

Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament* (Baker, 2003)

The lingering impact of the classroom fascinates me. Sitting in a DA Carson classroom all those thirty years ago was routinely apocalyptic for me. The revelations came fast and furious. Under God's good hand, the way Carson could stimulate my mind and soften my heart at the same time changed me forever. I now read pretty much everything he writes. [NB *Scandalous* (Crossway, 2010) is 12 inches from my right hand as I type . but I can't quite get there yet...]

For me the Walter Kaiser classroom was not the same experience. Though incredibly funny . You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you Evangelical Free+(Kaiser and TEDS were part of the Evangelical Free Church of America) . I never came alive in that classroom. And I've tended to avoid his books ever since.

I write here to repent of my ways. I can think of no better place to commence a journey into preaching the Old Testament than this little book. Various reasons come to mind:

- (a) It is simple and accessible in its writing style. Great for beginners.
- (b) Its coverage of the Old Testament genre is more comprehensive than other similar books. Narrative, Wisdom, Prophet, Lament, Torah, Praise and Apocalyptic each receive their own chapter.
- (c) It follows up simple and practical how-to-ideas on preaching each genre with an illustration of...+where Kaiser provides a little pocket sermon from a passage in that genre. While he tends to over-structure sermons and become a bit clinical, having these examples is very useful.
- (d) These chapters on genre are framed . beginning and end . with helpful material for beginning preachers. The book opens with chapters on %The Value of the Old Testament for Today+, %The Problem of the Old Testament for Today+, %The Task of Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament Today+and %The Art and Science of Expository Preaching+. Then at the end of the book Kaiser includes material on contextual issues like individualism and pluralism . as well as an Appendix in which he demonstrates his method of exegesis.

There is even one comment I remember him making in that classroom so many years ago (see . I do remember something!): %if we leave any portion of God's Word unattended and without exposition, it will become a potential seedbed for heresy in the next generation ... and in the mercy of God, he has often sent a para-church ministry to fill these gaps the church has left in the hearts and minds of those who should have been ministered to more fully and completely+(178).

My own informal surveys of classrooms over the years have left me distraught at the amount of preaching from the Old Testament which students have heard. Very few hands go up . if any! For those wanting to repent of this negligent past and contribute to a better future which includes, as I would advocate, a solid series from the Old Testament every year in the diet fed to God's people . then this is a superb resource for the beginner.

It took me awhile . but thank-you, Dr Kaiser ☺

Paul Windsor