

# The Battle for God

*Karen Armstrong*

*ebooks | Download PDF | \*ePub | DOC | audiobook*

 Download

 Read Online

#3178506 in Books 2000-03-07 2000-03-07Format: Bargain PricePDF # 1 9.52 x 1.45 x 6.76l, #File Name: B0085S43HK464 pages | File size: 63.Mb

**Karen Armstrong : The Battle for God** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Battle for God:

252 of 290 people found the following review helpful. The battle for the Soul - Simply GreatBy Professor BernisiI have been travelling a lot around the world and was very often confronted with different ethical problems and cultures. I have spent my life to find the Spirit of the Soul and I can only agree on everything which is said in this book:The differences of the religions are very big, but every culture has its own Battle for God. You will understand different views of this phenomenon and definitely better understand how different people have different views regarding of god.Brilliantly and enthusiastically written.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fundamentalism: Where From, Where To?By Anne MillsAnother enlightening book from Karen Armstrong on religion. This one focuses on the emergence in recent years of powerful -- and politically powerful -- fundamentalist trends in the three great monotheistic religions. She presents these not as a reversion to the past, but as an attempt to deal with a frightening modern world. The world is frightening in a philosophical sense, since the interlinked Enlightenment trends of rationalism, devotion to science, and secularism have created what Sartre called "a God-shaped hole" in modern society, without fulfilling the Enlightenment expectation of better people. It is also frightening in political terms: the horrors of the 20th century, the impact of colonialism, and the current power of what is called free market capitalism have left millions of people feeling marginalized, threatened, and without any clear identity. In this context, the emergence of simplistic fundamentalism with clear beliefs and clear directives is not surprising.It has also had a

profound political impact, unleashing terrorism for allegedly Islamic ends, pushing the U.S. consensus sharply to the right, and enflaming the Israeli/Palestinian dispute. In all three instances, Armstrong points out, there are massive conflicts within religious groupings as well as between them, so much so that as Armstrong says "Secularists and religious both feel profoundly threatened by one another". and are unable to understand the other side's world view as anything other than derangement. Armstrong raises the question of what is to be done to defuse these conflicts, but does not come up with many helpful answers. Perhaps there are not any of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book about religious fundamentalism By Jessica Karen Armstrong's analysis of fundamentalism in the Abrahamic religions is top notch. I read this book several years ago and purchased this copy for my brother in law who I know will appreciate it.

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.

.com About 40 years ago popular opinion assumed that religion would become a weaker force and people would certainly become less zealous as the world became more modern and morals more relaxed. But the opposite has proven true, according to theologian and author Karen Armstrong (*A History of God*), who documents how fundamentalism has taken root and grown in many of the world's major religions, such as Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Even Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism have developed fundamentalist factions. Reacting to a technologically driven world with liberal Western values, fundamentalists have not only increased in numbers, they have become more desperate, claims Armstrong, who points to the Oklahoma City bombing, violent anti-abortion crusades, and the assassination of President Yitzak Rabin as evidence of dangerous extremes. Yet she also acknowledges the irony of how fundamentalism and Western materialism seem to urge each other on to greater excesses. To "prevent an escalation of the conflict, we must try and understand the pain and perception of the other side," she pleads. With her gift for clear, engaging writing and her integrity as a thorough researcher, Armstrong delivers a powerful discussion of a globally heated issue. Part history lesson, part wake-up call, and mostly a plea for healing, Armstrong's writing continues to offer a religious mirror and a cultural vision. --Gail Hudson From Publishers Weekly Former nun and *A History of God* iconoclast Armstrong delves deeply once again into the often violent histories of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, this time exploring the rise of fundamentalist enclaves in all three religions. Armstrong begins her story in an unexpected, though brilliant, fashion, examining how the three faiths coped with the tumultuous changes wrought by Spain's late-15th-century reconquista. She then profiles fundamentalism, which she views as a mostly 20th-century response to the "painful transformation" of modernity. Armstrong traces the birth of fundamentalism among early 20th-century religious Zionists in Israel, biblically literalist American Protestants and Iranian Shiites wary of Westernization. Armstrong sensitively recognizes one of fundamentalism's great ironies: though they ostensibly seek to restore a displaced, mythical spiritual foundation, fundamentalists often re-establish that foundation using profoundly secular, pseudo-scientific means ("creation science" is a prime example). Armstrong is a masterful writer, whose rich knowledge of all three Western traditions informs the entire book, allowing fresh insights and comparisons. Her savvy thesis about modernization, however, could be improved by some attention to gender issues among fundamentalists. The book is also occasionally marred by a condescending tone; Armstrong attacks easy Protestant targets such as Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart (whose name she misspells) and claims that fundamentalists of all stripes have "distorted" and "perverted" their faiths. Despite its underlying polemic, this study of modernity's embattled casualties is a worthy and provocative read. (Mar.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Armstrong, author of *A History of God* and other books on the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religions, writes very perceptively about the intense fear of modernity that has stimulated various fundamentalisms: Protestant, in the United States; Jewish, in Israel; Sunni Muslim, in Egypt; and Shii Muslim,

in Iran. Each is ultimately modern in its attempts at converting mythic thinking into logical thinking and in its use of widespread literacy and the democratic ideas about individual importance that modernity fostered, but each is also at war with its liberal co-religionists and with secularists who "have entirely different conceptions of the sacred." Armstrong concludes that both sides--fundamentalists and secularists (including governments)--need compassion in order to be true to their own religious or humanistic values. The historical range and depth of this work, which transcends other treatments of the subject, make this highly recommended for all libraries.---Carolyn M. Craft, Longwood Coll., Farmville, VA Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.