



## Gospel of John 1-12

### Introduction: The Great “I Am”

John is unique among the gospels. The first three, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are known as the Synoptics (from a Greek word meaning “to see together”) because of their similarities to each other.

However, in John we find the solution of the mysteries of the Synoptics—the revelation of the Deity of the Messiah.

#### A. The Incarnation: *The Theme of John* John 1:14

**1. God tabernacles among us:** The word ‘dwelt’ is the word ‘tabernacle’ which means that God pitched His tent among us. John was thinking of the wilderness tent that was pitched in the midst of the people, the center of life and the appointed place of their worship.

**2. The Glory of God:** Jesus’ flesh became the tent; but as in the ancient tabernacle it was the Shekinah glory that was central and so in the Man of Nazareth the glory of the Only begotten of the Father is central. Jesus is the fulfillment of the symbolism of the OT tabernacle.

**3. The Temple of the Holy Spirit:** All believers are indwelt with the Spirit of God—the fullness of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit reside in us (*John 14:15-20*). The glory of God dwells in us—we are the light of the world!

#### B. Seven Miracles

The seven miracles recorded in John are ‘signs’ of the Messiah

1. **The Wedding at Cana:** *John 2*
2. **Healing of the Official’s Son:** *John 4:46*
3. **Healing at the Pool on the Sabbath:** *John 5*
4. **Feeding of Five Thousand:** *John 6:1*
5. **Walking on the Water:** *John 6:16*
6. **Man Born Blind is Healed:** *John 9*
7. **Raising of Lazarus:** *John 11:38*

#### C. Seven “I Am” Statements (*See also Ex 3:14*)

This is the famous Greek phrase “ego eimi” that appears many times in the Gospel of John. The three most common uses involve ‘common identification,’ ‘uncertain predicate,’ and ‘absolute use.’ (*See side bar*)

**G. Campbell Morgan** comments on the **explicit predicate**, the fourth use of “I Am” in the book of John...

*“These texts are often accompanied by discourses in John and serve to contrast Jesus with the Judaism he is fulfilling. Hence, “I am the good shepherd” means that other shepherds are unnecessary and untrustworthy. These paragraphs in John serve in a way similar to the Synoptic parables of the kingdom (“the kingdom of God is like ...”) where concrete images fill out the meaning of Jesus’ announcement.” G. Campbell Morgan “*

1. **I Am the bread of life:** *John 6:35, 41, 48, 51*
2. **I Am the light of the world:** *John 8:12*
3. **I Am the door of the sheepfold:** *John 10:7, 9*
4. **I Am the good shepherd:** *John 10:11, 14*
5. **I Am the resurrection and the life:** *John 11:25*
6. **I Am the way, the truth and the life:** *John 14:6*
7. **I Am the true vine:** *John 15:1, 5*

**Note:** In lesson 2 we will examine in more detail the relation between Exodus 3:14 and the seven “I Am” statements of John.

#### Scripture (NKJV)

**John 1:14** And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

**1 Cor 6:9** Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? See also 2 Cor 6:16

#### Uses of “I Am”

##### 1. Common Identification

This use is common in John in answer to the question “Who are you?” or “What are you?” In John 1:20 the Baptist says, “I am not the Christ.” In John 18:35 Pilate asks, “Am I a Jew?” This use is evidenced throughout the Gospel and bears no theological importance.

##### 2. Uncertain Predicate

More difficult are passages where Jesus says “I Am” and we are left uncertain if we are to supply a predicate or if the phrase is being used for self-identification. For example, in John 6:20 the frightened disciples are comforted when Jesus says, “*egō eimi*, do not be afraid.” He may mean, “It is I.”

##### 3. An Absolute Use

There are at least four texts where the use of *egō eimi* seems incomplete and the words have assumed the form of a title: John 8:24, “For you will die in your sins unless you believe that I am”; John 8:28, “When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am”; see also John 8:58 and John 13:19,

##### 4. Explicit Predicate

Here *egō eimi* is a statement of truth explained by an accompanying metaphor.