

10.19.25

Genesis

Chapter 15 - God's Unseen Guarantees Visualizing Promises (vs. 7-11)

Genesis 15:7-11: And He said to him, “I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.” He said, “O Lord GOD, how may I know that I will possess it?” So He said to him, “Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.

The calling of Abraham is found in Genesis 12. He is called out of Ur of the Chaldeans. That was his home. It's a setting. It's a place in which he was raised. It's a culture in

which he understood. We all grow up in different ways, surrounded by different people. But it's what makes us up. It's what makes us, us. And it is in that culture, in many respects, that God begins to speak to us through. God is not limited. We read a passage such as this, and naturally, we say, "I don't get it." I mean, you can read this passage as just a lay person opening up Scripture, and you're going, "I don't see the significance of this. I mean, what's the cutting of the animals? What's the bringing of the animals before Him?" But it was very much a part of his culture. And what we're going to see is that God speaks to us where we are. That's a wonderful thing, isn't it?

I'm reminded of the fact at the very beginning of this chapter that God is reminding Abram how great He is, because we have a tendency, of course, to in some way minimize the grand and the glory of God. Nevertheless, God begins to display to him not only His greatness, but the great things that He has in store for him, as Paul would say, beyond what we would ask or think. Unimaginable things, inexplicable things God has

prepared for us. God is great. I think sometimes because we have a hard time understanding how great God is, that we perceive that He has a hard time understanding who we are. And so, in this particular passage, what we're going to see is God is intimately acquainted with our ways and is very much involved with us.

At the very beginning of this passage, if you look with me in Genesis 15:7, God starts off by declaring,

(Genesis 15:7) “... “I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.”

Now, the word that He uses for “possess” means to take from someone else and take it as your own. So, he's actually going to have to push out the people that are living there in order to possess the land. He comes back with a natural question, “How? How is this going to happen?” The passage is not as much that Abraham is doubting God, but he is asking Him, “How will this be accomplished?”

It kind of reminds me of Mary in Luke 1:31. The angel says, “You're going to conceive from your womb.” Mary goes, “Okay, so how is this going to come about? Because

I'm a virgin. How is this going to happen?" It wasn't Mary doubting. It was her wanting to know how this was going to happen. And God was certainly going to reward her with that. In this particular passage, virtually what Abram is asking is, "By what means will this be fulfilled? I'm going to take land from somebody else. How is that going to happen? By what means will You do that?" And in many respects, he's not only asking by what means, but he's asking, "What time? Will I be ready?" I know one of the things that he's probably imagining in his mind, we already know that he has a tendency to maybe think this way, is "I have 318 soldiers, maybe we can do it with them." But you have all of this mass of humanity around you, "Is this how we're going to do it?" And of course, what God is going to do is He's going to answer the question.

Now, let me just say this. We're not going to get specifically to the direct answer today. The direct answer is going to be seen in verses 12 through 21 as you look at the passage. What we're going to be looking at specifically is God, in many respects, letting Abram know that He is

involved in his life, and He understands where he's coming from. This is a very important thing because we oftentimes come to God in prayer and we're wondering, "Does God really understand where I'm coming from?" And God in this particular passage shows in such a unique way.

I'm reminded of the great text in Psalms, Psalm 139, and many of us quote it to ourselves and to each other oftentimes. It says in these verses, though, in verse 2 in particular,

(Psalm 139:2) "You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You understand my thought from afar."

He used the Hebrew word in thought there, "*rēa'*," which makes reference to the purpose that I have, the design that I have in my mind, the way that I think. And it actually is akin to a word that refers to a close friend who knows you very well. So, it's like a close friend and he goes, "I know what you're thinking." And God is saying, "I know what you're thinking." And when he uses the term "from afar," he's actually saying and talking about things

not easily perceived. So, He goes into the depths of our thoughts and He knows them very well.

It then goes on and says,

(Psalm 139:3) “You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.”

“*Sākan*,” “intimately acquainted,” is the word that he uses there, making reference to the fact that He is thinking in terms of what you need. It actually has the word servant in it, which is very interesting. But He's thinking in terms of what you need in order to benefit you. And so, when it says He's intimately acquainted with all your ways, it's not just God calculating thoughts about you. Well, He's thinking about this, He's thinking about this. But He's thinking about what you're thinking about and thinking how He can help you in this. And it's a wonderful passage that begins to show that God is very much involved in our lives. We think of Him oftentimes as a very impersonal force, and yet that's not true.

Now, we come to this, and in the very beginning in verse 7, God is saying something that we would say, “Well, He's almost being redundant because we know that He's taken

him out of Ur of the Chaldeans. Abram knows that He took him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, so why is He saying that?" Why He's saying this is He's establishing the fact that "I want you to know that I know your background very well, and everything we're about to do from here on out, I take in consideration how you think." I'm comforted by that. I'm comforted by the fact that God knows what it takes to get into my head. Because the fact of the matter is that though He is great, I have a hard time thinking the way He thinks. And of course, the Spirit of God can help me in that. But how does He communicate with me? We see Jesus and He takes little children and He puts them on His lap, and you go, "I think He knows how to communicate with kids." And He communicates with fishermen. He communicates with Pharisees. From one end of the spectrum to the other, He seems to be able to communicate with them. And so, God is very much involved. He's very much interested. He's acquainted. And He is clearly scrutinizing everything so as to do good for us. So, He's letting him know, "I know where you come from. I know who you are. And I know how you think." So, then it turns into, as he asked the question, "So, how is

this going to happen?" God goes, "I know exactly what you're thinking. So, this is what we're going to do." And I love the fact that God will oftentimes do this visualizing thing, because just in case we might miss it, if it was in perhaps words or language, God says, "Well, let Me show you a picture." And it's the same thing that He does when He wants to show him just how great His plans are for him." He says, "Let's step outside. Let's look at the stars." And as we said last week, it's just a reminder that He's dealing with somebody, specifically, that that's what he's done all of his life. For 75 years, he's been looking at the stars. That's what Chaldeans do. Their name is oftentimes translated "stargazers". So, for Him to take him out and look at the stars, this is what he does. But he's never seen them the way that God intended him to see them. And so, He's going to show him what they really mean. Well, the same thing is true with what God is asking him in this particular passage to bring before him. He's going to be asking him to bring certain animals before Him.

Now, let me just say this, and I know that there probably could be some debate on me making this statement. But

I'm thoroughly convinced that as we begin to go through Scripture, and in particular Genesis, we're watching the beginning of things, right? So, we're watching the beginning of many things. Obviously, man sinning, God creating things. There are so many beginnings in the Book of Genesis. But one of the beginnings that we see is how man thinks. And oftentimes I think that we perceive that God is calling the shots in the sense of telling man to do certain things. But I don't see that in the Book of Genesis. What I see is man begins to do things and God then works in the realm of how man thinks. Now, it's not that God is being manipulated, but it's God caring for us, and as Scripture will oftentimes refer to Him, as One bending down to speak to us; that is to say, coming down on our level. It's the grace of God that does this. So, when you look at the beginning in Genesis 4, after man has sinned, we see Cain and Abel bringing offerings to God. Now, I just want to emphasize this. There is nothing in the passage that said God told them to bring offerings to Him. It's a very interesting text. Of course, Cain's offering was not an offering that should have been brought before God, because he really wasn't regarding God as being holy

and being somebody that was important. He brings in the after-effects of the things that he had brought in. So, you could see the carelessness of him bringing it in. But Abel brought in the firstlings, and so, he gave the best. The inference of the text there in Genesis 4 is that Eve was so grateful for what God had done for her that it seemed to have rubbed off on the boys, and they wanted to do something to give thanks. This is how they perceived that they would give thanks, so they did.

Then in Genesis 8, you have Noah, and God rescues him and his family through this flood. And at the very end, he comes out and he offers burnt offerings. There is nowhere in the text that says that God told him to offer a burnt offering. But he perceives this as a way to tell God how grateful he is and a burnt offering is that which just totally burns the offering completely, which basically is that total, totality picture of the fact that "All is dedicated to You, all is devoted to You." And so, he places this on the altar.

What I'm saying is that these things are out of man's heart and his way of thanking God. Now, I believe that in

many respects, they kind of got the idea that you want to give a something, a sacrifice, because God actually slaughtered a ram or a lamb in order to cover Adam and Eve. But if you remember, it was to cover them. So, it was God saying to them, “You're more important than all the animals, and that you feel shame, I would rather sacrifice this animal to cover you so that your shame would not abide.” So, this whole thought of sacrifice then began to stick, and man began to want to offer to God as a way of doing this. It is then, as we come to Abram, God calls Abram out, and it says, Abram built an altar. There's nothing in the text that says that God told him to build an altar. But he built an altar because this is what man had been doing in his culture. They would build altars unto their gods. And so, Abram's going to build an altar unto God.

In Genesis 14, we have a word that pops up that we've never seen pop up before, and that's the word “king”. It is the Hebrew word “*melek*”. It actually transforms into “Molech,” where the god in which you would sacrifice children on the altar. Kings were not in play in the realm

of Israel. And ultimately, as you come to the Book of Samuel, you realize that the children of Israel go, "We want a king just like the other nations." And God says, "I'm your Ruler." The word "*melek*" actually means ruler, or sovereign, or one to actually judge over you. It's interesting that man has already picked somebody to judge over him, and God didn't tell him to. So, here he does this, and God says in the Book of Samuel, "I didn't tell you to get a king. But now that you've done this, I'm going to give you a good one." And He gives them David. You remember the way that it unfolds. He does warn them, "You get a king, you're going to have to pay taxes. He's going to take your men, he's going to take your daughters, he's going to take things from you to embellish himself. You sure you want a king?" They go, "Yeah, we want a king." Somebody didn't really think through that. But as we go on, what we're seeing are things that begin to happen, and God forms and uses. He goes, "Okay, you take a king, I'm going to give a king, but he'll be a shepherd king. He'll be a good king." In other words,

“You'll have a king that will rule over you that actually cares for you rather than the way the world does.”

It's interesting in the Book of Ezekiel, it mentions the king of Babylon. You know what his title is in the Book of Ezekiel? “King of Kings”. Ultimately, we will see the Lamb of God Who will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords. But the whole concept of king was a part of what man wanted for himself. And so, God says, “Now that you want this, let Me be this for you in the right way.” And we see this pattern forming.

When I think of the tabernacle, God had asked them to make a tabernacle as they were going in the wilderness, we realized that was just tents. We've oftentimes made mention of this, and Hebrews will confirm this, everything about the tabernacle was not to build a building. It was to build a “presence.” And the word “tabernacle” actually means to abide with; God will tabernacle among us. And so, the purpose of the tabernacle was, as it was made out of tents, was to give a picture of God abiding with Him. And someday, He would actually take on flesh, i.e. the tents made out of skins. Someday He would take on flesh

and He would dwell among us. And that's, of course, John 1. Well, Solomon goes, "I want to build Him a great temple." And God says, "When did I ever ask for a temple? The whole time I called you out, did I ever ask for one? I didn't ask for one." They go ahead and build a temple. He builds a great temple. But that's not what He wanted. And He ultimately says, "I'm going to send My Son, and He's going to be that 'tabernacle' that dwells among you." And Jesus will even use that in John 2. He says, "Tear this tabernacle down. In three days, I'll raise it up." They'll go, "The temple? You're going to tear it down and raise it up in three days?" So, man has these perceptions, and God begins to work in the realm of the way that man thinks. It's very interesting.

So, the whole concept of the sacrifices, the whole concept of slaughtering animals, was man's idea on how he would worship God and how he would strike up deals. Now, the thing that we're going to see in this particular passage is something that has been going on for a while in Ur of the Chaldeans. That is to say, if you make a covenant, you make a promise, this is the way you do it: you take an

animal, you cut it in half, and you basically say, “And so may it happen to me if I don't fulfill on my promise.” And this is actually on clay tablets that they've actually dug up from Ur of the Chaldeans at the time that Abram was living there, before he was called out. So, we know that this tradition, if I could put it this way, was going on for a long time in Ur of the Chaldeans, and it was something that Abram had seen. I stipulate and declare all of this and preface this for this reason, that what you're about to see is something that is happening. God is calling for the animals, but He's not calling for them to be cut. It's not going to say that God told him to cut the animals. Abram's going to do this because that's what they do.

Just to give you an example, Jeremiah 34, in that particular passage, it actually refers to, once again, God says, “You've been coming to Me with your animals and cutting them and trying to make commitments, and you're not upholding your commitments.” One of the reasons why this tradition was created in Ur of the Chaldeans was because man, obviously, was not following God in these lands. And in these lands, they wanted

people to take serious a commitment. Jesus will say, "Let your yes be yes and your no," see? But man goes, "Cross my heart, hope to die, stick a needle in my eye." He's got to go through that process in order to convey to the person, "I'm really serious about this." And so, that's what is being done in Ur of the Chaldeans. If you'll read Scripture, basically, what it says, you won't find yourself wandering in places that you don't need to go. And so, it's just an encouragement. There are a lot of passages, and why doesn't it say, "God said"? Well, because He didn't. Because had He said it, He would have let you know.

So, we come to this passage, and it says in verse 8, in which Abram calls unto the Lord, and he goes, well, basically, "How is this going to come about? By what means will it be accomplished? By what time and what way?" And God will actually demonstrate to him, like I said in verses 12 through 21, how and in what way and in what time it's going to happen.

But then it goes on and says this in verse 9,

(Genesis 15:9) “So He said to him, “Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.””

Now, let's just look at this very simply. What does He say? He just says, “Bring them.” That's all He says.

The passage then goes on and reads this way,

(Genesis 15:10) “Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two...”

Well, why is Abram doing this? Because this is the way covenants are made in Ur the Chaldeans, and he just takes for granted this is what we're going to do.

So, he cuts them in two and it says, if you look at the passage,

“... and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds.”

That's interesting. Why would Scripture tell us that? Why would he not? And I know the argument has often been, “Oh, the birds were too small. Couldn't cut birds.” And there might be some truth to that, but I've seen people cut birds even though they were small. But there might be

some truth to that. I think there's a greater lesson in the text.

But as we go on, it says that he brought all these things. He laid them down. And then, of course, as it ends in verse 11,

(Genesis 15:11) “The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.”

So, you have an interesting picture here that is given. God first calls for these animals. Now, what are the animals about? And in, once again, the culture, they all represented something. This has been true down through the ages. And if you don't think that's true, just look at your football teams. Your football teams have animals that represent them in many respects, not to mention the one in which city we live. So, all of these things have really been handed down through the centuries. The reason why is that the animals really possess certain attributes that define them. In other words, ants work really hard, bees are busy, and when a lion roars, you better run, because they're pretty intimidating. So, you have these, and you have this sense of an eagle has these eyes and

are able to see things, and they possess these attributes that define them. So, nations actually would take on these animals to represent who they were. The reason for this is, like you go into the Book of Daniel, Daniel 7, you have the different nations, whether it's the Babylonian nation, whether it's the Medes and the Persians, or whether it's the Greeks; they're all represented by a particular animal in Daniel 7. All you have to do is go back to some of the archaeology of Babylon, and you'll see the big great lions that they had that were representing their kingdom, as well as the eagle, which some nation that I know of uses the eagle. So, what you begin to see is they define themselves by these kinds of animals. Of course, Greece, because of a swiftness, was like a leopard that ran, and he began to conquer things quickly. And you have Medes and the Persians were seen as a bear. They had one side stronger than the other. Well, that was because at that time, whether it was the Medes or the Persians, one side was stronger than the other as they began to conquer. So, all the way through, what you begin to see is animals being that which describe. And by the time you come to

Daniel 8, you see rams and you see goats that are also a picture of nations as well.

When you come into Ezekiel 1, you have the four living beings, and the four living beings have four faces on each of them. So, each being of the four living beings, which is an interesting picture of the four corners of the world, as it's oftentimes made mention, is representing four different kinds of kingdoms. One would be bullish, one would be like a lion, an eagle, the wisdom of man. So, the four heads of each of the beasts represent the kinds of kingdoms that there are on the earth and how men rule by these.

Psalm 49 will say that man is like a beast that perishes. If, in fact, we don't come and humble ourselves before God, we would act in accordance with our natural desires. And so, as Peter will actually make reference to, we oftentimes, without Christ, will act by instinct. And some people will act a certain way because they're lions and other people will act another way, but it's descriptive of who they are. It's not different in this, in the fact that in Ur of the Chaldeans, when you would make a promise or

make a commitment, you would choose an animal that would identify the commitment that you're making. So, in this particular case, God is having him bring out specific animals to identify commitments. And He's, in many respects, revealing the heart of Abram.

So, if you look at the animals with me, you'll see, and it actually says, "Go fetch these animals." And the first is the "*eḡlâ*," or the heifer. That's basically, from what I understand, if you work on a farm, that this is a female cow. And the fact that she had to be three years old is telling us that is the peak of her age. In other words, historically, what I understand, they saw that from up to that point, from one to three, the animal was actually gaining in value. And at age three, it was the peak value. So, God is wanting an emphasis here with this. And if you look, every one of the animals, whether it be the heifer, the female goat, the ram, every one of them, three years old. So, God is emphasizing peak.

Then if you look at the passage and understand that this heifer represents in that nation, and I did a little bit of investigation here in the Ur of the Chaldeans, they saw

the heifer as one that represented productivity. And of course, we know that in Ur of the Chaldeans, they worshiped the Nanna god, or oftentimes referred to as Sin, which was the moon god. And the moon god, if you watch the phases of the moon, actually comes to a point where it looks like bullhorns. It's one of the reasons why it's associated with the moon. But the moon has these cycles, and in the cycles, you plant according to the moon cycles. And in so doing, you become productive if you submit yourself according to the moon god. So, the emphasis of this animal is fundamentally fertility and productivity.

The second animal that He calls upon is the female goat, which is dealing with fertility as well. But in addition, it has a sense of one of the things that make goat a little bit different from sheep, is they're more cunning. And so, in this particular setting, specifically, they would see the female goat as this cunning force that brought forth. So, the best way I can describe that is it would define prosperity and a cunning prosperity. So, your hope was in

some way to prosper by virtue of this was something that you embrace.

And then the third was the ram specifically, and that's in the male category. So, the first two were female, which were dealing with fertility and productivity as well as prosperity. But now, you're dealing with what is called power. And from what I understand, the god Marduk was actually associated with this god, which is in Babylon. But the emphasis of this god was to be strong, strength, robust, and have a sense of tenacity. Rams have a sense of tenacity. I don't know if you knew that or not. But the fact that you couldn't push them away, they're going to come right back at you. And so, they were oftentimes seen as strong and robust, and they would build actually columns and call them "rams" because they're immovable. So, the picture is of strength.

Now, the last is very interesting. We'll talk about the dove in just a minute. But up to this point, what we're seeing is that what God is saying is, "I know the different things that where you're from, I know those things that they elevate. I know that they elevate productivity, prosperity,

and strength. I know that. Bring those animals to Me.” Let's talk about this. And Abram's not scratching his head. He knows exactly what He's talking about because that's the land in which he grew up in. Now, his thoughts are, “God's going to want me to give these things up.” So, he cuts them. He goes, “Okay, I'll make a commitment.” He cuts them. And the wonderful thing is, as we go on, we'll find out, no, God says, “No, I'll pass through.” But Abram will cut these animals to make a commitment to God. He basically will say, “I give up prosperity. It's not what I'm looking for. I'm not looking for productivity. I'm not looking to be the strongest. I'm not looking for these things. And my commitment to You will be above all those other things.” It's fundamentally the promise that Abram would have to make, “My commitment to You will be above all these other things.” Now, it's interesting that God called him to bring these animals out because now, what's in his head is, “He's asking me to make a commitment,” which is not the point.

But God asked him to bring out another animal. And if you look at the passage, it is the “*tôr*”. Now, the “*tôr*” is

actually what is called onomatopoeic. What that means is that the name sounds like what the bird does, or sounds like, “tor, tor,” like a dove. They make that kind of sound. So, it's named in such a way. It's also associated specifically with caring and love. You actually don't have to go very far back to the time of Noah, and this was the bird that came back. This was the bird that was loyal. There's a reason why they call them homing pigeons. They always go back home. And this particular bird that is mentioned is actually called the ringed dove, which it has a ring around its neck and is oftentimes associated with the ring of promise, where we get a wedding ring idea and concept of fidelity, because it's a very loyal bird. So, He asked him and He calls him to bring this particular bird in the mix.

Now, in understanding this, I could have you turn to passages like Psalm 74:19 or Song of Songs 2, which makes mention of this dove and the love and the affection and a sense of endearment. But what we have is a picture, and once again, all of these are pictures. We have a picture of endearment. We have a picture of

fidelity. We have a picture of love. So, in the mix of, if you think about it, productivity, prosperity, power, it's almost like you're changing gears and you go into the realm of endearment and fidelity and faithfulness and trustworthiness. And you have all of these pictures that are giving; in addition to the fact that there's a sense of, in the relationship that you might have with somebody and feeling these kinds of feelings towards somebody, there's a sense of vulnerability. It's not a mistake that when Jesus was baptized that the Spirit of God reveals Himself like a dove. It is that peaceful, endearing relationship that God is wanting to convey and one of fidelity. I like the way that it's put in Ephesians, that you've been sealed until the day of redemption by the Holy Spirit. Sealed. He's telling us, done, promised, faithful, and you see the continuous of that.

What's interesting is, not only is the dove asked for, but the way it reads in our Scripture, it should be probably translated a little bit different, but He says, "I want you to bring this three-year-old ram," and, if you look in verse 9, "a turtle dove," and actually it would be its young. It's not

necessarily young pigeon, it's basically the turtle dove, but it's young. The word that is used makes reference to a young bird so young that it doesn't have its feathers yet. So, the picture and the word that is used to describe a bird that is that young, if in fact it's picked up, actually means to pluck out or to rob the nest. Because in order for this bird to be out of the nest, it's been robbed. Now, what's interesting about the ring dove, is that this dove, if in fact its young dies, will not leave the nest and will continue to sing around the bird. What we have is a separation; what we have is a moment of sorrow that is literally placed before us as we have the parent and the young. The passage says that Abram would not cut them. The passage, in some way, is God saying, "So, what's important to you, Abram?" And he says, "I'll let this go. I'll let this go. I'll let this go. I cannot let relationships go. They're important to me. The affections that we have, one towards the other, I cannot." I believe the text is literally saying he cannot cut it, that he will not cut it. Of course, in the passage, is there anything that says God's telling him what to do? But this is Abram making a decision and revealing his heart. And God is saying to

Abram, "This is why I chose you. I saw your heart. This is why I chose you."

There are a number of things in Scripture that as you begin to dig, you see these wonderful truths. Isn't that wonderful? The deeper you dig, the more you see God. You're all acquainted with the passage in which God turns to Abram and He says, "I want you to offer your only son. Take him to Mount Moriah and offer him there." So, he does. He takes him there. And when he takes him there, and God says, "Because you have not spared your only son, I'll provide the sacrifice." Remember? And you remember how He provided it? There was a ram in the thicket. Do you remember it? A ram in the thicket. In 1928 and 1929, archaeologists were digging in the city of Ur of the Chaldeans, where Abram was from. They found two statues. It was interesting. It was actually in the place in which it was called, and they had the sign that was there. It was the place in which they actually called the "Great Death Pit," and it was the cemetery of the great men in Ur of the Chaldeans. I don't know how many times Abram probably walked past them, but I know that he

must have seen it because it was very visual, and these items were actually designated as being during the time and before the time of Abram. They are, interestingly enough, two rams, and they are made out of gold and silver, and the eyes are lapis lazuli. The rams, both of them, are entrapped by a thicket. It's the picture of death to the Chaldeans. The picture of death is that "I've been caught by death, and I can't get out. Doesn't matter how strong the ram, doesn't matter how strong I am, I can't break free of the death." Does it surprise you that when God reveals Himself to Abraham that it would be a ram in the thicket that will be the sacrificial lamb that would take the place? It is literally God saying, "I know how you feel, I know how you see death, but I'm going to do that for you." And it's something that he can identify with because God knows how they think and He knows what their symbols are for those things. I mean, did you ever ask yourself, why would Jesus die on a cross? It's what Romans used to kill people. So, all the way through, you begin to see how God associates with us and where we are.

In John 1, we read in the Book of John, that Jesus is going to actually call out disciples, and Philip is very excited, and somehow Nathaniel gets in the mix. Nathaniel goes, "Where's He from? In Nazareth? Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" And then you have this interesting passage, Jesus turns to Nathaniel and He says, "I saw you under the fig tree studying." And Nathaniel goes, "You've got to be My Lord. Nobody knows me like You. How did You know that? How would You even be interested in the fact that I'm studying, that I'm reading, that I even exist?" This is the thing that excited the woman at the well. Here she is, and Jesus says, "I know you've had five husbands, and the one you're living with is not your husband." And she goes, "Glory be, somebody knows me! I can't believe that somebody knows me this intimately." God is constantly revealing to us that He's intimately acquainted with all our ways. And I know the thought sometimes is, "Well, how will God speak to me?" He knows who you are. You just need to listen to Him. In the things in life, everything that's happening in your life, God is orchestrating to bring you to Himself. He is letting you know, "I know how you think, I know what's important to

you, and I know what you need to lay down in order to have salvation. And because your heart is this way, I'm going to draw you to Myself. I'm going to work in your life. It's the reason I called you." God knows everything about us, and I take great comfort and great solace in the fact that He is that involved in my life. In all these things that we see in Scripture, God begins to work in the areas that we begin to walk in. I mean, why would Jesus talk to Peter about nets? Because Peter's a fisherman. And so, the very things that He's talking to you about are the things that are in your life, and He's calling you to Himself, and He's saying, "What's important to you?" You begin to tell Him. He goes, "Are you willing to let those go?" And you say, "Yeah." He said, "What do you value most?" And if you'll say, "relationship," He'll draw you to Himself.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You and we give You thanks for Your love for us; that You're intimately acquainted with our ways; that You know when we rise and when we sit down. Lord, we give You thanks for these things. We give

You thanks for You're talking to us. As a song oftentimes says, *"In the rustling grass I hear Him pass, He speaks to me everywhere."* Certainly, You're not limited to my ability to communicate with You, for You've been talking to me all along. And the things in my life that You've been working and orchestrating are things that You've been using to bring me to a relationship with You. I believe that.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, I don't know the circumstances and the situations, the background, the culture that you come from, but God does. And there are certain things that He's done in your life, you know that's Him. He's letting you know that He's doing a work in your life. You need to open your eyes and accept that. You need to draw close to Him at this time and you need to listen to what He has to say. Because all these things are because He loves you.