

**“I AM THE ONE WHO BEARS WITNESS”:
THE INCARNATE SON IN THE TEMPLE IN JOHN 8**

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INTRODUCTION

Among the inspired books of Holy Scripture, the Gospel of John is essential revelation advancing disciples’ understanding of the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Listening closely to the Lord’s teachings (John 13:23) and aided by the Holy Spirit’s ministry of apostolic remembrance (John 14:26), the Apostle John persuasively unfolds that Jesus of Nazareth is God the Father’s only begotten Son and the incarnate God of the Exodus.¹

This paper considers one of the most overlooked ἐγώ εἰμι statements in John, “I am the one who bears witness about myself,” in 8:18. The proposal is that in these words, like so many of the other ἐγώ εἰμι formulas in John, Jesus made yet another great statement of his divine nature identifying himself as the God of the Old Testament.

THE USE OF ἐγώ εἰμι IN JOHN’S GOSPEL

The use of ἐγώ εἰμι in John’s Gospel is well documented. John records several instances of Jesus saying “I AM,” where it stands alone.² Three of those seven appear in John 8. On several additional occasions, Jesus says “I AM” followed by a predicate, such as “I am the Bread of Life,” or “I am the resurrection and the life.” With these “I am” declarations, Jesus identified himself to be Yahweh, the “I am,” incarnate. Many interpreters argue that, when the ἐγώ εἰμι declarations are grouped in clusters, one can identify seven substantival ἐγώ εἰμι statements and seven ἐγώ εἰμι with the predicate. The traditional lists of the two sets of seven “I am” statements are provided below.³

The argument is represented well by James Montgomery Boice in his commentary: “The words [“I am”] are a title ... The point of his claim is that the title “I am” was similar to, if not identical with, the great Old Testament name for God: Jehovah.”⁴ The point is not that every time Jesus said “I am,” his hearers recognized a claim to deity in “real time” (though observe the Jews’ reaction in John 8:59), but that this was to be picked up by careful readers (and hearers), perhaps upon believing meditation on the Lord’s claims. Even for those who are “‘I am’ skeptical,” Jesus’s unimpeachable claim to deity in John 8:58, “Before Abraham was, I am [ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγώ εἰμι.],” and his similar claim in 13:19, provides ample ground to look for significance in the other, similar declarations that fill John’s Gospel.

Many interpreters stress the significance of ἐγώ εἰμι when it stands alone. One way or another, the phrase evokes the sacred name announced by God at the burning bush in Exod 3. There Yahweh

¹ This paper assumes that the Gospel of John is true in the spirit of John 14:6 and John 10:35, *Scripture cannot be broken*.

² Interestingly, the first three occasions of ἐγώ εἰμι in John occur in the mouth of John the Baptist as he repeatedly denies that he is the Christ. See John 1:20, 27; 3:28.

³ Whether or not there are two lists of seven ἐγώ εἰμι statements is unimportant to the argument of this paper.

⁴ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John: Volume 1, The Coming of the Light, John 1–4* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 301.

introduced himself to Moses, “I am the God [ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ θεός, LXX] of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exod 3:6a). Moses asked this God his name (3:13). God’s reply evoked a similar statement in v. 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.’” καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸς Μωϋσῆν ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν καὶ εἶπεν οὕτως ἑρῆς τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ὢν ἀπέσταλκέν με πρὸς ὑμᾶς.⁵

In Exod 3:15, God makes clear that “I am” stands behind the sacred name, and the Lord God used a similar statement to introduce the covenant to the nation of Israel in Exod 20:2: “I am the LORD your God [ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου, LXX], who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.”

Importantly, the isolated name or title is used generously by Yahweh to refer to himself in the Isaiah, as in Isa 43:10:

“You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he [ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, LXX]. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.”⁶

In the second half of Isaiah, the phrase “I am” (‘*ani hu*’) is certainly a reference to Yahweh, evoking the burning bush appearance. Harner summarized well the rich tapestry of its significance in Isaiah:

We may distinguish six important characteristics of this phrase [‘*ani hu*’, “I (am) He”], as Second Isaiah uses it in various settings. 1) It is always spoken by Yahweh, never by anyone else. 2) It signifies that Yahweh alone is God. 3) It presents Yahweh as the lord of history, and therefore the redeemer of Israel. 4) It presents Yahweh as creator of the world, as well as lord of history. 5) It points to a reality that Israel perceives, in faith, within the context of its witness and service to Yahweh. 6) It is closely related to other expressions of divine self-predication, especially the phrase ‘I am Yahweh’ (*ani YHWH*).⁷

Isaiah’s emphasis on God the “I am” underscores that the same God who delivered Israel during the Exodus would return again in the age of Messiah. Through Messiah’s salvation Israel shall know the name of this God again: *Therefore my people shall know my name. Therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here I am* (Isa 52:6).

⁵ Philip Harner regards it unlikely that “I am” finds its ground in Exod 3:14 because where the English reads “I am who I am,” the LXX gives ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν. This means the “proper name” in Exod 3:14 is ὁ ὢν and the expression ἐγώ εἰμι merely introduces that name. Philip B. Harner, *The “I am” of the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), 16–17, 60–62. <https://archive.org/details/iamoffourthgospe0000harn/page/n3/mode/2up>. Yet, as many have rightly argued, since Isaiah clearly uses “I am” to point back to the tetragrammaton and those pivotal chapters in Exodus (as Harner concedes), and because Exodus features so prominently in the Fourth Gospel, it seems very likely that the Gospel of John did see a link between Exod 3:14 and “I am” on Jesus’s lips.

⁶ Also see Isa 52:6, “Therefore my people shall know my name. Therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here I am.” Isa 52’s description of a future redemption cast in terms of an “Exodus” to come (v. 4) where the people listen anew to “I am” speaking, this time with joy seems to republish Deut 30:9–10’s description of the nation of Israel after The Gathering hearing the voice of Yahweh speaking with circumcised hearts.

⁷ Philip B. Harner, *“I am”*, 6. Harner regards it unlikely that “I am” finds its ground in Exod. 3:14 because where the English reads “I am who I am,” the LXX gives ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν. This means the “proper name” in Exod. 3:14 is ὁ ὢν and ἐγώ εἰμι merely introduces that name. Ibid., 16–17, 60–62. Yet, as many have rightly argued, since Isaiah clearly uses “I am” to point back to the tetragrammaton and those pivotal chapters in Exodus (as Harner concedes), and because Exodus features so prominently in the Fourth Gospel, it seems very likely that the Gospel of John intended a link between Exod. 3:14 and “I am” on Jesus’s lips.

For Boice, ἐγώ εἰμι alone is always a claim to deity and ἐγώ εἰμι with a predicate showed Jesus to be “the source of all good and the answer to all men’s needs.”⁸ Carson distinguishes the predicate phrases as “metaphorical,” and traces the “absolute” phrases back to “Isaiah’s use of the same expression as a reference for God.”⁹

ἐγώ εἰμι in John’s Gospel	
ἐγώ εἰμι alone	ἐγώ εἰμι + predicate
4:26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.” ἐγώ εἰμι , ὁ λαλῶν σοι.	6:35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς ; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 6:41 I am the bread that came down from heaven. ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ καταβάς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. 6:48 I am the bread of life. Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς. 6:51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς.
6:20 But he said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” ἐγώ εἰμι , μὴ φοβεῖσθε.	8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου.”
8:24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.” ἐὰν γὰρ μὴ πιστεύσητε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι ,	10:7 So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ θύρα τῶν προβάτων . 10:9 I am the door. ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ θύρα If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.
8:28 So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, τότε γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι , and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.	10:11 I am the good shepherd. Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 10:14 I am the good shepherd. Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς I know my own and my own know me,
8:58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” πρὶν Ἀβραάμ γενέσθαι ἐγώ εἰμι .	11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.
13:19 I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. ἵνα πιστεύσητε ὅταν γένηται ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι .	14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ No one comes to the Father except through me.
18:5–6 They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am he.” Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζωραῖον. λέγει αὐτοῖς· ἐγώ εἰμι . Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground. 18:8 Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go.” ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· εἶπον ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι .	15:1 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή . 15:5 I am the vine; ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος , you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ¹⁰

⁸ Boice, *Gospel of John*, 1:301.

⁹ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 57–58.

¹⁰ This table excludes the instances of Jesus’s use of ἐγώ εἰμι in John 7:34 (cf. v. 36); 12:26; 14:3; 17:24; 18:37. Cf. John 17:16. Carson shows that the phrase “I am,” despite its high Christology in John’s Gospel, does not present unreconcilable conflict with the Synoptics’ portrayal of the Lord. *John*, 57–58.

David Ball distinguishes between ἐγώ εἰμι with and without an image.¹¹ Edward Klink distinguishes “formal” and “informal” “I am” statements in John, all of which “locate Jesus in the divine identity of God.” The seven formal “I am” statements, which include the predicate, “are rooted in the OT ... and communicate the self-revelation of God.” The “informal” statements, where the “I am” stands alone, emphasize Jesus’s qualifications.¹²

In addition to two sets of seven listed above, one other possible “I am” expression is found in John 8:18. Interpreters have not known quite what to do with it: ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ. [*I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me.*]¹³ Here ἐγώ εἰμι is followed by a substantive participle, a structure unique within John. For this reason, this statement is never included in either of the other two lists of seven “I Am’s.”

“MOSES ... WROTE OF ME” IN JOHN 5–8

John’s Gospel does not identify Jesus’s deity only in the “I am” statements. The Apostle advances the claim in several other ways as well, including ways in which the words and works of Jesus resemble Jehovah as revealed in the Old Testament. Disciples are alerted to look for this at the end of John 5, when Jesus said to some hostile Jews, “For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?” (John 5:46–47)

In John 6, Jesus fed the five thousand and proclaimed showing himself to be the true manna, the fulfillment of the original manna that Moses wrote about (John 5:46). In that sixth chapter, Jesus said, “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35, ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς).

Also in John 6, Jesus walked on the water to rescue his disciples. When the Lord came to the worried disciples in the boat, Jesus said to them “I am. Do not be afraid” (John 6:20, ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε.) Jesus, who rules the raging sea (Pss 77:16, 19; 89:9), is, in flesh, the same God who conquered the sea and brought his people safely through the waters—the “I am” about whom Moses wrote.

In John 7:37, Jesus declared that he gives living water. The one who gave Israel water in the wilderness (Exod 17:5–7; 1 Cor 10:3) is the one who gives the living water to those who are a spiritual wilderness of drought. Moses wrote of him.

The Apostle John carefully and reverently advanced the great truth that the Christ who is Jesus (John 20:31) is to be identified with Yahweh, the God of the Exodus. John never did this such that we collapse the only begotten Son’s identity into that of God his Father (“the Word was with God”). Yet, truly, “the Word was God” (John 1:1).

¹¹ David Mark Ball, “*I Am*” in *John’s Gospel: Literary Function, Background and Theological Implications*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 124 (Bath: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 14.

¹² Edward W. Klink III, *John*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2016), 331–32.

¹³ David Ball noticed a possible connection between 8:18 and 4:26, ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι. *The “I Am,”* 89. Yet he conceded that the ἐγώ εἰμι in 8:18 does not appear to stand alone, where 4:26 arguably can. For an Old Testament reference echoed in John 4:26, see Isa 52:6.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES IN JOHN 7 & 8

Before turning to John 8, a word about the context is necessary. John 7 and 8 take place during the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles, six months before Christ’s crucifixion (John 7:2, 37).¹⁴ The Feast of Booths had certain memorable and meaningful rituals.

Early each morning of the 7-day festival, the high priest would take a gold flagon or pitcher, fill it water from the pool of Siloam, and would take it by solemn procession with music to the temple and the altar. Jews in Jerusalem would watch this rite. Perhaps they sang along with the Psalms 113–118 as they were sung. At the altar, the priest would pour out the water along with another drink offering of wine.

The poured water did not signify just one thing. For this Fall festival after harvest, the water would have reminded the people that of God’s provision through another season of farming. It also evoked the water God provided in the wilderness during the Exodus. Finally, the Feast of Booths water anticipated the prophecies about literal and spiritual water during Messiah’s glorious kingdom reign.

The Feast of Booths was featured in several important Old Testament passages. These texts would have been important in the imagination of the Jews. Among these, Zech 14 discussed the observance of the Feast of Booths during Messiah’s kingdom (14:9), where living waters flowed out from Jerusalem (14:8) and the nations observed the Feast of Booths each year before Jehovah (14:16–19).¹⁵ So it is with special significance that John 7:37 reads, *On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.”*

If water was important in the Feast of Tabernacles, the same could be said for light (Zech 14:6–7). At night, the city of Jerusalem was lit up as torches illumined the city. At the temple, four huge lamps were ablaze within the Court of the Women. The evening of the first day of the Feast, Jewish men would sing praises to Jehovah while twirling in cultural dances with torches. The praise would last all night. These rituals commemorated the light of the glory of God that was with his people during the wilderness wanderings and, as with the water, looked forward to the coming light of Messiah’s kingdom (Isa 42:6; 60:1).

THE CLIMAX OF THE ἐγώ εἰμι STATEMENTS IN JOHN 8

In John 8, the emphasis on “I am” in John’s Gospel arguably reaches a climax. In addition to v. 18, chapter 8 gives one important ἐγώ εἰμι with a predicate in v. 12 and two important ἐγώ εἰμι alone statements in vv. 24 and 28 before the climactic of all ἐγώ εἰμι declarations in v. 58.

“I am the Light of the World”

In v. 12, Jesus declared, still during the Feast of Tabernacles, “I am the light of the world. [ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου] Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” Yahweh’s Light was very important in the Old Testament. In Exod 13:20–22, Yahweh went before Israel in the glory-cloud “to give them light.” As noted above, the Feast of Tabernacles commemorated these wanderings. This divine light bestowed and represented gracious presence,

¹⁴ See Joseph Jacobs, H. G. Friedmann, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Tabernacles, Feast of.” <https://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14103-sukkot-feast-of>; and Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the Time of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 277–287

¹⁵ Köstenberger, *John*, 239–41.

salvation, protection, direction, and glory. God also commanded the Menorah be put in the tabernacle “for the light” (Exod 27:20). The Psalter showed that the people rightly came to associate Yahweh their God with life-giving light (Pss 27:1; 36:9; 43:3; 56:13).

The latter prophets, in their visions of Messiah and his glorious kingdom, also spoke of the divine light that would bathe the glorious restoration of Israel. Isaiah could speak of those Israelites who formerly “walked in darkness” seeing “a great light,” realized in the child-king to be born (Isa 9:2, 6). Later in Isaiah, Yahweh’s Servant is called “a light for the nations” (Isa 42:6) who will bring “my salvation ... to the end of the earth” (Isa 49:6). This glorious salvation is also described as Yahweh arising upon them and their darkness with glory and light (Isa 60:1–3; cf. Zech 14:6–7).

So when Jesus said, “I am the light of the world,” during a Jewish feast that remembered Yahweh’s glory-cloud in the wilderness, he was claiming not only to be the Christ, but God himself, who fulfills all the spiritual blessings of the divine light foretold in Scripture.

“That I am He”

Later in John 8, Jesus emphasized again that he is the “I am” in vv. 24 and 28:

John 8:24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.”

John 8:28 So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

In v 24, Jesus warned the Jews of their sin and utter inability to save themselves. For their sins, they deserved death (cf. 8:21). Their place before God was not simply a matter of their being children of Abraham. They needed Christ’s grace as the Incarnate I am. It was necessary that the Jews receive the Light coming into the world (1:9–13), for Jesus was in truth Yahweh Incarnate.

Verse 28 is rich with significance for John’s message. Jesus certainly develops in v. 28 what he meant in v. 24 to “believe that I am.” Jesus foretold that he will demonstrate his divine glory in particular “when you have lifted up the Son of Man.” Those words, clearly alluding to Isa 52:13, is a reference to Jesus’s crucifixion and his resulting resurrection and divine exaltation (cf. Phil 2). The Jews’ “lifting up” Jesus on a cross will ironically result to Jesus’s exaltation by the Father and all believers. And in this demonstration of glory and grace, Christ will be a light and will demonstrate with a particular glory that he, in fact, Yahweh Incarnate, the God of grace and forgiveness (Exod 34:5–7; John 1:14).

In both vv. 24 and 28 Jesus referred to himself with the language of passages like Isa 41:4, 10; 43:10, 25; 45:8; etc., and, through them, to Yahweh, the “I am” of the Exodus, as explained above.¹⁶

¹⁶ Carson comments, “The majority of interpreters today rightly see that, however ambiguous the expression remains in vv. 24, 28 (but not in v. 58), the proper background to *ego eimi* in John 8:24, 28, 58 is the use of *ego eimi* in Isaiah 40–55 (cf. especially Is. 41:4; 43:10, 13, 25; 46:4; 48:12; cf. also Dt. 32:39). In the Hebrew original, God discloses himself in the repeated declaration, ‘I am he’ ...; it is this expression that the LXX consistently renders by *ego eimi*, formally ‘I am’ ... For Jesus to apply

We will not consider closely the famous, clarion “I am” statement in 8:58: “Before Abraham was, I am.”¹⁷ The point is that the cluster of “I am” statements in John 8 is both significant and dense. This collection of important statements warrants close consideration of the final ἐγώ εἰμι statement in 8:18, “I am the one who bears witness.”¹⁸

INTERPRETATIONS OF “I AM THE ONE WHO BEARS WITNESS”

Though the research is admittedly limited, three prevailing approaches emerge concerning Jesus’s expression, “I am the one who bears witness” in v. 18.

Nothing to See Here

Many commentators either ignore the “I am” formula in v. 18 or outright deny it has any significance. Augustine simply passed over the “I am” statement altogether.¹⁹ John Chrysostom likewise stresses that the witness of the Son is independent of the Father’s witness, yet “His power has nothing different (from the Father’s).” The two witnesses are “of the same Substance.”²⁰ Calvin similarly passes by.²¹ John Gill and Matthew Henry did not find the “I am” statement worth commenting on, stressing again the simultaneous distinctiveness and equality of the divine persons of the Son and the Father.²² Westcott emphasizes the different form of the two witnesses. “He that gave the witness was one, but through Him the Father also spake and wrought.”²³

Murray Harris likewise has nothing to say about the “I am” formula. The same could be said for R. V. G. Tasker, Bruce Milne, R. Kent Hughes, Jo-ann Brant, and Martin and Wright.²⁴ Merrill C. Tenney is doubly silent.²⁵ William Hendriksen, F. F. Bruce, George Beasley-Murray, Urban von

such words to himself is tantamount to a claim to deity, once it is clear that the other potential meanings of *ego eimi* are contextually impossible.” *John*, 343–34.

¹⁷ Ryle observed of v. 58, “This famous verse, I believe, can only receive one honest interpretation. It is a distinct assertion of our Lord’s eternity ... All attempts to evade this explanation appear to me so preposterous that it is a waste of time to notice them.” J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2012), 2:97. More recently, J. Ramsey Michaels observed, “Because Jesus is Abraham’s God, and ‘before Abraham,’ Abraham himself is numbered among those who ‘will never see death.’ This is as close as the Gospel’s opening words, ‘and the word was God,’ come to being made explicit on Jesus’s own lips.” *The Gospel of John*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 535.

¹⁸ David Ball observed, “[T]he words ἐγώ εἰμι point forward to a future fulfilment (8.24, 28) and thus the reader is called to anticipate what it is about Jesus’ exaltation on the cross which will reveal his identity in terms of ἐγώ εἰμι. The ‘I am’ of ch. 13 points forward to the betrayal and thereby simultaneously anticipates that of ch. 18. In this way the use of ‘I am’ in John 8 and 13 demands that the reader understand them in the context of the whole Gospel and especially of the betrayal and passion.” *The “I Am,”* 149–50.

¹⁹ Augustine, “Tractate 36,” in *Homilies on the Gospel of John, Homilies on the First Epistle of John, Soliloquies*, NPNF¹ 7:208–13.

²⁰ Homily 52 in *Homilies on the Gospel of Saint John and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, NPNF¹ 14:189, 188.

²¹ John Calvin, *The Gospel according to St John 1–10*, trans. T. H. L. Parker, eds. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 212.

²² John Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments* (London, 1809; repr. Paris, AR: The Baptist Standard Bearer, 2006), 7:844. Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 5:796.

²³ B. F. Westcott, *The Gospel according to St John* (London: John Murray, 1898), 129.

²⁴ Murray J. Harris, *John*, EGGNT (Nashville: B&H, Academic, 2015), 169. R. V. G. Tasker, *The Gospel According to Saint John*, TNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 114. Bruce Milne, *The Message of John: Here is Your King! Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 127–31. R. Kent Hughes, *John: That You May Believe*, PTW (Wheaton: Crossway, 1999), 235. Jo-Ann A. Brant, *John*, Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 143. Francis Martin and William M. Wright IV, *The Gospel of John*, CCSS (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 156.

²⁵ *John: The Gospel of Belief: An Analytic Study of the Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 145. Also Merrill C. Tenney, *John*, EBC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 9:92–93.

Wahlde, and William Cook focus their comments on the two testimonies.²⁶ Surprisingly, James Boice, who is usually an “‘I am’ Maximalist,” also passes by the formula.²⁷ In his study on “I am” in John, Harner skips v. 18 entirely.²⁸ Even the acclaimed *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* completely passes by v. 18.²⁹

Michaels dismisses outright any significance to the “I am” construction on grammatical grounds. He wrote, “The form of this pronouncement (ἐγώ εἰμι) resembles (probably intentionally) the form of Jesus’ classic ‘I am’ sayings (as in v. 12, and earlier in 6:35, 47). Yet as Bultmann noted ..., it is not the same because ‘I’ is actually the predicate and not the subject of the sentence (as if to say, ‘It is I who testify’).”³⁰

Ambiguously Divine, but Not Much Else

Other commentators allow that “I am” is a possible affirmation of Christ’s deity, something like the other occurrences. For example, Godet connects Jesus’s declaration in v. 18 to v. 12 but hesitates to go much further: “It is in virtue of this divine light which shines within Him and by means of which He also knows others, that He is present as the *light of the world* (ver. 12).”³¹

Likewise, C. K. Barrett recognizes the “I am” structure and includes it in his discussion of John’s “I am” statements but concludes that 8:18 (and 8:23) “evidently differ in form from the other passages and are not considered here.” The *other* “I am” passages are “metaphorical or symbolical titles.” Still, at 8:18 he cross-references Isa. 43:10.³² Leon Morris is similar.³³

Following Charlier, Brown seems to acknowledge some possibility for a divine sense to “I am” in v. 18 but he gives no real development to the verse.³⁴

D. A. Carson acknowledged the “I am” possibility, but ultimately found no significance to it: “The words *I am one who testifies* formally constitutes another ‘I am’ saying, but in Greek it is structurally rather different from those listed in the notes on 6:35. The words do not so much identify Jesus as a particular individual (someone called ‘the testifier’ or the like) as they identify his peculiar qualifications: he is peculiarly the *one who testifies*, with full qualifications for doing so, for the reasons specified in vv. 14, 16.”³⁵

²⁶ William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979) 2:41–2. F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 19983), 190. George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 2d ed. WBC 36 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 129. Craig Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 1:741–42. Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, vol. 2, *The Gospel of John*, ECC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 391–92. William F. Cook, *John: Jesus Christ is God*, Focus on the Bible (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2016), 140.

²⁷ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John: Volume 2, Christ and Judaism, John 5–8* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 619–24.

²⁸ Harner, *The “I am.”*

²⁹ Andreas J. Köstenberger, “John,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 456–59. In this volume’s index, there is no entry at all for John 8:18.

³⁰ Michaels, *John*, 483 n99.

³¹ Frederick Louis Godet, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, repr. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970) 2:95.

³² C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (London: SPCK, 1960), 242, 280.

³³ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 442–43.

³⁴ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John (i–xii)*, ABC (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), 339–45.

³⁵ Carson, *John*, 340.

Certainly Divine, but No Further Connection

A last group of interpreters insist that the statement “I am” is divine, but fail to press any further on any other connections to the Old Testament Jehovah. In other words, their focus is on ἐγώ εἰμι and only that or they might connect it to a passage or two in Isaiah.

J. C. Ryle saw at least something of divinity in v. 18. In his words, Jesus claims that, “I bid you observe that there are two witnesses to my divine nature and mission. I myself, the Eternal Son, am one of these witnesses: I am ever testifying concerning myself.” Ryle carefully stipulates that this in no way distinguishes the divine being. In his typically warm style, he added, “There is undeniably something very remarkable about this verse ... The Greek words beginning the verse are peculiar and can hardly be rendered in English. They will almost bear to be translated, ‘I, the great I am, am the person witnessing about myself: and the Father,’ etc.”³⁶

Andreas Köstenberger went further than Carson (see above). He allowed for a possible “hint of deity,” following Morris and others, but linked the reference to Isa 43:10: “‘You are my witnesses,’ declares the LORD, ‘and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.’”³⁷

Though frustratingly non-committal about it, Andrew Lincoln evocatively notes, “Again Isa. 40–55 may well provide the background. Isa. 43.10 LXX, which employs the ‘I Am’ formulation, also speaks of two witnesses, Yahweh and Israel, the servant, who has just been portrayed as a light to the nations (Isa. 42.6). Through his claims here to be both the light of the world and the one who bears witness, Jesus can also be seen as taking on the role envisaged for the servant in God’s lawsuit with the world.”³⁸ Ball likewise points to Christ as the Servant of Isa 43:10, and ties that to Isa 42:6.³⁹

Similarly, Edward Klink describes v. 18 as “one of several informal ‘I am’ ... statements in the Gospel, which serve to give insight in the *particular qualifications* of Jesus.”⁴⁰ John Marsh, Gerald Borchert, Francis Moloney, and Richard Phillips made similar arguments.⁴¹

THE RICHER BACKGROUND OF ὁ μαρτυρῶν

Certainly, the “I am” statement in John 8:18 is significant, but even the third view above fails to recognize the fuller significance of the whole phrase. Despite its varying structure and difficulty classifying it with other “I am” statements in John, here Jesus made another important statement about his deity, one that arguably alludes, like many other “I am” statements to an Old Testament theme, besides Isa 43:10.

³⁶ Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*, 2:62.

³⁷ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 256.

³⁸ Andrew Lincoln, *The Gospel According to Saint John*, BNTC (USA: Hendrickson, 2005), 267.

³⁹ Ball, *The “I Am,”* 185–88.

⁴⁰ Klink, *John*, 408.

⁴¹ John Marsh, *Saint John*, Westminster Pelican Commentaries (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 354–56. Gerald L. Borchert, *John 1 – 11*, NAC (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 297–98. Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, SPS (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 266–69. Richard D. Phillips, *John*, 2 vols., REC (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2010), 525. Moloney notes, “Jesus is able to bear witness to himself because he was sent by the Father who also bears witness to him (v. 18). To stop short at the historical Jesus ... and apply the niceties of the Law to him is to miss the point. The Law has been perfected by the revelation of God in the person and message of the one sent. A knowledge of God has come through the Law, but Jesus cannot be understood, much less by judged, by such knowledge.” Ibid., 267.

In v 17, Jesus sets up a contrast coming in v 18: “In your Law it is written that the testimony of two people is true.” The focus is really on “two people,” or, better, “two men.” Jesus did not have two men as witnesses, he has God the Father and himself, the Eternal Son. “You accept it the testimony of two men, then why do you reject the perfectly united testimony of two divine persons?” So Jesus says to the Jews, “in your Law it is written.” Jesus was not throwing shade on the Law; he loves the Law God gave to Israel. But the Jews are fundamentally inconsistent with the very Law they profess to uphold over against Jesus. They have faulty judgment, mired in darkness (8:15).

Jesus continues, *I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me.* The statement is structured carefully:

ἐγώ εἰμι
ὁ μαρτυρῶν
περὶ ἑμαυτοῦ
καὶ
μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἑμοῦ
ὁ πέμψας
με πατήρ.

We could say much about the united testimonies of the Father and the Son. Our attention must remain focused on the beginning “I am” statement. As noted above, this “I am” expression differs in structure from both traditional forms. Here Jesus follows ἐγώ εἰμι with the substantive present participle ὁ μαρτυρῶν, *the one who bears witness*. The cognate noun of the verb μαρτυρέω is μαρτύριον, “testimony.” Both μαρτυρέω and μαρτύριον are very important themes in John, but “testimony” is also very important in the Old Testament.⁴²

Despite its prevalence throughout the OT, “testimony” rarely gets the attention it deserves. The Hebrew word עֵדוּת (testify or bear witness) came to take on great significance within the Sinai covenant. Scripture very often refers to the Law of Moses itself as the “testimony.”⁴³ “Testimony” could also refer to the ark of the covenant (“the ark of the testimony,” Exod 25:16),⁴⁴ the tablets which bore the Decalogue (Exod 31:18), or even the tabernacle (“the tabernacle of the testimony,” Exod 38:21). Consider Exod 27:20–21:

*You shall command the people of Israel that they bring to you pure beaten olive oil for the light, that a lamp may regularly be set up to burn. In the tent of meeting, outside the veil that is **before the testimony**, [תָּלַקְתָּ לֵּךְ | ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ τοῦ μαρτυρίου, LXX] Aaron and his*

⁴² John’s Gospel gives several different witnesses to Jesus, such as God the Father (5:37), the Samaritan woman (4:39), John the Baptist (1:7), the Scriptures (5:39–40), Moses (5:39, 45–47), the Holy Spirit (15:26), the Apostles (15:27); and Jesus’s works (10:25).

⁴³ See, for example, Exod 32:15; 34:29; 40:20; Deut 4:45; 6:17, 20; 1 Kgs 2:3; Ps 19:7; 119:2, 14; Isa 8:20; Jer 44:23. H. Strathmann in *TDNT* noted the connection between the noun *testimony* and the verb *bear witness* and its significance in the Law. “μαρτύριον always takes on here the sense of revelation, the revelation of divine commandments.” “Hence a distinctive point in the LXX use in so far as it goes beyond the popular is the fact that Yahweh Himself is the subject of the μαρτυρεῖν contained in μαρτύριον. But this μαρτυρεῖν is worked out in the revelation to Moses. The commandments are its content. The full appropriation of the word μαρτύριον and its plural μαρτύρια for the self-witness of God in the Mosaic legislation is a highly significant process for the development of OT nomism.” *TDNT* 4:485–6.

⁴⁴ Interestingly, the first items said to be put in the “ark of the testimony” is not the Law, but the jar of manna. See Exod 16:34. Compare Victor P. Hamilton, *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 258–59.

sons shall tend it from evening to morning before the LORD. It shall be a statute forever to be observed throughout their generations by the people of Israel.

Here the “testimony” stands for the ark, which bears, among other things, the testimony (the Law). The testimony/ark bore witness to who Yahweh is, his covenant promises, and his redeeming work. Accordingly, the testimony also bore witness to the people’s covenant obligations revealed in the Law.⁴⁵ Strikingly, the tabernacle’s lamp “for the light” burns before the testimony.⁴⁶

The bottom line is this: Yahweh God testified to his people.

The Law, written with the finger of Yahweh (cf. John 8:8), kept in the ark of the testimony (Exod 31:18), testified that the God of Abraham was Israel’s God and that they were his people. Even within the Law, Yahweh would often ground his commandments in “I am the Lord your God” [אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם | ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν] (Exod 29:46; cf. Exod. 20:2; Lev 11:45; 18:2, 4, 5, 6, 21, 30; 19:3, 4, 10; etc.).

The Law bore witness to the people that they were in a covenant relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.⁴⁷ From this covenant relationship, God had promised to make them a kingdom and provide them a Redeemer King who would save them and restore the blessing of Eden. Indeed, Yahweh testified within the Law to a new covenant that he would make with them after Israel failed to keep his Law (Deut 30). Yahweh’s Shekinah presence of light above the testimony, the ark of the covenant (which was illuminated by the lampstand outside the veil, Lev 16:2, 13), gloriously testified to his truth and gracious presence with his people.

Throughout its history, Yahweh’s glorious presence and Law continued to witness to Israel of his covenant and kingdom purposes for them. Accordingly, later, in Isa 55:4 God says of the messiah-king from David’s line, *Behold, I made him a witness* [עֵד | μαρτύριον, LXX] *to the peoples*. This great statement in Isaiah comes directly after Jehovah calls to his people, “Come, everyone who thirsts” (55:1), promises that that spiritual food that does satisfy (cf. 55:2) is none other than “an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David” (55:3).

This modest “biblical theology” of *testimony* gives greater clarity to what was Jesus meant when he said, *I am the one who bears witness*. In v. 14, Jesus had already referenced his preexistence: *I know where I came from*. Now, in v. 18, our Lord was saying that he, the light of the glory cloud (John 1:14), testified in the Old Testament to his own coming in the flesh.

Jesus added, *I am the one who bears witness about myself*. He is both the one bearing witness and what was being witnessed to (Is 55:4). He, the Word, testified to himself in the Law. He testified to himself in the symbols of the tabernacle. He testified to himself in the presence of his light and glory with God people. Yahweh bore witness, saying, “This is who I am. My Word will be fulfilled. I myself will save you and make you my kingdom.” He, the “I am,” bore witness to himself.

⁴⁵ Carl Schultz observed, “The law of God is his testimony because it is his own affirmation relative to his very person and purpose. While in the OT the written words constitute the testimony, it is the proclamation of the gospel which is the essence of the testimony of the NT.” *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 650, s.v. עֵד.

⁴⁶ *Light and bear witness* also appear together in John 1:7–8, though the one bearing witness is the Baptist.

⁴⁷ The *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* (C. van Leeuwen) also the close connection between *covenant* and *testimony* (compare Deut 9:9, 15), which at times referred to Ten Commandments, which served both as “a reminder of Yahweh’s saving acts and esp. of the obligation that he placed on Israel.” (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 2:844.

Further, just as the Lord God often insisted that Israel "keep" Yahweh's "testimonies" (Deut 6:17; 1 Kgs 2:3; Pss 25:10; 78:56; 119:2, 88, 129, 167; 132:12), later in John 8, the one bearing witness insisted with the strongest possible language, *Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone my word keeps, death no never will he see forever* (John 8:51, author's translation).⁴⁸

Jesus did not mean that his bearing witness to himself was restricted to the Old Testament. Jesus used a present active participle. The Son ever bears witness. The Word made flesh was still bearing witness to himself when he spoke that day in Jerusalem. Jesus bore witness to himself in his miracles, in his sinless life, in his death to save sinners, in his glorious resurrection, and in the glory of his unchanging divine person. And, in a true sense, Jesus was self-authenticating. As the Son of God, he did not need any created authority to bear witness to who he was and is.

Without question Jesus bore witness to himself in the glory of his earthly ministry. Yet the declaration *I am the one who bears witness of myself* pointed to an even richer theme, one that went even further back into the history of Israel and its relationship to Jehovah God. He, the Word, bore witness to himself, when he, the I am, testified by his covenantal presence to his own coming incarnate glory and kingdom. From the beginning of history to the coming of the Mediator, the God of Abraham, the "I am," was ever testifying to who he is and his saving purposes. That testimony was consummated in the incarnation of the Son of God.

God told Moses to put the lamp "for light" in the tent meeting, outside the veil that is before the testimony where Jehovah himself dwelt among his people. Centuries later, the Word made flesh, right after saying, *I am the light of the world*, declared, *I am the one who bears witness*. To seal this connection, twice John attests that Jesus said this *in the temple* (John 8:20, 59). In the man Jesus of Nazareth was the Lord who was present with his people above the mercy seat, the messenger of the covenant (Mal 3:1), the "I am" who testified in covenant. There is an identity between the "I AM WHO I AM" who dwelt in light above the testimony and this extraordinary son of David, Jesus of Nazareth. By his presence in the tabernacle and his covenant promises, Jehovah testified of his own incarnation, which fulfilled the tabernacle's types and symbols (John 1:14).

In ch 5, Jesus said, *Moses of wrote me*. Moses certainly did. The Jews were willing to take the testimony of two men. But they refused to take the united, unbroken testimony of The Testimony the Incarnate Son and his Father. They fulfilled Isaiah's great warning: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa 8:20, KJV).

It should be conceded that there are difficulties with this proposed reading. One might say that this interpretation gives too much weight to what is otherwise a simple statement of personal identity, "I am." Interpreters must allow Jesus to be able to say "I am" without reading into every single saying some Old Testament reference. One might also object on the grounds that the language of the Old Testament emphasizes the noun *testimony* (μαρτύριον) more than the verb *bear witness* (μαρτυρέω).

Yet the several lines of evidence point to an allusion to the Old Testament *testimony* in Jesus's claim, "I am the one who bears witness," in John 8:18.

(1) This reading shows that v. 18 is well in line with the words ἐγώ εἰμι so prevalent in the Gospel of John.

⁴⁸ ἅμην ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐάν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ, θάνατον οὐ μὴ θεωρήσῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. (Jn. 8:51 BGT)

(2) This interpretation also shows continuity between ἐγώ εἰμι in v. 18 and the other four ἐγώ εἰμι declarations within chapter 8.

(3) An allusion to the Old Testament “testimony” in the “one who bears witness” advances the theme in John’s Gospel that Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament temple.

(4) This reading also rounds out the “testimony” theme in John’s Gospel, connecting it to God’s testimony from Israel’s earliest days.

(5) This proposal better explains “I am the one who bears witness,” with “I am the light of the world,” given the close association of *light* and *testimony* in passages like Exod 27:20–21; Num 9:15; 10:11; Isa 8:20; 43:10; and Rev 1:5, 8, 12–13, 16 (see below). (Pairing “I am the one who bears witness” with “I am the light of the world” might help those concerned with fitting v. 18 into the list of seven “I am” statements.)

(5) John specifically *twice* draws our attention to the fact that it was *in the temple* (John 8:20, 59) that Jesus made this great declaration, with its significance to the Old Testament tabernacle and ark.

(6) The testimony theme is also advanced in Isaiah, a feature of many of the other “I am” statements. Yahweh through Isaiah can declare in 55:4 concerning the one who fulfills the everlasting covenant with David (55:3), *Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples*. We should expect Messiah to be a testimony (cf. Isa 43:10–11; Rev 1:5). Yahweh says of this same Servant in 42:6, *I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations*. Recall the connection between the testimony and the covenant in the Pentateuch was explained above (Exod 25:16; Pss 25:10; 132:12). The Servant of Yahweh who fulfills the covenant promises is both a light and witness to God and his gracious salvation.

(7) Finally, understanding this declaration of “I am” with “the one who bears witness” gives even greater strength to Christ’s argument. Not only does the Father bear witness to his Son, but our Lord himself has been ever bearing witness to himself. Like light itself, the Eternal God is self-authenticating.⁴⁹

CONCLUSION

Hermann Bavinck once observed, “Once a testimony has been recognized and accepted as divine, its power to bind and govern man is obviously stronger than that of any other word.”⁵⁰ Jehovah in the Old Testament came to his people simply declaring “I am Yahweh your God” (Gen 15:1; Exod 3:6; 6:2; 20:2; Josh 5:14; Isa 42:8; 43:11; 44:6; Jer 32:27; etc). The Incarnate Son came declaring, “I am” to his people, testifying to himself. Christ’s ultimate testimony to his truthfulness rests not in fallible man, but in his own divine testimony. John 8:18 makes it clear that it would be a mistake to restrict this testimony to the incarnate life of the Son of God, as important as that may be. The Son has been and continues to bear witness to his saving work to his people since the earliest days of Yahweh’s covenant with Israel.

⁴⁹ Carson comments on 8:12, “More important to the immediate context, the theme of light is not unrelated to the question of truthfulness and witness in the following verses, for light cannot but attest to its own presence; otherwise put, it bears witness to itself, and its source is entirely supportive of that witness.” *John*, 338–39.

⁵⁰ Herman Bavinck, *The Certainty of Faith*, tran. Daniel Schrock (Glenside, PA: Westminster Seminary Press, 2025), 26.

The Jews' true ignorance of the Father was made manifest when they rejected the Father's Beloved Son. In this way, the Jews were like their ancestors in the wilderness. This was not the first generation of the children of Israel that failed to recognize the glory of God in their midst. Even though God was present with them with the divine light of the glory-cloud, most Israelites did not recognize his glory. They grumbled, disbelieved, and disobeyed with Yahweh's light in their midst.

Jesus testified that he was the light and the one bearing witness *as he taught in the temple*. The self-authenticating glory of God was, once again, in the temple. The Incarnate Son, the glorious light of the unseen God, was shining from the temple, but the Jews failed to recognize his glory. Accordingly, as the Jews in fury began to stone him for his claims to deity (v. 58), *Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple* (v. 59). Once again, the glory of the Lord tragically left his temple (cf. Ezek 10).⁵¹

⁵¹ Carson, *John*, 358.

THE LIGHT/CLOUD WITH THE TESTIMONY IN SCRIPTURE

Exodus 27:20–21 You shall command the people of Israel that they bring to you pure beaten olive oil for the light, that a lamp may regularly be set up to burn. ²¹ In the tent of meeting, outside the veil that is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening to morning before the LORD. It shall be a statute forever to be observed throughout their generations by the people of Israel.

Leviticus 16:13 and put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is over the testimony, so that he does not die.

Numbers 9:15 On the day that the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony. And at evening it was over the tabernacle like the appearance of fire until morning.

Numbers 10:11 In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, the cloud lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony ...

Psalms 99:7 In the pillar of the cloud he spoke to them; they kept his testimonies and the statute that he gave them.

Isaiah 8:20 To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.

Isaiah 42:6, 43:10 "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations . . . Isaiah 43:10 "You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.

Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ... ⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." ... ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ... ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.