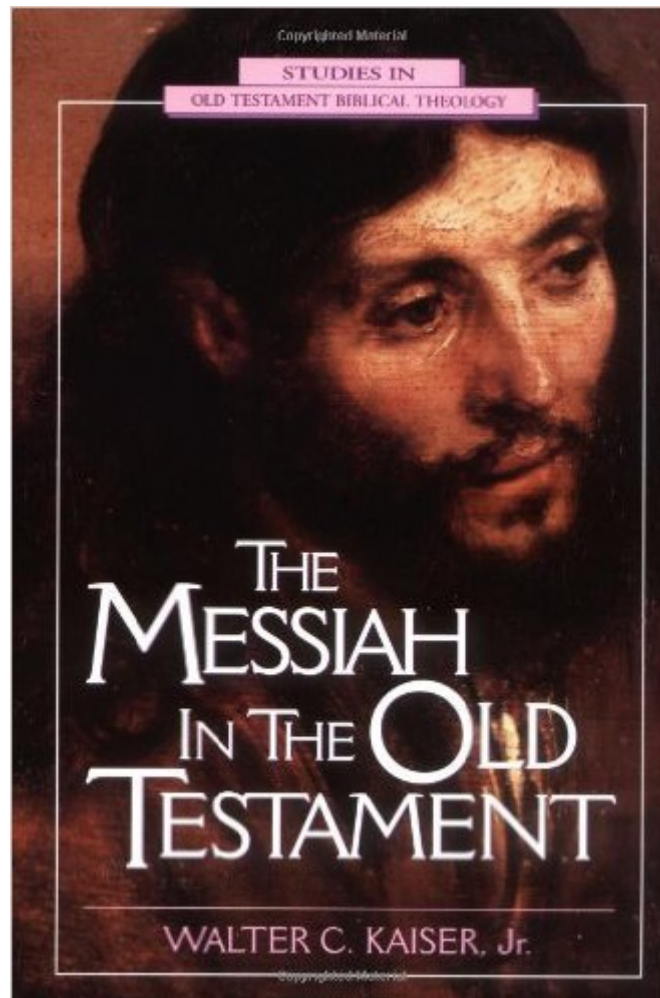


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Messiah In The Old Testament, The



Synopsis

Old Testament texts that point to the coming of the Messiah are traditionally interpreted either from the viewpoint of their New Testament fulfillment (evangelicalism) or their linguistic and grammatical distinctiveness within the Hebrew Bible (non-conservative). The Messiah in the Old Testament considers another important line of interpretation that has been neglected in building an Old Testament theology. It approaches Israel's concept of the Messiah as a developing theme and shows how a proper grasp of the textual meaning at each stage of Old Testament revelation is necessary for understanding messianic prophecy. Beginning in the Pentateuch and working through the Old Testament to the Minor Prophets, the author delineates texts that are direct messianic prophecies and examines their meaning and development within the flow of God's plan. The reader will gain an understanding of God's process for bringing the Messiah to earth through the nation of Israel, and of his intent to bring the saving knowledge of Christ to the World through them.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Walter Kaiser, Jr. has given us a very rich study regarding the Messiah. His study is very specific and unique. He focuses only on passages that deal with direct prophecies/predictions of the coming Messiah. He steers clear of typology, which can sometimes be too subjective. His approach is chronological. He begins with the Pentateuch and shows us the foundation of predictions of the Messiah that God revealed in the earliest of His revelations. He proceeds to show the reader how

subsequent writers of Holy Scripture built upon this foundation and developed themes of the Messiah (e.g. Prophet, Priest, King, Servant, etc.). He follows prophecies of the Messiah through different eras of Israel's history. When he gets to the prophets themselves, he groups them by the century in which they prophesied. So, the earliest parts of this book give us prophecies of the Messiah in the order that they come in our English translations of the Old Testament. The prophets, however, are not necessarily addressed in our biblical order, as their works do not appear in chronological order in our English translations. I wish I could say this study was for everyone - I do believe it would be beneficial reading for everyone. Kaiser's study is deep, and sometimes technical. It helps to have a basic understanding of hermeneutics (biblical interpretation) before beginning this book. There are a couple of places where he discusses aspects of Hebrew grammar - the gist is attainable if the reader will press on through these brief sections. So, it is readable, but some things will be outside the grasp of the average reader. Kaiser does not overwhelm one with the technical aspects of his research, but it is sometimes present. There is another aspect of this book that may trouble some readers.

There are a number of scholars today who claim the Tanach, the Old Testament, does not hold any information about the Messiah. The point being, of course, that if they can untie the Old and New Testaments, they can deal a severe blow to either Christianity in general --by making the New Testament stand without reference-- or they can deal a blow to conservative Christianity, by taking the New Testament as a belief system completely unrelated to Judaism. Dr. Kaiser, in this book, a part of the Old Testament Theology series, takes great issue with this contention. Dr. Kaiser focuses on reading the Scriptures in a "single meaning," sense. "Let us begin by admitting that the nontraditionalists have been justified in their insistence on the two criteria that must be used for interpreting prophecies: (1) the meaning of the OT references to the Messiah must reflect the author's own times and historical circumstances, and (2) the meaning must be a meaning that is reflected in the grammar and syntax of the OT text. To deny these two working hypothesis introduces pandemonium into the interpretive process. -Page 23" Using this methodology, he traces various Messianic prophecies and promises throughout the Tanach. He begins his book with an overview of studying the Messianic texts in the Tanach. The remainder of The Messiah in the Old Testament is arranged based on the Tanach itself; the Pentateuch, the Davidic Monarchy, the Psalms, the ninth and eighth century Prophets, Isaiah, the seventh and sixth century Prophets, and the postexilic Prophets are each covered in their own sections.

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