

WHO IS “I AM”?

WEEK ONE

KEY SCRIPTURES

Exodus 3:1-15, John 8:42-59 (NIV)

OVERVIEW

We all wonder: *Am I enough?* Eventually we realise, *I'm not*. Reality leaves us searching to satisfy our longings for safety, security, and significance. As we move from one thing to another, we find ourselves looking to see if anything will be enough. In these studies we'll discover the truth that Jesus is enough to meet all of the needs we have. To our nagging question, *Are you enough?* Jesus answers, *"I am."* To the hungry, *"I am the bread of life."* To those walking in darkness, *"I am the light of the world."* When we look for answers, Jesus says, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life."*

When God calls Himself the *I Am* in Exodus 3, God reveals Himself to His people and says He will act to redeem them out of exile and lead them into a new life. God's name reveals who He is and what He is like. He is the *I Am* - eternal, unchanging, self-existent one; infinite and above all created things. He is God. 1,600 years later, Jesus applies the *Am* title to himself, claiming to be God (John 8:58). The divine, eternal, pre-existent, infinite, perfect Being. He's greater than Moses because He is the God of Moses. He can give life to us.

JESUS' DECLARATIONS AS THE "I AM..."

Jesus self-identified as part of this holy, present God in John 8:58 when He said, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."* (ESV) The Jews recognised this reference to God and were ready to stone Jesus to death for such blasphemy (John 8:59). Because Jesus is fully God, it wasn't blasphemy for Him to claim the name I AM. As God, He was not created but is self-existent (Colossians 1:17).

He is eternal, existing before Abraham and now seated at the right hand of God the Father for eternity (Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 8:1). He is self-sufficient, and He is unchanging, *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever* (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus is a type of Moses as He came to deliver people from their sin and spiritual captivity. John demonstrated that the "I AM" who Moses met in Exodus was now 1,600 years later, physically standing in front of people, ready to be their *Bread of Life*, their *Light*, their *Door* to the Father, their *Shepherd*, their *Life*, their *Truth*, and their *Vine*. Each statement is meant to reveal Jesus' divine purpose, power and identity to his audience, which is the purpose of the Gospel according to John.

THE "I AM" STATEMENTS OF JESUS

1. I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE

John 6:22-59, (especially verses 28-35)

2. I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

John 8:12-30

3. I AM THE DOOR OR GATE

John 10:1-18

4. I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10:1-18

5. I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

John 11:17-27

6. I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

John 14:6

7. I AM THE TRUE VINE

John 15:1-6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As you reflect on the past twelve months of your life, in what ways have you been aware of God's presence in your everyday reality?
2. Imagine being present in Jerusalem when you hear Jesus stating, "*I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.*" (John 8:58). What would you be thinking?
3. Jesus declares Himself to be the eternal God of all creation, both fully human and fully God. Think back on when you first heard this. How did you respond? What would you say to someone struggling with this idea?
4. We read in Hebrews 13:8 that - *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.* How does that truth speak to the issues in our world?

IF YOU WANT TO GO DEEPER...

In Exodus chapter 3, in the form of a burning bush, God appeared to Moses and told him He was sending him to free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Moses' insecurity and fear rose. He was worried the Israelites would not believe God had sent him and says: *"If they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?"*

Moses asked God for His name. Moses was raised in Egypt as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, and he'd be familiar with the names of Egyptian gods. Having fled to Midian and raised sheep there for many years, Moses knew the names of Canaanite gods like Baal and Asherah. When Moses asked God for His name, the response was a surprising *"I AM WHO I AM...This is my name forever"* (Exodus 3:14,15).

The statement "I AM" comes from the Hebrew verb *"to be or to exist."* With this statement, God declares He is self-existent, eternal, self-sufficient, self-directed, and unchanging. God also declares He is present with His people. He was aware of their suffering, He desired to deliver them, and He intended to be known throughout all generations ready to intervene on their behalf.