



The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Genesis -- Deuteronomy

John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews

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Why is the serpent singled out as more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made? Why was pork considered unclean and forbidden? What is the cultural significance of the golden calf? These and many more questions arise as we read the first five books of the Old Testament. But the answers won't be found merely by searching the text more carefully. They call for knowledge apart from the text of Scripture. They summon us to investigate the world of the Bible that lies outside the Bible. It is a world that the original readers of Genesis, Exodus and the other books would have been very familiar with, a world that would have required little extra explanation for them. But few of us, now centuries removed from the time of the books' first writing, are equipped for such understanding. Fortunately in recent decades much has been learned of that distant and ancient Near Eastern world. But much of that knowledge is still "locked up" in archaeological studies and academic texts to which scholars alone hold the keys. In *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Genesis--Deuteronomy*, John Walton and Victor Matthews make accessible to us the results of extensive historical and cultural investigation and then apply it toward our understanding of each passage of the Pentateuch. Like its predecessor, the bestselling *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, this work is a "must have" for every student of the Bible. Pastors, teachers, Sunday-school teachers, college and seminary students, and everyday readers of the Bible will find it a priceless and constant companion to their study and reading of these five foundational books of the Old Testament.

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