

You will see that the ministers, priests, rabbis, mullahs, and monks who claim knowledge of ancient sacred texts are ignorant of the true meaning of these texts or else hiding this meaning. Thus, their legitimacy must be questioned.

Even notable scholars, such as Joseph Campbell and Carl Jung, who have tried to understand and explain mythology and religion, missed the most fundamental sources. You will see that Campbell and Jung both overlaid psychological explanations on top of natural phenomena. Although there may be some truth to their psychological explanations, when one digs a little deeper, one finds greater and more marvelous truths.

From a historical perspective, this book is just the latest in a series of discoveries that show the mysteries of life to be known, physical entities. For millennia, it was thought that some *élan vital* or “life force” made living things different from mere matter. Thanks to people like van Leeuwenhoek, Lavoisier, Pasteur, Hooke, Harvey, Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Kepler, Einstein, Cuvier, Darwin, Mendel, Mendeleev, Norbert Weiner, James Watson, Francis Crick, and others, this idea has slowly changed. There *is* “a vital immaterial spirit,” but what you will find here is that this “spirit” is explainable with modern chemistry.

This book is not meant to be an exhaustive survey of all the world’s myths or religions.¹ I have picked the most spectacular, mysterious, powerful, and pervasive religions and myths and given a reasonable explanation for them.

Of course, there are other myths. How a woman gave birth (through the sperm and egg) was probably a mystery for many millennia. However, as I said, I avoid a tedious tome, in favor of a clear outline of the theory.

David Sloan Wilson has said, “What before was a jumble of uninterpretable facts suddenly becomes organized by the relationships made reasonable by the theory.”² *My goal is to present an overarching theory, and give a reasonable amount of evidence for it.* I could easily have written ten books on this subject, as there is much more evidence than what I have included in this book. Not only do I provide a theory with which to study religion and mythology, but with the force of logic and evidence presented in this book I think you will find that this theory covers all the facts better than any competing theory.

It is unfortunate that I even have to write this book at all. The “burden of proof” should lie on those who claim *extraordinary* events, not with those who logically interpret historical religious and mythological writings in light of natural phenomena.

Who should read this book? Anyone who is intellectually courageous. Anyone who wants some clarity on some of the fundamental questions of our age. Anyone who wants to understand the beginnings of religion and science. This book could be used in a class on critical thinking, comparative religions, anthropology, psychology or the history of science and religion. It could be used as the basis to clarify translations from ancient tongues. It could also be used to combat religious dogma, wherever it might appear: East, West or Middle East.

I have a hope, but it is not the false hope of the “afterlife” that is promised by many religions. It is the hope that by using logic, rationality and the scientific method, we can overcome the difficult survival problems that lie ahead of us.

¹ Such as James Frazer’s twelve volume classic, *The Golden Bough*.

² Wilson, David Sloan, *Darwin’s Cathedral*, p. 149.

I also hope that this book can counterbalance the constant barrage of propaganda and advertisements that we receive daily from commercial, religious and political sources. As you may know, these communications do not always have our best interests at heart.

This book did not spring into being overnight, but was the result of thirty years of sustained effort into many areas of science, philosophy, and religion. I will spare the reader the years of deprivation and poverty (and even some homelessness) I went through in my search for truth. Apparently, sacrifices are sometimes needed.

This work was first written about 1998. My goal was originality not elegance—substance not style. Since then I have made many small revisions, changed the title several times, and taken out several chapters. I tried unsuccessfully to get the book published for over a decade. I sent it, or parts of it, to many literary agents, publishers, academic presses, scholars, scientists, and various journals and magazines, repeatedly. I received only a few responses, including one from Sir Arthur C. Clarke and a few other notable scholars. I was very discouraged for many years, and somewhat cynical, and it was only with the arrival of Amazon self-publishing and Facebook that was I finally able to find a significant readership for the book. It has been gratifying to see the warm reception the book has received.

I sold so few copies between 1998 and 2010, that when I finally got around to registering the book for official publication, I decided to use 2011 as the publication date. Meanwhile, I hope to publish another volume in the future, which will include the chapters I removed, which are a prequel, and some new chapters.

I no longer feel an urgency to publish. I was once extremely excited to share my work, but now I feel, well, wiser. As I mentioned, the discoveries contained herein have been hidden for thousands of years, and ten or fifteen years more is insignificant in comparison. I am fairly confident that in another 100 or 200 hundred years this book will still be fresh to many readers.

Some of you may find what you read here disturbing. Think of it as a cold bath: you may not like it, but you may come out of it feeling greatly refreshed, and it may open up new horizons far beyond your present imaginings. It did for me.

However, enough prelude. Please join me on a journey into the ancient past. Into an era when there were not separate branches of knowledge. Into an era when there were no words such as “religion” or “science.”

We will go far down the Tree of Knowledge, through geology, chemistry, and alchemy, to the very roots of the tree, where we will examine some of the earliest stories in the world.

Egypt is where we will begin our journey. In my search for truth, I dug deeply into the mythological writings of the Nile River civilization, and never, in my entire life, have I been so completely stunned by what I discovered there.