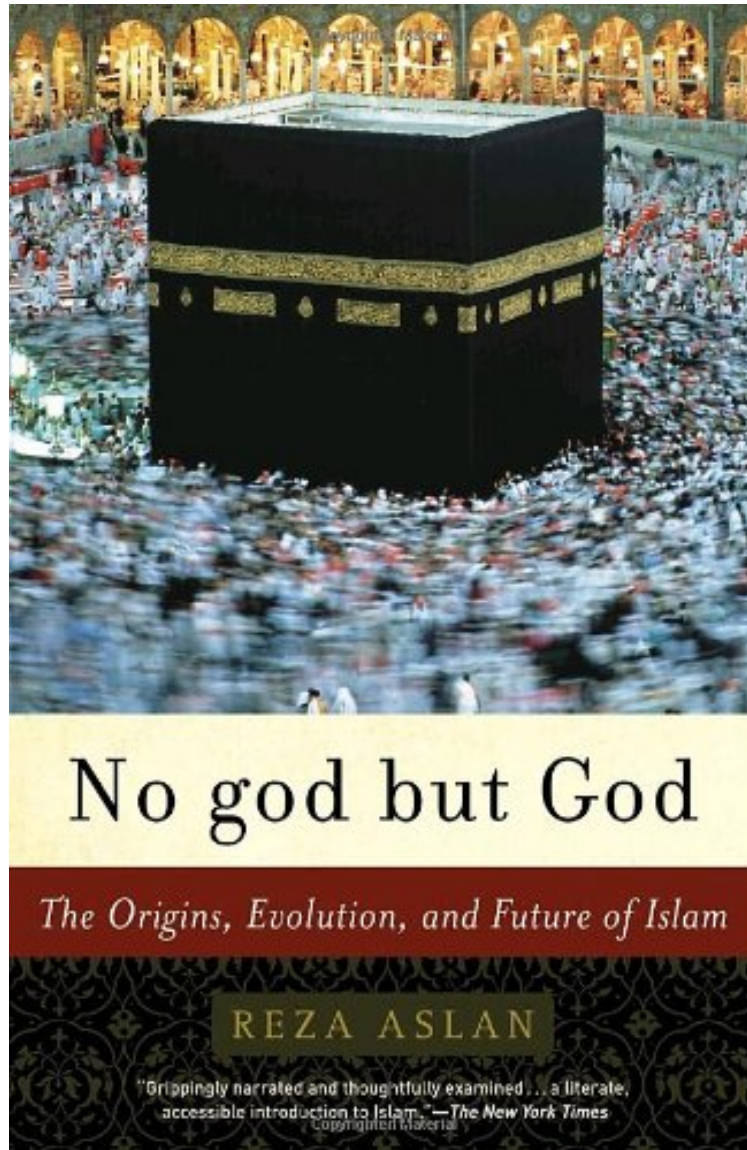


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# No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam

Reza Aslan

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**Reza Aslan : No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good historical account By Scotty954 What I appreciate about this is that the author - as much as possible - gives more of a historical account of both the roots of Islam as well as the many iterations that have developed over the year. Definitely worthwhile read - about to start his other novel Zealot: The

Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An amazing accomplishment! Covering a whole lot of history and ...By mary k. wakemanAn amazing accomplishment! Covering a whole lot of history and ideas, in a way that was grounded in people's stories. As gripping as a novel, so that I staid up late nights to finish whatever chapter I was on. Realistic, and hopeful, too. Everybody should read it, to get past all this Islam-phobia, and on to some better understanding. The comparison of Christianity's development with that of Islam was especially enlightening.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Required readingBy Lars TackmannIn this age when every politician seems to have an opinion about Islam, this book comes forward as a truly masterful recount of the history and origin of Islam. Everything from Muhammed's early days in medina to how the Muslim caliphs conjured the world is covered. Great care is given to introduce readers not familiar with the subject to key events such as colonial rule or the Iran revolution. Reading this book will give you much firmer ground to discuss religion or understand middle eastern politics like the Arab spring. Overall highly recommended and should be required reading by anybody making public announcement about the true nature of Islam.

A fascinating, accessible introduction to Islam from the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Zealot* Though it is the fastest-growing religion in the world, Islam remains shrouded in ignorance and fear for much of the West. In *No god but God*, Reza Aslan, an internationally acclaimed scholar of religions, explains this faith in all its beauty and complexity. Beginning with a vivid account of the social and religious milieu in which the Prophet Muhammad forged his message, Aslan paints a portrait of the first Muslim community as a radical experiment in religious pluralism and social egalitarianism. He demonstrates how, after the Prophets death, his successors attempted to interpret his message for future generationsan overwhelming task that fractured the Muslim community into competing sects. Finally, Aslan examines how, in the shadow of European colonialism, Muslims developed conflicting strategies to reconcile traditional Islamic values with the realities of the modern world, thus launching what Aslan terms the Islamic Reformation. Timely and persuasive, *No god but God* is an elegantly written account of a magnificent yet misunderstood faith.

From *The New Yorker*Aslan, a young Iranian emigrant, lucidly charts the growth of Islam from Muhammad's model community in Medinadepicted as a center of egalitarian social reformthrough the chaotic contest to define the faith after the Prophet's death. Within generations, seven hundred thousand hadithaccounts of Muhammad's words and deedswere in circulation, many "fabricated by individuals who sought to legitimize their own particular beliefs." Out of this muddle was born the primacy of the ulema, Islam's clerical establishment. The ulema, in Aslan's view, foreclosed Koranic interpretation, detoured from the Medinan ideal, and obscured Islam under a thicket of legalistic decrees. Fifteen centuries after Muhammad, Islam has reached the age at which Christianity underwent its reformation; Islam's renewal, Aslan attests, "is already here." However, both modernizers and their "fundamentalist" opposites call themselves reformers, and the victory of the former is not assured. Copyright 2005 The New YorkerFrom BooklistAslan's introduction to the history of Islam, which also devotes several chapters to the place of Islam in the contemporary world, tackles its subject with serious and well-informed scholarship. But, miracle of miracles, it's actually pretty fun to read. Beginning with an exploration of the religious climate in the years before the Prophet's Revelation, Aslan traces the story of Islam from the Prophet's life and the so-called golden age of the first four caliphs all the way through European colonization and subsequent independence. Aslan sees religion as a story, and he tells it that way, bringing each successive century to life with the kind of vivid details and like-you-were-there, present-tense narration that makes popular history popular. Even so, the depth and breadth here will probably be a bit heavy for some, who might better enjoy Karen Armstrong's shorter, if less authoritative, *Islam* (2000). That said, this is an excellent overview that doubles as an impassioned call to reform. John GreenCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved Grippingly narrated and thoughtfully examined . . . a literate, accessible introduction to Islam.The New York TimesAslan offers an invaluable introduction to the forces that have shaped Islam . . . an eloquent, erudite paean to Islam in all of its complicated glory.Los Angeles Times Book Wise and passionate . . . An incisive, scholarly primer in Muslim history and an engaging personal exploration. The New York Times Book Precise . . . acutely perceptive . . . For many troubled Muslims, this book will feel like a revelation, an opening up of knowledge too long buried. The Independent (London)Thoroughly engaging and excellently written . . . While [Aslan] might claim to be a mere scholar of the Islamic Reformation, he is also one of its most articulate advocates. The Oregonian