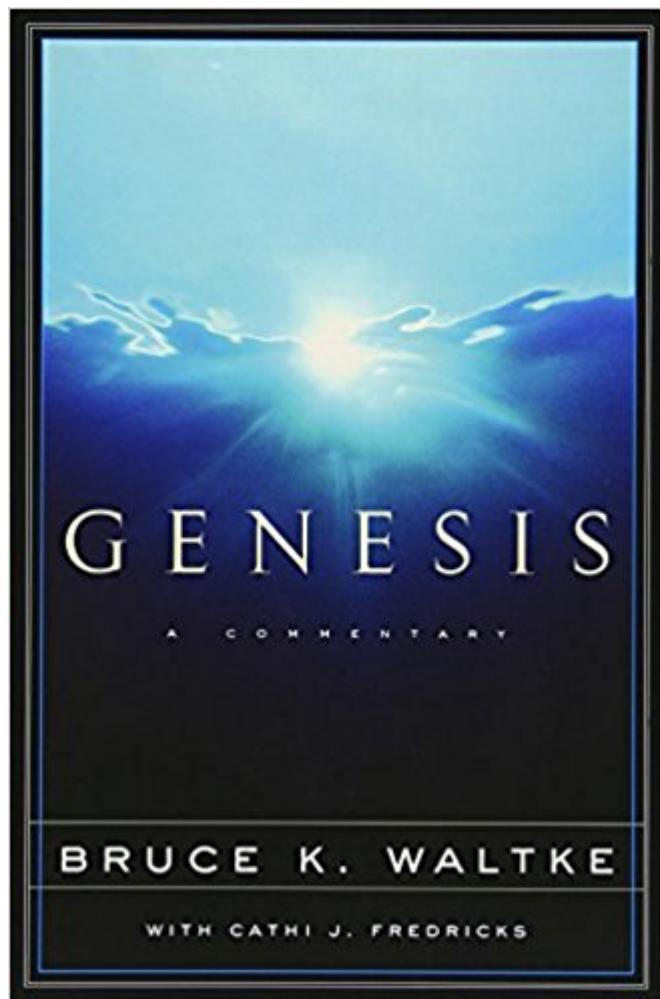


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# Genesis: A Commentary



## Synopsis

This landmark commentary marshals the vast experience and brilliant insights of one of today's most revered Old Testament scholars. To those familiar with the work of Bruce K. Waltke, the significance and value of Genesis will be instantly apparent. Others who are unfamiliar with Waltke have only to read the first few chapters to understand why he has earned the reputation of a scholar's scholar, and why this masterful volume stands like a monolith among Old Testament commentaries. Exploring the first book of the Bible as "theological literature," Waltke illuminates its meanings and methods for the pastor, scholar, teacher, student, and Bible-lover. Genesis strikes an unusual balance by emphasizing the theology of the Scripture text while also paying particular attention to the flow and development of the plot and literary techniques--inclusion, irony, chiasm, and concentric patterning--that shape the message of the "book of beginnings". Genesis Models the way to read and interpret the narratives of the book of Genesis Provides helpful exegetical notes that address key issues and debates surrounding the text Includes theological reflections on how the message addresses our contemporary theological and social issues, such as ecology, homosexuality, temperance, evil, prayer, and obedience Addresses critical interpretive issues, such as authenticity, date, and authorship For all the author's formidable intellect and meticulous research, Genesis is amazingly accessible. This is no mere study tool. Lucidly and eloquently written, it is a work of the heart that helps us not only to understand deeply God's Word in its context, but also to consider how it applies to us today.

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## Customer Reviews

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Bruce K. Waltke (PhD, Dallas Theological Seminary; PhD, Harvard Divinity School), acknowledged to be one of the outstanding contemporary Old Testament scholars, is professor of Old Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida, and professor emeritus of biblical studies at Regent College in Vancouver. He has authored and coauthored numerous books, commentaries, and articles, and contributed to dictionaries and encyclopedias. Cathi Fredricks (MCS, Regent College) lives in London, where she is an executive assistant at the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

I was so surprised to see so many negative reviews of this commentary which I have fallen in love with, that I decided to write a review myself. First of all, Waltke's command of Hebrew and the decision to bring out certain aspects of the Hebrew text is selective, not exhaustive. For example, he does not cover every nuance of the Hebrew text in a verse, but does cover significant issues especially with an eye towards exegetical work (so it's a great tool for pastors-cutting through the

chaff and getting to the kernel of the issue). Let me illustrate by looking at Waltke's coverage of 'Book 1 of 10 in Genesis'. In Genesis 2:4a (pg 83) he says : "This the account" [toledot] (sorry I cannot make the Hebrew transliteration look like his typesetting). This word is the signal marker for the beginning of each of the ten books of Genesis. Toledot, from the root yld, meaning "to bear children" here signifies "what is produced or brought into being by someone." It is the nominal form of the root, meaning "descendants." The account pertains to what the cosmos has generated, not the generation of the cosmos. If you desire more on this, you will have to read someone like Victor Hamilton's NICOT or any number of fuller technical works on Genesis. But for the pastor preparing a sermon, he boils it down to the essentials without TMI (too much information). For each book in Genesis (he sees 10) Waltke follows a pattern that I find refreshing to read in comparison to fuller commentaries. He starts out with a section called "Theme of Book 1" or 2 and so on. It is a short summary in normal language of that part of Genesis. Then he gives an outline of the book. He breaks it down into Acts, Scenes and Epilogues. This is very logical and consistent and brings out the literary structure of Genesis in a way that really connects well with everyone I've been teaching so far. That's very helpful from a pastor's point of view. Then he does a broad segment called 'Literary Analysis of Book 1'. He covers a bit on Genre, structure and plot, escalation, characters, conflict, irony and innertextuality. After all of this he gives a segment called 'Exegetical Notes to Book 1' In this he gives cogent comments for each part of each verse, sometimes focusing on significant words, such as 'Adam' in Genesis 2:7 with quick overview of the play on words in the Hebrew text and some well polished phrases to sum it up in English (a lot of his stuff is ready made for preaching). The format is pleasant to read for any regular person, not packed with lots of parenthetical phrases or Hebrew, Greek, Latin fonts. Everything is transliterated and smoothly presented. He has everything organized by Book, Act, Scene. If that is confusing, matching scripture references are retained next to those, and there is a contents table at the front of the book for anyone who is a bit confused by that arrangement. I found it very helpful to use. Anyhow, after his section on Exegetical Notes, then he has a major segment that I believe will tempt some pastors to skip to this part immediately. It is his segment called Theological Reflections on Book 1 (or 2 or whatever book he is on). He takes crucial theological concepts like 'Second Adam' and gives the major cross links with enough food for thought to get any Bible teacher moving into a major spiritual treasure trove. After all of his Theological Reflections (which I never find in regular commentaries), then he also offers a segment called Excursus. On Book 1 it is Genesis Genealogies. I think some of the criticisms of this commentary that are on this website, reflect the hopes and needs of a more scholarly approach than the target of this commentary is intended to assist. This book is a Gold

Medallion Award Winning book. The back cover attempts to posit the book as a good tool for everyone from pastor, to scholar, to student, to Bible-lover. I'm not sure scholars or Graduate students will like this tool as much as the heavier duty commentaries out there. But I absolutely love this commentary. I'm very glad that I decided to purchase a copy, and I urge pastors and Bible teachers who have an eye for bringing the text into the hearts of people everywhere to use this commentary in your research of the text. Overall Waltke gives about 30 pages of information for Genesis 2:4 through the end of chapter 4. Comparing this to Victor Hamilton's NICOT with 92 pages for the same text, and you can see why I call this a 'shorter commentary'. However, Waltke is extremely helpful, particularly for busy pastors and teachers who have to prepare messages week in and week out and draw out not only accurate exegetical thought, but relevant theological and practical application from the text. Other resources: I would also suggest Hamilton's two volume set NICOT or Wenham's Word Biblical Commentary (2 volumes) on Genesis for the fuller treatment that is sometimes needed on parts of the text. I really love Sidney Greidanus on "Preaching Christ from Genesis" for developing exegetical sermons from Genesis.

I'm using this commentary to help prepare for a study on a Genesis that I'm leading. It's very readable, has all the depth I need, and does a great job of connecting Genesis with the rest of the Bible and the gospel story. If you are looking for just one commentary on Genesis, I highly recommend this one!

Great commentary, down to earth practical information. A little technical at the first, but great when he starts the verse by verse discussion. Dr. Waltke shares great insight and application of the Word of God.

Great Commentary. One of the best. Waltke's strength is in understanding the larger literary themes in Genesis. He doesn't narrowly focus only on the immediate story but also shows the links between stories and the repeated themes such as the similarities between the judgment of the flood and Sodom and Gomorrah. He also focuses in occasionally on a significant theological theme. Highly Recommended.

You know how some things are different and you are thinking, "This is different, but not as good as more standard approaches; it's different in a bad way"? This commentary is altogether different. Treating Genesis as a play with Books, Acts, & Scenes, Waltke is different good. It's thoroughly

engaging. Waltke has given us a masterwork. No other commentary fails to capture both the detailed human drama as well as the broad, sweeping themes of the great work that is Genesis. This commentary is different for all the right reasons. Different good.

I highly recommend Dr. Walke's commentary! It's enjoyable to read and it helps me to understand Genesis. He also has technical information regarding the text. I love this commentary!

Admirable and scientific structural exegetical work

I have found this work extremely helpful aid in the study of Genesis. Walke is very organized in his outlines and breakdown of the unfolding drama. I will revisit this commentary when I study Genesis in the future and well as look for other works by this author.

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