

Lecture 15 – Names, Roles & Historical Acts (cont.)

“O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord. You hem me in-behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.”
Psalms 139:1-6

Key Terms

Names, deeds, traits, personality

Objectives

*List key names and deeds of God, explaining what they reveal of His character.

*Explore implications for Christian discipleship of biblical revelation of God’s character.

Names, Roles & Historical Acts

II. What is the Key to God’s Identity? By What Method Should We Proceed?

We will want to look at:

1. God’s name or names
2. Mighty deeds (and words)
3. Historical roles and relationships
4. Character traits
5. Persons (the trinity)

III. Divine Names

A. What’s in a name?

B. *Elohim*

1. Generic Hebrew word for deity. Plural
2. When applied to the true God
 - a. The God of power and majesty
 - b. The transcendent One
 - 1) The Creator/creation distinction
 - 2) Height
 - 3) Enthronement
 - c. *Elohim* emphasizes God’s transcendence, not His personhood.

C. *Yahweh*

1. The name God gives to Himself
2. God’s personal name given in covenant relationship. Equivalent to the N.T.’s ‘father’ (*πατηρ*)
3. Exodus 34:6-7
 - a. *Yahweh* is a moral God.
 - b. *Yahweh* is a long-suffering God.
 - c. *Yahweh* is a loving God.
 - d. *Yahweh* is a righteous God.
 - e. *Yahweh* is faithful in His relations and in His person.
 - f. *Yahweh* is the king of creation.
 - g. *Yahweh* is the LORD of history.

D. A further reflection on the divine attributes within classical theism.

1. The classical method of attribution represents a right insight gone wrong.
2. *Pantokrator* or *omnipotens*?
Pantokrator:
Omnipotens:
Potentia Absoluta
3. Psalm 37, omniscience and omnipresence
Psalm 139

IV. Mighty Deeds

- A. The importance of God's actions to His identity
- B. The Old Testament confessions
 1. Deuteronomy 26:5-9. The little credo
 2. Deuteronomy 6:4-5. The shema
- C. The New Testament confessions
Philippians 2:6-11; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:3-7
 1. The christological concern of the New Testament
 2. The emphasis upon the resurrection (e.g. 1 Cor. 15:3-5) as the vindication of God
cf. the Exodus in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 26:5-9)

V. Roles and Character Traits

- A. Roles
 1. Analogical roles. God is like....
 2. Social roles (office, function, relationship)
- B. Character traits

What personality traits do you find typical of God? What traits do not belong to Him?

VI. The Practical and Homiletical Consequences of Our Study

- A. Law and grace