

Deuteronomy 32:21

¹⁹*But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.*

Here in Romans 10:19, Paul quotes Deuteronomy 32:21, in answering the question, *Did not Israel know?* Paul poses the question to suggest, that Israel should not be “*surprised*” at all that has taken place in recent days. That they “*knew*” of this day, they were “foretold” of all these things. God had warned them for generations of the day when He would no longer be found of Israel... A day when God would “*Hide His face*” from them, forsaking them, leaving them to themselves, and be found in another nation.

Deuteronomy 32 is written in somewhat of a “*figurative language*,” in the terminology of a *husband and wife*. On Mt. Sinai, God entered a “*Covenant*” with Israel, a contract of sorts, in which He would be their God, and Israel would be His people. Like any other contract, they were bound by certain terms and conditions as set forth in the covenant agreement. Namely, what we refer to as the “*Ten Commandments*.” With the first being, “*Thou shall have no other Gods before me...*” Which is the “*First and Great commandment*.” “*You shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” As a matter of fact, the keeping of that one commandment is the keeping of the whole law, and the commandment being simply to “*Love God.*”

God was basically asking Israel for their heart... But, as time would reveal, something they did not do. They gave their heart to “*Things*”, to other “*Gods...*” It is written in marital terms, in that Israel would play the “*harlot*,” forsaking God for mammon, for other gods... And as a result, God vows He would leave them, and unite with another nation.

God’s hope was, that as a result of seeing this “*new relationship*”... Israel would become “*jealous*”. That this upon “*seeing*” God among this “*other nation*,” that it would provoke a “*love for Him*.” That they would repent of their *adulterous ways* and seek to be *re-united* with Him again.

Which is exactly what has happened... Upon Israel’s rejection of Christ, God has left Israel, and united with the Gentile world. In Christ, God had entered a “*new relationship*,” a “*new covenant*” as it were, with the Gentiles...

Something that should come as no surprise to Israel... For God had been telling them of His intentions for close to fifteen hundred years now. In Romans 10:19, when Paul asked, “*Did not Israel know?*” he was referring to the statement he made back in 9:30~33, concerning God’s relationship with the Gentiles. “*Did not Israel know?*” They most certainly know! For God had told them through Moses of His intentions concerning the events of this day! Tonight, I want to take a closer look at God’s warning to Israel of this, found in Deuteronomy 32. To better understand, we need to turn back to chapter 31.

Deuteronomy 31:14~18...*Prediction of Israel’s Rebellion...*

God reveals to Moses, that after his death, Israel will greatly rebel against God... And God explains to Moses what He will do in the matter. He will forsake them, hiding His face from them, until they come to realize, that their sin has separated them from God.

(Vs 19) ¹⁹*Now therefore (Knowing that) write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.*

I want you to write these words down, in the form of a SONG...and teach it to the children of Israel. I want them to know this song by heart.

(Vs 20~23) This SONG will be a WITNESS unto them...

God reveals to Moses that upon entering the Promised land, Israel will “*waxen fat*”, they will nourish their hearts with the good of the land, and turn from God... They will get wrapped up in all the things, all the “*blessings*” and will abandon God, and basically give themselves to pleasure and fun...

(Vs 24~27) To ensure that this SONG be not forgotten, Moses commands it to be placed with the Law of God in the Ark of the Covenant.

(Vs 28~30) Moses gathers all the leaders, and explains this Song...

(32:1~43) The SONG...

(Vs 1~4) He is faithful and Just...

(Vs 5) They are unfaithful and corrupt...

(Vs 6~14) How could you do the Lord this way? ...He's been so Good to you!

(Vs 11) *Jesus used a similar analogy to express his love when he looked over Jerusalem and said he wanted to gather them as a hen does its chicks...but they would not...*

(Vs 15~18) Their Spiritual condition...

(Vs 19~21) God's Jealous will spur Him to action...

The Lord was provoked to jealousy by Israel's worship of that which was “*Not God.*” So in turn, He would provoke Israel to jealousy by a “*No Nation.*”

He would give Israel a dose of their own medicine! They had left Him for other gods, He would leave them for another nation.

(Vs 22~25) The Description of the “*fury*” of God's Jealousy...

(Vs 26~27) He thought about completely “*annihilating them!*”...

But He had to restrain himself... The only thing that would prevent the Lord from permitting the complete destruction of “*His people*” would be His concern that the Gentiles might claim for themselves the honor of victory over Israel!

(Vs 28~36) The Impending Judgment upon His People...

The Lord will judge Israel as a nation, but that nation is composed of “*righteous and wicked.*” In verse 36, the King James says “*and repent himself for his servants...*” which is better understood as “*he will have compassion on His servants.*” That's not to say they won't suffer along with the nation, but that God actually helps the righteous by destroying the wicked. “*His servants*” are the righteous, all who in the time of judgment are faithful to the Lord. The Lord would judge Israel, not to destroy the nation, but to judge the sinners and show the folly of their false gods and wicked ways. At the same time, the Lord has always shown compassion for those who have loved and obeyed him.

(Vs 36~43) He exhorts them to call upon their gods for help...

(32:44~47) The importance of the SONG... A matter of “*Life and Death.*”

The ironic thing is...it was a song. A song that no doubt, Israel didn't feel much like singing. Paul points to this song, that all of Israel knew by heart, and declares... God told you so! You left God for other gods, thus God has left you, and went to another nation, the Gentiles...

No doubt, Israel may have thought this to be fulfilled on several occasions, when they were taken captive by their enemies, the "*Babylonians*," the "*Medo-Persians*," the "*Greeks*." All of which were judgments of God. But those were not what it was in reference too. The song pointed to during the times of Christ, when Israel would "reject" Him...

Reason being, the song was in reference to the time when God would "*Leave Israel*" to unite with "*Another Nation!*" And despite all their rebellion, which caused God to send judgment on Israel by the surrounding nations, God never left Israel. It wasn't until Israel nailed him to a tree, that God leaves them to themselves. Now, through Christ, He has entered into a covenant relationship with Gentiles...

Beloved, this is a reference to the "*Church*." God's glory has departed from Israel, and now abides on the church, which consist of believing Jews and Gentiles all over the world. By playing the harlot, Israel has lost her husband to another woman. A situation that will provoke Israel to jealousy.