



Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 1: Genesis 1-15

Gordon J. Wenham

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Recent scholarship has shown a marked preference for a simpler analysis of Genesis, says Dr. Gordon Wenham, and with this trend his commentary identifies.

Dr. Wenham has a remarkable gift for clarity of expression in discussing even the most difficult problems. His terse, crisp style serves well in his interaction with the multiplicity of arguments in primary arenas of scholarly concern-textual analysis, compositional sources, chronology, theological significance. Throughout, he effectively shares his broad knowledge of current research on Genesis and provides invaluable bibliographic information.

Among the topics discussed are:

- Genesis in recent research and an evaluation of current critical positions
- An analysis of the principal source hypotheses of the early 19th century to the present
- The new literary criticism and its relationship to source criticism
- The theological relationship of Genesis 1-11 to ancient Near Eastern ideas, to the rest of the Pentateuch, and to modern thought.

It would be difficult to find a more concise yet thorough discussion of technical and textual matters. At the same time, Dr. Wenham displays unusual sensitivity to the compositional artistry of Genesis and the importance of storytelling in God's self-revelation to the human family.

Dr. Wenham shows the opening chapters of Genesis as describing an avalanche of sin that gradually engulfs mankind-the alienation of the first man and woman and their expulsion from the presence of God in the garden, mankind's near-annihilation in the flood, the folly of Babel and humanity's dispersal over the face of the globe teaching that without God's blessing mankind is without hope. "But the promises to Abraham and the patriarchs begin to repair that situation," says Dr. Wenham. "The covenant will benefit not just Abraham and his descendants, but in him all the nations of the earth will find blessing, and the ultimate fulfillment of the creator's ideals for humanity is guaranteed Let us beware of allowing ourselves to be diverted from the central thrust of the book so that we miss what the Lord, our creator and redeemer, is saying to us."

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