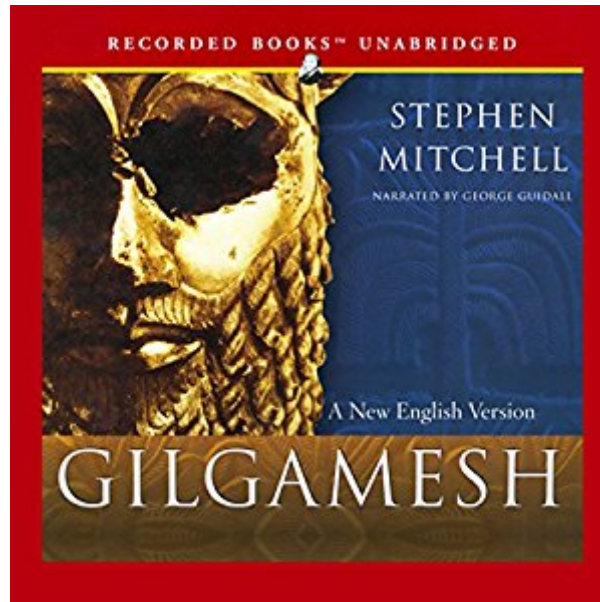




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Gilgamesh: A New English Version



Synopsis

Gilgamesh is considered one of the masterpieces of world literature, but until now there has not been a version that is a superlative literary text in its own right. Acclaimed by critics and scholars, Stephen Mitchell's version allows us to enter an ancient masterpiece as if for the first time, to see how startlingly beautiful, intelligent, and alive it is. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I had not read the entire Gilgamesh story before, but I read some passages in high school English class. This is a great edition that ties together the fragments of the Gilgamesh story that have survived for thousands of years in a way that seems true to the way it was written in the original language and text. I enjoyed listening to the tales, and especially the commentary about the writing of this version and the research involved in piecing together the fragments. Enjoyable, especially for a long road trip.

This version of the great Babylonian epic Gilgamesh is immensely readable and lively, Mr. Mitchell's version does not try to overawe the reader but strives to make the material approachable, and at this he certainly succeeds. My own regret is that the editor/translator - Stephen Mitchell's introduction was so thorough and lengthy that it all but made the actual tale redundant. While informative, the introduction was too much of a blow by blow account to be labeled a proper introduction, it was rather a " synopsis en toto " >Read more

My interest in ancient religions lead me to Gilgamesh. This is the Mitchell version, he's unable to read or translate from the cuneiform but instead took several literal and not so literal English translations, using them he created his own "version". From reading other reviews this has lead to mixed opinions, it seems that he was very loose with the translations and being so free bothers some of the purists. For me personally, I don't mind a very loose rendering, I plan to follow this up with the Andrew George edition and I got this easier to read version as a sort of commentary. The introduction on this edition is some what long about 65 pages and he gives the entire plot summary for Gilgamesh, so if one is worried about spoilers then this should be saved for the end. I read it first and knowing the plot before hand didn't seem to hurt my opinion of the story. Most of the end notes are the more literal translations of certain passages that Mitchell was very free with, I read them but since I'm about to read another edition, I don't think it was worthwhile. As for the Epic of Gilgamesh itself, it was a great read. The version was very easy to read and the story itself was pretty interesting. I got way more into this one than some of the other early texts I've read. I think the most common thing known about Gilgamesh is that it contains its own version of the flood. Of course this brings comparisons to the Genesis account of the flood and the two stories are surprisingly similar, even down to both Noah and Utnapishtim sending out some sort of bird to see if the land was yet dry. One of the main differences between the two is that the boat in Gilgamesh is smaller and cubed, which reminded me of one Genesis commentary I read/heard which pointed out that the boat in Gilgamesh couldn't possibly float so therefore this has to be myth and the Genesis account is the true one, which caused me to chuckle a little. Anyways, the flood account was less than a tenth of this book and the rest was equally fascinating. I'm looking forward to read this one again.

Stephen Mitchell is one of my favorite "theological" writers and Gilgamesh is no exception. He is quite lyrical in his introduction which I really liked. And the translation was great.

GILGAMESH by Stephen Mitchell Read this for my class in English dealing with myths. This was a fast read, actually enjoyed reading this very much. The friendship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu is one of friendship and brothers, and about dealing with loss. With a strong friendship Gilgamesh is having a hard time dealing with his loss and he doesn't like the feeling and he wants his friend and brother back. The friendship between these two is what being a friend really is, Enkidu was sent to be his equal and sure enough his best friend, there for each other when needed, when one is down the other helps the other out. In a way Enkidu was there to guide Gilgamesh to who he is supposed to be. Gilgamesh will go to any lengths to stop this feeling he is feeling for the loss of his friend. In the

beginning he is a man who takes what he wants by the end he has lost the most important person in his life and he does not know how to deal with that. So his mission is to find HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH DEATH? This is one book even though read for class, I will read it again.

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