

Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, January 23, 2022

"[A]nd he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:" (Revelation 1:1d)

Fourteen months ago I was led by the Spirit to present a sermon on what I named as "Revelation 1:1c", "*to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass*" (11/1/20); after going at least that long between sermons on the first two five-word clauses of that verse "*The Revelation of Jesus Christ,*" (2/5/17) and "*which God gave unto him*" (4/1/18). If you put them back-to-back, it might present a fairly helpful presentation of the first verse of this magnificent treatise on Christ's return. Taken together, we have presented for us the majestic subject of this treatise, the universe-disposing origin of that subject, the intimate and duty-imposing purpose of bringing the presentation of it forward, and (now) the pride-defying and proprietary mechanism for distribution.

If the world's generations had been filled with sincere and sanctified souls writing about our blessed King, it would still result in a mind-wrecking volume of information to consume and sift to get to a point of saturation and clarity in viewing the endless facets of God's wondrous attributes. When you put into the equation the desperate cause of Satan, and those reprobate souls energized by that vicious angel to sew deceit and confusion, the ratio of wheat to chaff in all you must consume is staggering. So, when so few words of the Spirit are used to capture such foundational truths, it helps to slow down and graze – so the flavor and wonder of the words can just keep washing over your heart and mind. It steady's the impatient hand to do that. I've heard it before spoken of how our sweet Gran said that sometimes – just sometimes it is a single verse that brings comfort if you quiet your mind and slow down and let it simmer. That is what I wanted with this opening verse of this treatise. I wanted to refuse to rush. I wanted to consider each clause; each word coupling; each conjunction or preposition ... so that my mind will slow down its mad rushing about what all the prophets and all the apostles have written; together with all the speculations and expositions written – some good, some truly poor.

The context of this work done by our "***brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ***" (**Revelation 1:9**) is exile. The context is exile. I would offer here that when Scripture says that we present our bodies "***a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God***" (**Romans 12:1**) that it will in a significant way to each of His servants include exile. I'm not ever going to excuse any who would maltreat one of the saints – and I would caution every soul here not to be numbered with those who would or do – but if you are a child of God, you are going to be in exile. In John's instance, it was a physically isolating exile. I remember when I was first introduced to this blessed book of The Revelation as a young man, some expositor that was referenced then described the state that John was placed. He was sentenced to exile because he preached, or as he tells us "***for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ***" (**Revelation 1:9**). He was sentenced to be isolated from all other human beings, with a sentry posted such that if he had any thought of attempting to leave that island prison – Patmos sits about thirty miles off the western coast of today's Turkey, or about forty miles southwest of Ephesus – he would be prevented. There is nothing in any of that to worship clearly, but it should weigh upon us that our tribulations could always be much worse, though never too much to overcome a redeemed soul.

But contemplation about the context of John's recording of this grand event always brings me to certain sadness or melancholy. This inhospitable state, the rage of the world against his simple preaching, the perpetual discomfort to his flesh and a certain degree of wonderment about if he would ever have concourse with his co-elect again in this life, or would he die on that barren, rocky prison. Such thoughts induce sobriety about how I live each day; how all of us live each day. Our Christ warned of those who "***heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful***" (**Matthew 13:22**), so it is a great and ever-present threat to have too much care for things. Certainly, we should strive to bring our spirits and our hearts into a state of exile from those dangers when we can.

The LORD sent this magnificent work to His servant John who, the following verse indicates, made the record. The capacity to see, and to know, and to prophecy is appointed of the LORD.

"And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." (John 3:26-29)

Here we have John Baptist being engaged with by those who had observed Christ – after coming up out of the baptismal waters with him – going about preaching and seeming to be gaining a following and having believers baptized. This was a sleight in their eyes, they being unable to understand that it was the very Passover Lamb in the flesh to whom they were presently ascribing a jealous wickedness and presumptuousness that He would do such a thing. It is a common error in the hearts of men that they think the opening of these matters are in the hands of the flesh. That these filthy frames to which we are imprisoned in this life could take unto themselves a knowledge of eternal things and – even more insulting – to be a teacher or preacher or (as articulated in this passage) ***"Rabbi"*** or master of them, is beyond arrogant. To presume, in the dreadful state of our nature, to collect together these jewels of our own wisdom and strength would be altogether like that poor soul who thought to sweep and garnish his house and find he prepared it for not just one but seven wicked spirits (Luke 11:24-26). ***"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven."*** Mucking about thinking that you can handle these blessed things with human hands is guaranteed only to bring upon you that destruction guaranteed for those ***"that are unlearned and unstable [and therefore] wrest"*** (2 Peter 3:16).

John Baptist understood this wonderfully. We should understand this wonderfully. The preachers and prophets of God are ***"sent"*** to the work of declaring God's will to the human race, as Paul reminds us in this passage:

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:14-15)

Nothing intrinsic in any men make them worthy to go, because they are, with the whole of the Adamic race, under sin (Romans 3:9), and have feet that ***"are swift to shed blood"*** (Romans 3:15); not to ***"bring glad tidings of good things"***. But things change when the sweet Spirit of God is infused into them, and they are ***"transformed by the renewing of [their] mind"*** (Romans 12:2). The Greek word that is used to describe this energy of sending forth is ***"apostello"*** ("ap-os-tel'-lo"), and appears in the New Testament 130 times; 93 times in the four gospels, mostly referencing that Christ was sent to His work by the Father or the sending forth of the apostles by Christ. He sends us ***"forth as sheep in the midst of wolves"*** (Matthew 10:16); He sends His laborers into His vineyard (Matthew 20:2); He sends his servants to call them that are bidden to the wedding (Matthew 22:3-4); He calls unto Himself whom He will and then sends whom He will forth to preach (Mark 3:13-14).

When you are in a distress of mind or are in some fit of spirit about what is falling out – whether it be due to some affliction or it be due to a thought that some life event seems too difficult to understand as falling out to one of the servants of God – let me offer this. When the whole tapestry of the creation is laid out, with all of the generations of time stretched end to end and all of the intricate relations between people and villages and

cities and states and nations and empires; events across the earth and the endless heavens and the eras of which there has been any competent recording to consume – how humbling is it to consider your brief and lowly place? Then consider the relatively few members of that creation that have ever been plucked forth by a sovereign God to send for His work; where they lived, how they lived, what they were called forward to do and to say. Mostly living in truly humble life circumstances with little in this life that any creature would consider much of anything. None of them having anything of this life to boast, but rather affliction and guilt and shame and distress. Yet, carrying through some significant and important part of that life this “***treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.***” (**2 Corinthians 4:7**). Such a rare honor and blessing to be among those who are sent to this work, this joyful labor, this seed that we go forward bearing while we weep of our guilt and shame but having a certain confidence in the promise that we shall doubtless come again bringing in our sheaves with us (**Psalms 126:6**).

And oh, when that soul is chosen by the eternal God to be sent forth for the dissemination of His blessed Word, it goes forth with all of the powers of that Majesty on High for Whose “***pleasure [all things] are and were created*** (**Revelation 4:11**). All of the creation, human, beast and the mighty angelic, animate, and inanimate, are summoned forth in an innumerable collection and inerrant symphony to support – wittingly and unwittingly – the fulfillment of that work. When we sing the lyrics “*that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake I will never, no never, no never forsake*”, I fear that however stirring those can be to our spirits they cannot fathom the depth and scope of the power that sustains the humble soul who has been sent to the work. That gospel preaching “***shall not return unto [God] void, but it shall [] prosper in the thing whereto [He] sent it.***” (**Isaiah 55:11**). But only when He sends it.

For it has simultaneously proven to be a dreadful thing for any human to take upon himself the title of God’s prophet or minister when that soul has not been sent. Look at this prophecy of Ezekiel as an example:

“¶ ***And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD. They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The LORD saith: and the LORD hath not sent them: and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word. Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith it; albeit I have not spoken? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord GOD. And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.***” (**Ezekiel 13:1-9**)

It is treachery to present yourself as a minister and prophet of God when you have not been sent to the work. It is true that “***if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work***” (**1 Timothy 3:1**), but it does violence to this blessed passage to pretend that the desire here discussed flows from the lustful malignance of a man’s desire to be lord “***over God’s heritage***” (**1 Peter 5:3**). Expositor John Trapp has some instructive words regarding this desire: “***He desireth a good work; But a hard work. The ministry is not an idle man’s occupation, but a sore labour; [], saith Chrysostom, a burden too heavy for an angel’s shoulders; a pains nothing short of that of a travailing woman, saith Melancthon after Paul, [My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, (Galatians 4:19)].***” There is no desire among these hypocrites who want to prophesy of peace and safety; of numerology and the human’s capacity to manage the outcomes of God’s creation, to do the work. They want the favor of men, not to “***labour in the word and doctrine***” (**1 Timothy**

5:17). They want the creature comforts heaped upon them as Jezebel did those of her prophets of Baal and of the groves which ate at her table (1 Kings 18:19), not to be those hid by fifty in a cave for their very lives, fed by Obadiah with bread and water (1 Kings 18:4). Or perhaps they desire to “**draw away disciples after them**” (**Acts 20:30**), causing them to speak perverse things of their own selves rather than of our Lord; grievous wolves who will not spare the flock over which they have professed to have care. And the consequences are severe.

¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him. And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.” (**Numbers 16:23-34**)

These men were devoid of understanding about the exclusive prerogative of God to appoint who among the human race will speak for Him. They drummed up a following and challenged the authority of Moses and Aaron to lead the LORD’s people. Be clear on this, friends. Had this been a human institution, this political gamesmanship would be less than irrelevant – another round of the endless silliness that possesses mankind in their perpetual rush for conflict and some vain notoriety. But Moses – as is true for all of God’s servants – did not dream up these eternal words and their application to the humans on the ground in each generation. I told that venomous jury in the *Snyder v. Phelps* trial that their rage at me about what happened on September 11, 2001, was grotesquely misplaced. I didn’t fly those planes into those buildings, and I was not the power in the universe that moved the levers of providence to bring that to pass ... it was the LORD! God is the Author of providence, so your squabble over what is not going how you like it to go – is with Him! He has chosen who will speak for Him in every generation of mankind, and you pick fights with Him and His people over that at your very real temporal and eternal peril!

This is an example, of course. There are many in scriptures who took it upon themselves to pretend they were sent by God, and they were made shipwreck for it. We must always be sensitive to how we treat this work. When we have an unction, we go and we speak and we write and we do the work put before us to do. When there is no unction to go and speak and write and do, we should take care not to presume to push our human will hard up against that of our God. We must wait upon Him to direct our steps and then when the door is open, pray for boldness to go forth and preach where, when, how and with what we are sent.

This raises is an additional component that should be examined with regard to the LORD sending forth prophets and preachers. When a human is sent to do God’s bidding, that work has parameters ... sometimes broader and sometimes much more narrow. Noah was sent to preach for an hundred and twenty years “**while the ark was a preparing**” (**Genesis 6:3; 1 Peter 3:20**), and we know the outcome was eight being saved while the remainder of the earth’s inhabitants were killed. Jonah was sent forth for a much shorter period to Nineveh and the

outcome was significantly different. Many of the prophets were engaged for decades with ebbs and flows of conflict with the wicked of their generation, while others had relatively few words recorded and no record of direct conflict with their extant rebels. When the two witnesses of Revelation are introduced, it is recorded that they have power for exactly three- and one-half years to prophecy in a most remarkable way to those who are in the earth as it transitions from the New Testament dispensation to the dispensation of Christ's millennial reign. The language in the passage intimates a grant or permit given, like a time-stamped license. We receive from our God a period of licensure to serve as His mouthpiece. It doesn't make us oracles for our lifetimes ... it makes us nothing but accredited messengers. We are given an ambassadorship to carry a diplomatic pouch or message to those of our generation.

When prophets have sought to go beyond their diplomatic mission, they have been chastened. Jeremiah prophesied of certain things, and when those things were not timely accomplished – as he viewed the timeline with his human eyes – he got testy with the Lord, to wit:

"¶O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. ... Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad. And let that man be as the cities which the LORD overthrew, and repented not: and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide; Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb to be always great with me. Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?" (Jeremiah 20:7-9, 14-18)

There is much more to this oracle, and I am not sitting in judgment of Jeremiah more than what is necessary for me to offer instruction to my friends in this house. I have a deep and abiding affection for Jeremiah, but I also know that he is flesh and blood as we are, so what the Lord chooses to show us about his struggles we should be quick to seize upon for our own cares. In the context, Jeremiah had prophesied that great destruction was in the immediate offing, but when time passed and those things did not unfold, he only got to see the wickedness of men grow and their creature comforts go on unabated. They mocked him and his words on the behalf of God. It was a weakness that we all are in perpetual risk of experiencing. The error is in imagining that we get to set this timeline, no matter how clearly we see the coming of God's vengeance, we are in danger of counting God slack, when in fact He is "***longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.***" (2 Peter 3:9). With Jeremiah, the answer from God is a reminder of who holds the prerogative to determine what words are provided to whom, by whom, and at what time:

"¶ O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke. Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation. Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail? Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them. And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD. And I will

deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.” (Jeremiah 15:15-21)

It is our duty, despite all of our human ignorance to think we know better than our Creator how things should and will go, to turn off that “*vile*” or “common” or “human” clatter and preach that “*precious*” word that He has graciously given us. If we will not, then we cannot serve as the mouth of the sovereign God in the earth. I find this a particularly critical truth when I feel wave after wave of energy flow through me about these grand matters of eschatology. I will feel at times as though I see things quite clearly and that they are all but upon our heads – and I wait earnestly for the first indicator that the seals have been ruptured from the book and we are in the sprint through the last of our years of trial and triumph before the seventh trumpet sounds and we are taken to our Lord in heaven. But these things are all perfectly appointed and declared to come to pass, and the blessed truth of them were “*sent*” by that eternal God so that the words of The Revelation would be written by John in exile. From eternity they were sent. For our edification they were sent. That we might be given the glorious and awesome duty to preach warning to our dying generation of mankind, they were sent.

The race of angels are actively engaged in this work of preparing the bodies, hearts, and minds of those chosen by God for the deliverance of His blessed gospel. Much has been said in this house about this race of creatures that have been fashioned by the Creator with characteristics of might and wisdom and strength and spirituality superior to the human race. Without any desire to make them objects of worship, it is our duty to be knowledgeable about this part of God’s creation, as he has given us a great deal to grasp about their position, their nature, and their work. My purpose in discussing them here is to see the significance to the angels’ role in the edification of the prophets on these matters of eschatology.

“And within the oracle [i.e., holy of holies within the temple] he made two cherubims of olive tree, each ten cubits high. And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other were ten cubits. And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubims were of one measure and one size. The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub. And he set the cherubims within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.”

(1 Kings 6:23-27)

In various depictions made of the scene described in this passage out of first Kings you will see the human tendency to make idols out of what was done here by King Solomon. Some present the room of the temple with only the mercy seat and the two angels carved upon the lid with wings stretched forward and meeting in the middle. Some present it with beastly characteristics like some sphynx or griffin, a four-legged beast that has massive wings spread across the room. Some present these cherubims as having more human form situated in the space so that their mid-wings are spread in flight across the length of the room while their upper wings are positioned to cover their faces and their lower wings cover their feet – as if depicting the prophecy of Isaiah chapter six:

“Above it [throne of God] stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.” (Isaiah 6:2)

I’m less concerned with looking at the relative strengths or weaknesses of the human in capturing this historical truth in drawings, than I am in helping this group here today understand the significance of this work. In two presentations, the holy of holies was indelibly marked with an eternal truth. In the immediate presence of God are His messengers. That truth being represented or depicted in the temple He prepared through His servants

in His providence is for our benefit. The two cherubs within this presentation by Solomon in the holy of holies are made of “**olive tree**”, bringing the mind to the matters revealed to both Zechariah and our friend under discussion today, John:

“¶ And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. ... ¶ Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.” (Zechariah 4:1-3, 11-14)

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“These [two witnesses] are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” (Revelation 11:4)

In both of these passages, the messengers present in the display are identified as two ... as olive trees ... and as standing before God. The symmetry of the cherubs placed within the holy of holies and the witnesses being presented by these ministering spirits to these two prophets of eschatology should not be lost on us as we consider how this grand book of The Revelation opens.

When we face enemies – who are themselves energized by that fallen member of the angelic race (Ephesians 2:2) – it is a great comfort to contemplate that we have angels assigned to our specific condition who “**always behold the face of [God]**” (Matthew 18:10). When we need help in any aspect of doing the daily work we are appointed to for the King, these are sent from the throne to serve as “**ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.**” (Hebrews 1:14). That work, though wonderful and comforting and edifying, is not quite the work we see in this opening passage of Revelation. We have a more distinct function of angels on display in this passage.

“Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.” (Daniel 9:21-23)

The picture these words express gives us a glimpse of what that great and eternal God – the Governor of providence and Author of the creation – is doing in the dispatch of messengers to His people. Preachers of this blessed gospel have lived in each of the generations of the human race. Each has tread this narrow and treacherous path of human life, with all of the foibles and frustrations and fighting without and fears within (2 Corinthians 7:5). Each has had periods of darkness where it is hard to see what interest we may have in that blessed Covenant of Grace, even while that hope within us anchors our souls to the throne of God (Hebrews 6:19). Each have received the helps of those grand ministers dispatched by God.

But it is hard to miss the multitude of instances when one of those prophets are brought to the business of prophesying about these matters of eschatology with detail, they have this engagement with the angelic

messengers to help them to see and to understand with distinction and detail. I've mentioned Isaiah, Daniel, and Zechariah above, but there is much more of this to pull forth. Ezekiel sees the work of these messengers in the direct display of eschatology throughout his visions, including unmistakable reference to that blessed display in Solomon's temple:

"¶ Then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne. And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight. Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court." (Ezekiel 10:1-3)

Right in the midst of his prophetical display of the work of God in eschatology – including the sealing of the 144,000 Jews – he receives the vision of these grand messengers positioned in the presence of God and in the “**inner court**”, or holy of holies. The intimacy between the work of the angels and the work of God’s prophets, priests, and ministers is always astounding to consider. Whether we are looking from the lens of daily sustaining of our hearts, minds, and bodies ... or if we are considering the dispensational work of God in providence, our spirits are strengthened when we consider our fellow workers who have such a desire to look into these eternal matters of the Covenant of Grace and of salvation by Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:12).

So when we see this intimate engagement referenced in the closing words of the first verse within The Apocalypse – when we are allowed to understand how the stage is being set to bring every relevant part of the creation to this determined moment in time – we must give it serious consideration. God, Christ, Spirit, angels, and servants are introduced to this work directly or by reference because so much is being prepared for disposal. A dispensation will close ... another will open and then will close ... and the God of eternity will then set His throne to rule over heaven and earth, having disposed of all those enemies of His. So few words; so full of meaning, prepare us for a sober work to look into the great mysteries of our King.

"¶ The Revelation of Jesus Christ^(a), which God gave unto him^(b), to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass^(c); and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:^(d)" (Revelation 1:1)

I love you all. Amen.