

## Reviews Seeking Father Khaliq

Phi Beta Kappa Reviews: *E. Lund* (5 stars)

Kareem al-Busiri is a study in contrasts - an Egyptian Muslim, now widowed, having been married to an American Christian. A philosophy professor who is unsure of God's existence but still considers himself religious. A modern man, attracted to his late wife's best friend, yet too traditional to approach her. And a father to grown children also polar - one son enlisting in the army to protect his country and way of life, the other secretly supporting the radical Danesh, also known as ISIS. When a mysterious woman, who may or may not be Saudi royalty, and who may or may not be real, challenges him to locate "Father Khaliq" for her, he embarks on a journey both physical and spiritual that changes his life. Author William Peace has woven a compelling narrative that explores the issues of religion, politics and social change, all while avoiding the pitfalls of becoming a treatise. Instead, "Seeking Father Khaliq" is a moving study of a family caught up in the volatile turmoil of the times, and a father who finds that moving closer to God is a way to navigate forward. Beautifully written with vivid depictions of religious pilgrimages, the book also delivers three dimensional characters fully realized and equally empathetic. Highly recommended for those who want to know more about this important part of the world, but as much to be enjoyed simply on its narrative merits.

Reviewed by Deborah Lloyd for Readers' Favorite (5 stars)

Kareem al-Busiri, a professor of philosophy at the American University in Cairo, receives a mysterious invitation to meet Princess Basheera. She requested that he find Father Khaliq. While she gave no specific information about him, she suggested Kareem make the Hajj. This religious journey led him to other pilgrimages. At the same time, Kareem continued to grieve the death of his wife, Elizabeth, whom he met while she was a Peace Corps volunteer in Egypt. Kareem misses Elizabeth's advice, as he deals with his family: son Naqib, his wife Anisa and their three young children; daughter Wahida; son Kalifa and his wife Sagira. The unsettling political situation in Egypt, peppered with acts of terrorism and the variety of religious beliefs and sects, comprise the setting for Kareem's intriguing quest to find the elusive Father Khaliq, in the novel, *Seeking Father Khaliq*, by William Peace.

This novel is a splendid account of current-day life in Egypt. Through the eyes of an intellectual university professor, and the conflicts within his own family, the reader gains a greater understanding of the divisions within this nation and this part of the world. Because the author provided factual information within a personal context, the book is interesting and captivating to the reader, Author William Peace provides a comprehensive, yet easy-to-grasp explanation of very complicated circumstances in *Seeking Father Khaliq*. The author's writing style is

clear and concise. The account is thought-provoking and fascinating; the reader will be forever changed. This is a much-needed book during these difficult, challenging times in our modern world.

Reviewed by Paige Lovitt for Reader Views (11/16)

In “Seeking Father Khaliq” by William Peace, widowed Philosophy Professor, Kareem al-Busiri, goes through the motions of life, without even realizing that he is isn’t living his life to the fullest. When a mysterious princess shows up and asks him to seek Father Khaliq, he is intrigued. The only thing the professor knows about Father Khaliq is that the princess calls him her father. The princess also informs Kareem that he will be rewarded when her father is found. The search involves pilgrimages to places where Father Khaliq was reported to have been seen. Kareem's experiences on the journey, both good and bad, bring him back to life. He learns a great deal about other belief systems, including Judaism, Christianity, and his own Islamic faith. Along the way, Kareem also opens his heart up to love again.

In reality, the pilgrimages are Kareem's journey toward his own spiritual development. The mysterious princess shows up at different times to discuss what he has discovered, and Kareem has no idea that her presence will help guide him through some of the most difficult events of his life. While mainly about his family, the events also involve mid-eastern politics and terrorism. Kareem must sort through what he believes to be true as his willingness to forgive is tested.

“Seeking Father Khaliq” by William Peace, tells the incredible tale of one man’s spiritual journey. The author does an amazing job of bringing the story alive for the reader. The pilgrimages are described in vivid detail, as he brings us into Kareem’s mind and soul. The honesty of Kareem’s doubts about his faith is refreshing. Kareem is a good man who has some imperfections, and as he seeks the truth, he becomes an even better person, in spite of the obstacles thrown in his path. I found this novel to be very inspiring. I highly recommend reading “Seeking Father Khaliq,” especially to arm chair travelers who are interested in middle-eastern religion and politics from a spiritual perspective.

[This is another wonderful book by author William Peace](#) (5 stars on Amazon)

By amts

This is another wonderful book by author William Peace. Fascinating discussions of theology, philosophy and politics all melded in to an intriguing and mysterious plot. Who is Father Khaliq and why does this perhaps Saudi Arabian princess hire Professor Kareem al-Busiri who teaches at the American University in Cairo to find him? An indifferent Muslim, he is intrigued by her offer. Looking for Father Khaliq takes him on a variety of religious pilgrimages from the Muslim Hajj to the Shia Arba'een, to a trip to Israel and to Rome. Not only does one encounter a treasure trove about each of these places and pilgrimages, but one is treated to stimulating discussions about the three major religions and their approaches to essential questions about the meaning of life, about who is God, and what role the divine being plays in each of our lives.

The politics of the Middle East is handled plot wise in the lives of two of the professor's sons. The elder, Naquib, wants radical change and becomes a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. The younger, Kalifa, chooses to join the army and to work for change within the system. The choices each makes leads to a tragic outcome that is unforeseen. During one of Kareem's pilgrimages he comes in contact with Daesh and are held hostage. The scenes involving Daesh are not easy to read, but anyone familiar with the work of ISIS, as Americans refer to Daesh, will not be surprised. Their eventual rescue is one of the most exciting scenes.

Kudos to Mr. Peace for providing us with a book full of strong women characters. Although he is a widower, we learn about the strength of his former Peace Corps American wife who stayed in Egypt after her tour ended and later became a Coptic Christian. He is a realist; she an idealist, but they accepted and respected each other and she was able to exert her quiet influence on him in many ways. Naquib's wife, Anisa, is the wage earner while Naquib is in school and takes care of the children while she is at work.

Kalifa is unmarried, but later marries the daughter of another strong character, Adeeba, a friend of his wife's whose husband had died about eighteen months before Elizabeth. Adeeba is a professor of Egyptian history also at the American University and the author of several books. She has strong opinions and is not shy about expressing them. The romantic relationship that eventually develops between Kareem and Adeeba is one of mutual respect and admiration, but also one with passion. The final strong female character is Wahida, Kareem's daughter who works for the Red Crescent and presents the viewpoint of a young Moslem woman challenged by life as a Moslem in the modern world and in a Middle Eastern country.

This book has much to offer the reader - a fast moving plot, stimulating ideas to ponder, insight into the contemporary Middle Eastern world, and well developed characters both the main ones and those whose places are more peripheral. I recommend it most highly.

Complex and Thoughtful, Yet Thoroughly Captivating and Engaging (5 stars on Amazon)

By M Dixon

Kareem al-Busiri is a study in contrasts – an Egyptian Muslim, now widowed, having been married to an American Christian. A philosophy professor who is unsure of God's existence but still considers himself religious. A modern man, attracted to his late wife's best friend, yet too traditional to approach her. And a father to grown children also polar – one son enlisting in the army to protect his country and way of life, the other secretly supporting the radical Danesh, also known as ISIS. When a mysterious woman, who may or may not be Saudi royalty, and who may or may not be real, challenges him to locate "Father Khaliq" for her, he embarks on a journey both physical and spiritual that changes his life. Author William Peace has woven a compelling narrative that explores the issues of religion, politics and social change, all while avoiding the pitfalls of becoming a treatise. Instead, "Seeking Father Khaliq" is a moving study of a family caught up in the volatile turmoil of the times, and a father who finds that moving closer to God is a way to navigate forward. Beautifully written with vivid depictions of religious pilgrimages, the book also delivers three dimensional characters fully realized and equally empathetic. Highly recommended for those who want to know more about this important part of the world, but as much to be enjoyed simply on its narrative merits