

I AM series

Life in His Name

I AM the Bread of Life
I AM the Light of the World
I AM the Gate
I AM the Good Shepherd
I AM the Resurrection and the Life
I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life
I AM the True Vine

Wednesday, February 22, 2023-
Wednesday, March 29, 2023



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The Great I AM

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

Welcome to RedArrow.edu. Over the next six weeks, we are going to study the identity of Jesus Christ through the gospel of John.

“The gospel of John has always been a favorite for many. At one level it is the simplest of all the gospels; at another level it is the most profound. It gives the appearance of being written by someone who was a very close friend of Jesus, and who spent the rest of his life mulling over, more and more deeply, what Jesus had done and said and achieved, praying it through from every angle, and helping others to understand it.” (N.T. Wright, *John for Everyone Part 1*, pg. x)

- What makes the gospel of John simple?

- What makes the gospel of John profound?

[Personal Reflection] Read John 1:1-18 (John’s prologue)

“This prologue is also an overture to the story of the rest of the Gospel. Themes mentioned here will be picked up later and given fuller development: the preexistence of Christ (1:1, 17:5), divine light entering the world (1:4, 1:9, 8:12, 9:5), the opposition of light and darkness (1:5, 3:19), the visibility of glory (1:14, 12:41), Jesus as the only Son (1:14, 1:18, 3:16), and Jesus’ divine birth (1:12-13, 3:1)”.

(Gary M. Burge, **The NIV Application Commentary**: John, pg. 52)

- Take notice of these themes mentioned in the prologue.

- Read the corresponding passages to see how John will incorporate these themes in his book.

Session One

Let's take a moment to get to know each other a little bit better.

In a moment, I'm going to ask for volunteers to introduce themselves. Here is the trick... you may only tell us who you are by telling us what you are not.

Hello, my name is _____, and I am not _____

_____.

- Was it easy or hard to introduce yourself in the negative?
- Is it possible for someone to really know you simply by knowing what you are not?

Read John 1:19-28

- What do we learn about John the Baptist by his introduction? Who is he not?
- As whom does John the Baptist identify himself?



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ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday kicks off the Lent season. Lent is the 40 days prior to Easter.

- Why is Lent 40 days? Is it really 40 days?
- Why do people fast during this time? Do people fast the entire time between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday?

References: Luke 4:1-2 & Mark 2:19.

- Why do people have ashes on their foreheads?

“Dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”

Ἐγώ εἰμι (I AM)

Over the next few weeks, we are going to look at the ways Jesus identifies himself. Specifically, we will look at seven “I AM” statements. Each statement uses the greek form of εγώ εἰμι (ego eimi). Before we can look at each individual statement, we need to know why Jesus uses εγώ εἰμι as his sentence structure.

Read John 8:58-60

“Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.”

LET’S COME BACK TO THESE VERSES!!!!

Session One

Read Exodus 3:1-15

(Questions from The Serendipity Bible, 1996, pg. 136).

- **Why did God use a burning bush to get Moses' attention?**
 1. It would add a lot to movies like "The Ten Commandments" or "Prince of Egypt".
 2. It signaled the beginning of a new and more intimate relationship with him.
 3. It would help Moses remember his calling later when he really needed to.
 4. The fire emphasized how holy the event was.
 5. God demonstrated his power by the bush not burning up.
 6. Other thoughts?

- **If you had been Moses, what would you have thought about this event?**
 1. I must have eaten too many anchovies.
 2. Why does God want me for this?
 3. I thought I could get away from God out here in the desert.
 4. God, don't talk to me about your problems; I've enough of my own.
 5. God, I am your humble servant.
 6. Other thoughts?

- **Why is Moses reluctant to go back to Egypt and do what God asks? What reassurances does God give to him?**

The Great I AM

- **If I were in Moses' sandals, I would share his:**
 1. fear of looking God in the eye.
 2. reverence in taking off my sandals.
 3. sense of inadequacy to do God's work.
 4. concern for what others think.
 5. wondering if God's plan will work.
 6. Other thoughts?

- **The burning bush (God's attention-getter) in my life has been:**
 1. a personal experience with God.
 2. a near disaster.
 3. frustrated plans.
 4. special blessings.
 5. a personal crisis.
 6. a meaningful worship experience (through personal devotions or a church service/program).
 7. a particular scripture passage.
 8. a life-changing relationship.
 9. Other thoughts?

- **What has been God's 'call' in your life? What would it take to get your attention and commitment to accept a new mission in life?**

- **How would you describe your relationship with God right now?**
 1. a burning bush
 2. a flickering bush
 3. a few ashes from the past
 4. what bush?!
 5. Other thoughts?

Session One

WHAT IS IN A NAME?

Exodus 3:14, “God said to Moses, “I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I am has sent me to you.’” (Εγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν, “I am who I am”).

- **Moses asks God for his name. What is the name God gives himself?**

“The name I AM comes from the Hebrew word *YHWH*. To pronounce this holy name, the Jews used the vowels from the name Adonai (Lord) and turned *YHWH* into Yahweh (LORD in our English translations).

The name conveys the concept of absolute being, the One who is and whose dynamic presence works on our behalf. It conveys the meanings of “I am who and what I am, and I do not change. I am here with you and for you” (Warren W. Wiersbe, *Jesus In the Present Tense*, 2011, pg. 20).

Wiersbe points out that God adds to his name, Yahweh, in nine places of the Old Testament. He explains that the Lord ‘filled out’ or ‘completed’ the name “I AM” in order to reveal more of his divine nature.

[Personal Reflection] Read these scriptures and take note of how God reveals more of his nature and character through these names .

- **Yahweh-Jireh:** The LORD will provide or see to it. (Gen. 22:14)
- **Yahweh-Rophe:** The LORD who heals. (Ex. 15:26)
- **Yahweh-Nissi:** The LORD our banner. (Ex. 17:15)

The Great I AM

- **Yahweh-M'Kaddesh:** The LORD who sanctifies. (Lev. 20:8)
- **Yahweh-Shalom:** The LORD our peace. (Jud. 6:24)
- **Yahweh-Rohi:** The LORD my shepherd. (Ps. 23:1)
- **Yahweh-Sabaoth:** The LORD of hosts. (Ps. 46:7)
- **Yahweh-Tsidkenu:** The LORD our righteousness. (Jer. 23:6)
- **Yahweh-Shammah:** The LORD is there. (Ezek. 48:35)

In order to reassure Moses, God told him his name.

- **Does knowing God's name bring you reassurance? What does his name mean to you? I'm asking you to ask yourself, "What does God have for me?" "If I believe in God, what kind of life will I receive?"**

IN GOD'S NAME, HE NOT ONLY TELLS US WHO HE IS, BUT HE ALSO TELLS US WHAT HE CAN DO FOR US AND WHAT WE CAN BECOME THROUGH HIM.

Session One

Read John 8:58-60

“Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.”

“Before Abraham was born, ἐγὼ εἰμι.”

- Why does this statement cause the people to pick up stones to stone him? Why are they so angry? What is Jesus saying about himself?
- Why did Jesus call himself, “ἐγὼ εἰμι” instead of “Yahweh”?
- WHAT DOES “ἐγὼ εἰμι” COMMUNICATE ABOUT JESUS?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Compare Exodus 3:6, 3:14-15, John 8:58, and Revelation 1:8.

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CLOSING THOUGHTS:

Just like Moses received the sign of the burning bush as well as God's name, we will see that this is a pattern Jesus uses as well. There will be a sign of his divinity and a name that gives us a bigger, deeper, fuller picture of Jesus' identity.

Through Jesus' I AM statements, we can ask, "How does who Jesus is effect me?"

Read John 20:30-31

"Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

The I AM statements communicate that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God. Believing in Jesus will give you life in his name.

- What kind of life do we receive from his name?

WHERE WILL WE SEE "Εγώ εἰμι" THROUGHOUT THE GOSPEL OF JOHN?

"The ἐγώ εἰμι sayings in the gospel of John are famous. The phrase occurs 21 times. Jesus says that "I am" the Bread of Life (6:20, 35, 41, 48, 51), the Light of the World (8:12), the Gate (10:7, 9), the Good Shepherd (10:11, 14), the Resurrection and the Life (11:25), the Way (14:6), and the True Vine (15:1, 5).

These are significant in that they are a reflection of the divine name in Exodus 3:14, where the God of the burning bush answers Moses' question about his name. In the LXX we read, Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν, "I am who I am" (ESV).

This most clearly surfaces in John 8:55, "Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the solemn truth, before Abraham came to be, I am!'" (πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγώ εἰμι).

Session One

But on the other side of the spectrum we see ἐγώ εἰμι used without any reference to God's name. When Jesus identifies himself as the Messiah to the Samaritan woman he says, "I, the one speaking to you, am he (ἐγώ εἰμι)" (4:26). When Jesus comes walking on the water he says to the disciples, "It is I; do not be afraid (ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε)" (see also 8:18; 13:19). Even the man born blind can say, "I am the man (ἐγώ εἰμι)" (9:9). And yet given John's affection for deeper meanings, one wonders if Exodus 3:14 isn't floating in the back of his mind even in these passages." (Bill Mounce, **Mondays with Mounce**, blog on John 18:5).

WHAT IS THE SEPTUAGINT?

"The Septuagint (also known as the LXX) is a translation of the Hebrew Bible into the Greek language. The name Septuagint comes from the Latin word for "seventy." The tradition is that 70 (or 72) Jewish scholars were the translators behind the Septuagint. The Septuagint was translated in the third and second centuries BC in Alexandria, Egypt. As Israel was under the authority of Greece for several centuries, the Greek language became more and more common. By the second and first centuries BC, most people in Israel spoke Greek as their primary language. That is why the effort was made to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek—so that those who did not understand Hebrew could have the Scriptures in a language they could understand. The Septuagint represents the first major effort at translating a significant religious text from one language into another.

In comparing the New Testament quotations of the Hebrew Bible, it is clear that the Septuagint was often used. Many of the New Testament quotes from the Hebrew Bible are taken from the Septuagint. This is the result of the fact that by the late first century BC, and especially the first century AD, the Septuagint had "replaced" the Hebrew Bible as the Scriptures most people used. Since most people spoke and read Greek as their primary language, and the Greek authorities strongly encouraged the use of Greek, the Septuagint became much more common than the Hebrew Old Testament.

As faithful as the Septuagint translators strove to be in accurately rendering the Hebrew text into Greek, some translational differences arose. But the fact that the apostles and New Testament authors felt comfortable, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, in using the Septuagint should give us assurance that a translation of the original languages of the Bible is still the authoritative Word of God." (<https://www.gotquestions.org/septuagint.html>)

I AM the Bread of Life

As you prepare for Sunday, February 26, 2023...

Our passage on Sunday comes from John 6. This text is set during the Jewish Passover Festival.

- **The people celebrated this festival to remember what events of the Old Testament?**

Thursday: Read Exodus 12:1-14:31

Friday: Read Exodus 16:136 and Number 11:1-35, pay special attention to Number 11:22.

“Would they have enough if flocks and herds were slaughtered for them? Would they have enough if all the fish in the sea were caught for them?”

Saturday: Read Luke 22:1-23

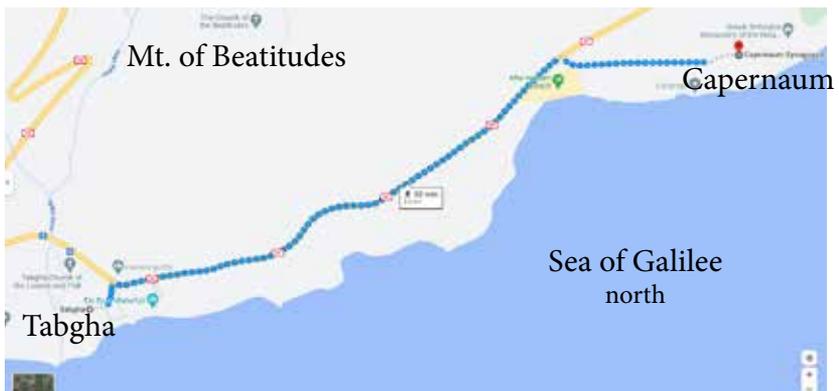
As you read these passages...

- **What do you notice about grumbling?**

- **What do you notice about provision?**

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John 6:35-60 (pg. 1591)
Sermon Notes:



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