

## I Am A Jealous God

"You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you should not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, I'm a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me." (Exodus 20.3-5)

It may sound strange to think of God as being "a jealous God." One reason is our understanding of the word jealous and jealousy. Usually we think of being jealous in a negative way, as being selfish and self-centered. The word jealous means vigilant guarding of a possession, it literally means "heat" or "warmth." In man it can be good or bad but with God it is always used in a good way. Deuteronomy 4. 24, "For the Lord our God is a consuming fire, a jealous God."

The question arises why would God be jealous? To answer that question, we want to look at 3 reasons Jehovah has for being "jealous."

God is a jealous God because he is our creator. We were made in his very image. "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:26-27) Throughout the Bible that point is made, Man was created and therefore should worship His Creator. He does not want us to give credit do any other source of our being here. Man was created in God's image, not in the image of corruptible man, or birds, or four-footed animals and creeping things as mentioned in Romans 1.23. It is wrong to think of God in those terms.

God values us as His creation. Part of the idea a jealous and jealousy, is to desire what is yours. Man was not created by Zeus or any other false god.

Man is not the product of nature and evolution, but man is the intentional result of God's word and work. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (Genesis 2:7) There are various passages which speaks of the Christian as being God's own special or peculiar people. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;" (1 Peter 2:9) God will not share his people with any other deity. In the Old Testament we see Israel was guilty of spiritual adultery as they worship foreign gods. "So it came to pass, through her casual harlotry, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees." (Jeremiah 3:9) To worship any other God is to be unfaithful to the one and only true God.

Finally, there are no other gods besides the one true God, Jehovah. To sacrifice, to bow down to, and to call for salvation to any other God is to put your faith in that which is not real. God warned not to rely on 'foreign gods' as they faced trials and tribulations. "I am the LORD, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me, That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting That there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other;" (Isaiah 45:5-6) One example of this in the Old Testament as seen in First Kings 18 as Elijah the prophet met with the prophets of Baal they were instructed to build an altar and offer their sacrifice to Baal. As they did so they called and pleaded for Baal to consume their offering. Elijah told them to cry out louder as their god may be meditating or busy or on a journey or even sleeping, v. 27. After doing so nothing happened. "And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. **But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.**" (1 Kings 18:29, emphasis mine, D.T.)

To hope and trust in any other god is to have no true hope. No one else can or will hear our prayers, will listen to our singing, will save us. "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

That is why our God is a jealous God, He is the one and only true God in heaven and earth. – Dennis Tucker