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The OT and Revelation

We as Christians often look at our Bible's in two different halves. Old Testament and New Testament. There is validity in that approach to scripture with the reality that Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament brings about a new age to followers of God and now believers in his Son, Jesus of Nazareth. The difficulty that can be caused in viewing our Bible in such strict halves is that at times we can miss the broader structure, narrative, and life it is trying to drive the reader towards. The Revelation given to John at Patmos is a perfect example.

This book is one of the most debated, discussed, and difficult books for many Christians of today's generation. One thing I think would help bring unity among Christians on the book of Revelation would be a change on how we view it as the culmination of all scripture and not an exclamation point to the New Testament.

Revelation is actually the New Testament book with the most Old Testament references and allusions.

An example of this can be found in Revelation 2:7 and 22:9. In both passages the tree of life is referenced both in John's writing to the churches and in his conclusion at the end of the book. The thing that makes this striking is that the only other place in scripture this appears is in Genesis 2:8-9 where God placed the tree of life in Eden with man in the creation. This is an example of how John is tying the Revelation to the ideas of creation and God's re-creation that serves as one of the primary themes of the book and of scripture. John is making a conscious effort to bring the readers mind into their Old Testament with this reference to show that all of scripture is pointing to what is happening in the events of Revelation. Take other themes like

God's throne room, living waters, or sacrificial lambs each have Old Testament passages that can tie them to what John writes in Revelation.

This brief walkthrough of scripture is not intended to show that the Old Testament is the whole key to a perfect interpretation of Revelation. It is rather meant to show that it is an important part. So, in reading Revelation you must be just as much a student of the Old Testament as a student of the New Testament. This is important because Revelation is the victory brought about by the whole Word of God. Hence why I see it as the most uplifting and encouraging book in scripture.