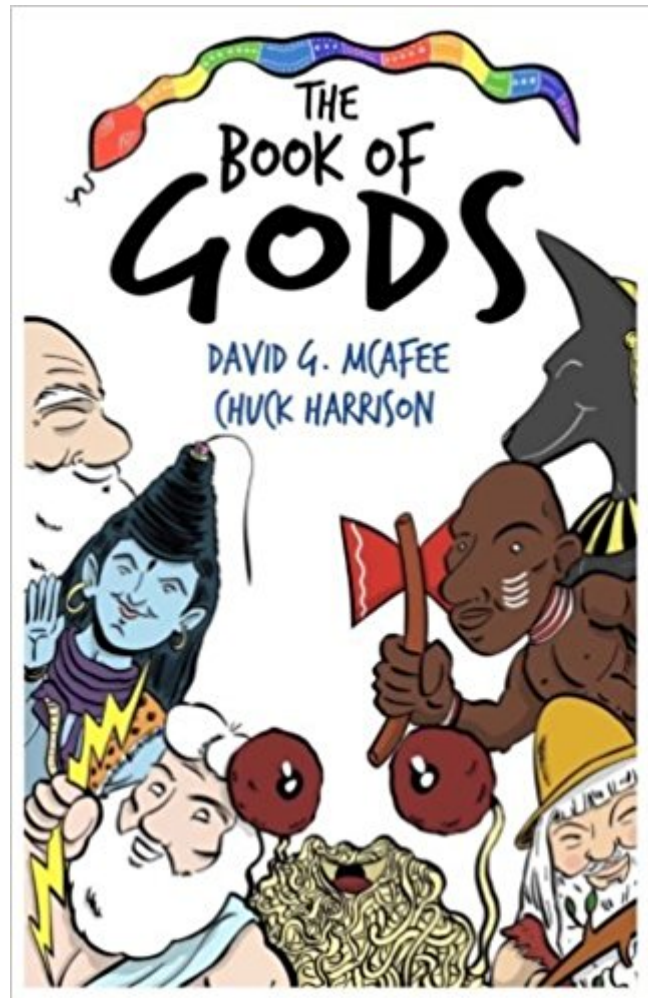




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The Book Of Gods



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Synopsis

What are gods and why do people believe in them? Where did they come from and what do they do? This book answers all those questions and more! David G. McAfee, who studies religions and writes books, has teamed up with writer and cartoonist Chuck Harrison to help everyone learn about beliefs, gods, and religion! The first book in this series was *The Belief Book*, which is all about why people believe the things they do, and now they are taking the next step by bringing you *The Book of Gods*... It doesn't matter how old you are. If you want to learn more about gods from around the globe, including where they came from and how belief in them has spread over time, this easy-to-read book is for you! The fully illustrated and interactive *Book of Gods* is for readers and thinkers of all ages, including kids and kids at heart.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is written for children, but from its length and subject matter, and a sprinkling of illustrations, it would be best appreciated by older children in about grades 3-4. It talks about religions, how we came to have religions, belief in gods and why our ancestors had particular gods. It defines thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, then talks about how an emotion can then motivate (a word defined in the book) someone to develop something - in this case, a god or a religion. It takes a tour of the world, and talks about some deities worshipped on each of the continents. Of course, this is by necessity simplistic when they bring up tribal animist religions, which might not extend over a full continent. The book's authors are atheists, but they say and write that they understand beliefs, and accept people of any or no religion. They encourage children to become good citizens by not fighting, but accepting others as they are, without discrimination. In some cases, they may be the

first to show the children that there are people with different beliefs than their own as well as people with no beliefs at all of gods or religions. They start at the basics about religions, for children who may have no experience with religious beliefs. A child who comes from an atheist home, reared by atheists, could get a handle on religious beliefs from this book. Then, they talk about prayer, why people pray, and how various people pray in a way that children could understand it. They take a "world tour" to talk about a couple of representative gods from all of the continents. Some tribal or animist gods are brought up, and those are not worshipped throughout the continent. They miss some major religions, such as Judaism, and barely touch upon Islam. The continent of Antarctica, with no native people thus no native gods is brought up, as a challenge for the children to make up their own gods, just as their distant ancestors did, then challenge them to create an idea for a deity even better than existing religions have that might address their needs. An example would be that the children want a god that gives them ice cream for breakfast. This is a want which is much different than a god that brings rains for harvests rather than famine or a god which a farmer hundreds or thousands of years ago would want. I don't see how this book could inspire a child to stop believing the religion he or she has been taught to believe. I can see how it can lead to children accepting other children who come from religious backgrounds which are different from theirs. There are a couple of logical errors in the book. A glaring one is that someone who was taught a religion and decides that it doesn't make sense to them anymore at some point does not necessarily become an atheist. Such a person may find another religion that does make sense to them, and that person can convert to a different religion. There are some minor copyediting issues, and one layout issue where an image overlays some of the text. All-in-all, it's a great book to teach older children and preteens that there are beliefs much different than their own, both in the world's past and in different places today. There are a lot of lessons in the book which stress that it's important to accept all of these people and beliefs, and not discriminate against that. The book gives definitions of big words, including discriminate, to widen the children's vocabulary. A book on comparative religions written for this age group is astounding!

David McAfee provides an excellent primer on gods. Why do people believe in gods? Where do they come from? What are some of the characteristics of gods people have believed in? All these questions are answered, and more! Not only is this book helpful in teaching children about gods, but it should be recommended for anyone who wants to brush up on their knowledge about gods.

Although this book is written for children, there is no age designation. I guess it to possibly interest those aged 12 to young adult. The author probably suggests those much younger since he says they can crayon-color the art figures, which is not really possible because of their small size. There are six essay-like (or creative) assignments, which really require higher skills than the coloring book level child (five more blank assignments at the end of the book). Unnumbered Chapter 5 (pp. 32-57) is the longest and most boring. It deals with "Gods Around the Globe". Although not an exciting read, it does show how silly the god-thing is. So silly that the author encourages the young reader to imagine a god for Antarctica where no god-making people lived. The author is rather contradictory in his approach. In the preface, and again near the end of the book, he stresses that the reader should respect those who do need a divine figure to be comfortable in life, and that he doesn't want to demean religion, but the latter is exactly what he ends up doing. And I'm not against that. The purported goal of the book is simply to explain WHY people think they need to believe in a god, of which there are many, and just what those gods do, how they look, and how they got invented. My guess is that the book will interest more adults than children. It's not very deep--and why should it be since it doesn't accept the superstitious premise of a god to begin with. The ideas therein will probably give some comfort to those who are religious doubters and reinforce the beliefs of non-believers in religion/a god. I give the volume a C or B: The C reflects the lack of "draw" the written word will have for the younger set; the B represents the attempt to simplify this subject for young people. Finally, the best summary for the book is the author's stated, but contradictory, goal on page 62: "Maybe in the future people will stop fighting over which god is better. Perhaps one day we can all come to the understanding that it's OK to believe in different gods or no gods at all without getting angry about it! It's possible that people in the future will be able to put aside the hatred and just wish peace to those who believe differently." The contradictory part is that it's NOT okay to believe in gods. But are atheist going to thump on a "bible," shout and wave their arms, cry, wear special costumes, establish a house of non-worship, write hymns....and more? No, such isn't needed, though the atheist's belief system is strong.

This is so fantastic for freethinking parents! Thank you McAfee!

Awesome book! I gave it to my 12 year old daughter and she loved it!

This is a great book for early elementary ages. It takes the issue of religion and why people believe

in gods and puts it on a level easy for a child to understand. It also talks a little about religious discrimination and why it happens and why it's not OK. My kids and I have had some great conversations sparked by this book lately! We're reading The Belief Book next. My only minor complaint is that the Kindle version seems to be formatted weirdly. Some of the pages overlapped and pictures blotted out a few sentences.

I love this book. Was fun to read it with my son.

Excellent! It opens the readers eyes to how many Gods humankind has had through the ages. All but a few still exist in the minds of men.

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