

# The Great I Am

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## I Am (Jn 8:58)

### INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
  - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on "The Great I Am."
  - a. Jesus in explaining He was God the Son said to the Jews...
    - i. **Jn 8:58** "...Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."<sup>1</sup>
      1. A reference to what God named Himself to Moses and the people.
        - a. **Gn 3:14** "God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' ""
    - b. What a powerful statement that was completely understood by the Jews as Jesus saying He was God.
      - i. **Jn 8:59** "So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple."
3. Jesus as the Son of God.
  - a. There have been droves that have questioned whether or not Jesus really was God and specifically the Son of God.
    - i. Many religions have Jesus as simply a good man or prophet.
      1. Islam has always suggested Jesus was "just a prophet of Allah."
      2. Baha'i believes "the various prophets that formed the various religions of the world are equal. There is no superiority or inferiority among them. So Jesus, Buddha, Muhammad, Moses, and Abraham are all equal." (<http://goo.gl/ajCWm>)
  - b. Thus it is with this in mind I want us to look at, examine, and show that Jesus truly was and is the Son of God.
4. Let us prove Jesus is the Great I AM!!!

### I. The Historic Jesus

- A. There are many non-Christian historians that wrote concerning Jesus
  1. Tacitus lived about 56-117AD and wrote a book called Annals in 115AD concerning the history of Rome.
    - i. In section 15.44 he wrote, "... Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome..." (<http://tinyurl.com/3pdctw4>)
      - a. Notice that Christians existed in the time of Nero.
      - b. Notice that Christ was their creator.

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<sup>1</sup> All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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- c. Notice He was killed during Tiberius' reign and by governor Pontius Pilatus.
    - d. Notice Christianity spread throughout Judea and into Rome.
  2. Seutonius who is said to have relied on "eye witnesses" wrote "Life of Claudius."
    - i. In section 25:4 he wrote, "Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus,<sup>75</sup> he expelled them from Rome." (<http://tinyurl.com/2hxnm7>)
      - a. This is referenced by Luke in **Acts 18:2**.
      - b. What we see here is that Christ ie His followers was the cause for all the disturbance.
  3. The rabbis in the Talmud
    - i. The Sanhedrin Tractate admits to Jesus' and the Bible historical accuracy concerning Jesus.
      - a. "On the eve of the Passover Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed Israel to apostacy. Any one who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought forward in his favour he was hanged on the eve of the Passover!" (<http://tinyurl.com/3rnnjym>)
  4. Josephus a Jewish historian wrote his book Antiquities concerning the history of the Jews.
    - i. In 18.3.3 he wrote, " And there arose about this time Jesus, a wise man, if indeed we should call him a man; for he was a doer of marvelous deeds, a teacher of men who receive the truth with pleasure. He led away many Jews and also Greeks. This man was the Christ. And when Pilate had condemned him to the cross on his impeachment by the chief men among us, those who had loved him at first did not cease; for he appeared to them on the third day alive again, the divine prophets having spoken these and thousands of other wonderful things about him: and even now the tribe of Christians, so named after him, has not yet died out." (The New Complet Works of Josephus translated by Whiston, William pg. 580)
- B. There are many Christian historians that wrote concerning Jesus
  1. Clement of Alexandria who lived from 150-215AD wrote a letter to the church in Corinth.
    - i. In chapter 16 he wrote, "For Christ is of those who are humble-minded, and not of those who exalt themselves over His flock. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sceptre of the majesty of God, did not come in the pomp of pride or arrogance, although He might have done so, but in a lowly condition, as the Holy Spirit had declared regarding Him." (<http://tinyurl.com/3c7v5hb>)
  2. Polycarp who lived 65-155AD wrote a letter to the church in Philippi.
    - i. "and bringeth forth fruit to our Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sins suffered even unto death..." (<http://tinyurl.com/3wx2tg4>)

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## C. Thus...

1. What we can be certain of is that the Great I Am was, without a doubt, a real person that lived on the earth.

## II. The Biblical Jesus

### A. We find in Scripture Jesus saying He is God

1. **Jn 8:58** "...Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."
2. **Lk 22:66-70** "As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council, saying, 67 "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will by no means believe. 68 And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go. 69 Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God." 70 Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" So He said to them, "You rightly say that I am.'" (NKJV)

### B. We find in Scripture others saying He is God

1. Paul who didn't believe Jesus was God at first then after getting to Damascus proclaimed Him as such.
  - i. **Ac 9:19b-20** "...Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus. 20 Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God." (NKJV)
2. Peter said Jesus was God.
  - i. **Mt 16:16** "...You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
3. The Hebrew write explains Jesus is God.
  - i. **He 1:3** "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high"
4. John could not be more clear in saying Jesus is God.
  - i. **Jn 1:1** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
  - ii. **I Jn 5:20** "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life."

## C. Thus...

1. What we can be certain of is that the Great I Am is, without a doubt, a said to be God.

## CONCLUSION

1. Lee Strobel an atheist that became a believer in Jesus being the Son of God said, "in short, I didn't become a Christian because God promised I would have an even happier life than I had as an atheist. He never promised any such thing. Indeed, following him would inevitably bring divine demotions in the eyes of the world. Rather, I became a Christian because the evidence was so compelling that Jesus really is the one-and-only Son of God who proved his divinity by rising from the dead. That meant following him was the most rational and logical step I could possibly take."

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- a. The evidence is overwhelming Jesus of Nazareth is the one and only Son of God being both man and God.
2. Question: Could you prove Jesus was really God before now or even now if it was required of you at this moment?
  - a. Many times we forget the most important aspect of Christianity, "knowing" Jesus is God the Son.
3. Invitation
  - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
    - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
  - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
    - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
    - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
    - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
    - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
    - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
    - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**