

My 'Bell Mountain' Books



by Lee Duigon

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What would happen if a piece of highly advanced technology, still intact, were to fall into the hands of people living a thousand years after the civilization that produced that technology was utterly destroyed?

That's the question posed in my book, "The Witch Box," No. 15 in my "Bell Mountain" series, the book which I just finished writing a few days ago. No. 14, "Behold!," is awaiting publication.

The world's on fire, and I'm writing fantasy novels? We labor under the chaos of a Biden presidency, and I'm writing these?

Well, yeah.

I do have some readers who say "Enough already! Write something else!" But I also have readers who want more and more of it. Children and adults alike. And I still like writing them, so why not?

I can always turn to the nooze if I want discouragement. I turn to fiction when I want escape. Relief. Whether it's a J.R.R. Tolkien fantasy, an Agatha Christie mystery, or a historical novel by Sir Walter Scott, novels take me out of Camp COVID and show me something better. I can also find escape in chess, Pogo games on my computer, and movies; but the escape provided by a compelling novel is even better. It's a more intense experience, with so much more scope for the

imagination. And if you say you don't need escape, I won't believe you.

Writing fantasy also gives me a way of approaching "big issues" from an entirely new perspective. All sorts of questions can be addressed in a novel. How are we to try to do God's will? How do we cope with a crisis? What is the role of government? How do ordinary people wind up doing extraordinary things? There's nothing in real life that can't be seen and pondered in a novel.

Of course we can have all this by reading history—and hopefully learn from it. We read of things that really happened, and the real people who made them happen, and why other things that should have happened, didn't. The Bell Mountain books are a history of things that never happened, in an imaginary world. You can also say they're book-length parables. And parables don't have to be factual to be true.

Behind all the books in the series is the premise that once upon a time, long ago, the nations of the imaginary world became estranged from God, committed evil acts that earned His wrath, and were destroyed, God having turned them back to where they were a thousand years before. The story itself is set a thousand years after the destruction and tells of a mighty effort, initiated by two children, to repair man's broken relationship with God—who now shakes the world so that the things that cannot be shaken, remain. And are at long last seen and recognized for what they are.

I can't do this all in one book. It may be imaginary history, but all the same it never stops: until the very end, there's always more.

Unlike most fantasies, Bell Mountain does without the services of super-heroes, sorcerers, invincible female warriors who excel at jumpin', spinnin' kicks, brawny barbarians with insatiable sexual appetites, etc., etc. The characters are

ordinary people, men, women, and children, who must do the best they can in highly extraordinary situations. Sometimes their best is not enough. But sometimes it's better than they ever dreamed was possible.

So I'm going to keep on writing these for as long as God gives me stuff to write about. As series go, I'm never going to catch up with Hercule Poirot, Tarzan, or Inspector Napoleon Bonaparte, Australia's greatest bush detective. I won't be here long enough to read everything I want as often as I want. Even as these other authors' series have delighted and inspired me for years and years, so I hope to do the same.

I have discussed these and other topics throughout the week on my blog, <http://leeduigon.com/> . Drop in for a visit, and click "Books" for descriptions of all my Bell Mountain books published so far. My work can also be found at www.chalcedon.edu/ .

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