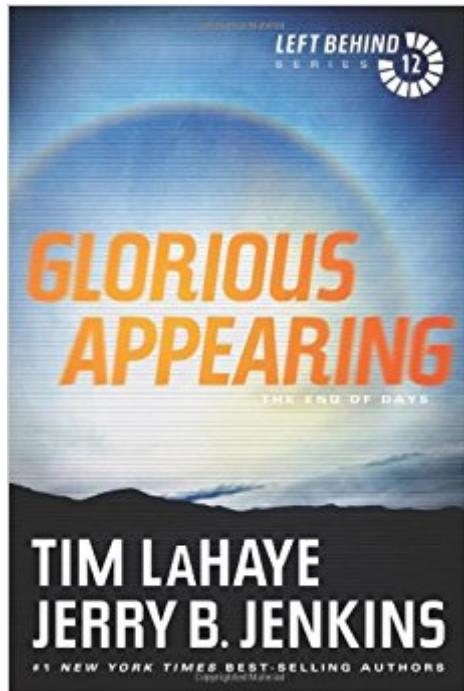


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Glorious Appearing: The End Of Days (Left Behind)



Synopsis

Thousands of years of human history stained by strife, death, and sin come to an end when the King of Glory returns to earth. The satisfying conclusion of the seven years of tribulation covered by the Left Behind series portrays the return of Jesus Christ to earth in both glory and judgment at the height of the battle between the forces of evil gathered at Armageddon and the remaining Christian believers at Petra and Jerusalem. A repackaging of the twelfth book in the New York Times best-selling Left Behind series.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Just as a preface, I found the previous books in the Left Behind series flawed but engaging enough to warrant reading. For a lengthy and relatively faithful rendition of how Revelation might play out in our world, I thought the books were suitable--though I would love to see this story retold more realistically and not in a preaching-to-the-choir sort of way. All that said, Glorious Appearing was a large disappointment for a variety of reasons, most of which are problems in the writing rather than the content of the source material. The first major problem is that there is zero dramatic tension once Jesus shows up. You know the good guys won't get touched and you know all the bad guys will get what's coming to them. You also know exactly what's going to happen, because all the characters have been studying the Scriptures and talking about the prophecies which will be fulfilled. I know that the fulfillment of prophecy is very important for eschatological writing, but novels

need dramatic tension to keep the reader's interest. I think it would have been much more interesting to have the focal point characters NOT always in the know, and have them struggle through these experiences without knowing all the answers before hand. The second major problem is how Jesus and the angels speak: almost entirely in passages lifted straight from the Bible. I'd imagine Lahaye and Jenkins wanted to err on the side of caution here, not wanting to ascribe to Jesus anything that he might not say. That was a mistake for two reasons. From a dramatic standpoint, it made Jesus and the angels dull, their dialogue stale and tedious because we've heard it before (and in this very book series, too). From a theological standpoint, it's troubling because it feels like it's limiting Jesus. A better solution would be to have Jesus speak original, modern dialogue that fits with who he is (as presented in the Bible) and is tied closer to the context of the book. The third problem is that individual perspective is all but obliterated. Very often there will be a six-page section during which the focal character's name is mentioned once... and then somehow he or she is able to witness things such as mountains splitting in two and entire cities raised hundreds of feet. This book is written like a summary rather than a personal experience. If I wanted the broad picture from a distant point of view I would read Revelation or one of the hundreds of commentaries written on that book. When I'm reading a book--particularly one labeled as FICTION--I want to know and feel what the characters are going through. To this extent, I would rather the characters and myself know less about what's going to happen, so I can experience a much richer and less predictable drama. There are other problems with this book but those are the primary ones. If you've read most of the previous books in the Left Behind series, then you should definitely read through this one just to complete the story. If you haven't read any of the series or you've only read a book or two, you might want to reconsider before you invest your time in 12 books with a disappointing payoff. The books are based on worthwhile material (Revelation--which I'd recommend over these books any day) and the authors seem to have good intentions (though I question why they had to stretch this out over so many books if not for money-making reasons), but the execution really falls short in the end. Hopefully the financial success of this series will pave the way for another, better fictional rendering of Revelation.

Whoo boy, what can I say about this one? I am a Christian and it's nice that Christian themes are getting a lot of attention these days. But this book committed a cardinal sin in fiction - it bored me nearly to death. The writing is so poor that during the reading of the book on a CD version my daughter and I listened to on a cross-country car trip, we ended up fast-forwarding lots of it, and even skipping whole CD's, just so we could finally hear what happened at the end. I read several of

the early books in this series, and they seemed to get more padded with each installment. I gave up in frustration some time around book 7, but decided to try this one to see how the whole thing ended. That turned out to be a mistake. As far as what exactly is wrong with this book, it's hard to know where to begin. The characters are all two-dimensional for starters. They talk in speeches and platitudes for pages at a time. When they are brief they sound like comic book characters, and poorly-written ones at that. In stories like this, the villain is very important. He provides the sense of menace that gives the story its tension. One wonders how the heroes are going to defeat such an awesome adversary. In this story the villain, Satan himself, comes off as a buffoon. He is mostly comic relief, thus depriving the reader of any sense of foreboding. Any other possible drama is diffused by the characters in this book telling us ahead of time exactly what is going to happen. And they're usually right. So where's the drama? It's like watching a football game where the good guys are ahead 1 million to zero in the 4th quarter. And we're supposed to be holding our breath. Read your Bible instead. It's written a whole lot better.

I have read all of the previous 15 books in the Left Behind series, include the ones about the time before the rapture. I have to say without exception, I could not put them down to the point of reading all night and catching a cold because of lack of sleep! :) Having said that, Glorious Appearing is such a disappointment and let down for what should otherwise feel like "Wow! Jesus has come, he loves me beyond my comprehension, and I am completely fulfilled." Not so. Instead of tenderly smiling at each of his children and embracing them with the arms of unconditional love, he is portrayed completely focused on violently killing and maiming unbelievers while at the same time reciting Bible verses all the while. While I have no idea what Jesus Christ will do to unbelievers when he comes, I do know that he wouldn't want his "saints" to be having any feelings other than complete joy and peace at his coming. Personally watching humans' bodies splitting open and guts spilling out while they scream in agony, would not bring me ANY peace and joy; even if they were the most evil people ever. It's human suffering and it's sad and very upsetting to watch. But the book is so void of the characters' reactions to this that I find it very UN-Christian, which I believe would be a mindset of instinctual sadness to watch ANY human suffer in pain. This book was written by men who, I believe I am correct in saying, would say " You must accept Jesus as your PERSONAL Savior to spend eternity with him." The Jesus portrayed in this book is anything but personal; he in fact, seems aloof toward the characters. I just wish the authors of the book had put a little more of a relaxed, loving Jesus into his character, but of course this is just my personal belief (based on some very compelling experiences) of how Jesus would react to his believers. who really

knows....the first 15 books were great though... :)

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