



The Ishbane Conspiracy

Randy Alcorn , Karina Alcorn , Angela Randall

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Jillian is picture-perfect on the outside, but terrified of getting hurt on the inside. Brittany is a tough girl who trusts almost no one. Ian is a successful athlete who dabbles in the occult. And Rob is a former gang-banger who struggles with guilt, pain, and a newfound faith in God. These four college students will face the ultimate battle between good and evil in a single year. As spiritual warfare rages around them, a dramatic demonic correspondence takes place. Readers can eavesdrop on the enemy, and learn to stave off their own defeat, by reading The Ishbane Conspiracy.

The Ishbane Conspiracy Details

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From Reader Review The Ishbane Conspiracy for online ebook

Josh says

Great read!

So thankful for the message in this book and for reminders of where my true home is. Thankful for reminders that the enemy is working but only in accordance with my Heavenly Father's perfect will.

Pat says

This is a must read for all young people. It just shows how the devil can be so sneaky!

Sheila says

Cross C.S. Lewis's Screwtape Letters with a modern-day, very American, Christian high-school romantic read and you'll have the flavor of the Ishbane Conspiracy. Ishbane, or Prince Ishbane, is a demon, corresponding with lesser demons who hope to control the destinies of four young American adults. High-schoolers might be tempted with tarot cards, family rebellion, sexual attraction and more. Younger siblings could be tempted to read the evil Harry Potter books or play D&D. And wiser Christian friends might argue that the world was surely made in six sets of twenty four hours because the Bible tells them so.

Told in alternating chapters of modern teen fiction and demon-mail, the story centers on a recent convert whose father has died, and a former gang-member who's moved with his family to Portland to avoid his LA past. School libraries eagerly accept New Age books, but reject the Bible. Meanwhile students play with Ouija boards, drink to excess, take risks with drugs, and wonder why their friends seem always to die. But it all has a very one-time one-place feel. The letters deal with specific themes and lack the timeless relevance of their predecessors. These Christians adhere to a particularly American brand of faith. And sweeping denunciations of Harry Potter, evolution and more might alienate a significant part of the intended audience. That said, there are some very well-dictated examples of Christian witness which, coupled with a deeply emotional ending, make for a worthwhile read. It's not C.S. Lewis, and it's not Robin Jones Gunn, but it's a well-imagined concept and an interesting tale.

Disclosure: Blogging for Books provided this book to me for free in exchange for an honest review.

Yo Leo Ficción Cristiana says

RESEÑA COMPLETA EN ESPAÑOL

Like any young adult book, in this story we know the conflicts that every teenager goes through and how often they do not know how to deal with them.

This novel focuses heavily on the spiritual aspect and how young people are attracted to it , through what is seemingly innocent and harmless.

The narrative is mostly dialogue and has no long descriptions, making it easy to read. However I didn't enjoy the letters too much... I was kind of bored reading them.

I really liked the topics of this book because any young people can identify with those issues.

While this book is aimed to young people, I think this novel should be read by adults and people who work with young people, because it puts at the forefront current issues and problems and how we have react to them.

Bt says

I am 15 and I am a devout Christian and a fan of many Christian books (such as the CS Lewis). I am also an avid reader. However, this was a terrible book! The characters were very shallow, and their lives were ridiculously disastrous. The demons were, in my opinion, not very bright, but the characters were even worse. I hated them, and by the end, I was rooting for more disasters to happen to them, so much did I hate them. The author had some wonderful points and messages to send, but I would rather he had told them to me straight out in a sermon than in this lame attempt at fiction. I'm sure he is a wonderful pastor, but he, at least in this book, is not a good novel writer. Had this not been required reading for private school, I would have quit long before the end. I just can't figure out what other people see in it! Even the theology was not particularly sound. In my opinion, it encouraged the view that you can blame all of your problems on demons that are constantly watching you. I hear this is just a "modernized" copy of CS Lewis's Screwtape Letters. In this case, I would say, stick to the classics.

Jamie says

A relatively interesting book about a group of teenagers and the spiritual battle that is wages over theirs souls. Lots of good points are made in this book in how easy it is to fall prey to evil without even realizing it.

On the flip side, I felt the book was a bit too preachy, even for Christian fiction. I love a good religious discussion but I have never liked being talked AT. And I feel that is what this book does. While parts can be an eye opener for certain life aspects it came across as nagging especially when it comes to Rob's character. Still, it is a thought provoking book.

The chapters are short and each one includes a letter correspondence from a a demon. at first the letters were amusing and even insightful but about halfway through I just started to half-skim over them and just read the actual chapters. They became way to repetitious.

The ending was unexpected and not sure I liked it. The Characters varied. Rob came across as a Bible-thumper, which is something even as a Christian I do not like. Ian is more a side character until the end so when his story becomes vital I just could not relate. Jillian, Daniel and Brittany were okay but none of the characters really jumped out at me.

The messages the book conveyed were good and the style was interesting. Even though I do not see demons

writing letters to each other, the plotting they were at felt very real. It really makes you think what is going on around us that we don't see.

I received this book in exchange for a fair, honest review. All thoughts and opinions expressed are strictly my own.

Jerry says

The Good: Longtime Christian writer Randy Alcorn and his two daughters do a great job of illustrating real-life spiritual warfare. It's shocking when you realize how much sinfulness has invaded our culture, as Foulgrin and Ishbane describe quite well. This book is disturbing at times, but, that's kind of the point. The ending has a twist you won't see coming.

The Bad: As good as the story and writing were, the choppy formatting is a major problem; usually short chapters always accompanied by a letter made this one hard to finish. While the letters are a nice touch, there could have been less of them. Some readers may not be able to finish this one due to that issue.

Conclusion: A great story marred by poor formatting; it strives to be another *This Present Darkness* and a newer version of *The Screwtape Letters*...but, it can't be both! Either tell the story through letters or through a regular narrative.

Score: 3/5

Emily S. says

It was one of the best books I've ever read probably... it wasn't a book you just want to blow through, you want to think about what's being said, especially in the letters... it can give you a perspective that can help you live out your faith in a more effective way.

Barbara says

Randy Alcorn is an excellent writer, and *The Ishbane Conspiracy* is great at making you think on several levels. The temptations that college students must face and overcome in order to be successful as adults are numerous and daunting, and this book gives you a perspective on the spiritual battle around us.

Becca says

This book was amazing!! It really opened my eyes to how Satan could be trying to tempt me in my everyday life. It was a very interesting, and enjoyable read. It really helped me to realize where I am in my faith and walk with God. It helped me to see where I need to improve. This book inspired me soooo much! I recommend it for all Christians or any one who is interested in God or thinking about becoming a Christian. Don't miss out on an amazing read!! You won't be sorry! :D

Jeff says

The Screwtape Letters for youth of the early 21st century. A real page turner. Where it differs from Lewis is that, rather than simply being the letters between devils about what is going on among the humans involved, Ishbane Conspiracy alternates chapters between life on earth among the main characters and the letters between the devils. Covers many pertinent issues in teen culture. You'll never think of a ouija board as just a game again! Some of the music and movie references are a little dated, but overall an excellent book. As a youth pastor, I've given it to teens and youth workers who have all loved it. Highly recommended.

Travis says

Ideally, a book should be judged on its own merits and not compared to another. Well, all throughout my reading of *The Ishbane Conspiracy*, I couldn't help but compare it to its inspiration, C.S. Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters*, and unfortunately, I feel that Ishbane could use some pointers from ol' Screwtape. Brief side note: even though this book is apparently a semi-sequel to *Lord Foulgrin's Letters* by Randy Alcorn, *The Ishbane Conspiracy* is perfectly capable of serving as a stand-alone book. I have never read *Foulgrin*, but don't think that interfered in any way with my reading of *Ishbane*.

So, what did I think of it? In short, I thought *Ishbane* was populated with stereotypical characters, riddled with uninspiring dialogue taken straight out of a sermon, lacked a clear sense of direction and tried to bite off more than it could chew. The theology contained in it is true enough and addresses some relevant issues, but the execution is too clumsy to make this as hard-hitting or memorable as the classic *Screwtape*.

I thought the demon characters were a little too sanitized; they simply weren't diabolical enough for the part. The human characters, meanwhile, all possessed that artificial perfection that often afflicts characters in Christian fiction: they're just a little too humble in confessing their faults, and their (quite frequent) theological debates and conversations have that "pre-planned" quality about them. These debates/conversations constitute the main problem I had with *Ishbane*.

Whereas in the *The Screwtape Letters* C.S. Lewis gave only one side of the story, the Alcorns use what can only be described as sermons delivered by the Christian characters to counter the diabolical advice of the demons. This could have worked if the sermons were better integrated into the story, but the already mentioned artificial and pre-planned quality of the human's dialogue makes it seem simply forced and condescending, like Christians today are incapable of recognizing satire, and have to be told straight up not to take the diabolical bits seriously. These sermons are also bound and determined to address every issue the authors can think of: the occult, sex, abortion, depression/suicide, drinking/drugs, school violence, relationships, etc. This means that every problem addressed has to have a corresponding character that suffers from it, which leads to even more forced elements in the story (view spoiler) and a rather disjointed narrative.

That's not to say there was nothing at all redeeming about *The Ishbane Conspiracy*. It's a noble effort, one that sincerely tries to encourage young people in their walk and inform them about potential pitfalls. It gave me some stuff to think about despite all the bad mouthing I just did about it. But overall, I think the authors would have been better off putting their important message in a non-fiction book instead of trying to force it into a novel. My recommendation: stick with the classics, go with C.S. Lewis and his *Screwtape Letters* instead.

Carter Wells says

I thought this book was somewhat boring and not very engaging. I didn't find the story very interesting and its Christian themes were a little over exaggerated. As a guy I did not enjoy the main theme of the book, which focused on girls and their issues with relationships. As a result, this story lacked an interesting climax, which made the book a struggle to get through, and it felt like a stretch to the finish. The book would have appealed to a wider audience had the author chosen a more unisex theme.

The style of writing also threw me off as a reader because periodically throughout the book there letters written from the devil or a devilish like creature. This seemed to be pointless and did not contribute to the overall climax of the book. I felt as though the author put these letters in the book to try to scare these Christian themes into the reader. These letters do not tie into the overall plot of the book and do not tell or accentuate any part of the story. Overall, I would not suggest this book to anyone and probably won't choose to read another one of this author's books again.

Laurencarvalho5 says

An easier read than Scewtape but just as brilliant.

Ashley says

Four teenagers at a New Year's Eve party, chatting and laughing, unaware that their lives will be inextricably intertwined by battling forces of good and evil, each struggling for dominion in the teens' lives...

This book was amazing, no two ways about it. Superbly written, gripping characters, enthralling plot, eye-opening letters, life-changing book... this book has it all. It alternates chapters between the story of the four teens, Jillian, Ian, Brittany, and Rob, and letters between demons about how to draw them away from God and use them for their own twisted purposes.

It's hard to write a review without giving too much of the book away, but suffice it to say that I read it in two days, despite stacks of other books calling my name. It's that good. (And the only reason that I didn't finish it in one day was because I started it later in the day.) This book truly opens your eyes to spiritual warfare and the subversive attacks that the Devil uses to bring us down. It exposes lies that our generation has swallowed hook, line, and sinker, and shows how demons use it to exploit and drag us away from God. However, it also shows the detrimental effects on Satan's army when God's people allow themselves to be empowered by Him and do what He asks.

Because of the use of letters between demon associates, I would equate this book with the Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis. Additionally, the books are comparable because they discuss ways of bringing Christians down and keeping non-Christians from finding Him. However, reading one does not make up for not reading the other. Yes, I'm making a two-book-review/plea-to-read in this one review, but you'll just have to deal with it. ;)

Be forewarned, this book does deal with teenage drinking and drug use, premarital sex, and deals heavily with the occult. However, that should not scare you off from it, because these things are dealt with in a

mature and Biblical manner, with the appropriate consequences.

Everyone should read this because it's very pertinent and applicable, not only to this generation, but to our parents' generation, and the generations after us. The issues it deals with are, at the core, human issues, not just generational.

Well-written, compelling characters, and superb storytelling combine to present morals and warnings about our culture and the direction we're headed.

Amy says

Reading this book was a lot like tying a millstone around my neck and jumping into the ocean: in short, dangerous, painful, and a waste of time. Whether or not the author intends to, the message that comes across is this - if you avoid dating, prom dresses with a slit, and Harry Potter, you're a good Christian who won't let sin in. It was basically the mantra of my middle through high school years. Let me tell you something, living like that is *exhausting*. God's grace is so much greater!

Besides carrying a dubious moral message, the book itself is awful. The writing is heavy-handed and over the top. The characters are one dimensional and frankly boring. The climax is out of nowhere and completely dramatic. Every issue from modesty to 7 day creation gets a diatribe, and even when I agreed I felt annoyed with the way the author approaches the subject. It was a lot like talking to my Grandma - all the vices of this era are new and totally on us.

I think this book portrays an unhealthy image of the spiritual realm and a rule-based, overly dramatized idea of what it means to be a Christian.

Don't recommend. I kind of wish I could just not return it to the church library where I found it. Teens do not need to be reading this!

A??α says

This was an AMAZING book! It was so encouraging, as well as interesting! I recommend this to everyone I know! There is a lot of reference to the occult, premarital sex, and drugs, so only those over thirteen or fourteen should read this.

Ed says

I really enjoyed this book. Very similar to C.S. Lewis' book The Screwtape Letters. In this allegory you find an unsaved family trying to deal with troubled teens. We read about Ishbane and Foulgrins letters to each other in trying to destroy this family and those associated with it. The Lord interferes with them in trying to rescue the family. There are many lessons learned here about teenage rebellion and drug use. This is a good book to give to all teens because it talks about present day and the culture they have to deal with.

Lou says

Unfortunately, this book wasn't what I was expecting at all.

Kim says

All of Randy Alcorn books have been so much worth the time to read. Such a refreshing view of Heaven and God....so looking forward to living my life with God's grace and mercy new every morning.
