

Discussion Guide for Apollyon

Just-for-Fun Facts

- 1) After half an hour in the check-in line at the King David Hotel, what does the clerk tell Tsion?
- 2) Who trips during the beginning of Nicolae's televised response to the gathering in Kollek Stadium, and what does this person trip over?
- 3) What is the name of the bar that Stefan and Jacov frequent?
- 4) How does the GC illuminate the area by the Wailing Wall where the two witnesses remain?
- 5) What is Rayford's first hint that Ernie is faking his conversion to Christianity?
- 6) What stops will Abdullah and Buck make on their way back to Wheeling?
What is the call sign of the Egyptian jet fighter?

Discussion Questions

Prayer

- 7) After the Gulfstream lands in Jerusalem, Buck and the others make their way over to Kollek Stadium where the Meeting of the Witnesses will take place. Buck has the opportunity to pray with the Israeli committee and considers it a privilege (see p. 13). How do you feel about the times when you prayed with the pastor or other leaders and staff before a revival, retreat, or special event? Imagine having an opportunity to pray with the people running a Women of Faith Conference, Christian concert, or crusade.
- 8) Tsion is explaining the difference for Chaim between Nicolae, an enemy of God (see p. 30), and Chaim's position, not yet a believer. Chaim is amused by the word *yet*, but Tsion assures his old friend and mentor that he prays for him every day. Encourage one another by recalling the answers to your regular prayers over the years for the salvation of friends and loved ones.
- 9) On p. 250, Rayford tells Lukas Miklos that he is an answer to prayer. How does it feel when you are an answer to someone else's prayer?

Boldness

- 10) On p. 7, we learn that Tsion Ben-Judah came up with the strategy of simply trusting God, believing that God could and would protect him from the harm that Carpathia & Co. craved. While this seems simple and obvious, recall situations when you have taken precautions to protect yourself in the face of potentially serious threats. How does the confidence from doing what God has directed affect the courage we find to persist with conviction?
- 11) Jacov, Chaim Rosenzweig's driver and valet, becomes dismayed and tells Buck that he never thought he (personally) would have anything to do with fighting Nicolae Carpathia (see p. 210). How would you feel about being asked to personally share the gospel in a land like Saudi Arabia where such boldness is harshly punished?
- 12) Ken Ritz repeatedly defies GC Chopper Two pilot's orders to land (see p. 224), and his bold actions save the lives of Chloe and Tsion. Later Buck sees Ken die as a bullet hits him in the head. In John 15:13 Jesus said, Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. How does love teach us boldness?

Sharing Faith

- 13) It is difficult to imagine an evangelist with a more exhaustive knowledge of the Scriptures pertaining to salvation than Dr. Tsion Ben-Judah, yet his comprehensive presentation of God's invitation to his chosen people fails to convince Dr. Rosenzweig. Tsion challenges Chaim by asking how a man with such a mind as his can ignore the mathematical impossibility of so many dozens of prophecies referring to just one man unless he is the Messiah (see p. 272). Some people are presented with superb arguments in favor of God and the Lord Jesus Christ and yet reject the truth out of hand, while others are presented with vague and incomplete testimony and receive the Good News with repentance and joy. What are some possible reasons for such incongruity?
- 14) Tsion urges the crowd at the stadium and all those listening on television and radio to receive Jesus Christ. As he prepares to preach from the prophetic message of Revelation 8:13 (see p. 192), suddenly the two witnesses come onto the stage and Moishe recites the verse Tsion selected. Whenever the Scriptures are sown, they return having been productive (see Isaiah 55). We do not need to have Eli and Moishe broadcasting the Word of God to see this result. How have you seen God's Word produce fruit in the lives of those who have heard it?

- 15) Jacov has heard the truth about God (see p. 64), but he is not ready to admit that he needs Jesus to become a part of God's kingdom. Then the Lord humbles Jacov by turning water into blood. We often pray for others as Buck prayed for Jacov, but we don't often see how God changes a heart from indifference to worshipful submission as Buck did. Recall seeing such miracles in your witnessing and praying for others.

Prophecy

- 16) Nicolae attempts to arrogantly manipulate Eli and Moishe (see p. 287), but the two witnesses will not tolerate it. The bottom line of their message is the prophecy that destruction and terror will befall everyone who will not acknowledge God's sovereignty. This terror that will surely come is a promise from God. It is prophesied so that everyone can see for themselves that God keeps his word. Why else has God established prophecies? Do you think prophecies like this are meant more for God's people or unbelievers? Why?
- 17) The prophecy of Revelation 8:12, the fourth Trumpet Judgment, is the darkening by one-third of the sun, moon, and stars. Compared to earthquakes, burning mountains falling from the sky, and Wormwood, this judgment may at first glance seem like it would have much less impact. Think about times when severe storms have blown up in the middle of sunny afternoons, then imagine that this darkness came just as suddenly but without any reasonable explanation. Describe how you think unbelievers might feel (see p. 262).
- 18) Try to picture the scene in heaven described in the Epilogue. God has been so gracious to us that we might neglect his attributes of holiness, omnipotence, and omniscience. How do you feel when you think about God in heaven behind his holy altar as described throughout the book of Revelation?

Fellowship

- 19) Dr. Charles feels awkward about his upcoming move into the safe house (see p. 26). Rayford speaks the truth in love to Floyd and finds a way to affirm him for the gifts he will bring into their midst. How have others challenged you in the past when you were thinking unclearly about some aspect of life? Think of a situation and describe how you might confront and affirm your brother or sister in Christ.
- 20) When Chaim suggests that Jacov is out getting inebriated, Buck fears the worst (see p. 126). When Buck asks Jacov for a key but to keep it secret from Chaim, Jacov fears that some harm might come to Chaim (see pp. 209—10). Trust and trustworthiness are important issues in Christian fellowship, but so

are forgiveness and love. How have others presumed your motives or guilt or misjudged you in the past? How difficult is it to forgive such mistakes and relate to one another in love without resentment and bitterness over past hurts?

- 21) T. M. Delanty and Rayford make each other's acquaintance while Bo and Ernie are being stung by the demon locusts. They have very little in common, and on top of that Rayford is still dealing with the loss of his good friend and Christian brother, Ken Ritz (see p. 337). Rayford decides to take it slow by eating lunch with T a couple of times before even asking a personal question. Sometimes believers take Christian fellowship for granted, forgetting the kindness and little courtesies that help people ease into relationship with one another. Can you recall some rocky starts in relationships between believers that may have been averted by observing simple amenities?

God's Sovereignty

- 22) Crowds often find the bluster in numbers to propose and encourage fiendish and depraved actions. The Jews called out to Pilate, Crucify him! Similarly, the crowds at the Temple Mount on Thursday evening were roaming around and up to no good (see p. 246). Already an air of wickedness had pervaded the area. Then, with the urging of Nicolae and the GC guards, the herd begins to lust for blood. They want someone, anyone, to kill the two witnesses. But God had already proclaimed that anyone who tried to harm them would suffer immediate death. What situations can you recall when others have mocked God's sovereign will and tried to discredit or harm those who stand up for the righteousness God requires?
- 23) Sitting with Chaim in his home, Buck realizes that Chaim's reluctance to surrender to God was a choice (see pp. 297—98), not a result of uncertainty about the existence of God or his sovereignty. Chaim tells Buck that his prayers for him mean more than he can express, but Chaim foolishly supposes he need not make a decision immediately. The terrifying plague of demon locusts sweeps across the world in that moment, and Chaim is stung. How are the carefully measured and loving chastisements of God's judgments similar to the trials and tribulations you have experienced in daily life? How do they lead us to Christ and teach us humility and obedience? In a manner of speaking, how have you been stung when procrastination delayed obedience?

Answer Key for *Apollyon* Just-for-Fun Facts

- 1) The clerk at the King David hotel tells Tsion that his room reservation had been bumped to allow Nicolae Carpathia to book the entire top floor of the hotel. (see p. 8)
- 2) Leon Fortunato trips over a light cord. (see p. 104)
- 3) The name of the bar frequented by Stefan and Jacov is The Harem. (see p. 125)
- 4) They use giant klieg lights to illuminate the area, a glaring spotlight bathing the witnesses. (see p. 134)
- 5) Bo is able to see the mark of the believer on Ernie's forehead. (see p. 302)
- 6) Abdullah and Buck will stop in Greece, London, and Greenland, to refuel on their way back to Wheeling. (see p. 353) The call sign of Abdullah's Egyptian jet fighter is Edward Zulu Zulu Two Niner. (see p. 355)