



## THE GOD WHO IS JEALOUS

Exodus 20:1-5 |

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### RELATED SCRIPTURES

Exodus 34:1-17 | Isaiah 44:5-9 | John 3:16-17 | Hebrews 12:2

### SUMMARY

Today we head into the difficult doctrine of God's jealous love. It's difficult, for one, because we've never met a perfectly righteous jealous friend, or lover. But we should keep in mind that God doesn't think or act like us. His ways soar like the sky above the earth, forever higher than us (Isa. 55:8-9). So also is his jealousy not our petty jealousy.

J.I. Packer talks about it this way,

*"When God brought Israel out of Egypt to Sinai, to give them his law and covenant, his jealousy was one of the first facts about himself which he taught them. The sanction of the second commandment, spoken audibly to Moses and "inscribed by the finger of God" on tablets of stone (Ex 31:18), was this: "I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God" (20:5).*

*A little later, God told Moses, even more strikingly, "the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (34:14). Coming where it does, this latter is a most significant text.*

***The making known of God's name—that is, as always in Scripture, his nature and character—is a basic theme in Exodus...***

*Now, Scripture consistently views God's jealousy as being...an aspect of his covenant love for his own people..."*

**Think of it this way:** God is jealous for us, because if he is our heavenly Father, then it wouldn't be right for us to look for fatherly direction from anyone else, right? Jesus warns about this in John 8:39-47 (my paraphrase): *If God were your Father, you would love me... Why can't you understand a word I say? Here's why: you can't handle where my words come from. You've got a different father, the Devil, and all you want to do is please him.*

**It's more than just a sick burn.** Jesus is saying is that if you love taking spiritual direction from anyone but your heavenly Father, then you're probably part of a of a different, more Slytherin-like, fork-tongued spiritual family.

As God's children, we no longer live to please ourselves. We give up our right to be self-sufficient people and rely wholly on God's Word to direct us in what pleases God and loves our neighbor. **And to be blunt,** if God is jealous for us, for our loving obedience of him, it's because he knows what's best for us, what will truly heal us, and make us into the people he created us to be. Tim Keller summarizes it well,

*"How can you come to grips with someone who has given himself utterly for you without you giving yourself utterly for him? Jesus gave himself wholly for us. So now, we must give ourselves wholly to him."* It's simply what God's covenant love requires.

## GROUP QUESTIONS

- Think of the last time you were jealous. Was it of a friend, a colleague, a “frenemy”? Contrast your jealousy with God’s. What differences can you observe?
- From the sermon, or your direct reading of Exodus 20:1-5 (read aloud, sit with it), share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you about God’s jealousy.
- In Exodus 34:1-17 God promises that his jealous love is for us. Here God says that his faithful love (hesed) and his covenant promises bind him to us as his people. He won’t fail us, leave us, cheat on us. He’ll be with us is what he’ll be. How have you seen God’s jealous love being **for** you in your life?
- If there’s one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of these portions of Scripture, what is that thing?