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Below is a clipping of your book review that appeared in the January 09 issue of the *Sacramento Book Review*. Thank you for sending us the book.

The Scourge of God

By S. M. Stirling

Roc, \$25.95, 464 pages

The Scourge of God is the latest book in Stirling's Change series—a story where all technology in the world has ended. Motors no longer run, electricity has failed, and gunpowder doesn't ignite. In the beginning, the series set up the conditions and Stirling had fun developing the potentials in a counterpoint to his *Island in the Sea of Time* series (where the island of Nantucket gets moved back thousands of years in time, introducing technology into the ancient world). Some of the people turn to recreating technology within the constraints of the new physics, others turn to religion and see the change as the wrath of God, and turn to Luddite methods to keep any return to technology at bay. Then magic was introduced, turning the series from a straight post-apocalypse story into meta-fiction.

The main thrust of the series has been Rudi Mackenzie's journey across the former United States, heading for Nantucket Island (one would guess that when a skilled author like Stirling

reuses a major location, there is most likely a reason), where the change originated. Along the way, he picks up companions and allies, and has to fight off followers of the Church Universal and Triumphant (the Cutters). This part of the story is the fifth book in the overall series, and the second in the current story arc. This is not the book to start with for the series, and in reality, not much really happens in this part of the series either. While I'm fairly sure you can't skip this book and just continue with the next one, there just isn't much development or action happening. Stirling is a highly competent writer, and the book is well written with characterization and descriptive language. But for people looking for some of his more typical action story lines, there isn't much for them.

