

The Key of David

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What does the phrase “*key of David*” mean? Is it referring to an object, an individual, or a concept? The following scripture is one of only two containing this phrase.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says he who is holy, he who is true, “He who has the key of David, he who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”: “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept my word, and have not denied my name.” (Revelation 3: 7 – 8; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted)

So “what” or “who” is being referred to in these verses? In order to properly answer this, we have to go to the beginning of the book of Revelation.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God (the Father) gave him (Christ) to show his servants - things which must shortly take place. And he sent and signified it by his angel to his servant John (Revelation 1: 1; Ed. notes in parentheses).

In this verse, God the Father revealed important information to Christ who then sent it by a loyal angel, or messenger, to the apostle John who was one of Christ’s servants.

Now I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of

this book. Worship God (the Father) (Revelation 22: 8 – 9; emphasis added).

In the latter part of verse 9, where it says, “Worship God,” the original Greek word for God is “theos”. SHD 2316 (Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary) defines “theos” as: “... the word appropriated by Jews and retained by Christians to *denote the one true God.*”

With this in mind, the following phrases in Revelation 3:7 can be reviewed in more detail.

“These things says He who is holy”

What’s important to remember is that God the Father is the originator of this information. Therefore, the individual being referred to here as “holy” can only be God the Father in the ultimate sense of holiness. Christ reinforced this many times during his earthly ministry.

Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. **Holy Father**, keep them through your name which you have given me, that they may be one as we are (John 17: 11; emphasis added).

Christ is showing here that his Father is the source of all that is regarded as holy. The goal of the physical and spiritual creation is that everyone eventually becomes holy as a result of God the Father’s actions in their lives. Christ also emphasized that there is only One who is “good” in the ultimate sense of goodness.

So he (Christ) said to him (rich young ruler), “Why do you call me good? No one is good but One, that is, God (Almighty) (Mt. 19:17a; Ed. notes in parentheses).

“He who is true”

By extension, we can conclude that this phrase is also referring to God the Father as the ultimate source of everything that is truthful.

And we know that the son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him (the Father) **who is true**; and we are in Him (the Father) **who is true**, in (through) His son Jesus Christ (because of Christ’s sacrifice) (I Jn. 5: 20; cf. John 17:3; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Then Jesus cried out, as he taught in the temple, saying, “You both know me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of myself, but **He** (the Father) who sent me **is true**, whom you do not know. But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent me.” (John 7: 28 – 29; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added)

For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and **true God**, and to wait for His son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come (I Thes. 1: 9 – 10; emphasis added).

“He who has the key of David”

Now we see that He who is **holy**, and He who is **true**, is also He **who has the key of David**. This means that God the Father is **the ultimate owner of the key**. However, as He has delegated His authority to His faithful witness and son, this key is now being used by Jesus Christ.

And from Jesus Christ, **the faithful witness...** (Rev. 1:5a; cf. 3:14; emphasis added).

For I (Christ) have not spoken on my own authority; but the Father who sent me gave me a command, what I should say and what I should speak (Jn. 12:49; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Then Jesus came and spoke to them (his disciples), saying, “**All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.**” (Mt. 28:18; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added)

Almighty God stated in a prophecy that He would give this key to His chosen servant.

The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; so he shall open and no one shall shut; and he shall shut and no one shall open (Isa. 22:22).

Therefore, in a figurative sense, Christ has this key in his hand and is able to open and shut or lock. So, what is being opened and shut?

Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away **the key of knowledge**. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered (Lk. 11: 52; emphasis added).

The word translated “key” in Luke 11:52 is “kleis” from SHD #2807, and it is exactly the same Greek word translated “key” in Revelation 3:7. So this key opens up knowledge and, according to SHD # 1108, the word translated *knowledge*, “...in the N.T., refers to spiritual truth.” Consequently, the key of David opens up the understanding of spiritual things, which the lawyers were incapable of discerning.

This spiritual knowledge would also include understanding prophecy, which according to Revelation 3: 7 can be *shut* or closed. The following series of scriptures lead to an example of shutting up knowledge related to prophecy.

Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man **clothed in linen**, whose waist was **girded with gold** of Uphaz! His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, **his eyes like torches of fire**, his arms and **feet like burnished bronze** in color, and the sound of his **words like the voice of a multitude** (Dan. 10: 4 – 6; emphasis added).

Who is this referring to?

And in the midst of the seven lampstands one like the Son of Man (Christ), **clothed with a garment** down to the feet and **girded** about the chest **with a golden band**. His head and his hair were like wool, as white as snow, and **his eyes like a flame of fire**; his **feet were like fine brass**, as if refined in furnace, and his **voice as the sound of many waters** (Rev. 1: 13 – 15; emphasis added).

Then, suddenly, **a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands** (Dan. 10: 10; emphasis added).

Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words." (Dan. 10:12; emphasis added)

And when I saw him, **I fell at his feet as dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying "Do not be afraid**; I am the First and the Last" (Rev. 1: 17; emphasis added).

As no one has ever seen or heard God the Father (John 5: 37), the spirit being who refers to himself as being "the First and the Last" has to

be the one with authority to speak on behalf of Almighty God.

"I am he who lives (as a result of being resurrected), and was dead (because he was sacrificed), and behold I am alive forevermore (because his Father resurrected him) (Rev. 1:18; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So, by comparing these scriptures in Daniel with those in Revelation we see that the spirit being who is speaking to Daniel is the same one who would later become known as Jesus Christ. Following on from Daniel chapter 10, Christ continued to "open up" detailed prophecies until chapter 12. In chapter 12, he states that he has the authority to "shut up" understanding in order to fulfill his Father's will. We see that this "shutting up" pertains to "end time" prophecies.

At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, **shut up the words, and seal the book** until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase (Dan. 12:1- 4; emphasis added).

And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for **the words are closed up and sealed** till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." (Dan. 12:9-10)

Therefore, Christ can shut up knowledge, or open it, depending on his Father's will at any given time in history. This includes "opening and shutting" the correct interpretation of prophecy. By attaching David's name to this key of knowledge, it identifies Christ as the descendent of David who would be given this key.

Now we can examine how the **key of David** works in relation to carrying out the will of the Father. The starting point in the process begins with a decision from the Father to lead an individual to the point where they see themselves as a sinner in need of forgiveness.

... the goodness of God (Almighty) leads you to repentance (Rom. 2:4b; Ed. note in parenthesis).

King David understood, that when he sinned, he was sinning against Almighty God.

Against You (Almighty God), You only, have I (David) sinned, and done this evil in Your sight (Ps. 51:4).

The next step in the process involves the Father giving the repentant individual to His son, Jesus Christ, after they are baptized.

No one can come to me (Christ) unless the Father who sent me draws him (Jn. 6: 44; cf. 6:65; Ed. note in parenthesis).

This is the will of the Father who sent me, that **of all He has given me** I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day (Jn. 6: 39; emphasis added).

They were Yours (the Father's), **You gave them to me** (Christ), and they have kept Your word (Jn. 17: 6b; emphasis added).

After an individual is given to Christ, the Father begins revealing who His only begotten son is,

When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the son of Man, am?" (Mt. 16: 13)

And Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for **flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.**" (Mt. 16: 16 – 17; emphasis added)

Many in Christianity believe they know who the real Christ is. They frequently use his name and claim to know him and represent him, but he warned his own disciples that this would happen. He also said that it would be part of an ongoing deception that would continue until his return.

And Jesus answered and said to them (his disciples): "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name (using the name of Christ), saying, "I am the Christ," (claiming to know who Christ is) and will deceive many." (Mt. 24: 4 – 5; Ed. notes in parentheses)

To summarize so far, God the Father leads an individual to repentance, after repentance He gives the newly converted individual to Christ who is then responsible for teaching that person. This is confirmed by the command given by Almighty God.

"This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased. **Hear him!**" (Mt. 17: 5; emphasis added)

Christ confirmed that he had authority to teach those who are given to him.

"You call me teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am." (Jn. 13: 13)

At some point in this teaching process, Christ reveals who the One True God is. This is clearly stated in the following scripture.

Nor does anyone know the Father except the son (Christ), and he (the converted Christian) to whom the son wills to reveal Him (Mt. 11: 27; emphasis added).

Unless Christ reveals this understanding, no one could enter God's kingdom. Figuratively speaking, because Christ has *the key of David*, he is able to open up this truth to those who have repented, been baptized, and received the Father's Holy Spirit.

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your son, that your son also may glorify you, as you have given him authority over all flesh, that he shall give eternal life to as many as you have given him. And **this is eternal life that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent** (Jn. 17:1 – 3; emphasis added).

Christ warned the Jewish religious leaders that they were actively working to remove the key of knowledge, thereby preventing anyone under their influence from entering God's kingdom.

"Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away **the key of knowledge**. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered." (Lk. 11: 52; emphasis added)

As we now know, the key of knowledge is personified in Jesus Christ. Therefore, Luke's next statement exposed the motives of the religious leaders who wanted to deny Christ's authority as well as destroying him at their

earliest opportunity. The phrase "lying in wait" is probably not a coincidence because it is used in Deuteronomy 19:11-12 to describe pre-meditated murder.

And as he said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail him vehemently, and to cross-examine him about many things, **lying in wait** for him, and seeking to catch him in something he might say (Lk. 11: 53 – 54; emphasis added).

Going back to Revelation 3: 8 – 9, we can continue examining other truths that the key of David is revealing.

"I know your works"; which is a reference to the works of God's faithful servants. To assist them, Christ opens up spiritual knowledge, which is inclusive of the *hidden mysteries that Paul referred to on a number of occasions. The majority of mankind doesn't yet know these mysteries because the ability to understand them has been *shut* by the key of David.

Then his disciples asked him say, "What does this parable mean?" And he said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables that **'Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'** Lk. 8: 9 – 10; cf. *1Cor. 2:7; 15:51; Eph. 1:9; 5:32; Col. 1:26; emphasis added)

"you have a little strength"; which refers to miraculous power, or mighty works, according to SHD # 1411. So, although God's true servants are not known for the working of miracles, or performing mighty works, Christ complimented them because they had.... **"kept My word, and not denied My name."**

As Jesus Christ is also known as the Word of God (Rev. 19:13), true servants of his Father are to

obey what Christ teaches them. This includes obedience to God's law and commandments (Mt. 4:4; 7:21-23; 19:17). Those who claim that living by every word of God is no longer necessary are denying Christ's name.

He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him (I Jn. 2: 4).

Now we will examine how Christ, the key of David, reveals truths that are a complete mystery to the majority of mankind.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send it (Holy Spirit) to you." "However, when it, the Spirit of truth, has come, it will guide you into all truth; for it will not speak on its own authority, but whatever it hears it will speak; and it will tell you things to come (prophecy). It will glorify me, for it will take of what is mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are mine. Therefore I said that it will take of mine and declare it to you." (Jn. 16: 7:13 – 15; Ed. notes in parenthesis)

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your son, that Your son also may glorify You, as You have given him authority over all flesh, that he shall give eternal life to as many as You have given him (Jn. 17:1-2).

John 17: 2 confirms that Christ has authority from his Father to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. This granting of eternal life refers to a future resurrection from the dead, and not something that automatically occurs as soon as a person dies.

The majority of mankind does not understand who God is because they are deceived by a false

preacher who is described as "the god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4 cf. Rev. 12:9 and 2Cor.11: 14 – 15).

Many, who refer to themselves as Christians, worship more than the One True God. They have a god who is composed of either 2 or 3 entities, or hypostases. As a result of this false teaching, the majority of Christianity breaks the first commandment. Because the key of David has the power to shut up understanding, the majority of mankind does not understand how the relationship between Christ and his Father works. Consequently, there is a great deal of confusion about Christ's interaction with mankind as well those who dwell in the spirit realm. Even the most learned students of Holy Scripture do not understand Christ's past, present, and future roles in God's plan of salvation. Christ confirmed this when he quoted his forefather King David.

Then Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, 'How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? ³⁶For David himself said by the Holy Spirit: *The Lord (Almighty God) said to my (David's) Lord (Christ), sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.*' ³⁷Therefore David himself calls him (Christ) 'Lord'; how is he then his son?' And the common people heard him gladly (Mk. 12:35-37; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Although Christ could trace his lineage back to King David, he was nonetheless *the Lord* of his forefather David while David was still alive. Therefore, the spirit being who spoke with David was the one who would later be known as Jesus Christ. He also taught all the patriarchs going back in time to Adam and brought the nation of Israel out of Egyptian slavery and then proclaimed the law and commandments to them at Mt. Sinai.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8).

The majority of communications and interactions during the Old Testament were between Christ and mankind. Even on those occasions when Almighty God spoke, His messages were delivered through loyal angels because no man has seen or heard God the Father. Jesus Christ is separate and distinct from his heavenly Father and was the first of Almighty God's creations.

...These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, **the beginning of the creation of God** (Rev. 3:14b; emphasis added).

Although Christ was given wisdom from his Father, he never regarded himself as being equal to Him.

But to those who are called both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God** (1Cor. 1:24; cf. vs. 30; emphasis added).

For it pleased the Father that **in him** (Christ) **all the fullness should dwell**, ²⁰and by him (through Christ's sacrifice) to reconcile all things to Himself (the Father), by him (Christ), whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of his cross (Col. 1:19-20; cf. Eph. 1:17-23; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

(Christ), who being in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped (RNT; Ed. note in parenthesis).

So, *the key of David* is a phrase that describes the ability given to Jesus Christ by his Father to open or shut the understanding of spiritual truths. Because King David knew the spirit being who would later be called Jesus Christ, David referred to him as *his Lord*, which is exactly the

same way Christ's disciples related to him (Jn.13:13). Therefore, David knew the real identity of Jesus Christ and Christ's position as Almighty's God faithful servant.

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