

The Old Testament and The Book of Revelation: Part 2

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Scripture Reader and Reading: Nash Crisp – Revelation 22.6–9

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Phil Joseph – No Suggestions

- I. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson edited a huge book, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*.

A. When I bought it, it retailed for \$64.99, but I got a discount at \$59.99!

B. On the chapter dealing with the Book of Revelation, the commentary begins:

“No other book of the NT is as permeated by the OT as is Revelation. Although its author seldom quotes the OT directly, allusions and echoes are found in almost every verse of the book. Revelation’s message remains thoroughly ‘New Testament.’ The church universal is called to maintain a faithful witness in the midst of persecution, following in the footsteps of the Lamb, who died to free them from their sins. Having conquered through faith, they are promised the blessing of eternal life in the presence of God in the new heaven and new earth, all with the purpose that they worship him and that he receive the glory forever. However, the imagery is drawn almost exclusively from the OT, thus reminding the reader that redemption in Christ is the fulfillment of God’s eternal plan.”

– Page 1081

II. Paul in Ephesians made it obvious

A. that what we have in Christ

B. God had in His mind from eternity:

4 ...just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love...

– Ephesians 1.4

10 ...that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

– Ephesians 1.10

8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given,

that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord...

– Ephesians 3.8–11

III. Yes, there were prophecies, promises, types, and shadows, but

A. how all that would come together

B. was not revealed until Christ and then

1. His apostles preached it to the world.

2. However, Revelation with its abundant Old Testament material,

a) shows how all of the Scriptures formed the one plan.

b) Twice John, in The Revelation, spoke of God's plan

(1) as designated from before creation:

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

– Revelation 13.8

(2) And John spoke of the saved from before the beginning:

8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

– Revelation 17.8

(a) Those whose names have been written

- (b) in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world,
 - i) will not be surprised by the Beast and woman
 - ii) of Revelation 17, because
 - (1) Daniel showed those same things.
 - (2) What is interesting about that
 - (a) is notice the name that John gave the woman:

5 And on her forehead a name was written:

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

– Revelation 17.5

- (b) Remember Daniel was in Babylon.

C. Those whose names have been written

- 1. in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world
- 2. have read and meditated upon
 - a) the Hebrew Bible, Genesis to Malachi, and
 - b) they know its message and
 - (1) they see it fulfilled in the Christian Scriptures and
 - (2) in the world.

D. Therefore, you gain a fuller understanding of the New Testament,

- 1. especially of the Book of Revelation,
- 2. when you know the Old Testament, and
 - a) see how Revelation picks up and then finishes
 - b) the story of God first presented in all of the Old Testament.
 - (1) The New Testament, including the Book of Revelation

- (2) is not a different story from the Old Testament, but
 - (a) a continuation of the story.
 - (b) Knowing the story from the beginning, Revelation refreshes the reader.

IV. Again from Beale and Carson:

“It is generally recognized that Revelation contains more OT references than does any other NT book, although past attempts to tally the total amount have varied...”

– Page 1082

A. Then the commentary provides examples from various researchers:

1. 394
2. 635
3. 493
4. 455
5. 195
6. 278
7. 226
8. 1000

a) The reason for the variety

- (1) happens because of what qualifies or not
- (2) as an Old Testament reference.

b) *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* says:

“The range of OT usage includes the Pentateuch, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Job, major prophets, and the minor prophets. Roughly more than half the references are from Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and in proportion to its length, Daniel yields the most...”

– Page 1082

c) The Commentary continued:

“Ezekiel exerts greater influence in Revelation than does Daniel. Proportionally, Ezekiel ranks second as the most used OT book...although in terms of actual numbers of allusions Isaiah is first, followed by Ezekiel, Daniel, and Psalms...”

– Page 1082

V. John scanned the entire Old Testament and covered much of what it covers.

A. Last week I showed you how Revelation finishes what Genesis began.

B. However, it does not stop there.

1. The plagues of Egypt in the Book of Exodus

2. provide the language and imagery of judgments in the *Book of Revelation*.

C. When John shows us the throne room of God,

1. John showed us what both Isaiah and Ezekiel saw.

2. See and hear what Isaiah experienced:

1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said:

**“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!”**

– Isaiah 6.1–3

3. Next see and hear what Ezekiel experienced:

1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.

– **Ezekiel 1.1**

5 Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.

– **Ezekiel 1.5**

10 As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle.

– **Ezekiel 1.10**

28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

– **Ezekiel 1.28**

4. Then Revelation 4 unfolds a magnificent scene.

a) A trumpet-like voice invites John into heaven.

b) He then said:

2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.

– **Revelation 4.2**

c) After picturing for us how the One on the throne looked,

(1) John pictured what surrounded the throne,

(2) including what Isaiah and Ezekiel saw and heard:

6 Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. 7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the

third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. 8 The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

**“Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!”**

– Revelation 4.6–8

5. John made the connection for us
 - a) between what he saw, heard, and experienced
 - b) with what the prophets of old saw, heard, and experienced.
 - (1) He wants you to read the Bible and then
 - (2) when you come to Revelation,
 - (a) he, or the Spirit, wants to jog your memory, and
 - (b) you will conclude that you have read this material before.
 - i) From the Garden of Eden to our day,
 - ii) John shows that Satan has always waged war
 - (1) against God and His people.
 - (2) The battle in Revelation is the same
 - (a) as the battle in any place that you pick
 - (b) through the Old Testament.

VI. John often combined Old Testament narratives.

- A. For example, what I showed you from Revelation 4
 1. has elements in it from Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 1.
 2. John does this throughout the Book of Revelation.
- B. Determining how John used the Old Testament,
 1. especially when he combined imagery from different places,

2. presents a challenge, as The Commentary states:

“This problem is compounded since many, indeed most, of the OT remiscences are found in combination with one another. Sometimes four, five, or more different OT references are merged into one picture. Good examples are the descriptions of Christ (1:12–20), God on the throne and the surrounding heavenly host (4:1–11), and the diabolic beast (13:1–8)...How are such combined allusions to be studied?

“...some see conscious effort in such allusive combinations for the purpose of expressing evocative and emotive power.”

– Page 1083

- a) Picture yourself suffering horribly at the hands of the Roman Empire.
- b) Then you read the Book of Revelation, and
 - (1) it brings to your remembrance how the children of Israel
 - (2) suffered at the hand of the Egyptians and the Babylonians, but
 - (a) in those and many other cases,
 - i) the Lord always delivered His people and
 - ii) the Lord always defeated their enemies.
 - (b) This fires up your faith
 - i) as you remember the heroes of the faith
 - ii) that you have read about, and heard about for a long time.
 - (1) You now realize that they were like you and
 - (2) that you are like them,
 - (a) facing ultimately the same enemy, but
 - (b) that even as they overcame so shall you.
- C. You read where John says of the people of God:

11 And they overcame [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

– Revelation 12.11

1. Even as all the generations in the Old Testament,
 - a) such as Israel in Egypt or the Jews in Babylon,
 - b) overcame Satan who worked through those oppressive powers,
 - (1) so you too can overcome
 - (2) that serpent of old.
2. Their story becomes your story and your story is their story.

D. You keep reading the Book of Revelation and

1. you come to chapter 17
2. that pictures Rome fused with the apostate church, and
 - a) they fight Jesus and His people, but
 - b) John then reveals what an angel said:

14 “These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”

– Revelation 17.14

- (1) You have seen all the faithful revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures
- (2) reign victoriously over whatever beastly enemy persecuted them.
 - (a) They overcame because the Lord stepped in for them.
 - (b) Revelation tells you that the same shall happen with you.
 - i) We look back at history and the Book of Revelation, and
 - ii) see that the Lamb
 - (1) destroyed the Roman Empire and
 - (2) has incapacitated the apostate Roman church.
3. Therefore, whatever enemy the church and Christians face now,

- a) we know that we shall overcome because
 - b) of what is revealed in both the Old Testament and Revelation.
- E. As John nears the completion of his Book,
- 1. he shows you that the first heaven and the first earth have passed away.
 - 2. In their place, the Lord has made a new creation.
 - a) You read in Revelation 21.3 the totality of The Family Promise of God,
 - b) noticing how John brings together all the elements of that Promise
 - (1) that have been scattered throughout both Testaments.
 - (2) You read of the place where no suffering exists (v. 4).
 - (3) You hear God say that He has made everything new (v. 5).
 - (a) You hear Him announce that it is all over.
 - (b) The story of His people on the earth has ended (v. 6).
 - 3. Then you read some of the most encouraging words of the Bible:

7 “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.”

– Revelation 21.7

- F. Hallelujah! You have witnessed and participated in
- 1. the war between God and Satan, and
 - 2. you see that,
 - a) just like all of the saints of old, of the Old Testament,
 - b) you are on the winning side.
 - (1) That war will end and
 - (2) you shall find eternal blessings,
 - (3) including meeting all those saints from the Hebrew Scriptures.