

Kingdom Series Book Review

By **Terri Camp**, The Old Schoolhouse Magazine

My blissful sleep was interrupted by the sudden sound of my alarm clock buzzing. In an effort to become what I perceive as a better person, I have chosen to try to get up in the morning at a time which seems to be a better hour than my normal nine o' clock. Sighing, I push the snooze button, knowing deep down that the extra seven minutes my clock affords me will actually turn into at least thirty minutes, when I will finally lie in bed somewhere between guilt and resignation.

"Lord, why can't I be all that you want me to be?" I begin my customary conversation with the Lord. Now that my children are a bit older and can tend to their breakfast needs on their own, I find myself enjoying the quiet morning in my room conversing with Jesus. My day goes much smoother when I begin the day practicing being in the presence of God.

When I finally arrive downstairs, most of the children have already eaten break-fast. I can usually tell at a glance based on how many dishes are on the counter which children have not eaten yet. I greet each child with a hello and a smile, reminding them it is now time to begin their JOYS (Joyful Obedient Youthful Service).

By the time they finish their JOYS, my e-mail reading and responding is complete, I've checked my calendar (hopefully I looked at the right year) to see if there are any appointments that I missed yesterday. Mentally I put a checklist in my head of things that I need to do such as Curves at 2:00, with a trip to the post office to mail some orders for my book, Ignite the Fire, if it would quit snowing enough for the roads to get plowed.

All the kids go to their respective locations to do their math. The older kids work on Math U See, while John does two lessons of his Saxon 54. He will go into MUS as soon as he finishes his Saxon book. Briana and Erica work on their Miquon books. When they finish, I work on reading with them, while the older kids finish up their math. Briana hasn't been terribly excited about learning to read herself. She can do it, but needs constant reminders that she can. She enjoys Alpha Phonics more than Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons. Erica and Briana are often competing in both math and reading. Today Erica accused Briana of hiding her math book so Briana could get ahead of Erica. Erica spent ten minutes searching the math shelf without success. Finally, in exasperation, I walked over to the shelf, took everything off, and found her book behind the others. She smiled one of those, "Ha! You'll never get ahead of me!" smiles at Briana.

After most of the kids finish their math, David lets me know that he forgot he was supposed to be doing his math while he was in his room, and instead was reading a book; I assemble them in the living room for read aloud time.

We have a little discussion about which book to read because most of the kids aren't real thrilled with Catherine, Called Birdy. They don't like how disrespectful she is to her dad, and they aren't finding much redeeming about her. We decide to not finish that book at the time. The older boys begin chanting, "Read the *Kingdom* books! Read the *Kingdom* books!" Chuck Black, a homeschool dad who wanted to encourage his children to desire reading their Bibles, wrote the Kingdom books.

David and John have read the books in their own reading time, but want me to read them to the whole family.

I decide to begin the book. With that monumental decision made, the kids run up to gather their read aloud notebooks or quiet activity. David opts to play with Bryan with Bionicles while I read. I would rather he work on copying speeches of famous Americans, but decide to let him play quietly with Bryan while I read. John gets his Notebook with Lots of Stuff so he can draw while I read. Christi spends the time browsing through Arabian Horse Times for pictures of horses that she wants to put in one of her horse notebooks. Cathy decides to draw. Briana and Erica both get books from our old books section to cut out pictures for their notebooks.

Within a couple of minutes I realize the book was a great choice as the kids are all enamored and are participating in discussions as I read.

About an hour after our normal lunch time, one of the kids asked if they could gather food for a living room lunch. I keep reading. Apples, cheese, and crackers make their way into the living room. Every time I take a bite, the kids look at me like I've committed some crime because I have ceased reading for a moment. The snow continued to fall, so I knew going out today wasn't going to be an option.

Hours pass as I continue reading. At the end of each chapter I ask if they've had enough, to which they all shout, "Keep reading!"

Around 4:00 I read the last sentence of the book. As I closed the book, the children began applauding. They tried to convince me to begin book 2, but I decided we needed to get some other things done.

The day had gone by so quickly I hardly believed it was already 4:00. Grabbing a toilet paper tube I announced, "Time to prepare for the King!" The kids quickly began cleaning up their respective locations in order for the house to be presentable when Daddy arrived home.

The rest of the day was spent with the children all chattering about the book and what parts of the Bible they knew were part of the book. During dinner, the kids talked about the book and told Steve some of the more exciting parts.

Some people may not see an entire day of reading as being a productive day in homeschooling. We often look at how many different subjects we can complete in a given day as our measure of productivity. I measure productivity not by number of subjects, but by how the day has affected the hearts of my children. This day was definitely a success!

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