



International Bible Lesson

International Bible Study Commentary

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Jesus Is I Am John 8:21-30

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 (John 8:24—KJV).

Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins (John 8:24—NASB).

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

When Jesus told the religious leaders that He was going away and they could not go where He was going, they asked contemptuously, “Is He going to kill himself?” They thought those who killed themselves went to the lowest place in hell, and they thought Jesus should go to hell too. They also thought they could never go there. In reply, Jesus told them that they would die in their sins. Jesus knew they would never believe what He taught about himself or believe in Him; so, they would die in their sins. They would die before the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, during its destruction, or soon thereafter. Because they would die in their sins, they could not go where Jesus was going—back to His Father in heaven. Jesus told them why they would die in their sins, saying, “you will die in your sins unless you believe that **I am**.” Using the Greek language of Jesus’ day, one could simply say with one word, “I am,” or for emphasis use two words. When Jesus applied God’s name to himself, Jesus used two words with the emphasis on “I.” Rather than preserve precisely only the two Greek words in English translation, the footnotes of most English Bibles show that English translators added “he” in

italics after “I am.” In addition to applying God’s name to himself, in John 8:29, Jesus claimed to be perfect, for He said that He always did what was pleasing to His Father who sent Him. Jesus always pleases His Father whenever He gives eternal life to those who believe in Him.

Thinking Further

1. Where was Jesus going, to whom was He going, and when was He going?
2. Why would some of Jesus’ listeners look for Him, not find Him, and die in their sin?
3. What does Jesus declare to the world?
4. In what way did Jesus use the divine name for himself?
5. How did Jesus tell His listeners that He was the Messiah, and when did He say some of them would realize who He was?

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