

# The Case For God Karen Armstrong

there is widespread confusion about the nature of religious truth for the first time in history a significantly large number of people want nothing to do with god militant atheists preach a gospel of godlessness with the zeal of missionaries and find an eager audience tracing the history of faith from the palaeolithic age to the present karen armstrong shows that meaning of words such as belief faith and mystery has been entirely altered so that atheists and theists alike now think and speak about god and indeed reason itself in a way that our ancestors would have found astonishing does god have a future karen armstrong examines how we can build a faith that speaks to the needs of our troubled and dangerously polarised world

reveals how the fundamentalist movements in christianity judaism and islam were born out

of a dread of modernity

the idea of a single devine being god yahweh allah has existed for over 4 000 years but the history of god is also the history of human struggle while judaism islam and christianity proclaim the goodness of god organised religion has too often been the catalyst for violence and ineradicable prejudice in this fascinating extensive and original account of the evolution of belief karen armstrong examines western society s unerring fidelity to this idea of one god and the many conflicting convictions it engenders a controversial extraordinary story of worship and war a history of god confronts the most fundamental fact or fiction of our lives

from one of the world s leading writers on religion and the highly acclaimed author of the bestselling a history of god comes a major new work a chronicle of the ninth century bce when the peoples of four distinct regions of the civilized world created the religious and philosophical traditions that have continued to nourish humanity into the present day 25 maps

in this extensive and original account of the evolution of belief karen armstrong examines western society s unerring fidelity to the idea of one god and the many conflicting convictions it engenders

the bible is the most widely distributed book in the world translated into over two thousand languages it is estimated that more than six billion copies have been sold in the last two hundred years alone in this seminal account karen armstrong traces the gestation of the bible to reveal a complex and contradictory document created by scores of people over hundreds of years karen armstrong begins her analysis with the origins of the very earliest books of the hebrew bible in which god was called both yahweh and elohim she then traces the development of both the hebrew bible and the new testament to reveal the disparate influences that helped to form these sacred texts from the jewish practice of midrash and the christian cult of jesus to the influence of paul s letters on the reformation and the manipulation of revelations by christian fundamentalism armstrong explores the contexts in which these sixty six books were understood and explains the social needs they answered in the process she reveals an unfamiliar and paradoxical work that will permanently alter our understanding of the bible

the foundation stone of jewish and christian scriptures the power of the book of genesis lies in its stories creation the fall cain and abel noah abraham jacob and joseph these

ancient tales illuminate some of our most enduring and profound problems cowardice the struggle with evil the difficulty of facing past mistakes achieving a true understanding of our innermost selves karen armstrong traces the themes and meanings of these stories examining what they can still tell us about the human quest for meaning

it is the most persistent myth of our time religion is the cause of all violence but history suggests otherwise karen armstrong former roman catholic nun and one of our foremost scholars of religion speaks out to disprove the link between religion and bloodshed religion is as old as humanity fields of blood goes back to the stone age hunter gatherers and traces religion through the centuries from medieval crusaders to modern day jihadists the west today has a warped concept of religion we regard faith as a personal and private matter but for most of history faith has informed people's entire outlook on life and often been inseparable from politics humans undoubtedly have a natural propensity for aggression the founders of the largest religions jesus buddha the rabbis of early judaism the prophet muhammad aimed to curb violence and build a more peaceful and just society but with our growing greed for money and wealth came collective violence and warfare with the arrival of the modern all powerful secular state humanity's destructive potential has begun to spiral out of control is humanity on the brink of destroying itself fields of blood is a celebration of the ancient religious ideas and movements that have promoted peace and reconciliation across millennia of civilization

with 8 pages of color photographs and 82 illustrations in text

explores the ways in which the idea and experience of god evolved among monotheists jews christians and muslims

a rich and subtle exploration of the sacredness of nature filled with a timeless wisdom and deep humanity guardian in this hugely powerful book karen armstrong argues that it isn't enough to change our behaviour to avert environmental catastrophe we must rekindle our spiritual bond with the natural world from gratitude and compassion to sacrifice and non violence armstrong draws themes from the world's religious traditions to offer practical steps to reconnect you with nature speaking to anyone interested in our relationship with nature worried about environmental destruction or searching for new actions to save our planet sacred nature will uncover the most profound connections between humans and the natural world a lamentation in the key of greta thunberg with undertones of carl jung wall street journal warm and witty a challenge to think differently in the face of climate change

tablet karen armstrong is one of the handful of wise and supremely commentators on religion alain de botton

evaluates the role of religion in history and the modern world stating that today s expressions of faith are considerably removed from those of previous generations while arguing that an increased awareness of past insights may help to build a faith that speaks to an increasingly polarized society

please note this is a companion version not the original book sample book insights 1 the guide turns his flashlight on the ceiling of the underground caverns of lascaux and the painted animals seem to emerge from the depths of the rock the artwork is far more clear than it was to the palaeolithic artists since they had to work by the light of small flickering lamps 2 the caves were probably sanctuaries and their iconography reflected a radically different worldview than the outside world the cave paintings depict men confronting animals in a state of trance with upraised arms 3 the palaeolithic caves may have been the scene of similar rites the paintings include dancing men dressed as animals the bushmen say that their own rock paintings depict the world behind this one that we see with our eyes which the shamans visit during their mystical flights 4 the caves were used for the initiation ceremonies that marked the adolescent boy s rite of passage from childhood to maturity the purpose of the ritual was to train the boy to kill in the sacred manner he was introduced to the more esoteric mythology of his tribe during the initiation

fundamentalisme er et ord man dagligt støder på i medierne i bogen beskriver forfatteren hvordan fundamentalisme har udviklet sig inden for tre vidt forskellige men dog beslægtede monoteistiske religioner den jødiske fundamentalisme i israel den protestantiske fundamentalisme i usa og den islamiske fundamentalisme i egypten og iran

the mystics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were writes karen armstrong like the astronauts of our own day they broke into a new religion blazed a new trail to god and to the depths of the self a trail far from the beaten pilgrimage paths of chaucer and langland mysticism is a spiritual mystery shared in some form by all faiths it has a supernatural quality that extends beyond the given boundaries of religious creed and may be experienced by any lay person the thrilling intensity of a mystical experience as represented in this volume by the writings of four mystics of the middle ages can inspire other spiritual seekers with its insight into the limitless wonder of both human and divine experience dissatisfied by the strictures of dogma and a religion that failed to quench the human thirst

for knowledge of a mystical order these four mystics richard rolle of hampole walter hilton dame julian of norwich and the unknown author of the cloud of unknowing communicate an intense and passionate experience of faith rare in any time because of their unique beliefs and spiritual strength their knowledge and writings have proved timeless and in this beautiful volume show contemporary seekers important new insights into the nature of divine love

in this fascinating book by the author of a history of god and jerusalem one of the best known and least understood books of the bible is clarified for modern readers armstrong shows readers how the ancient tales of the creation the fall cain and abel noah abraham jacob and joseph illuminate our most profound and impenetrable problems

in the late twentieth century fundamentalism has emerged as one of the most powerful forces at work in the world contesting the dominance of modern secular values and threatening peace and harmony around the globe yet it remains incomprehensible to a large number of people in the battle for god karen armstrong brilliantly and sympathetically shows us how and why fundamentalist groups came into existence and what they yearn to accomplish we see the west in the sixteenth century beginning to create an entirely new kind of civilization which brought in its wake change in every aspect of life often painful and violent even if liberating armstrong argues that one of the things that changed most was religion people could no longer think about or experience the divine in the same way they had to develop new forms of faith to fit their new circumstances armstrong characterizes fundamentalism as one of these new ways of being religious that have emerged in every major faith tradition focusing on protestant fundamentalism in the united states jewish fundamentalism in israel and muslim fundamentalism in egypt and iran she examines the ways in which these movements while not monolithic have each sprung from a dread of modernity often in response to assault sometimes unwitting sometimes intentional by the mainstream society armstrong sees fundamentalist groups as complex innovative and modern rather than as throwbacks to the past but contends that they have failed in religious terms maintaining that fundamentalism often exists in symbiotic relationship with an aggressive modernity each impelling the other on to greater excess she suggests compassion as a way to defuse what is now an intensifying conflict bonus this edition contains an excerpt from karen armstrong s twelve steps to a compassionate life

a memoir of spiritual discovery

because god is infinite nobody can have the last word what is this thing religion supposedly the cause of bloodshed and warring for centuries what is god and do we need him in our modern world karen armstrong looks again at these questions in a refreshing and startling way god is not to be believed in as a child believes in santa claus religion is not a story to be proven true or false but a discipline akin to music or art that answers a deeply human need and can teach us to discover new capacities of mind and heart selected from a case for god fields of blood and the lost art of scripture vintage minis great minds big ideas little books a series of short books by the world s greatest writers on the experiences that make us human also in the vintage minis great ideas series art by simon schama science by ian mcewan

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