

Connected to the IAM= Knowing God --- Do you know Him?

By © Leen La Rivière : leen@continentalart.org

The themes of the last years spoke about: Connection, Trust, Faith, Salvation, etc. Great themes where we digged out jewels of meaning. But slowly it dawned on me(LLR), that all of those great themes were centering around a central message: WHO is there? With WHOM are we connected? WHO can we trust? Faith in WHOM? WHO is giving salvation? So it is time to go a step further to think, study and talk about WHO IS THERE at the centre of our belief? And WHO IS HE?

This first question was asked by Moses. I take you to the story of the burning bush, Exodus 3. Moses has fled out of Egypt after committing a political inspired murder. He is now shepherd and far out in the desert. Suddenly he sees a burning bush without consuming the bush. Next a discussion happens. Finally asks Moses how to convince Pharaoh and the elders of the Israelites? Vs 13: *13 Moses said to God, "Behold, when I come to the children of Israel, and tell them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you;' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' What should I tell them?"*

14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM," and he said, "You shall tell the children of Israel this: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" *15 God said moreover to Moses, "You shall tell the children of Israel this, 'Yahweh(= the LORD), the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and this is my memorial to all generations'.*

A scholar once said that this definition I AM was the highest and most exact explanation of 'self, of identity.' If you speak this name of God you can feel the immense power behind it.

WHO **HE IS** is more explained in the 10 commandments. He reveals here His identity=His view on life, how should we do and live as His creations; Exodus 20: *1 God* spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am Yahweh(=The Lord) your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 You shall have no other gods before me.*

4 "You shall not make for yourselves an idol, nor any image of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 you shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and on the fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 and showing loving kindness to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 "You shall not take the name of Yahweh(=the Lord) your God in vain, for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

8 "Remember the Sabbath day(=the Lord), to keep it holy. 9 You shall labor six days, and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh(=the Lord) your God. You shall not do any work in it, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates; 11 for in six days Yahweh(=the Lord) made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore Yahweh(=the Lord) blessed the Sabbath day, and made it holy.

12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which Yahweh(=the Lord) your God gives you.

13 "You shall not murder.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor'

In the New Testament Jesus the Christ puts this all together in the following sentences: Luke 10:

26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." He said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this, and you will live."

The same kind of question is Jesus asking to his disciples: Luke 8: *On the way he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that **I am**?"*

28 They told him, "John the Baptizer, and others say Elijah, but others: one of the prophets."

*29 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "**You are the Christ.**"*

Christ = the Messiah, the send One, the anointed One.

More is revealed about the **content of THE NAME** in Isaiah 9: *2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who lived in the land of the shadow of death, on them the light has shined.*

6 For to us a child is born. To us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulders. His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

More: a remarkable situation is happening at the beginning of Jesus' ministry on earth, John reveals (John 1): *17 For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has seen God at any time. The one and only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him. You can say that in Jesus who God IS, is revealed. John the Baptists continues: 29 The next day, he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. This is another aspect of THE NAME: Agnus Dei: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.*

The NAME and generations

When you study the stories of Abraham, son Isaak and grandson Jacob you find that over and over God says: I AM.....

Abram (Gen 15): *1 After these things the word of Yahweh(=the Lord) came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Don't be afraid, Abram. **I am your shield**, your exceedingly great reward." And later in Gen.17: *1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh(=the Lord) appeared to Abram, and said to him, "**I am God Almighty**. Walk before me, and be blameless. 2 I will make my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly."**

God starts to reveal Himself to **son Isaak** (Gen.26): *23 He(=Isaak) went up from there to Beersheba. 24 Yahweh(=the Lord) appeared to him the same night, and said, "**I am the God of Abraham your father**. Don't be afraid, for I am with you, and will bless you, and multiply your seed for my servant Abraham's sake." 25 He built an altar there, and called on the name of Yahweh.*

Gods starts to reveal Himself to **grandson Jacob** (Gen.28): *10 Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. 11 He came to a certain place, and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. He took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12 He dreamed. Behold, a stairway set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. Behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13 Behold, Yahweh (=the Lord) stood above it, and said, "**I am Yahweh**, the God of Abraham your (grand) father, and the God of (father)Isaac. 15 Behold, **I am** with you, and will keep you, wherever you go, and will bring you again into this land. For I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken of to you."*

God is NOT a God for one moment. **He IS** faithful to generation after generation. God says that even to Moses appr.400 years later (Exodus 3): God called to him out of the midst of the bush, and said, "Moses! Moses!" He said, "Here I am." ⁵ He said, "Don't come close. Take off your sandals from off your feet, for the place you are standing on is holy ground." ⁶ Moreover he said, "**I am** the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look at God.

Not much later Gods word/promise is *for the entire people of Israel*. The revelations and blessings are for all (Exodus 6): ⁶ Therefore tell the children of Israel, '**I am Yahweh**(=the Lord), and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments: ⁷ and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and you shall know that **I am Yahweh your God**, who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for a heritage: **I am Yahweh.**'

And what is absolutely great, Paul explains us in the book of Romans (4), that we too and all the world inherit this blessing and promises : ¹³ For the promise to Abraham and to his seed that he should be heir of the world wasn't through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of no effect. ¹⁵ For the law works wrath, for where there is no law, neither is there disobedience. ¹⁶ For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace, to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. ¹⁷ As it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations." This is in the presence of him whom he believed: God, who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not, as though they were. ¹⁸ Who in hope believed against hope, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken

This covenant with the I AM is a convenat for all time, with all nations, with you and me. This is again confirmed in the letter to the Galatians(3): ⁶ Even as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." ⁷ Know therefore that those who are of faith, the same are children of Abraham. ⁸ The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you all the nations will be blessed." ⁹ So then, those who are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham. ¹⁰

Now, it is interesting if you type in on any Bible search register the combination of I AM, the list is very long. But between those hundreds of texts, there are wonderful and powerful supplements to THE NAME:

- I Am the Lord your God
- I AM the Lord, who heals you
- I AM a jealous God
- I AM the merciful
- I AM the Holy one
- I AM making you holy
- I AM compassion
- I AM the Lord your God at times of rejoicing, feasts and festivals
- I AM your saviour
- I will be with you, not leaving you
- I AM the Lord of the generations from beginning till the end (see Isaiah 41,4 and 44,6) this is the same what is said in Hebr.13:8: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

And in Mathew 28,20 says Jesus: I am with you till the end of times. And in Revelation 1,8: I am the alpha and omega (Rev.21,6 too) and Rev.22,13)

- I have chosen you
 - I AM the salvation; I AM the saviour
 - I AM the comforter
 - I AM the One, who speaks
 - I AM your redeemer
 - I AM the one who sends you
 - I AM with you
 - I AM the shepherd; I AM the good shepherd
 - I AM with you, be strong
 - The I AM looks for us, see what Jesus said (Matthew 9): ¹² When Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are healthy have no need for a physician, but those who are sick do."¹³ But you go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And in Luke 4: ⁴³ But he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the Kingdom of God to the other cities also. For this reason I have been sent."
 - I AM your servant (Luke 22,27)
 - I AM the bread of life
 - I AM the light of the world
 - I AM the door
 - I AM the resurrection and the life
 - I AM the way the truth and the life
 - I AM the vine, you are the branches.
 - I AM your helper
- Etc, etc

And if you go and search for other texts related to His NAME, again you get a wonderful and powerful list like:

- the glory of HIS NAME
- trusting his holy NAME
- praise HIS NAME, proclaim his salvation
- Call HIS NAME for redemption
- where there are 2 or 3 gathered, we are gathered in HIS NAME
- who believe in HIS NAME, have the right to become children of God
- We have life in HIS NAME
- everyone who call on the NAME of the Lord, will be saved
- forgiveness in his NAME
- we praise his NAME with music
- justified by the NAME
- believe in the NAME and love each other in the NAME

Jesus Christ is the expression of God. The political elite of his time thought he was a revolutionnary, others thought he was a prophet, others saw how he criticised the economical system (the traders in the temple thought he was bad business), the religious leaders (the orthodox and the liberals) saw him as their enemy. Was he a rebel? The military executed him. The cultural elite could not get it with his philosophy. The populists thought Jesus had betrayed them. Why was he always disturbing the status quo? So who IS Jesus?

I add these thoughts as the focus on Jesus Christ is the essential conclusion about I AM. And here is a lot to think about. **HOW DO YOU SEE HIM?** As great example? As son of man? As son of God? As Messiah? As mediator? As light of the world? As peacemaker? As grace-giver? As personal savior? As savior of the world? As LORD over all? As king of the kingdom? As sender of the Holy spirit?

Depending your point of view, that will decide HOW and WHAT you are going to do in your life. This great passage in Mathew 25 is a wonderful help for direction and this passage is a great help to understand the nature of the 10 commandments: ³¹ *"But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.³² Before him all the nations will be gathered, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.³³ He will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.³⁴ Then the King will tell those on his right hand, 'Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;³⁵ for I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in;³⁶ naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me.'*

³⁷ *"Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you a drink?³⁸ When did we see you as a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you?³⁹ When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?'*

⁴⁰ *"The King will answer them, 'Most assuredly I tell you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers^{*}, you did it to me.'⁴¹ Then he will say also to those on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels;⁴² for I was hungry, and you didn't give me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink;⁴³ I was a stranger, and you didn't take me in; naked, and you didn't clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'*

⁴⁴ *"Then they will also answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and didn't help you?'*

⁴⁵ *"Then he will answer them, saying, 'Most assuredly I tell you, inasmuch as you didn't do it to one of the least of these, you didn't do it to me.'"*

But there is one more VIEW, an incredible one, the Artistic view on the I AM: this mentioned in words like: He is the shekinah, He is like a fire, a sparkling, dazzling Light, He is shining, His radiance, Shining glory, true light, the shining beauty of God (see Ez 8,2; Ez.10,4,9; Marc 9:3; Ps.67,1; Ps.80,3,7,19; Ps.89,15; Ps.97,6; Ps.50,2; Ez.1,4,27,28; And the shining glory of God can be seen in his great new world and new Jerusalem(Rev.21). 1 Timothy 6:15,16: *God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To Him be honor and might forever. Amen.* And it is through Jesus Christ that we can know God.

After all these thoughts, considerations, beautiful views, powerfull texts: I want to close with what really will help to find purpose and meaning in your personal life with the GREAT I AM: *Romans 8: ³¹ What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who didn't spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how would he not also with him freely give us all things? ³³ Who could bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*

³⁵ *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Could oppression, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ Even as it is written, "For your sake we are killed all day long. We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter."³⁷ No, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

So, are you connected tot his great Magnificent I AM? Do you know him? Do you really believe Him? Believe in Him?

God is like a shining diamant, having so many great and fascinating aspects....



"Understanding the splendour, and beauty of this incredible, glorious GOD, I stood in silence in total amazement, breathless, speachless, full astonishment, perplexed, mind-blogging. In reverence I felt on my knees and wept "