

# INTRODUCING THE DUB REVELATOR!



## an interview with APOSTLE SOLOMON JABBY



by messian dread

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**The autumn in 2001 was a sad season for the online artist community when MP3.com decided to drastically reduce their royalty program. Not so much fun going on! So we could use a good thing. JAH has provided us with a pleasant surprise, with the coming of Apostle Solomon Jabby, the DUB Revelator!**

**Jabby is an artist with a surprisingly fresh and authentic DUB SOUND, completely in style and technology of the Dub Masters like King Tubby and Prince Jammy. A very welcome addition to those online DUB Artists that incorporate modern technology in their music. Good and strong riddims, and a lot of instruments. He plays everything himself, on real instruments, and you can hear that the Idren knows how to play the instruments. His style and technique reveals an in-depth knowledge of the art of creating music. And his lyrics and song titles show also spiritual consciousness. Reasons enough for the Dubroom to check out his music, and the gifted breddaman himself for an interview.**

ASJ:"I am a student of classic dub reggae, I'm not a king or a prince, just a student of classic dub who wants to bring back the old style. I like all the new dub that is out there, the music needs to move forward, and I thought someone should go back and try to bring the old sound into the 21st century. I am not there yet, it may take me a while before I can put out something that truly sounds like it was recorded in the Waterhouse District of Kingston in 1977, and I may never be able to do it, but I will have fun trying."

Where many would say a thing like that, Solomon Jabby himself is already very far on that road. His riddims are original but well founded in the roots reggae of the era that he wants to recall with his vibes. The Apostle has an impressive musical background. Words of a true multi-instrumentalist:

ASJ:"I have been playing drums since I was 9 years old. When I was 16 I started to play drums and percussion in a band where we experimented with some reggae, jazz, blues, and R&B. In college, for about 2 years I was a Jazz Studies major and played drums in a big band type arrangement. I also played congas in the university Latin Ensemble where we played a lot of Cuban salsa. This is where I got most of my formal training in percussion and piano. I didn't stay with it as a major because it was really hard to go from not reading any music when I arrived, to site reading jazz songs on piano in a matter of weeks, so I changed majors. Most of what I learned on drums I learned from my teacher Mike Vosbein. He was a studio musician in Los Angeles for about 10 years and now plays in a jazz trio at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Atlanta. I was also fortunate enough to have a few lessons with legendary jazz drummer Jeff Hamilton who now plays with the Ray Brown trio. As far as guitar, I had been playing around with it a while throughout college but my friend Jamie Berry taught me most of what I know. He is a super blues/ jazz guitarist and taught me a lot blues stuff and soloing in octaves and all those things. After that I just listened to

different reggae albums and picked up what they were doing. As far as horns, I played saxophone and trumpet in grade school for a couple of years. I am a lot better on sax than trumpet. Actually I am looking for some horn players to record with, I need some solid trumpet and trombone players, but I can handle myself on sax pretty well. I would also like to record with a flute player, the flute is an ancient instrument and is often mentioned in the Book of Psalms, it is definitely a "dubwise" instrument. I have had pretty much stage experience throughout the years. Studio engineering is something that I am studying everyday trying to get better. When Lee Perry came to Atlanta I talked with his sound man, I have talked with different engineers trying to learn things, I'm always behind someones mixing board when I have the chance, trying to see what they do. I would also like to record with a flute player, the flute is an ancient instrument and is often mentioned in the Book of Psalms, it is definitely a "dubwise" instrument. I think it will take a couple of years for me to get an album to sound the way I want it to sound, so stay tuned..."

I also asked the Dub Revelator how he came in contact with the music that forms the choice of his art: Reggae music. This is what he said:

ASJ: "When I was thirteen I started playing drums to Bob Marley albums. I was really curious about the rhythms they were playing, they were emphasizing the downbeat which was totally different from what I was used to playing. In Atlanta we had a weekly reggae radio show called "The Caribbean Shakedown." I used to tape the show every week and I gradually collected a massive archive of various reggae artists. Then I came across an album in my local library that really captured my imagination and made me a lifelong aficionado of dub reggae music. The album was "Rockers Meets King Tubby's Inna Firehouse." I was absolutely mesmerized by Pablo's melodica, Carlton's drums, and Tubby's excessive usage of spring reverb and tape echo effects. So throughout my time playing in various musical groups I always had the desire to play reggae. But again, there wasn't anyone who shared my passion for reggae. So I played blues, I played jazz, funk, and r&b, and I like those styles and they have a lot in common with reggae, but they just didn't give me the irie feeling I got from reggae music. There's nothing like roots music. Roots music reaches deep down, something pop music will never be able to do because pop music is secular and is created to accumulate wealth. So when someone sets out to record reggae music, especially dub music, you know they do it because they love it, not because they want to get rich or famous."

Being a gifted multi-instrumentalist is a nice thing, when you want to create DUB music. I asked the Dub Apostle how he felt about being able to play so many instruments, so many instruments crucial in roots reggae music.

ASJ: "I do everything myself, but that is because I have to, not necessarily because I want to. I have not been able to find any musicians interested in playing reggae where I live, so my only choice was to do it myself. Sure, it is kind of cool to say, "yeah I play everything myself," but I would much rather have other people to work with if that meant having a better sounding album. I hope to have some help in the future whether it be a musician or just a studio assistant. There are many more disadvantages to working alone than working with other people. For example it's really hard to accurately check the levels when sitting at a drum set. Also, a second pair of ears is invaluable when in the studio, after listening to your own song 20 or 30

times it is impossible to listen to it objectively. On the other hand, if I had waited to find someone to work with, I would have never finished this album."

Although Jabby chooses to use old-skool equipment and styles, that doesn't mean that he would not recognize modern technology as genuine in the production of Reggae Music.

ASJ: "I am going after the old sound because that is what I have been listening to the most, and also there are not a lot of people doing it. I have been really impressed with the level of skill and production of all the new pioneers of dub out there. It is really cool to see that there are so many people out there that are keeping the music alive and moving forward. Actually, knowing how technology-conscious King Tubby was, I think if he were with us today he would be using digital effects, midi, and PC's, except he would have probably built his own computer out of spare parts."

Solomon Jabby is a humble Yesus Dread who showed to be perfectly able to express his consciousness. His dreads are an outward sign of his inner believe, as he puts it.

ASJ: "Religious tradition is empty, boring, and lacks power. But having a relationship with the Almighty, on a personal level, that goes beyond stories in a book, is the ultimate "high" of life, because that is the reason we were created, to be Jah's representatives in Babylon and get to know Him personally. There is nothing Jah wants more than to know His children, and we are all His children. I am a student of the ways of Yeshua, or Jesus if you prefer the western English interpretation. Reggae is "Word, Sound, and Power", but without acknowledging the Most High Jah, the music loses the "power", and the power is the Spirit of Yeshua that decended like tongues of fire on the disciples in the upper room. So that is why I use "Apostle.""

Autumn 2001 marked the entrance of Solomon Jabby to the online DUB Artist arena. Quite an entrance, because the name of Dub Revelator is spreading like wildfire on the various Dub Mp3 sites ever since. I thanked the Apostle for coming online with his tunes.

ASJ: "I felt the internet was my chance to reach the international dub community with my music. This isn't the type of music where big record companies come knocking on your door to sign you to a big contract so I knew I would have to promote myself for the most part. I also knew that there were a lot of reggae fans around the world, especially in Europe, so I wanted to try and connect with them. It is also the fastest and cheapest way to take your music from your basement studio to the world stage."

On his MP3 download page and site he has placed some of his works, but like Christ saved the best wine for the last in Cana, Solomon Jabby has reserved his best tracks for his CD "Dub Revelations", which is mastered by Jim Fox at the Lion and Fox studio's. Jim Fox mixed Israel Vibration and many other well known reggae artists.

ASJ: "The cd I gave Mr. Fox was my master cd-r, already mixed down in stereo. He is going to do all the post production like EQ, compression, etc. When I started to record what is now known as "Rootical Revelations" I didn't really think that what I was recording would actually be put on cd and sold. It was basically just an experiment, which is probably one reason it sounds so rough."

Well, maybe it's rough, but it's also tough and many of the old skool dubs from King Tubby sound rough. Rough and Tough! When I'm writing this, the CD has not yet been released, but I can't wait to get a copy of it and enjoy come crucial riddims played, mixed and produced in the Old Skool Style. I would reccommend every Dub Lover to at least download his tunes, but for the better work, buy the CD!