



Wrath of Ashar

Angus Wells , Larry Elmore (cover artist)

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In the north, a fire rages through the world-spanning forest of Beltrevan. Out of the flames is born terrifying being with monstrous powers--Taws, messenger of the fire-god Ashar. The ancient prophecies say he will raise a great Horde from the warlike tribes of the north to bring destruction to the peaceful Kingdoms of Tamur, Ust-Galich, and Kesh. In the south, a young prophetess of the order of the lady forsakes her vows of celibacy to bear a child, for the Book of Kyrie says that a champion will arise from Tamur to meet the challenge of the Usurper. The boy is named Kedryrn. And as he nears manhood it seems that he may indeed be the child of prophecy, for he wields powers that none outside the Sisterhood have ever claimed. He may be the last, desperate hope for the survival of the Kingdoms--but the Usurper has learned of Kedryrn as well, and his armies are on the march

Wrath of Ashar Details

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From Reader Review Wrath of Ashar for online ebook

Asocialhermit says

Good writing if a little long-winded and a decent plot but the characters are very reminiscent of his other books. Not a lot of dialogue either which can be a good or bad thing depending on your taste. Nice book to pass the time if you don't have anything else to read.

Angie says

This is a surprisingly good book; I thought it would be rather run of the mill, but the characters, plot, and background all carry it forward, and it's an enjoyable read.

My quibbles are few. First, the use of 'myriad' myriad times. Everything is myriad, a myriad, or a myriad of. (If you're a quibbler about the use of myriad, I like Grammar Girl's explanation. I myself prefer "myriad" alone, as in "myriad bonfires," though my quibble isn't with how it's used, simply how often. There are plenty of other words to describe "a lot of," and the constant use of "myriad" to denote "lots" really took away the power and the poetry of the word itself.

Second quibble is that, in the beginning, there isn't much of a time sequence given- and throughout, it's unclear how old the hero, Kedryn, is. While it's not overly important on its own, I spent the first few chapters under the impression that Taws comes out of the fire exactly when what's-her-face is making the decision to go forth and bear the kingdom's savior, Kedryn- so that it appears as though Taws will have at least a decade to rampage before Kedryn is old enough to swing a sword, let alone be the savior of the kingdom. Then, while it's implied that Kedryn has just about hit puberty or so, and is thus old enough to be blooded as a warrior and become a man, he seems to transition from a roughly 12-year-old boy to perhaps a 16 or 17-year-old. It's confusing- and while not overly important, again, an age range does give context and meaning to the story itself. While plenty of fantasy stories choose a faster timeline for their characters (as in, a child becomes an adult around onset of puberty, instead of late teens/early 20s), it needs to be made more clear. An actual stated age isn't necessary, it just seems like a 12-year-old kid is quite suddenly acting and speaking much older for no good reason.

Thirdly, and this I know is the kind of thing that is probably a waste of my brainpower to think about, and your time to read, and it's such a fine line that it's only because I'm a nitpicker that I bring it up. It's the use of the word 'amen' in a religious setting in fantasy books that otherwise have a fully developed religion. While amen in Hebrew can be a general affirmation (it essentially means "so be it") and is a word used in other languages as well, and obviously having come into common usage in English so that it's relatively ubiquitous, for most English speakers it does have a religious connotation. So that, when used in a religious context, it is generally associated with Judaism/Christianity/Islam. This is where you could argue about trickle-down or whatever; people use it all the time simply to agree with each other, which is its basic function as a word. But at the same time, if you've got a fully fleshed-out religion, in a wholly separate universe that's never had exposure to Hebrew, Arabic, etc., then the use of amen is rather jarring- it doesn't *fit*. With a peaceful goddess-like religion, it would make more sense to simply make up a new response to someone's prayers or statements (using "amen" to respond to "may the Lady bless you" is a little jarring, using something like "and Her blessings also on you" would simply fit a lot better with the theme of that religion).

So, you know, nitpicky stuff, surprisingly good book considering it looks like your average cheesy SF novel, though it isn't as succinct as it could've been.

Isca Silurum says

Inappropriate use of language which gets in the way of the plot, you get feeling great use made of a thesaurus! But started series so as bloody minded will have to finish.

Joe says

Well written and engaging, if not cliched. Not a bad book by any means, but does not bring much new to the genre. Just a strong, if typical, fantasy novel.

Ron says

A very readable fantasy story in the tradition of Robert E. Howard. A young warrior from a provincial part of the world becomes the hero of an entire nation and goes on, battling demons and dark gods to ultimately ascend a throne. The descriptions of the defence of the frontier fortifications protecting the civilized world from the horde of forest-dwelling barbarians beyond the wall seem to prefigure some of George R. R. Martin's ideas.

Susan says

My friend Sandy loved these books and insisted I read them. They were fun reads, but nothing to write home about.

Chris Decker says

I don't care what you guys say, I like this book.
