



# The Scourge of God

*William Dietrich*

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## **The Scourge of God** William Dietrich

The Roman Empire is weakening. In 367 AD, approximately eight years after the great battle at Hadrian's Wall, Roman garrisons begin to hear rumors of barbarian tribes massing to the north. By 449 AD, Attila, the ruler of the Huns, has become the continent's most powerful monarch, his reputation in battle earning him the title "The Scourge of God."

Anticipating an imminent attack by the Huns, Roman leaders negotiate with one of Attila's lieutenants, convincing him to play the part of assassin. He is joined on his mission by a Roman citizen, Jonas, an ambassador dispatched to negotiate a peace treaty with the Huns. When the plot is discovered, Jonas becomes a hostage, forced to fight for his captors if he wishes to remain alive. But he soon learns that Attila intends to conquer Rome itself, and is caught between two mighty empires, both poised for one of the greatest conflicts the world has ever seen. Jonas, knowing his life could be forfeit, has the potential to tip the battle in either direction—and his decision will alter the face of Western civilization.

## **The Scourge of God Details**

Date : Published March 15th 2005 by Harper (first published January 1st 2005)

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## From Reader Review The Scourge of God for online ebook

### Matias Sulzberger says

Es complicado escribir sobre alguien del cual se sabe tan poco como Atila. Por ende, la novela contiene muchos datos que no son del todo reales.

De todos modos, la novela es atrapante y contiene un apéndice donde el autor detalla que datos son reales y cuales no lo son.

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### Christie says

Powerful historical fiction about the fall of the Roman Empire to the Huns. Deitrich admits there's little information, but he did what research he could and successfully created characters that I cared about enough to be interested in the actual battles, which are described in gruesome detail.

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### Ray S says

One of the very best Roman era historical novels, maybe the very best. Unusually, it is unique among Dietrich books for being set in that time period; I wish he would do more in this genre. Keeps you on the edge of your seat even if you are familiar with the actual history.

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### RiverShore says

This historical novel was well written with a number of surprising and little known facts about the historical figures involved (Attila the Hun, Flavius Aetius, Valentinian, etc). The author was able to capture the essence of life during the fall of the Roman Empire: a mixture of hopelessness, futility, frustration and anarchy all created or enabled by a society that no longer prized honesty, discipline, thrift, industry and hard work but instead had grown fat and lazy (like its rulers) off taxing the work of others. Gee...that sounds vaguely familiar.....

Those who are interested in learning from the past mistakes of others would do well to read this. It would also interest those who like battle strategy. As a romance, it had little to offer (I still don't know who the heroine was in love with!). Still, all in all, my husband and I both enjoyed it.

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### Lorena says

Finally I'm done reading ot, and must confess the ending wasn't as I predicted. Maybe a little too much incidence in the belic details, although it's worth reading.

### Shiela says

William Dietrich is quickly becoming one of my “go-to” authors to help satiate my need for entertaining historical fiction. By combining factual information, real historical characters and adding fictional supporting roles, Dietrich makes historical events come to life in a highly adventurous imaginative manner.

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### Steve says

Fantastic historical fiction. I have never read anything on Atilla the Hun and the book brought a common household name but obscure historical figure to life. More interestingly, the description of the late days of the Roman Empire and Constantinople were fascinating. No idea how realistic or accurate, but the author was first a non-fiction writer and historian so I assume it is somewhat accurate.

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### Denise says

2nd book read by this author. Detailed fictional story of Attila the Hun and his hordes and the last battle of the Roman legions in Gaul (modern-day France). Fact blended with stories--some true characters and others created by the author. The weakness of the western Roman empire (ruled by a weak emperor in Rome) combined with the desperation of the eastern empire--based in Constantinople (modern day Istanbul, Turkey). I've read many books about the Roman empire but few about its end times and none (until now) about the peoples' lives as it fell apart around them.

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### Olethros says

-La tardanza en entrar en materia, aunque sea para preparar mejor el momento, suele tener un precio.-

Género. Novela Histórica.

Lo que nos cuenta. Jonás Alabanda, romano de oriente, recuerda los tiempos de la Antigua Roma que, con su imperio ya empequeñecido, fueron testigos del avance de los hunos y su líder Atila, que con mucha ambición, con el maltrecho estado de las tropas romanas, con la excusa que le dio una noble romana y con la torpeza política del emperador parecía ser imparabile durante unos eventos en los que Jonás terminó inmiscuido.

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## **Fernanda says**

Attila's defeat near Chalons is the climax of a story about the clash between the decadent Roman culture and the vigorous, but uncivilized, barbarians from the North. Deep misunderstandings, greed, and treason lead to a great war of nations in order to restore world order and balance.

Attila is just a secondary character, but his strength and legend are such that ignoring him is impossible. Despite the lack of historical and reliable informations about the Huns and their greatest king, this books turns out to be well written and documented.

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## **Jill says**

This is an interesting account of Attila the Hun. Dietrich takes actual historical events, locations, and characters and weaves an intriguingly captivating fictional story around them. While Attila is certainly presented as the ruthless, calculating, and sometimes merciless conqueror that he was, he is also given a human face that causes the reader to ponder the true character and nature of the legendary Attila the Hun. I learned quite a bit of ancient history from this novel, and I was pleasantly surprised that the brutality it documented was not nearly as graphically explicit as I had feared.

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## **Elizabeth says**

So far, it's good. Lots of little details that add to the story. And I'm only on page 20, so that bodes well for the rest of the book, I think. And stories about the decline of Rome are rare, I've found, and the Huns feature heavily. So it should be interesting.

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## **John says**

This is very interesting historical fiction detailing the story of Jonas, a Roman historian and swordsman, caught up in a time when the Roman Empire was threatened by the awesome power of Attila, around 450 AD. It does a good job of giving a picture of the diminishing power of the Roman Empire and the threats it faced on many fronts. It is well researched and a captivating story filled with action, adventure and romance.

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## **Michael says**

Historical fiction, 450 AD. Attila the Hun invades Western Europe, destroying everything in his path. He lost, kind of, but not before leaving a really big scar. He is maybe as bad a guy as anyone in history. No doubt the Romans had it coming, but they stood for something at least, for civilization. All the Huns did was burn and kill.

Again I am interested why these tribesmen came off the Asian Steppe (High Plains) at least three times to obliterate everything they found. Maybe their culture reached a critical mass where cities and civilization were required to maintain a cohesive group, and instead of building them they let off the pressure by attacking far and wide. Living on the plains as I do now, I can see how living there made them really damn

tough. It is just a hard place. Especially for a nomadic people living off the land.

The same thing happened here in North America. The Plains tribes were far and away the most formidable on this continent, and took to the horse as the center of their existence. Apaches, Comanches, Sioux, Crow, Nez Perce, etc. Lived in movable tepees. The land made the same culture and adaptations on two sides of the world. That is a thought I could follow a long way...

I think the Hyksos that attacked and occupied ancient Egypt around 2000BC, the Huns that attacked Rome and Europe around the 400AD, and the Mongols in the 1200's were the exact same crew, mostly unchanged but separated by centuries or millenia. From physical descriptions there is no doubt they were of the same race, and the cultural basis and geographical origin of each is identical, even to the yurts they lived in and tactics they used. And the weapons. Specifically the composite recurved bow paired with overwhelming mounted attack.

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### **Arn Howald says**

This is a dramatization of Attila the Hun's invasion of Roman Europe. I'm very happy that I've read this because I always confuse Attila the Hun and Genghis Khan. You know..."Wait, is Attila the 5th century scourge of God or the 15th century scourge of God?" It turns out he's the one from the the 5th century. Apart from the exciting (and remarkably clear)fight scenes, what I really enjoyed about this book was the history lesson. It's a great idea of what the end of the Roman Empire must have looked like. It wasn't so much that the empire "collapsed" as it was kind of dismantled. Although Imperial influence wained, the "barbarian" tribes (like the Goths and Franks)who were taking over Roman lands found themselves emulating and imitating Roman "civilization," albeit poorly. The remnants of the Roman empire in these lands found themselves making deals instead of governing. For example, a local warlord, chief or decurion would be charged with patrolling and keeping safe a particular valley, and their recompense would be permission to levy taxes. There were no longer uniforms, weapons or even soldiers coming from an increasingly remote and out of touch Imperial center; instead, local authority figures ended up seeing themselves as the representative of Rome in their particular valley. The reader can then see the beginnings of medieval feudalism in such a governing model. At this point, all that was required was the recognition that Rome had no real control over that particular valley and another chunk of the empire would dismantle itself.

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