

Sent & Signified

Revelation 1:1-3

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

As has been stated many times, this book is proof of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and that his role of Advocate and intercessor, as High Priest on the right hand of the Father, is seen in not just in his personal and willing sacrifice - even of his own life - for the salvation of those who believe in him, but also shows the ongoing love and care of those who put their faith in him. It is not enough for a good shepherd to rescue the wayward sheep from the valley of the shadow of death, but the good shepherd continues in his guidance and love for the flock. This book of Revelation, is that ongoing care - the sharing of intimate knowledge, of exhortation and demonstrations of power, proof of the authority invested in the Son of Man, and the very character of Jesus Christ who without hesitation mediates tirelessly between the Father and his Children.

This Revelation of secret things is exactly that. The giving of knowledge, the revealing of information is the demonstration of the purpose and will of God to a chosen few. It is expected of the servants to understand the language of the prophecy, and of the metaphors used. The giving of the revelation, the opening of the mind of God, and revelation of His purpose to a select few, is to strengthen and to enable them in times of pressure and temptation

to continue to be servants – that is to obey as Deuteronomy 29:29 explains: *The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.* The sharing is not intended for all and sundry – it is given to servants and the process of giving was through sign – it was signified – This is a clear indication that the book – which is famous for being difficult to understand at first reading – is not intended for everybody to understand, it is not given for the benefit of the general population. Those who cannot accept the word of God is true, and inspired, and fail to appreciate the power of the gospel, of course they will find the book still will remain a secret: Psalms 25:14: *The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.* This is reinforced by the testimony of Amos 3:7: *Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

It has already been shown that because of unbelief the word was shut up and hidden from the unbelieving Jews at the time of the prophets, who were stoned and persecuted by them. So many Jews remained in captivity, and even when they returned from exile, they corrupted again the covenant of God. Thus Daniel was instructed Daniel 12:4: *But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.* Further Revelation would not be given until the time of the end. The Time of the End of what? Much of the visions given to Daniel related to the history of the Kingdoms of men versus the Kingdom of God – Israel as a nation. The book then would be unsealed at the time of the end of the Judean Commonwealth, when the Romans took away their *place and nation.* (John 11:48)

The Book of Revelation was a Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to him. It did not come from the mind of Christ. It was not knowledge which Jesus already had, and was passing on, but instead, he was a vehicle of the Spirit of God. This of course proves that Jesus is not equal to the Father, as the idolatrous cult of Trinitarians claim

In fact Jesus himself admitted this: Mark 13:32: *But of that day and that hour knows no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*

The Father who was he who sent His Revelation to Daniel through the Angel, continued His Revelation through His Son Jesus Christ, to maintain the flow of information to those who were capable of receiving it at the time of the end: So Jesus as a faithful Son did as he was instructed and imparted the knowledge to his Servants – *things which would shortly come to pass*. The Greek word for servants we are reminded is *doulos* which means slaves. *Back in the day, servants were paid, whereas slaves were owned. There was a big difference – and still is. We are also reminded of Joseph who was the slave of Potipah, but all things were given into his hand, as through his magnificent example and behaviour he was completely trusted. So is the status of the slaves of Jesus Christ, who although freed from being slaves to sin and given liberty through the forgiveness of sins, they in return, through love willingly submit themselves to the will of God, and enter into a covenant of obedience to be willing slaves of the mind of Christ. This new relationship which is not appreciated by so many- (who seem to think that service to God is entirely voluntary – they can dip in and out when they feel like it) But Jesus explains: John 15:15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Thus the signification, the giving of the Revelation to faithful Joseph-like slaves is a demonstration and elevation to Friendship. John 15:14: Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

The new information revealed related to *things which must shortly come to pass*. Knowledge of these “things” had been sealed up *until the time of the end*. There had been a long gap between the last Old Testament prophet and John the Baptist. There were no more prophets after Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi around 420BC until John the Baptist – who Jesus describes as the greatest of the

prophets Luke 7:28. This long gap was even prophesied, and so it came to pass: - Micah 3:6 *Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them.*

The Revelation of Jesus Christ began during his life, when he spoke to his disciples: Luke 10:24: *For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*

Jesus warned his disciples of things which would shortly come to pass in Matthew 24, and Luke 21, of the demise of the Judean Commonwealth, and the Roman oppression and persecution. Yet as a new generation of believers experienced this persecution after the preaching of the Apostles in all nations, and Gentile and Jew together in little Ecclesias around the Roman empire struggled to keep the commandments delivered to them, and as the Apostles suffered death and martyrdom at the hand of the persecutors, the Good Shepherd continued to feed the flock, and unsealed the book, and ensured that his disciples would have all that was necessary to fortify them against the time to come. Thus the giving of the Revelation was the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13, as being *That which is Perfect is come...* (verse 10)

The Lord Jesus did not deliver the scroll personally – he had already been revealed, and many refused to believe even though one had risen from the dead, and he had work to do on the right hand of the Father, but he sent and signified the Apocalypse by his angel unto his servant John. It was his angel as Peter the Apostle observed: 1 Peter 3:22: *Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.* The special Revelation of information was to be given to his servant John. This is the same John to whom Jesus prophesied would *tarry until I come* – see John 21:22-23. As John was in Jesus mortal life a close

and faithful disciple, so he was now, and he declared in this Introductory Foreword and explanation of this last book of the Bible that he testified to everything that he saw concerning the word of God and the testimony about Jesus Christ. John would have been an elderly man, and witnessed the *time of the end* the catastrophe which befell the Jewish people, the destruction of the temple, the political earthquake which completely changed the region, and made so many Jews exiles and refugees. John was the living connection between the then *time of the end*, and the beginning of the times of the Gentiles. It is why he was given information which would relate to things which would shortly come to pass. It would be relevant to his time and generation, - just as every generation of believers can identify with “their” epoch within the continuously historic revelation of drama which befall the times of the Gentiles. Those who claim the revelation was some futuristic vision, which would have been irrelevant to John and of little consequence would make John a liar, because how could he in all good conscience show any appreciation for what he received if it bore no connection to his own present day? But he did see, and did understand as he declares in verse 2.

The brief introduction closes with a blessing and exhortation. A word of advice to those servants who would gladly receive this Divine wisdom: *Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

As faithful slaves, their life is one of action and business in the household of their Master. Reading, hearing, keeping. An attentiveness, an alertness, and an anxiety in maintaining that level of service, why? Because of the blessing. See Matthew 5:3-10, just as Jacob so desired the blessing it consumed him, and transformed his life, so it should be with all true Servants.

Brother Terry