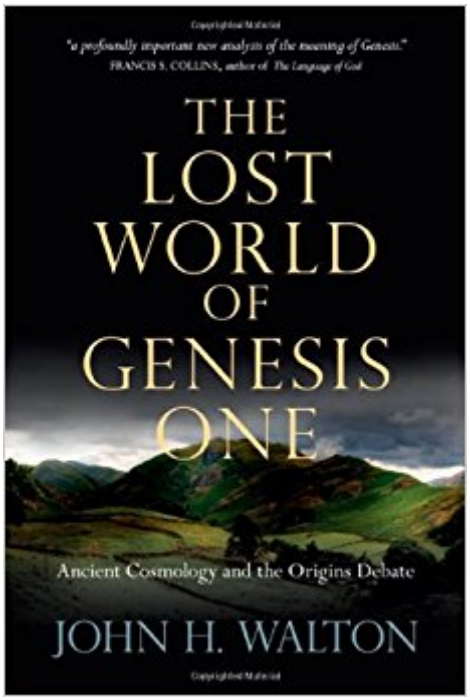
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The Lost World Of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology And The Origins Debate



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Synopsis

In this astute mix of cultural critique and biblical studies, John H. Walton presents and defends twenty propositions supporting a literary and theological understanding of Genesis 1 within the context of the ancient Near Eastern world and unpacks its implications for our modern scientific understanding of origins. Ideal for students, professors, pastors and lay readers with an interest in the intelligent design controversy and creation-evolution debates, Walton’s thoughtful analysis unpacks seldom appreciated aspects of the biblical text and sets Bible-believing scientists free to investigate the question of origins.

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Customer Reviews

"Walton [brings] a fresh perspective that enlightens, enriches, and honors the biblical text. . . I recommend the book to anyone interested in the origins question and look forward to seeing how these ideas shape origins discussion of the future." (Sean M. Cordry, Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith, September 2010)"It will challenge many to think about Genesis in the way Christian scholars have been championing for many years now---as an ancient document, speaking to people with an understanding of the world very different from our own. Hopefully, it will open the doors to a conversation that is long overdue." (Douglas J. Becker, Themelios, November 2009)"An interesting read. Well worth putting in church libraries." (Church Libraries, Winter 2009-10)"John Walton’s expertise in the Ancient Near Eastern sources enables him to shed a flood of new and unexpected light on the deeper meaning of Genesis 1. The Creator, Genesis is saying, designed heaven and

earth as a great temple with the intention of coming to live in it himself--and the sabbath isn't just a nice break after the work is done, but the moment when he takes up residence in the world he has just made. The implications of this resonate right through the rest of the Bible. This is not just a book to invite 'creationists' to think differently; it is a book to help all Bible students read the whole of Scripture with fresh eyes." (N. T. Wright, Bishop of Durham)"Professor Walton seeks to describe clearly and with ruthless honesty the nature and purpose of the biblical text in Genesis that is juxtaposed to the claims of modern science and scientism in the current debate over origins. His work will be welcomed by all those who seek to render to both the Scriptures and modern science the authority appropriate to each--while at the same time avoiding false or unnecessary stands on either side." (Shirley A. Mullen, president, Houghton College)"John Walton offers a compelling and persuasive interpretation of Genesis, one that challenges those who take it as an account of material origins. His excellent book is must-reading for all who are interested in the origins debate." (Tremper Longman III, author of How to Read Genesis, and Robert H. Gundry Professor of Biblical Studies, Westmont College)"Every theologian, every pastor, every Christian in the natural sciences, indeed, every Christian who loves the Bible must put aside all other reading material this minute and immediately begin to absorb the contents of John Walton's The Lost World of Genesis One. Walton closely examines Genesis 1 in light of ancient Near Eastern literature and offers a compelling case that the creation account is far more concerned with the cosmos being given its functions as God's temple than it is with the manufacture of the material structures of the earth and universe. In the process, he has blown away all the futile attempts to elicit modern science from the first chapter of the Bible." (Davis A. Young, Professor Emeritus of Geology, Calvin College, and coauthor of The Bible, Rocks and Time)"Walton's cosmic temple inauguration view of Genesis 1 is a landmark study in the interpretation of that controversial chapter. On the basis of ancient Near Eastern literatures, a rigorous study of the Hebrew word bara' ('create'), and a cogent and sustained argument, Walton has gifted the church with a fresh interpretation of Genesis 1. His view that the seven days refers to the inauguration of the cosmos as a functioning temple where God takes up his residence as his headquarters from which he runs the world merits reflection by all who love the God of Abraham." (Bruce Waltke, professor of Old Testament, Reformed Theological Seminary)"This book presents a profoundly important new analysis of the meaning of Genesis. Digging deeply into the original Hebrew language and the culture of the people of Israel in Old Testament times, respected scholar John Walton argues convincingly that Genesis was intended to describe the creation of the functions of the cosmos, not its material nature. In the process, he elevates Scripture to a new level of respectful understanding, and eliminates any conflict between scientific and scriptural

descriptions of origins." (Francis S. Collins, head of the Human Genome Project and author of The Language of God)

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fascinating.

The book was great. It gives you a lot to think about. And the fact that I could listen and read was fantastic. Kindle just moved up to the number one reader. Now if the marking could underline and highlight.

Excellent

This is a great resource for the biblical scholar. The narrative of Genesis 1 is very informative and well-supported.

I do not detect a command in Holy Scripture that when we have come to an understanding of any certain text in Scripture, that we then close our minds forever to any further better understanding. Walton knows this. He correctly points out that in the 19th century, over a million cuneiformtablets from ancient civilizations in the Middle East neighboring ancient Israel were found, which were not known before. He does not teach that the inspired writer of Genesis simply lifted thoughts from those. He recognizes those ancient peoples shared a lot of common thought patterns, as becomes evident as one reads more even of translations of those documents. I welcome his acknowledgment of this and expect it of a true scholar, just as I would expect a New Testament scholar to know about incipient Gnosticism and its affects on ethics on the Christian communities.He also points out that several past traditional teachers did not have a knowledge of Biblical Hebrew. As a Protestant evangelical who holds to theinerrancy of the Scriptures in their autographs, I and we should not accept a traditional reading, simply because it is old and traditional, to be infallible forever, as if we

could set up another false idol. God alone is infallible. If we are to criticize Dr. Walton's conclusions, let us deal with the accuracy or inaccuracy of his Hebrew word study conclusions, and if we want, spell out where we think he missed the intent of where the text says it was a material manufacture and not a setting up of a function. Abusive name calling (liberal, New Ager) is only going to impress those who areimmature and uncivil in how they relate to others. Do your homework and show us what you find. Stop whining.

Excellent !!

This is important reading for any serious student of the Bible - especially for those who are themselves or have children studying in high school or university.

I thoroughly enjoy books that present paradigm shiftsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •particularly those dealing with the biblical texts. John H. Walton's The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate made me reconsider my entire outlook on the creation vs. evolution debate.Walton's observation that the ANE perspective on the origins of the cosmos stems from a functional ontology, rather than materialist, is profound and fits the original historical and literary context well. He often deals with jejune objections that only a fundamentalist would have, and his arguments concerning the meaning of 'create' (bara) in Hebrew weren't very convincing (although I don't attribute this to a lack of scholarship on Walton's part, I believe he may have intentionally simplified his argument for a popular audienceÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •his citation of Tsumura's semantic analysis of tÃƒâ |Ã Â•hÃƒÆ'Ã Â» as 'unproductive' rather than 'formless' is insightful). Aside from these minor critiques, his perspective was brilliant. Following this proposition, Walton proceeds to present his fascinating "cosmic temple inauguration view", which ties together the functional view of creation within the larger context of Genesis.After setting the stage with these propositions, he argues that since Genesis has nothing to say about material creation, (evangelical) Christians are free to believe in scientific theories concerning material origins, such as evolution. Walton makes an astute observation that intelligent design is not a science, but rather an attempt to discredit neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory and introduce teleology (metaphysical ideas concerning purpose) into scientific discussion of the origins of the universe. Walton argues that teleology has no place in science, which is based on an empiricist epistemology. Metaphysics should play no role. The problem, as Walton accurately points out, is that metaphysical naturalism and its accompanying dysteleology are often taught alongside evolutionary theory by science educators. Walton argues that

metaphysical neutrality in science education works both ways: there should be no imposition of teleology nor dysteleology.Walton is clearly targeting an evangelical audience, often making statements that only make sense if debating a staunch fundamentalist interlocutor. Many of these statements felt out of place for me, but this is because I do not bring many of the knee-jerk reactions to these ideas that many fundamentalist readers would (he even has a FAQs section in the appendix of the book to deal with additional objections to his propositions). Also, while his ideas are likely pushing at the boundaries of fundamentalist evangelicalism, Walton did not push far enough in my opinion (e.g. while not explicitly stated, he appears to take the stance that Genesis is a literary whole rather than a composite text).Despite the clear slant towards an evangelical audience and his aversion to historical-critical scholarship, Walton's propositions are extremely insightful and worth reading and understanding in their entirety. His approach is a refreshing voice in the creation vs. evolution debate.

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