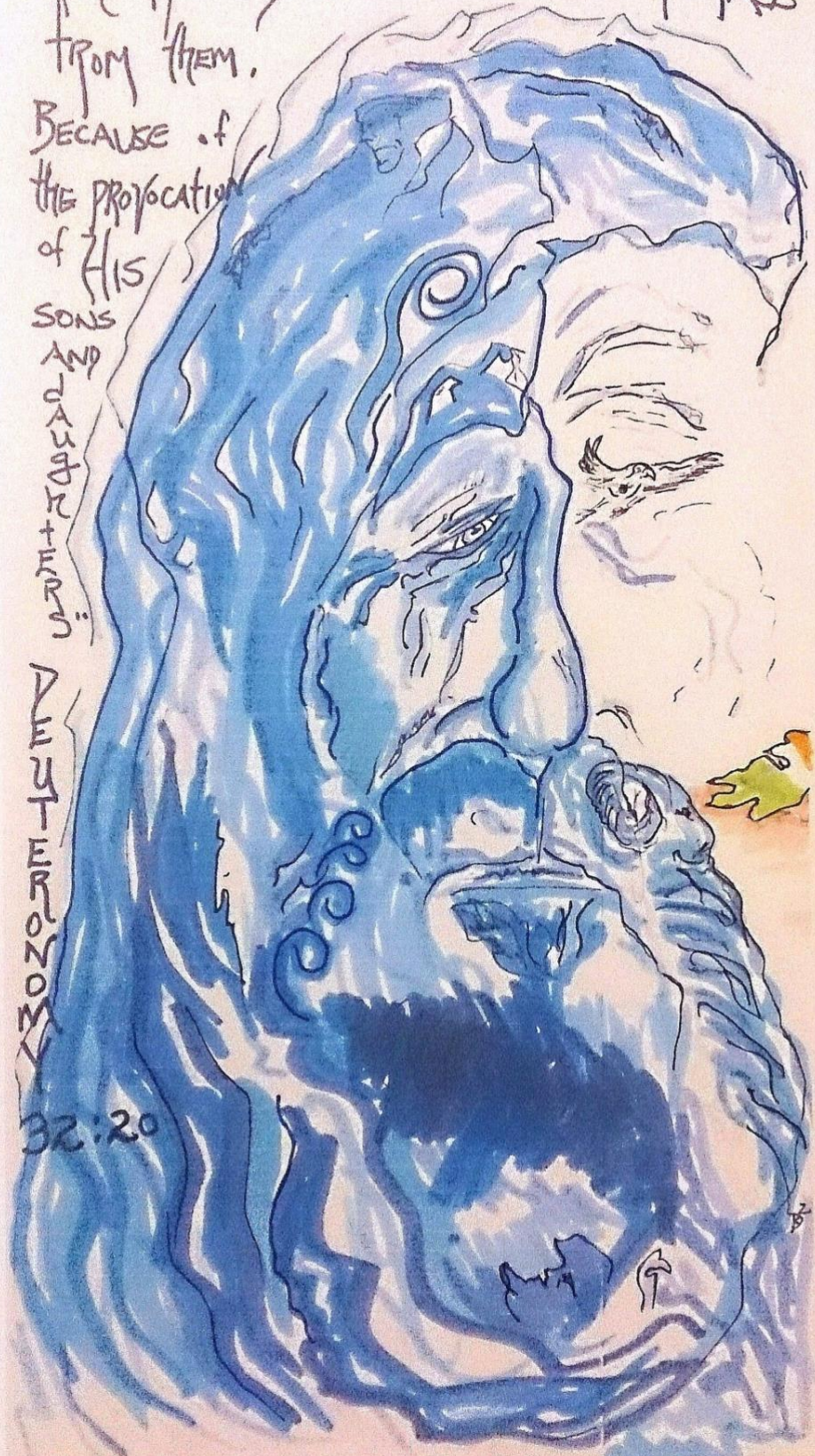


"AND HE SAID: I will hide My face
from them.

BECAUSE of
the provocation
of HIS
SONS
AND
JACOB'S
HEIRS

אֲנִי הָיִיתִי לְעֵינֵיהֶם

32:20



וַיֹּאמֶר,
אֶסְתִּירָה
פְּנֵי
יְהוָה--
{ר}
אֶרְאֶה,
מָה
אֶחְרִיתָם:
{ט}
כִּי
דוֹר
תַּהֲפֹכֹת
הָמָּה,
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בְּנֵי
לֹא-אֱמֹן
בָּם.
{ס}

20 March 2022

ORION 5 JULY 2011

KALLERSON

Deuteronomy 32:15-22
The Song of Moses, Part III
March 20, 2022

*¹⁵ "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked;
You grew fat, you grew thick,
You are obese!
Then he forsook God who made him,
And scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation.
¹⁶ They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods;
With abominations they provoked Him to anger.
¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons, not to God,
To gods they did not know,
To new gods, new arrivals
That your fathers did not fear.
¹⁸ Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful,
And have forgotten the God who fathered you.
¹⁹ "And when the LORD saw it, He spurned them,
Because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters.
²⁰ And He said: 'I will hide My face from them,
I will see what their end will be,
For they are a perverse generation,
Children in whom is no faith.
²¹ They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God;
They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols.
But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation;
I will move them to anger by a foolish nation.
²² For a fire is kindled in My anger,
And shall burn to the lowest hell;
It shall consume the earth with her increase,
And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.*

My dad mentioned to me many years ago that when typing a book, the less references there are to a specific period, the more likely the book will be relevant at any time. If one refers to Ronald Reagan in the book, the material becomes dated. As such, it will only be relevant to those who are looking into that specific era or topic.

I've tried to remember that lesson and have attempted to make things I write more useful to any generation. However, there is also the truth that when writing things, there is often more of an appeal to the audience if a lesson from "right now" is included.

It is hard to get away from "right now," because it is our reference point to gauge the past and compare it to our own circumstances. This can be especially relevant in a sermon where people need to wake up to what is happening around them.

It may be helpful to make a comparison of Israel as Moses describes him in today's passage to some other point in time, like ancient Rome that also grew fat and complacent, but if that is all that is stated, it ignores the obvious connection to us today.

This sermon will refer to our circumstances in the US as we become the latest example in the history of the world to follow the same pattern since creation. Society is formed, society develops until man increases and has ease, man forsakes God and grows in wickedness, and man is judged, reaping what he has sown.

Text Verse: *“Yet hear now, O Jacob My servant, And Israel whom I have chosen. ² Thus says the LORD who made you And formed you from the womb, who will help you: ‘Fear not, O Jacob My servant; And you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. Isaiah 44:1, 2*

The Lord formed Jacob His servant, and He chose Jeshurun, meaning Israel. As such, there should have been a resulting appreciation for what the Lord had done, a clinging to Him, and an ever-increasing bond between them.

But that is not human nature. Instead, people, communities, nations, and indeed the entire world tend to move away from God as they prosper and develop. The more prosperous the city, the more liberal and wicked the people become.

This is why a nation, such as the United States, may have massive areas of conservative voters that are spread out across the nation, but the cities and populated states quickly turn left and take on a distasteful shade of blue. There is a joining together of those who are prosperous, and the result is discussions about new, inventive, and exciting ways of doing evil.

With the global prosperity that has arisen in the past century, the entire world is heading down the same path as the pre-flood world. Only when real calamity arises will people turn back to the Lord. Unfortunately, when real calamity arises, it is often too late.

When a nuke detonates over Rome, for example, there won't be much time to think on how to get right with God. Only those on the outskirts of the blast zone will have time to maybe humble themselves and reach out to Him before the radiation consumes what is left of them too. And those further away may, if they are wise, see and turn.

But it all started with a life of ease. When things are going well, we forget our God and find other things to chase after. Let us be wise and pay heed to Him now, before things devolve, not after.

Such lessons as this are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Rock of His Salvation (verses 15-18)

We have been following the progression of the Song of Moses as it develops. There has been an introductory call. Moses then proclaimed the perfections of Yehovah. He then provided a contrast by noting the imperfections of Israel. Next, he spoke of the calling, establishment, and exalting of the nation. Verses 15-18 will tell of Israel's abandonment of Yehovah because of prosperity and ease, leading to apostasy from Him and to false gods...

¹⁵ **“But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked;**

As was the case previously, the verbs are imperfect, giving the sense of the events happening right before our eyes: *va'yishman Yeshurun va'yivat* – “And he grows fat, Yeshurun, and he kicks.” Jeshurun is a proper noun and is a play upon the name “Israel.” One can see the similarity when written in Hebrew:

Yisrael: יִשְׂרָאֵל

Yeshurun: יִשְׁרוּן

It will be seen only four times – here, in 33:5 & 33:26, and in Isaiah 44:4. It is derived from the word *yashar*, which means straight, level, or upright. Some see it as a diminutive and thus a term of endearment, which is then something like “Child of the Upright,” or “Blameless Little People.”

Others say it is a descriptor: “Upright One.” But if you look at the other times it is used, it is given synonymously for the name Jacob. As such, it is a proper noun: “Upright” –

“Moses commanded a law for us, A heritage of the congregation of Jacob. ⁵ And He was King in Jeshurun, When the leaders of the people were gathered, All the tribes of Israel together.” Deuteronomy 33:4, 5

Of this name for Israel, Moses describes his state as “he grows fat.” It is a new verb, *shamen*, meaning to grow fat. It is always used in conjunction with Israel. The idea is that of having plenty and thus being at ease.

In such a state, there is a resulting lack of reliance on the Lord. In essence, “All is good and I have no needs. I can do as I want without a care.” The other three uses of the word show the process by which Israel departed from the Lord. The first to note is found in Isaiah, prior to any thought of exile –

“And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’” ¹⁰ **“Make** the heart of this people **dull**, [lit: make fat]

And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.”
-Isaiah 6:9, 10

From there, Moses’ words are fulfilled in the people as described by Jeremiah –

“**They have grown fat**, they are sleek; Yes, they surpass the deeds of the wicked; They do not plead the cause, The cause of the fatherless; Yet they prosper, And the right of the needy they do not defend. ²⁹Shall I not punish them for these things?’ says the LORD. ‘Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?’” Jeremiah 5:28

And then, after the exile, Nehemiah recalls the state of the people –

“And they took strong cities and a rich land, And possessed houses full of all goods, Cisterns already dug, vineyards, olive groves, And fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled **and grew fat**, And delighted themselves in Your great goodness.”
-Nehemiah 9:25

One can see how ease (growing fat) leads to a growing fat of the heart, meaning the understanding, and that then leads to a rejection of the Lord and a need for His corrective measures. If one can’t see that in our nation today, he is not looking very hard.

Moses says that in this state of growing fat, “and he kicks.” It is another new and rare verb, *baat*. It will only be seen one more time and the sense of the meaning is understood from it –

“Why do you kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling place, and honor your sons more than Me, to make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel My people?” 1 Samuel 2:29

The idea is “to despise.” In Jeshurun’s growing fat, their attitude towards the Lord and His goodness towards them is to despise Him. As before, it is exactly what is seen in our nation today. Next, Moses again uses the word signifying to grow fat along with another new word...

¹⁵ (con’t) **You grew fat, you grew thick,**

It is correct: *shamanta avita* – “You grew fat! You grew thick!” The aspect of the verbs is now in the perfect. Note the change –

“And he grows fat, Yeshurun, and he kicks.”
“You grew fat! You grew thick!”

From the action of growing fat, the result is realized. Along with that, a new word, *avah*, or “to be thick,” is seen. One can see Upright, no longer upright. He is a blob that has grown out instead of up. So much so that...

15 (con't) You are obese!

kasita – “You *are* bulging!” The verb *kasah* is found only here. It comes from the cognate noun *kasah*, meaning to cover. A literal translation would be, “You *are* covered.” But the unstated meaning is being covered with fat. Yeshurun has gorged himself so much and so often that he is nothing but a roly-poly blob. As such...

15 (con't) Then he forsook God who made him,

va'yitosh eloha asahu – “And he deserts God *who* made him.” Explaining the verb *natash* will clarify the action. It comes from a root meaning to pound. As such, when something is pounded, it spreads out and the edges move farther and farther away.

What is evident is that as Israel grows, there is a resulting movement away from God. It just happens. It is the inevitable result of prosperity. The same has been the case in the US. We have grown fat, really fat.

We have “kicked” in our obesity, and the disdain we have shown for God has only grown as the prosperity has increased. This is so much the case that to even speak of Him in public is considered objectionable by the left. They literally hate Him and want Him erased from every public meeting place.

Israel was there before we were, but many of Israel are still here. The halls of our government are inclusive of Jews who literally hate the thought of God, but they are only a part of the left's machine of this hatred. They are just more practiced at it after all of this time...

15 (con't) And scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

vay'navel tsur yeshuato – “And he humiliates Rock his salvation.” The verb *navel* speaks of being foolish or stupid. As this is used causatively, the action is toward the Lord, and it is hard to come up with a suitable word to convey the intent, but I would liken what they do to how Christ was treated on the cross. He was mocked and humiliated. In this, the sense seems to come through appropriately. Verse 15 has a particular parallel structure to it –

- (a) And he grows fat, Yeshurun, (b) and he kicks.
- (a) You grew fat! You grew thick!
- (a) You *are* bulging!

- (b) And he deserts God *who* made him.
- (b) And he humiliates Rock his salvation.

Israel looked around and saw that life was good. There is no need for anything and no care for life with the Lord, and so they looked down on Him instead of looking up to Him. Yeshurun humiliates the Rock of His salvation. On to the next verse...

¹⁶ They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods;

yaqniuhu b'zarim – “They move Him to jealousy in strangers.” Notice how the words have gone to the plural. Israel forsook the Lord, and all of the people go astray in their own unique way. One after this, and one after that.

The words themselves are reminiscent of the man in Numbers 5 who is jealous of his wife who has strayed. There it says, “if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he becomes jealous of his wife, who has defiled herself” (Numbers 5:14).

The people go after strangers, meaning gods other than the Lord. In this, they move Him to jealousy. It is the US today, ten thousand false gods – wood, stone, digital, sexual, powerful influence, financial, religious... it goes on and on. There is time for anything and everything except for the Lord. As such, it is...

¹⁶ (con't) With abominations they provoked Him to anger.

b'toevot yakisuhu – “In abominations they are provoking Him to indignation.” The jealousy leads to the anger. Their false attitude towards Him is the grounds for His anger. This is perfectly seen in the record of Jeroboam, where the same verb is used –

“because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he had sinned and by which he had made Israel sin, because of his provocation with which he had provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.” 1 Kings 15:30

Jeroboam had set up the golden calves in Bethel and in Dan for the people to worship, but even more offensively, he ascribed to them the people’s deliverance from Egypt –

“It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” 1 Kings 12:28

But this is what the people had already done, even from the very moments after they had accepted the terms of the covenant –

“And Aaron said to them, ‘Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.’ ³So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. ⁴And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!’” Exodus 32:2-4

But Aaron went further by then stating that what they had just made was, in fact, the Lord, saying, “A feast to Yehovah, tomorrow!” (CG). In these things, the people not only prostituted themselves to others, but they did so while claiming that what they were worshipping – something which is a part of what He created – is actually the self-existent Creator, Yehovah.

It is like watching the pope kiss the feet of a plastic model of baby Jesus or a wooden image of Jesus hanging on a cross and calling it a good thing, as if that is somehow connected to the Lord who actually came and walked among us and who was then crucified for our sins. There is no reasoning as to the true nature of their actions before the Lord. In this verse, we see reverse parallelism –

- (a) They move Him to jealousy (b) in strangers
- (b) In abominations (a) they are provoking Him to indignation

It is future, but it is assured. The charges against them are laid out, in advance. But more indictment against Israel is ahead...

¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons, not to God,

yizbekhu la'shedim lo eloha – “They are sacrificing to the demons, not God.” It is a rare and difficult word, *shed*, found only here and in Psalm 106:37. Some say it is of foreign origin, like the Arabic word for Satan. As such, and being plural, it would be “to the Satans,” and thus demons.

It may also come from the Hebrew *shud*, signifying waste. This would still refer to demons, as something malignant. Moses was aware of them, in advance, and the Psalm bears out that Israel did exactly this, even with their own children –

“They even sacrificed their sons And their daughters to demons, ³⁸And shed innocent blood, The blood of their sons and daughters, Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; And the land was polluted with blood.” Psalm 106:37, 38

The horror of their actions cries out from the pages of their own Scriptures, testifying against them both in advance and after the fact. This is what Paul later warned the church of –

“Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons. ²² Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?”

-1 Corinthians 10:20-22

This is a practice often seen in Roman Catholicism where the false gods of the nations are actually incorporated into the church through what is known as syncretism – the merging of different religious expressions.

Just two years ago, a statue of Pachamama (Mother Earth) of Amazonian worship was incorporated into a Vatican display during prayer services. As praise and prayers are considered sacrifices to God, this is perfectly akin to what Israel was charged for. Their allegiances were directed...

17 (con’t) **To gods they did not know,**

elohim lo yedaum – “Gods no they knew.” The Lord was God to them. He had removed them from a land of gods to be their only God, but they didn’t just go back to the old gods of Egypt. They actively went seeking after new gods to serve...

17 (con’t) **To new gods, new arrivals**

It is a plural adjective: *khadashim miqarov bau* – “Newbies, from near they came.” The word *qarov*, or near, can mean in time or in vicinity. Due to the structure of the verse, it is probably referring to time. They are newbies...

17 (con’t) **That your fathers did not fear.**

lo searum avotekem – “No have they dreaded, your fathers.” One gets the sense of appeasement with these words. The word *sa’ar* doesn’t mean to just fear, but to be terrified of. It comes from a root signifying “to storm.”

Thus, it speaks of being terribly afraid. We can imagine the false gods conjure up by people when telling stories. Eventually, like in a Hollywood movie, the people become terrified of them. In order to pacify them, sacrifices are made to them.

This is unlike their fathers who were close to the Lord. Their relationship was not of terror, but of awe that indicated a right fear of Him. Instead of trusting in and fearing the Lord (we’ll say, “Take a chance on Me!”), they feared the demons and sacrificed to them (to the Lord they said “So long!”). Hence the abba structure –

- (a) They are sacrificing to the demons, not God.
- (b) ‘Gods’ no they knew. (previously unknown)
- (b) Newbies, from near they came. (previously unknown)
- (a) No have they dreaded, your fathers.

Enough pop music for now! Of the false gods, they were mindful, but of the Lord from whom they issued, however...

¹⁸ Of the Rock *who* begot you, you are unmindful,

The second verb is a jussive: *tsur yeladekha teshi* – “Rock brought forth you; may you forget!” It is also a word unique in Scripture, *shayah*. It comes from a root signifying to keep in memory; be unmindful. Being a jussive, however, it is as a command to forget.

Also, the words are all in the singular: You, Israel. Therefore, it is a play on words. There is the Rock, stable and unchanging, who brought Israel forth, and then there is Israel being practically commanded by Moses to forget Him because of their actions toward Him...

^{18 (con’t)} And have forgotten the God who fathered you.

va’tishkakh el mekholelekha – “And you have forgotten God in travail with you.” The idea conveyed is the process the Lord went through in order to establish Israel. It is as if He brought them forth as a woman in labor. All of His efforts were expended to do so, and yet Israel has forgotten Him. Moses uses the same term to describe the formation of the world itself –

“Before the mountains were brought forth, while Thou wast yet **in travail with** earth and world, and from eternity unto eternity Thou art God!” Psalm 90:2 (Ellicott)

Again, we see here reverse parallelism –

- (a) Rock brought forth you; (b) may you forget!
- (b) And you have forgotten (a) God in travail with you.

The Rock of our salvation is not like any other God
 He is steadfast and mighty to save
 To Him alone do the redeemed shout and applaud
 A marvelous thing He did when His Son He gave

Let us refrain from provoking Him
 By following after that which is less than bubbles

That will set us on a path, dark and grim
And set our feet on a way filled with troubles

In Him alone, let us find our rest
And to Him alone, let us direct all of our praise
He is worthy of it all, even our very best
And He is worthy of it all, even to eternal days

II. I Will Provoke Them to Jealousy (Verses 19-22)

With Israel's abandonment of the Lord noted by Moses, he will now bring out Yehovah's rejection of them, His turning from them, and His judgment upon them. However, in verse 21 it will allude to His plan to lure Israel back to Himself through His active turning to another group of people.

¹⁹ **“And when the LORD saw *it*, He spurned *them*,**

va'yar Yehovah va'yinats – “And saw, Yehovah, and spurned.” The words are of Moses beholding the results of Israel's actions. They are direct, comprehensive, and unambiguous. Israel's doings are completely open and exposed before the Lord. In seeing what they have done in spurning Him, He in turn snubs them. We cannot help but see the ultimate spurning of Him in the Person of Jesus.

It's not that they just rejected Him and nailed Him to the tree, but they continued to do so, even after the innumerable evidences that He had resurrected and that in His name healing came to the people through miracles being performed. And so, He spurned them...

¹⁹ (con't) **Because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters.**

mi'kaas banav u-benotav – “From provocation His sons and His daughters.” Here, the idea of the previous verse continues. The Lord brought them forth and He was in travail with them.

Taken with the previous verse, one can see an additional parallelism where the forgetting of the people leads to the spurning of them by the Lord and how the forgetting of their Father is equated to provocation of the children. It is an a/b/a/b pattern –

- a) Rock brought forth you; may you forget!
- b) And you have forgotten God in travail with you.
- a) And saw, Yehovah, and spurned.
- b) From provocation His sons and His daughters.

They are His sons and His daughters, but they are disobedient and unfaithful to their Father...

²⁰ And He said: 'I will hide My face from them,

va'yomer astirah panay me'hem – “And He said, I will hide My face from them.” This is the result of His spurning them. Moses speaks on behalf of the Lord: “I will hide my face from them.” This thought was first expressed in the previous chapter –

“And the LORD said to Moses: ‘Behold, you will rest with your fathers; and this people will rise and play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land, where they go to be among them, and they will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them. ¹⁷ Then My anger shall be aroused against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, “Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?” ¹⁸ And I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done, in that they have turned to other gods.’” Deuteronomy 31:16-18

When the expression “I will hide my face from them” is used, one can get the sense of the Father not allowing his disobedient children to come into His presence. Cambridge stupidly says the words “And He said” are a gloss that overloads the rhythm. A gloss is added only to highlight the rhythm, not overload it.

The words are perfectly placed to draw out the thought of the Lord for us to consider. The people are cast off and left to their own devices as a form of discipline against them. The Lord is curious how they will fare...

²⁰ (con't) I will see what their end *will be,*

ereh mah akharitam – “I will see what their end.” For sure, the Lord knows their end. It is an ironic way of saying it, just as a parent would say when a child threatens to run away – “Go ahead and go then! We’ll see how far you get.” The Lord knows that without Him, their end won’t be a happy one...

²⁰ (con't) For they *are* a perverse generation,

ki dor tahpukoth – “For generation contrariness.” It is a new noun to Scripture, *tahpukah*, coming from *haphak*, meaning to turn or overturn. Hence, it refers to them as those who are contrary, always turning things around. This word will be seen nine more times, all in the Proverbs. A good example of it is –

“A violent man entices his neighbor, And leads him in a way that is not good. ³⁰ He winks his eye to devise perverse things; He purses his lips and brings about evil.”

-Proverbs 16:29, 30

Like the violent man whose facial expressions give away the things of his heart, so is Israel as they devise things that are perverse and mull over doing evil. They are...

²⁰ (con't) **Children in whom *is* no faith.**

hemah banim lo emun bam – “They children no trustworthiness in them.” It is a new noun, not an adjective, *emun*. It is derived from *aman*, to confirm or support. Thus, it speaks of the state of being established or trustworthy. Israel is being equated to children that are asked to do the chores while dad is away, and when he comes home, he finds that nothing was done.

Instead, the house is sloppier than before, the animals all ran away because the gate was left open, and the day’s vegetables have bugs in them because they weren’t taken inside and washed. And instead of memorizing their daily Bible passage, they have torn out the pages and made paper airplanes.

One can see the a/a/b/b structure of the verse when it is set forth as a whole –

And said,

a) I will hide My face from them.

a) I will see what their end.

b) For generation contrariness.

b) They children no trustworthiness in them.

In their untrustworthiness, He says...

²¹ **They have provoked Me to jealousy by *what* is not God;**

hem qinuni b’lo el – “They provoked me jealous in ‘no-god.’” Israel worshipped anything and everything that they could set before them. Not one of the things they set before them was God. The singular is used to describe all of the various things as one. Cumulatively, they are all a “no-god.” The Lord contrasts Himself to them, giving the reason for His jealousy. But there is more...

²¹ (con't) **They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols.**

kiasuni b’havlehem – “They have moved Me to indignation in their bubbles.” The word *hevel* signifies vapor or breath. To give the sense of something that can be seen but has no

substance, I said bubbles. They look like something, but they are nothing – like your breath that you see on a cold morning, and then it is gone.

Because of worshipping something so ridiculously stupid, they have moved the Lord to a state of vexation. As this is so, a plan has been devised to bring them back to their senses...

21 (con't) But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation;

There is an emphasis in the words: *va'ani aqniem b'lo am* – “And I, I will provoke them to jealousy in no-people.” One can almost hear the Lord call out as He contrasts what He will do to what they have done. “They have done this, and I, I will do that.” He then contrasts their “no-god” to His “no-people.”

It is the call of the Gentiles. Israel's gods were many and thus they are no-god. The Gentiles are many peoples and thus they are “no-people.” The contrasting thought continues with...

21 (con't) I will move them to anger by a foolish nation.

It is a brilliant statement forming a play on words between two clauses and an alliteration between two different clauses. The words *go naval*, or nation foolish, are set against *havlehem*, or bubbles, forming a play on words. The words *naval* and *hevel* are spelled with only one letter difference in the Hebrew.

The alliteration is seen in the words *aqniem* (provoke to jealousy) and *akisem* (move them to anger). Moses is speaking for the Lord in a unique and remarkable way. Great structure can be seen in the verse –

(a) They provoked me jealous (b) in ‘no-god.’

(a) They have moved Me to indignation (b) in their bubbles [הבל].

(a) And I, I will provoke them to jealousy [אֶקְנִיָאֵם] (b) in no-people.

(b) In nation foolish [נבל] (a) I will move them to indignation [אֶכְעִסֵם].

This verse is carefully used by Paul as he makes his case for the gospel of justification by faith alone through the calling of the Gentiles in Romans 10 –

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”

¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?" ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. ¹⁸ But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world." ¹⁹ But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: "I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation."

²⁰ But Isaiah is very bold and says: "I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me." ²¹ But to Israel he says: "All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people." Romans 10:14-21

Israel failed to find Christ and the Lord turned to the Gentiles to provoke them. But His anger was also to be brought to bear against them...

²² For a fire is kindled in My anger,

ki esh qadekhah b'api – "For fire kindled in My nostril." Here is a new word *qadakh*. It signifies to kindle. The Lord spoke through Jeremiah of this using the same word –

"And you, even yourself, Shall let go of your heritage which I gave you; And I will cause you to serve your enemies In the land which you do not know; For you have **kindled** a fire in My anger which shall burn forever." Jeremiah 17:4

The idea of the burning nostril is that of fire shooting forth from it. His anger and hot displeasure burn forth as such...

²² (con't) And shall burn to the lowest hell;

va'tiqad ad sheol takhtith – "And shall burn even to Sheol lowest." The word *sheol* can signify various things: the pit, the underworld, the grave, and so on.

The word "hell" is an archaic word used to refer to Hades, the underworld. Today, hell takes on the thought of the place of eternal damnation. This is not the intent. The fire will burn to the lowest places, even the realm of the dead. One can think of Jesus' parable about Lazarus and the rich man. Nowhere will be safe from the burning anger of the Lord. As such...

²² (con't) It shall consume the earth with her increase,

va'tokal erets vibulah – "And consume land and her increase." This is specifically referring to the land of Israel at this time. The judgment being referred to is solely upon Israel. As far as the connection to the corresponding clause, it says in Genesis 3:19 –

“In the sweat of your face [literally: **nostril**] you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”

-Genesis 3:19

Man tends to the ground as the sweat rolls down his nostril to bring forth the increase of the earth. The fire of the Lord’s nostril shoots down upon the earth and consumes all that Israel has worked for. Nothing will be left; everything in the land will be devoured...

*22 (fin) **And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.**

va’telahet mosde harim – “And enflame foundations mountains.” Moses uses another new word, *lahet*. It is derived from a root meaning to lick. Thus, by implication, it means to enflame as tongues of flames lick up everything.

This is a poetic way of speaking of the strongest fortifications, even those set directly into the base of mountains, being utterly consumed by the fire the Lord kindles. There would be flames and burning until nothing was left.

- (a) For fire kindled in My nostril.
- (b) And shall burn even to Sheol lowest.
- (a) And consume land and her increase.
- (b) And enflame foundations mountains.

The marvelously structured and worded verses are given to excite the imagination and provide an anchor for remembering the content. But the contents are based on an actual meaning. They were given by Moses as a warning of what lay ahead for Israel.

Unfortunately, they failed to pay heed, and the terrors that were prophesied came to pass. Their failure continues to this day, and greater terrors lie ahead in the contents of the poem. But more, what lies ahead also includes the world at large.

Thus, the poem, along with the rest of Scripture, is given as a testament and a warning to the world. But the big question is, “Does anyone think the world will pay heed when even the church doesn’t?”

The large majority of the church is asleep at the wheel. Entire denominations are being led astray by truly wicked people. The holiness and sanctity of the word is disregarded. It is relegated to a bunch of myths outside of a few verses that somehow demonstrate that all will be well, and that God accepts what we do, no matter how depraved and vile it is.

This is not the case. Israel failed to pay heed, and even after the millennia of judgments upon them, they still have their heads buried deeply in the sand. The church has – for all intents and purposes – followed suit. And thus, the world has no reason to assume that the contents of Scripture hold any merit at all.

In this state, things will not – indeed they cannot – go well. But you, fellow Christian, I would ask you to take stock of what you have heard, apply it to your life, and not be led astray by those who say, “All is well; the Lord does not see or care.”

They are deluded, and in this, the wrath of God shall come upon the entire world. This is the warning of Scripture, but it is preceded with a mark of grace. God was willing to spend His wrath towards us in His own beloved Son.

The pains and wrath that Christ faced were sufficient to stay the wrath of God that we deserve, because the righteousness He bears is sufficient to remove from us the sin we bear. In Him, and in Him alone, the exchange can be made.

Israel has yet to figure this out, but the people of God – those who understand the significance of the cross – have seen and understood. If you are like disobedient Israel, today is the day for you to wake up from your slumber and reach out to the God who loves you enough to do what He did... just for you. Don't waste a moment but call out to Him for life and length of days, even to eternity in His presence.

Closing Verse: *“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; ²⁷ For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.’” Romans 11:25-27*

Next Week: Deuteronomy 32:23-34 *The majesty of the words will go on some more... (The Song of Moses, Part IV) (96th Deuteronomy Sermon)*

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

The Song of Moses, Part III

“But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked
You grew fat, you grew thick. You are obese!
-----you disobedient nation

Then he forsook God who made him
And scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation

With foreign gods they provoked Him to jealousy
With abominations they provoked Him to anger exceedingly

They sacrificed to demons, not to God
To gods they did not know, they drew them near
To new gods, new arrivals
That your fathers did not fear

Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, sad but true
And have forgotten the God who fathered you

“And when the LORD saw it, He spurned them
-----this disobedient nation
Because of His sons’ and His daughters’ provocation

And He said: ‘I will hide My face from them
I will see what their end will be
For they are a perverse generation
Children in whom is no faith towards Me

They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God
They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols
-----that cannot soothe
But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation
By a foolish nation, I will them to anger move

For a fire is kindled in My anger
And shall burn to the lowest hell, below the deepest fountains
It shall consume the earth with her increase
And set on fire the foundations of the mountains

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise

Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...