



Evil's Edge

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A compilation of books 7-9 in the Left Behind series:

The Indwelling--It's the midpoint of the seven-year Tribulation. A renowned man is dead, and the world mourns. In heaven, the battle for the ages continues to rage until it spills to earth and hell breaks loose.

The Mark--Nicolae Carpathia is back, resurrected and indwelt by the devil himself. Terror comes to the believers in Greece as they are among the first to face a GC loyalty mark application site and its hideous death contraption.

Desecration--Believers in Jerusalem must flee or take the mark of the beast. Carpathia has ordered every Morale Monitor armed as he travels along the Via Dolorosa and on to the temple. God inflicts the first Bowl Judgment.

Evil's Edge Details

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From Reader Review Evil's Edge for online ebook

Margaret Chind says

A compilation of books 7-9 in the Left Behind series

Tyler Jarvis says

About 3 weeks ago, I decided, "Hey you know what would be fun? Let's re-read all the Left Behind books that I read when I was in High School. I don't believe any of the premillennial dispensationalist stuff, but it'd be fun to see what I think about these books now that I have the benefit of 2 degrees in Bible and theology."

I'm a decently fast reader. I got to work. Over 3 weeks, I read the 12 books of the main series, the 3 prequel novels, and the bizarre sequel that takes place in the millennial kingdom. That's 16 books (though I only counted the 4 collections toward my read total for the year). When it's all totaled up, it adds up to nearly 7,000 pages of biblical fan fiction. I spent so much time reading I actually dreamed about the characters and situations in the book.

These books are crap. Absolute crap. On every conceivable level, they are crap. Beyond that. These books are what Artillery Arthur Hobbs would call "The crap that crap craps."

The first book actually manages to be slightly interesting. The idea of the havoc that would be wreaked if an entire segment of the population vanished suddenly is a very interesting one. But once you get past the interesting premise of the first book, you're left with 15 books so disgustingly terrible, they wouldn't be out of place in the bottom of the outhouse at Burning Man.

There are so many issues with these books that I could not begin to address them all, but I will try and address 2 different categories. As someone who reads, these books were bad literature. As a person of faith with a passion for biblical studies and theology, these books were absolute garbage. As anti-Christ as Nicolae Carpathia is supposed to be in this series.

First, the bad literature. The pacing of these books is terrible. The POV changes so frequently I contracted whiplash. Which character am I supposed to be following? Where are they? What's their job again? This isn't like in a George R. R. Martin book where each character gets a chapter. The POV changes after a few paragraphs. Sometimes as frequently as after every paragraph. Speaking of the characters, the cast of characters in these books are super, SUPER lame. There's no discernible development of the characters. They're all kinda jerks until they become believers, and then they're largely perfect (save the few times a newly-converted believer will swear under their breath and then apologize to anyone around that they're working on it). The books manage to trudge on despite the fact that the characters are not believable as actual people, because every time you start to figure out the characters are flat and wooden, you're distracted by the next "judgment". The judgments are usually gleefully violent (but also poorly written). The various judgments usually serve to push the plot along just enough to keep you reading, but not enough to make you care. Also, in every book (except the first one), what little flow there is to the narrative is regularly interrupted by a sermon (or sermonizing blog post). None of these sermons are particularly good (see my

tirade about the theology below), and usually just serve to make the already clunky narrative even clunkier.

All of the bad literature pales in comparison to the bad theology though. I was horrified reading this and knowing that huge numbers of evangelical Christians actually believe much of this crap (even if they're not premillennial dispensationalists like Lahaye and Jenkins). First off, any Christian who knows anything about the Bible at all can tell you that Jesus says the two Greatest Commands for all followers of God are, "Love the Lord Your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength." and "Love your neighbor as yourself."

But if you thought that nearly 7,000 pages of supposedly Christian literature would try and squeeze in these two great commands somewhere, you'd be mistaken. There are many encouragements for believers to pray to God. Many encouragements to believe the right things. Many encouragements to not wait until it's too late. But it isn't until you're neck deep into the very last book in the regular series (Glorious Appearing, for those keeping track at home) that the book even mentions that love of neighbor is supposed to be a part of the Christian faith. Incidentally, that particular mention comes right after (spoiler alert) Jesus slices the enemy army into ribbons (literally) by speaking King James English at them. So love your neighbor **after** you mutilate them. Love of God is not, to my knowledge, mentioned at all. Because for Lahaye and Jenkins, what is important is obedience. Those who don't obey are mutilated.

By the way, the mutilation of enemies in these books is not just present, it's gleeful. These books read like revenge fantasy. Which makes sense, considering Evangelical Christianity is pretty well known for acting like persecuted victims while also enjoying a position of extreme privilege and influence. In these books, the persecuted Christians get the last laugh while their enemies are mutilated, tortured, and destroyed in dozens of creative (and deeply disturbing) ways.

Oh and these books absolutely mutilate scripture. Lahaye and Jenkins seem to believe themselves experts on the end-times, but don't seem to have any actual knowledge of the ancient genre of apocalyptic literature. They just interpret everything as literally as they possibly can, with no regards for context, genre, audience, or anything else. They also say on multiple occasions, "biblical prophecy is just history written down in advance." Which is silly, because much of the prophetic literature is not even written to talk about the future. And the stuff that is written in future tense is still intended to be a lens at the culture it was written in.

The logical inconsistencies in this series are also laughable. God basically tries to scare the hell out of everyone so they'll turn to him and be saved, but when the anti-Christ, Nicolae Carpathia, tries to use violence and coercion to win people over to his side, he's painted as a sick monster that intelligent people should see right through. The God of these books is violent and coercive, and never demonstrates even an ounce of love for Creation other than when he says it (again, in King James English) in between violent bursts of destruction.

So, yeah. These books are poorly written. They're violent. They're completely devoid of the character of Jesus. These books portray the endtimes where Jesus is a Get Out Of Hell Free card, and God is an angry toddler who's just been told it's time to clean up his toys.

Do not read them. They're not worth reading. Do not pass them onto your friends. Your friends deserve better books than these. And certainly don't get any theology from them. This isn't who God is. This isn't how God operates. This is biblical fan fiction written by people who don't understand the Bible.
