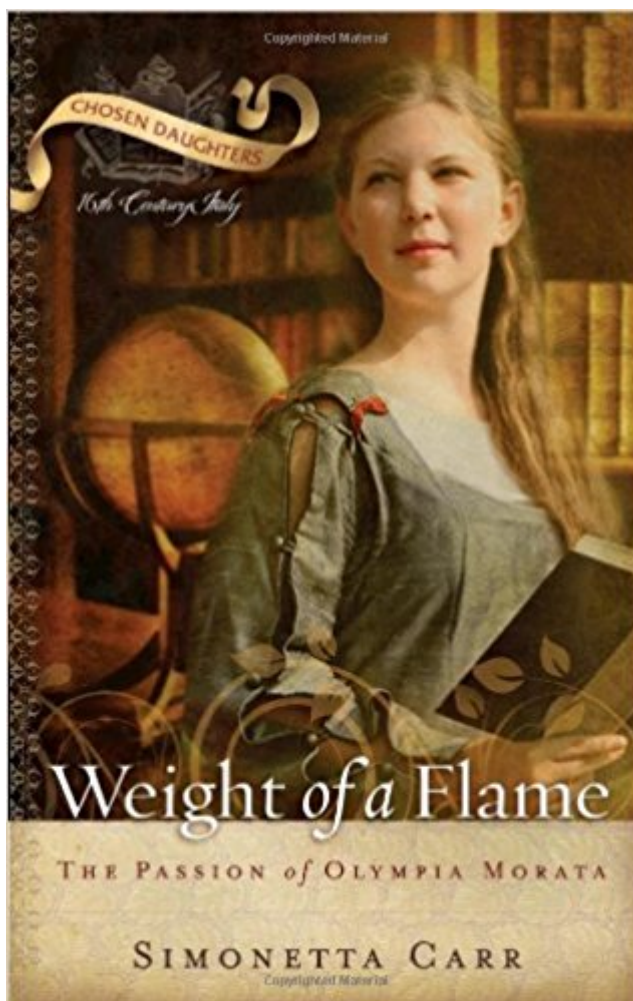


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# Weight Of A Flame: The Passion Of Olympia Morata (Chosen Daughters)



## Synopsis

Olympia Morata (1526-1555) is a girl far ahead of her time. A quick tongue and a ready pen are her mind's tools to record her vivid thoughts, poetry, songs, and opinions. Appointed tutor to Duchess Renée's children, her future is bright when suddenly, evil rumors turn her world upside-down. In the midst of it all a young doctor comes courting. Will their love survive the danger waiting on the other side of the Alps?

## Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

"More than strength of character, Simonetta Carr celebrates the strength of the God in whom these believers trusted. May we, and our children, exhibit the same trust in these days of our own pilgrim exile." (Eric Landry, Modern Reformation)"Readers will face, with Olympia, the daily dangers and insecurities that accompanied a faithful witness to the truth of the gospel." --Starr Meade"In this delightful yet informative historical fiction we meet Olympia, a young girl willing to stand strong for her Christian values in the troubled, changing world of the Reformation." --Laura E. Smith"With the precision of a scholar and the heart of a storyteller, Simonetta Carr brings to life the story of Olympia Morata, a daughter of the Italian Reformation."

--Eric Landry

Why write about Olympia Morata? Because the Italian Reformation is generally unknown but in the first part of the 16th century, sparks of Reformed faith burned brightly in Italy. As the Roman Catholic Church tightened its measures, Italian believers were faced with three choices: compromise and silence, defiance unto death, or voluntary exile. Olympia's story underlines the vital role that women played during the Italian Reformation. They organized prayer meetings, supported preachers, and interceded for those who were captured and condemned. Many were enough well-versed in Latin and Greek to be able to judge critically the theological works of their time. Olympia Morata is a positive role model for many young women, because she lived her faith uncompromisingly until the end. Christ is also uplifted in her life, letters and writings.

Since being introduced to her series "Biographies for Young Readers" I have become a huge fan of Simonetta Carr's writing. Her passion to teach children about church history, theology and the Word of God is so evident in her work. The 5th book in The Chosen Daughters Series, *Weight of a Flame*, tells the story of a girl, Olympia Morata, becoming a woman wholly devoted to Christ. Though she lived centuries before us, Olympia's story will spur you on in your faith. While given many privileges in this life she came to a point of truly counting all as loss for the sake of knowing Christ - no matter the cost. I highly recommend this book particularly for young girls (and their moms!) to read.

**Positives:** There are so many things I enjoyed about this book. I loved the historical accuracy that is expertly woven into a descriptive story that captures the imagination and stirs the heart. I was very moved by the story of her transformed life, to see her as a young girl whole-heartedly pursue her academics and then come to the realization that she could use the mind God had given her to glorify Him. Lastly, her deep conviction to encourage others to study and understand the Scriptures and to live a pious and holy life in the face of persecution and death is a wake-up call to our American culture.

**Negatives:** None

**Talking Points:** There are 2 verses that kept continually coming to mind while reading this story. The first verse is I Cor. 10:31. Olympia learned the value of doing all things to the glory of God. Talk to your children about the gifts, talents, abilities and opportunities that God places in their lives and how all things should be done with our utmost effort in order to give God the glory. Not only should we put forth our best effort, but our best attitude as well. The other verse is II Tim. 3:12. This verse tells us that if we desire to live a godly life, we will be persecuted. What this will look like, we do not know, but we can pray for strength to glorify God in and through whatever persecution we may face. Talk about the persecution faced by Olympia and

her family, talk about the fears and doubts that they had at times. Talk about the peace that comes from a life surrendered to Christ in obedience, no matter what the cost. Challenge your children to stand firm in their knowledge and belief in Christ that they too can pass on a flame of passion for His glory to others. The author has provided some insight into which parts of the story are true and which are fictional. [HERE](#) is a link to her blog if you would like to read about this. It is a 4 part series. Age Level: 8 years of age and up. It will appeal mostly to girls. I received a free copy of this book from P&R Publishing for this review.

What would it be like to live in the years immediately following the Reformation? How joyful would the discovery of Gospel truth be? Yet, how terrible would it feel to know people close to you, who are suffering for their faith? The turbulent period which followed the Reformation is captured well in a new book by Simonetta Carr. In "Weight of a Flame: The Passion of Olympia Morata" (part of the Chosen Daughters series from P & R Publishing), Carr tells the story of a Reformation-era heroine still remembered to this day. Olympia Morata was an Italian tutor and scholar, who embraced the teachings of Martin Luther and John Calvin with as much fervor as her professor father. She was fluent in Latin and Greek by the time she was 12, and at 13, she was summoned to the court of the Duke of Ferrara to tutor his eldest daughter, Anna D'Este. Morata developed into a scholar in her own right, lecturing on Cicero and studying philosophy. And she was known for her poetry, having written her own metrical adaptations of the Psalms. This obscure historical figure is brought to life through the imagination and pen of author Simonetta Carr. Carr weaves us in and out of the tale of Morata's short life. We share her wonderment at going to court, and learn with her of the terrible plight of French refugees fleeing religious persecution. Morata's relationship with her father and her family is developed and a romance eventually unfolds. But the story of Olympia Morata has its dark turns. She encounters suffering martyrs and survives a bout with the black plague. At one point her town is besieged and then sacked, and she and her family run for their lives. And at the young age of 28, she dies. The author doesn't leave us with the bare facts of the case. She infuses the story with Gospel hope. The characters rehearse Scriptural promises to each other and find encouragement in the Gospel. And through this fictional account we can imagine what it really would be like to be there in Olympia's and her husband's shoes living through these difficult times. Stories like these can help build the faith of our children. This book, directed primarily to girls, will both educate and inspire them. And the story is written well enough to captivate both children and their parents. As the father of five daughters, I can't wait to place "Weight of a Flame" in their hands. I can't thank the author enough for uncovering another Christian heroine for my daughters to

look up to and to emulate. May the hope-filled life of Olympia Morata inspire many chosen daughters to trust the Gospel and risk their lives for the cause of Christ. Disclaimer: This book was provided by P & R Publishing for review. I was under no obligation to offer a favorable review.

Whether reading for pleasure or academic purposes, the story of Olympia Morata will inspire. *Weight of a Flame* is a well told narrative which helps to illuminate a critical time in the church's history. Set in Italy during the early 16th-century, Olympia Morata lived in an age of great upheaval and violence for Italian Protestants. It was a time when a profession of faith in Christ alone meant a choice between compromise, death, or exile. With imagination and creativity Carr brings to life one of the most beautiful and compelling female figures of the Protestant Reformation. In each dramatic chapter, Carr helps us absorb all the historical data while we empathize with the human qualities of our heroine. More important, we identify with the young Olympia as a Christian. The stakes are high at every turn and as conflict after conflict unfolds, the reader is challenged by the faith of this young woman who did not love her life so much as to shrink from death (Revelation 12:11). In a culture characterized by heedless self-indulgence and that extols the virtues of selfishness and ambition stands Olympia Morata, a woman whose short 29 years consisted of troubles, reproaches, persecutions, and death. Having forsaken all worldly pleasures and satisfactions for the sake of the cross, Olympia's story encourages us to run the race marked out for us with perseverance (Hebrews 12:1). It is my pleasure to recommend this book to all readers, but particularly young women, who will find in Olympia Morata, a shining example of strength and courage.

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