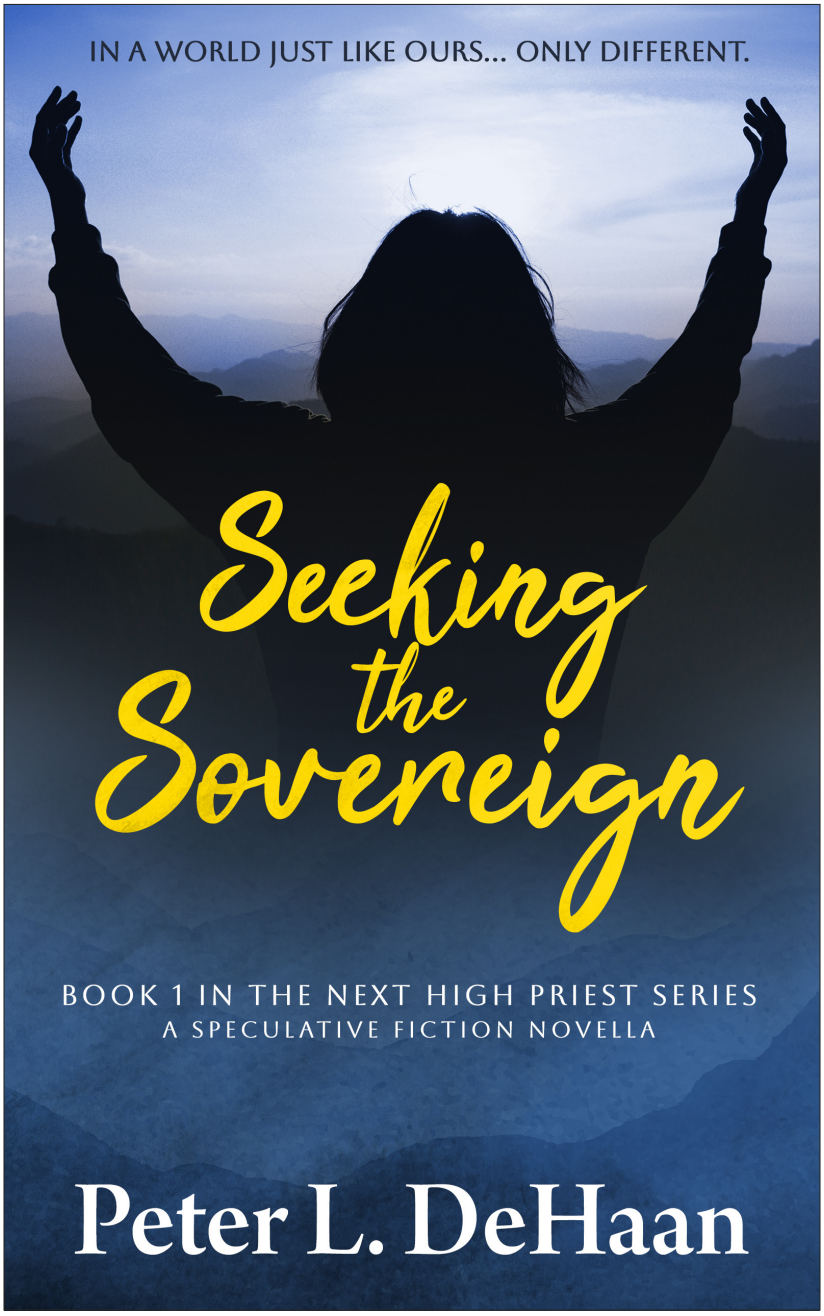


Discussion Guide for

Seeking the Sovereign

by Peter L. DeHaan

For middle school classes

PeterLDeHaan.com

How to Use This Guide

Please finish the book first. The questions mention later events in the story.

This guide is for middle school classes. Work through the chapter sections in order, or choose the groups that fit a class period. There are no right or wrong answers—invite students to share what stood out to them. Save the whole-book questions for the end of your discussion.

Chapters 1–2: Forbidden and Dinner and Dishes

Emma stands up for a new girl at school, faints, and later asks her parents why normal people cannot read the Holy Text.

1. Why do you think Emma rushes in to help the new girl even though it gets her in trouble?

2. How does Joshua's kindness after Emma faints affect the way she sees him?

3. What does Emma's family think about reading the Holy Text, and why does that matter to her?

4. How does the homeless man's blessing make Emma feel, and what does it show about giving?

5. In what ways is Emma already starting to follow the Sovereign even though her parents worry?

Chapters 3–4: Homework and Priorities

Emma studies the Holy Text in secret every night and begins to wonder how much she may need to give up for the Sovereign.

1. What does Emma notice about math, science, and history that points her to the Sovereign?

2. Why does Chloe sign Emma up for the musical, and how does Emma respond?

3. How does the voice inside Emma's head feel different from her own thoughts?

4. What "extra credit" is Emma really doing, and why does she keep it secret?

5. If you were Emma, would you skip the musical? Why or why not?

Chapters 5–6: Emma's Crew and A One-Word Prayer

SWAT officers arrest Joshua right in front of Emma; she later escapes danger by obeying the Sovereign's one-word direction.

1. Why does the group look to Emma as their leader even though she feels unworthy?
2. What does Emma risk when she yells at the SWAT captain?
3. How does the homeless man help Emma without giving her money or directions out loud?
4. Why is the simple prayer "Please" enough in that moment?
5. How does Chloe's choice to run away make Emma feel, and what does it teach about friendship?

Chapters 7–8: A Close Call and Crazy or Consecrated?

Emma's parents worry about her ideas; she later dreams of rescuing prisoners and senses a call to the Temple.

1. Why does Emma kick her sister under the table at dinner?
2. What three rescue plans does Emma imagine, and which one feels most like her?
3. How does the voice at 3 a.m. feel different from ordinary thoughts?
4. Why does Emma wonder if she is crazy or consecrated?
5. What does it mean to have a "childlike faith" in this story?

Chapters 9–10: An Early Start and Gabe

Emma hides from police, researches at the library, and meets Gabe, who shows her a key verse about a pure heart.

1. Why does Emma leave her phone in the book return?
2. What does Gabe do that surprises Emma about his smell and his knowledge?
3. How does the verse "Approach the Sovereign with a pure heart and live" change Emma's plan?
4. Why does Gabe ask if Emma is "the One"?
5. What does Emma learn about faith from Gabe in just one afternoon?

Chapters 11–12: Sanctuary and Sarah

Emma hides in a tree house and receives help from Joshua's sister Sarah.

1. How does the tree house match the vision Emma had earlier?
2. Why does Sarah's family keep their door unlocked for Emma?
3. What does Sarah reveal about Joshua that surprises Emma?
4. How does the Sovereign use ordinary people (Sarah's mom, Gabe, Chloe) to protect Emma?
5. What does Emma learn about asking others to pray for her?

Chapters 13–14: Ruby Red and Plans Change

Emma learns to see people's spiritual light and is arrested at school but escapes the SWAT van.

1. What color light does Emma see in Gabe, Sarah, and herself?
2. Why does the Sovereign tell Emma to check her locker before heading to the Temple?
3. How does Emma get out of the handcuffs, and what does that show about obeying the Sovereign?
4. What changes when Emma decides to deliver her letters first?
5. How does the Sovereign's protection feel different from magic?

Chapters 15–16: The Temple and A New Day

Emma spends the night in the Temple, meets the Sovereign, and is chosen as the new High Priestess while bullets fall harmlessly around her.

1. What does Emma learn about having a pure heart versus selfish intent?
2. How does the Sovereign's voice sound different from any human voice?
3. Why does the Sovereign choose Emma even though she feels too young and unprepared?
4. What happens when Hernandez tries to shoot Emma, and what does it prove?
5. How do the people's reactions the next morning show that the Sovereign is at work?

Whole-Book Discussion Questions

1. What is the biggest change in Emma from the first page to the last, and what caused it?
2. How does the prophecy at the beginning come true in surprising ways?
3. Which scene made you laugh, and which one made you think hardest about your own faith?
4. What does the story teach about reading the Holy Text even when others say it is forbidden?
5. How do Emma's friendships with Chloe, Joshua, and Sarah grow or change?
6. Why is a "pure heart" more important than age, training, or being male?
7. What does the book say about obeying the Sovereign even when the plan seems impossible?
8. Which moment best shows that those who trust the Sovereign are protected?
9. How does Emma's story encourage you to stand up for others at school?
10. What would you have done differently if you were Emma on the morning she went to the Temple?
11. How does the story balance courage with humility?
12. What part of Emma's journey reminds you of a Bible story you already know?
13. If the Sovereign asked you to do something big and scary, what would help you say yes?
14. What do you think happens next for Emma as the new High Priestess?
15. Who should read this book, and why would it help them?

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

Seeking the Sovereign is book 1 of The Next High Priest Series. The full series:

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5. Freeing the Prisoners
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