

The task of interpreting the Bible – which was written by and to people living in very different cultural contexts from contemporary Western society – can seem monumental. The opposite is also true: people can easily forget that studying the Bible is a type of cross-cultural encounter, instead reading their own cultural assumptions into biblical texts. In *A Cultural Handbook to the Bible* John Pilch bridges this cultural divide by translating important social concepts and applying them to biblical texts. In short, accessible chapters Pilch discusses sixty-three topics related to the cosmos, the earth, persons, family, language, human consciousness, God and the spirit world, and entertainment. Pilch's fresh interpretations of the Bible challenge traditional views and explore topics often overlooked in commentaries. Each chapter concludes with a list of useful references from cultural anthropology or biblical studies, making this book an excellent resource for students of the Bible.

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This – mantra, – repeated often in author (The Cultural Dictionary of the Bible) John J. Pilch's latest – handbook, – is given in defense of the Biblical research shared. John J. Pilch is visiting professor in the Odyssey Program at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and author of *A Cultural Handbook to the*.

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