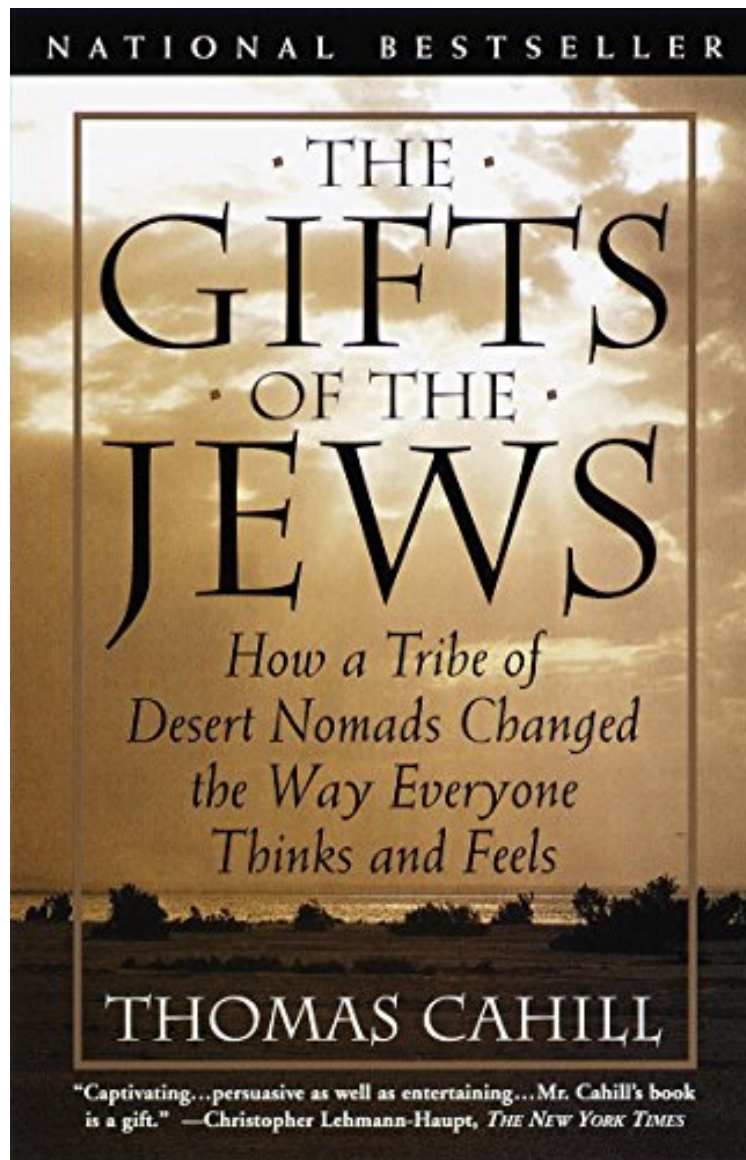


[Free and download] The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels (Hinges of History)

The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels (Hinges of History)

Von Thomas Cahill

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Von Thomas Cahill : The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels (Hinges of History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels (Hinges of History):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Flawed but still well, well worth itVon Lee GruenfeldNormally, I only include books on this page that I recommended highly and unequivocally. In the case of *The Gifts of the Jews*, I do recommend it, but with a bit of equivocating. There's no sense rehashing all the critiquing that has already been done on this short and fascinating volume -- it is truly a quite thought-provoking attempt at some historical paradigm shifting. My question is whether such shifting is warranted in light of the evidence Cahill brings to bear on his thesis. Like most bible-based historical analyses, *Gifts* suffers from assumptive leaps often grounded on precious little substance. For example, to claim that our very concept of time evolved from one of cyclical and unbreakable repetition with no end and no beginning to our current "processive" notions of past and future because of the Jews begs more questions than Cahill tackles. Among them are how the Egyptians managed to spend decades building monuments that were intended to last forever if they were convinced it would all be for naught when the next cycle began anew. For that matter, how did the Sumerians ever get around to building cities? The author also provides mountains of detail regarding the emotional states of biblical figures whose words and behaviors were described in the barest of minimalist proportions, attributing broad and profound meanings to mere handfuls of words. To his credit, Cahill chose for his basis an unconventional translation that hews much closer to the meaning of the original language, and in fact his presentation of that novel interpretation is the best part of this book, but some of those interpretations strain credulity to such an extent that his underlying thesis is too often undermined. As an example, jumping directly from the Burning Bush to the conclusion that "God...can burn in us without consuming" is poetic and clever but did this actually occur to the early Israelites? Overall, there is far too much speculation upon which to hang a serious thesis, and it put me in mind of the classic skit in which one syllable uttered by a diplomat becomes three paragraphs from the translator. However, the book is so full of wonderful nuggets that it is still a delight to read, at least once you get past the overlong and overly-discursive discussion of the Sumerian "Epic of Gilgamesh," and that's why I am recommending it. Cahill's reading of the Abraham and Isaac story is tremendously moving, as is the story of the exodus from Egypt, particularly as concerns the ongoing frustrations of Moses. One of the most soul-stirring sections is the one dealing with the "minor" prophet Amos, who openly scorns the "elegant piety" of the people of Israel and exhorts them to put away the symbolic sacrifices and instead "let justice flow like water."

2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Excellent, informative, a little over my headVon Ein KundeI am a 15 year old sophomore in high school and I read this book as a project for my religion class. I must admit, I thought this book was going to be boring and just a repeat of all the Jewish history I have learned in my 11 years of attending Catholic schools. I was wrong- this book was informative and interesting; I enjoyed it and finished the book in about a week. Cahill does an excellent job of condensing all the Jewish history into a readable and interesting novel; he touched upon the important facts, sticking to the original translations of the names and places. The section concerning the Epic of Gilgamesh was confusing but I managed to get through it. I had a dictionary next to me the entire time, he writes for an older and more verbal audience. I didn't feel he was being condescending, as some suggested. I definitely recommend this for anyone interested in Jewish history- it's a nice overview.

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Unique World ViewVon James GallenIn "The Gift Of The Jews", Thomas Cahill advances the theory that the Jews introduced unique world views. In his view the Jews, unlike antecedent societies, viewed history as progressive, not cyclical. The Jews recognized the worth of each individual rather than seeing people only as members of a group. The Jews see human action as making a difference, rather than being the results of unalterable fate. The Jews see God as a person who talks with His people and who invites them to have a personal relationship with Him. Cahill makes his case by telling the history of the Jews as told in the Old Testament, from the call of Abraham to the return from the Babylonian Captivity. Through his selection of Biblical stories he demonstrates the evolution of the Jewish world view over the millennia. This book's depiction of the evolution of the Jewish understanding of God and man's relationship to Him makes for a very interesting read. It is generally consistent with what I had learned in collegiate scripture classes. From the perspective of an analysis of development of Jewish thought as reflected in the Bible, it is very good. My only question is whether the insights identified as being Jewish are truly unique. Cahill says yes, but I lack the knowledge to form an independent judgment. Overall, it is a fascinating book concluding with challenging questions for all readers.

KurzbeschreibungThe author of the runaway bestseller *How the Irish Saved Civilization* has done it again. In *The Gifts of the Jews* Thomas Cahill takes us on another enchanting journey into history, once again recreating a time when the actions of a small band of people had repercussions that are still felt today. *The Gifts of the Jews* reveals the critical change that made western civilization possible. Within the matrix of ancient religions and philosophies, life was seen as part of an endless cycle of birth and death; time was like a wheel, spinning ceaselessly. Yet somehow, the ancient Jews began to see time differently. For them, time had a beginning and an end; it was a narrative, whose triumphant conclusion would come in the future. From this insight came a new conception of men and women as individuals with unique destinies--a conception that would inform the Declaration of Independence--and our hopeful

belief in progress and the sense that tomorrow can be better than today. As Thomas Cahill narrates this momentous shift, he also explains the real significance of such Biblical figures as Abraham and Sarah, Moses and the Pharaoh, Joshua, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Full of compelling stories, insights and humor, *The Gifts of the Jews* is an irresistible exploration of history as fascinating and fun as *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. **BONUS MATERIAL:** This ebook edition includes an excerpt from Thomas Cahill's *Heretics and Heroes*.

deThomas Cahill, author of the best-selling *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, continues his *Hinges of History* series with *The Gifts of the Jews*, a light-handed, popular account of ancient Jewish culture, the culture of the Bible. The book is written from a decidedly modern point of view. Cahill notes, for instance, that Abraham moved the Jews from Ur to the land of Canaan "to improve their prospects", and that the leering inhabitants of Sodom surrounded Lot's lodging "like the ghouls in *Night of the Living Dead*". *The Gifts of the Jews* nonetheless encourages us to see the Old Testament through ancient eyes--to see its characters not as our contemporaries but as those of Gilgamesh and Amenhotep. Cahill also lingers on often overlooked books of the Bible, such as *Ruth*, to discuss changes in ancient sensibility. The result is a fine, speculative, eminently readable work of history. --Ali Perry-Gallagher.co.uk

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