**What the Act of Revelation Teaches Us**

**Introduction**

1. The true God is greatly contrasted with all other so-called gods in that He speaks and makes His will known – ***“They have mouths, but they do not speak” (Psalm 115:5a)***.
2. The fact that God has spoken to us is an incredible thing – **Hebrews 1:1-2**
   1. What is otherwise unknowable can be known because God has revealed – **1 Corinthians 2:6-12**
   2. What we have in our Bibles are the very words of God made known to us – **2 Timothy 3:16** (*theopnuestos*)
3. What does the act of revelation teach us?
   1. Not, what does any specific revelation teach us.
   2. The fact that God has uncovered His will for us in the holy scriptures itself teaches us great and important truths.
4. God Wants Us to Know
5. God wants us to know.
   1. Creation – **Psalm 19:1-4a** – unavoidable, all can see and know God to that degree.
   2. Word – **Psalm 19:7-11** – convert, make wise, cause to rejoice, enlightening eyes, warning and reward.
   3. Brought it near – **Deuteronomy 30:11-14** (conditions of blessing spoken before concerning their return to God in obedience)
6. God has adapted His revelation to its audience (man).
   1. Because He wants us to know, He did not reveal His will in a way that did not relate to us.
   2. Created man in His image (spirit), and saw as good – **Genesis 1:26, 31** – Good, perfectly adapted to the purpose God had created them for (like all other parts of creation).
      1. **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14** – purpose (all) of man.
      2. **Genesis 2:16-17** – word (command) given that can be known/understood.
   3. Looking forward to time of the reign of Messiah – **Isaiah 32:1-5** – refuge, transformation of righteousness by understanding and complying, calling evil for what it is.
      1. They can ***“understand knowledge”*** and therefore ***“speak plainly.”***
7. There is no insignificant revelation.
   1. The weight comes with inspiration – **2 Timothy 3:16** – ***“ALL Scripture”***
      1. Apostolic writings included – **2 Peter 3:1-2, 15-16**
      2. Whatever is inspired is essential – not “take it or leave it.”
   2. Jesus – **Matthew 5:18-19** – every “jot” and “tittle”
   3. James – **James 2:10-11** – not one more significant than the other.
8. God’s intentional revelation implies intentional silence.
   1. **Deuteronomy 29:29** – the explained reason for God’s revelation gives an implied reason for that which He has kept separate from us.
      1. Secret – to hide, be absent.
      2. SECRET in contrast to REVEALED
         1. REVEALED – ***“that we may do all…”***
         2. SECRET? – opposite – not do (else He would have revealed it.)
   2. Example of Christ’s priesthood as separate from Law of Moses (order of Aaron) – **Hebrews 7:12-14** – “spoke nothing” = intentional exclusion of all other tribes.
   3. Example of day of observation of Lord’s Supper – **Acts 20:7** – no other statement, example, inference on time – revealed 1st day, unrevealed any other day. (**cf. 2 Timothy 1:13** – pattern of sound words, i.e. revealed words of God)
      1. To act on speculation is presumptuous.
      2. If God wanted us to know of another day of observation He would have revealed it.
9. We are Obligated to Know and Can Know
10. Pursuit of knowledge is the appropriate response to revelation.
    1. Paul’s description of unknown God – **Acts 17:26-27** – to seek, grope, find.
    2. Approval of God requires proper knowledge of word – **2 Timothy 2:15**
       1. Timothy told to pursue these things – **1 Timothy 6:11**
       2. Pursued through study and application – **1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16**
    3. Understanding commanded – **Ephesians 5:1, 3, 6-7, 8-10, 15-18**
       1. **(v. 1)** – to imitate God (**cf. Ephesians 4:20-21** – by learning Christ from the truth).
       2. **(vv. 3, 6-7)** – not living according to deceptive words of others – no fellowship.
       3. **(vv. 8-10)** – Walking as children of light by finding out what God requires.
       4. **(vv. 15-18)** – understanding the will of the Lord.
11. Ability and/or clarity are not in question, but honesty.
    1. Both claims of man’s inability (failure in design of man) and Scripture’s lacking clarity (failure in revelation) place blame on God.
    2. Parable of Sower, explanation of speaking in parables – **Luke 8:4-18**
       1. **(v. 8)** – invitation/command to hear word.
       2. **(vv. 9-10)** – question about meaning, identified as having “been given to know.”
       3. **(vv. 16-17)** – purpose of speaking – to reveal, not conceal – light (of gospel) shine, mystery revealed.
       4. **(v. 11, 15)** – word of God understood and obeyed by good soil.
          1. ***“these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart” (NASB).***
          2. NOTE: **(vv. 9-10)** – DIDN’T UNDERSTAND BUT WANTED TO AND SOUGHT UNDERSTANDING. **(vv. 11-15** – parable explained)
    3. We can understand as Paul did – **Ephesians 3:3-4**
12. Willful ignorance and self-deception are condemned.
    1. Rejected knowledge – **Hosea 4:6** – destroyed.
    2. Salvation through gospel, but gospel rejected – **Romans 10:16-21** – no excuse (personal responsibility), knowledge available but rejected, they (Jews) rejected.
       1. (**vv. 19-20)** – by the law, Israel should have known the message would be brought to Gentiles.
       2. **(v. 21)** – they were disobedient and contrary – rejected message.
       3. **Romans 10:3** – willful ignorance – opposing God’s will on basis of dislike is always deadly.
    3. Seeking another message won’t change judgment by truth – **Isaiah 30:8-14** – regardless of self-deception (fully convinced) will be judged based on truth rejected.
       1. **Jeremiah 6:14** – peace when no peace.
13. We are Obligated to Obey and Can Obey
14. God has always required full obedience to His revealed word.
    1. Revelation is not merely imparting of information, nor offering of suggestions – **Deuteronomy 29:29** – ***“that we may do all”***
    2. In every dispensation:
       1. Patriarchal – Noah (**Genesis 6:22**), Abraham offering Isaac (**Genesis 22:12** – had been obeying since told to go offer Isaac, but brought it to its conclusion; **James 2:22** – faith made perfect by works)
       2. Mosaic – Samuel to Saul (**1 Samuel 15:22-23**), After Ezra Read the Law (**Nehemiah 8:13-14, 17; Ezra 3:4** – had kept feast in 1st year of return, but not dwelt in booths)
       3. Messianic – Lord’s Instructions (**Matthew 28:18-20** – all things); Must hold fast inspired traditions (**2 Thessalonians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 4:16-17** – taught everywhere)
15. Failure to obey does not equate with inability.
    1. Sin is not a product of fulfilled prophecy – i.e. we have to sin because God said we do in His word – **1 Kings 8:46; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23** – not prophetic, merely a statement of fact.
       1. **Man sinning is the cause of God’s word revealing such as the case.**
       2. God’s word is not the cause of man deciding to sin.
    2. Sin is not a product of an inability, or sinful nature:
       1. Inability? – Sin is a transgression of law (**1 John 3:4; Romans 4:15; 5:13**); God’s laws are made to be kept (**John 14:15** – asking something impossible?)
       2. Sinful nature? – Sin is not a part of our nature (**Ecclesiastes 7:29; Romans 7:9**); Sin is a choice, and is learned (**Ephesians 2:1-3**):
          1. **(v. 3)** – nature – *physis* – a mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature (THAYER)
          2. Why? – **(v. 1)** – lived contrary to revealed law by choice; **(v. 2)** – followed after the course of the world, submitted to Satan, had a rebellious disposition by choice; **(v. 3)** – fulfilled our inordinate desires by choice.
16. We can always obey what God requires.
    1. What man has ever always obeyed? – **Hebrews 4:15**
       1. There is no sympathy if He is not a man like us – **Hebrews 2:14**
       2. If there is sympathy, it means that though the pull was there, He never gave in.
    2. We are called to walk JUST as He walked – **1 John 2:6** – we can!
    3. Sin is a struggle, but we can refuse – **1 Corinthians 10:13; Genesis 4:7**

**Conclusion**

1. That God has revealed His complete will to us is significant.
2. We must not make God out to be foolish by our own folly:
   1. If He revealed, it means He wants us to know.
   2. If He revealed, it means we can understand.
   3. If He revealed, it means we can obey.