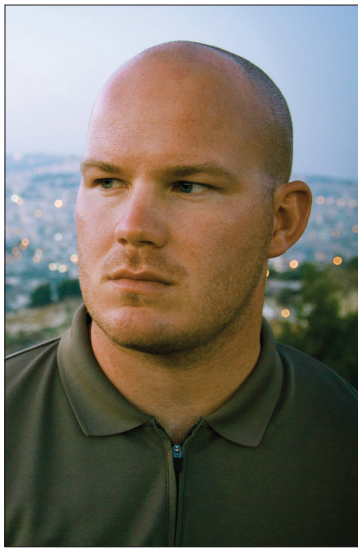


QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH CLIFF GRAHAM

Shadow of the Mountain: Exodus

Shadow of the Mountain #1

by Cliff Graham

Trade Paper ISBN: 978-0-7642-1475-2

\$15.99; 304 pp.

Ebook ISBN: 978-1-4412-2855-0

Release Date: May 2015

Media Contacts

 FICTION PUBLICIST: **Amy Green**

952-829-2596

agreen@bethanyhouse.com

 CANADIAN MEDIA: **Ellen Graf-Martin**

519-342-3703

ellen@grafmartin.com

Please send tear sheets to:

Amy Green

11400 Hampshire Ave. S.

Bloomington, MN 55438

1. How is *Shadow of the Mountain: Exodus* different from your previous series, starting with *Day of War*?

I got started in fiction with the LION OF WAR series, about the battles of King David and his elite warriors known as the Mighty Men. It was born out of my time as a soldier and then pastor, trying to find ways to tell Bible stories in a manner that men could relate to.

It opened up a career for me, and I began to travel and speak to many groups about the elements of the story of David I believed were important for us to grasp. As I met men of all ages and cultures, I noticed the older guys seemed to feel left out of church activity. They're good for tithing and volunteering for the early morning stuff, but ultimately people believe their sun is setting and it is time for them to step out onto the iceberg and float toward the horizon.

In my new series of novels, SHADOW OF THE MOUNTAIN, I wanted to retain the emphasis on men at war, but also portray the challenges and opportunities of growing older. To go back to a time when gray hair was a badge of honor and the young revered the elderly for their wisdom and experience.

2. What's something interesting you learned during your research that readers might not know?

I'm sure others know this, but it is not common knowledge. It's likely that Caleb was not an ethnic Hebrew, but instead a member of a desert tribe known as the Kenizzites. He's one of the first examples of how God's covenant with Israel was intended for all people.

3. What do you hope readers take away from this novel?

This is the gritty, intense portrayal of the journey from slavery in Egypt through the wars of conquest in Canaan through the eyes of Joshua and Caleb. It's about the nature of masculine friendship over a lifetime and an indictment of the idea that once you reach a certain age, you can just retire and take it easy. After working many years in ministry and speaking at conferences, churches, and to men's groups, I noticed the older men in the crowd tended to feel left out of what was happening, and as a result had begun checking out to spend time on the golf course. I thought it was time we had a look at a biblical character who defied the idea of "retirement."

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4. What does living like Caleb look like in the modern world?

Whenever I hear men in the church complain that there are “no more great battles to fight” and use that as an excuse to disengage, I have to take deep breaths.

Last I checked, there are still orphans and widows in the world.

Last I checked, there are still people drowning in despair who need hope.

I became involved over the past year with several organizations, including Operation Underground Railroad and Breaking Chains Ministries. These groups, and others like them, fight the evil of child sex trafficking by conducting undercover, government partnership-based rescue missions. It’s more than just raising awareness; it’s about taking action to live out the principles in James, chapter 1, about defending the weak and oppressed. It’s what men ought to be about.

I have been blessed to be a part of the rescue of over 150 children through these organizations through undercover work and sting operations. A drop in the ocean of the problem, but action nonetheless.

The duty is to fight and not to give up because the problem is overwhelming. I donate a large percentage of everything I sell to help fund these missions and organizations. It’s a good battle, and not one we should retire from.