BOOKS I HAVE READ: MISSION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

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Category: Reviews

If you've been meaning to readÂ The mission of GodÂ by Chris Wright, but keep getting put off by it's length, you might just want to giveÂ Mission in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the NationsÂ a go. It covers a lot of the same ground as the opening part of Wright's book, but in more digestible chunks.

Walter Kaiser packs a lot into less than 100 pages and at times it's rather dense, but make no mistake, this is good stuff. The chapter list gives you a clue as to where he is going:

1. God's Plan for Missions in the Old Testament
2. God's Purpose for Missions in the Old Testament
3. God's Use of Individuals to Reach Gentiles in the Old Testament
4. God's Call to Israel to be a Light to the Nations
5. Gods Persuasion of Jonah to be His Witness with Other Prophets from Israel
6. God's Call to the Missionary Paul Based on the Old Testament

A couple of things stood out to me.

Firstly, in an age where many Christians feel that we are surrounded by enemies, it was good to be reminded that Israel was in the same position, but their primary responsibility was to declare God's greatness to the nations.Â Sadly, they didn't live up to their calling - are we falling into the same trap?

The second thing that struck me was the final chapter which rooted Paul's mission to the Gentiles in the Old Testament. The book closes with this summary:

> *Paul was the missionary to the Gentiles par excellence. The same gospel that had been given by the prophets in the Holy Scriptures was now Good News that Paul carried to the nations...*
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> *... there could be no mistaking where Paul got his marching orders: they came from the Old Testament. The case for evangeliszing the Gentiles had not been a recently devised switch in the plan of God, but had always been the long-term commitment of the Living God who is a missionary God. This is the same case that is consistently, even if at times only rudimentarily, found in the entire corpus of the Old Testament.*

The call to take the whole of Scripture as one inter-connected narrative couldn't be made much more strongly.