

# THE CONFIDENCE OF MERCY: KNOWING GOD

Ruth 1:14-22

*For who even of slight intelligence does not understand that as nurses commonly do with infants, God is wont in a measure to "lisp" in speaking to us? Thus such forms of speaking do not so much express clearly what God is like as accommodate the knowledge of him to our slight capacity. To do this he must descend far beneath his loftiness.*

**John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book I:13:1**

## I. THE NATURE OF THE COVENANT: I will be your God and you will be my people.

### Ancient Near Eastern Covenants

*Preamble:* The king's name was announced

*Historical Prologue:* Past benefits of the king were retold

*Stipulations:* Laws for life within the covenant

*Sanctions:* Blessings for obedience and Curses for Unbelief

*Continuity:* Provisions for the future of the covenant

### Deuteronomy Outline

Deut 1:1-4

Deut 1:5-3:29

Deut 4-26

Deut 27-30

Deut 31-34

*Significance: YHWH is mentioned in the OT over 6800 times and occurs in every book except Esther, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. The shortened form yah occurs around 50 times, mostly in poetry. It is most likely derived from the Hebrew for "I am" in Exodus 3:14ff. In the Greek translation of the OT, kyrios (Lord) is used to translate this word. The Greek phrase ego emi (I am) often alludes to this name of God as well. Yahweh is the covenant name of God. It names Him as holy and personal. It reveals Him as Savior and Lord. This name was more than a name for God. It was the name of God, encompassing all that He was, all He had done, all He had promised to His people. Some of the most relevant passages referring to this name are: **Exod** 3:14ff; 6:1-8; 20:1-17; 33:19; 34:6; **Deut** 32:39-40; **Ps** 135:13; **Is** 26:4-8; 41:4; 43:10-13, 25; 44:6; 46:3-4; 48:12; 51:12; **Hos** 12:4-9; 13:4; **Mal** 3:6; **John** 4:26; 6:48; 8:12, 24, 28, 58; 9:5; 10:7, 14; 11:25; 13:19; 14:6; 15:1, 5; 18:5-8; **Rev** 1:4, 8; 4:8; 11:17; 16:5.*

## II. THE DIVINE COVENANTS: Is the Bible a random record of redemptive events or a structured story of redemptive progress?

The Covenant of Creation (Commonly called the "Covenant of Works")

The Covenant of Redemption (Commonly called the "Covenant of Grace")

1. *The Covenant with Adam:* Commencement (Gen 3:15)
2. *The Covenant with Noah:* Preservation (Gen 9:8-11)
3. *The Covenant with Abraham:* Promise (Gen 17:2-8)
4. *The Covenant with Israel/Moses:* Law (Ex 24:8-12)
5. *The Covenant with David:* Kingdom (2 Sam 7:13-16)

*God's self-revelation to us was not made for a primarily intellectual purpose... The Biblical idea is to have the reality of something practically interwoven with the inner experience of life. Hence, "to know" can stand in the Biblical idiom for "to love"... Because God desires to be known after this fashion, He has caused His revelation to take place in the milieu of the historical life of a people. The circle of revelation is not a school, but a covenant.*

**Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology*, 8**

## III. LORD OF THE COVENANT: Jesus fulfills the covenant (Lu 22:20; 1 Cor 15:20-22; Phil 2:9-11).

### Recommended Reading:

*The Christ of the Covenants*, O. Palmer Robertson  
*Understanding Dispensationalists*, Vern Poythress  
*Biblical Theology*, Geerhardus Vos

*The Final Word*, O. Palmer Robertson  
*When the Time Had Fully Come*, Herman Ridderbos  
*The Doctrine of God*, John Frame