The Old Testament and the Book of Revelation

To understand the Book of Revelation, you have to understand the Old Testament

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • May 26, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2019
Scripture Reader and Reading: Jacob Noveske – Revelation 21.1–3
Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Phil Joseph – No Suggestions

Prelude:

I. Years ago, the last sentence of Revelation 19.10 said something to me

A. about the relationship between

B. the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation:

10b …the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

– Revelation 19.10

II. Also, when I learned from the Old Testament

A. how God makes multiple prophecies of the same people and events,

B. I saw that He continued that method in the Book of Revelation.

1. Almost everyone sees the Book of Revelation

2. as one long chronological view of the future.

a) Consider the Book of Daniel.

b) Consider Pharaoh’s dreams.

C. Consider all the different things said about the Messiah,

1. the fact that multiple prophecies and promises,

2. types and shadows pointed to the same person.

III. Another thing that I have spoken to you is The Family Promise of God.

A. There are five elements to this promise.

B. It is in the Book of Revelation where you see all five come together.

IV. John uses all kinds of material from the Old Testament.

A. Creation, the Flood, the Exodus, David, Babylon and
1. John made references to Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.
2. John also used Zechariah, Joel, Amos, and Hosea.
3. He used the Psalms.
   a) In fact, I used to go to a lectureship in Texas every year, and
   b) one year it was on Revelation.
      (1) The lectureship was five days from 9am to 9pm
      (2) of lectures on the Book of Revelation.
          (a) As you can imagine we heard a lot of information.
          (b) The last speaker’s job was to summarize Revelation.
              i) He walked to the pulpit and
              ii) do you know what the first words out of his mouth were?
                  (1) Several quotations from the Book of Psalms
                  (2) without commentary on his part, but
                      (a) he knew what we had been experiencing and
                      (b) he knew we would see the truths of those Psalms.

B. I am fully persuaded that this commentator had it right:

“...whoever endeavors to comprehend Revelation without a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament will find it virtually impossible to understand the book.”

– Ranko Stefanovic

1. As you read Revelation,
   a) you will see many times
   b) where John speaks as the Old Testament.
2. No other New Testament Book
   a) has more Old Testament references than the Book of Revelation, yet,
   b) John ever quotes directly from the Old Testament.
(1) John was like the early Restoration Movement preachers or
(2) the early Restoration Movement preachers were like John,
   (a) in that they just spoke Bible.
   (b) America’s Founding Fathers were the same way.
      i) They spoke as the Bible spoke
      ii) without telling people what they were saying because
          (1) everyone knew what they were saying.
          (2) They all read the Bible constantly.

C. By the way, John also used Judges, Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and Job.

Persuasion:

I. Ranko states that:

“the vision in Revelation 4-5 is built on the coronation of Israelite kings (cf. Deut. 17:18-20; 2 Kings 11:12); that the Old Testament covenant curses (cf. Lev 26:21-26) lie in the background of the vision of the seven seals; that the 144,000 standing victoriously on the sea of glass and singing the song of Moses and of the lamb is a clear allusion to Exodus 15; and that the scene of Revelation 16:12-18:24 is built on the capture of historical Babylon by Cyrus the Persian and his armies (cf. Isa. 44:26-45:7; Jer 50-51).”

II. Some Comparisons

A. All Nations
   1. Daniel 7.14
   2. Revelation 5.9

B. Horses and Chariots
   1. Zechariah 6
   2. Revelation 6

C. Sealing God’s Servants
   1. Ezekiel 9.1–8
2. Revelation 7.1–8

D. A Great Harvest
   1. Joel 3.11–13

E. Babylon’s Overthrow
   1. Jeremiah 51.60–64
   2. Revelation 18.21

F. Locusts
   1. Joel 2.10, 31; 3.15 and Revelation 9.2
   2. Joel 2.4 and Revelation 9.7
   3. Joel 1.6 and Revelation 9.8
   4. Joel 2.5 and Revelation 9.9

G. The Witnesses
   1. Zechariah 4
   2. Revelation 11.3–6

H. The Beast
   1. Daniel 7.2–3 and Revelation 13.1
   2. Daniel 7.8, 11, 20, 25; 11.36 and Revelation 13.1, 5, 6

III. Revelation 12 | That Serpent of Old

9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

– Revelation 12.9

IV. What We Lost in Genesis, We Regain in Revelation

A. Natural Creation
   1. Gained: Gen 1.1
2. Lost: Rev 20.11

B. A Home for Man
   1. Gained: Gen 2.8
      a) Lost: Gen 3.22–24
   2. Revelation 21 and 22 show a Garden of Eden-like setting

C. The Serpent
   1. Gained: Gen 3.1
   2. Lost: Rev 20.10

D. Pain and Sorrow
   1. Gained: Gen 3.8
   2. Lost: Rev 7.13–17; 21.4

E. The Curse
   1. Gained: Gen 3.16–19
   2. Lost: Rev 22.3–4

F. The Tree of Life
   1. Gained: Gen 2.9
      a) Lost: Gen 3.22–24
   2. Regained: Rev 22.2, 14

G. The Light
   1. Gained: Gen 1.3

Exhortation:

I. If you have read the Book of Revelation before and
   A. noted things that sounded familiar, but
   B. perhaps you could not identify it all,
      1. you need to know that it was not accidental nor coincidental.
2. Jesus sent His angel to John
   a) to show these things intentionally, and
   b) John had grown up in the Hebrew Scriptures, and
      (1) he never stopped reading them and using them.
      (2) To read the Hebrew Bible is to read the words of the Holy Spirit.
         (a) To speak as the Hebrew Bible does
         (b) is to speak the words of the Holy Spirit.

II. The Book of Revelation brings together in one place
   A. the entire biblical message and
   B. if you read the entire Bible repeatedly,
      1. you will see that happening.

III. The Book of Revelation does not quote the Old Testament directly, but
   A. it uses the language, stories, figures, images, and so on
   B. of the Old Testament
      1. so that someone familiar with the overall message of the Bible
      2. will get the message of the Book of Revelation and
         a) will not fear that message, but
         b) will see it for why God revealed it to John:
            (1) A message of hope.
            (2) John expected his readers to be familiar with all the stuff that he uses from the Hebrew Bible.
               (a) He was like Jude in verse 11 of his book.
               (b) Jude expects us
                  i) to know what the way of Cain is,
                  ii) to know how Balaam ran greedily for profit, and
                  iii) to know what the rebellion of Korah was.