

# Deuteronomy 32:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God;  
they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will  
move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I  
will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

## Analysis

**They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God**—bēlō' 'ēl (אֱלֹהִים), literally 'with a no-god.' Paul quotes this verse extensively in Romans 10:19 and 11:11-14, showing how Israel's rejection of Messiah led to Gentile evangelization. Divine jealousy provoked by Israel's unfaithfulness produces redemptive jealousy in Israel when they see Gentiles enjoying covenant blessings.

**I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people**—bēlō'-'ām (אֱמֻלִּים), 'with a no-people.' This prophesies Gentile inclusion in the New Covenant, where pagans become God's people (Hosea 1:10, 2:23; 1 Peter 2:10). **A foolish nation** (gôy nāvāl) refers to Gentiles who lacked Torah—yet through Christ, the 'foolish' confound the 'wise' (1 Corinthians 1:27).

## Historical Context

This 'measure for measure' judgment was fulfilled progressively: Assyria and Babylon (foolish nations) conquered Israel; later, the gospel went to Gentiles while many Jews rejected Christ (Acts 13:46, 18:6, 28:28). Paul saw himself fulfilling this prophecy as apostle to the Gentiles, provoking Israel to jealousy (Romans 11:13-14).

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does Paul's use of this verse in Romans 10-11 demonstrate the continuity between Old and New Testament redemptive history?
2. What does God's turning to 'those which are not a people' reveal about grace based on election, not ethnic privilege?

## Interlinear Text

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הָיָה	אֶקְנִיָּא	בְּלֹא	אֵל
H1992	They have moved me to jealousy	with that which is not	God
	H7065	H3808	H410
אֶכְעִסֶם:	בְּהַבְלֵיהֶם	וְאֲנִי	
I will provoke them to anger	with their vanities	H589	
H3707	H1892		
אֶקְנִיָּא	בְּלֹא		
They have moved me to jealousy	with that which is not		
H7065	H3808		
עִם	בְּגוֹי	נָכַל	אֶכְעִסֶם:
with those which are not a people	nation	with a foolish	I will provoke them to anger
H5971	H1471	H5036	H3707

## Additional Cross-References

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**Romans 10:19** (Parallel theme): 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.

**Romans 9:25** (Parallel theme): As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

**1 Kings 16:26** (References God): For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.

**1 Kings 16:13** (References God): For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.

**Jonah 2:8** (Parallel theme): They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

**Psalms 78:58** (Parallel theme): For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

**Psalms 31:6** (Parallel theme): I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD.

**Jeremiah 14:22** (References God): Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.

**Deuteronomy 32:16** (References God): They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

**Hosea 1:10** (References God): Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.