

The Pharaoh and the Gods: The Beginning of Civilization: Mythologies Told True: Book 5

Dennis Wammack

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From Sinai to Canaan and Phoenicia, the historical novel The Pharaoh and the Gods travels eternal landscapes at a spirited pace.

Dennis Wammack's ambitious historical novel *The Pharaoh and the Gods* reimagines ancient history, myths, and legends.

This saga centers on ancient Egypt, which is ruled by the gods Isis and Osiris. Then Egyptian gods Set and Horus enter into fierce conflict, with Set being the more vicious aggressor. Though Set and Horus are supposed to share a balance of power, Set is obsessed with becoming the dominant force; intrigue results.

When the novel begins, Prince Djoser is the visionary heir to the Egyptian throne. After the death of his father, King Nebka, the prince arranges for his mother to marry Khasek, a respected general, and Khasek becomes king. Djoser knows that it is not yet the right time for him to become pharaoh and that he must instead work with Horus to expand Egypt's glory. Also included are Hetephe, a Nubian woman who is brave, shrewd, and one of the finest archers in the world, and Anath, who is cunning and uses her feminine wiles to achieve power. Anath is beholden to Set, whom she insists saved her from "the gutter." And ten-year-old Asherah is calm and detached; having accepted that she is a "chosen one," she expects to be "thrown into the great fire as a sacrifice."

The book is vast in scope and depicts expeditions, battles, festivals, human sacrifice, and interactions between gods and mortals, all covered via distinctive atmospheric details. Here, military forts are checked for hidden scorpions; people enjoy honeyed milk, fruit, and nuts; and time is marked by moon cycles and solstices. Intimate and reflective moments flesh this world out further, as with a conversation about power and ethics between Horus and his mother, Hathor.

But as people travel between kingdoms, the book's progression becomes erratic. Some descriptions are rushed through to distancing effect, as with "Cymbals clashed. Horns blew. Singers sang" in the course of an otherwise rousing scene. And the novel is further hindered by misused punctuation and misspelled words. Elsewhere, fervid interior monologues and long conversations in which the speakers are ill distinguished also muddle the book's delivery. Further, the supplemental index does not include all of the featured characters.

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