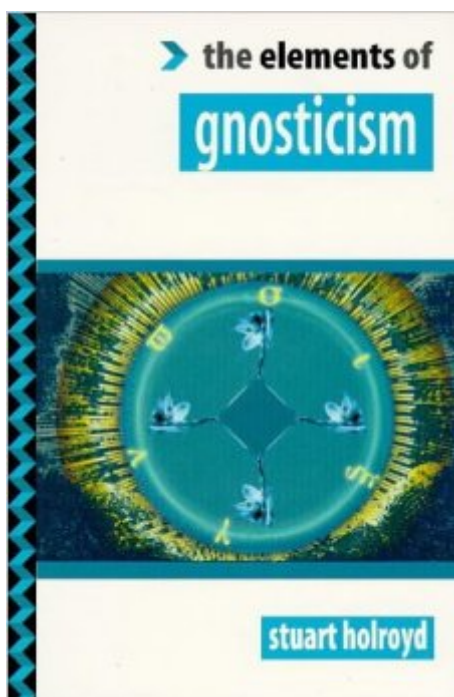


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The Elements Of Gnosticism (The "Elements Of..." Series)



Synopsis

Gnosis is Greek for knowledge, gnosticism offers a dramatic account of creation and has both similarities and significant differences from Christianity. In ancient times, Gnosticism rivalled Christianity in popularity, and now is finding an increasing following in the West. Its central beliefs is that the creation is not divine and that only the soul of man has any true goodness. This text explains the meaning of Gnosticism, giving details of its history and relationship with Christianity. Discussion is included on the Gnostics themselves and the main teachings of the faith, as well as the major schools of Gnostic thought and literature.

Book Information

Series: The "Elements of..." Series

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (6 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I will love this book and its content for so long as I am on earth: of course until something dramatic to the contrary emerges. The book is a good introduction into Gnosticism. It gives you the various interpretations of Genesis within the Gnosticism approach: there are two different and opposing Gods in the universe. Gnosticism gives me answers to questions that I have always pondered on: why does "God" (the God of wind/storm) behave so cruelly sometimes (especially in the Old Testament), may be even today. It provides various Gnostic schools of thought. Very simple and illuminating. Although it does not dwell deeply into the subjects, it does provide you with a good basic understanding of Gnosticism. Read together with "The Nag Hammadi Library in English" (the bible for the Gnostics), it will really blow your mind. Of course, it is not for orthodox conventional

Christians, yet they may benefit from it, if they are willing of course!

A concise historical overview of an oft suppressed current of Western thought with which not many today are familiar. The writing is engaging and thoughtfully organized. My only reservation is that the work's brevity may necessarily make some of Holroyd's associations seem slightly glib.

However; viewed as a springboard to the topic, the book is superb. I highly recommend it to those with an interest in comparative religion or history, or to anyone who delights in exploring ideas that have been deemed at times to dangerous for print.

This book is ok, and it does exactly what it claims: provides an introduction to Gnostic thought, briefly contextualizing major figures and movements. Criticisms: Holroyd's sweeping generalizations of Blake and Jung shouldn't be taken seriously, and the citations are a disaster, both in style and content (even an introductory book could have tried to cite primary texts instead of other secondary works). Nevertheless, I'd have given the book a somewhat higher mark if the writing weren't simply atrocious - never before have I stumbled through horrible style to the extent that my understanding of some passages suffered! It makes me intensely disinterested in the poetry the author has purportedly written as per the author notes. There must be better - certainly better written - introductions out there.

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