. **Heaven** has no "queen." The only references in the Bible to prayers to **the Queen of Heaven** are found in **Jeremiah 7:18; 44:17-19, 25**, where it is severely condemned as a heathen custom practiced by apostate **Jews**. The so-called **Queen of Heaven** was a Canaanite goddess of fertility, Astarte (plural Ashtoreth) in **Judges 2:13**. How shameful to impose a heathen title on Mary, and then to venerate her as another deity![124]

Radical feminists' like Mary Daly claim to embody the deity within themselves – in other words, to be **God**. "I found **God** in myself and I loved her fiercely," exults Carol Patrice Christ; that is the logical result of a religion in which **God** is believed to be contained in all things and all persons. Feminists who hold such views become a god unto themselves. Indeed to such feminists as Dorothee Solle and Isabel Carter Heyward, there is no such thing as original sin, and the "fall" of **Genesis 3** is a good, liberating action, creating knowledge and action and reliance on one's self. According to Solle, "The most telling argument against our traditional **God** is not that **He** no longer exists or that **He** has drawn back within **Himself**, but that we no longer need **Him** because **God** is in us."

Rosemary Ruether has written liturgies for worshiping groups of women that celebrate the cycles of the moon, the solstices and the seasons, as well as the cycles of menstruation and menopause. She teaches that there is no eternal life for those in her female godless religion. Rather, the end she envisions for all of us is that we will simply end up as compost. She writes, "In effect (at death), our existence ceases as individuals and we merely dissolve back into the cosmic matrix of matter/energy from which we came from. It is this matrix, rather than us as individuals that is everlasting." In this distorted view of the world, this goddess worship, these women become their own **Queen**, ruler over their own universe.

If there is no **God** who is **Lord** over life, who intervenes, judges, and confirms, and who has given **His** final judgment and won **His** decisive victory in the cross and resurrection of **Jesus Christ**, then human evil will always have the last word and there will be no hope for this world.[125] But praise **God, my Redeemer lives (Job**

19:25).