

A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG

A HISTORY OF GOD: KAREN ARMSTRONG'S ENDURING IMPACT ON RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND BEYOND

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PUBLISHER: ALFRED A. KNOPF, A RENOWNED IMPRINT OF PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE, KNOWN FOR PUBLISHING HIGH-QUALITY NON-FICTION AND SCHOLARLY WORKS WITH A SIGNIFICANT GLOBAL REACH. THEIR REPUTATION FOR RIGOROUS EDITING AND IMPACTFUL DISSEMINATION ENSURES WIDE READERSHIP FOR IMPORTANT WORKS SUCH AS A HISTORY OF GOD BY KAREN ARMSTRONG.

EDITOR: DR. DAVID J. ROSEN, FORMER EDITOR AT ALFRED A. KNOPF, WITH OVER 20 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE EDITING PROMINENT WORKS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES, HISTORY, AND PHILOSOPHY. DR. ROSEN'S EXPERTISE ENSURED THE ACCURACY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF ARMSTRONG'S COMPLEX ARGUMENTS IN A HISTORY OF GOD.

INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG

KAREN ARMSTRONG'S A HISTORY OF GOD: THE 4,000-YEAR QUEST OF JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM, PUBLISHED BY ALFRED A. KNOPF IN 1993, IS MORE THAN JUST A HISTORICAL ACCOUNT; IT'S A LANDMARK WORK THAT RESHAPED THE LANDSCAPE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES. THIS INSIGHTFUL EXPLORATION OF THE ABRAHAMIC FAITHS – JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM – PROFOUNDLY IMPACTED HOW THESE RELIGIONS ARE UNDERSTOOD AND DISCUSSED, NOT ONLY WITHIN ACADEMIC CIRCLES BUT IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE AS WELL. THIS ARTICLE WILL DELVE INTO A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG, EXAMINING ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT, ITS LASTING IMPLICATIONS, AND ITS CONTINUING RELEVANCE IN TODAY'S WORLD.

THE GENESIS OF A MASTERPIECE: CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

PRIOR TO A HISTORY OF GOD, KAREN ARMSTRONG, A FORMER CATHOLIC NUN WHO HAD BECOME A RENOWNED SCHOLAR OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION, HAD ALREADY ESTABLISHED HERSELF AS A RESPECTED VOICE IN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE. HER PREVIOUS WORKS LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR HER MAGNUM OPUS. A HISTORY OF GOD WAS CONCEIVED AMIDST GROWING RELIGIOUS TENSIONS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS, A PERIOD MARKED BY INCREASING POLARIZATION AND A PREVALENT "CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS" NARRATIVE. ARMSTRONG'S APPROACH WAS REFRESHINGLY DIFFERENT: SHE ESCHewed POLEMIC AND INSTEAD OPTED FOR AN EMPATHETIC, NUANCED EXPLORATION OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE DIVINE IMAGE WITHIN THESE THREE PROMINENT FAITHS.

ARMSTRONG'S METHODOLOGY IS CHARACTERIZED BY ITS RIGOROUS RESEARCH, CAREFUL ATTENTION TO PRIMARY SOURCES, AND A DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT IN WHICH THESE RELIGIONS DEVELOPED. SHE AVOIDS SIMPLISTIC GENERALIZATIONS, INSTEAD ILLUMINATING THE COMPLEX INTERNAL DEBATES AND TRANSFORMATIONS WITHIN EACH TRADITION OVER MILLENNIA. THE BOOK'S STRENGTH LIES IN ITS ABILITY TO CONNECT SEEMINGLY DISPARATE THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS ACROSS TIME, REVEALING PATTERNS AND THEMES THAT HIGHLIGHT THE SHARED HERITAGE OF THESE THREE FAITH TRADITIONS.

KEY THEMES IN A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG

THE EVOLUTION OF THE DIVINE: A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG TRACES THE EVOLVING UNDERSTANDING OF GOD, FROM THE ANCIENT, ANTHROPOMORPHIC DEPICTIONS FOUND IN EARLY TEXTS TO THE MORE ABSTRACT AND TRANSCENDENT CONCEPTIONS THAT EMERGED LATER. ARMSTRONG METICULOUSLY DOCUMENTS THE SHIFTS IN THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING, HIGHLIGHTING THE INFLUENCE OF PHILOSOPHICAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MYSTICISM: ARMSTRONG EMPHASIZES THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF MYSTICISM IN SHAPING THE DEVELOPMENT OF EACH RELIGION. SHE ARGUES THAT MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE, WITH ITS FOCUS ON DIRECT COMMUNION WITH THE DIVINE, HAS BEEN A

PERSISTENT AND VITAL FORCE, INFLUENCING THEOLOGICAL DOCTRINES AND ETHICAL PRACTICES.

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND UNDERSTANDING: A CENTRAL THEME WOVEN THROUGHOUT A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG IS THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND UNDERSTANDING. BY HIGHLIGHTING THE SHARED ROOTS AND COMMON THREADS IN JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM, ARMSTRONG ENCOURAGES A MORE EMPATHETIC AND NUANCED APPRECIATION FOR THE DIVERSITY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

THE DANGERS OF FUNDAMENTALISM: WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF RELIGIOUS FAITH, ARMSTRONG ALSO WARNS AGAINST THE DANGERS OF FUNDAMENTALIST INTERPRETATIONS THAT CAN LEAD TO INTOLERANCE AND VIOLENCE. HER ANALYSIS PROVIDES VALUABLE INSIGHT INTO THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FOSTERING MUTUAL RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING.

THE IMPACT OF A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG ON THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES INDUSTRY

A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG HAD A PROFOUND IMPACT ON THE FIELD OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES. ITS ACCESSIBILITY AND ENGAGING NARRATIVE STYLE BROADENED THE AUDIENCE FOR SCHOLARLY WORK ON RELIGION, MAKING COMPLEX THEOLOGICAL IDEAS ACCESSIBLE TO A WIDER READERSHIP. THE BOOK'S SUCCESS ALSO DEMONSTRATED THE PUBLIC'S GROWING INTEREST IN UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AND THEIR INTERCONNECTIONS. ITS INFLUENCE EXTENDS BEYOND ACADEMIA, IMPACTING POPULAR CULTURE AND FOSTERING BROADER INTERFAITH DIALOGUE. SCHOLARS NOW FREQUENTLY CITE ARMSTRONG'S WORK, AND HER EMPHASIS ON HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND NUANCE HAS BECOME A CORNERSTONE OF CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP.

ENDURING RELEVANCE IN A CHANGING WORLD

IN A WORLD INCREASINGLY SHAPED BY RELIGIOUS CONFLICT AND MISUNDERSTANDING, A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG REMAINS STRIKINGLY RELEVANT. ITS MESSAGE OF EMPATHY, UNDERSTANDING, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGAGING WITH RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS ON THEIR OWN TERMS CONTINUES TO RESONATE DEEPLY. THE BOOK SERVES AS A POWERFUL ANTIDOTE TO SIMPLISTIC NARRATIVES THAT REDUCE COMPLEX RELIGIONS TO MONOLITHIC ENTITIES, URGING READERS TO ENGAGE WITH RELIGIOUS BELIEF SYSTEMS WITH GREATER NUANCE AND RESPECT. ITS LASTING CONTRIBUTION LIES IN ITS ABILITY TO FOSTER GREATER RELIGIOUS LITERACY AND CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE PEACEFUL AND HARMONIOUS WORLD.

CONCLUSION

A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG IS A SEMINAL WORK THAT CONTINUES TO SHAPE DISCUSSIONS ON RELIGION, HISTORY, AND INTERFAITH UNDERSTANDING. ITS RIGOROUS SCHOLARSHIP, ENGAGING NARRATIVE, AND PROFOUND INSIGHTS MAKE IT AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE FOR STUDENTS, SCHOLARS, AND ANYONE SEEKING TO DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ABRAHAMIC FAITHS. ARMSTRONG'S LEGACY LIES NOT ONLY IN HER PROFOUND SCHOLARSHIP BUT ALSO IN HER ENDURING COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING IN A WORLD INCREASINGLY DIVIDED ALONG RELIGIOUS LINES.

FAQs

1. WHAT IS THE MAIN ARGUMENT OF A HISTORY OF GOD KAREN ARMSTRONG? THE MAIN ARGUMENT IS THAT JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM SHARE A COMMON HERITAGE AND THAT UNDERSTANDING THEIR EVOLUTION THROUGH HISTORY, PARTICULARLY THEIR MYSTICAL TRADITIONS, IS ESSENTIAL FOR FOSTERING INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND PEACE.
1. WHAT MAKES A HISTORY OF GOD DIFFERENT FROM OTHER BOOKS ON RELIGIOUS HISTORY? ITS EMPATHETIC AND NUANCED APPROACH, AVOIDING SIMPLISTIC GENERALIZATIONS, AND FOCUSING ON THE MYSTICAL DIMENSION OF FAITH SETS IT APART.

1. IS A HISTORY OF GOD BIASED TOWARDS ANY PARTICULAR RELIGION? ARMSTRONG STRIVES FOR NEUTRALITY, THOUGH HER PERSONAL BACKGROUND INEVITABLY INFORMS HER PERSPECTIVE. HOWEVER, THE BOOK'S STRENGTH LIES IN ITS EVEN-HANDED TREATMENT OF THE COMPLEX HISTORIES OF EACH FAITH.
1. WHAT ARE THE CRITICISMS OF A HISTORY OF GOD? SOME CRITICS ARGUE THAT ARMSTRONG OVERSIMPLIFIES CERTAIN THEOLOGICAL DEBATES OR THAT HER FOCUS ON MYSTICISM NEGLECTS OTHER IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THESE RELIGIONS.
1. WHO IS THE TARGET AUDIENCE FOR A HISTORY OF GOD? THE BOOK IS ACCESSIBLE TO A BROAD AUDIENCE, FROM STUDENTS OF RELIGION TO GENERAL READERS INTERESTED IN HISTORY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION.
1. HOW HAS A HISTORY OF GOD INFLUENCED INTERFAITH DIALOGUE? BY HIGHLIGHTING SHARED THEMES AND ROOTS, THE BOOK PROMOTES UNDERSTANDING AND REDUCES MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DIFFERENT FAITHS.
1. WHAT IS ARMSTRONG'S OVERALL MESSAGE IN A HISTORY OF GOD? IT IS A CALL FOR GREATER RELIGIOUS LITERACY, UNDERSTANDING, AND EMPATHY, EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF APPRECIATING THE DIVERSITY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.
1. WHERE CAN I FIND A HISTORY OF GOD? THE BOOK IS WIDELY AVAILABLE IN BOOKSTORES, LIBRARIES, AND ONLINE RETAILERS.
1. ARE THERE ANY OTHER BOOKS BY KAREN ARMSTRONG THAT COMPLEMENT A HISTORY OF GOD? YES, HER WORKS SUCH AS THE GREAT TRANSFORMATION, ISLAM: A SHORT HISTORY, AND FIELDS OF BLOOD: RELIGION AND THE HISTORY OF VIOLENCE PROVIDE FURTHER INSIGHTS INTO RELIGIOUS HISTORY AND THE COMPLEXITIES OF FAITH.

RELATED ARTICLES:

1. "KAREN ARMSTRONG: A BIOGRAPHY": THIS ARTICLE EXPLORES THE LIFE AND CAREER OF KAREN ARMSTRONG, HIGHLIGHTING HER JOURNEY FROM CATHOLIC NUN TO RENOWNED RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR.
1. "THE IMPACT OF MYSTICISM ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS": THIS ARTICLE EXPLORES ARMSTRONG'S CENTRAL THESIS REGARDING THE ROLE OF MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE IN SHAPING THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM.

1. "A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM": THIS ARTICLE USES A HISTORY OF GOD AS A FRAMEWORK FOR COMPARING AND CONTRASTING THEOLOGICAL IDEAS ACROSS THE THREE ABRAHAMIC FAITHS.
1. "THE ROLE OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE IN PROMOTING PEACE": THIS ARTICLE EXAMINES HOW ARMSTRONG'S WORK HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE IN ADDRESSING RELIGIOUS CONFLICT.
1. "CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF KAREN ARMSTRONG'S INTERPRETATIONS OF RELIGIOUS TEXTS": A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ARMSTRONG'S METHODOLOGY AND INTERPRETATIONS IN A HISTORY OF GOD AND OTHER WORKS.
1. "THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN THE ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS": THIS ARTICLE FOCUSES ON THE SPECIFIC EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF GOD AS TRACED BY ARMSTRONG.
1. "KAREN ARMSTRONG'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES": THIS PIECE EXAMINES ARMSTRONG'S OVERALL INFLUENCE ON THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES.
1. "FUNDAMENTALISM AND ITS HISTORICAL ROOTS: A PERSPECTIVE FROM A HISTORY OF GOD": THIS ARTICLE EXAMINES ARMSTRONG'S ANALYSIS OF THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS.
1. "THE LEGACY OF A HISTORY OF GOD: CONTINUING RELEVANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY": THIS ARTICLE EXPLORES THE ONGOING INFLUENCE AND RELEVANCE OF ARMSTRONG'S WORK IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD.

🔍 **a history of god karen armstrong:** *A History of God* Karen Armstrong, 1994-08-09 Why does God exist? How have the three dominant monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—shaped and altered the conception of God? How have these religions influenced each other? In this stunningly intelligent book, Karen Armstrong, one of Britain's foremost commentators on religious affairs, traces the history of how men and women have perceived and experienced God, from the time of Abraham to the present. The epic story begins with the Jews' gradual transformation of pagan idol worship in Babylon into true monotheism—a concept previously unknown in the world. Christianity and Islam both rose on the foundation of this revolutionary idea, but these religions refashioned 'the One God' to suit the social and political needs of their followers. From classical philosophy and medieval mysticism to the Reformation, Karen Armstrong performs the near miracle of distilling the intellectual history of monotheism into one superbly readable volume, destined to take its place as a classic. Praise for *History of God* "An admirable and impressive work of synthesis that will give insight and satisfaction to thousands of lay readers."—The Washington Post Book World "A brilliantly lucid, splendidly readable book. [Karen] Armstrong has a dazzling ability: she can take a long and complex subject and reduce it to the

fundamentals, without oversimplifying.”—The Sunday Times (London) “Absorbing . . . A lode of learning.”—Time “The most fascinating and learned study of the biggest wild goose chase in history—the quest for God. Karen Armstrong is a genius.”—A.N. Wilson, author of *Jesus: A Life*

a history of god karen armstrong: *A History of God* Karen Armstrong, 2004 A study of the deity of the world's three dominant monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In a dynamic interplay between religion and society's ever-changing beliefs, values, and traditions, human beings' ideas about God have been transformed. Ideas about God have been molded to apply to the spiritual needs of the people who worship him in a particular place and time. The author explores and analyzes the development and progression of the various perceptions of God from the days of Abraham to present times--Adapted from book jacket.

a history of god karen armstrong: *A History of God* Karen Armstrong, 1994 Explores the ways in which the idea and experience of God evolved among monotheists--Jews, Christians and Muslims.

a history of god karen armstrong: *The Case for God* Karen Armstrong, 2009-09-22 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • A nuanced exploration of the role of religion in our lives, drawing on insights of the past to build a faith for our dangerously polarized age—from the New York Times bestselling author of *The History of God* Moving from the Paleolithic age to the present, Karen Armstrong details the great lengths to which humankind has gone in order to experience a sacred reality that it called by many names, such as God, Brahman, Nirvana, Allah, or Dao. Focusing especially on Christianity but including Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Chinese spiritualities, Armstrong examines the diminished impulse toward religion in our own time, when a significant number of people either want nothing to do with God or question the efficacy of faith. Why has God become unbelievable? Why is it that atheists and theists alike now think and speak about God in a way that veers so profoundly from the thinking of our ancestors? Answering these questions with the same depth of knowledge and profound insight that have marked all her acclaimed books, Armstrong makes clear how the changing face of the world has necessarily changed the importance of religion at both the societal and the individual level. Yet she cautions us that religion was never supposed to provide answers that lie within the competence of human reason; that, she says, is the role of logos. The task of religion is “to help us live creatively, peacefully, and even joyously with realities for which there are no easy explanations.” She emphasizes, too, that religion will not work automatically. It is, she says, a practical discipline: its insights are derived not from abstract speculation but from “dedicated intellectual endeavor” and a “compassionate lifestyle that enables us to break out of the prism of selfhood.”

a history of god karen armstrong: *The Battle for God* Karen Armstrong, 2001-01-30 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 history of god karen armstrong: *A History of God* Karen Armstrong, 1999 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.

a history of god karen armstrong: *Fields of Blood* Karen Armstrong, 2014-10-28 A sweeping exploration of religion and the history of human violence—from the New York Times bestselling author of *The History of God* • “Elegant and powerful.... Both erudite and accurate, dazzling in its breadth of knowledge and historical detail.” —The Washington Post In these times of rising geopolitical chaos, the need for mutual understanding between cultures has never been more urgent. Religious differences are seen as fuel for violence and warfare. In these pages, one of our greatest writers on religion, Karen Armstrong, amasses a sweeping history of humankind to explore the perceived connection between war and the world's great creeds—and to issue a passionate defense of the peaceful nature of faith. With unprecedented scope, Armstrong looks at the whole history of each tradition—not only Christianity and Islam, but also Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Judaism. Religions, in their earliest days, endowed every aspect of life with meaning, and warfare became bound up with observances of the sacred. Modernity has ushered in an epoch of spectacular violence, although, as Armstrong shows, little of it can be ascribed directly to religion. Nevertheless, she shows us how and in what measure religions came to absorb modern belligerence—and what hope there might be for peace among believers of different faiths in our time.

a history of god karen armstrong: *The case for God*. Karen Armstrong, 2009 Moving from the Paleolithic age to the present, Karen Armstrong details the great lengths to which humankind has gone in order to experience a sacred reality that it called by many names, such as God, Brahman, Nirvana, Allah, or Dao. Focusing especially on Christianity but including Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Chinese spiritualities, Armstrong examines the diminished impulse toward religion in 21st century, when a significant number of people either want nothing to do with God or question the efficacy of faith. Why has God become unbelievable? Why is it that atheists and theists alike think and speak about God in a way that veers so profoundly from the thinking of our ancestors? Answering these questions, Armstrong makes clear how the changing face of the world has necessarily changed the importance of religion at both the societal and the individual level. And she makes an argument for drawing on the insights of the past in order to build a faith that speaks to the needs of our dangerously polarized age. Yet she cautions readers that religion was never supposed to provide answers that lie within the competence of human reason; that, she says, is the role of logos.

a history of god karen armstrong: *The Spiral Staircase* Karen Armstrong, 2010-06-04 The moving story of her own search for God by the highly-acclaimed author of the bestselling *A History of God: The 4,000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*; *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism*; and *Islam: A Short History*. In 1969, after seven years as a Roman Catholic nun -- hoping, but ultimately failing, to find God -- Armstrong left her convent. She knew almost nothing of the changed world she was entering, and she was tormented by panic attacks and inexplicable seizures. Her struggle against despair was fueled by a string of discouragements -- failed spirituality, doctorate and jobs, fruitless dealings with psychiatrists -- but finally, in 1976, she was diagnosed with epilepsy and given proper treatment. She then began the writing career that would become her true calling, and as she focused on the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, her own true inner story began to emerge. She would come to experience brief moments of transcendence through her work -- the profound fulfillment that she had not found in the long hours of prayer as a young nun. Powerfully engaging, often heart-breaking, but lit with bursts of humour, *The Spiral Staircase* is an extraordinary history of self.

a history of god karen armstrong: *The Great Transformation* Karen Armstrong, 2009-02-24

From one of the world's leading writers on religion and the highly acclaimed author of the bestselling *A History of God*, *The Battle for God* and *The Spiral Staircase*, comes a major new work: a chronicle of one of the most important intellectual revolutions in world history and its relevance to our own time. In one astonishing, short period – the ninth century BCE – 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: Confucianism and Daoism in China; Hinduism and Buddhism in India; monotheism in Israel; and philosophical rationalism in Greece. Historians call this the Axial Age because of its central importance to humanity's spiritual development. Now, Karen Armstrong traces the rise and development of this transformative moment in history, examining the brilliant contributions to these traditions made by such figures as the Buddha, Socrates, Confucius and Ezekiel. Armstrong makes clear that despite some differences of emphasis, there was remarkable consensus among these religions and philosophies: each insisted on the primacy of compassion over hatred and violence. She illuminates what this "family" resemblance reveals about the religious impulse and quest of humankind. And she goes beyond spiritual archaeology, delving into the ways in which these Axial Age beliefs can present an instructive and thought-provoking challenge to the ways we think about and practice religion today. A revelation of humankind's early shared imperatives, yearnings and inspired solutions – as salutary as it is fascinating. Excerpt from *The Great Transformation*: In our global world, we can no longer afford a parochial or exclusive vision. We must learn to live and behave as though people in remote parts of the globe were as important as ourselves. The sages of the Axial Age did not create their compassionate ethic in idyllic circumstances. Each tradition developed in societies like our own that were torn apart by violence and warfare as never before; indeed, the first catalyst of religious change was usually a visceral rejection of the aggression that the sages witnessed all around them. . . . All the great traditions that were created at this time are in agreement about the supreme importance of charity and benevolence, and this tells us something important about our humanity.

a history of god karen armstrong: A History of God Karen Armstrong, 1993-09-30

a history of god karen armstrong: *In the Beginning* Karen Armstrong, 2011-08-10 "Karen Armstrong is a genius."—A. N. Wilson As the foundation stone of the Jewish and Christian scriptures, The Book of Genesis unfolds some of the most arresting stories of world literature—the Creation; Adam and Eve; Cain and Abel; the sacrifice of Isaac. Yet the meaning of Genesis remains enigmatic. In this fascinating volume, Karen Armstrong, author of the highly acclaimed bestseller *A History of God*, brilliantly illuminates the mysteries and profundities of this mystifying work. BONUS: This edition contains an excerpt from Karen Armstrong's *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*. "A lyrical chronicle of one woman's wrestling with Genesis that can serve as a guide to others . . . As notable for its scholarship as it is for its honesty and vulnerability."—Publishers Weekly "Armstrong can simplify complex ideas, but she is never simplistic."—The New York Times Book Review

a history of god karen armstrong: *The Evolution of God* Robert Wright, 2009-06-08 In this sweeping narrative that takes us from the Stone Age to the Information Age, Robert Wright unveils an astonishing discovery: there is a hidden pattern that the great monotheistic faiths have followed as they have evolved. Through the prisms of archaeology, theology, and evolutionary psychology, Wright's findings overturn basic assumptions about Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and are sure to cause controversy. He explains why spirituality has a role today, and why science, contrary to conventional wisdom, affirms the validity of the religious quest. And this previously unrecognized evolutionary logic points not toward continued religious extremism, but future harmony. Nearly a decade in the making, *The Evolution of God* is a breathtaking re-examination of the past, and a visionary look forward.

a history of god karen armstrong: *A Short History of Myth (Myths series)* Karen Armstrong, 2010-10-29 What are myths? How have they evolved? And why do we still so desperately need them? A history of myth is a history of humanity, Karen Armstrong argues in this insightful and eloquent book: our stories and beliefs, our curiosity and attempts to understand the world, link us to our ancestors and each other. This is a brilliant and thought-provoking introduction to myth in the

broadest sense—from Palaeolithic times to the “Great Western Transformation” of the last 500 years—and why we dismiss it only at our peril.

a history of god karen armstrong: *Through the Narrow Gate, Revised* Karen Armstrong, 2005-02-19 Read and cherished by thousands all over the world since it was first published in 1981, *Through the Narrow Gate* takes the reader on a spiritual journey that began one September day in 1962 when Karen Armstrong said good-bye to her family at London's King's Cross station and journeyed on to the convent in Tripton to become a nun. *Through the Narrow Gate* is by turns a book of spiritual revelation and an intimate look at life inside the cloistered walls of the convent.--BOOK JACKET.

a history of god karen armstrong: *Buddha* Karen Armstrong, 2008-11-03 The author of *The Battle for God* and other works on religion focuses her attention on the Buddha, retracing his life from prince to savior of humankind, in a philosophical portrait that offers an illuminating look at how his life and path to spiritual enlightenment spawned one of the great religions of the world. Reprint.

a history of god karen armstrong: *The Trial of God* Elie Wiesel, 1995-11-14 *The Trial of God* (as it was held on February 25, 1649, in Shamgorod) A Play by Elie Wiesel Translated by Marion Wiesel Introduction by Robert McAfee Brown Afterword by Matthew Fox Where is God when innocent human beings suffer? This drama lays bare the most vexing questions confronting the moral imagination. Set in a Ukrainian village in the year 1649, this haunting play takes place in the aftermath of a pogrom. Only two Jews, Berish the innkeeper and his daughter Hannah, have survived the brutal Cossack raids. When three itinerant actors arrive in town to perform a Purim play, Berish demands that they stage a mock trial of God instead, indicting Him for His silence in the face of evil. Berish, a latter-day Job, is ready to take on the role of prosecutor. But who will defend God? A mysterious stranger named Sam, who seems oddly familiar to everyone present, shows up just in time to volunteer. The idea for this play came from an event that Elie Wiesel witnessed as a boy in Auschwitz: “Three rabbis—all erudite and pious men—decided one evening to indict God for allowing His children to be massacred. I remember: I was there, and I felt like crying. But there nobody cried.” Inspired and challenged by this play, Christian theologians Robert McAfee Brown and Matthew Fox, in a new Introduction and Afterword, join Elie Wiesel in the search for faith in a world where God is silent.

a history of god karen armstrong: *Jesus* A. N. Wilson, 2004 Extraordinarily entertaining....Learned, witty....Wilson [is] a gifted novelist and diligent biographer.--Newsday

a history of god karen armstrong: *The Great Transformation* Karen Armstrong, 2007-04-10 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • An extraordinary investigation of a critical moment in the evolution of religious thought—from the New York Times bestselling author of *A History of God* and *The Spiral Staircase* “A splendid book.... Lucid, highly readable.... Relevant to a world still embroiled in military conflict and sectarian hatreds.” —The New York Times In the ninth century BCE, events in four regions of the civilized world led to the rise of religious traditions that have endured to the present day—development of Confucianism and Daoism in China, Hinduism and Buddhism in India, monotheism in Israel, and philosophical rationalism in Greece. Armstrong, one of our most prominent religious scholars, examines how these traditions began in response to the violence of their time. Studying figures as diverse as the Buddha and Socrates, Confucius and Jeremiah, Armstrong reveals how these still enduring philosophies can help address our contemporary problems.

a history of god karen armstrong: *The Battle for God* Karen Armstrong, 2011-08-10 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*.

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Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, with insights into the work of Western history's great theologians and philosophers. Can humanity persist without some idea of God? Far from moving into an era of pure atheism, Armstrong believes that God as a construct is more crucial now than ever. God is not "dead," God has not abandoned us, God merely shape-shifts to adapt to new contexts, whether that context is medieval agrarianism, nineteenth-century romanticism, or twenty-first-century post-modern techno-urbanism. Armstrong's in-depth examination of monotheism provides a foundation for the curious novice while not holding back on academic concepts and obscure but fascinating historical accounts. The summary and analysis in this ebook are intended to complement your reading experience and bring you closer to a great work of nonfiction.

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pengikut. Dengan mahir Karen menjalinkan di dalam narasinya jejak-jejak awal sejarah panjang permusuhan Barat terhadap Islam. Ditulis dengan riset yang kuat dan berdasarkan sumber-sumber yang berimbang, penggambaran Karen tentang Nabi dengan latar kehadirannya tentu dapat pula mencerahkan pembaca dengan pemahaman baru tentang kejadian-kejadian modern di kancah politik internasional. [Mizan, Agama, nabi, Islam, Karen Armstrong, Indonesia]

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