

karen armstrong the battle for god

Karen Armstrong The Battle for God: Exploring Faith, Conflict, and Understanding

karen armstrong the battle for god is more than just a phrase; it is a gateway into one of the most profound examinations of religion and its role in modern society. Karen Armstrong, a renowned scholar of religion, has deeply influenced how we understand the complex relationships between faith, violence, and the human quest for meaning. Her book, **The Battle for God**, offers a sweeping historical narrative and insightful analysis of the rise of fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. If you're curious about why religion sometimes seems to be at the heart of conflict, Armstrong's work provides a compassionate and enlightening perspective.

Understanding Karen Armstrong's Approach to Religion

Karen Armstrong is an author and former nun whose writings have helped demystify religion for a broad audience. Unlike many scholars who focus solely on theology or history, Armstrong combines her personal experience with rigorous research to explore not just religious beliefs but also the social and psychological forces behind them. In **The Battle for God**, she does not merely chronicle events but seeks to understand the emotional and existential anxieties that fuel religious fundamentalism.

Who Is Karen Armstrong?

Before diving into **The Battle for God**, it helps to know a bit about Karen Armstrong herself. Born in 1944, Armstrong was a Roman Catholic nun for several years before leaving the convent and embarking on a career as a writer. Her unique background gives her a rare insider-outsider perspective on faith, belief, and doubt. Over the decades, she has become one of the most respected voices on interfaith dialogue, religious history, and the challenges facing faith communities today.

The Genesis of **The Battle for God**

Published in 2000, **The Battle for God** emerged at a time of increasing global awareness about religious extremism, particularly in the aftermath of the 20th century's numerous conflicts and the rise of Islamist militant groups. Armstrong's book was groundbreaking because it rejected simplistic explanations that label religion as inherently violent or irrational. Instead, she traced the historical roots of fundamentalism within the three Abrahamic faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—showing patterns of reaction to modernity, secularism, and social change.

The Core Themes of The Battle for God

At its heart, *The Battle for God* explores the tension between tradition and modernity, faith and secularism, and how these tensions have given rise to fundamentalist movements. Armstrong's nuanced portrayal encourages readers to see fundamentalism not just as fanaticism but as a complex response to feelings of dislocation and loss.

Fundamentalism as a Reaction to Modernity

One of Armstrong's key insights is that fundamentalism often arises when religious communities feel threatened by rapid social changes. These changes might include scientific discoveries, political upheaval, or the loss of traditional social structures. For example, the rise of secularism in the West challenged the authority of the church, while colonialism and Western influence disrupted traditional societies in the Middle East.

Armstrong argues that fundamentalism is fundamentally about preserving identity and meaning in a world perceived as increasingly hostile or fragmented. This perspective humanizes fundamentalists, presenting them as individuals seeking stability and certainty rather than simply as extremists.

Common Patterns Across Faiths

While Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are unique faith traditions, Armstrong identifies common patterns in how fundamentalist movements develop within each. These include:

- A strict literal interpretation of sacred texts
- A desire to restore a perceived lost golden age
- An emphasis on community boundaries and purity
- Resistance to pluralism and secular values

By highlighting these shared characteristics, Armstrong invites readers to understand fundamentalism as a broader sociocultural phenomenon rather than an isolated issue within any single religion.

Historical Contexts Explored in The Battle for God

Armstrong's book is rich with historical detail, tracing fundamentalism's evolution from the late 19th century onward. This historical lens is crucial because it shows that fundamentalism is not a timeless feature of religion but a product of specific historical circumstances.

Christian Fundamentalism

In the United States, Christian fundamentalism emerged in response to the rise of modernist theology, Darwinian evolution, and the secularization of society. Armstrong illustrates how early 20th-century American evangelicals championed a return to biblical literalism and moral conservatism as a way to resist these changes. This movement laid the groundwork for the politically active Christian Right seen today, showing how religious identity can merge with political aspirations.

Jewish Fundamentalism

Armstrong also examines the development of Jewish fundamentalism, particularly in the context of Zionism and the establishment of Israel. For some Jewish groups, religious fundamentalism became intertwined with nationalism and the quest for a homeland, often leading to tensions with secular authorities and other religious communities. This history highlights how political and religious identities can become deeply entangled.

Islamic Fundamentalism

Perhaps the most widely discussed aspect of **The Battle for God** is Armstrong's treatment of Islamic fundamentalism. She traces its roots to socio-political upheavals in the Muslim world, including colonialism, rapid modernization, and the collapse of traditional religious authority. Armstrong emphasizes that Islamic fundamentalism cannot be understood without considering these external pressures and the genuine spiritual concerns of its followers.

Why Karen Armstrong's *The Battle for God* Still Matters Today

In an era where headlines often focus on religious violence or extremism, Karen Armstrong's **The Battle for God** offers a refreshing and necessary corrective. It urges readers to go beyond stereotypes and headlines, encouraging empathy and deeper understanding.

Lessons for Interfaith Dialogue

One of the most valuable contributions of Armstrong's work is its call for interfaith dialogue. By showing the shared struggles and fears behind fundamentalism, she paves the way for greater empathy between different religious groups. Understanding the roots of religious conflict is the first step toward building bridges and promoting peace.

Insights for Modern Readers

For anyone interested in the intersection of religion, politics, and society, *The Battle for God* remains a vital resource. It helps explain why faith matters to so many people and why religious identity can sometimes lead to conflict. More importantly, it challenges readers to consider how societies can accommodate religious diversity without eroding core values.

Exploring Further: Related Works by Karen Armstrong

If *The Battle for God* sparks your interest, Karen Armstrong has authored several other influential books that explore religion's role in human history and contemporary life. These include:

- *A History of God*: A comprehensive look at the evolution of the concept of God in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
- *The Case for God*: A philosophical and historical investigation into why religion remains relevant.
- *Islam: A Short History*: A concise introduction to the history and beliefs of Islam.

Each work complements *The Battle for God* by deepening our understanding of faith's complexities and continuing the conversation about religion's place in the modern world.

Karen Armstrong's *The Battle for God* invites us to reconsider our assumptions about religion and conflict. By weaving together history, theology, and human stories, she paints a picture of fundamentalism that is as compassionate as it is enlightening. As the world continues to grapple with religious tensions, her insights remain a beacon for those seeking to understand – and perhaps heal – the battle for God.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Karen Armstrong in 'The Battle for God'?

Karen Armstrong is the author of *The Battle for God*, a renowned scholar and writer known for her works on religion and spirituality.

What is the main theme of 'The Battle for God' by Karen Armstrong?

The Battle for God explores the rise of fundamentalism in the three major monotheistic

religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—and examines the historical and social factors behind this phenomenon.

When was 'The Battle for God' published?

'The Battle for God' was first published in 2000.

What religions does Karen Armstrong focus on in 'The Battle for God'?

Karen Armstrong focuses on Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in 'The Battle for God,' analyzing the development of fundamentalism within these faiths.

How does Karen Armstrong define fundamentalism in 'The Battle for God'?

In 'The Battle for God,' Armstrong defines fundamentalism as a reactionary movement that seeks to return to what adherents perceive as the original, pure form of their religion in response to modernity and secularism.

Why is 'The Battle for God' considered an important book on religious fundamentalism?

'The Battle for God' is considered important because it provides a balanced, historical, and empathetic analysis of fundamentalism, moving beyond stereotypes to understand its causes and impact.

What impact did 'The Battle for God' have on discussions about religion and extremism?

The book contributed significantly to scholarly and public discussions by offering nuanced insights into the motivations behind religious extremism and promoting interfaith understanding.

Are there any notable critiques of Karen Armstrong's 'The Battle for God'?

Some critics argue that Armstrong's sympathetic approach to fundamentalism may downplay its dangers, while others praise her for providing context and avoiding simplistic judgments.

Additional Resources

Karen Armstrong *The Battle for God: An Analytical Review of Faith and Fundamentalism*

karen armstrong the battle for god is a pivotal work that delves into the complexities of religious fundamentalism and its profound impact on modern society. As a renowned author and scholar of religion, Karen Armstrong presents a meticulously researched narrative that explores the historical

roots, ideological conflicts, and socio-political ramifications of the rise of fundamentalist movements across Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This book stands as a critical resource for understanding the ongoing tensions between faith, tradition, and modernity in a globalized world.

Contextualizing Karen Armstrong The Battle for God

Published in 2000, "The Battle for God" emerged at a time when global consciousness was increasingly shaped by the aftermath of political events such as the Iranian Revolution, the rise of evangelical Christianity in the United States, and the growing visibility of Islamic fundamentalism. Karen Armstrong, a former nun turned religious historian, uses her extensive background to investigate how fundamentalism takes shape as a reactionary force against the perceived erosion of religious authority and traditional values.

Armstrong's approach is neither polemical nor apologetic; rather, it is an investigative journey that seeks to unpack the motivations behind fundamentalist ideologies. By focusing on the shared characteristics of religious fundamentalism rather than its doctrinal specifics, she provides readers with a nuanced understanding of why these movements continue to influence global affairs decades into the 21st century.

Exploring the Core Themes in The Battle for God

Karen Armstrong the battle for god articulates several key themes that resonate throughout the text. The exploration of these themes offers insight into the interplay between faith, politics, and identity.

The Origins of Fundamentalism

Armstrong traces the emergence of fundamentalism to the early 20th century, highlighting how rapid modernization, secularization, and colonialism disrupted traditional religious communities. She argues that fundamentalism is fundamentally a defensive posture—a struggle to reclaim a perceived lost purity of faith amid social upheaval.

The book identifies the 1919 publication of *The Fundamentals*—an influential series of essays advocating a return to literal interpretations of the Bible—as a defining moment for Christian fundamentalism. Similarly, Armstrong examines the Wahhabi movement in Islam and the Zionist religious revival within Judaism as parallel phenomena reacting to the pressures of modernity and political instability.

Common Characteristics of Religious Fundamentalism

One of Armstrong's most significant contributions is her identification of common traits shared across different fundamentalist movements. These include:

- **Literalism:** An unwavering belief in the literal interpretation of sacred texts.
- **Militancy:** A readiness to confront perceived enemies of faith, often through political or sometimes violent means.
- **Authoritarianism:** Strict hierarchical structures and rejection of pluralistic values.
- **Separatism:** A tendency to isolate communities from secular society to preserve religious purity.
- **Apocalypticism:** A belief in an imminent divine intervention that will restore righteousness.

By drawing these parallels, Armstrong encourages readers to view fundamentalism not as a monolithic or isolated phenomenon but as a multifaceted response to global socio-political changes.

Fundamentalism as a Reaction to Modernity

Karen Armstrong the battle for god investigates how fundamentalism arises as a counterforce to the challenges posed by modern secularism, scientific advancement, and cultural pluralism. Modernity often entails the fragmentation of traditional community structures and the relativization of absolute truths, which can provoke existential anxiety among believers.

Armstrong suggests that fundamentalist movements attempt to reassert a unified moral order in the face of uncertainty. This pursuit often leads to a rigid worldview that resists compromise and demonizes the “other,” whether that be different religious groups, secular governments, or liberal ideologies.

Comparative Insights: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

A distinctive feature of Karen Armstrong’s analysis is her comparative approach to religious fundamentalism. She does not limit her scope to a single faith tradition but instead presents a cross-religious examination that highlights both similarities and distinctions.

Christian Fundamentalism

Armstrong traces Christian fundamentalism primarily to the American context, where it originated as a reaction against modernist theology and Darwinian evolution. The book examines how evangelical movements gained political influence, particularly through alliances with conservative political parties. This intersection of religion and politics is portrayed as a defining characteristic of contemporary Christian fundamentalism.

Islamic Fundamentalism

The analysis of Islamic fundamentalism centers on movements like Wahhabism and the Muslim Brotherhood. Armstrong discusses how colonialism and Western intervention in the Muslim world have fueled a radicalized response seeking to restore Islamic governance and law. The book emphasizes the diversity within Islamic fundamentalist groups, cautioning against overgeneralization.

Jewish Fundamentalism

In discussing Jewish fundamentalism, Armstrong explores the rise of religious Zionism as a response to secular nationalism and the trauma of the Holocaust. She highlights how this movement blends political objectives with religious fervor, sometimes leading to tensions within Israeli society and with neighboring communities.

Strengths and Limitations of Karen Armstrong *The Battle for God*

Karen Armstrong's "The Battle for God" is widely praised for its scholarly rigor and balanced perspective. The book's strengths include:

- **Comprehensive Research:** Armstrong draws on historical documents, theological texts, and contemporary case studies to build a rich narrative.
- **Neutral Tone:** Her investigative style avoids sensationalism, providing a measured understanding of sensitive topics.
- **Interfaith Perspective:** By comparing fundamentalism across religions, the book fosters a broader comprehension beyond sectarian lines.

However, some critiques point to potential limitations:

- **Complexity for General Readers:** The depth of historical and theological analysis may be challenging for readers without prior knowledge of religious studies.
- **Limited Coverage of Emerging Movements:** Since the book was published in 2000, it does not fully address more recent developments in fundamentalism, such as the impact of social media or post-9/11 geopolitics.

The Relevance of The Battle for God in Contemporary Discourse

Two decades after its release, Karen Armstrong's *The Battle for God* remains a vital text for academics, policymakers, and anyone seeking to understand the ongoing conflicts rooted in religious identity. The book's insights into the causes and characteristics of fundamentalism provide valuable context for analyzing current events—from the rise of nationalist parties with religious agendas to the global debates over secularism and religious freedom.

Moreover, Armstrong's emphasis on empathy and contextual understanding challenges simplistic narratives that portray fundamentalists solely as aggressors. This perspective encourages dialogue and nuanced policy responses that address the underlying fears and grievances driving fundamentalist movements.

In synthesizing historical trends with modern realities, "The Battle for God" stands as a critical reference point for ongoing discussions about the role of religion in public life and international relations. Its analytical framework equips readers to engage with one of the defining ideological struggles of our time with greater clarity and compassion.

[Karen Armstrong The Battle For God](#)

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karen armstrong the battle for god: 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*.

karen armstrong the battle for god: *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*.

karen armstrong the battle for god: *The Case for God* Karen Armstrong, 2009-09-22 From the bestselling author of *A History of God* and *The Great Transformation* comes a balanced, nuanced understanding of the role religion plays in human life and the trajectory of faith in modern times. Why has God become incredible? 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? Moving from the Paleolithic Age to the present, Karen Armstrong details the lengths to which humankind has gone to experience a sacred reality that it called God, Brahman, Nirvana, Allah, or Dao. She 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. With her trademark depth of knowledge and profound insight, Armstrong elucidates how the changing world has necessarily altered the importance of religion at both societal and individual levels. And she makes a powerful, convincing argument for structuring a faith that speaks to the needs of our dangerously polarized age.

karen armstrong the battle for god: *The Battle for God* Karen Armstrong, 2000 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.

karen armstrong the battle for god: *A History of God* Karen Armstrong, 2011-08-10 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

karen armstrong the battle for god: 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.

karen armstrong the battle for god: 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.

karen armstrong the battle for god: The Fall of the House of Bush Craig Unger, 2007-11-13 The presidency of George W. Bush has led to the worst foreign policy decision in the history of the

United States -- the bloody, unwinnable war in Iraq. How did this happen? Bush's fateful decision was rooted in events that began decades ago, and until now this story has never been fully told. From Craig Unger, the author of the bestseller *House of Bush, House of Saud*, comes a comprehensive, deeply sourced, and chilling account of the secret relationship between neoconservative policy makers and the Christian Right, and how they assaulted the most vital safeguards of America's constitutional democracy while pushing the country into the catastrophic quagmire in the Middle East that is getting worse day by day. Among the powerful revelations in this book: Why George W. Bush ignored the sage advice of his father, George H.W. Bush, and took America into war. How Bush was convinced he was doing God's will. How Vice President Dick Cheney manipulated George W. Bush, disabled his enemies within the administration, and relentlessly pressed for an attack on Iraq. Which veteran government official, with the assent of the president's father, protested passionately that the Bush administration was making a catastrophic mistake -- and was ignored. How information from forged documents that had already been discredited fourteen times by various intelligence agencies found its way into President Bush's State of the Union address in which he made the case for war with Iraq. How Cheney and the neocons assembled a shadow national security apparatus and created a disinformation pipeline to mislead America and start the war. A seasoned, award-winning investigative reporter connected to many back-channel political and intelligence sources, Craig Unger knows how to get the big story -- and this one is his most explosive yet. Through scores of interviews with figures in the Christian Right, the neoconservative movement, the Bush administration, and sources close to the Bush family, as well as intelligence agents in the CIA, the Pentagon, and Israel, Unger shows how the Bush administration's certainty that it could bend history to its will has carried America into the disastrous war in Iraq, dooming Bush's presidency to failure and costing America thousands of lives and trillions of dollars. Far from ensuring our security, the Iraq War will be seen as a great strategic pivot point in history that could ignite wider war in the Middle East, particularly in Iran. Provocative, timely, and disturbing, *The Fall of the House of Bush* stands as the most comprehensive and dramatic account of how and why George W. Bush took America to war in Iraq.

karen armstrong the battle for god: Buddha Karen Armstrong, 2004-09-28 With such bestsellers as *A History of God and Islam*, Karen Armstrong has consistently delivered penetrating, readable, and prescient (*The New York Times*) works that have lucidly engaged a wide range of religions and religious issues. In *Buddha* she turns to a figure whose thought is still reverberating throughout the world 2,500 years after his death. Many know the Buddha only from seeing countless serene, iconic images. But what of the man himself and the world he lived in? What did he actually do in his roughly eighty years on earth that spawned one of the greatest religions in world history? Armstrong tackles these questions and more by examining the life and times of the Buddha in this engrossing philosophical biography. Against the tumultuous cultural background of his world, she blends history, philosophy, mythology, and biography to create a compelling and illuminating portrait of a man whose awakening continues to inspire millions.

karen armstrong the battle for god: Killing for God Stephen Schwalbe, 2020-07-15 Given the extremely high cost of overseas military operations today, the author offers readers scholarly insights as to what motivates kingdoms, countries, and groups to engage in religious conflict, beginning with those found in the Hebrew Bible. To do this, he analyzes three related religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, to determine their similarities and differences regarding the killing of people. The areas of conflict analysis include Fundamentalism, Proselytization, Sacrifice (to include martyrdom), and Revenge (to include genocide). The insights of preeminent religious and political scholars are integrated into this comprehensive analysis of conflict involving religion, leading to an answer to the ultimate question: Is the killing worth it?

karen armstrong the battle for god: Religion as Metaphor David Tacey, 2017-09-08 Biblical stories are metaphorical. They may have been accepted as factual hundreds of years ago, but today they cannot be taken literally. Some students in religious schools even recoil from the fairy tales of religion, believing them to be mockeries of their intelligence. David Tacey argues that biblical

language should not be read as history, and it was never intended as literal description. At best it is metaphorical, but he does not deny these stories have spiritual meaning. Religion as Metaphor argues that despite what tradition tells us, if we believe religious language, we miss religion's spiritual meaning. Tacey argues that religious language was not designed to be historical reporting, but rather to resonate in the soul and direct us toward transcendent realities. Its impact was intended to be closer to poetry than theology. The book uses specific examples to make its case: Jesus, the Virgin Birth, the Kingdom of God, the Apocalypse, Satan, and the Resurrection. Tacey shows that, with the aid of contemporary thought and depth psychology, we can re-read religious stories as metaphors of the spirit and the interior life. Moving beyond literal thinking will save religion from itself.

karen armstrong the battle for god: A Bible for A Thoughtful Skeptic, the Natural History of Intelligence Thom Pain, Jr., 2005-02 This book makes the case for realistic faith in the power of intelligence as opposed to blind faith in the pronouncements of those who claim infallibility or divine guidance. The author, Thom Pain, identifies the discoveries of systems and information theory early in the twentieth century as the key to a naturalistic explanation of purposeful life and intelligence and to the last stage in the emancipation of science from theology. He begins his story with the discoveries that revealed the memory mechanism as a built-in tropisms for truth that gave even primitive creatures a logical tool for improving their decisions and solving their problems. It is a story that reveals a surprisingly early version of intelligence and an amazing versatility in the types and range of intelligence. When one species developed symbolic languages, it becomes the story of the cultural developments of the human species. As civilization evolved, Thom identifies the rulers and the ruling classes as both the leaders and the obstacles to intellectual progress. In their new role, the rulers either claimed to be gods or the representative of the gods and often led the exploitation that had become the privilege of conquerors and of the ruling classes. Indoctrinated faith and loyalty became authoritarian tools of aggression and oppression. In this cruel environment, religion also became a source of moral strength and initiative for the oppressed and religious rebels were often the leaders in the struggles for political and intellectual freedom. These struggles were not about the belief in God but about the abuses of authority by those who claimed to be the representatives of God. Thom follows this story as it sharpened the distinction between reason and theology and led to the modern concepts of democracy and personal and religious freedom.

karen armstrong the battle for god: A Communication Perspective on Interfaith Dialogue Daniel S. Brown Jr., 2013-01-30 Communication theory provides a compelling way to understand how people of faith can and should work together in today's tumultuous world. In A Communication Perspective on Interfaith Dialogue, fifteen authors present their experiences and analyses of interfaith dialogue, and contextualize interfaith work within the frame of rhetorical and communication studies. While the focus is on the Abrahamic faiths, these essays also include discussion of Hinduism and interracial faith efforts. Each chapter incorporates communication theories that bring clarity to the practices and problems of interfaith communication. Where other interfaith books provide theological, political, or sociological insights, this volume is committed to the perspectives contained in communication scholarship. Interfaith dialogue is best imagined as an organic process, and it does not require theological heavyweights gathered for academic banter. As such, this volume focuses on the processes and means by which interfaith meaning is produced.

karen armstrong the battle for god: Jew, Christian, Muslim: Faithful Unification or Fateful Trifurcation? Kenneth L. Vaux, 2003-09-29

karen armstrong the battle for god: Bahudhā and the Post 9/11 World Balmiki Prasad Singh, 2008-02-20 The rise of terrorism and fundamentalism in recent times has brought about phenomenal changes in global politics. These unprecedented challenges call for a new, bold, and imaginative statecraft from world leaders. Underlining the need to transcend age old peace mechanism and reconstruct our language of discourse, this book propounds the concept of Bahudhā—an eternal reality or continuum, a dialogue of harmony, and peaceful living. Bahudhā recognizes the distinction between plural societies and pluralism, facilitates exchange of views, and promotes understanding of

the collective good. The book is divided into five parts. The first part discusses the major events witnessed by the world during 1989–2001—the fall of Berlin Wall, transfer of Hong Kong to China, and the terrorist attack on the USA on September 11—and their implication for various nations, cultures, and international peace. The next part discusses India's experiences in handling the pluralistic challenges by citing examples from the Vedas and Puranas and analysing policies followed by Ashoka, Kabir, Guru Nanak, Akbar, and Mahatma Gandhi. In the subsequent sections, the author underlines the importance of Bahudhā as an instrument of public policy for harmony and also discusses the global imperatives of following such an approach. He highlights the central role of education and religion in the building of a harmonious society and advocates the strengthening of the United Nations to become an effective global conflict resolution mechanism.

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