

Gilgamesh by Joan London. Atlantic Books 2003.

The title of this stylish, sparsely-written and powerful novel relates to one of the great epic pieces of the ancient world known as the Gilgamesh Epic. It tells the story of two friends who travel together and have many adventures, enduring love and loss along the way.

Joan London's novel relates similar themes set against the background of the years between the two World Wars and the Second War itself, focussed especially on a young Australian girl, Edith, who travels with her son to London, then to Armenia, finally returning home via the Middle East. The writing is beautiful and the story stays with the reader long after the book has been finished. With its obscure title this may not be an obvious choice of book but it is a gem well worth reading.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh