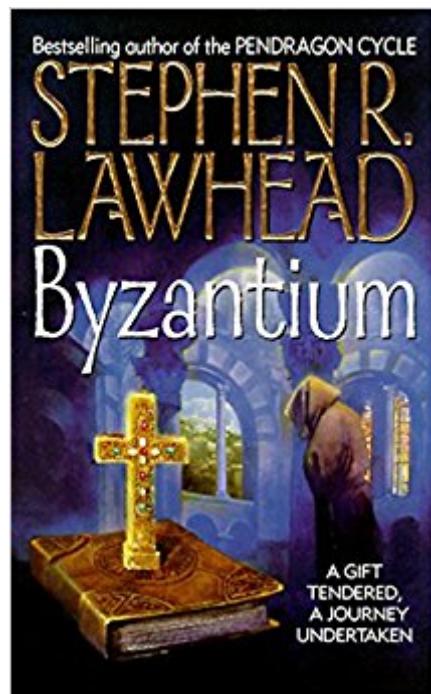


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# Byzantium



## **Synopsis**

Born to ruleAlthough born to rule, Aidan lives as a scribe in a remote Irish monastery on the far, wild edge of Christendom. Secure in work, contemplation, and dreams of the wider world, a miracle bursts into Aidan's quiet life. He is chosen to accompany a small band of monks on a quest to the farthest eastern reaches of the known world, to the fabled city of Byzantium, where they are to present a beautiful and costly hand-illuminated manuscript, the Book of Kells, to the Emperor of all Christendom. Thus begins an expedition by sea and over land, as Aidan becomes, by turns, a warrior and a sailor, a slave and a spy, a Viking and a Saracen, and finally, a man. He sees more of the world than most men of his time, becoming an ambassador to kings and an intimate of Byzantium's fabled Golden Court. And finally this valiant Irish monk faces the greatest trial that can confront any man in any age: commanding his own Destiny.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The bestselling author of the Pendragon Cycle now tells the story of Aidan, a 10th-century Irish monk sent to take the Book of Kells to the Byzantine Emperor in Constantinople. Separated from his fellow pilgrims, Aidan undergoes various exotic adventures, including capture by and life with Vikings, political intrigue in the Byzantine court, enslavement in a caliph's mine and loss of his all-important faith in God. Lawhead is a Christian writer, and here the Christian themes are integral and well developed; he also shows a keen and sympathetic eye for the values and cultures of non-Christians. Marketed as fantasy, the novel contains little overt supernatural content, although

prayer is vital and dreams can be seen as omens. Still, the narrative has the excitement of a good fantasy novel, a vivid historical setting and a lengthy, credible and satisfying plot?just the elements, in fact, that have made Lawhead a commercial success time and again. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Young Aidan is blessed. He is one of a small band of Irish monks chosen to accompany a magnificent hand-painted manuscript--what we now know as the Book of Kells--across the sea to Byzantium. There the gift will be presented to the emperor, who will then be predisposed to hear of the difficulties facing the Irish church. But before reaching landfall in Brittany, the monks' coracle is set upon by Viking raiders who capture Aidan and take him into slavery in their northern homeland. And the Book? It survives, of course, and Aidan is finally able to fulfill his quest. But a Viking raid on Byzantium, an expedition to the Holy Land, imprisonment in a desert prison-mine, wars at sea, and yet more adventures come before the monk's commission is discharged. Not merely a gripping yarn--and it certainly is that--this is also a novel about faith and the tests life plants in its way. Lawhead, author of the popular Pendragon cycle of fantasies, here makes a sure move into mainstream historical fiction. Patricia Monaghan --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I loved this book! It had action, adventure and the thing I loved most was that this book was impossible to predict what was going to happen. A lot of books you can do that with, but not with this one. I was always like, whoa, didn't see that coming! It's a long book, but it held me captive 'til the end. I kept waiting and wondering if he was going to find his faith again and I had no idea how it would end. The ending didn't disappoint. I originally picked this out for my teen boys for homeschool high school literature. They love action and adventure which this has lots of. Both of my boys have advanced reading skills, there's just some heavy scenes, such as graphic violent physical abuse. There's also a scene where he attempts to buy a prostitute's services and lose his virginity, though it doesn't actually occur and it's very brief. Because of those parts, but mainly the graphic images of men being brutally tortured, I'm not going to have my kids read this. Maybe in a few more years. In case you were thinking about this for your teen, I wanted to caution you. Personally I strongly dislike pointless violence, but it had purpose in this book, and since it was such a part of the main character's life it belonged in the book, it was just very well-described. The book is well-written and addicting. I love how you see the character change as the story progresses. The character development is phenomenal! All of the characters are so realistic and you just get sucked into the

story. It's one of the best books I've ever read. This author has a gift! I'll be reading his other books now. If you love historical novels that are full of adventure and keep you guessing at every turn, you will love this story and it will not disappoint!

This is one of those books where one immediately feels a kinship with the main character - Aiden. Well, Aiden, with a simple, but sincere, though untested faith, goes on a mission to Byzantium with 12 fellow monks. What happens in the next 650 pages is a pilgrimage of faith that makes the ministry of the apostle Paul look like a piece of cake. The lessons Aiden learned can only be understood and appreciated by following his steps and missteps. The conclusion powerfully answers the question so many Christians have asked of God, why?

This is a book you will go back to read many times in your life. I'm on reading three or four. This is my favorite Lawhead book by far. His Robin Hood trilogy is also quite good. This book is a great combination of historical fiction and a redemption story. I look forward to sharing this powerful story with my sons once they're old enough (mid-school) to handle some of the more intense portions of the story.

I first read *Byzantium* perhaps twelve years ago and did what I seldom do and read it again. It is just as fresh now as then. It is the best book to be written since the advent of the printing press. No other Author can impart the raw emotions and articulate the finest point of theology like Stephen Lawhead. I have desired to meet with him several times over the years but alas my time draws near. May you read this classic tale and feel the inspiration I feel. Though the book is long, it is not tiresome. In fact it has kept me awake several nights, during both readings.

Rarely has a crisis in faith been matched with such elegant prose and masterful character development. I will leave the full-blown plot analysis to others who seem to delight in the picayune. Myself--I consider this one of the top 10 books I have read...and I have consumed thousands. From beginning to end, this book will satisfy every nook and cranny of your psyche. Mr. Lawhead--I commend you.

One of my favorite books. I have read it many times.

I really enjoyed this book. I had already watched the show Vikings on the history channel and

thought how similar the stories were. I did some investigation and found that the show was not made from this book but that the book was more in line with Saint Adian, an actual saint that experienced some of what the book character did.

Thought provoking, however the realistic explanation of violent events was not necessary to the quality of the story.

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