



# Among The Ruins: A Backsliding Agnostic's Quest For God

*James W. Rhoades*

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This book is about questions -- profound questions which have no objective answers, yet serve as the foundation of religious faith. Does God exist? If He does, what does He expect of us? How can we recognize sacred texts? In what sense is the Bible the "Word of God?" What is the relationship between the historical and the biblical Jesus? Do humans really have free will? In the modern age, can science and religion be compatible? How can we understand good and evil? Should we believe in prophesy? Miracles? Prayer? A final judgment? Heaven and hell? Scientist James Rhoades approaches these questions by examining how well the possible subjective answers theologians have proposed to these questions mesh with the world as we know it. In "Among the Ruins," the author traces his own evolution from main stream Christian to doubting skeptic. Labeling himself a "backsliding agnostic," Rhoades explores the balance between intellectual agnosticism and an emotional desire to believe. He provides no absolute answers, but rather food for thought and a justification for tolerance rather than dogmatism in approaching the complex world of religious difference. Ten years in the making, the book represents the author's personal search for answers to ultimately unanswerable questions. It is not written to dissuade believers or to challenge atheists, but rather to inspire likeminded seekers to continue the search for an understanding that will be personally satisfying.

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