
Karen Armstrong Fields Of Blood Religion And The History

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Princeton Readings in Religion and Violence

Macmillan
 The spirit of our times can appear to be one of joyless urgency. As a culture we have become less interested in the exploration of the glorious mind, and more interested in creating and mastering technologies that will yield material well-being. But while cultural pessimism is always fashionable, there is still much to give us hope. In *The Givenness of Things*, the incomparable Marilynne Robinson delivers an impassioned critique of our contemporary society while arguing that reverence must be given to who we are

and what we are: creatures of singular interest and value, despite our errors and depredations. Robinson has plumbed the depths of the human spirit in her novels, including the National Book Critics Circle Award-winning *Lila* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Gilead*, and in her new essay collection she trains her incisive mind on our modern predicament and the mysteries of faith. These seventeen essays examine the ideas that have inspired and provoked one of our finest writers throughout her life. Whether she is investigating how the work of the great thinkers of the past, Calvin, Locke, Bonhoeffer--and Shakespeare--can infuse our lives, or calling attention to the rise of the self-declared elite in American religious and political life, Robinson's

peerless prose and boundless humanity are on display. Exquisite and bold, *The Givenness of Things* is a necessary call for us to find wisdom and guidance in our cultural heritage, and to offer grace to one another.

The Spiral Staircase Anchor

Written by top practitioner-scholars who bring a critical yet empathetic eye to the topic, this textbook provides a comprehensive look at peace and violence in seven world religions. Offers a clear and systematic narrative with coverage of Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Native American religions. Introduces a different religion and its sacred texts in each chapter; discusses ideas of peace, war, nonviolence, and permissible violence;

recounts historical responses to violence; and highlights individuals within the tradition working toward peace and justice Examines concepts within their religious context for a better understanding of the values, motivations, and ethics involved Includes student-friendly pedagogical features, such as enriching end-of-chapter critiques by practitioners of other traditions, definitions of key terms, discussion questions, and further reading sections

Leaving the Witness W. W. Norton & Company

One of the most original thinkers on the role of religion in the modern world—author of such acclaimed books as *A History of God*, *Islam*, and *Buddha*—now gives us an impassioned and practical book that can help us make the world a more compassionate place. Karen Armstrong believes that while compassion is intrinsic in all human beings, each of us needs to work diligently to cultivate and expand our capacity for compassion. Here, in this straightforward, thoughtful, and thought-provoking book, she sets out a program that can lead us toward a more compassionate life. The twelve steps Armstrong suggests begin with “Learn About Compassion” and close with “Love Your Enemies.” In between, she takes up “compassion for yourself,” mindfulness, suffering, sympathetic joy, the limits of our knowledge of others, and “concern for everybody.” She suggests concrete ways of enhancing our compassion and putting it into action in our everyday lives, and provides, as well, a reading list to encourage us to “hear one another’s narratives.” Throughout, Armstrong makes clear that a compassionate life is not a matter of only heart or mind but a deliberate and often life-altering commingling of the two.

Buddha John Wiley & Sons

A common objection to belief in the God of the Bible is that a good, kind, and loving deity would never command the wholesale slaughter of nations. Even Christians have a hard time stomaching such a thought, and many avoid reading those difficult Old Testament passages that make us squeamish. Instead, we quickly jump to the enemy-loving, forgiving Jesus of the New Testament. And yet, the question doesn’t go away. Did God really command genocide? Is the command to “utterly destroy” morally unjustifiable? Is it literal? Are the issues more complex and nuanced than we realize? In the tradition of his popular *Is God a Moral Monster?*, Paul Copan teams up with Matthew Flannagan to tackle some of the most confusing and uncomfortable passages of Scripture.

Together they help the Christian and nonbeliever alike understand the biblical, theological, philosophical, and ethical implications of Old Testament warfare passages. Pastors, youth pastors, campus ministers, apologetics readers, and laypeople will find that this book both enlightens and equips them for serious discussion of troubling spiritual questions. [Free to Believe](#) Anchor

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*.

[The Givenness of Things](#) Random House

A portrait of the Buddha explores his identities both as an archetypal religious icon and as a man, chronicling his journey from his decision to leave a life of ease and power to his attainment of spiritual

enlightenment.

Not in God's Name Schocken

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.

The Future of God Knopf Canada

Pantheism is the idea that God and the world are identical—that the creator, sustainer, destroyer, and transformer of all things is the universe itself. From a monotheistic perspective, this notion is irremediably heretical since it suggests divinity might be material, mutable, and multiple. Since the excommunication of Baruch Spinoza, Western thought has therefore demonized what it calls pantheism, accusing it of incoherence, absurdity, and—with striking regularity—monstrosity. In this book, Mary-Jane Rubenstein investigates this perennial repugnance through a conceptual genealogy of pantheisms. What makes pantheism “monstrous”—at once repellent and seductive—is that it scrambles the raced and gendered distinctions that Western philosophy and theology insist on drawing between activity and passivity, spirit and matter, animacy and inanimacy, and creator and created. By rejecting the fundamental difference between God and world, pantheism threatens all the other oppositions that stem from it: light versus

darkness, male versus female, and humans versus every other organism. If the panic over pantheism has to do with a fear of crossed boundaries and demolished hierarchies, then the question becomes what a present-day pantheism might disrupt and what it might reconfigure. Cobbling together heterogeneous sources—medieval heresies, their pre- and anti-Socratic forebears, general relativity, quantum mechanics, nonlinear biologies, multiverse and indigenous cosmologies, ecofeminism, animal and vegetal studies, and new and old materialisms—Rubenstein assembles possible pluralist pantheisms. By mobilizing this monstrous mixture of unintentional God-worlds, *Pantheologies* gives an old heresy the chance to renew our thinking.

The English Mystics of the Fourteenth Century HarperCollins UK

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.

The Politics of Jesus Kube Publishing Ltd

From one of the most original thinkers on the role of religion in the modern world, a profound exploration of the spiritual power of nature—and an urgent call to reclaim that power in everyday life. "Much has been written on the scientific and technological aspects of climate change.... But Armstrong's book is both more personal and more profound. Its urgent message is that hearts and minds need to change if we are to once more learn to

revere our beautiful and fragile planet."

—The Guardian Since the beginning of time, humankind has looked upon nature and seen the divine. In the writings of the great thinkers across religions, the natural world inspires everything from fear, to awe, to tranquil contemplation; God, or however one defined the sublime, was present in everything. Yet today, even as we admire a tree or take in a striking landscape, we rarely see nature as sacred. In this short but deeply powerful book, the best-selling historian of religion Karen Armstrong re-sacralizes nature for modern times. Drawing on her vast knowledge of the world's religious traditions, she vividly describes nature's central place in spirituality across the centuries. In bringing this age-old wisdom to life, Armstrong shows modern readers how to rediscover nature's potency and form a connection to something greater than ourselves.

The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Violence Princeton University Press

'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

Surrender All Ballantine Books

A leading religious freedom attorney, the veteran of several Supreme Court battles, helps people of faith understand religious liberty in our rapidly changing culture—why it matters, how it is threatened, and how to respond with confidence and grace. WINNER OF THE CHRISTIAN BOOK AWARD® • THE GOSPEL COALITION'S BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR, PUBLIC THEOLOGY & CURRENT EVENTS • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY WORLD MAGAZINE Many Americans feel like their religious freedom is under attack. They see the culture changing around them, and they fear that their beliefs will soon be punished as a form of bigotry. Others think these fears

are overblown and say Christians should stop complaining about imaginary persecution. In *Free to Believe* leading religious freedom attorney Luke Goodrich challenges both sides of this debate, offering a fresh perspective on the most controversial religious freedom conflicts today. With penetrating insights on gay rights, abortion rights, Islam, and the public square, Goodrich argues that threats to religious freedom are real—but they might not be quite what you think. As a lawyer at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, Goodrich has won several historic Supreme Court victories for clients such as the Little Sisters of the Poor and Hobby Lobby. Combining frontline experience with faithful attention to Scripture, Goodrich shows why religious freedom matters, how it is threatened, and how to protect it. The result is a groundbreaking book full of clear insight, practical wisdom, and refreshing hope for all people of faith. You Can Achieve More Basic Books From the New York Times Bestselling Author. Can God be revived in a skeptical age? What would it take to give people a spiritual life more powerful than anything in the past? Deepak Chopra tackles these issues with eloquence and insight in this book. He proposes that God lies at the source of human awareness. Therefore, any person can find the God within that transforms everyday life. God is in trouble. The rise of the militant atheist movement spearheaded by Richard Dawkins signifies, to many, that the deity is an outmoded myth in the modern world. Deepak Chopra passionately disagrees, seeing the present moment as the perfect time for making spirituality what it really should be: reliable knowledge about higher reality. Outlining a path to God that turns unbelief into the first step of awakening, Deepak shows us that a crisis of faith is like the fire we must pass through on the way to power, truth, and love. "Faith must be saved for everyone's sake," he writes. "From faith springs a passion for the eternal, which is even stronger than love. Many of us have lost that passion or have never known it." In any age, faith is a cry from the heart. God is the higher consciousness that responds to the cry. "By itself, faith can't deliver God, but it does something more timely: It makes God possible." For three decades, Deepak Chopra has inspired millions with his profound writing and teaching. With *The Future of God*, he invites us on a journey of the spirit, providing a practical path to understanding God and our own place in the universe. Now, is a moment of reinvigoration, he argues. Now is moment of renewal. Now is the future.

The Gospel According to Woman Baker Books

The author draws upon her own experiences as a wife, mother, and television personality to offer advice on surrendering problems and difficult situations to God and finding personal peace, health, and purpose in life.

Fields of Blood Harmony

A bestselling journalist exposes the connection between the Catholic Church's sexual abuse crisis and the practice of confession.

Jerusalem Fields of Blood

Venerated for millennia by three faiths, torn by irreconcilable conflict, conquered, rebuilt, and mourned for again and again, Jerusalem is a sacred city whose very sacredness has engendered terrible tragedy. In this fascinating volume, Karen Armstrong, author of the highly praised *A History of God*, traces the history of how Jews, Christians, and Muslims have all laid claim to Jerusalem as their holy place, and how three radically different concepts of holiness have shaped and scarred the city for thousands of years. Armstrong unfolds a complex story of spiritual upheaval and political transformation--from King David's capital to an administrative outpost of the Roman Empire, from the cosmopolitan city sanctified by Christ to the spiritual center conquered and glorified by Muslims, from the gleaming prize of European Crusaders to the bullet-ridden symbol of the present-day Arab-Israeli conflict. Written with grace and clarity, the product of years of meticulous research, Jerusalem combines the pageant of history with the profundity of searching spiritual analysis. Like Karen Armstrong's *A History of God*, Jerusalem is a book for the ages. BONUS: This edition contains an excerpt from Karen Armstrong's *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*.

Muhammad: Prophet for Our Time

Gramercy

In this powerful and timely book, one of the most admired and authoritative religious leaders of our time tackles the phenomenon of religious extremism and violence committed in the name of God. If religion is perceived as being part of the problem, Rabbi Sacks argues, then it must also form part of the solution. When religion becomes a zero-sum conceit—i.e., my religion is the only right path to God, therefore your religion is by definition wrong—and when individuals are motivated by what Rabbi Sacks calls

“altruistic evil,” violence between peoples of different beliefs appears to be the inevitable outcome. But through an exploration of the roots of violence and its relationship to religion, and employing groundbreaking biblical analysis and interpretation, Rabbi Sacks shows that religiously inspired violence has as its source misreadings of biblical texts at the heart of all three Abrahamic faiths. By looking anew at the book of Genesis, with its foundational stories of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Rabbi Sacks offers a radical rereading of many of the Bible's seminal stories of sibling rivalry: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers, Rachel and Leah. Here is an eloquent call for people of goodwill from all faiths and none to stand together, confront the religious extremism that threatens to destroy us all, and declare: Not in God's Name.

The Dark Box Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Fields of Blood Anchor

Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life
Oxford University Press

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.

In the Beginning Columbia University Press
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.

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