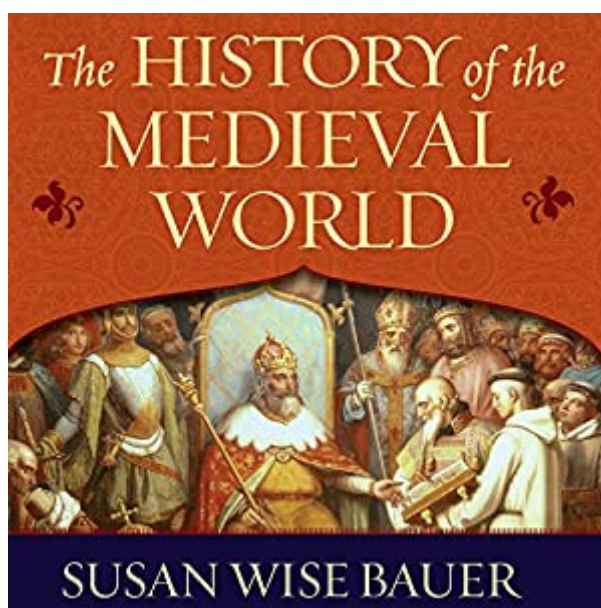


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# The History Of The Medieval World: From The Conversion Of Constantine To The First Crusade



## Synopsis

A masterful narrative of the Middle Ages, when religion became a weapon for kings all over the world. From the schism between Rome and Constantinople to the rise of the Tang Dynasty, from the birth of Muhammad to the crowning of Charlemagne, this erudite book tells the fascinating, often violent story of kings, generals, and the peoples they ruled. In her earlier work, *The History of the Ancient World*, Susan Wise Bauer wrote of the rise of kingship based on might. But in the years between the fourth and the twelfth centuries, rulers had to find new justification for their power, and they turned to divine truth or grace to justify political and military action. Right thus replaces might as the engine of empire. Not just Christianity and Islam but the religions of the Persians and the Germans, and even Buddhism, are pressed into the service of the state. This phenomenon stretching from the Americas all the way to Japan changes religion, but it also changes the state. 4 illustrations; 46 maps --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Working on family genealogy. Proving very interesting, finally learning history as it relates to my family. DNA testing gave me a high Scandinavian % considering how Irish I am, so knew had to learn more about the Vikings and Norman, and this book is chock full of interesting information. Originally borrowed from the library but so much interesting information I had to purchase it because this kind of digging takes a while. Looking forward to see what all I learn from this book.

This is an interesting and comprehensive treatment of a very convoluted and ever changing period

of history. It moves across the major European and Asian empires and societies in a quick, but readable fashion, which means it sacrifices historical detail for broad coverage. It successfully imparts the key developments, ebb and flow of power and the influences on them through a thousand years of history. The primary focus is developments in Western Europe, Constantinople, India, China and Japan, although much of the book covers the first two. This is a period that is probably less well known by many readers and it successfully imparts the complexity and rapid developments of societies through this period. Maps are provided in most chapters and each one also ends with a less useful timeline showing key dates across several of the cultures. Also, while well written and easy to read, like any book on a topic this broad, it can get confusing with the changing names and dynasties and at times, the skip from one culture to another forces a quick review of the prior section. Overall, a very enjoyable and recommended to anyone interested in general history during this period.

This second book in the chapter picks up right where the first one left off! Begin with Constantine and the establishment of the Christian church as an official recognized religion and soon as a powerful political force. See the decline of Rome, The days of Byzantium, the rise to somewhat civil society of the medieval barbaric tribes. Witness the rise and fall of more Chinese dynasties and their dealings with newer oriental peoples. Travel through the histories of India, the rise of the Islamic caliphates, the theological battles within the Christian church and each of these peoples struggle to discover, solidify, and maintain their identities in the realities of a very hostile world which in many respects is teetering on the edge of darkness. Emperors, Kings, Generals, Religious figures, usurpers to the throne, foreign peoples, alluring and astute females all return in the classic follow-up to the first book. I look forward to reading the next very soon!

When I chose this work, I had only the vaguest understanding of the development of nation states over the centuries. As a typical college graduate I had some insight into both England and Europe, but virtually nothing about the middle and far east. What this remarkable work has done is to develop a comprehensive and compelling time line across the globe, comparing and contrasting development of governmental structures across the centuries. In addition to the well-researched historical data it manages to present the material in a wonderful and subtle dry wit. David Evan Glasser, Eski Datca, Turkey

The History of the Medieval World spans the history of the world from the conversion of Constantine

through the first Crusade (picking up where *The History of the Ancient World* left off). It is told in a conversational, and sometimes very funny, format with lots of footnotes, endnotes, references, charts, pictures, and maps. I quite enjoyed reading it and am very happy to have learned so much about a time period I was previously a bit shaky on. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in world history.

I'm not an ardent historian. I read of times gone by to have a fairly overall factual perception of how we, (humankind) have gotten to this point in history and why; especially in the political arena and birth of our nation. For me, Susan's book is the first read encompassing World History. I enjoyed her book and could follow it without difficulty. At time of purchase, I was unaware her additional two books on so I started her series in the middle. I will read the remaining volumes in the future. Thank you Susan for all your hard work, expanding my view of our world a little more.

The Medieval World, also known as the Middle Ages or Dark Ages, is often glossed over in "History of Civilization" or "World History" classes. At least I know it was in my high school and college courses that were so named. But there is a lot of really interesting history from the time of the decline of the Roman Empire until the Renaissance. And Susan Wise Bauer presents a meaty overview of that time period that is both very thorough and often spiced with a little humor as well. While there cannot be great depth in such a broad treatise, it is heavily foot/end noted for anyone who would like to study certain topics further. Chapters are relatively short with timelines of the various material covered at the end of each, so it is an easy book to pick up and read for a short time, then come back to later. I highly recommend this for anyone who is curious about History and enjoys reading about it. This is a companion volume to Ms. Bauer's "*The History of the Ancient World: From the Earliest Accounts to the Fall of Rome*" which is also excellent.

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