



## Daily Verse and Comment

### Exodus 34:12-16

(12) Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. (13) But you shall destroy their altars, break their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their wooden images (14) (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God), (15) lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and *one of them* invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, (16) and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods.

*New King James Version*

[God](#) describes idolatry as harlotry, playing around with someone else's spouse. It is a case of divided loyalties. God becomes angry, jealous, when this happens spiritually. In fact, in [Deuteronomy 4:24](#), His anger becomes so hot that He describes Himself as being a consuming fire. Fire symbolizes God's radiant glory as an aspect of His [holiness](#).

Zeal and jealousy are opposite sides of the same coin; both of them are driven by passion. One is positive, the other negative. One is for, one is against. Zeal is passionately for something or somebody, while jealousy is passionately against something or somebody. Similarly, fire is hot, and it is both positive and negative. It symbolizes both refining and purifying, on the one hand, and death and destruction on the other.

The pattern is in the way God depicts His feelings toward us. As a consuming fire, He will either purify or destroy with His passion. He is either for something with a great deal of ardor, or He is against something with a great deal of fury. He is for those who are with Him, and He is loyal to the *n*th degree to them. But He is against [sin](#) and disloyalty with just as

much heat as He is for those who [love](#) Him and diligently seek Him. His attitude is not cool in any way, shape, or form, but hot. He wants us to respond in like manner.

In what way are we [seeking God](#)? Diligently? Earnestly? Sincerely? With warmth, ardor, and affection? Is our seeking the ardent pursuit of one in love—one who wants to be around this personality and really desires to know Him because we are, after all, going to marry Him and spend all eternity with Him? Or is it a kind of a take-it-or-leave-it, distant, academic coolness because we do not want to make a fool of ourselves or [offend](#) others with our zeal? Think about it.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**  
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