

Covenant
- God's alternative

Walking In The Word Service
Sat, 7.30pm
Sun, 8.30am



**Knowing God –
Israel's Covenantal Privilege**

- **Covenantal relationship is to *know God***
- **'Know' is a covenant verb**
 - ➔ **it refers to the personal knowing that involves relationship and commitment.**
- **Knowing God is not abstract knowledge but relational knowledge.**



Knowing God – Israel's Covenantal Privilege

God is NOT

- unknown
- faceless
- mysterious force of nature
- a capricious deity
- or one of the many gods that inhabit the world.



Knowing God – Israel's Covenantal Privilege

He is a God who

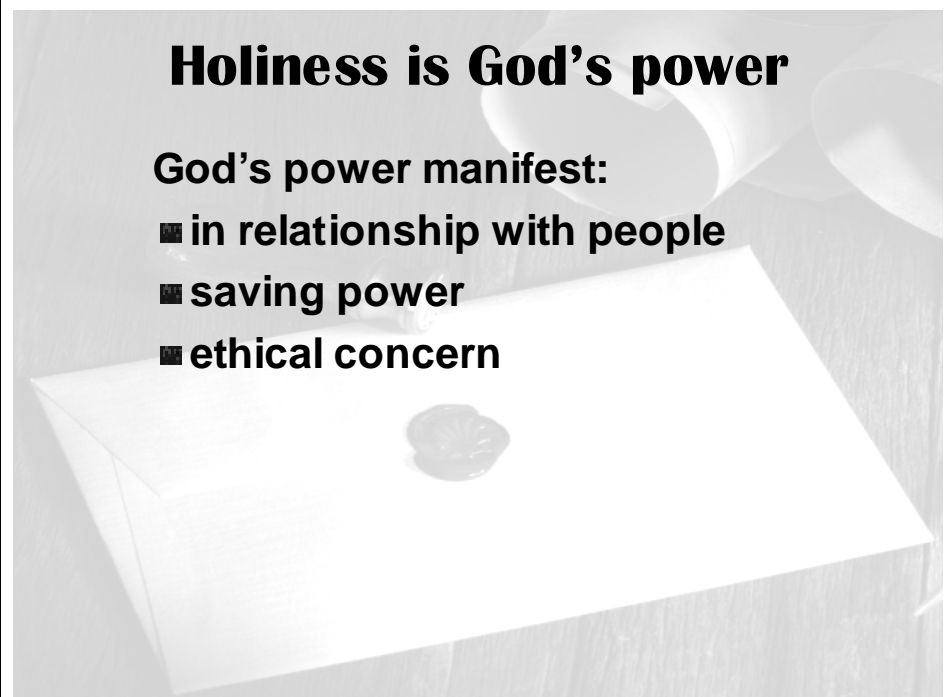
- reveals himself
- enters our history
- participates in human existence

Knowing God is to know His Name

- **Our holy God is not nameless**
- **He named himself through the various experiences in the history of Israel**
- **God chooses to have identity**
- **God chooses to enter into relationship with us**
- **“God with us” or “God in our midst”**

Holiness is fundamental to YHWH

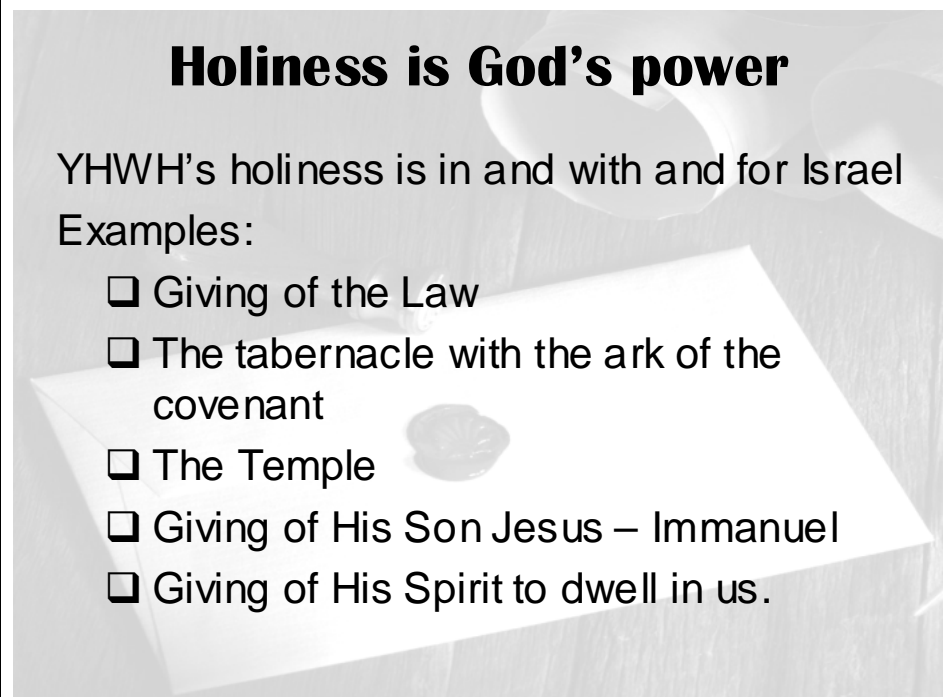
- **Holiness is the fundamental tone that sounds through the whole range of the literature of the OT**
- **Hos. 11:9b. – indicates God’s holiness is not an alienating holiness but in their midst**
- **Holy power is also saving power**
- **It is not transcendent but immanent, ‘dwelling in their midst’ (Isa. 57:15)**



Holiness is God's power

God's power manifest:

- in relationship with people
- saving power
- ethical concern



Holiness is God's power

YHWH's holiness is in and with and for Israel

Examples:

- Giving of the Law
- The tabernacle with the ark of the covenant
- The Temple
- Giving of His Son Jesus – Immanuel
- Giving of His Spirit to dwell in us.

God's holiness is not isolating or destructive but creative

God's holy judgement are intended to:

- shake the people out of a false way of life
- bring them to a new life
- give them a "new heart" (Eze. 18:31-32)

Valley of dry bones (Eze. 37:1-14) portrays a corporate revival of a people that lost its life and hope

Rendering Exclusive Worship to God

- YHWH alone must be our God
- His command is: "There will be no other gods before me."
- It is a claim of exclusive loyalty and intimacy (illustrated in marriage relationship)

Obeying God's Law – Covenantal Responsibility

- **Knowing God is to walk in the way of the Lord**
- **Understanding His ways, one must obey His will**

Obeying God's Law – Covenantal Responsibility

- **The instrument holding the community of God and Israel together is the law**
- **The Law was given to shape Israel's life as God's covenant people**
- **The Law is to bring the whole of life under YHWH's Lordship**

Protect God-Israel Relationship

- Israel have been delivered from Egypt, but not yet from sin
- The covenant God has with us as a command-premised relation
- The Torah is given for guidance

A Lawful Fellowship

Israel was taught that:

- their God was the God of law, who called them into a lawful fellowship
- God is the Author of law.
- Law is the way in which He administers His universe
- God can be relied upon to act according to law

A Stable Fellowship

- The covenant provided a "firmly regulated form of fellowship between God and man or man and God" that is stable and dependable
- The covenant spells out the terms and conditions of the relationship

A Faith-inspiring Fellowship

- Covenant fellowship with God gave Israel a mighty anchor to their faith
- God was obligated to Israel by the covenant
- He was bound to be loyal and merciful to His people

Promote Solidarity and Security

- The Torah is the alternative to chaos, alienation, and narcissistic subjectivity
- The Torah brings order into society and community
- “Torahlessness” is when everyone does what he or she pleases
- In the Torah, God has given guidance on the way that they should walk

Promote Solidarity and Security

- The Hebrew word torah means ‘guidance, instruction’
- Torah bears witness to the root experiences:
 - “the saving experience”
 - “the commanding experience”

Promote Solidarity and Security

Ps. 19:8 – the Torah rejoices the heart

The reason for this rejoicing are:

- revelation of God's will
- people do not have to live in a situation of moral relativism, making ethical decisions

Promote Solidarity and Security

- Deuteronomy is the clearest statement of covenantal ethics in the OT
- Dt. 15:1-18 – the most daring and demanding is the 'year of release':
 - surely bless v.4
 - surely hear v. 5
 - surely open v. 8
 - surely lend sufficiently v. 8
 - surely give v. 10
 - surely furnish v. 14.

Promote Solidarity and Security

The Torah is:

- the announcement of the promise
- the slow painful keeping of the promise
- a reflection of what to do (obedience) while waiting

Promote Solidarity and Security

The promise for the community functions:

- to deny the notion of a closed, fixed fate
- it argues that we are bearers of a destiny that is still working its way
- to prevent the despair and numbness that come with hopelessness
- to preclude a settling in on the present no matter how good it is

Promote Solidarity and Security

The Torah provides the grounds for solidarity and consensus in community in order that Israel may flourish

