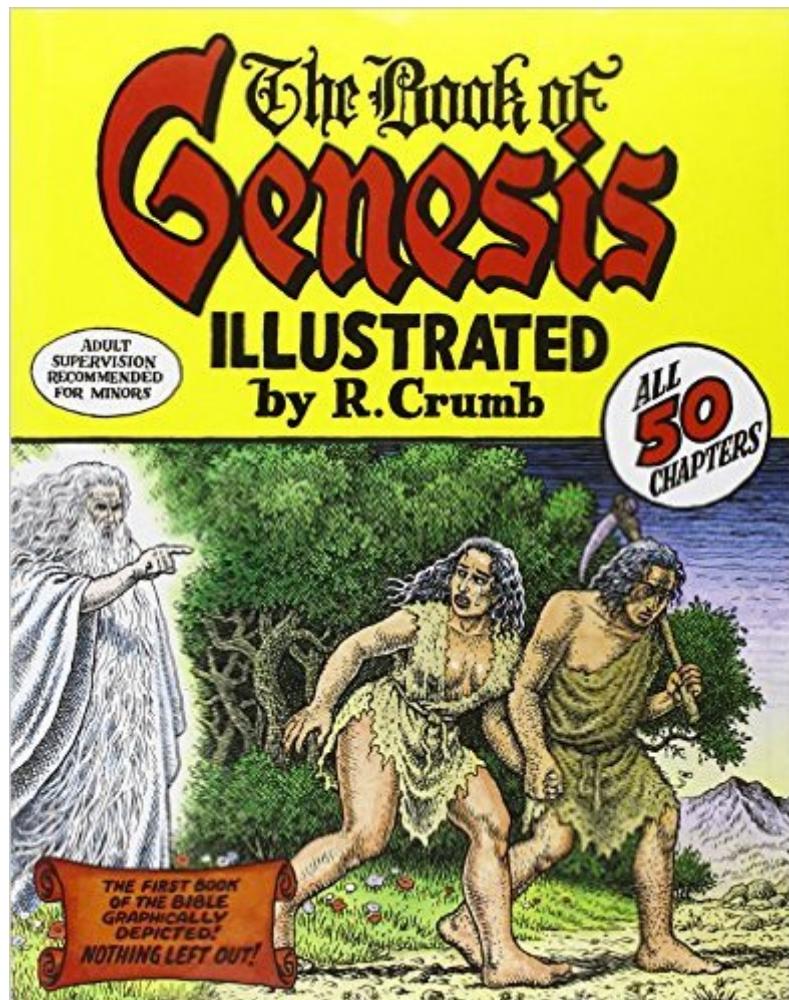


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The Book Of Genesis Illustrated By R. Crumb



Synopsis

Nominated for three 2010 Will Eisner Comic Industry Awards: From Creation to the death of Joseph, here are all 50 chapters of the Book of Genesis, revealingly illustrated as never before. Envisioning the first book of the bible like no one before him, R. Crumb, the legendary illustrator, reveals here the story of Genesis in a profoundly honest and deeply moving way. Originally thinking that we would do a take off of Adam and Eve, Crumb became so fascinated by the Bible's language, a text so great and so strange that it lends itself readily to graphic depictions, that he decided instead to do a literal interpretation using the text word for word in a version primarily assembled from the translations of Robert Alter and the King James bible. Now, readers of every persuasion—Crumb fans, comic book lovers, and believers—can gain astonishing new insights from these harrowing, tragic, and even juicy stories. Crumb's Book of Genesis reintroduces us to the bountiful tree lined garden of Adam and Eve, the massive ark of Noah with beasts of every kind, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed by brimstone and fire that rained from the heavens, and the Egypt of the Pharaoh, where Joseph's embalmed body is carried in a coffin, in a scene as elegiac as any in Genesis. Using clues from the text and peeling away the theological and scholarly interpretation that have often obscured the Bible's most dramatic stories, Crumb fleshes out a parade of Biblical originals: from the serpent in Eden, the humanoid reptile appearing like an alien out of a science fiction movie, to Jacob, a somewhat depressed guy who doesn't strike you as physically courageous, and his bother, Esau, a rough and kick ass guy, to Abraham's wife Sarah, more fetching than most woman at 90, to God himself, a standard Charlton Heston-like figure with long white hair and a flowing beard. As Crumb writes in his introduction, the stories of these people, the Hebrews, were something more than just stories. They were the foundation, the source, in writing of religious and political power, handed down by God himself. Crumb's Book of Genesis, the culmination of 5 years of painstaking work, is a tapestry of masterly detail and storytelling which celebrates the astonishing diversity of the one of our greatest artistic geniuses. Nominated for three 2010 Will Eisner Comic Industry Awards: Best Adaptation from Another Work, Best Graphic Album, Best Writer/Artist.

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Customer Reviews

As soon as I received my copy of Crumb's masterpiece, four years in the making, I knew I would want to review his creation, taking the opportunity to share my appreciation for the strange, insightful man who visualized this important story and breathed life into it, like Yahweh did to the mud-man. It is important to be clear that this is not a "comic book" version of Genesis for kids, paraphrasing and simplifying the story, leaving out the disturbing parts. Nor is it an irreverent, witty satire a la Monty Python. No, as Crumb says in the introduction, his basic approach was that of an illustrator, not of a redactor, or paraphraser. He takes the story as given to him. But the illustrator picks and chooses what to draw, which images the writings bring to his or her mind, and how to render the material. As near as I can tell, an essentially complete English text of Genesis is here, and it is the source of all written material, except for Crumb's footnotes which he adds to explain the Hebrew original. It should be pointed out early in this review that illustrating Genesis certainly gives R. Crumb a chance to draw voluptuous, high-breasted women with big fine legs and bubble butts. Well, I'm sure he had some fun with this aspect, and the project certainly gave him a chance to indulge it. Because there is plenty of sex in Genesis; Crumb illustrates the text, never inventing any gratuitous lust. It certainly reminded me how much Genesis is concerned with procreation, marriage, and whose children were whose. Up until after the Flood, Yahweh's only command is 'Be fruitful and multiply.' So Crumb's proclivities were appropriate to this project, and faithful to the text. There is nothing 'dirty' in any thing he draws in this book.

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