

“I am he”

When Easter approaches each year, many people turn their thoughts to the events leading up to, and surrounding, the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. As I was reading in Isaiah, I came across something that turned my thoughts to one of those events, which occurs in John 18. Jesus and his disciples are in the garden...

Judas then, having received a band of *men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, **I am he**. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, **I am he**, they went backward, and fell to the ground. (John 18:3-6)

What is it about those words – “**I am he**” – that they went backward and fell to the ground?

Back in the day when I was in the camp of the critics (the text critics), I would “correct” God and say (aloud, or in my mind) that the “he” is in italics, and should be deleted – so as to have Jesus saying “I AM” like God said from the burning bush in Exodus 3:14.

But now... Having come (back) to a *complete* trust in God’s word which he (being God) interpreted into English *perfectly* [other tongues... will I speak, 1 Cor 14:21, Acts 2:4) (not just Hebrew and Greek)]...
now... Having come to a complete trust in *every word* (Luke 4:4, Prov 30:5, Deut 8:3) ...
now... I believe the Lord is answering my prayer a little at a time [precept ... upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little (Isa 28:10)] as I ask according to Job 32:8 for him to inspire his word to my understanding as I read it and hide it in my heart that I might not sin against him (Ps 119:11), and as I do according to the understanding which he gives (2 Tim 3:16-17, James 1:25).
(And be sure to know that any understanding I may have is not of me: it is of the Lord that giveth. The Lord will give the same – or even greater – understanding to you if you come nigh unto him and his word, with a believing heart; casting aside all doubts, and trusting every word in God’s book, the KJB).
now... I accept every word of God and trust that God will “shew” me why his words are what they are; and I no longer even “dream” of diminishing even one word.

So, here is what I came across in Isaiah, which led me to think of the Lord’s words “**I am he**” in the garden, and which has “shewed” me why Jesus said “**I am he**”...

Isaiah 41:4 Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; **I am he**.
Isaiah 43:10 Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that **I am he**; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.
Isaiah 43:13 Yea, before the day was **I am he**; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?
Isaiah 43:25 I, *even* **I, am he** that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.
Isaiah 46:4 And *even* to *your* old age **I am he**; and even to hoar hairs will I carry *you*: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver *you*.
Isaiah 48:12 Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; **I am he**; I am the first, I also am the last.
Isaiah 51:12 I, *even* **I, am he** that comforteth you: who *art* thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man *that* shall die, and of the son of man *which* shall be made *as* grass;
Isaiah 52:6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that **I am he** that doth speak: behold, it *is* I.

If, in the gospel of John, the text critic removes “he” from “**I am he**,” God’s spiritual connection (the comparison of spiritual things with spiritual) between those words in John, and those same words in Isaiah will be removed. This is one reason why God says, “diminish not a word” (Jer 26:2) – not even the word “he” which he has given to us in his perfect interpretation into English – the KJB.

In these verses in Isaiah, I took special note of the occurrence together of "**I am he**" with "the first" and "the last." Searching the scriptures, I found "first and last" (*without "the"*) nine times in reference to kings of Israel and Judah (from David to Josiah), but it was not lost on me that the King of kings is "the first" and "the last." So let's look now "**I am he**" in the gospel of John, and consider who "he" truly is...

John 8:21-30 21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.
22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.
23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.
24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that **I am he**, ye shall die in your sins.
25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.
26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.
27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.
28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that **I am he**, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.
29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.
30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

No doubt many knew the scriptures, and as such, to those with a believing heart (and not a critical mind like the Pharisees whom Jesus was addressing), the words "**I am he**" from Isaiah came to mind, and therefore many recognized in their hearts that they were hearing the words of the one that spoke in Isaiah 48:12 – **I am he**; I am the first, I also am the last. And therefore, As he spake these words, many believed on him.

John 13:19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that **I am he**.
John 18:1-8 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.
2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.
3 Judas then, having received a band *of men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.
4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?
5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, **I am he**. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.
6 As soon then as he had said unto them, **I am he**, they went backward, and fell to the ground.
7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.
8 Jesus answered, I have told you that **I am he**: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

Again, who is he (Jesus)?

Isaiah 48:12 **I am he**; I am the first, I also am the last.
Revelation 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.
Revelation 1:11 ...I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last
Revelation 1:13 ... the Son of man
Revelation 1:17 ... I am the first and the last
Revelation 1:18 **I am he** that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen

Revelation 2:23 ... **I am he** which searcheth the reins and hearts
Revelation 21:6 ... I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.
Revelation 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.