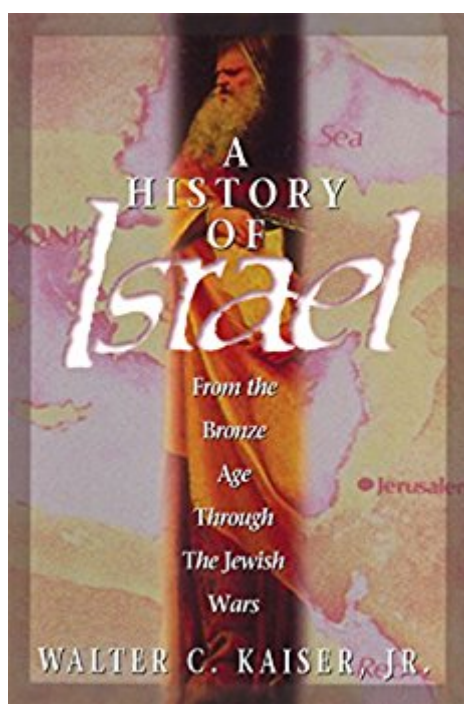


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History Of Israel



Synopsis

A History of Israel refutes many of today's common misconceptions about Israel and sets down an accurate account of its history, from the Patriarchal Age to the birth of Christ, based on Holy Scriptures. With his customary thoroughness and attention to detail, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., has carefully researched his subject, assembled the facts, and conveyed his findings in a convincing narrative style. Kaiser not only uses the Bible as a resource, but also supports the Scriptures' historical claims with ancient Eastern documents and compelling archaeological evidence. The complete chronological history of Israel presents and explains: The current approaches to the study of the history of Israel Common fallacies found in modern secular historical study The most convincing proofs for the historical authenticity of the Bible

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Customer Reviews

I agree with a previous reviewer about the number of typographical errors in the book and I even saw a number of run on sentences, more so than I am used to in a work from a major scholar. And the first 35 pages of the book constitutes some of the most turgid and boring prose I have ever read. But once the story enters the last two millennia of the BC era, the book picks up steam rapidly. It

becomes a very engaging whirlwind trip through the Old Testament, with Kaiser stopping along the way to make some salient points about the historicity of particular passages. He discusses the date of the Exodus,, the historicity of the conquest of Israel, David's kingdom, and Josiah's discovery of the Book of the Law in the Temple. He also defends the early date for the book of Deuteronomy. Kaiser is definitely swimming upstream in this book, as he is constantly dialoging with scholars who take less conservative positions on these matters, and he is virtually alone in the early dating of the Exodus. But he does an admirable job, and if you can make it past page 35, the book becomes very rich indeed.

I would place this book alongside John Bright's A History of Israel, as one of the top two books on the subject. Liberal scholars will find it annoying because Kaiser begins from a different premise than do they. However, for those who consider the Bible a reliable historical document, this represents perhaps the most cogent defense of a conservative approach to historiography currently in print. I would highly recommend it, and while I might write to the publisher and encourage them to revise the work for editing issues. I barely notice the typographical issues due to the clarity of the information and reasoning. Currently my favorite biblical history reading material...and has been for some time.

This work by Walter C. Kaiser Jr. offers a persuasive Evangelical view of Israelite history during the Old Testament. With a meaningful blend of archaeological and biblical data, Kaiser presents students of the Bible with relevant information concerning the events and people that most shaped the Old Testament stories. Written in a clear and concise manner, this work also serves as an excellent resource to those searching for an introductory work on the background of the nation Israel during this period in Old Testament history.

Kaiser's work is a useful tool for anyone who wants to study the Old Testament seriously, whether they are a layperson or someone who is doing so for a living. It is well written and easy to understand, yet has enough meat in it to keep those satisfied who think they know the first two-thirds of the Bible by heart. While it is an enjoyable and good resource, I wouldn't use it on its own, simply because having more sources to correlate facts is good (it also fosters positively critical thinking). If you use this book, don't forget to have another one like Eugene Merrill's "Kingdom of Priests" along with it.

First the good: Kaiser is obviously quite knowledgeable, and is not a mere Bible thumper in my opinion, as some of the reviewers seem to think. The bad: This work should be MUCH longer to adequately deal with the material. I am left with many questions. Second, it is clumsily written. Third, I have no objection to the very conservative viewpoint, but I do not think that he ably argues that position at every turn--though he does much of the time. Lastly, some passages are incorrectly referenced. I agree with the reader who thought this work read like a rush job. Dr. Kaiser should return to the data and literature, and re-write this work from the ground up, doubling its length.

This is one of those books that must remain in the Bible student's personal library. I recommend it for its rendering to the one of the most honest stories ever told, the History of Israel. Excellent for Old Testament studies, and also to provide context for the intermediate period between the last book in OT, and the Gospels.

Walter Kaiser has written a summary of Israelite history that is long on substance and short on style. His work makes for difficult reading. Overall, it is horribly edited and seems as though it were rushed to press. Spelling mistakes abound; typographical errors mark many a page. On page 280, Kaiser writes, "Submerged just outside the harbor are the remains of two artificially built dolphins; these are mooring piers where ships coming from the open sea could fasten on the dolphin (12) while waiting to enter the harbor to unload their cargo." Reading footnote #12, one finds, "This is a sailing term for mooring piers just outside the harbor where ships coming from the open sea could 'fasten on the dolphin' while waiting to enter the harbor to unload their cargo." With footnotes like these, who needs footnotes? You get the picture. Kaiser's work presents a solidly evangelical view of Israelite history--but a decidedly dry one at that. Don't read this one when you're trying to cram at 3 a.m. for an Old Testament test--you'll fall asleep faster than you can say "Ramathaim Zuphim."

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