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WHO'S JEALOUS?



By Ariel Blumenthal



Did you know that one of the names of God is “Jealous”?!

Exodus 34:14 says, “... you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”

Paul knew it; and received pivotal revelation in Romans 11 regarding how the history of Israel and the nations involves ... jealousy!

It turns out that long before Paul revealed to the Gentile church their calling to *provoke un-saved Israel to jealousy*, this was all part of an epic saga in which Israel provokes the jealousy of God by our idolatry and unfaithfulness. Then the faithful God promises to provoke us back to Himself by extending His covenantal love to millions of non-Jews. It's an amazing covenantal-love story that we all get to be part of and play a part in – by faith in the gospel of Yeshua as revealed in the Holy Scriptures!

Paul begins Romans 11 by asking rhetorically, “*Has God rejected his people?*” And then “*Have they stumbled so as to fall beyond recovery?*” It's a very serious stumble, yet... “*May it never be; but by their transgression salvation has come to the Nations to make them jealous.*”

Now remember, according to Romans 1:1-3, everything Paul writes in Romans is part of setting forth the gospel. It's about His son and everything “*promised beforehand in the Holy scriptures.*” One of the scriptures Paul is referring to, is Moses' prophecy in Deuteronomy 32 which foretells this provoking to jealousy. This is Moses' culminating recounting and prophecy:

“... a God of faithfulness and without injustice; righteous and upright is He ... and there was no foreign god with him... and he made them ride on the high places of the earth ... honey from The Rock... the best of wheat ...” (v. 4,12-14)

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So much blessing! But things changed pretty quickly in verse 15 when Israel “... *grew fat and kicked.*” All the blessing is wonderful, except it can make you chubby and you are liable to forget the source of the blessing:

“*He forsook God who made him and scorned the rock of his salvation. They made him JEALOUS with strange gods; With abominations they provoked him to anger they sacrificed to demons...*” (v. 15-17)

“*I will see what their end shall be for they are a perverse generation sons in whom is no faithfulness they have made me JEALOUS with what is not God; They have provoked me to anger with their Idols. SO I WILL MAKE THEM JEALOUS with those who are not a people...*” (v. 20-21)

There it is! Israel would start in worship but then fall into idolatry and be unfaithful. Read Hosea 1-4 and Ezekiel 16. God is passionate about His relationship with His people, like a man is for his bride. God's not a passive school principal looking down upon wayward students. He's like a jealous husband. This jealousy may be the most passionate of all emotions, because it's about keeping the covenant; adultery and unfaithfulness in marriage destroy families, destroy generations. This jealous, passionate God is married to his bride made up of Jews and Gentiles who trust in him. The word jealousy in Hebrew is *KIN'AH*. It's also translated as zeal. God is zealously passionate for us. Are we passionate for Him?

God says, “I married you and you've been unfaithful. You've played the harlot and provoked me to jealousy and anger.” And then you know what God said? That He is going to make Israel jealous by inviting the nations into covenant with Him!

Today, with millions of Gentiles around the world passionate for the God of Israel and even visiting us here, many Israelis are asking, “Who are they and where did they all come from?” God says in effect, “They're my people. They're also part of my bride now, and look how they love me. Look how devoted they are to me. Look how faithful they are to me. Look how they get up and pray. Look how they read My Word.”

Paul saw it, and it's happening in front of our eyes today. His plan is working. Moses prophesied it. Paul was living it out, and now we are too. Paul got passion from these verses in Deuteronomy, from the zeal of God. He was the Apostle to the Gentiles, but he also sought to bring something back to Israel, to stir them to jealousy (Romans 11:13-14) and remove the veil that hid their face and prevented them from seeing God.

Hallelujah, there it is – the jealous, fiery love of God wooing both Israel and the nations. That should give us a lot of “oomph-passion” to keep on going. Amen?

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Jan' 25
02



MISSILE SHRAPNEL IN THE YARD & MAKING WAVES IN HISTORY



By Hannah Tekle

Lada and Fyodor stood in their newly renovated kitchen and told us how hard they have been working on this, their new home. It sits on a generous plot of land, on a street neighboring the congregational building. They bought the house as an investment before the war started. Despite the incongruence of forever-home renovations and wartime desperation and insecurity, they are doing their best, indeed like we all are, to forge forward with life.

Thanks to the ceasefire, we were finally able to visit and see the progress they have made. We “oohed and aahed” over the fresh feel of the house and over the extensive sunbathed patio and garden area that Fyodor has been tirelessly improving. Updating us on the state of each of their children, we were surprised to hear that one of their daughters was considering a move to another country. “How could you bear to see her move abroad?” we asked them, and then discussed the pros and cons of being in Israel or elsewhere. These included: financial ease and quality of material life, versus: security, belonging and protection from growing anti-Semitism in the world.

In the weeks since the ceasefire, we have easily and thankfully adjusted to life without sirens, though the war has taken its toll in so many ways. Loud booms and shrill sounds like a motorcycle driving by, still make us jump. But, sitting and drinking tea with the sun shining in through the window, the war seemed far away. Then as we left, complimenting them again on the great yard, Lada, as a casual afterthought, showed us a collection of shrapnel saying, “*These are the missile pieces that fell in our yard.*” I didn’t know whether to laugh or cry, and I felt that odd, familiar gnawing in my belly.

On their return from an “after army trip” a few of our young people flew back from East Asia through Dubai. With all the chaos and political instability, with anti-Semitic/terrorist attacks around the world, and the kidnapping and murder of a Chabad rabbi in Dubai, we were nervous. Israel has warned its citizens to avoid travel to certain countries right now, and to use discretion when speaking Hebrew in public and displaying Israeli and Jewish symbols.

Everything went smoothly until the last passport check. One girl passed through the digital check station smoothly, but when the digital check didn’t work for the second girl for some reason; and she had to approach the manual checkpoint, they apprehended her. Holding her passport, they asked accusingly, “*You are from Israel!?*” After what seemed like forever the immigration clerk frowned and took the passport to his superior, “*He will deal with you.*” For a moment it seemed like things might take a turn for the worse, her only crime – an Israeli passport. Thankfully, even as her parents were praying, the superior shortly returned her passport and begrudgingly wished her a good flight.

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THANKS TO OUR MOTHERS!



By Leon Mazin

In Genesis 25 we read about our matriarch Rivka (Rebekah). How can we learn from her faith, and also from her mistakes, that we might trust in the Lord in our own journeys?

Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife Rebekah, because she was childless. The Lord answered his prayer, and she became pregnant. Barrenness is a heavy burden; in those times, it was even worse. And now that Rebekah was finally with child, her pregnancy was also hard as the twins began wrestling in their mother's womb. Rebekah asked the Lord, "How it can be?" God answered her, and she remembered God's answer.

"... So she went to inquire of the Lord. The Lord said to her, 'Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.'" (Genesis 25:22-23)

In several biblical families, a younger brother appeared to be "in the driver's seat" relative to his older brother(s) – Cain and Abel, Ephraim and Menashe, etc. Years later, when Rebekah heard Isaac planning to give Esau the blessing, she got upset and tried to bring God's prophecy concerning younger brother Jacob, to come to pass by her own efforts.

In Israel this is called "Polish mother syndrome." However, I'll tell you honestly that it holds true for other mothers too, including some from the former Soviet Union. A mother feels she must contend for everything and nudge her son in the "right direction," for example toward becoming a doctor or lawyer. I'm partially joking; but this character trait exists from Rebekah's days. (Consider the mother of James and John who asked Yeshua to favor them in Matthew 20:20.) In Genesis 27, Rebekah creates an elaborate plan which will result in Jacob receiving the blessing: cooking meat in a certain way and dressing Jacob in his brother's clothes. This is "absolute Hollywood," but it works. Of course, the fallout was painful. Jacob had to flee his brother's wrath, and his mom would never see him again.

God can use the human foible factor, or He can bypass it; but either way, the plans of God will be realized. Rebekah contended for Jacob in prayer and in other ways. This Jacob became a man who continued the spiritual lineage, anointing and calling of Abraham and Isaac. It was Jacob, who due to his "past life experience," was able to dedicate all of his 12 sons to the Lord so that the Nation of Israel is alive today.

May we all be grateful to our mothers, whom we probably did not sufficiently honor with expressions of thankfulness for their love and willingness to sacrifice. Wives and mothers deserve gratitude. **They are models of self-sacrifice. They wish their children well and constantly bring their requests in prayer. Then, when they hear God's reply, they hold on till the end.**

Lord, bless the mothers, wives, and daughters. May they be always open to the Lord and not give in to the ways of this world. May we see all generations standing in the faith, inheriting their fathers' calling through the labor of their mothers.

"I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God..."
(2 Timothy 1:4-6)



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THE LAND RESTED



By Guy Cohen

At this moment while I write, thanks to the ceasefire in the north, the intensity of the war appears to be lessening. I am reminded of a phrase from the book of Judges: *“The land rested forty years.”* This phrase appears in three places - Judges 3:11, 5:31 and 8:28. It describes a season when the land was quiet following Israel’s victory in battle, after which an agreement was made. When the war ended, the leader of Israel who was victorious over her enemies, ruled in peace.

What is the difference between the Israelites who lived in the Land at the time of the Judges and the Israelis living here now? Sadly, many Israelis are still functioning in selfishness, idolatry, greed and fear. Our instinct is to seek a confident human leader who promises protection and prosperity. We wish people would just “live and let live.”

However, we live in a neighborhood called the Middle East where the mentality is tribal, where individual ethnic groups and extended families rise up against one another. When they see another group living in peace and prosperity, the motivating agenda is to conquer and destroy.

This takes me back to Cain and Abel, brothers from the same mother. When Cain killed his brother, I can’t help but wonder how Eve (*Chava*) the mother of us all, reacted to seeing the fruit of her womb killed by his own brother.

So where will this so-called cease fire with Lebanon take us? We in Israel yearn for quiet, but we also know that our neighbors will not stop until they have exhausted their attempts to destroy us. All that to say, now that we have quiet here in the North (and it is a relief!) where are we headed? There is a sense that you cannot let down your guard, and most of us are tired. Yet I believe that even harsher tribulations are still ahead of us.

True and lasting peace will not come by means of a man-made peace treaty. Only when the hearts of men are changed; when the hearts of brothers will be for one another. Only when the Messiah comes will the prophecy of Isaiah 2:4 come to pass and there will be no more war.

“And He will judge between the nations, And will mediate for many peoples; And they will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning knives. Nation will not lift up a sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.”

(Isaiah 2:4 NASB)

Meanwhile, we continue to pray for the salvation of Israel and the nations which surround her.



Freedom and security are not taken lightly these days. We are hyper aware that the situation can change in a moment. The last year has brought new meaning to the word “volatile,” causing some of us to check the news even when we wake in the middle of the night to see what dramatic event may have happened while we were sleeping.

Over a cup of coffee at the congregational coffee house on a recent weekday evening a few of us women sat together to talk and pray. Each one shared where she is at and how the war and ceasefire has affected her. Each one had a story to tell – five women from five different countries: how she came to faith, what are her current struggles and blessings, and how she is coping with the situation. One shared how a rocket had hit right in the park where she takes her grandchildren to play. Another told of a rocket falling just meters from the apartment where she was with her mother. It could have been a heavy and depressing

conversation, but we were laughing and grateful for the *miraculous protection* we have each seen; and for how the difficulty has opened up opportunities for each one to share the love of God with people in their path.

On the news that evening a video from one of the kidnapped hostages had been released and they showed his mother’s emotional response to the video. Anyone watching could not stay dry-eyed. I thought back to the prayers we had prayed – simple, desperate, un-eloquent prayers – for our families, for our country, for the hostages. With so much to be thankful for, and yet so many unsolved problems, our human souls faint at the tangled web of trouble we see in our country and in the world. It feels like an impossible scenario – regular mundane life goes on and must go on – the sun rises and sets and time passes bringing us into a new calendar year, but our hostages remain frozen in time, frozen on that fateful October day.



As the ocean is full of waves that return again and again to the shore without tiring, God’s faithfulness will yet prevail. His ocean of miracles that has been crashing on the shores of our humanity since the beginning of time will not cease until His purpose is fulfilled.

**“When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion,
We were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing.
Then they said among the nations,
‘The Lord has done great things for them.’
The Lord has done great things for us,
And we are glad.
Bring back our captivity, O Lord,
As the streams in the South.
Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.
He who continually goes forth weeping,
Bearing seed for sowing,
Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing,
Bringing his sheaves with him.”**

(Psalm 126 NKJV).



SEEING INTO THE SPIRITUAL WORLD



By Jonathan Moore

“Rabbi,” Nathanael answered, “You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

“Because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree, you believe?” Yeshua replied to him. “You will see greater things than that!” And He said, “Amen, amen I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God going up and coming down on the Son of Man!”

(John 1:49-51)

When I look at a person, I see ... a person. But when a doctor looks at a person, he sees skin, muscles, veins, and all kinds of bodily systems working together. And when God looks at a person, He sees every hair on their head, every gene in the genome, every part of their past and even into their future! Quite a difference!

Most of us see the natural around us and fail to see beyond. But it isn't impossible or un-natural to see beyond; it's just super-natural. Jacob went to sleep in the middle of nowhere and saw into the supernatural with angels ascending and descending and the Lord Himself standing at the top of the ladder. He woke up and said, “Undoubtedly, the Lord is in this place – and I was unaware.”

I think we can all identify with his thought... “I was unaware.” It's so easy to look at the natural and miss the supernatural. It's easy to become complacent. Sometimes, we even get scared by the natural. Just like Elisha's servant who was freaking out about the army of horses and chariots surrounding the city. But Elisha responded:

“Fear not,” he replied, “for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” Then Elisha prayed and said, “Lord, please open his eyes that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.” (2 Kings 6:16-17)

So whether due to complacency or fear, we often fail to see into the spiritual realm. But it's there – just beyond what our physical eyes, ears, and touch can discern. And you have the ability to see into it. You have the ability to hear the heavenly sounds, see the angels, and walk and talk with God ... all day long.

So let's bring Heaven to Earth today. Let's be emissaries of the Kingdom ... here!



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THE CROSS IS THE THRONE



By *Youval Yanay*

Jerusalem is the spiritual epicenter of God's plan for the world – where Yeshua was crucified, where He will return, and where His throne will be established. As followers of Yeshua, our mission is to bring the Kingdom of God to the heart of Israel, and Jerusalem is at the center of this mission.

“The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; So he shall open, and no one shall shut; And he shall shut, and no one shall open. I will fasten him as a stake in a secure place, And he will become a glorious throne to his father's house.”
(Isaiah 22:22-23)

Yeshua holds the authority, the key to the Kingdom. He is the one who opens doors no one can shut and shuts doors no one can open. He is the faithful stake driven into a firm place. A stake in the ground represents stability, authority, and a central point that connects everything around it. In the same way, Jerusalem is that stake in the ground for God's Kingdom. It is where heaven and earth meet, where the nations will gather, and where Yeshua will reign as King. As we move forward in our mission, we recognize that the cross of Yeshua is the central message we must proclaim. The cross is not just a symbol of suffering and sacrifice; it is the throne from which Yeshua rules.

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”
(1 Corinthians 1:18)

The cross is the place where all authority in heaven and on earth was given to Him, where the power of redemption was unleashed, and where we find our true identity as His disciples.

Jerusalem, as the physical and spiritual center of the world, holds a unique significance in God's plan. It is the place where the nations will come to worship the Lord, and it is the place where Yeshua will establish His throne.

At Revive Israel, we are committed to proclaiming this message in Jerusalem and beyond. We believe that the time is coming when all eyes will be focused on this city to witness the return of Yeshua to rule (Zechariah 14:4).

As we prepare for this day, we must ensure that our message is centered on the cross and the throne. Without the cross, our teachings lose their foundation; without the throne, we lose sight of the ultimate purpose of God's Kingdom.

As we approach the return of Yeshua, Jerusalem's importance becomes even more evident. It is the stage on which the final act of God's plan will unfold. The nations will gather around Jerusalem, and Israel will cry out, *“Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”* Our role is to help prepare the way and to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom.

“Let us keep our eyes fixed on Yeshua, the author and perfecter of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2), and continue to proclaim His message in Jerusalem, in Israel, and to the ends of the earth. As we do so, we trust that God's power, love, and grace will be made manifest, drawing all people to Himself and fulfilling His prophetic plan for Israel and the nations. Together, we will see His Kingdom come, and His will done, on earth as it is in heaven.

