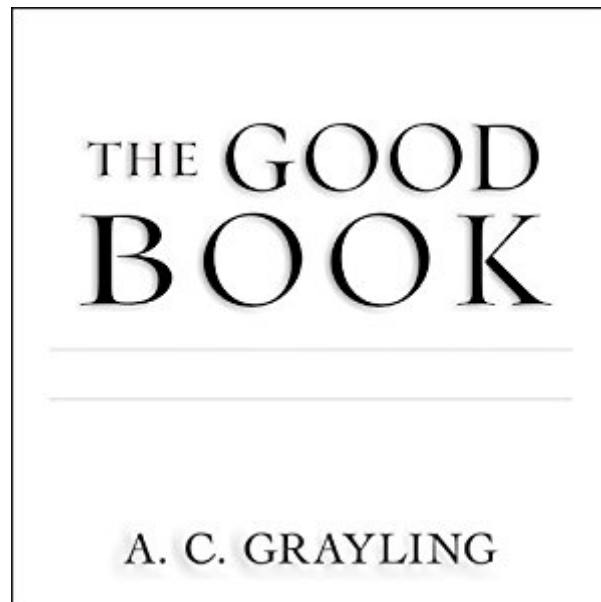




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The Good Book: A Humanist Bible



Synopsis

Few, if any, thinkers and writers today would have the imagination, the breadth of knowledge, and the literary skill to conceive of a powerful secular alternative to the Bible. But that is exactly what A. C. Grayling has done, creating a nonreligious bible drawn from the wealth of secular literature and philosophy in both Western and Eastern traditions, using the same techniques of editing, redaction, and adaptation that produced the holy books of the Judeo-Christian and Islamic religions. The Good Book consciously takes its design and presentation from the Bible, in the beauty of its language and its arrangement into short chapters and verses, offering to the nonreligious seeker all the wisdom, insight, solace, inspiration, and perspective of various secular humanist traditions. Organized in 12 main sections, The Good Book opens with meditations on the origin and progress of the world and human life in it, then devotes attention to the question of how life should be lived, how we relate to one another, and how vicissitudes are to be faced and joys appreciated. Inspired by the work of Herodotus and Lucretius, Confucius and Mencius, Seneca and Cicero, Montaigne, Bacon, and so many others, The Good Book will fulfill its audacious purpose in every way.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I bought this book with no expectations. I had read an article about it, as an atheist I liked the idea and wanted to support Grayling's work so I bought it. I really was pleasantly surprised. This book is not a compilation of work. You will not open it up and find passages from various works called out by author. It is truly written in the style of the Bible - Grayling has taken the collected wisdom of hundreds of secular philosophers and melded it together in the flowery prose form typical of the

Bible. There is no reference list at the back to tell you where anything came from, he has taken the ideas and the texts and melted them together. The Good Book begins with Genesis, where you can see the ideas of Darwin laid out in an inspirational way. Reading through this I was really pleasantly surprised at how much I liked it. I'm used to this language being peppered with things I don't believe in, and listening to it at weddings or funerals generally gives me a lump in my stomach. Here was the same kind of lofty language, but saying the things I believed! I didn't realize how much I would enjoy hearing Darwin's theory of evolution told as a beautiful story of how we began and the cycle of life. As you make your way through the book, you can clearly see where he has incorporated Plato's dialogs, but without specific references. Characters are mentioned in the same way as the Bible, introduced without preamble, just snippets of conversation or story which attempt to showcase an idea. There are passages on grief and death as well. If you are looking to learn the works of these philosophers in an intellectual way, this is not the book for you. This book is meant to absorb the ideas they upheld in a more spiritual feeling way. I wish this book had been published before I got married, I would have looked for a passage from it to read at my wedding. I could see reading it at a funeral, there really is something cathartic about having grief and death and moving on with life written in this way. I feel in some ways as an Atheist this may have been what I was missing and didn't realize it. I didn't have anything to help me find a way to feel good about my place in nature's greater story, I just felt the absence of the belief in an afterlife. I also feel like this is a book I could read to my kids to help them figure out how to be a good person in a world which is not always good and in which you cannot rely on an all powerful being to save you from your problems. The language is flowery and poetic, but it's also much more accessible than say Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals*. I minored in philosophy in college, I'm by no means an expert, but I have read some of these works and they are by no means easy to absorb. So, I think for what this book is trying to accomplish, what it says it is in the description, it is a great work.

It got me through. It was uplifting. It didn't contain nonsense. It lived up to its name. I read it each night by red G.I. flashlight.

Really appreciating the poetic way in which this book is written, I think it will encourage all of us to speak and write more eloquently. Love how so much of what we are reading are things we have studied in history so far, it's wonderful to make all these connections with my children...even my four year old is getting into it! which is amazing because he is so hyper! (we read at mealtimes, it helps the boys not bicker, and gives us something to talk about besides pokemon, or minecraft - hahaha)

An excellent collection of thought provoking material from sources that span centuries and cultures. I have it in both eBook and hardback. There's material one can turn to no matter the mood you're in or the circumstances you face. I have the eBook handy for no matter where I'm at and I keep the hardback on my night stand. I turn to it frequently at the end of each day to really put things into perspective.

Interesting

Absolutely loved this book. History drags, but if you get taken away by the stories and the philosophy contained within, you'll find that it's a real world account of how good morals ripple out over time. I've found a laundry list of excellent nuggets of wisdom within these pages. It is hands down my favorite book and I will make my way through it for a second read.

What an amazing book. It is so rich in wisdom that you might find yourself highlighting whole pages!

I was hesitant to buy this book, just because I have so much to read and I left religion as a child so I'm comfortable as an atheist and didn't feel I need any kind of guidance. Well, I didn't realize the wonderful nature of this book, nor the beautiful format and content! I had the wrong impression about what it was! Wow, I am so impressed with this hefty tome! It's everything religious text should have been and are not. This version of Genesis is realistic, amazing, and awesome. It's written with stark awareness, an interconnection with nature and reality, and optimistic poignancy. It voices what so many of us had thought about, but articulates it all in a delightful poetic manner, as gorgeous as nature itself. I'm not a fan of poetry and never have been, but this book touches me deeply. I see how Grayling has tried to stay in similar style to how the Christian bible was written, but his writing far exceeds anything in the bible, his words resonate so deeply and beautifully . . . I keep tweeting awesome quotes and sharing on FB. This book is so well done, a pleasure to read, to page through, picking out verses, or reading page by page. It's a book I will refer to often, enjoying chapters, picking out lines. A wonderful tome that should be in the hands of everyone on the planet! BTW, I recommend the hard copy and not Kindle, as it's just wonderful to page through, to put sticky notes in, or highlight lines. Buy it, read it, savor it, and share it. Well done, Grayling. Wow!

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The Good Book: A Humanist Bible The Bible: The Complete Guide to Reading the Bible, Bible

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