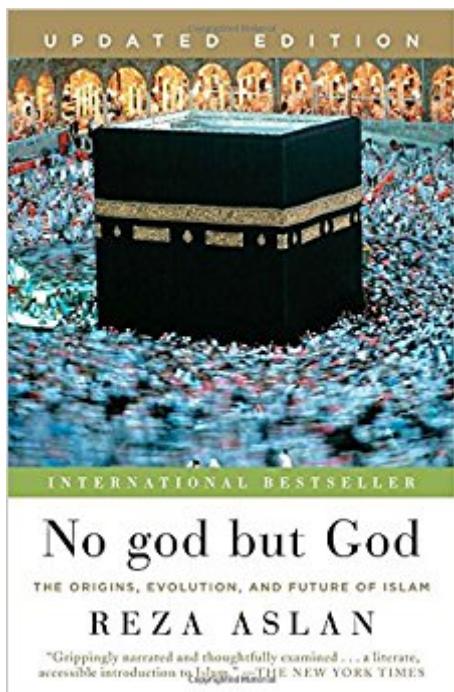


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# No God But God (Updated Edition): The Origins, Evolution, And Future Of Islam



## Synopsis

A fascinating, accessible introduction to Islam from the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Zealot* and host of *Believer* FINALIST FOR THE GUARDIAN FIRST BOOK AWARD In *No god but God*, internationally acclaimed scholar Reza Aslan explains Islam's the origins and evolution of the faith in all its beauty and complexity. This updated edition addresses the events of the past decade, analyzing how they have influenced Islam's position in modern culture. Aslan explores what the popular demonstrations pushing for democracy in the Middle East mean for the future of Islam in the region, how the Internet and social media have affected Islam's evolution, and how the war on terror has altered the geopolitical balance of power in the Middle East. He also provides an update on the contemporary Muslim women's movement, a discussion of the controversy over veiling in Europe, an in-depth history of Jihadism, and a look at how Muslims living in North America and Europe are changing the face of Islam. Timely and persuasive, *No god but God* is an elegantly written account that explains this magnificent yet misunderstood faith. Praise for *No god but God* "Grippingly narrated and thoughtfully examined . . . a literate, accessible introduction to Islam." The New York Times "[Reza] Aslan offers an invaluable introduction to the forces that have shaped Islam [in this] eloquent, erudite paean to Islam in all of its complicated glory." Los Angeles Times Book Review "Wise and passionate . . . an incisive, scholarly primer in Muslim history and an engaging personal exploration." The New York Times Book Review "Acutely perceptive . . . For many troubled Muslims, this book will feel like a revelation, an opening up of knowledge too long buried." The Independent (U.K.) "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

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## Customer Reviews

“Grippingly narrated and thoughtfully examined . . . a literate, accessible introduction to Islam.” •The New York Times “[Reza] Aslan offers an invaluable introduction to the forces that have shaped Islam [in this] eloquent, erudite paean to Islam in all of its complicated glory.” •Los Angeles Times Book Review “Wise and passionate . . . an incisive, scholarly primer in Muslim history and an engaging personal exploration.” •The New York Times Book Review “Acutely perceptive . . . For many troubled Muslims, this book will feel like a revelation, an opening up of knowledge too long buried.” •The Independent (U.K.) “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

Reza Aslan is an acclaimed writer and scholar of religions whose books include *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam* and *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*. He is also the author of *How to Win a Cosmic War: God, Globalization, and the End of the War on Terror* (published in paperback as *Beyond Fundamentalism*), as well as the editor of *Tablet & Pen: Literary Landscapes from the Modern Middle East*. He lives in Los Angeles with his wife and three sons.

I've long known the names of the dominant Islamic sects, but never had history or context to their differences. This is a great read that gives good detail on the history of Islam, where it's been, and where it is today, all without bogging down or getting boring. If it lacks in any area, it would be in the final section prognosticating about the future. Then again, who knows what the future holds for anyone, let alone an entire religion...

A little disappointed because "Zealot" was so good. This book just didn't hold my attention, and seemed a bit pedantic and choppy as far as the order of topic.

This book is a clearly written and entertaining explanation of the basic history and development of Islam. "No god but God" tells the story of Islam from founding through current day. I wanted to understand things like, Why the differences between Suni and Shia? Who was Mohammed? How do the various schools and structures within Islam work ? What is the Saudi connection to wahabi Islam ?All these issues and much more were explained in an easily read manner. This is not a history text book but a colorful exposition of a fascinating and important religion.

The best book I've read about Islam. Gives the complete picture of this religion, in all its aspects. I would never have imagined it could be possible, but Reza Aslan has done it, so beautifully.I come from an Islamic country, I have studied, loved and hated this religion through whole my life, but had never got the full picture of its history. And here Aslan takes me to all corners of this world, places I had already seen and knew about, and places I didn't even know that existed. Such a journey.Thank you Aslan.I can recommend this book to everyone. It's a must read in our time.I wish I could find similar books about other religions. I will now read his latest book about Jesus of Nazareth with big expectations.

I had seen this book for years and while I always wanted to fill in my gap in understanding around Islam, I was daunted by its size and density.Turn the clock ahead a few years and I wind up picking up and reading Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth by Reza Aslan and saw him on the Daily Show a few times to boot. Eventually the dots connect and I realize that this was Reza's first book. Doh!So I grabbed it for my Kindle (where the size and density are at least masked) and have enjoyed it quite a bit. Reza is a born storyteller and this book really is at its best when he is telling the story of Muhammad and his journey and the events that followed his death.Though it is not Reza's intent, reading the story of Islam following the death of Muhammad is like reading about a train wreck in slow motion - a slowly unfolding series of events that fractured and politicized a religion in shockingly little time.Reza is originally from Iran and fled to the US with his family following the revolution that deposed the Shah. He was an avowed atheist for many years before coming back to his religion. While he doesn't evince the radical fervor of the converted, he does have a genuine heartfelt love for Islam that informs his writing. That said, I cannot judge whether his Iranian background in any way has "prejudiced" this account. It certainly FEELS like Reza is working mightily to be even-handed and factual.That said, Reza clearly abhors the political radicalization that has permeated much of Islam. He is clear that the true values of Islam do not support this turn. He is also clearly attracted to the passionate mysticism of the Sufis, something

that Westerners like myself will appreciate, but may offend more traditional Muslims. If you liked Zealot and felt you learned something from it, then I heartily recommend this book. Islam's history is complex and frankly confusing, but Reza does a heroic job in sorting things out.

While I didn't agree with some things, he changed my mind on others, and ultimately pleased me as a Muslim that he did justice to presenting the essence of Islam and its factual history unadulterated.

During my short time at HQ United States Central Command, I had the opportunity to chat quite a bit with the intelligence specialists in the Human Terrain branch. One young woman whose educational background focused on middle eastern studies recommended this book to me to give a good, unbiased look at the pre-Islamic history of the middle east. It further develops into how Islam was established, and the tumult that followed in the vacuum left when the Prophet died.

Aslan offers a fair account of history as he explores the development of Islam while maintaining accessibility to the lay reader and offering relevant commentary. Those approaching this text should not expect a burdensome text, nor one exceedingly academic or niche. Aslan's text contains a kind of fluidity reminiscent of Arabic calligraphy, binding discussion of historical and theological controversies (that matter to those of general interest) with his storytelling. A superb introduction for those embarking on a journey to understand where Islam began, how it has developed, and where it is going. Exactly as the subtitle suggests.

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