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Dare to Know

Religious Fiction

Fiction in which characters lose, find, or reaffirm their belief in a higher power.

A broad genre in which stories are inspired by religious texts, teachings, or practices. Protagonists typically embark on a journey of faith, if not a physical or emotional trek. They have doubts, beliefs, and questions regarding faith and morals, and work to resolve their internal conflicts. The level of inspirational insight and depth into matters of theology and spirituality varies from novel to novel. This genre can blend with others, such as **detective and mystery fiction**, **historical fiction**, **romance fiction**, and **thrillers**. Thomas Mann's *Joseph in Egypt* (1933), Sholem Asch's *Nazarene* (1939), Grace Livingston Hill's *Bright Arrows* (1946), Frank G. Slaughter's *The Song of Ruth* (1954), and Paul Ilton's *The Last Days of Sodom and Gomorrah* (1957) are classic examples.

Common Elements

Sacrifice
Passion
Sin
Faith

Deep meanings
Flawed but not irredeemable characters

Allusions and symbolism

Benefits of Reading

Improves readers' knowledge of various faiths and belief systems
Demonstrates to readers a variety of religious themes and principles
Allows people to see the world, human nature, and the cosmos in different ways

Assists readers in their personal faith journeys
Permits readers to see the strengths and flaws of different faiths

Modern Literary Examples

The Gospel According to the Son (1997) by Norman Mailer
Lights of Love (2001) by Roni S. Denholtz
The Matzah Ball (2021) by Jean Meltzer

Queenmaker (2002) by India Edghill
Rebekah (2002) by Orson Scott Card
The Red Tent (1997) Anita Diamant
The Shack (2007) by William P. Young