

“I Am That I Am”
The Gospel of John Chapter 8:44-59

These concluding verses of chapter eight culminate in Jesus’ great declaration of His deity, “Before Abraham was, I Am.” John begins the chapter with the tender and forgiving heart of the Savior (Eph. 4:32) towards the woman caught in adultery. He follows with Jesus’ declaration that He is the Light of the world, one of the seven great “I Am’s” of this gospel (Jhn. 6:48, 8:12, 10:7, 11, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1). He further records Jesus’ profound words of living in His word and being set free only in the Son.

The true children of Abraham (Gal. 3:26-29) would love the Son and not be plotting His demise. The terrible reality is these unbelieving Jews act like their true father, the devil (Gen. 3:1-5). We are either energized by the evil one (Eph. 2:1-3) or the good One (Phil. 2:13). Believers are new creatures (2Cor. 5:17; Jhn. 3:3), partakers of the divine nature (2Pet. 1:4).

These enemies of Christ have been exposed. They cannot convict Him of sin because He has none (2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26). They can only demonize Him who is the truth, an excellent example for all believers to remember and take to heart (Jhn. 15:18-20; 16:2; 1Pet. 4:12-13).

Jesus clearly reveals His eternal nature and omniscience when He reveals that Abraham rejoiced to see **His** day. This is a reference to Abraham looking forward to Christ’s incarnation and ultimate resurrection (Gen. 17:4, 19; Heb. 11:10, 17-19). Not possible, say the Jews. You are not even fifty years old (Num. 4:3; Lk. 3:23)! Jesus’ answer is preceded by the solemn amen, amen. Both the Hebrew and Greek words mean sure, true, and so be it. John began his gospel with the preexistence of the Word who became flesh (Jhn. 1:1, 14). The Greek words for I Am are *ego eimi*. This is significant because the Jews in Alexandria, Egypt had translated the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek some two hundred years before Christ. It was called the Septuagint after the seventy translators. They used the same words *ego eimi* to translate the name of God that comes to Moses from the burning bush (Ex. 3:14; Isa. 41:4, 43:10-11; Rev. 1:8). Jesus did not say “I was,” but “I Am.” He is an eternal Being in existence before Abraham was ever born! He is eternal God (Isa. 9:6; Matt. 1:23; Mk. 2:7; Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:8).

The Jews take up stones to kill Him because they understood that He was claiming to be God! He was guilty of the greatest blasphemy for using God's name as His own (Lev. 24:16). Miraculously, He walks away.