



# Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion

*Susan Jacoby*

Download now

[Click here](#) if your download doesn't start automatically

# Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion

*Susan Jacoby*

## **Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion** Susan Jacoby

In a groundbreaking historical work that addresses religious conversion in the West from an uncompromisingly secular perspective, Susan Jacoby challenges the conventional narrative of conversion as a purely spiritual journey. From the transformation on the road to Damascus of the Jew Saul into the Christian evangelist Paul to a twenty-first-century “religious marketplace” in which half of Americans have changed faiths at least once, nothing has been more important in the struggle for reason than the right to believe in the God of one’s choice or to reject belief in God altogether.

Focusing on the long, tense convergence of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—each claiming possession of absolute truth—Jacoby examines conversions within a social and economic framework that includes theocratic coercion (unto torture and death) and the more friendly persuasion of political advantage, economic opportunism, and interreligious marriage. Moving through time, continents, and cultures—the triumph of Christianity over paganism in late antiquity, the Spanish Inquisition, John Calvin’s dour theocracy, Southern plantations where African slaves had to accept their masters’ religion—the narrative is punctuated by portraits of individual converts embodying the sacred and profane. The cast includes Augustine of Hippo; John Donne; the German Jew Edith Stein, whose conversion to Catholicism did not save her from Auschwitz; boxing champion Muhammad Ali; and former President George W. Bush. The story also encompasses conversions to rigid secular ideologies, notably Stalinist Communism, with their own truth claims.

Finally, Jacoby offers a powerful case for religious choice as a product of the secular Enlightenment. In a forthright and unsettling conclusion linking the present with the most violent parts of the West’s religious past, she reminds us that in the absence of Enlightenment values, radical Islamists are persecuting Christians, many other Muslims, and atheists in ways that recall the worst of the Middle Ages.

*(With 8 pages of black-and-white illustrations.)*

 [Download Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion ...pdf](#)

## **Download and Read Free Online Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion Susan Jacoby**

---

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Dorothy Guillen:**

The book *Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion* can give more knowledge and also the precise product information about everything you want. Why then must we leave the good thing like a book *Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion*? Wide variety you have a different opinion about reserve. But one aim which book can give many details for us. It is absolutely right. Right now, try to closer with the book. Knowledge or details that you take for that, you may give for each other; it is possible to share all of these. Book *Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion* has simple shape however, you know: it has great and massive function for you. You can seem the enormous world by available and read a book. So it is very wonderful.

#### **Henry Perry:**

Book is to be different for every single grade. Book for children until adult are different content. As you may know that book is very important for all of us. The book *Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion* has been making you to know about other knowledge and of course you can take more information. It is very advantages for you. The reserve *Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion* is not only giving you a lot more new information but also to become your friend when you sense bored. You can spend your own personal spend time to read your e-book. Try to make relationship with the book *Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion*. You never experience lose out for everything in case you read some books.

#### **Frederick Cagle:**

The book untitled *Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion* contain a lot of information on the idea. The writer explains your ex idea with easy approach. The language is very clear to see all the people, so do certainly not worry, you can easy to read this. The book was compiled by famous author. The author provides you in the new period of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or product, so you can read the book within anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can open up their official web-site and order it. Have a nice study.

#### **James Fitzpatrick:**

A lot of book has printed but it is unique. You can get it by internet on social media. You can choose the most effective book for you, science, amusing, novel, or whatever through searching from it. It is named of book *Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion*. You'll be able to your knowledge by it. Without making the printed book, it might add your knowledge and make an individual happier to read. It is most crucial that, you must aware about reserve. It can bring you from one destination for a other place.

**Download and Read Online Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion Susan Jacoby #NBRAIFMHW3G**

## **Read Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion by Susan Jacoby for online ebook**

Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion by Susan Jacoby Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion by Susan Jacoby books to read online.

### **Online Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion by Susan Jacoby ebook PDF download**

**Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion by Susan Jacoby Doc**

**Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion by Susan Jacoby Mobipocket**

**Strange Gods: A Secular History of Conversion by Susan Jacoby EPub**