

## **03 | God's Dream for Man (Part 1)**

### THE LOVE OF GOD Series

Welcome back to The Love of God. In this session we're going to be talking about God's dream for a man part one. Now, in the previous two sessions, we've been seeing that from the very beginning it is evident in scripture that God is not only powerful and creative, but He's so loving. And in the story of creation, we saw that everything He was making, He was making for us. Remember, He said, "Let it be done," and then He said, "It's good." It's good because He was thinking about you and me. He was creating this planet for mankind, for that crowning jewel of creation, and we saw that we're His masterpiece, we're His masterpiece. We are uniquely designed and crafted by Him, and He made us in His image and likeness, to have relationship with us so that He could love us, and we could love Him in return. Now, in the last session, we saw Jesus speaking in the book of Proverbs, talking about how He was there from the very beginning. He was the master craftsman over all the process of creation. And we saw scripture repeatedly tell us that everything was made through Him, and not only that, it was made for Him. Then we also saw that even though He was the delight of the Father, He said, "But my delight, what I look forward to, what I enjoy is the sons of men." We are Jesus' daily

delight, and I really hope you caught that. That is such a game changer, when we realize that He enjoys us, He looks forward to us, He loves us.

So today what we're going to do is we're going to continue looking at Jesus' pursuit of us all throughout the Old Testament, and see that God has always been pursuing relationship, always looking for those that will walk with Him, that He can really be their God and they'll be His people. Let's go back to the Book of Genesis, and let's take a look at Chapter five. You know, after Adam and Eve were taken out of the garden because of the fall, they began to have children, and their children began to have children, and in chapter five, we see this genealogy. But it's interesting because in the middle of this genealogy, there's a pattern break and that should draw our attention. There's a pattern break with a man named Enoch. So, let's take a look at Genesis 5:21. It says, "Enoch lived 65 years and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years, and had sons and daughters. So, all the days of Enoch were 365 years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." This is amazing. This guy, Enoch, he never died. It says literally that God took him. But before that, it says this about Enoch. Twice in this passage we see that it says that he walked with God. He walked with God. And there was something about that fellowship that Enoch had with God that pleased the heart of God and we see this in Hebrews 11:5. It says, "By faith, Enoch was taken away so

that he did not see death and was not found because God had taken Him. For before He had taken him, he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Now, what again was it that please God so much about Enoch that he just wanted to take him for Himself? Enoch walked with Him. He walked with God. What does it mean to walk with someone? It means that you're coming into agreement with them on the direction that you're headed. It usually means that there's some kind of fellowship happening as you walk together. Enoch had that testimony, that he made a decision and choice in his life to walk with God, just like we see in the Garden of Eden. God came down in the cool of the day and He came, and He walked with Adam and Eve. And we see Enoch, he had the same heart, and it's the same heart that God is inviting you and me to have. A fellowship of relationship, of receiving His love, and giving it back. Enoch walked with Him.

Now, as we continue in the Book of Genesis, we find another man who had a similar heart, and his name at the beginning was Abram. In Genesis 12:1, God encounters Abram, and He invites him to walk with Him. In verse one, it says, "Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and I will make your name great, and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you. And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'" So

here God is giving Abram an invitation. He's saying, Abram, will you follow me? Will you walk with me? Will you leave behind your old ways, your family, and will you come into a new life that I have for you? And then listen to how God describes what He wants to do for Abram if he will walk with Him, He says, "I want to make your name great. I want to bless you." And He begins to describe, I don't want to just bless you, but I want all of your descendants and even the earth to be blessed through you, Abram. Now, this is a beautiful heart of love that we see God communicating to Abraham, and we see Him continue to communicate it to Abram's descendants, the children of Israel. Most of you know this story, but Abraham's descendants, they get taken into the land of Egypt, and in Egypt they become slaves for over 400 years. But then God raises up a deliverer in the person of Moses who helps to bring them out. But as they're coming out of Egypt, God has to start talking to them about the kind of relationship that He wants to have, how He wants to walk with them, how He wants to bless them. And that's where I want to pick it up here in Exodus 19:4-5, God is speaking and He says, "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagle's wings and brought you to Myself. Now, therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people, for all the Earth is Mine." Listen, God said I didn't just throw you out of Egypt. He said, "No, I literally I bore you on eagle's wings." It's a picture of tremendous care, right? He's

protecting them. He's keeping them. He's taking them out of Egypt. And He said, I didn't just take you to the desert. I didn't just take you out of Egypt into freedom. He said, No, I took you out of Egypt and I brought you to myself. This is what's so important to the heart of God. He's saying, I want to be your God. I want you to be My people. And I brought you out of Egypt. I brought you to Myself, and He says this, "If you will listen to me, if you will obey My voice." What is He saying? He's saying if you'll walk with Me. If you walk with Me and let Me be your God, He says, "I want to make you My special treasure." Listen to this language, this heart of love from the heart of God. He says, "I want to make you My special treasure.".

I don't know if you as a kid had anything that you would keep and kind of tuck away in your bed at night because it meant so much to you. This is kind of the picture of a special treasure, something that you take care of, that you guard, that means so much. And God says, that is who you are to me. It sounds a lot like what we talked about in the last session. A daily delight in God is speaking to the children of Israel and says, "This is who you are. I want you to be My special treasure." In Exodus 29 God says this in verse 44, He says, "So I will consecrate the tabernacle of meeting in the altar. I will also consecrate both Aaron and his sons to minister to me as priests." In verse 45 it says, "I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God, and they shall

know that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them." I am the Lord their God. Again, listen, He says, "I'm bringing the children of Israel out, and here is my desire." And He repeats it multiple times. He says, "I want to dwell among them." Remember who we're talking about here, we're talking about the Creator of heaven and earth. We're talking about the Almighty, we're talking about the all-powerful One who has always existed and will always exist. And He says, "Do you know where I want to be? I want to dwell with you." He says to this child, the children of Israel who've been slaves, right? They've been slaves for 400 years in a foreign land, and they've just come out and He says, "I want to be with you guys. I want to dwell right in your midst. I want to be among you." What kind of love is that? Well, it's the same kind of love that we saw at the very beginning, right where Jesus said, "And my delight, is with the sons of men." His delight was with the children of Israel. His delight is with you, and He wants to be with us. He wants to dwell with us. He wants to be right in the middle of our days, and our families in the middle of our situations and circumstances. And He tells the son of Israel, I want to dwell among you. He begins to talk to them about what He desires in the land that He's going to bring them into. Now, listen to His heart, and I want you to really hear this for yourself today about the kind of God that He is, not the kind of God that other people have told you about. But I want you to hear from His own heart, from

Scripture, the kind of God that He is. He says this in Leviticus 26:6. He says, "I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down and none will make you afraid. I will rid the land of evil beasts and the sword will not go through your land. I will chase your enemies and they shall fall by the sword before you. Five of you shall chase one hundred and one hundred of you shall put 10,000 to flight. Your enemy shall fall by the sword before you, for I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm my covenant with you. You shall eat the old harvest and clear out the old because the new. I will set my tabernacle among you and my soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be my people. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt that you should not be their slaves. I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright." Do you hear the passion? Do you hear the protection? Do you hear the provision that is all coming out of this heart of love. That God's saying to the children of Israel, "If you will walk with Me, if you will let Me be your God when I bring you into this land, I'm going to take care of you. I'm going to take care of all of your needs. And I want to dwell right in your midst." He says it again and again. I want to be right there in the midst of you. He says in verse 12, "I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be my people."

So, God brings them to the land of Canaan and right as they get there Moses

sends 12 spies into the land of Canaan to see this land that God has promised them. Now, as they go and they spy out the land and they come back and in numbers 13:26, it says, "Now they departed and came to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation and the children of Israel in the wilderness appeared at Kadesh. And they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and they show them the fruit of the land. Then they told him and said, We went to the land where you sent us, it truly flows with milk and honey and this is its fruit." So they're excited. They come back from this scouting trip and they're like, "Yes, this land that God promised us is so good, right here is its fruit." And it says they were literally carrying a bunch of grapes on a pole between two men, that's how big the fruit was. They say it's a land flowing with milk and honey, milk kind of being that basic necessity of life that we all need like babies do. But then, honey, being this overflow of just goodness and sweetness, and that it's filled with all of that. Everything that we need is there. But listen to how they continue. In verse 28, it says, "'Nevertheless, the people who dwell there in the land are strong. The cities are fortified and very large. Moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there,' and they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, 'The land through which we have gone as spies is the land that devours its inhabitants. And all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the Giants (the descendants of Anak came from the Giants),



and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight. And so we were in their sight.'" So, they begin to see these challenges, these obstacles in the land that God has promised them, and there is fear in their hearts. And so they give the children of Israel, it says in scripture, a bad report because they saw themselves so small compared to the challenges in front of them. So in Numbers 14:1 it continues, it says, "And all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried. And the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron. And the whole congregation said to them, 'If only we had died in Egypt or if only we had died in the wilderness, why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not have been better for us to return to Egypt?' So they said to one another, 'Let us select a leader and let us return.'" Now you can imagine the heart of God in this moment. We have to remember that we have emotions because God has emotions. And He has brought these people out of Egypt, and He brought Egypt to its knees. The superpower of that time, He brought it to its knees by His power and His authority. And yet the people have so quickly forgotten God's ability and His faithfulness. And as they come and they see these giants in the land and fortified cities, they're beginning to complain and say, "Man, He should have just killed us. Right? He should have just left us in the wilderness." And you can imagine God's heart just breaking in this moment, that they are not trusting Him, that

they're not believing Him, and they're not trusting in His love.

As we continue in this passage, I want you to hear the difference in two other spies, Joshua and Caleb, because they had a revelation of the love of God, which is what you and I are going after in this series, that we would see life and we would see challenges and we'd even see the giants in the land, but through the love of God. So listen to what they say. Verse five, it continues, and it says, "Then Moses and Aaron, they fell on their faces before the assembly of the Congregation of the Children of Israel. But Joshua, the son of nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, they tore their clothes. And they spoke to the congregation, the children of Israel, saying, 'The land we pass through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us. A land which flows with milk and honey, only do not rebel against the Lord nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread and their protection has departed from them and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them.'" Do you hear the difference? Here, Joshua and Caleb are telling the people, don't give in to fear. Don't give in to timidity. Don't back down. If God is for us, if God loves us, then He's going to bring us into this land that He's promised. See, Joshua and Caleb, they knew who God was, and they knew that God was not going to change His mind. He was not going to

back off of His promises. And it was founded on their understanding of the love of God. I just want to challenge you today to think about the promises that God has made to you. And maybe there has been some challenges, there's been some big giants that have made you back off of them a bit. Come back to the love of God today. Come back to the revelation that you are His daily delight, and you are His special treasure, and that what He promises you, that He's going to go before you and make a crooked way straight. You can trust Him. You can rely on Him. See this foundational understanding of the love of God, it changes everything, and it is a booster to our faith to be able to walk into difficult circumstances and situations, but know that God is with us, that He's for us, and that He is going to see us through and we see that in Joshua and Caleb.

Unfortunately, the children of Israel did not listen to them. And so God actually at that point said, okay, I'm not going to bring you in. He said, You've tested me now even these ten times, I'm not going to bring you into the land, I'm going to bring in your children. So that generation wandered in the wilderness for 40 years until they died off and it was time for their children to now come in and take the land. Now God begins to coach this next generation on how they are to prepare their hearts to come into the land that He's going to give them. And he reminds them over and over again, "I want you to be My people." Remember, we've been hearing this, He's saying, "I want you to be My

people. I want to be your God. I want you to walk with me. I want you to keep my covenant." And in Deuteronomy 7:6, He says this, "For you are a holy people to the Lord, your God. The Lord, your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself. A Special treasure above all the people on the face of the Earth." The Lord did not set His love on you or choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all people, but because the Lord loves you. Now, I love this. He's saying the same thing that He said to their fathers. He's saying, "I want you to be my special treasure. I want you to walk with me." And then it goes on and clarifies and says, "I didn't set my love on you because you were so great. Because you had it all together." No He says, "I set my love on you because I chose to set My love on you." And some of you need to hear that today. It's not because of your past. You don't have to measure up to God's love. He loves you because He chooses to love you. But it continues and says, "But the children of Israel, they didn't listen." Unfortunately, they went into the land, they settled in it, but they quickly forgot about the Lord, and they continued to turn their hearts towards idols, serving other things rather than Him. And in Psalm 81, we hear God's heart, and as He's watched this happen, and He's watched them turn away, He says this in Psalm 81:8, "Hear, Oh, my people, and I will admonish you. Oh, Israel, if you would listen to Me, there shall be no foreign God among you, nor shall you worship any foreign God. I am the Lord your God who brought you

out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide and I will fill it. But My people would not heed My voice and Israel would have none of Me. So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart to walk in their own counsel. Oh, that my people would listen to Me. That Israel would walk in My ways. I would soon subdue their enemies and turn My hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord would pretend submission to Him, but their fate would endure forever. He would have fed them also with the finest of wheat and with honey from the rock. I would have satisfied you again." Do you hear God's heart? He's like, "If you would just listen to Me. If you just wouldn't turn to all these other things to be your source, but if you would just turn to Me, if you would just walk with Me." Again, over and over and over again, this invitation of love, "Let Me be your God, be My people." And He says, "If you will just let Me do that, you will watch me change things in your life. You will watch Me provide for you in amazing ways." I love that it concludes and says that He would have fed them with the finest of wheat and with honey from the rock. He's like, I would have provided the best for you, even where it seemed like it couldn't come from, I'd still bring it and provide it for you because you would be My people and I would be your God.

You know, as we continue through the Old Testament, we see this pattern over and over and over again, God calling out in love, saying, "I want to be your God, be My people." And over and over again, the

children of Israel turning their hearts away from Him. But as we get into the latter part of the Old Testament, we begin to see these prophecies as God begins to tell them, "Okay, I'm not going to just come and dwell in a tent, but no I'm going to come and I'm going to really dwell among you, and I'm going to do a new thing. I'm going to forge a new covenant. Zachariah 2:10-11 says, "Sing and rejoice O daughter of Zion. For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst, says the Lord. Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and they shall become my people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the Lord of Hosts has sent me to you." You know what we're seeing here is, we're seeing God say, "I'm sending Jesus." And Jesus is going to come and He is going to literally dwell among you. And over and over again, God continues to repeat the same thing, "I want to be with you. I want to be with you. I want to walk with you. I want to dwell with you." And I pray that you hear that today, that He's speaking those same words to you, that He wants to dwell with you right in your home, right in your situations, right in your workplace. God is saying, "I want to walk with you. Will you let Me be your God? Will you be My people? And will you allow Me to show you My love, to provide for you, to protect you, to lead you." Will we receive His love, will we be like Joshua and Caleb and say, "You know what? Doesn't matter what everyone's saying, and it doesn't matter how hard things look in front of me. If God is with me, I can do it, I can do it, I can move forward. Because if God is for me (like

we know that the Word of God says), who can be against me?".

Let's pray. Father, we thank You for Your word. And we thank You for the relentless pursuit of Your love. That You continue to chase after us, and give us this invitation, "Walk with Me. Let Me be your God, be My people." Lord, we thank You. We thank You that even though our situations and circumstances can feel so messy and complicated, when You come in, Lord, You are the maker of heaven and earth, and You bring peace, You bring reconciliation, You bring hope, You bring joy. Lord, I thank You that You do it all from a heart of love. Because not only do You have love for us, but we know that Your word tells us that You are love. Father, I pray that for everyone listening to this right now, that they would recognize at a new and deeper level, that You are the God who loves them, and wants to walk with them, and be in their midst. I pray this in Jesus' name, amen.