

Exodus 20:4

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

Divine Jealousy

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Forward

Human jealousy describes the hostility one has toward a rival or one believed to enjoy some advantage.

Jealousy is an emotion we often describe as seen between lovers.
God was Israel's husband (Jeremiah 31:32)

God was in covenant with Israel, and because of His love for His people He zealously acted to maintain their fidelity.

Divine jealousy is not the petty emotion so often seen in fallen men and women, but describes Jehovah's justifiable intolerance to any and every rival. Jealousy is God's rightful demand for our exclusive affection or loyalty. In short, God's kind of jealousy is appropriate and good, for He is defending His word and His high honor.

He makes a strong, exclusive demand on those who are His beloved. As such, we must treat only the Lord as God to the exclusion of all other people and things in all the universe!

Marriage is one of many figures used in Scripture to emphasize the relationship of God to men. This illustration is used in both Old Testament and New Testament to picture love, intimacy, privilege, and responsibility. In the Old Testament, as here in Hosea 2:16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

All humane and civilized governments which account themselves responsible for the well-being of the people committed to their care are characterized by this temper of jealous. The jealousy exercised in the interests of others must be holy and beneficent.

God will not allow intrusion into His work, no division of His authority, no departure from His laws. He alone can guide us through the rocks and whirlpools, and bring us to our far-off goal. That He should be supreme is the very salvation of the universe.

STUDY THE SCRIPTURES ON DIVINE JEALOUSY

Chapter 1

Make no graven image

Exodus 20:4-7

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

This second commandment refers to the worship we are to render to the Lord our God. It is forbidden to make any image or picture of the Deity, in any form, or for any purpose; or to worship any creature, image, or picture. But the spiritual import of this command extends much further. All false oaths are forbidden.

Godliness and honesty must go together.

Worship no other Gods.

Exodus 34:13-14

But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

The Israelites are commanded to destroy every monument of idolatry, however curious or costly; to refuse all alliance, friendship, or marriage with idolaters, and all idolatrous feasts; and they were reminded not to repeat the crime of making molten images.

Eleazar the Priest turned away God's jealous wrath.

Numbers 25:11

Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.

Phinehas, in the courage of zeal and faith, executed vengeance on Zimri and Cozbi. This act can never be an example for private revenge, or religious persecution, or for irregular public vengeance.

The Lord is a consuming fire.

Deut. 4:23-24

Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

Take heed lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God. We must take heed lest at any time we forget our religion. Care, caution, and watchfulness, are helps against a bad memory.

Iniquities shall be visited upon your children.

Deut. 5:9

Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,

Here it is taken from Israel's deliverance out of Egypt; for that was typical of our redemption by Jesus Christ, in remembrance of which the Christian Sabbath was to be observed. In the resurrection of Christ we were brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, with a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm.

Chapter 2

Do not take the name of the Lord in vain.

Deut. 5:11

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

How sweet is it to a soul truly distressed under the terrors of a broken law, to hear the mild and soul-reviving language of the gospel!

God is a jealous God.

Deut. 6:15

(For the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God; neither by despairing of his power and goodness, while we keep in the way of our duty; nor by presuming upon it, when we turn aside out of that way.

The Lord will blot his name from under heaven.

Deut. 29:20

The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.

There is scarcely a threatening in all the book of God more dreadful than this. Oh that presumptuous sinners would read it, and tremble! For it is a real declaration of the wrath of God, against ungodliness and unrighteousness of man.

Strange Gods provoked God to anger.

Deut. 32:16

They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

These people were called Jeshurun, "an upright people," so some; "a seeing people," so others: but they soon lost the reputation both of their knowledge and of their righteousness. They indulged their appetites, as if they had nothing to do but to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts of it. Those who make a god of themselves, and a god of their bellies, in pride and wantonness, and cannot bear to be told of it, thereby forsake God, and show they esteem him lightly.

They provoked God with vanities.

Deut. 32:21

They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

The Lord will never disgrace the throne of his glory. It is great wisdom, and will help much to the return of sinners to God, seriously to consider their latter end, or the future state.

Chapter 3

God is a holy God.

Joshua 24:19

And Joshua said unto the people, ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

The Father seeks only such to worship him, as worship him in spirit and in truth. The carnal mind of man is enmity against God, therefore, is not capable of such spiritual worship. Hence the necessity of being born again.

Israel provoked God with their sins.

1 Kings 14:22-24

And Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done.

For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.

The abounding of the worst crimes, of the worst of the heathen, in Jerusalem, the city the Lord had chosen for his temple and his worship, shows that nothing can mend the hearts of fallen men but the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit. On this alone may we depend; for this let us daily pray, in behalf of ourselves and all around us.

Rely only on God.

2 Chron. 16:7-10

And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand.

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

God is displeased when he is distrusted, and when an arm of flesh is relied on, more than his power and goodness. It is foolish to lean on a broken reed, when we have the Rock of ages to rely upon.

God's in high places provoked God too jealously.

Psalm 78:58

For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

Those whom the Lord forsakes become an easy prey to the destroyer. And sooner or later, God will disgrace his enemies. He set a good government over his people; a monarch after his own heart. With good reason does the psalmist make this finishing, crowning instance of God's favour to Israel.

Wrath poured out on nations not called by the Lord's name.

Psalm 79:5-6

How long, Lord? Wilt thou be angry for ever? Shall thy jealousy burn like fire? Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.

In every affliction we should first beseech the Lord to cleanse away the guilt of our sins; then he will visit us with his tender mercies.

Those who persist in ignorance of God, and neglect of prayer, are the ungodly.

Chapter 4

Woe to the rebellious children.

Isaiah 30:1-2

Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

It was often the fault and folly of the Jews, that when troubled by their neighbours on one side, they sought for succour from others, instead of looking up to God. Nor can we avoid the dreadful consequences of adding sin to sin, but by making the righteousness of Christ our refuge, and seeking for the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

Men have always been prone to lean to their own understandings, but this will end in their shame and misery

Woe to those who trust in chariots.

Isaiah 31:1

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!

Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helped shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

God will oppose the help sought from workers of iniquity. Sinners may be convicted of folly by plain and self-evident truths, which they cannot deny, but will not believe. There is no escaping the judgments of God; and evil pursues sinners

My jealousy shall depart from you.

Ezekiel 16:42

So will I make my fury toward thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no angrier.

This is done under the parable of an exposed infant rescued from death, educated, espoused, and richly provided for, but afterwards guilty of the most abandoned conduct, and punished for it; yet at last received into favour, and ashamed of her base conduct.

God has spoken against the residue of the heathen.

Ezekiel 36:5-6

Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with spiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey.

Prophesy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye have borne the shame of the heathen: We have no reason to complain, if the more unkind men are, the kinder God is. They shall come again to their own border. It was a type of the heavenly Canaan, of which all God's children are heirs, and into which they all shall be brought together.

God will have mercy on the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 39:25

Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

When the Lord shall have mercy on the whole house of Israel, by converting them to Christianity, and when they shall have borne the shame of being cast off for their sins,

Chapter 5

Will the Lord be jealous of his land?

Joel 2:18

Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.

It is the work of ministers to warn of the fatal consequences of sin, and to reveal the wrath from heaven against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. The striking description which follows, shows what would attend the devastations of locusts, but may also describe the effects from the ravaging of the land by the Chaldeans. If the alarm of temporal judgments is given to offending nations, how much more should sinners be warned to seek deliverance from the wrath to come!

The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries.

Nahum 1:2

God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.

About a hundred years before, at Jonah's preaching, the Ninevites repented, and were spared, yet, soon after, they became worse than ever. Nineveh knows not that God who contends with her, but is told what a God he is.

Neither gold nor silver will deliver them.

Zeph. 1:18

Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

The Jewish royal family shall be reckoned with for their pride and vanity; and those that leap on the threshold, invading their neighbours' rights, and seizing their possessions. The trading people and the rich merchants are called to account.

Therefore, wait you upon the Lord.

Zeph. 3:8

Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

The preaching of the gospel is predicted, when vengeance would be executed on the Jewish nation. The purifying doctrines of the gospel, or the pure language of the grace of the Lord, would teach men to use the language of humility, repentance, and faith.

God is jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion.

Zech. 1:14

So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.

It is not uncommon for the enemies of God to be at rest in sin, while his people are enduring correction, harassed by temptation, disquieted by fears of wrath, or groaning under oppression and persecution.

God is jealous with a great jealousy.

Zech. 8:2

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.

The sins of Zion were her worst enemies. God will take away her sins, and then no other enemies shall hurt her. Those who profess religion must adorn their profession by godliness and honesty. When they become a city of truth and a mountain of holiness, Jerusalem is peaceable and prosperous.

Do not provoke the Lord to jealousy.

1 Cor. 10:21-22

Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

Eating food as part of a heathen sacrifice, was worshipping the idol to whom it was made, and having fellowship or communion with it; just as he who eats the Lord's Supper, is accounted to partake in the Christian sacrifice, or as they who ate the Jewish sacrifices partook of what was offered on their altar. It was denying Christianity; for communion with Christ, and communion with devils, could never be had at once.

If Christians venture into places, and join in sacrifices to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, they will provoke God.

Friendship with the world is the enemy of God.

James 4:4

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Since all wars and fightings come from the corruptions of our own hearts, it is right to mortify those lusts that war in the members. Wordly and fleshly lusts are distempers, which will not allow content or satisfaction.

Sinful desires and affections stop prayer, and the working of our desires toward God. And let us beware that we do not abuse or misuse the mercies received, by the disposition of the heart when prayers are granted when men ask of God prosperity, they often ask with wrong aims and intentions.

If we thus seek the things of this world, it is just in God to deny them. Unbelieving and cold desires beg denials; and we may be sure that when prayers are rather the language of lusts than of graces, they will return empty.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.
I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I
accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

Reference:

Matthew Henry's Concise Bible Commentary