



Darien's Rise

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"There are two moons in the sky!" Tiptoeing gingerly, Kyle and Anna cross the groaning floorboards of the old, abandoned house. Suddenly, a scream erupts! Crashing through the floor, they dangerously tumble down beneath it. But when they pick themselves up amid the dust and debris, they find themselves in a strange and mysterious new world - a place nothing like their hometown of Odyssey!

Bewildered by their new surroundings, Kyle and Anna are soon entangled in a web of intrigue, betrayal, and danger - a struggle to the death between a power-mad king and his valiant young general - a fight to determine who will rule the Kingdom of Marus!

Despite their best efforts, the ultimate outcome rests in the hands of the powerful and mysterious Unseen One, and the lives of Kyle and Anna will never be the same. Will they ever find their way back home? Or are they destined to live forever in this strange new land?

Darien's Rise Details

Date : Published September 27th 1999 by Tommy Nelson (first published 1999)

ISBN : 9781561797738

Author : Paul McCusker

Format : Paperback 208 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Christian Fiction, Christian, Fiction, Childrens, Christian Fantasy

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From Reader Review Darien's Rise for online ebook

Sarah says

Even as an adult, I found the suspense and action to be absolutely thrilling. I do admit some bias, though: I grew up with Odyssey, on which this series is based. True to its mother series, I loved the symbolism and intrigue that keeps me turning pages even though I know the story it's based on.

Drake TAG says

Kyle and Anna, brother and sister are at their grandparents for the summer, and don't have anything to do. Then their uncle shows up and talks about a secret fort in the woods, and that's where the book starts.

In this large house that is seemingly haunted, Kyle is searching the upstairs with his sister, but falls through the floor. Anna however escapes the falling floor and rushes into a room, where she is engulfed in a bright light.

The two find themselves somewhere else besides the fort, Kyle on the run with a young man named Darien, and Anna stays with a man called the Old Judge. They don't seem to know where they are, but realize they are far away from home when they spot not one, but two moons in the sky.

Trying to find each other, and helping a man who is apparently next in line to being king, the two go on the most bizarre adventure of their life.

Star Shining Forever says

This was a pretty cool book! The setting is like late 1800s America, so it's not original. Neither is the way the kids get into the magic world through a portal in our world.

But the hero Darien is David, and in the Bible David's story is super cool. I love the story of David, and this was a great version. The siblings and their roles are a nice touch.

King Haddock says

This first book in Adventures In Odyssey Passages is definitely the best by a long shot. McCusker does an amazing job retelling the story of how David became king, while adding much excitement and modern thrill and technologies (like trains). Actually, when I first read the book back in elementary, it took me a while to figure out how the story corresponded with the Bible. Either way, the book is very exciting and enjoyable. I did, however, find it slightly obnoxious how it seems exactly like Narnia and many other children's fantasy books - kids wander off and find themselves in a new world.

Amy says

Read this book a few years ago and LOVED it. I couldn't remember its name until I finally found the person who lent it to me xD The story of David, it was a fun, interesting novel that (if I recall correctly) was well-written.

Athelas Hale says

(I have just realized that, though I read these several years ago, I didn't mark them as read on here. So, in case your jaw just hit the floor, I did *not* read the entire series in one day. :p)

Adagoodreads says

Amazing! I couldn't put this down. If you are looking for adventure with a big dose of values, this is your book. See if you can make the connections with the inspiration.

Shali says

I read this series as a child, and enjoyed them immensely, and recently started reading them to my younger brother- who, incidentally, is named Kyle.

That made the experience ten times better, I must say, to narrate a story while giving pointed looks at my brother whenever the character did something juvenile or awesome.

I love the story, and when reading out loud I sometimes found myself acting out the scenes, instead of just reading them.

It's engaging and entertaining, and the story is a well done parallel to the Biblical story of King David.

It's always refreshing to find a gem like this; an interesting children's book, with a good Christian message, that's easy to read. I would recommend to any Christian, though even those who don't follow Christianity could enjoy the book.

I think it's a good book for a kid to read on their own, but also a good one to be read aloud.

Ellen says

What fun! The Passages series transports the reader to a fantasy world that richly parallels our own Biblical history. In Darien's Rise, the reader can quickly identify David and King Saul. Two visitor children from our own world stumble into Marus through a portal (Wardrobe, anyone?) and find themselves serving as protector and voice of the Unseen One, guiding the main character through many troubling times. What makes it even more interesting is the modern setting of 1958. Marus appears to be a Northern European setting rather than Middle Eastern and there are modern conveniences such as railways and pistols. Even so, the message is not lost. I enjoyed very much seeing how the author interwove the details of both worlds and

maintained the integrity of Scriptural truth. C.S. Lewis would be proud.

Hunter Oda says

The first book of the Passages series was a lot different than I was expecting. It was also a lot better. I was expecting it to be more of a book for little kids but I really enjoyed it even at the age of 15. The book takes place with two young kids, Kyle and Anna, playing in the woods looking for an abandoned house their uncle told them about. Finally they find it and while they're exploring the inside of it, both of them are magically transported to different parts of another world. The two of them experience the story of David and Saul. King David, or in the book his name is Darien, is in a battle when Kyle transports to where David is and he saves his life. Anna is transported to the bad guy's castle and she is caught "spying" on the king. She then gets taken away and is about to be sold into slavery when the old judge saves her. And from that point on the story of David and Saul is told from a new perspective.

There are times when I can get bored from reading and hearing the same Bible story over and over, so that is why I really liked Passages. It tells the story differently and allows you to get a new take on it. I have the rest of the series so I think that the chances of me reading a few more books from the series are pretty high. However, I thought that the book was a little slow at times. I felt like some chapters I wasn't reading because I couldn't put the book down but because I just wanted to get to another good part. It wasn't as action packed or interesting as I was hoping it would be when I first started. I also was hoping that there would be some comedy in the book. Kyle seems like the kind of kid who would be easy to make into a funny and relatable character but he was just kind of plain and simple. And the same goes for Anna.

Overall, I would definitely recommend the book. It kept me interested and it was definitely a great new way to hear some of those classic Bible stories.

AlixNicolee says

This book is AMAZING. I've learned so much from it, and like one of my favorite quotes says, what's the meaning of a book if you don't read it more than once?

Daniel Gaul says

The story of David, told in the setting of Marus - an awesome production!

Rachel says

I listened to the audio series long ago and loved it, so not only did this book bring me back to Odyssey and Passages, but it also gave me a fresh look into the story! I love the simplistic yet colorful descriptions of the characters and the places in Marus. So easy to imagine!

I loved the main character, Darien. He was so chivalrous and a bit restless at times, which altogether made him surprisingly dreamy. :)

And, surprisingly, I also loved villain, King Lawrence. In a way, especially near the end of the book, he almost reminded me of a mixture of both of the King Richards from Shakespeare's plays.

Filled with a nice combination of action and drama (I nearly had a few tearjerker moments), and embroidered with with great spiritual themes, this was truly a great read. I can't wait to read the rest!! :D

Rachel says

I've the entire series and these books are wonderful fiction for children and adults alike...fun little changes to the Bible stories we know and love bring a new perspective without adding to God's Word.

These have a fantasy/sci-fi feel to them but those who know the stories from the Bible well will find it as a treasure hunt to figure out who the characters represent and the meanings in each story...just as you would in a Chronicles of Narnia book. I thoroughly enjoyed the series. Good writing and a fun clean read for children. I think they would make a wonderful bible/book study for homeschooler's and a tool to encourage kids begin to study and dig into the bible on their own to find out what is true and what is fiction.

Lisa says

I don't have a lot of experience with Adventures in Odyssey, which is loosely tied to this series of books. In Darien's Rise, the first installment of the Passages series, a couple of adults discover and read an old story one of them found in a trunk from an estate sale. The story is about two kids who find an old house in the woods and are supernaturally transported to another place and time.

What's cool about this story is that it's based on a story from the Bible. In this case, it's based on parts of the life of King David.

I haven't read a lot of middle grade fiction, but I really enjoyed this book. It is well-written and the parallels are not obvious but also not so subtle that you have to have studied the Old Testament in depth to know it.

The books are promoted as a fresh look at familiar stories, and I would agree with that label. I'm looking forward to reading more of these.

Lisa Blair says

First section of the story was edge of my seat excitement and I really enjoyed it. The second section seemed to just fizzle out and kill off people rather than develop them. It was disappointing to me as a reader.

E.F.B. says

"Passages" is only one of my most favorite children's Christian Fiction series EVAH!!! I've lost track of how many times I've read these books. <3 <3 <3

Josiah says

Plot: C (ripped off "II Samuel" and "The Chronicles of Narnia")

Writing: D (numerous plot holes and direct contradictions)

Vocabulary: D (decent range of vocabulary used improperly - that word doesn't mean what you think it means, overuse, etc)

Level: Easy

Rating: PG-13 (murder, battlefield death, possession by spirits, assassination, suicide, cowardice, kidnapping, slavery)

Worldview: A mysterious god, knowable only to a few whom he chooses, affects the course of events among the people and nations of a world called Maris (which exists in another dimension than ours).

Great idea poorly executed. I do not recommend this book.

Madison says

You've heard of retold fairy tales? Well, this is sort of like a retold Bible story... AU. As a Christian, I loved how this book was simple, yet it really dealt with some deep Christian concepts like faith and what it means to be "chosen".

Ron says

It was definatly one of the top books on my list, i was blown away by how well it was written. It completely changed how i looked at the story of David, i used to think, "Oh, a boy hit a dude with a stone, he died, and became King, yay....." now that i read it i see that it was much more than that, and i could go on and on about this one book, but i wont, maybe later, but not now.....

One of my favorite qoutes in this book is "Were you dreaming before, or are you dreaming now?"

[and the audio drama was the MOST AMAZING THING I EVER HEARD]
