

Visit Tyndale's exciting Web site at www.tyndale.com

Discover the latest Left Behind news at www.leftbehind.com

Copyright © 2004 by Jerry B. Jenkins and Tim LaHaye. All rights reserved.

Cover photo copyright © 1995 by Mark Green. All rights reserved.

Cover photo copyright © 1987 by Robert Flesher. All rights reserved.

Left Behind is a registered trademark of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Published in association with the literary agency of Alive Communications, Inc., 7680 Goddard Street, Suite 200, Colorado Springs, CO 80920.

Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved.

Edited by Lorie Popp

ISBN 0-8423-8350-6, mass paper

Printed in the United States of America

09 08 07 06 05 04
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	What's Gone On Before	xi
1.	The Growing Threat	1
2.	Bloodshed	13
3.	A Familiar Face	25
4.	Captured	37
5.	Live Broadcast	47
6.	Deadly News	59
7.	Lights Out	71
8.	Lightning Show.	83
9.	The Attack	95
10.	The Edge of Time	105
11.	Death in the Desert.	115
12.	Surprise for Lionel	127
13.	Carpathia's Parade	139
14.	Personal Words	151
15.	Carpathia's Demise.	163
16.	Reunion	177
17.	A New Family.	189
	About the Authors	



What's Gone On Before

JUDD and Vicki Thompson are living the adventure of a lifetime. After their wedding in Petra, the two hear of a crisis brewing in Wisconsin. Lionel Washington and Chang Wong work together to alert their friends that the GC is nearby.

After a heated debate in Wisconsin, Mark Eisman separates from his friends and heads south. He immediately encounters GC Peacekeepers led by Commander Kruno Fulcire. After returning to help the others escape, Mark is captured by the GC, and an angel encourages him to speak to others about God. Mark must finally face the guillotine with men who now believe the truth.

Judd and the rest of the Young Tribulation Force are saddened by the news about Mark, but with only a few months before the Battle of Armageddon, there is much to do. He and Vicki make contact with believers in Jerusalem who are helping defend the Old City.

TRIUMPHANT RETURN

Judd's friend Westin Jakes helps them travel to Jerusalem to aid rebels in the upcoming battle.

Join the Young Tribulation Force as they witness Armageddon and anticipate the return of the King of kings.



The Growing Threat

VICKI held tightly to Judd as the Global Community's Unity Army rumbled through the streets of Jerusalem. She hoped they were simply putting their tanks and soldiers into place, but Carpathia's army could attack at any moment.

Vicki had felt a sense of adventure coming to the Old City. Jamal and Lina, Judd's friends from a previous trip to Israel, had taken them in. They had also met an old man named Shivte and his wife. These rebels were trying to hold off the GC army—something Vicki believed was part of biblical prophecy.

But the closer the GC army came and the more the walls of the underground tunnel shook, the less excited she became about being here. They could have stayed in Petra.

TRIUMPHANT RETURN

Instead, they were in the crosshairs of the GC.

Vicki reminded herself that Jesus would soon be back to wipe out this army. And she and Judd had been overwhelmed when thousands had become believers earlier near the Temple Mount. Rabbi Tsion Ben-Judah had given the message of Jesus. Still, the thundering army sent a shiver through her.

Judd scurried to talk with one of their leaders and came back a few minutes later. "He thinks we won't see action until morning. He wants us to get some rest. Let's head back to Jamal's place."

They took a tunnel heading east, passing rebels armed with Uzis and hand grenades. Vicki had become as familiar with these tunnels over the past few months as she had with their hideout in Wisconsin. Secret passageways snaked underneath streets and buildings. Lights clanked on the stone walls as GC tanks and transport trucks rolled overhead.

A few believers spoke with rebels about Jesus when they passed, trying to convince them of the truth, but many fighters didn't want to hear about the gospel.

"We don't want your blasphemy!" one rebel yelled at a believer. "Stay away from us!"

The Growing Threat

Judd peeked through the tunnel opening and motioned Vicki forward.

By the time they made it safely to Jamal's apartment, darkness had fallen. Neither Jamal nor Lina was home. While Judd checked the computer for the latest troop movement news, Vicki pulled the curtain back on the window. "You don't have to check the computer—look out the window," she said.

They were high enough to see outside the walls of the Old City. Tanks and large vehicles were in place. Streetlights cast eerie shadows on the monstrous army.

"Our people are going up against *that*?" Judd said.

"It's not just our people—God's fighting against the army," Vicki said.

"What does Tsion say about Jerusalem? Doesn't the Bible predict it's going to fall?"

Vicki nodded and closed the curtain.

"Chang said in his last e-mail that Tsion was coming here to help bring his fellow Jews into the kingdom before it was too late. Tsion believes the Unity Army will capture many rebels and conquer Jerusalem."

"Are you scared?"

Vicki hugged Judd. "I keep remembering what you said about sticking together no

matter what. And if we're attacked by the GC, at least we'll die together."

"I'd rather be alive to see Jesus when he comes back, but you're right. From here on out, we stick close."



Lionel Washington sat on his bed in Petra, scanning the list of names in his prayer diary. Many of them were highlighted in yellow and had the word *home* written after their name. Ryan Daley. Pete Davidson. Mark Eisman. Chloe Williams. *It won't be long until I see all of these people*, he thought.

He wasn't as sure about his other friends on the list. Rayford Steele. Buck Williams. Tsion Ben-Judah. Lionel knew from Chang Wong that Buck and Tsion were in Jerusalem. And Rayford Steele had returned to Petra in a chopper and was probably spending time with his grandson, Kenny. But what would happen in the morning? Would Jesus come back before the GC attacked? Already the Unity Army had Petra surrounded.

What if Tsion is wrong about Petra? What if Jerusalem stands and Petra falls?

Lionel pushed the questions from his mind and prayed over each name. It had been more than seven years since the disap-

The Growing Threat

pearances and the moment he had finally cried out to God. He had come far in those seven years, and now he was near the end.

Lionel didn't know the exact time of Jesus' return, but surely it would happen in the next day or two. What that moment would be like was anyone's guess, and Lionel couldn't wait.

Zeke called him on the radio. The burly man had asked Lionel to be part of a team that gathered weapons, ammunition, and even uniforms from fallen GC troops. "I'm out here taking a look at the edge of the camp. You should see this."

"When do you want me down there?" Lionel said.

"Before daybreak, unless the attack comes earlier, which I don't think will happen. Get a little sleep. Then head out."

Lionel had felt left out of some of the best assignments since coming to Petra and was glad Zeke had included him in this one. Now that he was close to actually going to the front line, Lionel felt unsure. Would God protect them?

He lay back on his bed and tried to fall asleep by thinking of all the people he had met in the past seven years. Carl Meninger came to mind. What a great story he had—becoming a believer while working for the

Global Community. Carl was now a vital part of the Tribulation Force in South Carolina and had seen hundreds of people believe the truth about God since Lionel and Judd had last seen him.

Lionel recalled others. Conrad Graham and Darrion Stahley, who were in Illinois, awaiting the return of Jesus with a group of inner-city believers. The stories they sent via e-mail were exciting and a little scary.

Lionel and the others had grieved the loss of the Young Trib Force Web site to the Global Community, but Chang Wong had worked his magic and was able to automatically direct anyone who logged on to Tsion Ben-Judah's Web site to a section run by the kids.

Kids, Lionel thought. *We haven't been kids since this whole thing started.* The disappearances had forced them to grow up fast.

Lionel tossed and turned on his cot for more than an hour.

Finally, he got up, dressed, and went to find Zeke.



Conrad Graham watched the sun move toward the horizon from a basement window of an abandoned house in Palos Hills, Illinois. He and the other members of the

The Growing Threat

Wisconsin group had finally settled into several homes near Enoch Dumas, the shepherd of a growing group of Christ followers from many different backgrounds. Enoch spoke with a Spanish accent, which Conrad loved. One night a Latino woman who had lived in an abandoned laser-tag park told her story. The next night it was an African-American man who admitted to everything from grave robbing to murder. Kids from the street and drug addicts all had stories of how God had reached out to them.

Conrad had been able to stay with Enoch himself and considered it as big a privilege as being in Petra. They had the chance to bring people to God every day. Though many had cautioned them to be more careful, Enoch and his followers wouldn't pass up a chance to help people receive Christ.

Conrad's mattress lay in Enoch's musty basement. The past few nights had been cold, so Conrad had given his best blanket to Shelly, who lived about three blocks away. It was shortly after Mark's death that Shelly and Conrad had renewed their friendship. Something Mark had said to Shelly caused her to give Conrad another chance after a bad disagreement in Wisconsin. They weren't going to get married anytime soon, but the

fact that they could be friends gave Conrad hope.

"Don't suppose we'll get much shut-eye tonight, eh?" Enoch said, walking into the room.

"I've waited years for this," Conrad said. "No way I'm going to sleep through it."

Enoch nodded. "I know what you mean. But I don't think it'll happen until morning."

"Why is that? Doesn't the Bible say no one knows when Christ will return?"

"True. But eight in the morning our time will be the seven-year anniversary of the signing of the treaty between Carpathia and Israel. To the minute."

Enoch's love of the Bible was contagious. Since coming to the group, Conrad found himself reading more, taking notes, and seeing the Bible come alive in new ways.

"You think it's going to happen at eight tomorrow morning?" Conrad said.

"Don't know for sure, but it's as good a guess as anyone's."

Enoch flipped on a small radio and tuned to the latest news. New Babylon, the gleaming jewel of Nicolae Carpathia, had been wiped out in less than an hour. Though the GC had tried to put a positive spin on the worldwide chaos, Conrad knew from reading

The Growing Threat

e-mails from Chang Wong in Petra that there were more suicides now than ever before.

The news reporter quickly turned to the Middle East where Nicolae Carpathia readied his troops. A vast army was nearing Jerusalem and had spread across the nearby desert to Petra. "An almost innumerable legion of tanks, artillery, and soldiers has assembled here to wage what should be a very quick end to a pesky enemy."

The reporter played a clip of Carpathia giving orders. It was clear that Carpathia wanted to level Petra and overrun Jerusalem.

"The only logical response to such an overwhelming military campaign is surrender," the reporter said, "but no one who has studied the history of the Judah-ites and Israelis over the last seven years believes that will happen."

"The one who should be surrendering is Carpathia," Enoch said. "God's going to make that clear real soon."

"I can't wait," Conrad said.



Judd found sleep impossible and stayed up watching the GC troops. He heard Vicki's breathing from the other room and was grateful she was getting some rest.

Judd felt concerned for Jamal and Lina, wondering what had happened to them. The last he had seen them, they were trying to convince several Israelis about Jesus.

At nearly 3 a.m. they crept inside, surprised to see Judd awake. "You won't believe who we saw at Shivte's home," Lina said, wide-eyed. "Tsion Ben-Judah. He was there with an American—"

"Buck Williams?" Judd said. He had seen the two together earlier at the Temple Mount.

"Yes! To see the teacher in person was such an honor," Lina said.

"And to see his commitment to the fight is even better," Jamal said. "He is not just here to give us moral support. He has a gun and is ready to use it."

Lina smiled and shook her fists like a child. "But we haven't told you the best news. Shivte and his sons were at the Wailing Wall this evening. They heard Dr. Ben-Judah and have believed in Messiah! All that praying we did for them, and now they are true believers."

It was all Judd could do not to rush to Shivte's house to see Buck and Tsion, but he didn't want to wake Vicki and there was no way he was going to leave without her.

When Lina left the room, Jamal spoke softly. "Shivte's sons told me they believe the

The Growing Threat

GC will come from the northwest and try to get through the Damascus Gate. We'll leave for there within the hour."

"Couldn't the GC come through just about any gate?" Judd said.

"Perhaps, but the Damascus Gate is where they need us most. I think you should leave your wife here and come with me."

Judd shook his head. "No, we've both promised—"

"This is no place for women. There will be much bloodshed. The GC is bent upon the destruction of every rebel living here in the Old City."

"Vicki and I feel God has brought us here for a reason," Judd said. "I can't leave her behind."

Jamal patted Judd's shoulder. "I understand, and I wish you success. When my wife returns, don't tell her where I've gone. Come to the Damascus Gate as soon as possible." He slipped out the door.

Jamal was gone a few moments when Lina returned with a sackful of supplies. She looked at Judd, then at the door, and burst into tears. "Tell me where he's gone! I've lost a son and a daughter to the GC! I will be with my husband at this critical hour."

TRIUMPHANT RETURN

"She's right," Vicki said, walking into the room.

Judd nodded. "Let's get our things. We're going to the Damascus Gate."