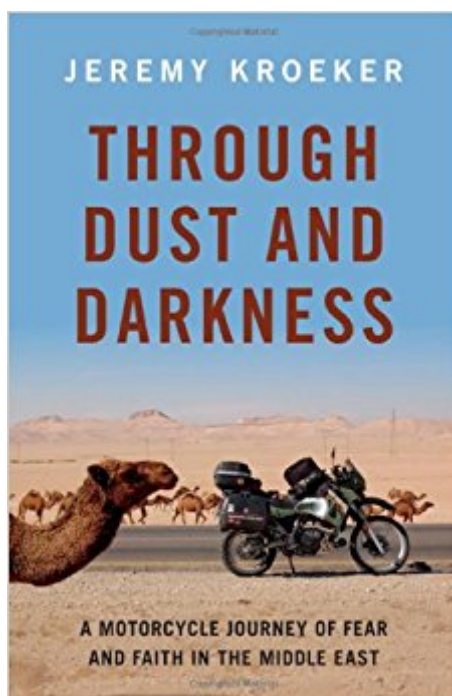




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Through Dust And Darkness: A Motorcycle Journey Of Fear And Faith In The Middle East



Synopsis

Jeremy Kroeker is a Mennonite with a motorcycle. When his seemingly unflinching faith in a Christian worldview begins to shift, Kroeker hops on his bike to seek answers from another perspective. After shipping his ride to Europe, Kroeker discovers that the machine wobbles back and forth worse than his own opinions about spirituality. Still, he carries on, oscillating through Europe—Germany, Austria, Croatia, Albania—and into the Middle East - Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and, ultimately, Iran. It is there, in the theocratic nation of Iran, that Kroeker finds himself on a forbidden visit to a holy Muslim Shrine. Once inside, invisible hands reach into his chest and rip from his heart a sincere prayer, his first in many years. And God hears that prayer. For before Kroeker can escape Iran, God steals into his hotel room one night to threaten him with death. At least, that's one way to look at it. In the end, Kroeker comes to accept uncertainty. What does he really know anyway? He may always fear a God that he can't explain. Perhaps if he keeps riding, one of these days God will speak clearly. And that frightens him, too.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jeremy Kroeker is a freelance writer, a speaker, mountaineer and the award-winning author of *Motorcycle Therapy: A Canadian Adventure in Central America*. With his motorcycle, he has travelled to over 30 countries while managing to do at least one outrageously stupid thing in every one. He has evaded police in Egypt, tasted tear gas in Israel, scrambled through minefields in Bosnia and Lebanon and wrangled a venomous snake in Austria. One time he got a sliver in El Salvador. His writing has appeared in newspapers such as the *Toronto Star*, *Winnipeg Free Press*

and Calgary Herald, and in U.S. magazines such as Alpinist, and Outrider Journal. He was born in Manitoba, grew up in Saskatchewan and currently lives in Canmore, Alberta.

I enjoyed reading this book, especially the bravery of the author to go into the mindfield of religion. That makes it more than just a motorcycle book but a personal journey. I hope he continues this on this path. It would be interesting to see him check out, get his own experience by exploring Buddhism.

A good read for anyone trying to figure out what is going on in the Middle East, and struggling with concept of God.

When I saw the description for Jeremy Kroeker's second book *Through Dust and Darkness*, I was immediately intrigued. It describes a Mennonite on a motorcycle, questioning his faith and seeking enlightenment riding through the Middle East. It's a great plot to begin with, but given that a motorcycle came into my life as the Mennonite was exiting, I sensed we might have a lot in common. I was curious to see where his questioning had taken him and how it had shaped him. *Through Dust and Darkness* combines a fascinating account of his travels through Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and his ultimate goal Iran, woven into his search for meaning. "It had always bothered me that God expects so much of us while refusing to show himself plainly. Some say that God can't reveal himself because that would nullify our faith. Parachuting from his fundamentalist Christian upbringing on the vast Canadian prairies into the choking cities of the Middle East, with their minarets, irrefutable expectation to answer the call to prayer five times daily, and brilliant Muslim mosques with gilded, mirrored shrines, is one way of learning to see things from a different perspective. At first it seemed the only things that connected them were the roads between New Testament cities, which came alive under his KLR650. There are many times when he was describing travel and his interactions with other people that I wondered what he was thinking. Perhaps he was processing his thoughts and waiting for the right time to let them out because he was certainly more open with his musings towards the end. "I wondered, not for the first time, whether the faint hope to which I clung only remained because I had been dropped into a certain faith at birth, placated with simple answers before I could form complex questions. Aside from the search for meaning, *Through Dust and Darkness* is an engaging account of travel in countries most of us will never visit; countries, people and issues we learn about through network

news. It held my attention right to the end. I admired Kroeker for his courage and vulnerability, to travel solo via motorcycle in such a diametrically different world, and then to be so transparent with his seeking. Whether he's describing the scenery, the people or his internal quest, he does so with innocence, curiosity and humor. He is searching for truth and does an excellent job of staying objective, open to alternative belief systems and accepting. The world would be a very different place if more of us adopted that perspective. I highly recommend this book. Kroeker will take you to souks and deserts of the Middle East, have you thirsting for water, trying to find accommodations in completely foreign and relaxing over tea with new friends. The welcoming style will draw you in and accompany you right to the end!

Recently I've formed an addiction to travel literature - specifically the two wheeled variety. I've been flying through books and I can tell you that this one stacks up to some of the best I've encountered. The author's travels are entertaining, his sense of humor is not unlike my own, and his personal struggles with religion added another interesting layer to his adventure. I'm not an overly spiritual individual but I think this aspect added a great deal to this book. I purchased the book and later found out that the author lives just an hour from where I currently reside. I recently met him at a motorcycle show and he seemed like a genuine and humble guy. For a quick and comical read, I'd also recommend his first book: 'Motorcycle Therapy.' I hope he continues writing because I'll certainly keep buying!

Through Dust and Darkness was a pleasure to read. The author has a unique story to tell of a motorcycle journey through Europe and the Middle East. This would be an interesting story in and of itself, but on top of the outward travels he has an inward search of God. His style of writing and his humor is personable and I found I could easily place myself in his shoes. Like other books that I fall in love with, I found myself slowing down near the end because I did not want it to end. I hope the author can continue his travels and continue to write more amazing stories.

Harrowing accounts of travel throughout the Middle East (Greece, Turkey, Syria and Iran) as the author (a Mennonite on a motorcycle) searches for enlightenment.

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