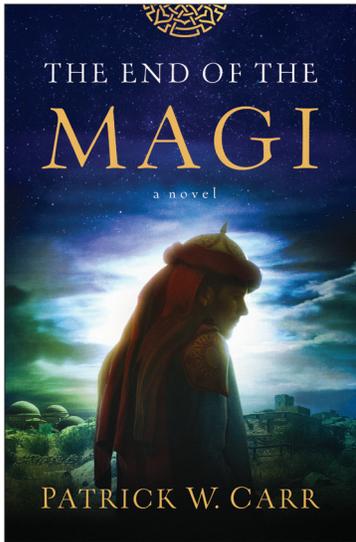




QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH PATRICK W. CARR



The End of the Magi

by Patrick W. Carr

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1. Up to now, you've focused on writing novels in the fantasy genre. What made you decide to publish a straight-up biblical-historical story like *The End of the Magi*?

Back in the mid-1990s, I was deep into a series of Bible studies on tape by a Bible teacher named Chuck Missler. It was amazing how he opened my eyes to the complexity and perfection of God's Word. During a study on the book of Daniel, he mentioned that the Magi might have been a sect of wise men that Daniel created in response to receiving the prophecy of the 70 weeks. That idea really fired my imagination and gestated there for a couple of decades. When I finished THE DARKWATER SAGA series, I decided to begin researching the Parthian Empire.

2. What was the most difficult part of writing the story of the Magi?

I guess I was a little naïve. I thought I'd be able to do some research and write the story. It turns out there's not that much information on the Parthian Empire. We actually have more information on the previous empire (Assyrian) than we do the Parthian Empire. I had to do a lot of digging, but the information I uncovered was fascinating. Their burial beliefs in particular were kind of shocking and surprising, and it was a lot of fun to be able to include those sorts of details in the book.

3. What do you think will surprise readers most about this novel?

I think what will really surprise readers is that the most outrageous plot points in the story are those that are ripped verbatim from history. For example, the Parthian Emperor Phraates held the title of "king of kings" like the emperors before him. I never knew that. So when the early fathers described Jesus that way, what they were in effect saying was "You lived with counterfeits claiming that title, now here's the real deal." Also, Phraates came to power by killing his father and about forty (not a typo) brothers and half brothers. It was a very bloody time in history.

4. *The End of the Magi* releases November 5th. Is that by design, and would you call this a Christmas book?

The release date is absolutely by design. When I pitched the idea to Dave Long at Bethany House, I made it a condition that we had to make it a November release. Dave graciously agreed, which just shows how awesome he and the people at Bethany House are, because that made for a pretty narrow window on finishing the manuscript and editing it. As for as calling it a "Christmas book," I would love nothing more than for people to pause during the Christmas season and read a story rooted in history surrounding what we're celebrating. Of course, it wouldn't be one of my novels unless I tried to give the reader more than they paid for.

5. Are there any big surprises in the novel?

That depends on how it's read and some possible interpretations of the Bible. I was surprised where the research took me, and I think most people will be as well. The birth of Jesus didn't occur in a vacuum. There was a very large world filled with conflict and politics happening at the time, with quite a bit of it focused on the birth of Christ. Most of the chapters near the end of the book follow short quotes from the Bible, so you might want to have your favorite version on hand as you read about the Magi.

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