



Samson: A Savior Will Rise

Shawn Hoffman

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“You are a man who has vowed to protect his family, even at the cost of your own life. So you have no other choice. . . . You must fight, Samson. You must.”

The year is 1941, and Samson Abrams makes a life-or-death decision that lands him, and his entire family, in the notorious concentration camp Auschwitz. When Samson is recognized by Dr. Josef Mengele and Commandant Rudolf Höss as a former boxing champion, he is ordered box for their entertainment. A win means extra rations, but the penalty for losing is death in the gas chambers.

One question haunts Samson as he and his family face one atrocity after another: Where is God in the face of such evil? An unexpected friendship between the Jewish Samson and the Polish Catholic priest Maximilian Kolbe challenges Samson to examine what little is left of his faith, but will it give him strength when he needs it most?

Based on true stories, *Samson: A Savior Will Rise* blends Shawn Hoffman’s thorough research with a compelling narrative that provokes questions about faith, hope, and love.

Samson: A Savior Will Rise Details

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Author : Shawn Hoffman

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Ulrike says

Ik heb al ontzettend veel boeken gelezen over Wereldoorlog II en de kampen zoals Auschwitz en Birkenau, ik ben er zelfs al 2 maal geweest. Toch was dit een van de meest waanzinnige, gruwelijke, meeslepende verhalen dat ik ooit gelezen heb. Zeer goed geschreven, ik heb soms echt moeite gehad om het weg te leggen.

Het is voor mij een van de eerste boeken waarin dokter Mengele en zijn experimenten zo gedetailleerd beschreven zijn, ook al is het slechts een kleiner deel in het boek tegenover het boksverhaal.

Een echte aanrader als je tegen de gruwelijke details kan.

Rhonda says

Every time I read a book on the Holocaust, I shudder with the brutal reality of it and the sheer evil that existed, and the horrendous actions committed in its name. I think I have read the worst, then another book, like this one comes along and a whole new level of evil actions and pure brutality is exposed and tears my heart apart. This book is just that, brutal, horrific, evil, heart and gut wrenching yet still uplifting and inspirational.

Christian Fiction Addiction says

"Samson" is an incredible read, weaving faith into a heart-breaking tale that I found impossible to put down. Samson Abrams is a character like no other, a man who finds himself at the mercy of Dr. Joseph Mengele in Auschwitz, and one who must watch his family die before his very eyes. The book is very well written, drama at its very best, with scenes that played across my mind in vivid detail. Samson's struggles to survive and his determination to succeed for the sake of his family utterly inspires, and knowing that the story is based on true events makes it all the more gripping. Many of the scenes are gruesome as they depict events that are difficult to even imagine. This book reminds me that evil is alive and well in the world around us, yet it also reminds that God will prevail. Some of the conversations that take place between Samson and a priest at the camp, Kolbe, have stuck with me well beyond the final page, as I ponder the place of suffering in the world and how that fits with who God is. And, the triumph that readers are left with, despite the ending of the book, is a wonderful reminder of God's love and grace to sustain our spirits no matter the circumstances in our lives. Be prepared to give up a few hours of your life as you devour this book, and expect a few tears along the way!

Filled with deep emotion, and written at an unstoppable pace, "Samson" is a "must-read" for this fall. I give it my highest recommendation and a rating of 5 out of 5 stars.

A review copy was received from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. I was in no way compensated for this review.

Cayleigh Lazarides says

A beautifully written novel based on true events. I could not put this book down. I especially loved the time that Shawn Hoffman put into his research. He adds several footnotes throughout the book that inform the reader of Jewish and Nazi culture, as well as life in Auschwitz. By the end, I felt like I had been on a journey with Samson. I felt love, fear, anger, and sadness right along with the characters. Be warned that this novel is not for the fainthearted...it is very graphic. Although the book delves deep into the idea of faith, I would not recommend this if you are looking for something especially uplifting.

Faith says

Any book that accurately retells the horror of the Holocaust will be a heart-wrenching book.

There are not words to describe it. There are no words strong enough.

Samson: A Savior Will Rise gives us faces and names and personalities of a Jewish family in the Krakow Ghetto.

Abraham and Hannah, the aged patriarch and matriarch. They were frail in body yet strong in spirit.

Samson, the eldest son, the prizefighter who should have competed in the 1936 Olympics.

His wife, Rebecca, beautiful even though she's slowly being starved to death, with part of her radiance coming from the new life she carries in her womb.

Their other three children, Simon and Leah and Rachel. The boy played classical violin with as much skill as a man twice his age, and the twin girls shed joy and laughter everywhere.

Samson's brother Zach, slim, soft-spoken, scholarly and his love, Esther. The two of them planned to marry as soon as possible, and their hope was to be as happy as Samson and Rebecca.

Samson's sister, Sarah, and her baby Elijah. Sarah's husband had already been taken away.

All of them lived in one room, all of them dependent on Samson to bring their daily bread.

And then the day comes when Samson rescues a boy from Nazi brutality, breaking one officer's nose and snapping the other one's jaw. In retaliation, his whole family is sent to the camp, to Auschwitz.

And there Samson is offered a sadistic bargain that will either preserve his life or send him to his death.

A boxing match, the winner lives and receives extra food, the loser goes to the gas chambers.

And so Samson will enter the ring again, and he will send his opponent to his death to try to save his family.

And as Samson fought, unleashing his fury on his opponents, matching his muscle against the Nazis, he became a symbol for the whole camp. He became a symbol of renewed hope when it seemed insane to have hope... and he became a symbol of their faith.

He fought with the strength of a man preserving his own life and desperate to free his family, and he fought with a strength that couldn't all be his own. He was battered, broken, "held together with stitches at the seams." Yet somehow, every time he fell, he rose to fight again, and when he fought he won.

There are so many questions laid on your heart as you read.

The perverse, wicked things done to Samson's family...

How could the world have allowed that to happen?

How could "civilized" and "educated" people ever rationalized or condoned that depravity?

How could we forget the wickedness in the grossly fallen heart of man... how could we ever convince

ourselves that we are all basically good?

How, when this massive sin flourished a mere 70 years ago, how could we train children today that there is not absolute truth, no absolute definition of good and evil?

How could we forget?

Thank you Booksneeze for my copy of Samson: A Savior Will Rise.

Mark says

Phew, what's that smell? Jews will love the historical accuracy and the focus upon The Church's well established heroism during WWII -- but to be fair, the idea of ripping off and somehow making an even worse version of "Triumph of the Spirit" gives this its raw fragrance. Can't wait for that well thought out fight night when Hitler actually went to Auschwitz and Mengele laces them up. Wow, finally a writer who really knows how to write about sports. It's like when Stallone wrote "Rocky" without all that ... "talent and skill" baggage.(less). The emperor has no clothes, even if he does go to church with you.

Samantha McLaughlin says

This book changed my life.

As an avid reader of Holocaust literature, I was extremely excited to have discovered Samson while on a "bookstore trip." The prose is absolutely well-written and devourable. I. Could. Not. Stop. Reading. And to know that the story was based off true events is simply mind-boggling. I don't cry very often, but the ending made me tear up. Fair warning, to all the readers out there.

My hat is off to Shawn Hoffman for writing such an amazing, literary work. I will not be able to forget the characters or brilliant diction anytime soon. So, thank you, Mr. Hoffman. You have changed my life.

Misty Nordyke says

I have read many books about the Holocaust, concentration camps, and Auschwitz and I have never been so touched by reading a book as this one. I knew that it was a horrible time and place but I was stunned to read some of the things that happened in this book. My heart, soul, feelings, and everything was back there in that time with them. I can not imagine how some survived.

This is a story about Samson and how helping a child eventually leads him and his family to the concentration camp in Auschwitz. When Samson is recognized as a former boxing champion he is ordered to fight. A win means extra food, but if you lose you go straight to the chamber.

The chamber is the gas chamber and this means death. Samson's family faces unimaginable atrocities. Samson soon starts asking where is God in all this?

This is based on a true stories. The author also provides notes in the chapters to help you understand things and clarify them better. There are also links to web sites for more information on topics.

I would recommend this book to those who really wants to read a book that takes you back in history to that horrible place, as if you were there.

I could not put it down!! ** WARNING WILL CAUSE TEARS **

** I received this book for free from BookSneeze for my honest review. **

Ben says

Snoeihard. Mijn verwachtingen waren onjuist. Natuurlijk moesten er wel horrorverhalen instaan over de medische experimenten. Wat een gruwel. Blij dat het boek uit is.

Rebekah Gyger says

Just... Wow. The research put into this book is amazing. It comes with pictures and footnotes and other information in the back. For a history nerd like me, that just makes this awesome. Add to the historical facts, retold Holocaust stories and Samson from the Bible, and you have a very emotional read. The horrors Samson suffered were atrocious and will haunt me for a while to come.

There were some things that I did not enjoy. Every now and again there was a little bit of head hopping, and at one point Höss refers to Samson by name, even though Höss has not learned his name yet. On the whole though, I enjoyed this story about a man God used to give hope to the Jews.

*The story of Samson is not a true story, though it is drawn from many other true stories. The content is, while not described in detail, graphic and upsetting.

I received this book in exchange for an honest review from Thomas Nelson publishers.

If you wish to know what other books I back, go to my blog at <http://backingbooks.blogspot.com/>

Henk-Jan van der Klis says

During World War II, Jewish men were forced to box on Saturday night for Nazi entertainment. The winner got extra food. The loser went to the gas chambers. Shawn Hoffman took this aspect of the cruelties in Auschwitz-Birkenau, the stories, Saul, an Auschwitz survivor, told the author, and recent discoveries on the medical experiments Dr. Joseph Mengele did there to build his plot.

The Jewish Samson Abrams, 1936 Olympic boxing participant, made a life or death decision in 1940 in Polish Kraków rescuing a young Jewish boy beaten by the Nazis. That act costed him and his family much. He tried to escape the penalty (being brought to Auschwitz), but let the love for his dear ones prevail. They end up in the concentration camp, labored, digged mass graves and tried to survive. As soon Samson is recognized as the former boxer, lieutenant colonel Rudolf Höss offered Samson a deal: boxing matches on Saturday night. The loser will be sent to the gas chambers, the winner gets an additional share of food. Remarkably, Samson is stronger than all of his opponents. Maximilian Kolbe, a Catholic monk also at the

camp, is the one that calms down the anger and rage again and again. Don't blame God for the evil men does. The monk strongly testifies about his Christian motives to help the Jews and stand for justice amidst the greatest cruelties you can think of. Is there a God? Why do the Jews have to suffer all these? Who can you trust? Will human power prove the Jewish to be superior to the Aryan race? "Not by might or power, but by the Holy Spirit..." is the lesson from both Old Testament Samson as well as this 20th century giant, tormented by the ongoing murders on his family members.

Step by step you feel your anger grow, as injustice does. And where you feel that it's too coincidental to have Adolf Hitler, Heinrich Himmler, Höss, and the angel of Death Mengele show up in this same plot, Hoffman throws in additional rounds, changed rules, bruises and opponents. After a culminating fight with Max Schmeling even Mengele is challenged to get in the ring. Samson: a Savior Will Rise strikes nerves, even though foot notes and historical details may distract for a minute. A powerful work of historical fiction.

Gabrielle Macklin says

I was blown away by this book. I have read countless Holocaust books, but none as powerful, insightful or as graphic as this one. Never before has a man's journey been so filled with torture and agony, but to find an ending at his...

The book is based on an amalgamation of stories and characters, I can only wish and hope the strength and courage seen in this book was once real.

One thing that was most interesting and most horrifying was looking at Dr. Joseph Mengele as a person, as a character - rather than just a name associated with atrocities. He is given a voice and thoughts in this book - thoughts that may haunt you.

This book is not for the weak of heart or stomach. Prepare yourself, only read in the light.

A prayer to those 6 million, remembered forever.

Jason says

Shawn Hoffman's book "Samson," subtitled "A Savior Will Rise" is a fascinating novel exploring the bonds of family during the most horrific circumstances of World War II.

Samson Abrams and his family are imprisoned in the infamous concentration camp Auschwitz. When Commandant Rudolf Hoess recognizes him as a former Olympic champion boxer, Samson is forced to fight for the entertainment of the local Nazi officers. The deal offered to him: if he wins, he gets extra rations; but if he loses, he is sent to death in the gas chambers.

The book is billed as "based on true events." However, it is not strictly a historical work. This is more of a historical novel. Throughout the book, Hoffman inserts footnotes to document actual events that occurred, upon which he bases his story. The characters are, in the words of the book, "amalgamations."

With some artistic license being taken, Hoffman is free to create a dramatic story worthy of telling on the movie or TV screen. The author is an actor himself, as well as a screenwriter. The book has the feel of

having been written with the intent to market the story as a movie. The screenplay for "Samson" has won awards at film festivals.

The subject of the victims' plight is treated with the utmost respect by the author, who met with a survivor from Auschwitz and was told stories of his experiences there. Readers will appreciate both the suspenseful story, as well as the historical information being presented.

Depictions of the horrific conditions and torture of prisoners can make some squeamish, but the author does not want people to forget this part of history. Worse still, there are those that deny the Holocaust happened. Despite the unpleasant nature of the setting, stories like this need to be told so we can learn from the past, and avoid ever having something like this happen again. The author takes care to present the major points without dwelling on gory details.

Samson's fights in the ring offer hope to other prisoners who have none, and serve as an inspiration for those struggling with faith in God.

This is a suspenseful story that will keep readers turning pages to see what happens next. Fans of history, boxing, and stories of a man's love for his family, will enjoy this book.

With elements of fact and fiction blended together, perhaps the book should be called faction. Well blended and documented for the reader to know the difference between actual historical events and character driven drama, this book should not be missed.

4 stars out of 5.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from the publisher through the BookSneeze.com® book review bloggers program. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

Stephanie says

Oh, my, this book! This is an amazing yet very difficult book to read. Obviously dealing with the subject of the Holocaust, it is bound to be tough. For those who may be a sensitive and have a difficult time with descriptive writing on such subjects, this may not be the book for you. The book is based on real people and real events and the author doesn't sugar coat the horror of life for the Jews in Auschwitz. It is very well written and brings the time period to life. He did a great job of making the "characters" real and evoking deep emotions of compassion for those suffering at the hands of evil and anger for those carrying out the atrocities. The one thing I didn't expect from this book was the spiritual aspect. It was beauty in the midst of ashes. As difficult as this book is to read, I highly recommend it.

Barbara Kinsky says

Another WWII/Holocaust masterpiece! Be warned though. This is extremely graphic describing Dr Josef

Mengele's experimentation on the Jews. Gut-wrenching but brilliant read! 10 Stars if I could :)
