

Citizens of Time in Genesis

Veda Duff Tohline

Xlibris (Mar 4, 2020)

Unknown \$21.99 (252pp)

978-1-4010-8650-3

According to author Veda Duff Tohline, the Bible is not a book of history, though many certainly view it as such. She also claims that it is certainly not science or a rule book for social behavior. Instead, Tohline believes it to be a record of man's struggles to relate to God. In *Citizens of Time in Genesis*, she attempts to create a sort of Biblical character map in which the important players of the Book of Genesis are placed under a microscope for further study.

Tohline, a retired teacher, has created an impressive collection of character analyses which begins, naturally, with Adam in the Garden of Eden. From the start, Tohline informs readers that Adam played a far more important role in the Bible than being simply a character from the Old Testament. She lists the various passages in which Adam plays a crucial role. This is important since Tohline claims this book is "not meant to become a substitute for Bible reading." This first chapter is a nice introduction and sets the scene for what is to come. It explains what readers should expect from analyzing the story of Adam and offers a list of "Reflections" which offer her personal take on how important aspects of the story help to enhance one's relationship with the Lord.

These reflections are often quite simple, but they never fail to provide a solid lesson or prove a valuable point. For example, in a reflection from the chapter dedicated to Jacob, who was tested by God and eventually led the nation of Israel, Tohline explains that "testing, though painful, helps us to see who we are and to become what we are capable of being." While this may sound slightly preachy to some readers, Tohline notes in her introduction that readers will surely agree or disagree with her reflections, but she hopes they will add some of their own to further the discussion.

Tohline is thorough and precise in her evaluations and allows readers to make up their own minds. Her work is set apart from other books on the subject by the way she offers her personal take and opinion on a given topic but doesn't make it the main focus of any of the chapters. Ultimately, Tohline's reflections are valuable and provide a deeper understanding of the characters in Genesis.

(February 15, 2010)

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