

The Great I AM; Exodus 3:13-15

I. What's In a Name?

A. The Bible has given us many names for God

1. El Shaddai; Lord God Almighty (7 times) – Genesis 17:1 (ESV) 1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless,
2. Adonai; Lord, Master (11 times) – Genesis 15:2 (ESV) 2 But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"
3. YHWH; LORD (6,519 times) – Exodus 3:15 (ESV) 15 God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

B. YHWH is used more than any other name that God has given us

- a. There are questions about the name He uses in Exodus 3:14 (Hyh) and the one in Exodus 3:15 (YHWH)
 - b. "What the NIV necessarily translates as "I AM WHO I AM" probably was heard by Moses as "I CAUSE TO BE because I CAUSE TO BE."
 - c. "My name forever" – forward into all the future and backward into all the past
 - d. YHWH Nissi (The LORD is my Banner); YHWH Raah (The LORD is my Shepherd); YHWH Rapha (The LORD who Heals); YHWH Shammah (The LORD is There); YHWH Tsidkenu (The LORD Our Righteousness); YHWH Mekoddishkem (The LORD Who Sanctifies You)
2. Many commentators argue over Genesis 3:14-15 as to what exactly is God's name
 - a. Coffman says that the words "I AM" in verse 14 are not His name, but "LORD" in verse 15 is
 - b. Britannica.com says, "Many scholars believe that the most proper meaning may be "He Brings into Existence Whatever Exists" (Yahweh-Asher-Yahweh)" and that brings us back to verse 14, "I AM who I AM"
 - c. "When Moses asks God his name, God first answers by saying "I am what I am" and even follows this up with "tell them Ehyeh (I-Am) sent you." The word *ehyeh* ("I am") sounds very much like YHWH and is meant as a play on words, explaining that YHWH's name means "he will be" or "being." [3] Thus, God follows up this implied etymology with the Tetragrammaton"
 - d. Jesus, there is a link between verses 13 and 14

C. Then establishes that He is the Great I AM!

II. Jesus

- A. John 8:58–59 (ESV) 58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” 59 So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.
- B. Jesus equates Himself with God (which is why they picked up stones to throw at Him)
- C. Jesus uses the phrase “I AM” many times, telling us exactly who He is
 - 1. Matthew 14:24–27 (ESV) 24, but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified and said, “It is a ghost!” and they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Take heart; **it is I**. Do not be afraid.”
 - 2. Both Luke and John use the exact wording, I AM, in their accounts of Jesus walking on water
 - 3. In Mark 14, Jesus is standing before the Sanhedrin and the High Priest of Israel. They attempted to accuse Him of many things but were not able to agree
 - a. Mark 14:58–59 (ESV) 58 “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’ ” 59 Yet even about this their testimony did not agree.
 - b. Jesus refused to answer any of the accusations
 - c. Mark 14:61–64 (ESV) 61 But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” 62 And Jesus said, “**I am**, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” 63 And the high priest tore his garments and said, “What further witnesses do we need? 64 You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all condemned him as deserving death.
 - d. Jesus didn’t answer with a simple “yes” or “no.” He said, “I AM”
 - 4. John 8:23–24 (ESV) 23 He said to them, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.”
 - a. John 8:28 (ESV) 28 So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that **I am** he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.
 - b. It is in this same conversation that we get the verse we started with, “Before Abraham was, **I AM**”
 - 5. John 18:4–8 (ESV) 4 Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” 5 They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “**I am** he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 So he asked them again,

“Whom do you seek?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” 8 Jesus answered, “I told you that **I am** he. So, if you seek me, let these men go.”

- a. I think this moment is one of the most misunderstood moments in the Bible
- b. We miss Jesus’ statement, “I AM,” and then fail to realize that everyone drew back and fell to the ground
- c. We miss the number of people by the translation, “band of soldiers”
 - i. The Greek word here is used to translate the Latin word Cohort
 - ii. “Always **cohort**, the tenth part of a legion (the σπ. [speiran] thus normally had 600 men, but the number varied”
 - iii. Britannica.com, in its article on Legions, military units, and formations, says,“
 - iv. We find it seven times in our New Testament. It is translated as ‘battalion’ (1260 men) and ‘cohort’
- d. As Peter lifts his sword to cut off Malchus’ ear, he is facing hundreds of soldiers and other people (keep in mind, there are only two swords among Jesus and the apostles)
- e. There is no question in Peter’s mind (and hasn’t been since Matthew 16:18) about who Jesus is, the GREAT I AM

III. The Great I AM

- A. “I want to be close, close to your side. **So Heaven is real, and death is a lie.** I wanna hear voices of angels above singing as one; Hallelujah, Holy, Holy, God Almighty, The Great I AM”
 1. We can be confident of exactly who Jesus is!
 2. One of my instructors (I think it was Ed Wharton) said, “Either Jesus is who He says He is, or He is a bold-faced liar!
- B. The mountains shake before him. The demons run and flee at the mention of the name King Of Majesty. There is no power in Hell or any who can stand before the power and the presence of the Great I Am!