



Christian Symbols, Ancient Roots

Elizabeth Rees

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Ancient peoples articulated and made sense of their lives through the powerful world of symbol. Christianity absorbed such symbols - blood, corn, fire and water - adding new dimensions of meaning to each one. By medieval times, these symbols provided access to a many-levelled world in which pagan and Christian truths shed light upon each other. During the Age of Reason, the language of symbol was spoken less, and now that symbols are valued once again, Christians often fear to reconnect religious symbols with their ancient roots. As a result the symbol world of 20th century Christians is often a pale shadow of the world their forebears inhabited. This book selects dominant Christian symbols and places them against the archaic background from which they grew, drawing on myths and rituals of both ancient and contemporary cultures. The book will help the present-day seeker after truth to integrate the worlds of symbol and reality, sacred and secular, myth and history. It is written with a wide readership in mind: pastors, counsellors and psychotherapists, artists and anthropologists, and anyone interested in exploring the ever-present world of symbol.

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