



## The New Interpreter's Bible: Genesis to Leviticus (Volume 1)

By Walter Brueggemann, Walter C. Kaiser, Leander E. Keck, Terence E. Fretheim

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## The New Interpreter's Bible: Genesis to Leviticus (Volume 1) By Walter Brueggemann, Walter C. Kaiser, Leander E. Keck, Terence E. Fretheim Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #278549 in Books
- Published on: 1994-09-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 2.48" h x 8.03" w x 10.61" l, 4.78 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 1195 pages

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### Editorial Review

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It's been more than 40 years since *The Interpreter's Bible (IB)* was first published (1951-57). With this volume, Abingdon Press (a division of the United Methodist Publishing House) begins publication of a new edition of the set, scheduled to appear in 12 volumes over the next six years. With an 11-person editorial board chaired by Leander E. Keck (Yale University Divinity School), 14 consultants, and 97 contributors, *The New Interpreter's Bible (NIB)* "is to bring the best in contemporary biblical scholarship into the service of the church to enhance preaching, teaching, and study of the scriptures."

*NIB* is an ecumenical work with some 25 religions represented among the contributors, though the majority come from Protestant denominations. Nevertheless, as Keck points out in his introduction, the writers in *NIB* are a far more theologically diverse group than those in *IB*, which "inevitably reflected the perspectives of white male liberal Protestants." Keck notes that contributors include 22 women (compared with one in *IB*) as well as African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and Native American authors.

This first volume includes general essays on the biblical canon and English versions of the Bible and various essays on biblical interpretation and the Old Testament. These introductory essays alone suggest the increased ecumenism of the work; witness the series of essays with such titles as "Reading the Bible as African Americans" and "Reading the Bible as Asian Americans." The bulk of the volume consists of texts and commentary on the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus. As in *IB*, the work features two translations and commentary. Unlike *IB*, however, the dual translations are the New International Version and the New Revised Standard Version, replacing the Authorized (King James) Version and Revised Standard Version of *IB*. The translations stand out nicely on a green background. The other significant change is that commentary appears after the various units of scripture (such as Genesis 50:15-21 or Exodus 20:12-17) rather than right in the middle of the translations, as was the case with *IB*, which printed the exegesis and exposition on the same pages as the translation. This created a somewhat confusing appearance for the novice. Each section of the scripture concludes with a "Commentary" and "Reflections." The introductory essay, "Features of *The New Interpreter's Bible*," indicates that the "Commentary" is an exegetical analysis while the "Reflections" "are meant to stimulate the thought of preachers and teachers." The work is extensively footnoted, and there are several bibliographies as well.

The Board noticed a few minor problems. The text is often of light type; while certainly not unreadable, differences in darkness can be noted from page to page. Also, many of the main, boldface headings in the essays appear in a difficult-to-read green typeface, though many headings also appear in black. Like *IB*, maps and illustrations are few and far between. Nevertheless, this volume represents an excellent start to the new series. Although the Board will withhold final judgment until the set is complete, academic and public libraries will almost certainly want to add this reasonably priced volume to their collections.

#### About the Author

Walter Brueggemann is William Marcellus McPheeters Professor *Emeritus* of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary. A past president of the Society of Biblical Literature, he is one of today's preeminent interpreters of Scripture.

Leander E. Keck, convener of the Editorial Board and Senior New Testament Editor, is Winkley Professor of

Biblical Theology Emeritus at Yale Divinity School.

2001 TERENCE E. FRETHEIM is Elva B. Lovell Professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He received his Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary, and has been on the faculty of 7 seminary schools, including Princeton, Graduate Theological Union, Vancouver and McCormick. He has authored or contributed to eighteen books, four by Abingdon and a forthcoming commentary on Jeremiah.

## **Users Review**

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#### **Tim Travers:**

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#### **Thomas Barreto:**

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