

# The Golden Bough



Sir James G. Frazer

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## The Golden Bough By Sir James G. Frazer (1854–1941)

The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion is a wide-ranging comparative study of mythology and religion, written by Scottish anthropologist Sir James George Frazer (1854–1941). It offered a modernist approach, discussing religion dispassionately as a cultural phenomenon, rather than from a theological perspective. Although most of its theories have subsequently been exploded (the most famous one being that of the relationship between magic, religion and science), its impact on contemporaneous European literature was substantial.

The Golden Bough attempts to define the shared elements of religious belief, ranging from ancient belief systems to relatively modern religions such as Christianity. Its thesis is that old religions were fertility cults that centered around the worship of, and periodic sacrifice of, a sacred king. This king was the incarnation of a dying and reviving god, a solar deity who underwent a mystic marriage to a goddess of the earth, who died at the harvest, and was reincarnated in the spring. Frazer claims that this legend is central to almost all of the world's mythologies, and he offers a plethora of colourful examples from all over the world. Moreover, his book is written in an admirable style, seldom excelled by his more modern colleagues. (From Wikipedia, with small additions by Måns Broo)

Read by hefyd, Jim Eastman, Leon Mire, Måns Broo, Christie Nowak, Mira Cheskis, Sheila Morton, Tysto, Sarah Jennings, JoeD, & Andrew Coleman. Total running time: 42:43:54.

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