

Title: **“I AM THAT I AM” - The God We Trust**
Text: Exodus 3:14
Date: Tuesday Evening — October 31, 2006
Tape # Exodus 27

Introduction:

The believer is called to a life filled with adversity, heartache and sorrow. Those who follow “*the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*” must never expect to be free of sorrow and grief in this world of woe. — “*In the world ye shall have tribulation.*” That is our Savior’s word to all his disciples. It is in this context that the apostle Paul writes to us in Philippians 1:27-30.

(Philippians 1:27-30) “Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; (28) And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. (29) For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; (30) Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.”

If we would follow Christ, we must take up our cross daily, and follow him. We are in a daily warfare, a warfare that rages without and a warfare that rages within. It is a warfare that shall never cease, or even become less violent, but only increase, until we drop this mortal frame and enter into rest with Christ in Glory. Our daily experience of these things causes the heaven-born soul to cry out, “*Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” — “*How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?*” — “*O God, how long shall the adversary reproach?*” — “*How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither?*”

I have come here tonight to preach specifically “*to them that mourn in Zion,*” to speak a word of encouragement and consolation to you. In every hour of need, support is sure. Behold God’s servant Moses. The ground he must tread is slippery ground. The obstacles he must overcome are huge. The task before him is immense. The hill of difficulty set before him is rough and steep. The foes opposing him are many. But he found a staff of strength and a shield of defense, a guiding light and a shelter of protection in the God he served, in the Christ he followed.

(Exodus 3:14) “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

Infinite Help

Knowing the apparent impossibilities before him, Moses asked, “*What is thy name?*” It is as though the Lord Jesus said, “**I AM THAT I AM**, cast on me all the burden of your soul, all the cares of your heart, all the fears and all the pains that trouble and perplex you.”

Blessed are they who can lean upon this staff, ever mighty, ever near! O child of God, lean the whole weight of your immortal soul upon Christ, and like Mt. Zion you shall not be moved. Like Moses, you shall scatter your adversaries like dust (1 Pet. 5:6-7).

(1 Peter 5:6-7) “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: (7) Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

“***I AM THAT I AM***” the voice of the burning bush. The One speaking to us is our God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Angel of the everlasting Covenant. It is our great Redeemer. He speaks to establish us upon the firm rock of comfort, assuring us that all the majesty, all the supremacy, all the glory of absolute and essential Deity, are his inherent right.

O my soul, into what specks of insignificance must our troubles dwindle before his greatness! The limits of our minds cannot imagine such greatness as resides in him! The arms of our hearts cannot embrace it. The words of our mouths cannot describe it. Had we the wings of eagles the ever-widening circle of Christ’s infinite greatness can never be comprehended by us! Vain is the effort. Its height is on heaven’s summit. What mortal arm can reach it? It is as space which has no boundary. — Immeasurable! Our mortal eyes cannot pierce the infinite expanse. The scales of our judgment cannot weigh the mountain. Our minds cannot fathom the depths of this infinite ocean! — “***I AM THAT I AM!***”

Fear Not

No wonder our Savior says so often to his people, “*Fear not!*”

(Deuteronomy 1:21) “Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up *and* possess *it*, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.”

(Deuteronomy 20:1-3) “When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, *and* a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. (2) And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people, (3) And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them;”

(Deuteronomy 31:6-8) “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. (7) And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. (8) And the LORD, he *it is* that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.”

Shall we then fret and fear, shall we murmur and complain before our God? — Fret because our God is so great? — Fear because our Savior is so immense? — Murmur because our Redeemer is so strong? — Complain because our his riches are unsearchable? What folly! What unbelief!

His treasures are such that gold is but dust in his deep mines! The riches of his grace fall like manna before our tent doors every day. May God the Holy Spirit allow us to drink the refreshing waters of this bottomless, ever-springing artesian well. — “*I AM THAT I AM.*” O Spirit of God, come, show us the things of Christ.

Eternality

“*I AM THAT I AM.*” — The first thing revealed in this name of our Savior is his eternity. Here the Lord Jesus robes himself in eternity. He knows no past. He knows no future. He lives unmoved in one unchanging present. He stretches through all ages past and all ages future. He is, in all his glorious Being, in all his infinite glory infinite, immeasurable, boundlessness, eternal! Before time was born, he is “*I AM THAT I AM.*” When time shall be no more, he is still “*I AM THAT I AM.*”

Were he not eternal, if there had been a time when he began to be, his name would be, “I am what I was not.” If there could be a time when he ceases to be, his name would be, “I am what I shall not be.” But he is! That means, he is “*I AM THAT I AM.*” He treads first and last beneath his feet. He sits upon the unbroken circumference of existence, as he who ever was, and ever is, and ever shall be. Let your mind fly back, until in weariness it faints; let it look onward until all vision fails; and you will ever find him the same “*I AM.*”

Look down now from this astounding height of glory and fix your eye on **Bethlehem’s manger**. There lies a baby in the in a cow stable, in an insignificant town, the child of an insignificant couple. — That child is the eternal “*I AM.*”

- He who is eternal, he who never had birth, who never began to be is born “*the woman’s Seed.*”
- He who encompasses eternity, is contained within an infant’s body!
- He who never began to be, here begins to be!

Can that be? Did the great “*I AM THAT I AM*” take our flesh, as one born yesterday? It is so! Indeed, it is! The Lord God promised it. Prophets foretold it. Types prefigured it. An angel announced it. Heaven rings with rapture at it. Faith sees it. All the redeemed rejoice in it.

(Genesis 3:15) “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

(Isaiah 7:14) “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

(Isaiah 9:6-7) “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (7) Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it

with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

(Galatians 4:4-5) “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

(1 Timothy 3:16) “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

But why this wonder of wonders? Why is eternity’s Lord a child of time? He thus stoops, that he may save poor wretched sinners such as we are. Could he not do so by his will or by his word? No. He willed, and all things were. He speaks, and all obey. But he must die, as man, that lost sinners may live. To rescue us from the guilt of sin and the curse of the law, the Eternal must take the sinner’s place, be made sin for us, made a curse for us, pay our debt, suffer all the wrath of God that we deserve, and die in our place. There is no other way for atonement to be made, no other way for salvation to come, no other way for sin to be put away. — “*I AM THAT I AM*” alone could do this. — “*I AM THAT I AM*” alone has done it.

(2 Corinthians 5:21) “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

(Galatians 3:13-14) “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

(Romans 4:25) “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

(Romans 5:1-11) “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. (11) And not only *so*, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

What self-denial, what self-abasement, what self-emptying is here!— What infinite greatness of humility!

(2 Corinthians 8:9) “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

Royalty in rags, angels in prison, would be nothing compared to this descent of Deity in flesh! But almighty, eternal love moved the Son of God Jesus to despise all shame, and to lie low in misery’s lowest pit. Through ages past his “*delights were with the sons of men.*” Eternity to come would be but an empty void, unless his people are made to possess his glory with him. Therefore he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that worms of earth might be raised to heaven’s immortality.

We rejoice in prospect of living with him in his glory forever. But why is there such rapture in the thought? It is this that gives us such ecstasy in hope. — Eternity will allow us to gaze with steady look on a Savior’s face, to see his glory, to sing with unwearied hymn his praise, to bless with perpetual blessing a his everlasting name, and to learn with ever-expanding knowledge a his matchless worth!

Immutability

“***I AM THAT I AM.***” — There is another note in this glorious name, which sounds with special sweetness in the believer’s ear. This great name, “*I AM THAT I AM,*” melodiously declares that **our Lord Jesus Christ cannot change**. It speaks of his absolute immutability (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8).

(Malachi 3:6) “For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

(Hebrews 13:5-8) “*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. (6) So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. (7) Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. (8) Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*”

Our great Savior is as constant as he is great. As surely as he ever lives, so surely he ever lives the same. He is an infinity of never-varying oneness. He sits on the calm throne of eternal serenity.

- Change is the defect of all things below.
- Immutability is the glory of all things above — for immutability is the essence of perfection.
- Our brightest morning often ends in storm.
- Summer’s radiance gives way to winter’s gloom.
- The budding flower soon lies withered.

- The friend who smiles today may soon become a relentless foe.
- Bereavement weeps where once the family beamed with domestic joy.
- Gardens wither into deserts.
- On all things here we must read a sad inscription — “fleeting, transient, vanishing.”

Henry Law wrote, “Time flaps a ceaseless wing, and from the wings decay and death drop down. ‘*I AM THAT I AM*’ sits high above all this. He is ‘*the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*’”

“Change and decay all around me I see,

O Thou Who changest not, abide with me!”

His Love

“*I AM THAT I AM.*” — The unchangeableness of our God and Savior is the unchangeableness of his attributes. Every divine attribute shines brightly in this bright mirror. Take just a glance at his love, his power, and his grace.

His infinite love is infinitely and eternally perpetual. Its roots are deeply buried in himself. My brother, my sister, drink constantly from this cup of joy. Ever draw the sweet waters of this deep well into your soul. Do not allow Satan to infuse a poisonous doubt.

Christ loved you fully when, in the councils of eternity, he took you as his own.

He loved you truly when, in the fullness of time, he took upon himself your sin and your curse, and drank the cup of your damnation!

He loved you tenderly when he showed you, by the Spirit, his hands and his feet, and whispered to you that you were his.

He loves you faithfully as he ceases not to intercede on your behalf, and scatters the blessings of his grace upon your soul.

He will love you intensely in heaven when you are manifested as his precious purchase and crowned as his bride!

To each doubting question — Has he loved me? — Does he love me? — Will he love me? — the one reply is, “*I AM THAT I AM.*” Do not raise the objection, if he thus loves, why am I thus? why is my path so rugged, and my heart like flint? We will soon know that our bitterest trials and our sorest pains are sure tokens of his love.

- The father corrects because he loves. In attentive care the physician deeply probes the wounds. Thus our sweet, loving Savior makes this world, that we may long for heaven's blessed rest.
- He shows us our vileness that we may cherish his cleansing blood. He allows us to stumble that we may cling more closely to his side.
- He makes the world emptiness that we may seek all in him.
- If he appears to change, it is that we may be changed. He hides his face, that we may seek him.
- He is sometimes silent, that we may cry more loudly for him.
- His desertion prevents our desertion.
- He saves from real hell, by causing us to sometimes experience what seems like hell.
- But his compassions fail not. They are new every morning.

All he does is the ever-flowing, overflowing tide of his infinite love. Let us with the eye of faith read upon his providence, — *"I AM THAT I AM."*

His Power

Our blessed Savior's power, his infinite omnipotence, goes hand in hand with his infinite, everlasting love. They co-exist and co-endure.

- It was a mighty voice that said, "Be" — and all things were.
- It was a mighty hand that framed this wondrous universe.
- It is a mighty arm which turns the wheel of providence.

That power still is, and ever will be, what it always has been. Time does not make it feeble. Use does not make it weak. This is the our rock. The Word of God everywhere encourages the "*worm Jacob*" to "*be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*"

- He still parts the sea for his own.
- He still opens the window of heaven and pours out his blessing.
- He still causes hurricanes and tempests to be a calm.
- He still makes straight the crooked path.

- He still levels the mountains that seem too high for us.
- He still stops the mouths of lions.
- He still quenches the fiery darts of the wicked one.
- In the face of all Goliaths, he cheers us on to victory, under the banner of “*I AM THAT I AM.*”

His Grace

“*I AM THAT I AM.*” — What more can I say? I have not touched the edges of the shadow of this glorious name. But I cannot send you home until I have shown you one more thing about our infinite, eternal Savior. His grace, his infinite, eternal grace is immutable grace. — Grace never changes! What a glorious fact! Grace never changes! That means many, many things, but none more delightful than this. Our Savior’s grace is sufficient to meet our every need (2 Cor. 12:9).

(2 Corinthians 12:9) “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Here God’s elect are assured of his grace in Christ and the absolute sufficiency of it always and in all things. One of the names of our great God is *El-Shaddai*, which means *God All Sufficient!* The grace of God in Christ and that alone is our sufficiency.

It is sufficient grace because it is effectual grace. — Today there is much talk about grace; but those who talk about it talk about a grace that lacks efficacy. That is not the grace of our God. God’s grace is effectual grace. It is always sufficient because it is always effectual.

“Nothing short of the grace of Christ is sufficient grace; and this is sufficient for all the elect of God, Jews and Gentiles, Old and New Testament saints, the family in heaven and in earth, the people of God that are already called, and are (yet) to be called, and (even) for the worst and vilest of sinners” *John Gill*

Let us ever remember that God’s grace in Christ is sufficient for us for everything and at all times.

- Sufficient to Accomplish All His Saving Purposes!
- Sufficient to Pardon, Justify, Regenerate, Sanctify, and Preserve Us!
- Sufficient in Every Time of Need!
- Sufficient in Health and Sufficient in Sickness!
- Sufficient Life and Sufficient in Death!

- Sufficient in Judgment!
- Sufficient to Present Us Faultless Before the Presence of His Glory Forever!

“The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.” — “I AM THAT I AM” must perish or must change, before our names can be torn from his heart. Some greater power must arise, before we can be plucked from the grip of his omnipotent hand. The bare idea is folly. Blessed are those sinners the Lord God calls “my people.” — *“I AM THAT I AM”* loves them, and they are loved — calls them, and they follow him — sanctifies them, and they are sanctified — blesses them, and they are blessed — gives them life, and they live — gives them glory, and they are glorified.

Amen.