

Reflections on Revelation and the Order of Melchizedek

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1.

The Book of Revelation, the “Apocalypse” is probably the most puzzling and confusing literature in the whole of the Bible. It is filled with paradoxes – perhaps the most fundamental being that although it promises to “reveal”, it is more likely to “confuse”!

These occasional reflections are a “musing” on some of the themes and images of Revelation. They are echoes of understandings gleaned from many sources. From Greek language grammars; from the writings of Edgar Cayce and Rudolf Steiner; from my own meditations – and mainly from my experience of my teacher Rev Mario Schoenmaker. Mario taught often from the Book of Revelation, and his insights have been recorded in several publications. These “reflections” are less about a systematic understanding of Revelation in any occult or esoteric sense (Mario has done that) – they are rather thoughts, which have originated from considering Mario’s work in the late twentieth century. Specifically that part of his work he termed “Raising the Order of Melchizedek”.

Questions

At the beginning of this process, I have very few “answers” – but quite a number of questions which have presented themselves. Some of these questions (not in any particular order or rank) are:

What is a “Revelation”? (Apokalupsis)

Who is this “Revelation” meant for?

Why is it written by a “John” – who is he and what is the significance of the authorship?

What connection does Revelation have to the Order of Melchizedek?

What does it have to tell us about the Order?

What did Mario mean when he said that his task was to “Raise the Order of Melchizedek”?

There are many people who understand that they have been ordained into the Order, who have no connection with Mario – what is their ordination about?

What was the Order doing when it wasn’t being “raised”?

Why is the Greek of the book so difficult?!!

What is the purpose of the Order – in general and in this day and age specifically?

Hopefully, answers to some of these questions may emerge – and hopefully also many other questions – Mario once announced: “The answer is in the question.” So it would appear that the more questions we have, the more answers will appear!



Revelation 1:1-8

A revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to bring to light to his servants those things which were to come about speedily and he made it known by his angel to his servant John, 2. Who bore witness to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, as far as he perceived. 3. Blessed is the one who knows well and who listens to the words of the prophecy and who keeps what is written in them for the time is near.

4. John to the seven churches in Asia. Grace and peace from he who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven spirits before his throne, 5. and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first born of the dead and the ruler of the kings on earth. To him who loves us and frees us from our sins in his blood, 6. and who made us a kingdom, priests to God and his father, to him be glory and power in the age, amen.

7. *See! He is coming with the clouds;
and every eye will see him
even those who pierced him,
and because of him
every tribe on earth will lament. [RSV "wail"]
So shall it be!*

8. I am the Alpha and the Omega, says [a] Lord, God, who is and who was and who is coming, the all powerful.

The first line tells us that this is “a revelation of Jesus Christ” – “which God gave to him”. The word “apokalupsis” means literally an “unveiling” of something, which was hidden. The matters, which were hidden, belong to Jesus Christ – and they were in turn given to him by God. The book then, is about the purposes and the workings of Christ. Not the exoteric understandings, but those that were hidden – or “occult”.

We are then confronted with the word “servant” – (doulos). It is not very fashionable to think of ourselves as “servants” or even (heaven forbid!) “slaves” – which the word “doulos” can also mean. For a servant or a slave is one who has no will of their own, but who acts to carry out the will of another. In metaphysical and occult circles the “I Am” is presented as the paramount spiritual concept. We once were slaves of the gods, they pulled the strings and we responded. Now we should see ourselves as “co-creators”; equals almost. Melody was once criticized for telling an esoteric authority that every morning she dedicated herself wholly to Christ. And yet, strangely Rev Mario declared that “as long as Christ flows through me 100%, no other influence can flow through me.”

Revelation challenges us to understand the concept of the soul and the concept of the I Am with great precision. The soul is always part of a group consciousness. In 1995 Rev Mario spoke about this at the Free Priest Retreat.

When you speak about souls, and this is another difficult situation, we cannot say as human beings that we have individual souls. We have not. We are part of a group soul, which happens to be human.¹

Reflections on Revelation - 1

The soul therefore, is not an individual – it is part of a group soul. This group soul is guided or inspired by its own “god”:

You find in the human race also where you have what we call an ethnic group, which is together as a group soul, and led by a group consciousness, by a group God. Each country, each tribe, each family is guided by a group God.²

The “freedom” we think we have then, is an illusion – our souls are subject to the spiritual forces that govern the group soul. If we are born in the USA, we are part of that group soul; if born in Australia, part of the Australian group soul. If we migrate from one culture to another, as Rev Mario did, then we come under the dominion of the group soul of the second culture and leave the group soul of the first:

If for instance, you like I, have come to this country at an early age, then we relinquish, as it were, the grip of the group consciousness of our country and become part of the group consciousness here. When we go back to our old countries we find that we are somehow like a fish out of water. We long to have this tank back and for the fish that are here.³

What we *do* have as human beings is an individual spirit:

We must not under-estimate the fact that we are part of a group-soul, but a spirit can never be a group-spirit, not in terms of the human being. We have individual spirits. That is the individual consciousness by which we can all think, but we don't necessarily all think alike. We don't always express the same thing. That makes us, therefore, individually spiritually conscious. That is unique to the human being.⁴

Christ is the human spirit. Christ is the “I AM”. But this brings about a curious paradox. If we wish to become free of the group soul, we must do this first through Christ. The encounter with Christ (and this is the purpose of the Order of Melchizedek) will free us from all other influences and spiritual powers. Thus Paul writes in Ephesians:

And you he made alive, when you were dead through the trespasses and sins in which your once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind and so we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Eph 2:1-3)

In this passage St Paul describes that we are not only subject to the “god” of the group soul, but have also been subject to many negative spiritual forces (eg “the prince of the air”). Many years ago Mario described the paradox of Christ very forcefully. In an address given in Perth, he described the meeting with Christ. When we have this meeting within our soul, then Christ frees us from all outside spiritual forces. We then have a choice – we can strive to retain this freedom, or we can give it away. We have the choice of being able to gladly surrender our

Reflections on Revelation - 1

freedom to the being from whom we just received it. Mario would say, “Christ makes us free from every spiritual force, even from himself”, and yet we may voluntarily choose to become not free entities, but servants – servants of Christ. Those who make this choice to become servants are the *doulois* for whom this revelation “of what must soon take place” is intended.

Why would an individual choose “servitude” as against “freedom”? After all, Christ announces in John 8, that he had come to set us free:

Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (Jn 8:31-32)

There are different ways of being a servant. In the first instance, servitude is enforced as an obligation. When his listeners object that they are legally free already, Jesus explains their servitude more clearly:

They answered him, “We are descendants of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to any one, how is it that you say, “You will be set free?”

Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not continue in the house forever; the son continues forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” (Jn 8:33-36)

The slave or servant “to sin” is the captivity we have created through our interactions with other beings throughout our incarnations on this planet. This is the captivity, not so much of karma, but of what Mario used to call “guilt”. Mario would say that Christ freed us from this “guilt” – the karma remains, but we have now have a choice how we work it out. We can work it out under duress, or we can fulfil it in love. The ultimate in all our human relationships is to act out of love towards the other person. This acting out of love can create the second understanding of what it means to be a servant.

When my partner does something for me in response to my desires, where she perceives my needs and responds to them, she is being a servant towards me. But it is a service born from love. Whenever we see the real needs of another person and strive to meet them, then we are being servants – but we are servants from a deep level of love. It is this longing to serve, which the writer of Revelation means when he uses the term “*doulos*”. One is a servant out of love.

This leads to another observation. The type of love the *doulos* has, can only arise from direct perception of that being whom they elect to serve. We have a phrase “being in love with love” which we apply to those who are not so much in love with an individual, but romantically enamoured of the idea of love itself. This type of “love” can never create the “*doulos*” because there is no real perception of another. We shall find that the Revelation of John is all about perception. It is about the encounter with Christ – and the work of Christ.

This brings us to the priesthood. It was once a pre-condition of ordination that the candidate

Reflections on Revelation - 1

for ordination should have “seen” the Christ. For some, this manifested as a literal vision – a seeing directly into spiritual worlds, as was the case for Mario. For others, this was more indirect – an “experiencing” of Christ. One could perceive Christ through certain events in life, and perhaps most of all through the ongoing relationship with the spiritual teacher. The whole purpose of the teacher could be summed up as being the “living flame”. We may not have been able to see into the spiritual worlds – but we could certainly see the teacher. A simple encounter would not be enough to empower the person spiritually – many people saw Christ when he walked the earth as Jesus – but they killed him anyway! The teacher challenges us to see past the physical representation to the core of the spiritual impulse, which burns within. This “seeing” will create a bond between teacher and student – the bond of discipleship.

Jesus is quite specific about those who can be freed. They are his disciples. Mario used to say that the word “disciple” indicated two aspects. In the first place a disciple is one who listens. In the second place, the disciple is the one who not only listens, but acts upon what has been heard. It is through perception that one becomes the disciple; this creates an intense degree of spiritual love, and eventually leads to the perception of Christ. Mario was only able to ordain people who created the bond of “discipleship” with him in some form or another. This discipleship could then mature into direct perception of Christ – which then offered the individual the opportunity to enter into the *doulos* relationship with Christ.

There are implications for the priesthood as we know it here. Mario said over and over again, that ordination gave only the seed of the priesthood. In some (hopefully most), this seed would grow and develop and mature. How does it mature? It matures through the priest becoming the “*doulos*” – the servant. One of the directions Mario gave to his priests was to celebrate Mass every day. The Mass is only one way of making the connection with Christ. It is perhaps the occultist’s way of connecting. For occultism is about creating a certain power on the spiritual levels, and every time the Mass is celebrated (in long or short form), a power is created within the spiritual worlds which then becomes available to the priest. Some priests preferred prayer, meditation, constant contemplation of Christ within the activities of life. Such connections are the sign of the mystic, the constant channel and window to Christ. In what ever way the connection is made, if the priest would continue to develop the devotional life, then the personal connection would be made and the encounter with Christ would occur. It is at the interface of the “encounter” that the choice is made – to become identified with the purposes of Christ and to put one’s own agendas aside forever, or to decide that it was more important to continue with the ideas and plans produced within the individual. If the latter decision was made, then Christ would withdraw, and the seed of the priesthood would no longer develop.

The “Revelation”, then, is to the “servants” – those who have made the conscious decision to be the servants of Christ and the Christ impulse working within evolution.

“But there is one more thing...” as Mario would often say in his lectures. Why would we think that the Book of Revelation is specifically addressed to the Order of Melchizedek?

It comes back to the “us”, John refers to in verse six: “and who made us a kingdom, priests to God and his father.” Those for whom the book is written are priests – but not just any priests, priests with a kingdom. In other words those who are “king and priest” – a direct translation

Reflections on Revelation - 1

of the Hebrew word, “Melchizedek”.

The “Revelation” is then, an unveiling of the purposes and workings of the Order of Melchizedek.

To be continued...

(Endnotes)

¹ Schoenmaker, Mario. “Questions and Answers.” Paper presented to Free Priest Retreat, 3rd September 1996.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.