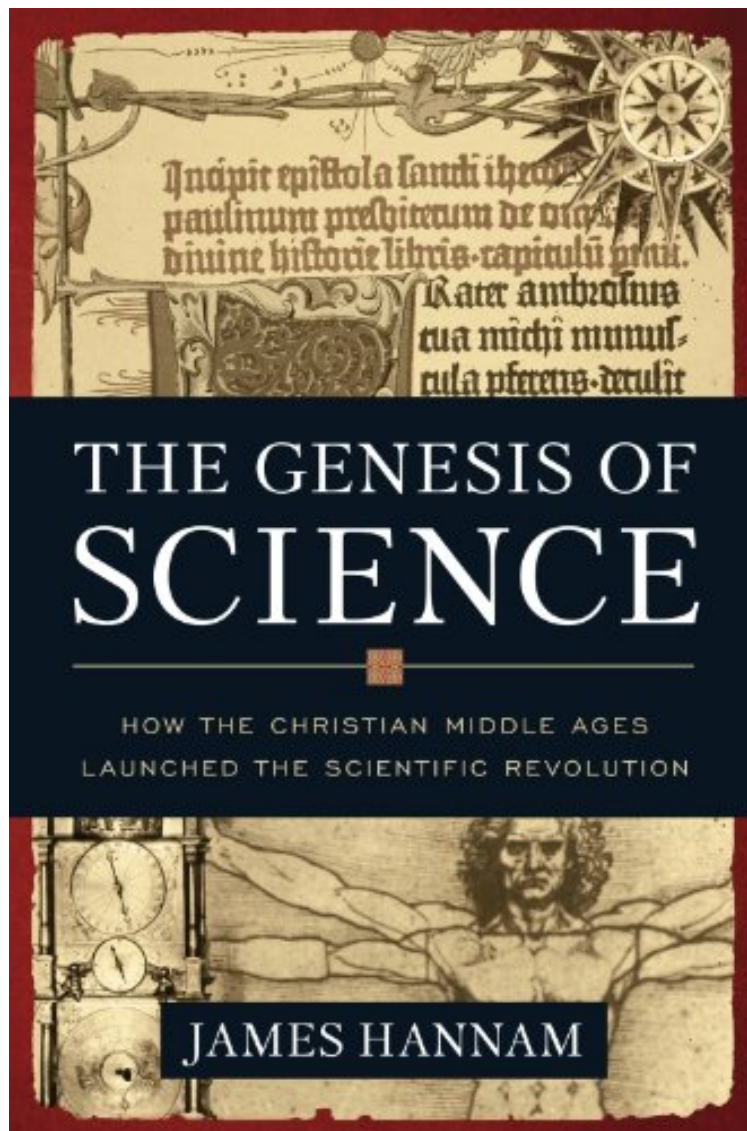


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The Genesis of Science: How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution

James Hannam

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James Hannam : The Genesis of Science: How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Genesis of Science: How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. My first audio book.By Randall Van OostenThis is a wonderful

overview of the history of scientific development in the West. It focuses on the theological and philosophical notions in Christian thinking that made science possible. It also gives a balanced view of Islamic influence as well as the part alchemy and astrology played to engender Western science. 10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. The Dark Age wasn't dark

By David Hoffman

The popular idea of the Middle Ages in Europe is that it was a thousand year period of ignorance and barbarism between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance, a time of nearly complete intellectual stagnation. Everyone is supposed to have been illiterate with the exception of a few clergymen and the Catholic Church kept a tight rein on all learning, burning any scholar who dared to have an independent thought or challenge the authority of Scripture. Historians have recognized for some time that this stereotype is entirely false. The Middle Ages, or "Dark Ages" were, in fact, a time of extraordinary fertility and progress. Many of the concepts and institutions that came to distinguish Western Civilization were developed in this era, especially the beginnings of the intellectual enterprise we call science. In his book "The Genesis of Science", James Hannam traces the development of science, or natural philosophy as it was then known, through the Middle Ages, from the fall of the Roman Empire to the trial of Galileo. He begins in the very depths the Dark Age, the chaotic 5th to 7th centuries, where even then the Europeans were beginning to pull ahead in practical technology with such useful tools as the moldboard plow and the horse collar, which revolutionized agriculture. The discovery of ancient Latin and Greek manuscripts from the Arabs and Byzantines led to the rise of the Scholastic theologians of the 11th to 13 centuries. The Scholastics, under the influence of Aristotle, established reason as the method for learning about God and His creation. There was some controversy in the Catholic Church about pagan learning but the Scholastics, especially Thomas Aquinas showed that faith and reason could be reconciled and the Church accepted the ancient learning to the extent that it did not contradict Christian doctrine. With the acceptance of reason as an adjunct to faith, the philosophers of the Middle Ages were prepared to see the natural world around them as the rational creation of a rational God, forming the foundation for later scientific thinking. The Scholastics did not slavishly follow Aristotle, however. They were capable of observing that he was wrong in some instances and were willing to move beyond him. In fact, some of their ideas about motion and forces were surprisingly modern. Some, especially Roger Bacon stressed the importance of careful observation of the natural world. With the increased knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome during the Renaissance of the 13th to 15 centuries, much of this learning was disregarded and forgotten. The Renaissance Humanists venerated the ancients and so were inclined to denigrate the achievements of their immediate predecessors. The authority of Aristotle and others was more respected than the thoughts of more recent philosophers. The Protestant Reformation did not help matters, as the Protestants were not eager to give the Catholic Church any credit. Still, progress continued and in the last section of his book, Hannam explores the scientific revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries. He closes with an account of Galileo. Although Galileo was a brilliant scientist who practically invented physics, he owed far more to his medieval predecessors than he was ever willing to admit. As for his troubles with the Inquisition, they had less to do with any Catholic opposition to science and were more due to politics and the folly of implying that the Pope was a simpleton. The Genesis of Science is worth five stars. The perhaps over long summary that I have given above is only the merest foretaste to this brilliant work. I cannot recommend it highly enough.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Sheds light on an important period of history

By D. Fleeger

Dr. Hannam has written an important book that sets the historical record straight about the Middle Ages. Anyone who loves science or history (or both) will enjoy this book. It is important to point out that this book is not a defense of the Christian faith, although after reading this book it is reasonable to conclude that religious faith and science are not as incompatible as we have been led to believe. The book also does not whitewash terrible episodes such as the Inquisition or the trial of Galileo. Rather, it attempts to cut through the modern mythology that has surrounded the Middle Ages. The "Dark Ages" were actually a time of major scientific progress - and that progress was often supported and funded by the Church. Hannam also offers a fascinating view of how what we call "the scientific method" came to be, and how today's scientists owe a debt of gratitude to those from the Middle Ages.

Maybe the Dark Ages Weren't So Dark After All...Here are some facts you probably didn't learn in school: People in the Middle Ages did not think the world was flat--in fact, medieval scholars could prove it wasn't;The Inquisition never executed anyone because of their scientific ideas or discoveries (actually, the Church was the chief sponsor of scientific research and several popes were celebrated for their knowledge of the subject);It was medieval scientific discoveries, methods, and principles that made possible western civilization's "Scientific Revolution".If you were taught that the Middle Ages were a time of intellectual stagnation, superstition, and ignorance, you were taught a myth that has been utterly refuted by modern scholarship.As a physicist and historian of science James Hannam shows in his brilliant new book, *The Genesis of Science: How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution*, without the scholarship of the "barbaric" Middle Ages, modern science simply would not exist.The Middle Ages were a time of one intellectual triumph after another. As Dr. Hannam writes, "The people of medieval Europe invented spectacles, the mechanical clock, the windmill, and the blast furnace by themselves. Lenses and cameras, almost all kinds of machinery, and the industrial revolution itself all owe their origins to the forgotten inventors of the Middle Ages."In *The Genesis of Science* you will discover:Why the scientific accomplishments of the Middle Ages far

surpassed those of the classical world; How medieval craftsmen and scientists not only made discoveries of their own, but seized upon Eastern inventions--printing, gunpowder, and the compass--and improved them beyond the dreams of their originators; How Galileo's notorious trial before the Inquisition was about politics, not science; and Why the theology of the Catholic Church, far from being an impediment, led directly to the development of modern science. Provocative, engaging, and a terrific read, James Hannam's *The Genesis of Science* will change the way you think about our past--and our future.

From the Inside Flap Maybe the Dark Ages Werent So Dark After All Here are some facts you probably didnt learn in school: People in the Middle Ages did not think the world was flat in fact, medieval scholars could prove it wasnt The Inquisition never executed anyone because of their scientific ideas or discoveries (actually, the Church was the chief sponsor of scientific research and several popes were celebrated for their knowledge of the subject) It was medieval scientific discoveries, methods, and principles that made possible Western civilizations Scientific Revolution If you were taught that the Middle Ages were a time of intellectual stagnation, superstition, and ignorance, you were taught a myth that has been utterly refuted by modern scholarship. As a physicist and historian of science James Hannam shows in his brilliant new book, *The Genesis of Science: How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution*, that without the scholarship of the barbaric Middle Ages, modern science simply would not exist. The Middle Ages were a time of one intellectual triumph after another. As Dr. Hannam writes, The people of medieval Europe invented spectacles, the mechanical clock, the windmill, and the blast furnace by themselves. Lenses and cameras, almost all kinds of machinery, and the industrial revolution itself all owe their origins to the forgotten inventors of the Middle Ages. In *The Genesis of Science* you will discover Why the scientific accomplishments of the Middle Ages far surpassed those of the classical world How medieval craftsmen and scientists not only made discoveries of their own, but seized upon Eastern inventions printing, gunpowder, and the compass and improved them beyond the dreams of their originators How Galileos notorious trial before the Inquisition was about politics, not science Why the theology of the Catholic Church, far from being an impediment, led directly to the development of modern science Provocative, engaging, and a terrific read, James Hannams *Genesis of Science* will change the way you think about our past and our future.