

# Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,  
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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## The Image of Jealousy

Images are objects intended to imitate something else. Some images are also symbols that represent much more than they appear to be. Sometimes they stir powerful emotions that are repressed by the conscious mind, which otherwise may not be felt.

Just as images may stir our emotions, they also stir up emotions, such as jealousy and anger, in Yahweh. Knowing that people are strongly attracted to the temptation of worshipping images, Yahweh warned Israel that they must destroy the altars, images, and groves of the inhabitants of the land in order to prevent themselves from being deceived into worshipping them. His jealousy is stirred so much by the worship of images as gods that Yahweh told Israel that His name is even also called “Jealous:”

- 12 Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you go, lest it be for a snare in the midst of you:
- 13 But you shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:
- 14 For you shall worship no other god: for Yahweh, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God: -Exodus 34

As we become aware of Yahweh’s strong feeling of jealousy toward images, we can begin to appreciate the significance of the vision that He gave to Ezekiel concerning the temple in Jerusalem. Even as Ezekiel was in captivity in Babylon, Yahweh showed him a vision that revealed the polluted worship practices that were being performed in the house of God by those who claimed to be His people.

The spirit of God showed Ezekiel a door in Jerusalem. It was the door of the north inner gate of the temple, where the “seat of the image of jealousy” was located:

- 3 And he put forth the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looks toward the north; where *was* the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy. -Ezekiel 8

As Ezekiel saw again the awesome glory of God, Yahweh showed him the “Image of Jealousy,” which stood northward at the gate of the altar:

- 4 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel *was* there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain.
- 5 Then said he to me, Son of man, lift up your eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up my eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. -Ezekiel 8

The Hebrew word that is translated here as “image” is *צמל* (cemel). Used only five times in the Bible, it is also translated as figure or idol. Because it is identified as “The Image of Jealousy,” we can infer that it represents something that directly competes with Yahweh for the affection of the people who enter His house for worship. Sitting at the gate of the altar, the “Image of Jealousy” must be passed by anyone coming to the altar to offer a sacrifice. Those desiring to worship Yahweh must first pass by, and perhaps worship, the image that sits before the altar.

The presence of this image in the house of Yahweh diverted from Him the complete worshipful affection for which He alone is worthy. Yahshua (Jesus) summarized Yahweh’s commandments concerning our love for Him:

- 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength: this *is* the first commandment. -Mark 12

This means that there must be no competition. Our love for Him cannot be shared. Yahweh outlined in detail exactly what this great commandment means when He said:

- 7 You shall have no other gods before me.
- 8 You shall not make you *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 waters beneath the earth:
- 9 You shall not bow down yourself unto them, nor serve them: for I Yahweh your God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me,
- 10 And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,  
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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11 You shall not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain: for Yahweh will not hold *him* guiltless that takes his name in vain. -Deuteronomy 5

The very presence of an image for worship or adoration in the house of God was in direct disobedience to His commandments concerning our total love for Him. While it is not clear exactly what the “Image of Jealousy” was, it made Him jealous. That means it competed with Him for love and worship among His people.

Just as the “Image of Jealousy” kindled in Yahweh the emotion of jealousy, the worship of the “Queen of Heaven” kindled in Him the emotion of anger. By offering sacrifices to the “Queen of Heaven” in Jerusalem, as well as in other cities of Judah, Yahweh’s people caused Him to become so angry that He told others to not pray or make intercession for them, because He would not even hear them:

- 16 Therefore pray not you for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear you.
- 17 See you not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?
- 18 The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead *their* dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. -Jeremiah 7

Instead of being blessed through their worship of the “Queen of Heaven,” the people brought both confusion and the promise of judgement from Yahweh upon themselves:

- 19 Do they provoke me to anger? says Yahweh: *do they not provoke* themselves to the confusion of their own faces?
- 20 Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh; Behold, my anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched. -Jeremiah 7

Those who bow down before such images as the “Image of Jealousy” or the “Queen of Heaven” also prepare

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themselves to bow to another image, which is described in the Book of Revelation as the “Image of the Beast.” This image could also be called the “Image of Blasphemy” because the “Beast” even blasphemes the name of God and makes war against God’s people:

- 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.
- 7 And it was given to him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all families, and tongues, and nations. -Revelation 13

A second “Beast” will use deceiving miracles to cause people to make an image of the first “Beast” and to worship it under penalty of death:

- 14 And deceives them that dwell on the earth by *the means* of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.
- 15 And he had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. -Revelation 13

Like the “Image of Jealousy” that Ezekiel saw in the temple of Yahweh, someone will sit in the Temple of God, pretending that he is God. Paul describes him as one:

- 4 Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. -2 Thessalonians 2

Those who worship the “Image of the Beast” will believe that the “Beast” *is* God. Not having a love for the knowledge of the truth, they will believe in the name of the “Beast,” while denying the name of Yahweh. By accepting the name of the “Beast,” they will also accept the “mark,” which represents his name. Many will accept the vain name of the “Beast” as the name of God:

- 16 And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:
- 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. -Revelation 13

Others, however, will know that the name of the “Beast” is not the name of God:

- 1 And I looked, and, behold, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. -Revelation 14

Knowing the name of Yahweh, they will not provoke Him to jealousy by worshipping a deceiving image. Instead, they will keep His commandment to love Him with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.