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Jesus Ballantine Reader's Circle

The renowned religious historian “preaches the gospel truth . . . explaining how the spiritual guide . . . came into being and evolved over the centuries” (Vanity Fair). As the single work at the heart of Christianity, the world’s largest organized religion, the Bible is the spiritual guide for one out of every three people in the world. It is also the world’s most widely distributed book and its bestselling, with an estimated six billion copies sold in the last two hundred years. But the Bible is a complex work with a complicated and obscure history. Its contents have changed over the centuries, it has been transformed by translation, and, through interpretation, has developed manifold meanings to various religions, denominations, and sects. In this seminal account, acclaimed historian Karen Armstrong discusses the conception, gestation, life, and afterlife of history’s most powerful book. Armstrong

analyzes the social and political situation in which oral history turned into written scripture, how this all-pervasive scripture was collected into one work, how it became accepted as Christianity’s sacred text, and how its interpretation changed over time. Armstrong’s history of the Bible is a brilliant, captivating book, crucial in an age of declining faith and rising fundamentalism. “Vintage Armstrong: sweeping, bold, incisive, and insightful. In eight chapters it covers the history of the writing, canonizing, and reading of the Bible . . . Her choice of topics is impeccable . . . and her brief, 23-page discussion on the rise of the Talmud is masterful.” —Choice “An excellent précis of the writing and compiling of the Bible and the ensuing centuries of biblical interpretation . . . one terrific little book.” —Booklist

Vintage Minis Schocken Books

A one-of-a-kind collection of rare writings from one of the world's foremost spiritual leaders and thinkers. For the first time, the three hard-to-get volumes known as The Ernest Holmes Papers will be published in one volume. Transcripts of

talks that Ernest Holmes gave over his career, The Ernest Holmes Papers contains Holmes's wisdom on prayer, life, prosperity, and God. Used by thousands of spiritual students around the world in previous editions, this first-ever omnibus edition will contain a new introduction from Dr. Kenn Gordon, spiritual leader of the Centers for Spiritual Living. The three volumes that are being included in this one volume are The Philosophy of Ernest Holmes, Anatomy of Healing Prayer, and Ideas of Power.

Science, Religion, and the Search for Meaning Penguin

Evaluates the role of religion, stating that today's expressions of faith differ from those of previous generations while arguing that an increased awareness of the past may help to build a faith that speaks to a polarized society.

The Origin of Satan Alfred a Knopf Incorporated

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. *A History of God* Vintage Canada

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* Anchor

From the renowned and best-selling author of *A History of God*, a sweeping exploration of religion and the history of human violence. For the first time, religious self-identification is on the decline in American. Some analysts have cited as cause a post-9/11 perception: that faith in general is a source of aggression, intolerance, and divisiveness—something bad for society. But how accurate is that view? With deep learning and sympathetic understanding, Karen Armstrong sets out to discover the truth about religion and violence in each of the world's great traditions, taking us on an astonishing journey from prehistoric times to the present. While many historians have looked at violence in connection with particular religious manifestations (jihad in Islam or Christianity's Crusades), Armstrong looks at each faith—not only Christianity and Islam, but also Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Judaism—in its totality over time. As

she describes, each arose in an agrarian society with plenty powerful landowners brutalizing peasants while also warring among themselves over land, then the only real source of wealth. In this world, religion was not the discrete and personal matter it would become for us but rather something that permeated all aspects of society. And so it was that agrarian aggression, and the warrior ethos it begot, became bound up with observances of the sacred. In each tradition, however, a counterbalance to the warrior code also developed. Around sages, prophets, and mystics there grew up communities protesting the injustice and bloodshed endemic to agrarian society, the violence to which religion had become heir. And so by the time the great confessional faiths came of age, all understood themselves as ultimately devoted to peace, equality, and reconciliation, whatever the acts of violence perpetrated in their name. Industrialization and modernity have ushered in an epoch of spectacular and unexampled violence,

although, as Armstrong explains, relatively little of it can be ascribed directly to religion. Nevertheless, she shows us how and in what measure religions, in their relative maturity, came to absorb modern belligerence—and what hope there might be for peace among believers of different creeds in our time. At a moment of rising geopolitical chaos, the imperative of mutual understanding between nations and faith communities has never been more urgent, the dangers of action based on misunderstanding never greater. Informed by Armstrong's sweeping erudition and personal commitment to the promotion of compassion, *Fields of Blood* makes vividly clear that religion is not the problem. *Muhammad* Anchor 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.

Prophet for Our Time

Anchor

'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*

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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*.

The Great Transformation
The Case for God

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 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.

Evolution of God

Grove/Atlantic, Inc.

Examines the origins of the religious traditions of the world during the ninth century B.C.E. in four distinct regions-- Confucianism and Daoism in China, Hinduism and Buddhism in India, monotheism in Israel, and philosophical rationalism in Greece.

Holy War Vintage

Since he was seven, Cary Stayner had dreamed of capturing women . . . and killing them They were crimes that grabbed headlines around the world and stunned America. Four women dead, their bodies charred and horribly mutilated. Now Dennis McDougal, acclaimed author of the spellbinding true crime tour de force *Mother's Day*, brings his considerable investigative and narrative skills to the Yosemite murders to give you the most complete account of what really happened. Drawing on

several personal conversations with the confessed killer and interviews with the victims' families, McDougal presents the definitive story, and answers many lingering questions. What demons drove this quiet handyman and nudist colony habitue to burn, mutilate, and murder four women he didn't even know? How did he overpower a woman and two teenaged girls? And most disturbing, did the glory-seeking FBI actually hinder the investigation, leaving the killer free to kill once more before he was caught? **THE YOSEMITE MURDERS** offers valuable insight into these savage and senseless murders in the heart of America's most beautiful wilderness.

My Climb Out of Darkness

Penguin
There is widespread confusion about the nature of religious truth. For the first time in history, a significantly large number of people want nothing to do with God. Militant atheists preach a gospel of godlessness with the zeal of missionaries and find an eager audience. Tracing the history of faith from the Palaeolithic Age to the present, Karen

Armstrong shows that meaning of words such as 'belief', 'faith', and 'mystery' has been entirely altered, so that atheists and theists alike now think and speak about God - and, indeed, reason itself - in a way that our ancestors would have found astonishing. Does God have a future? Karen Armstrong examines how we can build a faith that speaks to the needs of our troubled and dangerously polarised world.

A Memoir of Life In and Out of the Convent

Random House
The instant New York Times bestseller interpreting the controversial long-lost gospel The recently unearthed Gospel of Judas is a source of fascination for biblical scholars and lay Christians alike. Now two leading experts on the Gnostic gospels tackle the important questions posed by its discovery, including: How could any Christian imagine Judas to be Jesus' favorite? And what kind of vision of God does the author offer? Working from Karen L. King's brilliant new translation, Elaine Pagels and King provide the context necessary for considering its meaning. Reading Judas plunges

into the heart of Christianity itself and will stand as the definitive look at the gospel for years to come.

Coming to Terms with the Justice of God Anchor Books

This debut book boldly seeks to argue competitively in the same intellectual field as famous atheists such as RICHARD DAWKINS, CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS, and BERTRAND RUSSELL, and to do so in the spirit and style of such famous Christian apologists as C.S. Lewis and RAVI ZACHARIAS, drawing heavily on basic science, history, physics, psychology, paleontology, anthropology, archeology, neurology, child development and even science fiction. It describes the evolution of the human brain in ancient hominids allowing humans to eventually conceive a non-physical realm (the spirit world), and as the mind evolved intellectually from primitive animism to Christology, God revealed himself gradually as the developing hominid brain became able to comprehend new ideas. For Believers, the author presents a new, intellectually satisfying way to understand and

defend the Bible. For both Skeptics and Believers, a worldview is offered that is spiritually meaningful and scientifically sound.

The Spiral Staircase W.

W. Norton & Company
Here Armstrong argues that atheism has rarely been a denial of the sacred itself but has nearly always rejected a particular conception of God. She suggests that if we draw on the insights of the past, we can build a faith that speaks to our needs.

A New Interpretation of Genesis Ballantine Books

Available in Canada for the first time since its initial publication in 1981, this is acclaimed author Karen Armstrong's classic memoir of her life as a young woman in a convent — the precursor to the bestseller *The Spiral Staircase*. Through *The Narrow Gate* is Karen Armstrong's intimate memoir of life inside a Catholic convent. With honesty and clarity, she explains what drove her at age seventeen to devote herself to God. Over the next seven years, she endures the difficulties of convent life

— the enforced silence, the lack of friendship and family, her own guilt at not being able to stifle her voracious intelligence — and unveils the secrets of religious life during the post-Vatican II years.

Through the Narrow Gate is a moving account of a young woman's search for God and the experiences that put Karen Armstrong on her way to becoming one of the most admired and most respected interpreters of religious faith.

My Climb Out of Darkness Ballantine Books

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.

The Case for God Random House Digital, Inc.

The 4,000-year quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The Case for God HarperCollins Publishers

The Crusades and their impact on today's world.

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