

# **The Mark: The Beast Rules the World Study Guide**

**The Mark: The Beast Rules the World by Tim LaHaye**

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# Plot Summary

The Mark: The Beast Rules the World is the story of Nicolae Carpathia's attempt to rule the entire planet and the resistance led by a few who believe in Christ. The book begins with a speech by Carpathia, pledging that he will not tolerate those who have called him the Antichrist. David Hassid is one of the Christians, and the first chapter begins with David searching for his fiancée, Annie. He will later discover that Annie was killed by lightning called down from the sky by Carpathia's false prophet, Leon Fortunato. David works in the corporation that governs the entire planet, the Global Community. Carpathia runs the organization and has not yet discovered that there are a few within the organization who are Christians.

Christians of the time can recognize each other by the mark of Christ on the forehead. Non-believers don't see the mark. The small group of believers who have formed to fight the Antichrist and to lead as many people to Christ as possible are called the Tribulation Force. The group is comprised of Rayford Steele, his daughter Chloe, Chloe's husband Buck, Tsion Ben Judah who is a teacher and orator, Dr. Chaim Rosenzweig who is destined to be a leader, David and several others. The bulk of the group live in Chicago where false rumors of radiation poisoning mean that few people venture into the area.

The book takes up shortly after Rosenzweig has killed Carpathia. As was written in the prophecies of Revelations, Carpathia rose from the dead after the third day and is now indwelt by Satan himself.

While the believers know that there's no way to fully stop Carpathia - the details are already written in the Bible - they spend their time trying to reach as many lost people as possible and to bring them to Christ. The Mark is one of a series of books and in this particular edition, Carpathia has decided to have everyone swear their allegiance to him by accepting the "mark" described in Revelations. The mark is a biochip installed under the skin and a tattoo of three numbers that identify that person's home. The Christians know that accepting the mark means a life of eternal damnation. The non-believers know that they will be beheaded if they don't accept the mark. Despite the immediate retribution, there are some believers who refuse the mark.

Carpathia has many followers - people who pledge their full allegiance and rush to receive the mark. He is also a tyrant, ruling with an iron fist though few people see that side of him. He plans to do everything in his power to destroy the religions of the world. He calls for the arrest of Christians who meet secretly, calls them political prisoners and has many executed.

From his place in GC, David manages to help those with the Tribulation Force by assigning them new "orders" that allow them to travel, posing as members of the Peacekeepers - a military force that is part of Carpathia's plan. As the time draws near for David and other GC employees to receive the mark, David and the others concoct a plan to fake their deaths without having received the mark. They then plan to join the rest of the Tribulation Force.



The members have among their ranks, Zeke, a young man who seems rather slow mentally but who has a knack for computers. He manages to create new identities for anyone who needs to travel. A new member, Hattie Durham, has denied efforts to convert her to Christianity throughout the period of the Tribulation but now has accepted Christ. Hattie is absolutely bubbling over with the spirit and hurries to tell anyone who'll listen about her experience.

The story is set during a time the Bible describes as the Tribulation. The first event during the Tribulation was the "taking up" of all believers. The people left are now fighting to save as many as possible. The book takes place forty-two months into the Tribulation with three and a half years left to go before the return of Christ. This particular story ends just as Chaim Rosenzweig is preparing to become a "modern day Moses" to lead the Christians to a safe place - the city of Petra.



# Chapters One and Two

## Chapters One and Two Summary

The Mark: The Beast Rules the World is the story of Nicholae Carpathia's attempt to rule the entire planet and the resistance led by a few who believe in Christ. The book begins with a speech by Carpathia, pledging that he will not tolerate those who have called him the Antichrist. David Hassid is one of the Christians and the first chapter begins with David listening to a speech by Carpathia in Babylon. David has known Carpathia for some time, realizes that there's an incredible difference in the man. It will soon be revealed that Carpathia was stabbed in the head in a previous book and was dead for three days before rising again. As David looks at Carpathia, he recognizes a man who is indwelt by Satan. David says that Carpathia stares at him in such a way that he almost wants to rush forward, confessing his treachery against Carpathia.

David, frantic about the whereabouts of Annie, calls for an electric cart. It takes him some time to find one. Everyone is talking about Carpathia's resurrection and David finally agrees to drop an employee near the spot where Carpathia is currently speaking in order to get a cart. He then heads to Sector 53 where he believes Annie was last stationed.

Meanwhile, Rayford Steele is on the ninth floor of the Strong Building in Chicago. Rayford and other members of the Tribulation Force - a group seeking to bring as many as possible to Christ before the end of the Tribulation - have moved to Chicago from another safe house. Rayford, an airline pilot before the Rapture, flies a helicopter for members of the Tribulation Force. One of those members is Albie, who carries the Mark of Christ, though Rayford says he's not certain of the man's loyalties. Rayford leaves the Chicago building headed for Kankakee to pick up Albie.

Back in Babylon, there are many people who had been waiting in line for their chance to see their fallen leader, Carpathia, while he was dead. Following his resurrection, the people still waiting are frustrated and want to be near the man. Then one man tells a guard that they people want to worship a statue of Carpathia and leaders agree to allow them into a courtyard to worship the statue.

When David still can't find Annie and gets no answer on her phone, he heads for medical triage. David discovers that triage is in chaos and he frantically begins to search for Annie. He's growing desperate when he's overcome by the intense heat and crashes his head onto the asphalt. A nurse sews David's head up before he passes out.

As Rayford takes off to pick up Albie, he realizes that he's cut his time short and that he doesn't know where his cell phone. His immediate reaction is to curse, but he prays instead. When he arrives at Kankakee, he informs the tower that he's under the orders of Deputy Commander Marcus Elbaz - the false identity that's been created for Albie by David Hassid. David also arranges orders and paves the way for members of the



Tribulation Force to travel. Albie has had Rayford's cell phone and Rayford discovers that he missed several calls. He learns that the calls were from Hattie Durham, a nonbeliever who has had various contacts with members of the Tribulation Force. When Rayford calls Hattie, he discovers that she's being held in Colorado Springs but is due to be shipped back to the Belgium Facility for Female Rehabilitation - BUFFER. Rayford feels that it's an attempt to capture members of the Tribulation Force who might try to rescue Hattie. Albie says that he has a plan.

## Chapters One and Two Analysis

Chicago is considered fairly safe because most people believe there is radiation present. It's the reason members of the Tribulation Force can move about at least somewhat freely though they don't go outdoors during the day. The members are necessarily nervous about detection. The fact that Albie led them to this safe house makes Rayford more nervous as he's not certain of Albie's allegiance.

Meanwhile, in Babylon, David Hassid has seen Satan who is now dwelling in Nicholae Carpathia. David, as a believer immediately recognizes that evil though he's distracted with worry for his fiancée, Annie, who is not answering her phone.

When Hattie calls on Rayford, he is immediately suspicious. He points out that her past record is not good and that she's sold the team out on prior occasions. Rayford knew Hattie before the Rapture and he seems to feel compassion for her, but is reluctant to risk his own life or that of his fellow Tribulation Force members. However, the Christian attitude makes Rayford want to do something to help the woman. As Albie talks, it seems almost as if he's trying to talk Rayford into planning a rescue, and almost as if Rayford is trying to allow himself to be talked into the plan.



# Chapters Three and Four

## Chapters Three and Four Summary

Buck awakes at noon in Chicago. Immediately, his son, Kenny Bruce, climbs up to him and snuggles. He then asks if "Da-da" is going "bye-by," and Buck silently cries. When Buck and Kenny go to the main room where Buck's wife Chloe is, she's on the phone and is crying. Another of their members, Little Zeke, says that his father has been arrested. Though the GC forces haven't yet discovered Zeke, he knows it's just a matter of time. Buck first says that they should use the chopper to rescue Zeke, but is told that Rayford isn't expected back with the helicopter for at least another day.

Buck and Chloe go to the car garage of the Strong Building and discover plenty of cars to choose from, most with full tanks of gas. Buck selects a Hummer and takes the vehicle for a test drive before heading to the station where Zeke is waiting.

In the air, Rayford tries to contact David, not knowing that David has been injured and is still unconscious. Their plan is to land, go to the bunker where they believe Hattie Durham is being held, and - posing as Deputy Commander Elbez - take possession of the prisoner. They have a problem because David isn't available to clear the way for them. Without those orders, they have problems procuring a vehicle for their trip to the prison.

Albie attempts to push his way through but is facing opposition. Apparently, David comes through with the orders because they suddenly show up on a computer screen at the GC base near Colorado Springs. Suddenly, a chief offers up the use of her private vehicle, asking only that Albie - who she believes to be a high-ranking official - not tell of her insubordination. They reach the bunker where Hattie is being held and are greeted by a man in a wheelchair - Pinkerton Stephens. As Albie motions for Rayford to go down another hallway, following Mr. Stephens, Rayford considers that he might have walked into a trap.

David wakes in a hospital room and realizes that he must go to the bathroom. He stands, shakily, and discovers that he is attached to an IV. He takes the needle from his arm and within minutes, an alarm goes off alerting the nurse that there's a problem with the IV. David expects to have to argue his way into leaving the hospital, but the staff immediately tells him where his clothes are and advise him to get dressed. A nurse says that David is expected at a director's meeting. David continues his search for Annie but also discovers that he's lost his phone. Worried that someone could intercept a call from a member of the Tribulation Force, David begins to search for it. When he calls Nurse Palemoon - the woman who sewed up his head - she tells him that she has his phone, that it'd been turned off, and that she has something to show him. When he arrives, he finds that she has the Mark of Christ on her forehead and that she'd recognized him as a fellow believer. David continues his search for Annie but doesn't dare miss the



meeting of the directors. It's important to remember that Annie was also a believer and that the two were seeing each other secretly.

## Chapters Three and Four Analysis

Though there's no real explanation in this book about what happened to Buck, but he's been injured and is recovering. His love for his son is evident, here and in several additional places over the course of the book.

When a nurse is helping David tie his shoes at the hospital, she seems very kind. David immediately searches for the Mark of Christ on the woman's forehead but finds none. The believers have become very dependent on that mark. Not only does it tell them when someone is a believer, it warns them when someone is not. In some of those cases, the non-believer could be someone to witness to but David quickly sees that this woman, despite her kindness, is a Carpathian follower. When David discovers the mark on Nurse Palemoon's forehead, she invites him to "check it," and admits that she knows David's is real because she rubbed it with alcohol. David licks the tip of his thumb, rubs her forehead and calls her "sister." This action seems to indicate that the believers were constantly on the lookout for those who falsely claim Christ as their saviors.

Rayford isn't certain about Albie, though the reader never really knows from this book what it is that makes Rayford suspicious. He says that he questions Albie's recent actions but doesn't elaborate. When the two of them are following Mr. Stephens down a hallway, Rayford is suddenly certain that he's going to be captured and seems to believe that Albie is in on it. That type of suspicion and fear are part of human nature and it seems that Rayford is having trouble dealing with it.





# Chapters Five and Six

## Chapters Five and Six Summary

Dr. Tsion Ben-Judah was once the student of Dr. Chaim Rosentzweig. Now, the roles are reversed and Chaim is studying under Tsion. Chaim is preparing to lead the people of Jerusalem - like a modern day Moses. Chaim questions Buck about his decision to skip "Nicolae's first meeting with his new leadership team at the United Nations." Buck says he remembers, and that he was there though no one saw him. Then he says that he believes the conversation has come up because Chaim's own eyes are being opened. After some additional discussion, Chaim says that he understands that Buck was there and that he saw the truth - not what everyone else saw. Chaim then says that he believes that Carpathia truly is the Antichrist and that he'll do whatever it takes to stop him. At that point, he's reminded that he already did try but Chaim says that his murder of Carpathia wasn't for the same reasons that now motivate him.

David enters the director's meeting to join the two dozen already there. Carpathia jokes that he "has a new lease on life." He says that the autopsy reports should be published to discredit those who'll say the resurrection didn't really happen. Then Carpathia turns to David and asks if he saw it. David says simply that he'll "never deny it," which seems to satisfy Carpathia. Carpathia then abruptly orders that his office be expanded to include a glass ceiling. He'll later order full-length mirrors.

Carpathia promotes Leon Fortunato to a "more critical role" as Most High Reverend Father of Carpathianism. Fortunato accepts, and then falls to his knees, worshipping Carpathia and pledging his allegiance over and over. Viv Ivins then passes out folders that include a plan for dealing with those who refuse to pledge their allegiance to Carpathia. She explains that biochips will be implanted into every person, that those will be used instead of currency, and that each will uniquely identify a person. There will also be a three-digit number to identify that person's home region. Anyone who refuses the biochip and the mark will be beheaded. Viv explains that the process will begin on employees in a month and David knows that he has a month to "get out of Dodge."

As the directors are leaving, each stops to offer their allegiance to Carpathia. They grovel at his feet, weeping and making a scene. David worries about what he'll do when it's his turn. As it turns out, Carpathia reaches for David's hand just as David faints again, though he throws up on Carpathia just as he falls.

In Colorado Springs, Rayford wonders if he's been set up. Stephens wears a prosthetic faceplate and after a few minutes of conversation, he locks the door to his office and peels back the plate to reveal that he has the Mark of Christ. Then Stephens reveals that he is really Steve Plank. He was Buck's boss when Buck worked for a newspaper. Plank was in an earthquake and when he began recovery he reinvented himself. He says that he felt sorry for Hattie because of the way Carpathia treated her. He said that



he plans to help Hattie. To that that, Steve plans to "follow orders, obey the rules, do my job, and you'll rescue her."

As the men finish up their conversation, they move to Hattie's cell where they discover that she's hanged herself. Rayford pulls her down and gives her mouth-to-mouth. Hattie is resuscitated and the three men agree to say that she died. Plank calls the airstrip, clearing the way for Rayford and Albie to load the "corpse" onto their plane.

## Chapters Five and Six Analysis

The conversation between Buck and Chaim refers to a meeting that occurred in an earlier book of this series and it is not explained further. During that meeting, Buck was protected by the hand of God and saw what truly happened while others were deceived by what Carpathia wanted them to see. This is just one of the examples of the precautions Christians are taking to ensure that they have a chance to witness. While it's easy to say that these are secure in their future lives with Christ, it's also human nature to want to live. Besides that, the members of the Tribulation Force believe that their chief mission is to continue as witnesses in an effort to convert others before it's too late.

Everyone is supposed to greet each other with a statement and a reply. The first person is to say, "He is risen," and the second to reply, "He is risen indeed." Some of the believers console themselves by making the required statement and reply but by thinking to themselves that "He" refers to Christ rather than to Carpathia. When Rayford and Albie are talking to Steve Plank who they still know as "Mr. Stephens," Albie makes the statement and Stephens replies with "Who is risen indeed?" They both put it down to mispronunciation because of the serious damage to Stephen's face and fact that he wears a prosthetic mask until they discover that he's a Christian. The Christians talk about their lives and the fact that they're ready to face death but the human instinct of self-preservation remains, though many will give their lives rather than betray Christ by accepting the Mark of the Beast.



# Chapters Seven and Eight

## Chapters Seven and Eight Summary

Buck takes the Hummer to Zeke's station, sneaking up to the rear of the station in an effort to avoid the GC men who are staking out the station in an effort to catch any rebels looking for fuel. Zeke carefully rigs an explosion to go off within minutes of his departure so that the GC officials won't find anything to link Zeke with the Tribulation Force or to give away their current location. The GC men try to stop them but their sedan is no match for the Hummer.

Once on board, Rayford says that Hattie can go with him to the Chicago safe house and that they'll help her get a new identity. However, he cautions that the members of the Tribulation Force will continue witnessing to her as they always have. Hattie says that she might now be willing to listen to what others have to say.

As the two men travel with Hattie, Albie offers his own testimony, telling that he'd come to Christ through study of the Bible and of Ben-Judah's writings. The three spend the night in a motel, Albie and Rayford in one room and Hattie in another. That night, Albie prays for Hattie and Rayford later hears Hattie crying in her own room. The next morning, Hattie wakes Rayford to show him that she's received the Mark of Christ.

Nurse Hannah Palemoon finds Annie's body and takes David to see his fiancée one last time in the morgue. She uses the fact that she's a nurse to make her way past the morgue attendants and say only that they are there to identify a body. David is horrified by Annie's body. He sees that the lightning bolt exited one of her feet. Hannah assures him that Annie likely felt nothing and David takes comfort in that. David grieves but also realizes that he has little time left in the palace and that he needs to have the computer system set up so that he can continue to arrange traveling orders and to listen in on palace conversations once he's gone. He fights through his grief to begin his work.

## Chapters Seven and Eight Analysis

Hattie calls Rayford on the telephone the morning after they arrive at the hotel, the morning after they've rescued Hattie. Hattie is excited and tells Rayford that she's hungry. He teasingly calls her "dead girl," and says he'll be ready to go eat in twenty minutes. She says she'll be outside his door in fifteen and he says she'll be waiting five. The banter is light, not typical of the daily pressures Christians face. However, that type of teasing is fairly common and the characters seem to need that release whenever they have the opportunity. It's also important to note that Hattie now has the Mark of Christ and that she's excited to share her news. Hattie's enthusiasm will continue, at least for the immediate future, though it's not typical of all Christians, even the most recent recruits.



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It's noteworthy that David is to be deprived of openly grieving for his fiancée. They were secretly in love and David won't be allowed to show his heartbreak in public. Not only that, but he'll be told not to mourn at all because her death indicates that she was among those not loyal to Carpathia. David will have to immediately work through his grief to being preparing for his exit from the palace. His role there has been vital and he's searching for a way to be able to continue that work from an alternate location as well as to monitor the activities in the palace.



# Chapters Nine and Ten

## Chapters Nine and Ten Summary

Buck wakes in Chicago on the day after rescuing Zeke to discover that most of those at the safe house are asleep. Chaim is studying and Tsion is writing. Tsion produces articles that are posted online for those wishing to learn more about Christianity. Tsion and Buck talk briefly about Hattie's rescue and Buck indicates that he believes Hattie could be a "lost cause." Tsion points out that they were all lost not so long ago and that they should never give up. Tsion says that Zeke is "clearly not a churchgoing boy," shy and uneducated. He says that it would take Zeke the next three and a half years to read one of the books Chaim will finish by tomorrow, but that he's a genius with the "technical stuff." However, Tsion says that Zeke has a true servant's heart. Tsion then asks Buck to read the article he's about to post to the Web. Tsion begins his missive with the news that more than a billion people are reading his articles online and he urges everyone to provide hardcopies for those without computers.

Tsion writes that he's always known that some 30 percent of the Bible was prophecy and that he never understood why they would be included if people can't understand most of them. He says that God has revealed to him that he's simply to take them literally unless it's clear that they aren't literal. He points out that Carpathia's death and resurrection are written in the Bible prophecies and that it proves he is the Antichrist and that Leon Fortunato is the false prophet. Tsion warns of the coming of the Mark of the Beast and what it means for Christians. Without the Mark, one can't legally buy or sell anything and refusing the Mark will mean death. Tsion says that he's wondered if he would have the courage to accept death if he were faced with that decision and says that knowing it will condemn one to eternity without God means that believers will be able to refuse the Mark. He urges those who haven't yet made a decision for Christ to do so. Tsion predicts other things that are coming, including Carpathia's reviling of the Jews and withdrawal of his protection of Israel. As Buck finishes reading, he discovers that Tsion has gone and that there's a not asking him to post the article if he finds nothing that should be changed, which he does.

Hattie is concerned about her reception at the safe house. They continue their ruse of Hattie's death, moving her from the plane to the helicopter on a gurney and hidden under a sheet. Albie threatens to drop Hattie and once on board, pretends to clear the trap door so that they can eject her if she doesn't behave. Their copter has been loaded with a skid of black spray paint that they'll use to black out all the windows of the Strong Building so that no one will inadvertently see them inside. As they make their approach, Hattie talks to Chloe who is less-than-welcoming until she discovers that Hattie now has the Mark of Christ.

Hannah tells David that she has a plan for their escape. She says that she's had experience implanting biochips in pets, similar to the process that will be used for the Mark of the Beast. She suggests that she and David, accompanied by fellow believers



Mac and Abdullah and any other believers they can locate, board a plane for some destination to "help" with the marking process, then to fake their own deaths, allowing the plane to crash but somehow saving themselves.

David contacts those in the safe house and the believers there pray for David's comfort following Annie's death. When David arrives in his office, Viv Ivins is waiting for him. She tells David that they've made several purchases during his illness, including biochip injectors and "loyalty enforcement facilitators," which David thinks might as well be called "cranium and truck separators" but are really guillotines. Viv says she believes there'll be no need for them because no one could see the risen Carpathia and believe that he's not God.

## Chapters Nine and Ten Analysis

Tsion's reference to the "next three and a half years" is important because the time about to begin is known as the Great Tribulation and is to last three and a half years. It's important to note that, although all the people in the Tribulation Force are Christians, there remains the concern that someone will still be capable of betrayal. For instance, Rayford continues to seem uneasy about Albie's loyalty. That's more so of those who have betrayed them in the past. Though Hattie's betrayal isn't specified, there is a reference to the fact that she did betray at least some of the Tribulation Force members. Though there continues to be a Christian attitude, the members of the Tribulation Force are also concerned with self-preservation. That attitude is seen when Hattie first contacts Chloe. Chloe is rather rude, but turns her attitude quickly when she discovers that Hattie now has the Mark of Christ.

Before she leaves David's office, Viv tells him that he's not to observe any type of memorial for Annie because the fact that she was struck by lightning means that she was not loyal to Carpathia. When David tells Hannah, she says that Annie would "wear that like a badge of honor."

Viv Ivins doesn't have an official role among Carpathia's upper directors. She is reportedly some kin to Carpathia and it's that alone that has made her part of his inner circle. Though she apparently doesn't "lord" her position over others, she is powerful and seems ready to use it herself as well as to follow the orders of Carpathia.



# Chapters Eleven and Twelve

## Chapters Eleven and Twelve Summary

The members of the Tribulation Force live in a skyscraper but Rayford admits that "cabin fever" is setting in. The various personalities are beginning to grate on each other and the members are looking for something to do. It's Zeke who says aloud that he believes that Chaim is going to be sent to Jerusalem. He says the Bible indicates that Carpathia, as the Antichrist, is going to defile the temple of the Jews and then "brag about it right in their own temple." Zeke says that he figures someone will have to lead them and that Chaim seems the only one knowledgeable enough for the task. Zeke says that believers depend on Ben-Jordan's writings and that he doesn't think the believers could do without him, again pointing to Chaim as the obvious person to go. Rayford says that Zeke is correct and that he's going to be called upon to help create a new identity and disguise for Chaim.

Chaim tells Rayford that he doubts his ability to do the task set before him. He points out that he only recently killed Carpathia by ramming a knife in the man's head. He says that he helped fulfill the prophecy by which Carpathia became a host to Satan himself. Rayford tells Chaim to think back to the day when Carpathia was killed and to recall a gunshot just before he stabbed Carpathia. Chaim says he remembers that and Rayford says that he fired the shot. Chaim says it's not the same because Rayford, at the moment of decision, couldn't go through with it. Rayford reminds Chaim that it's destiny.

Chaim says he wishes someone else could fulfill the leadership role. He says that no one will see him as the present day "Moses." Rayford says the real question is whether Chaim will allow God to work in his life.

While Rayford is considering what he'll do with the people once he's joined by David, Hannah and David's friends, Mac and Abdullah, he gets word from Lukas Miklos that believers have been arrested in Ptolemais, Greece. Those captured include Miklos's wife and their pastor.

Meanwhile, David is called into Jim Hickman's office. Jim has recently been promoted to Leon Fortunato's old position though Viv said the position is less influential than before. Hickman tells David that he is going to be called into Carpathia's office and wants to be prepared. He asks if the orders for guillotines and syringes are on track. David corrects his terminology, calling them loyalty enforcement facilitators and biochip injectors. Hickman says that he's just a cop and that he feels the need to prove that he can handle the position where he's landed. Then he asks David if he can locate a large, live pig. He says he wants a pig big enough for Carpathia to ride, adding that a friend has said Carpathia is going to make that request and that he wants to be ready. He warns David not to tell anyone about the request but to check into availability. He says that this friend told him that Carpathia's plan is to fulfill the prophecy as told by Tsion by sacrificing a pig on the altar of the temple in Jerusalem. Leon announces that Carpathia



will soon visit Jerusalem and that there's no way the temple in that city will be off-limits to Carpathia.

David gets an email from Ming Toy. Her brother, Chang Wong, is in the city with his parents and Chang's father is pushing for Chang to be hired on. David knows that Chang is a Christian even before they meet and has begun to work on a plan to take Chang with him before he's faced with accepting the Mark of the Beast. In Ming's e-mail, she says that she's worried as she feels her brother will die before he accepts the Mark of the Beast. She says that if her brother tells their father that he's a Christian, her father will turn them in. David is asked if he'd like to have Chang as an employee in his department. He asks to meet the young man first and talks the problem over with Hannah while she's removing his stitches.

## Chapters Eleven and Twelve Analysis

The members of the Tribulation Force have become accustomed to activity, missions and danger. Though they feel reasonably safe in the Chicago skyscraper, they seldom venture outside except at night. They also seldom take Kenny Bruce outside except at night. The enforced confinement is grating on the nerves of the members. While Chloe is tied because of Kenny Bruce, others are anxious to go out.

Hickman is not a genius and admits that he's overwhelmed in his new position. It's the fact that he's overly anxious to look as if he's in control that will be his ultimate downfall. It's noteworthy that Hickman knows someone who is willing to feed him information - that Carpathia is going to ask for a pig. The fact that Hickman is afraid that he can't procure a pig is a statement of just how overwhelmed he truly is.

Chang is a computer genius and there's no explanation of how David knows the boy and his family. David also knows Ming, Chang's sister and that she is also a Christian. David is trying to figure out how to get Chang out of the city without having him face the decision to take the Mark of the Beast or die, but also wants to be certain that there's no reason to think their disappearances are anything more than an accident.





# Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen

## Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen Summary

Hannah Palemoon shares her testimony with David as she's removing the stitches and staples from his head. She says many people witnessed to her and that when the Rapture occurred, she knew that it was God taking his children home. She said that angered her because she wanted a hero, not someone who would leave her behind. She said she began to believe in Carpathia, but then became disillusioned with his attitude. She said that once she was ordered to not read Tsion's religious postings, she hurried to do just that and became a believer.

In Chicago, Buck and Albie are preparing for a trip to Greece where Lucas Miklos's wife and pastor are incarcerated. Zeke, helping with the new identities and change of appearance tells Buck that he has GC uniforms, taken from dead GC soldiers "after that horseman deal." He takes some teasing as he gets out a sewing kit and prepares to alter the uniform to Buck's size. Zeke says that he still hasn't heard from his father and that he knows he'll die in prison because he won't accept the Mark of the Beast.

David listens in to Chang's room and discovers that Chang's father is trying to arrange for his family to be first to get the Mark of the Beast. Chang is upset and David calls the room, talks to Chang and tells him that he plans to arrange for an interview the next day. He encourages Chang to believe that it will work out.

Chaim continues to battle his concerns. He can answer Tsion's questions but questions his ability to be the leader when the time comes. Tsion then tells Chaim that there's no need for him to take extra clothes because his clothes will never wear out. He says that God will provide food from Heaven and for all their needs.

David listens in when Carpathia holds a meeting with several of the directors. Carpathia asks if the weapons are all in a secure location and if that location remains a secret. David will later wonder how it happened that ten percent of the world's entire weapons supply was moved to a single location and no one is telling where those weapons are stored. Carpathia asks if they're any closer to finding Chaim Rosenzweig and the security expert, Walter Moon, says there have been few leads and none that panned out.

Carpathia then calls on Hickman for his report. He rambles on about the status of the guillotines, pausing as he searches for the correct term for them. Then he says that he's "got a lead" on a nurse who is familiar with biochip injection, though her experience is only on animals. Then Hickman says, "I've got a lead on your pig," immediately realizing that Carpathia hasn't yet asked for a pig. He tries to cover it up, saying that he hasn't heard anything, and doesn't know anything, but if Carpathia should need a pig, it can be provided. He then urges Carpathia to call if he should ever need a pig, "for anything, really." Carpathia demands to know who told Hickman of the pig, saying that he has to



be certain that confidential conversations remain confidential. Under threat of execution, Hickman admits that it's Ramon Santiago, who is immediately taken into custody and executed. Carpathia then calmly asks Hickman to tell him about "my pig," and whether it's "big, fat and ugly." He then asks Hickman if he's angry and the man affirms that. Carpathia might be angry, but seems almost pleased that Hickman would tell the truth.

## Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen Analysis

Of all the things Chaim learns about his upcoming role in the Great Tribulation, he seems suddenly fascinated over the fact that his clothes will never wear out. Though that might seem a trivial point, Chaim as a scientist may seriously be able to grasp the miracle of that more than some of God's other miracles. Chaim is simply insecure in his ability. Though he also seems almost unwilling to go to Jerusalem, it seems as if he would be willing if he felt he was worthy of the task. Though others try to persuade him that God forgives, it seems that Chaim has not yet forgiven himself for his own past.

The meeting in Carpathia's chambers is somewhat confusing as the directors vie to pay homage to Carpathia, often stepping in when someone else is speaking. The person who interrupts is then called down by Carpathia, prompting them all to be overly cautious about speaking out of turn. Hickman goes so far as to raise his hand for acknowledgement and Carpathia doesn't like that either. It seems that the directors don't know what's expected of them and most are truly floundering in their efforts to please Carpathia. There's no indication of any reactions over Hickman's mistake or the execution of Santiago. Moon seems immediately willing to have Santiago arrested, indicating his complete loyalty.

It's during this time that Hannah asks David if he's certain that no one is watching him. David has many offices bugged so that he can listen in from anywhere and has firewalls set so that he can hack in from anywhere. It's Hannah who asks if someone could be hacking into David's "secure" phone calls and e-mail. Though David will deny that it's possible, he'll soon admit to being a little more cautious and at least slightly paranoid about covering his own tracks.



# Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen

## Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen Summary

Buck is fighting jet lag when he and Albie arrive in Greece posing as a GC officer and his commander. When they make contact with Laslos, Buck tells him that he's going to write an article about the prisoners and their fate. Laslos is angry, saying that his wife is likely to be killed and all Buck plans to do is write about it. Laslos is almost immediately apologetic and asks Buck to tell his wife that he loves her if he should see her in the prison. Laslos says there are additional groups but that some believers have apparently told their whereabouts because there have been additional raids.

Ming, knowing that her father is pushing for Chang to be marked, frantically wants David to take Chang away. She becomes so angry when David says that he'll do his best that she says he would do more than that if it were Annie at stake. She immediately realizes the unfairness of that situation and apologizes, asking David to remember that it's her brother.

Abdullah and Mac have been working on a getaway plan. Mac says that David should select a particular site where he wants to monitor the marking process. Then Mac will requisition one of the large aircraft to transport David, Hannah and cargo to that site. They'll land before that point, then program the aircraft to go through some tactical maneuvers as a way of showing off the plane. Then he'll simply crash the plane into deep water, making rescue and even recovery impossible. Abdullah suggests Tel Aviv as their destination. Hannah interrupts their conversation to tell David that she's encountered Ramon Santiago's body in the morgue, and that Hickman's body - with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the temple - was also taken to the morgue.

David is asked whether he'd want Chang in his department. In an effort to put off the marking, David sets up an interview with Chang for 9 a.m. the following morning. He tells Ming that he's working to get her brother out, but arranges for her to move to the Chicago safe house. Ming wants to wait to be sure Chang is safe, but David convinces her that the two can't disappear at the same time. She finally agrees and David begins making the arrangements.

Meanwhile, Buck and Albie go to the prison where Laslos's wife is being held. It's an old manufacturing facility and prisoners are held in a haphazard array. Buck and Albie bluff their way into the process, following the guards as they begin herding the prisoners into an area to receive the Mark of the Beast. The first group, all young men, cheered that they would be first. Buck sees among the group a single man with the Mark of Christ on his forehead. He orders the prison officials to bring that young man forward and accuses him of mocking the GC Peacekeepers. He marches the young man out of the prison to the vehicle Buck and Albie arrived in. Then Buck takes the names of the youth's parents, vowing that he'll try to help them escape as well. He tells the man to



run away, first asking him the name of anyone who shared his cell. He says, "Paulo Ganter," and Buck returns to the prison saying that he's taking custody of Ganter.

At two o'clock that same afternoon, in Chicago, Zeke and the others hear on the news that his father, "fifty-four-year-old Gustav Zuckerman" was executed after refusing to accept the mark.

## Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen Analysis

Hickman is immediately terrified for his own life. He knows that he's made a mistake by offering the information about the pig before Carpathia asks about it. Hickman simply isn't smart enough to handle the duties of a position such as this. If he were in a spot where he only followed out orders, he'd likely do well. In his own words, he's nothing more than a cop. It's his effort to fill Leon's shoes that ultimately costs him his life.

There's no indication that his gunshot wound is anything other than self-inflicted, but there's no real proof that it was self-inflicted.

As David is trying to decide what to do about Chang, he believes that he can control the situation. It could be that David has simply been in control of so many things - such as creating false orders that allow members of the Tribulation Force to move around freely - that he believes he has this under control as well. David will learn that he doesn't have any control over this particular situation.

Buck can't do anything to save the many Christians who are in the prison facing the choice of accepting the mark or death, but he can't seem to resist helping at least one person. Buck will use what he witnesses to write his article - vital in the dissemination of true information in the world that now exists. While Carpathia is telling people what he wants them to know, Buck wants only to share the truth. It may seem that news is less important now, but it's actually as important - or more so - than ever.



# Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen

## Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen Summary

In Chicago, Zeke is being comforted by his fellow Christians. He asks Rayford if it'd be possible to retrieve his father's body and is encouraged not to. He's reminded that Zeke is already in Heaven, rejoicing with his Savior. As Rayford leaves Zeke's room, Kenny Bruce runs to Rayford's arms, yelling, "Grandpa!" He's pursued by Leah, a nurse and believer in the safe house who sometimes cares for him. Kenny Bruce also takes a turn hugging Tsion, who he calls, "Unca Zone." Later, it's Hattie who is changing Kenny Bruce and then snuggles with him as he goes to sleep.

Buck and Albie move to the girls' section of the prison. They spot one believer among the group and Albie demands that she come forward. She's handcuffed before Albie takes her outside, setting her free as Buck set the young man free. They move next to the women's cell where they see a group who are quietly praying. One of them is Laslos's wife. She refuses to stop praying and one of the guards hits her viciously on the head. She is seriously injured but returns to her prayer, accompanied by a woman who is then struck in the face. There are twelve who say they will die rather than be beheaded. Two more join that line, the Mark of Christ appearing on their heads. Buck manages to tell Laslos's wife of his message. She says sends a return message, including her thanks for leading her to Jesus. Buck and Albie can't watch as the women are summarily executed. Albie says those women are the first people he wants to see when he gets to Heaven, as soon as he's seen Jesus.

When it's time for the men's barracks, there are a group of men who also vow their loyalty to Christ. One man suddenly says, "I want God," and some of the prisoners begin to pray with him. Several accept Christ in that prison as they're being forced to decide whether to accept the Mark of the Beast or die. The men then begin singing, "What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!" When Buck and Albie return to the airport for their trip home, Ming Toy is waiting for them. Buck says that he will tell her about the miracles they saw in the prison camp. He says that they truly needed her with them for the trip home.

Chaim is miserable as he paces around the safe house and Rayford realizes that all Christians had to endure those doubts and fears. Rayford is struck by the irony that Hattie - the woman who held out against all attempts at witnessing for so long - is bubbling over with her excitement over Christianity. She agrees to talk to Chaim. Though he listens, he doesn't change.

## Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen Analysis

Zeke is saddened by his father's death but not devastated. He says that his father could have accomplished much more for Christianity. Zeke says that he plans still to



accomplish much for the cause. It's interesting that Zeke, uneducated and quiet among those at the safe house, is able to move on and accept his role in the Christian community while an educated man like Chaim is unable - or unwilling.

Buck and Albie wanted to be at the prison camp in order to write about it, but end up helping two escape. Though they can't help others, they serve an important purpose. They are the only two Christians to witness the event who will be able to share that story from a Christian's point of view. Buck will write about it, though he'll disguise how he knows the details. It's noteworthy that Buck and Albie so desperately needed Ming's presence after seeing the murders. David had arranged for Ming to be there, creating fake orders to move her from her previous assignment. Ming will now move to the safe house in Chicago. It could be called chance that Ming was at the airport to catch a ride with Buck and Albie, or it could be that God provided for the needs of all concerned.

It's interesting that some of the prisoners had obviously rejected attempts at witnessing prior to their incarceration but are willing to take that step at the moment it will cost them their lives. The various attitudes of those who are carrying out the sentences are also interesting. Some are so bloodthirsty that they're anxious to see the killing. Others are suddenly silent.



# Chapters Ninteen and Twenty

## Chapters Ninteen and Twenty Summary

The next morning, David discovers that Chang has already gone to have the mark before his scheduled 9 a.m. appointment with David. He runs around for a while, trying to locate Chang, his father or the chief security deputy, Walter Moon. He doesn't manage to locate any of them. He listens in on Carpathia's office and hears Carpathia telling Moon that he's disappointed in his abilities. He tells Moon that he wants his troops armed. Moon asks if Carpathia's objective is to make the citizens afraid. Carpathia says the loyal have no need to be afraid. Carpathia says that he wants one hundred thousand fully armed troops in Israel when Carpathia arrives there. David then overhears Carpathia singing a song: "Hail Carpathia, our lord and risen king; Hail Carpathia, rulse o'er everything. We'll worship him until we die; He's our beloved Nicolae. Hail Carpathia, our lord and risen king."

In Chicago, Tsion has written another article to be posted. In it, he says that there's a difference between the Book of Life and the Lamb's Book of Life. According to Tsion, everyone's name is written in the Book of Life at birth. When a person dies, their name is blotted out. However, the name of anyone who accepts Christ is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Those names are permanent and may never be removed. Tsion urges Christians to create problems for Carpathia but reminds them that it's not their top priority. Tsion writes that many have confessed to being afraid that they won't have the courage to give their lives when called on to accept the Mark of the Beast. Nevertheless, Tsion says that the Christian, faced with that decision, can't help but refuse the mark. When Rayford finishes reaching the missive, he says that it has comforted him greatly.

When the Wongs arrive in David's office, he discovers that Chang has been marked. David, caught off-guard, says that he believes age is an insurmountable issue. Chang has not yet completed high school and David says that he doesn't believe Chang is mature enough to handle the pressures of working at GC. He says that Chang is brilliant, but that he'd rather the youngster mature while working for someone else. He points to Chang, slouched and insolent, as reason for that decision. Mr. Wong says that Chang was afraid of the needle, screamed and cried and fought against receiving the mark. Mr. Wong believes that it's because of the fear of the needle. Mr. Wong and Moon leave the room so that David can talk to Chang alone. Chang shows his forehead and David admits that he can see both marks. Chang says that having the Mark of the Beast forced on him hasn't made a difference and that he can now live legally in the Palace, taking over David's position and ensuring that the Tribulation Force has someone in place there. They decide to work closely together over the days until David is going to leave.



## Chapters Ninteen and Twenty Analysis

David has wondered how it is that Carpathia could move such a massive supply of weapons and no one know where that stockpile is hidden. After he sees Hickman's friend executed for simply giving Hickman a heads up that Carpathia was going to ask him to procure a pig, David says he better understands how it could happen.

Chang's logic regarding the Mark of the Beast does make sense, and it clears the way for a believer to remain in the palace, overseeing the computers and providing that valuable service to members of the Tribulation Force. There's no doubt Chang will be valuable, but there's also no doubt that it's dangerous. As David said, there are few things in this day that aren't dangerous and living on the edge is normal. David tells Chang that Ming is going to be very angry with him for allowing the situation to occur. It's interesting that David is willing to gamble that Chang can continue to remain in the palace rather than to take him along for their "plane crash." It seems likely that David could have managed that feat, had he so chosen. Chang, though only briefly introduced, does seem somewhat young, immature and impetuous.





# Chapter Twenty-One

## Chapter Twenty-One Summary

Rayford sets the stage for the team's next mission. Hattie and Leah are to be headed to Tel Aviv. Albie and Rayford are going to help work on an airstrip that will provide a vital refueling stop for long trips. Chaim is to be at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. From there, he'll be prepared to confront Carpathia. Buck is going to Jerusalem where he'll watch Carpathia's speech and the crash of the plane that David and the others leave the palace on. Chaim says that he has many questions. He wants Tsion to reveal the city of refuge and Tsion says that it's Petra, the Rose Red City. Chaim says he's familiar with the city, was there as a child. Tsion points out that God has been planning for this moment from the beginning.

Following Hannah's guidance, the four escaping from the palace agree to take only what they'd need if they were planning to return home in a few days. They pack two suitcases each, one to take with them when they leave the plane and one to leave on the plane in case any wreckage is recovered. The four board the Phoenix 216, a large, fancy aircraft. Among their cargo is a "gigantic pig." They have overestimated the weights of all the cargo, meaning that the manifests show that the plane is overweight. The ground support argues that they shouldn't take off but David signs off on the order. As they're leaving, Mac allows the plane to sway slightly, furthering the impression of an overloaded plane.

They stop off in Jordan, ostensibly to unload several pieces of cargo. The four also remain on the ground and Leah picked them up in a van. Mac flew the plane by remote control and had the autopilot set to do a couple of passes over Jerusalem before crashing into the sea. Using a hand-held radio, Mac informs the tower that he's having radio problems, explaining why the crew won't again make contact before the crash.

Buck is watching as Carpathia begins his speech. As the plane approaches, it's rather low and Buck wonders if Mac would have programmed it to be so near the water level and ground. The plane then heads straight up, loses power and falls nose over tail onto the beach in a fiery crash. Buck feels somewhat overwhelmed, even though he knows that the four were not onboard. He briefly looks back over the years since the Rapture and speculates about the next three-and-a-half years, which will be known as the Great Tribulation.

## Chapter Twenty-One Analysis

Buck's appearance has been changed by Zeke in order that he might travel freely. It's interesting to note how each of them bring some particular talent or skill to the team. For instance, Zeke is a pro at changing appearances and creating false identities, down to the smallest details. Leah is a nurse and is eager to put herself on the front lines. Buck



is a writer and can share stories and information. Tsion is also a writer, but shares Christian knowledge and insight. Albie is a pilot. Chloe manages a co-op. Rayford is a pilot and leader. With all this, it's no wonder that Chaim seems to doubt his own abilities. It could be that he feels unworthy because of his past. The reader learns that he does feel responsible for something, but the details are sketchy in this book of the series.

Chaim was also the person who killed Carpathia, allowing Satan to resurrect him, thereby fulfilling the prophecy. Chaim feels guilty for that action as well. The comparisons between Chaim and Moses were interesting. Both killed someone prior to leading their people. Both were reluctant. Both felt themselves unworthy of the undertaking. Moses was successful in his quest. Chaim's role doesn't happen in this book and there's no way to know how he finally manages.



# Characters

## David Hassid

David is a member of the high-ranking officials of Nicolae Carpathia's kingdom. A Christian, it's David who pulls the strings to create computerized orders that allow the members of the Tribulation Force to move freely about the world. David is a believer but his biggest weakness seems to be that he also believes strongly in himself. He has hacked into many computer and telephone lines that give him access to a number of transmissions and has bugged many of the offices and even the plan used by Carpathia. When Hannah Palemoon suggests that someone could be watching David in the same manner, his immediate response is to begin double-checking his routes and firewalls in an attempt to keep that from happening. He even tells Hannah that he's not worried because he's that good, though she does plant a seed of doubt. However, David depends on his own skills to make it happen and if he prays about it, that's never mentioned to the reader. David is very competent and expects to be able to somehow save Chang from receiving the Mark of the Beast. He doesn't act quickly enough and Chang is marked before arriving at David's office for a job interview. One of David's immediate reactions is that Chang's sister, Ming, is going to be angry. Despite his failing in this area, David seems genuinely concerned about his Christian brothers and sisters and is most concerned about the loss of his cell phone after he passed out from heat exhaustion and struck his head. He knows that if someone answers the cell phone, it could ultimately lead to the Tribulation Force. He's relieved to find it's in the possession of another believer who has turned it off until David comes for it.

## Hannah Palemoon

The nurse who sews up the wound on David's head after he passes out. It's Hannah who sees the mark of Christ on David's forehead and takes his phone. When David wakes in the hospital, he begins to search frantically for the phone, imagining that someone might have received private phone calls that would compromise members of the Tribulation Force. When David tracks her down, she says that she does have his phone and that she has something to show him. When he arrives, she shows him her forehead, with her own mark of Christ. Hannah helps David through his recovery and helps him locate his fiancé who was killed by a bolt of lightning. It's Hannah who helps David, Mac and Abdullah figure out how to leave Carpathia without being killed for their refusal to accept the mark of the beast. Hannah becomes one of the newest members of the Tribulation Force and moves to the safe house in Chicago after she and the others fake their own deaths in a fiery airplane crash. It's important to note that Hannah basically led herself to Christ using the teachings and information of Tsion Ben-Judah. Hannah has done that and remained faithful without any contact with Christians until she meets David.



## Hattie Durham

Hattie was among the characters introduced in the first of the series and has remained a non-believer throughout, despite attempts by the members of the Tribulation Force to witness to the woman. She has apparently betrayed members of the team, though there are no details of those events in this book, only vague references. Hattie calls on Rayford when she's being held prisoner. Rayford believes that it might be a trap but ends up going to make the rescue anyway. Hattie, assuming that Rayford isn't coming, tries to hang herself but Rayford finds her in time and resuscitates her. Hattie then tells him that it might be time for her to listen to what the members of the Tribulation Force are saying. She does listen to the testimony of Albie, Rayford's partner on the rescue mission, and that night Hattie comes to Christ. While she worries about her reception at the safe house, Hattie is bubbling over with her newfound faith and is anxious to share it with everyone she meets.

## Rayford Steele

Leader of the Tribulation Force, Rayford is one of three who were on the force at its founding. Rayford has apparently had some problems because there's a reference to the fact that he's newly returned to his position as leader. Rayford is a strong leader and is responsible for assigning members of the team their duties. He executes the rescue of Hattie with the help of another believer named Albie. Rayford was once a pilot for Carpathia and is suspected in his assassination. In fact, Rayford fired a weapon just before Chaim plunged a knife into Carpathia's skull, killing him. Rayford seems a strong Christian and is genuinely concerned about others. He is Chloe's father and Kenny Bruce's grandfather.

## Cameron

Buck was a reporter for the Global Weekly before the Rapture and now produces a cyber magazine called The Truth. Buck is married to Chloe and is father to Kenny Bruce. He's often sent on assignments and is at Tel Aviv when the plane supposedly carrying David and his friends crashes on the beach.

## Zeke Zuckerman

"Little Zeke," so called as his father is called "Big Zeke." Zeke is an expert at disguises and helps those preparing to travel with changes in appearance and new identities. He's uneducated but astute in the ways of Christianity.



## **Gustov Zuckerman**

"Big Zeke," who was taken prisoner for selling gas illegally. He was the first to be executed when he refused to accept the Mark of the Beast.

## **Jim Hickman**

Hickman is assigned to a high-ranking position within the Carpathian regimen but is not equipped to actually handle the duties. He is constantly making social mistakes when talking to others, forgetting titles and talking out of turn. When he is told by a friend that Carpathia is going to want a pig, he begins his search for the animal. When Carpathia calls upon him for an update on his recent activities, he says that he's searching for a pig before Carpathia asks for it. Carpathia, citing the need for security in meetings, demands to know who told Hickman and he reveals the name - prompting the man's execution. Hickman then commits suicide.

## **Ramon Santiago**

Santiago is the man who told Mr. Hickman that Carpathia was going to want a pig for sacrifice on the alter. Hickman inadvertently lets Carpathia know that Santiago had told him of a private conversation in Carpathia's office regarding a pig, prompting Carpathia to arrest and execute Santiago. Hickman commits suicide a short time later.

## **Nicolae Carpathia**

Carpathia is the former president of Romania who is now the Global Community Potentate and has recently become the Antichrist. It's David who first says that he recognizes Nicolae as being indwelt by Satan.

## **Leon Fortunato**

The Antichrist's false prophet and right-hand man is Fortunato.

## **Albie**

Albie's background is unknown and though he bears the Mark of Christianity, Rayford remains uneasy with Albie's loyalties. Though the basis for Rayford's concern isn't outlined in this book, Rayford says that Albie's recent actions make him suspicious. Albie is a pilot and goes with Rayford to rescue Hattie then with Buck to the prisons where Laslos's wife and pastor are executed when they refuse to accept the Mark of the Beast.



## **Tsion Ben-Judah**

Tsion is the scholar who posts to the Web daily articles to help new Christians find their way.

## **Chaim Rosenzweig**

Chaim was once Tsion's teacher and is now frantically studying for his next assignment - leading the people of Jerusalem. Chaim killed Carpathia who was then resurrected as the Antichrist and feels guilty that it was him who made that happen. He is ultimately unsure of himself and believes that he is both incapable and unworthy to carry out his assignment.

## **Chang Wong**

At seventeen, Wong is a prodigy being sought by Global Communities. He's a believer and is forced to have the Mark of the Beast, becoming the only person to this point to have both the Mark of the Beast and the Mark of Christ. He is preparing to step into David's role at GC.

## **Ming Toy**

Chang's sister and an employee of GC, Toy escapes to the Chicago safe house before being forced to have the Mark of the Beast.



# Objects/Places

## Chicago

Chicago is the location of the Strong Building and home to a cell of believers led by Rayford Steele. It's from Chicago that many of the plans are executed. The city is believed by many to have active radiation, offering some limited safety for the believers from detection.

## Colorado Springs, Colorado

Colorado is where Hattie Durham is being held when she calls Rayford for help. This is also where Rayford discovers another believers within the GC's employees.

## BUFFER

The Belgium Facility for Female Rehabilitation. This is where Hattie Durham has been held before Rayford rescues her. Hattie hates the place so much that she attempts suicide to avoid being returned there.

## Loyalty Confirmation Facilitators

Loaylty Confirmation Facilitators is the name used for guillotines. The threat of beheading is meant to facilitate compliance with accepting the mark of the beast.

## Kozani, Greece

Greece is where Buck and Albie land their plane on the way to Ptolemais.

## Ptolemais

Ptolemais is the home to a prison camp where all were expected to receive the mark of the beast. Buck and Albie help two escape but can only watch as others are beheaded for their decisions. The city is also home to an underground church that was raided. Many of the members were imprisoned as political prisoners.

## Petra

Also called the Rose Red City, Petra is located in the ancient land of Edom. Petra is the destination of the new believers who are to be led away from the Antichrist by Chaim.



## **Jerusalem**

Jerusalem is the city where Carpathia was killed by Chaim before being resurrected by Satan and where Carpathia planned to return to demand obedience from the remainder of those against Carpathianism.

## **Nick**

The currency of the day, Nick is apparently named for the global potentate, Nicholae Carpathia.

## **Tel Aviv**

Tel Aviv is the city where Carpathia is offering a speech when the aircraft - supposedly carrying David, Mac, Abdullah and Hannah - crashed into the beach.

## **The Strong Building**

The Strong Building is the skyscraper where the members of the Tribulation Force are gathering.





# Themes

## Christian Faith

There's no doubt that the overriding theme of this book is Christian faith, or in some cases, a lack of Christian faith. It's important to remember that all believers were taken up during the Rapture and that happened just three and a half years ago. All the people of this book who are now Christians made that acceptance since that time. They are young in Christ but many are very strong in faith. It's also important to remember that many of these studied the Bible or the Toran or other religious documents prior to the Rapture but did not yet believe. They had the knowledge but lacked the faith. That's put them ahead of the game in many respects. All those who now claim to be Christians are and have the Mark of Christ to prove it. That Christian faith allows them to make decisions that would otherwise be impossible. The most significant examples are those who accept death rather than have the Mark of the Beast. In that case, their Christian faith assures them that they'll be going to Heaven for their decision. The alternative - accepting the Mark of the Beast - means they'll live longer on earth but destines them to a life in Hell. There are other cases in which the Christian faith is not so strong. Chaim seems destined to become a modern day Moses, leading the people of Jerusalem. However, Chaim is not convinced that he will be able to handle the task. His faith in God on this particular point is weak. Rayford explains to Zeke that he believes Chaim will be supernaturally protected once he's involved with leading the people of Jerusalem. Zeke accepts that it is true, showing his own faith. There's no accounting for levels of faith as it varies from one person to the next. For example, Hattie is a new Christian but is bubbling over in her faith. She's anxious to share her newfound Christianity and was hesitant only with regard to what her reception at the safe house might be. Once she was accepted and forgiven for her past transgressions, Hattie's faith seems solid.

## Christian Love for Others

The sheer fact of accepting Christ instills the Christian love for others. When Ming Toy contacts David about her brother, she begs him to help Chang get away before he's killed or forced to accept the Mark of the Beast. David says he'll do his best and Ming says that he'd probably do more if it were Annie, David's fiancée who recently died. Ming immediately apologizes, saying that her statement was unbelievably cruel and that she's sorry for hurting David. Ming then says that she hopes David can understand that she's thinking with her heart. Though another person might have been angry with Ming for her careless remark, David understands her love for her brother and forgives her. That love for each other makes people kind. Chloe is the only person in the Chicago-based safe house with a child. Kenny Bruce is cared for by various members of the Tribulation Force. All take turns playing with him and meeting his physical needs. Leah desperately longs to be in the field and says so to Rayford. She also tells him that if he finds something for Chloe to do, she'll take over Chloe's duties at the safe house, including caring for Kenny Bruce. The fact that Leah is willing to be confined herself so



that her sister in Christ can enjoy some time away is evidence of that Christian love. Hattie is another example. Hattie has been involved with the Tribulation Force from the very beginning but has always resisted their attempts to bring her to Christ. While there are only vague references to her past deeds, Hattie apparently has been disloyal to the group as well. However, when Hattie shows up at the safe house and displays her newly acquired Mark of Christ, she is immediately accepted with love. While the Christians may sometimes look for Christian love as an outward sign of Christianity, it's not always that evident. Some need to hide their caring for others to avert suspicion. David encountered a nurse who was very kind and caring but was not marked as a Christian, though he expected her to be.

## Quest for Acceptance

The quest for acceptance is likely stronger among the ranks of Carpathia's deputies and followers than among the Christians. The Christians know that once they believe they are accepted among the ranks of Christians. It seems that Carpathia's deputies and followers continually search for ways to become accepted. For example, once Carpathia calls a meeting of the deputies following his resurrection, the immediate response among the deputies is to see who can show the highest degree of loyalty. Those present immediately pledge that they'll do anything for Carpathia, falling to their knees and begging for his acceptance. That is again evident when Hickman calls on David to update him on current procurements and to help him find a gigantic pig. Hickman has heard that Carpathia is going to ask for a pig and wants to be able to tell him that it's no problem. As the reader knows, Hickman lets his information slip before Carpathia asks, which proves to Carpathia that someone told details of a previous meeting prompting Carpathia to execute the person who told the information and prompting Hickman to kill himself. The quest for Carpathia's acceptance is also strong among the general population. As the Mark of the Beast is being applied, there are those few Christians who choose to die rather than accept the mark. Those non-believers rush to accept the mark, anxious to show their loyalty to Carpathia and all he stands for. They don't understand what they've chosen but only seek acceptance of the Carpathia regime. Despite the fact that the Christians are already accepted into the kingdom of Heaven, there remains that human need for acceptance among the followers. Hattie is concerned about her reception at the safe house and is not welcomed until she shows her Mark of Christ. Before that, she worries that she won't be welcome and it seems to weigh on her. When Christians find each other, they are generally anxious to be near each other and it's likely for several reasons, including acceptance. Most Christians are living a lie, pretending to be loyal to Carpathia while seeking to do God's work. The fact that for a few minutes now and then they can be themselves is something they seem to long for. It's simply the opportunity to be accepted for who they truly are.

# Style

## Point of View

The book is written in third person from an omniscient point of view. It's the only method that would work for this book because the characters are spread out across the globe. There are occasional looks into the thoughts of individual characters. For example, David's thoughts of panic are revealed as he stands waiting in line to greet Carpathia after his resurrection. That addition to the third person point of view is important, even though it is greatly limited. The story is expressed in both the conversations of the various characters and through exposition, giving the reader a well-rounded opinion of what's going on. The omniscient point of view is limited only in that those non-believers are not included except through the view of the believers. For examples, the only glimpse into the life of Nicolae Carpathia is when he is with David or when David is listening in on his conversations. That is also necessary since the book is aimed at the lives and actions of the believers. If Nicolae's innermost thoughts were revealed to the reader, the mystery would be eliminated.

## Setting

The book is set in the Global Community that exists after Nicolae Carpathia becomes ruler of the entire world. The time is at the halfway point of the Tribulation when that time gives way to the Great Tribulation. The various events occur at different points around the globe, from Colorado Springs, Colorado, to Greece. The members of the Tribulation Force have both commercial airlines and private planes at their disposal, making that travel possible. It's also important to note that the computer technology is a vital part of the setting and is used for communication among the believers of the world. Cell phones are used for instant communication, both voice and text messages. There seems to be security on those lines of communication though the believers are careful to keep their locations and identities as secret as possible from anyone who might sell them out to the GC officials.

The base group of the Tribulation Force is living in Chicago. It's a perfect location because there were false rumors that Chicago was hit with radiation, making it an undesirable location. Most people are afraid to go there and the group is relatively safe from GC enforcement troops. They have moved into a skyscraper called the Strong Building. It provides amenities for the group including living quarters, but also housed a large garage. Most of the luxury vehicles there were full of gas indicating that the inhabitants were prepared for some sort of major emergency. The keys to the vehicles are available in the garaged office, meaning the force has access to any of the vehicles. There's no real indication of how they came to be there, other than the fact that it was Albie's idea. Because Albie is somewhat suspect among the believers, Rayford was skeptical but seems to be settling into the new accommodations.



## Language and Meaning

The book is written in clearly understood, everyday language. For the person without an adequate Biblical background, there may be occasional references that are unclear but the majority of the book is written for the layperson rather than for the Biblical scholar. The facts are Biblically correct, corresponding to references of the period known as the Tribulation.

The book is divided into chapters but each chapter includes actions and events that happen to the various characters scattered across the globe. Though it's always clear when the transitions are made, it's sometimes difficult to remember what happened to a particular character when they were last the topic of the book. However, the method is necessary in order to follow a time line and it would likely be more confusing to continually step backwards and forward in time than between characters and settings.

The writing is straightforward with easy-to-understand words. However, there are references to events prior to this book that make some passages difficult to understand without at least a basic knowledge of what happened before. The fact that each character is identified before the beginning of the book provides a vital point of reference for the reader and makes it somewhat less confusing. It's likely that with a basic understanding of the premise of the series, the book could be taken as a stand-alone, though it will likely draw the reader in to want more information about the series.

## Structure

The Mark is the eighth book of the Left Behind series. The book basically stand-alone though would be difficult to understand without knowledge of at least some of the early books of the series. For example, Buck says, "he felt as invisible as he had in the underbrush near where Moishe and Eli had been resurrected." That scene happened in an earlier book and the reader without knowledge of that event may be at least somewhat perplexed. Rayford talks of his return to the leadership role, though there's no explanation of how he fell from that role nor of how he was returned. There aren't an excessive number of the references and it's possible to have an acceptable level of understanding without having read all the books, though at least knowing the main characters is highly helpful. It's doubtful that a person with no idea of the basic idea of the series would understand what's happening. However, knowing some general information - that the Rapture has already occurred and that Carpathia is the anti-Christ - could be sufficient for understanding the current book. Though Biblical knowledge is a plus, it's not vital as the various passages referred to throughout the book are explained in various ways. The book is not "preachy," but focuses on the events that are referred to in Revelations, putting those into a fictional setting that meets the requirements of the prophecies.

The book is divided into twenty-one chapters, each about twenty pages long. Each chapter skips between the various groups of believers in various locations, generally keeping the reader up on what's happening at a particular time rather than what's

happening at a particular place. The method is sometimes annoying, as the reader will be forced to wait until the following chapter to discover what happens in a certain situation.

## Quotes

"There are those among you, however, who have referred overtly to me personally as the Antichrist and this period of history as the Tribulation. You may take the following as my personal pledge: If you insist on continuing with your subversive attacks on my character and on the world harmony I have worked so hard to engender, the word tribulation will not begin to describe what is in store for you." — Nicholae Carpathia, Page XI prior to Chapter One

"Nicolae knew him, of course, but the look, though it contained recognition, did not carry the usual acceptance and encouragement David was used to. That very welcoming gaze had always unnerved him, yet he preferred it over this. For this was a transparent gaze that seemed to pass through David which nearly moved him to step forward and confess his treachery and that of every comrade in the Tribulation Force." Chapter One, Page 2

"He wanted to swear, but since coming to his senses just days before, Rayford acknowledged that he needed a return to discipline." Chapter Two, Page 15

"The boy seldom had the patience to simply rest in his father's arms, but now he seemed almost ready to nap himself. With the baby's tiny hear beating against his own, Buck wished he could lie there forever." Chapter Three, Page 34

"We're older than our years, wounded scarred and scared. It won't be long before our days will be spent looking for ways just to satay alive. I worry about you all the time. It's bad enough living now, but I couldn't go on without you." — Chloe to her husband, Buck, Chapter Four, Page 59

"He had been in the presence of evil many times, but never in the company of Satan himself. He breathed a prayer for Annie, thanks for Nurse Palemoon, for Tsion who had taught him that Satan - though more powerful than any human - was no match for the Lord God." David, Chapter Five, Page 77

"David could not move and sensed the turning heads of those nearby. Carpathis looked puzzled, seeming to beckon him. David said, 'Pothen - Potenth - Exshell -' and pitched forward. His last image before crashing to the floor, head banging the marble, was that he had vomited all over Carpathia." Chapter Six, Page 96



"'I can see yours!' she said. 'That means you can see mine! Can you?'" — Hattie Durham upon receiving the mark of Christ, Chapter Eight, Page 134

"Nicholae Carpathia, the so-called Excellency and Supreme Potentate of the Global Community, is both anti-Christian and Antichrist himself. And the Bible says that the resurrected Antichrist is literally indwelt by Satan himself. Leon Fortunato, who had an image of Antichrist erected and now forces one and all to worship it or face their own peril, is Antrichrist's fals prophet." — From the writings of TSION Ben-Judah, Chapter Eight, Page 144

"That's all we need. Satan with no downtime." — David, Chapter Ten, Page 168

"You heard me, I want the biggest pig you've ever seen in your life. Big as a pony. Big enough to put a saddle on, not literally, but you know what I mean." — Hickman, Chapter Eleven, Page 193

"Chaim, if he can save you and me, of all people, forgive us our sins, bring us back from spiritual death, this clothes thing is one of his lesser miracles. Forget the extra buttons, the patches, the thread. Go there with something you like because you'll still be wearing it when this is all over." — TSION, Chapter Fourteen, Page 236

"If a person was not loyal to the risen potentate, why would he or she want to work here? What I want to see produced here are pictures, still and moving, of happy, willing, joyful loyalists. The citizenry of the Global Community should see rapture on the faces of those it depends upon to administer the new world order. No enforcement is needed here. We are the examples to the world of the joy of commitment, the sense of fulfillment when one takes his stand." — Viv IVANS on the lack of guillotines in the main Carpathian compound, Chapter Sixteen, Page 273

"With her back to the rest, the gaping wound emitting great back issues of blood that ran down her hair and onto her sweater, was exposed to everyone. Most averted their eyes, but Buck stared at the white of her skull at the top of the laceration. Her skull had shattered and surely bone had been driven into her brain. And yet there she knelt, silently continuing to pray." — Of Mrs. Miklos just before her execution, Chapter Seventeen, Page 300

"It was one thing to read the myths and legends and perhaps eyewitness accounts of a resurrection centuries ago. But to have seen with one's own eyes a man come back



from obvious death and to see his right-hand man imbued with supernatural powers - well, there was a religion for today." Chapter Twenty-one, Page 373

"Nicolae Carpathia was evil personified, and the next day Buck would be in the line of fire when the battle of the ages between good and evil for the very souls of men and women would burst from the heavens, and all hell would break loose on earth." Chapter 21, Page 380



## Topics for Discussion

How does David meet Nurse Palemoon? What does she have to show him? What is David's reaction?

How does Rayford plan to rescue Hattie? Why does he hesitate? What does Rayford learn about Hattie's captor? What does Hattie do just as Rayford is entering the building? What's the result of her action? What does she show Rayford the next morning?

How does Kenny Bruce fit into the extended "family" of the Tribulation Force? Does it seem an acceptable and healthy atmosphere for a child? Why or why not?

Who is Zeke and how does he come to be at the safe house in Chicago? List some of Zeke's skills. Why are those vital to the organization? Who is Zeke's father and how does he die? What is Zeke's reaction?

Why does Carpathia want a pig? How does Hickman know that Carpathia wants a pig? What happens when he tells Carpathia he has a pig? How does he try to cover his tracks? What's the result?

What is the purpose of the biochip portion of the Mark? What does that mean for those who hide themselves and don't take the Mark? What is the result of refusing the Mark?

Ben-Judah writes about the need for courage when Christians are required to accept the Mark. What does he say about his own courage? What does he say will happen? One believer does have the Mark. What happens to his Mark of Christ after the Mark of the Beast is applied? What does he say it means?

What is Chaim supposed to do during the next phase of the Tribulation? Is he ready? What have others done to help him prepare?

Describe some examples of the concern for each other exhibited among members of the Tribulation Force. Does that concern stretch to those who are not members? How?

Describe how Chang becomes marked. What happens to his Mark of Christ? Why? What does Chang see as the positive side of this? What's David's reaction? Could David have prevented it?