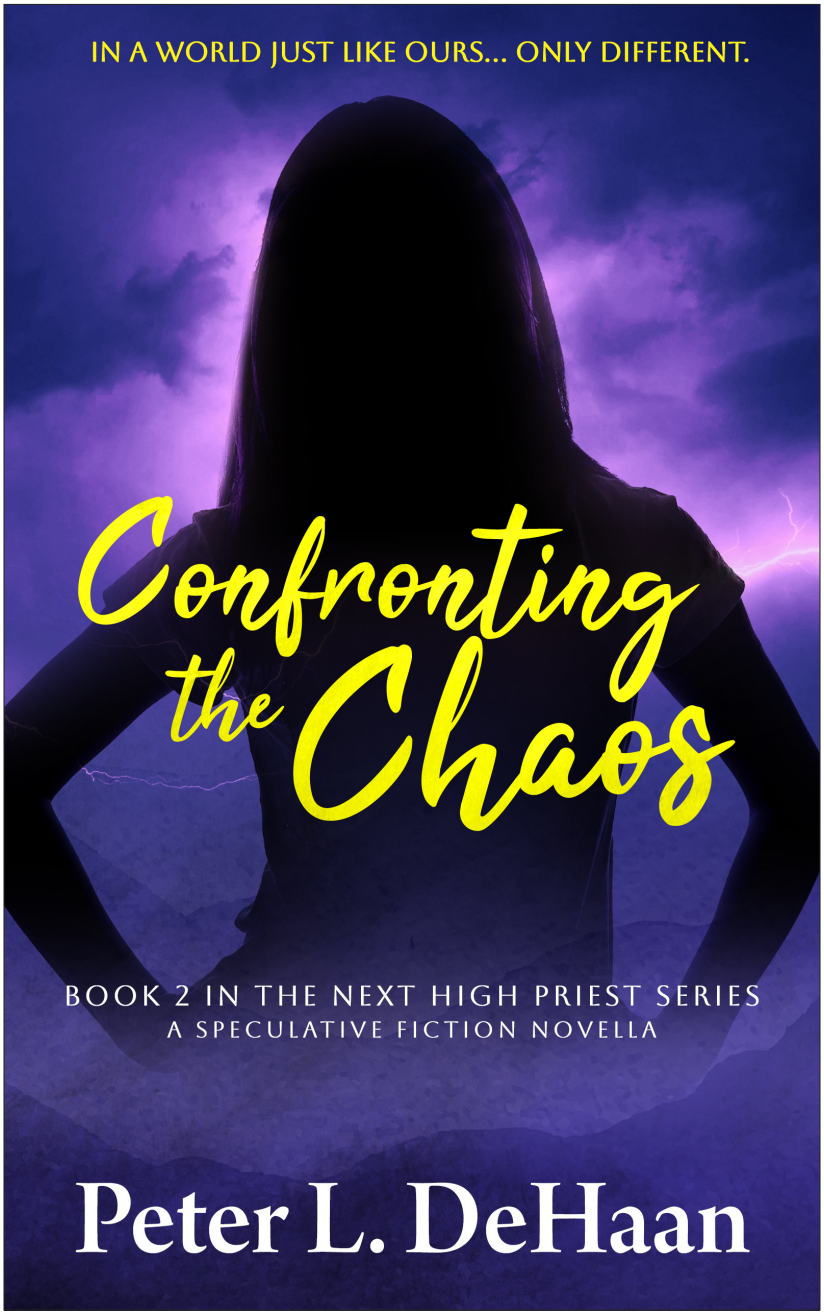


Discussion Guide for

Confronting the Chaos

by Peter L. DeHaan

For middle school classes

PeterLDeHaan.com

How to Use This Guide

Please finish the book first, or finish each chapter group before discussing it. The questions mention later events in the story.

Work through the chapter sections in order, or choose the groups that fit your class period. There are no right or wrong answers—share what stood out to you. Save the whole-book questions for the end of your discussion.

Chapters 1–2: Emma Wakes Up to Her New Role

Emma wakes in the Temple Palace as the new High Priestess after the Sovereign protects her from bullets, and she meets the controlling Chief of Priests.

1. Why do you think Emma feels both groggy and achy when she wakes up?
2. How does Emma's family show they care about her?
3. What makes Pompous Jack (the Chief of Priests) seem untrustworthy right away?
4. Emma says the Sovereign protected her. When have you felt God protecting you?
5. How would you feel if you suddenly had to live somewhere new and important?
6. What do you think Emma should do about not wanting this new role?

Chapters 3–5: The Robe, the Note, and Getting Ready

Emma refuses to live at the palace forever, receives a scary warning note, and prepares for her first service while learning about the strange robe and staff.

1. Why does Emma dislike the palace so much?
2. How does Jennifer help Emma, and what does that show about friendship?
3. What does the brick and note tell us about how some people feel about Emma?
4. Emma prays for peace and guidance. How can praying like that help when we feel scared?
5. If you were Emma, would you wear the ugly old robe or try to change it? Why?
6. What do you think the Sovereign wants Emma to learn from these challenges?

Chapters 6–8: Makeup, Sunday Service, and Standing Up

Ashley gives Emma the ghostly makeup Pompous Jack ordered, Emma removes it, leads the service her own way, and faces his anger afterward.

1. Why does Emma decide to remove the makeup before the service?
2. How does Emma's wave and extra "See you next Sunday!" show she is growing braver?
3. What does Pompous Jack's reaction teach us about people who want control?
4. Emma trusts the Sovereign even when people are upset. When is it hard for you to trust God?
5. How do Emma's parents and friends support her after the service?
6. If you were in the congregation, how would you have felt about Emma lowering her hood?

Chapters 9–11: Back at School and Facing Opposition

Emma tries to return to normal school life, but students avoid her, Principal Johnson suggests she leave, and she receives more threats.

1. Why is it so hard for Emma to just be a regular student again?
2. How do Chloe and Joshua show they are true friends?
3. What does Emma learn about trusting the Sovereign when things feel impossible?
4. Principal Johnson offers distance learning. Do you think that would be easier or harder? Why?
5. How can we support friends who feel left out or bullied at school?
6. Emma prays, "Just trust me." What does that mean for us when we face hard days?

Chapters 12–14: Family Dinner and Saying Goodbye

Emma's parents decide she must live at the palace, but first she enjoys one last dinner with family and Joshua.

1. Why do Emma's parents think the palace is the best choice even though they don't like it?
2. How does Joshua fit in with Emma's family?
3. What makes the dinner feel both happy and sad?
4. Emma wants to fire Pompous Jack. When is it okay to stand up to someone in charge?
5. How can we honor our parents even when we disagree with their decisions?
6. What would you pack if you had to move to a new "home" like Emma?

Chapters 15–17: The Limo Ride, Gabe, and the Sovereign's Protection

On the limo ride, Emma and Gabe talk about spiritual colors, Topher shares his story, and the Sovereign answers Emma's prayer for protection from following cars.

1. What do the rainbow colors help Emma understand about people's faith?
2. Why is Gabe's warning about glossy black spirits important?
3. How does Emma use both prayer and practical help (texting the captain) when facing danger?
4. Topher can't date Ashley because of the rules. How can we pray for people in unfair situations?
5. When have you seen God protect you or answer prayer in a surprising way?
6. What does it mean that the Sovereign "has your back"?

Chapters 18–20: New Friends, New Threats, and Choosing Safety

Junior becomes Emma's helpful guard, Ashley and Topher get closer, and serious threats at school force Emma to rethink staying.

1. How is Junior different from Pompous Jack?
2. Why does Emma want to keep helping Ashley and Topher?
3. What do the locker threats show about the cost of standing for faith?
4. Emma's disciples surround her for protection. How can friends support each other at school?
5. When is it wise to step back from something even if it feels unfair?
6. How does Emma keep trusting the Sovereign through every change?

Whole-Book Discussion Questions

1. How does Emma change from the first chapter to the last?
2. What does the story teach about true friendship versus fake friends?
3. How does trusting the Sovereign help Emma face fear and opposition?
4. Which character surprised you most and why?
5. What do the spiritual colors and auras add to the story's message about faith?
6. How is Pompous Jack different from the kind of leader God wants?
7. What part of Emma's story feels most like real life today?
8. How can we stand for our faith without being mean to others?
9. Which scene would you most like to act out or rewrite?
10. What lesson from the book do you want to remember when you face hard days?
11. How does Emma balance being a normal teenager with her new role?
12. What would you tell Emma if she asked for advice about Joshua or school?
13. How does the story show that the Sovereign's protection doesn't always mean an easy life?
14. Who in the book do you most want to be like, and why?

15. If you could ask the author one question about the story, what would it be?

About the Author

Peter L. DeHaan is an adult who dreams of being a teenager. When he's not contemplating grown-up thoughts, his mind retreats to the domain of invented worlds with his loyal and most real, yet still imaginary, friends.

His first published adventures come to life in The Next High Priest Series—a faith-friendly speculative fiction adventure in a world just like ours . . . only different.

Read the Rest of The Next High Priest Series

Confronting the Chaos is book 2 of The Next High Priest Series. The full series:

1. Seeking the Sovereign
2. Confronting the Chaos
3. **Dueling the Devil**
4. Reforming the Religion
5. Freeing the Prisoners
6. Fighting the Fanatics
7. Perfecting the Priesthood
8. Pursuing the Politicians
9. Restoring the Repentant

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