Humanity pushed its way to the stars – and encountered the Gbaba, a ruthless alien race that nearly wiped us out.

Earth and her colonies are now smoldering ruins, and the few survivors have fled to distant, Earth-like Safehold, to try to rebuild. But the Gbaba can detect the emissions of an industrial civilization, so the human rulers of Safehold have taken extraordinary measures: with mind control and hidden high technology, they’ve built a religion in which every Safeholdian believes, a religion designed to keep Safehold society medieval forever.

800 years pass. In a hidden chamber on Safehold, an android from the far human past awakens. This “rebirth” was set in motion centuries before, by a faction that opposed shackling humanity with a concocted religion. Via automated recordings, “Nimue” – or, rather, the android with the memories of Lieutenant Commander Nimue Alban – is told her fate: she will emerge into Safeholdian society, suitably disguised, and begin the process of provoking the technological progress which the Church of God Awaiting has worked for centuries to prevent.

Nothing about this will be easy. To better deal with a medieval society, “Nimue” takes a new gender and a new name, “Merlin.” His formidable powers and access to caches of hidden high technology will need to be carefully concealed. And he’ll need to find a base of operations, a Safeholdian country that’s just a little more freewheeling, a little less orthodox, a little more open to the new.
And thus Merlin comes to Charis, a mid-sized kingdom with a talent for naval warfare. He plans to make the acquaintance of King Haarahld and Crown Prince Cayleb, and maybe, just maybe, kick off a new era of invention. Which is bound to draw the attention of the Church…and, inevitably, lead to war.

It’s going to be a long, long process. And it’s going to be the can’t-miss SF epic of the decade.

My Personal Review:
Off Armageddon Reef was written by David Weber. It transitions from a sci-fi genre at the beginning of the book, into more fantasy until the end.

Off Armageddon Reef began at the peak of the great war between the Terran Federation and the Gbaba, an alien race whose entire purpose appeared to be to destroy all life. Humans had advanced to intergalactic travel and had begun numerous colonies on planets far beyond Sol. The Gbaba had leveled all of these colonies, and had finally wiped out all planet-bound humans, even those of Earth. The seemingly undefeatable race had pushed humanity to the brink, and was merely a few ships away from its complete destruction. These last few dozen ships, hiding from the Gbaba in a small star system, brought together its greatest minds, in order to create a way to continue the existence of humanity. What they came up with: Operation Ark. The colonization ships would find a planet so remote to establish their final colony, that even the star-spanning Gbaba might never find it. The rest of the ships would stay behind until the Gbaba found them, and fight one last battle to the death, hopefully convincing the Gbaba that the last of humanity had finally been erased. The colony ships would commence terraforming on a suitable planet, until human life could be sustained. Then, all crew of the ships would begin life again on the planet, plunging the ships into the planets sun, completely hiding the last of humanity from the Gbaba. The last surviving humans would then have possibly all the time they would ever need in order to determine how to defeat the Gbaba. But some of those administering Operation Ark had other ideas. They thought the operations purpose would be better served by keeping humanity from advancing further, keeping the planet hidden from the Gbabas sensors which would more easily pick up advanced technology. Once the colony had been established on Safehold, this group overthrew the rest of the administrators, wiped the memories of the colonists, and established a brutally oppressive religion upon the entire planet. The Church of God Awaiting was created to keep humanity from advancing and flourishing, with the corrupt administrators as its Archangel figures. A great war was fought between the Archangels and the administrators who believed mankind should never be kept from growing to its potential. Unfortunately, the Archangels triumphed and the Church of God Awaiting was completely in charge. But unknown to the church and
Archangels, was one of the great minds that had invented the idea of Operation Ark. The knowledge, memories, and intellect of Nimue Alban, copied into the matrix of a highly advanced android, had been placed in a mountain deep in the wilderness of Safehold. When she awoke, a collection of holographic recordings from one of her associates, placed a mission in her hands: to overthrow the Church of God Awaiting, and allow human progress to continue. She had been given a cache of technology to assist her in her mission. Remembering the ideas of human freedom and infinite potential, she re-birthed herself into Safeholdian society as Merlin Athrawes. The android body which she resided had abilities far beyond the capabilities of even the most powerful human, which would be entire advantage in accomplishing her mission. The only way join Safeholdian society as an unbelievably powerful human and not cause obvious problems, was to take upon herself the title of what the people of Safehold referred to as a Seijin (a sage or holy man). Nimue, as Merlin Athrawes, would find a way to overthrow the oppressive Church of God Awaiting, and allow humanity to advance, and inevitably find a way to defeat the Gbaba.

What I found to be the most powerful theme within the book can be best described in a quote: Human existence where the ideas of individual freedom and infinite potential are oppressed, is no better, nor even any different, than the absence of human existence altogether. As the story progresses, the reader comes to realize, that the stagnated potential of humanity, can never be permanent, because the human thirst for freedom will always triumph. The reader also sees how much this freedom is taken for granted, once they see the life of a race that no longer has that freedom.

The plot of the book was undoubtedly the best part of the book. Thinking a bit about it, writing such an immersive and detailed plot, is hard enough in and of itself. But writing it well is another story. The in-depth politics, blended with action sequences that you want to read over and over, make for a story that flows together so well, youre never confused or left in the dark, while still being grippingly suspenseful.

As the book progresses, Merlin Athrawes becomes personal guardian to the Prince of Charis, one among the largest kingdoms on Safehold. Merlin sees Charis and its government as good people, the least difficult to introduce anti-Church-of-God-Awaiting ideas to. In order to ensure these ideas are spread, Merlin has to ensure Charis as the strongest of the countries. He introduces many new and incredible ideas to Charis government, such as improvements on their military technology, and others like the method of the modern number system instead of roman numerals. Webers ability to create the changes of an entire world so realistically is stunning.

The intense battle sequences of the book flow so smoothly with perfect time transition, while still adding maximum detail to each action. Visualization of the setup and commencement of each battle are easily done by Webers well laid out writing style. Each one is fresh and unique to its own situation, never leaving you feeling ripped-off with repetitive events, actions, and descriptions. Even though theres a lot of reading in between
each one, its definitely worth it, because youre still remembering how great each battle was, long after youve finished the book.

Webers ability to describe emotion with perfect clarity gives the reader a love and attachment to each of the characters. Theyre not just characters in a book, but as close as possible to real people. This realism in each person makes the death of characters somewhat dramatizing to the reader, giving the book the depth Weber was hoping for.

The Setting of the book has everything to do with the book. It sets up the world in which the characters will live, and in this book, is a world very different from our own. The setting is what creates most of the conflict within the book, until the very end of the book, where the setting is very much changed, yet the change is far from finished.

This book keeps you practically addicted to it until the very end, and even then it leaves you craving for the sequel. David Webers incredible writing experience has enabled him to write books immensely rich with detail and emotion. Rare is it that you find such a fantastic read.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Off Armageddon Reef by David Weber - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!