



Scriptures and Doctrine :: Not destined for wrath - how and when?

Not destined for wrath - how and when? - posted by docs (), on: 2013/2/27 12:13

I've been engaging in some good reading lately. I recently completed Robert Gundry's book "The Church And The Tribulation." Writing from a posttribulational point of view, the author certainly poses some relevant questions. Published in 1972, the author is a very sharp scholar and thinker and put his arguments together well in this book. He takes an irenic tone in his book and doesn't attack those who advocate the pretribulational position but rather questions the view itself but with a calm and courteous tone.

It is said by the pre-tribulation view that the church will not go through the tribulation because the church is not destined for wrath but for salvation since to even be in the tribulation will be to experience wrath since that wrath will be so intense and widespread that it will be unavoidable for those present. I don't share that particular view because Revelation clearly portrays the wicked as the object of wrath and not believers. Yet Gundry asks if the blood of Christ justifies and delivers from wrath (Romans 5:9) then what of the multitude who will be saved during the tribulation?

13 - And one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where have they come?"

14 - And I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev 7:13-14)

During this final time, perhaps the greatest number of people will be saved in the shortest period of time than ever before. It will be a great day of evangelism amidst the strife. Yet if to even be in the tribulation is to experience wrath as many teach, then what of those who are saved during the tribulation and thereby are delivered from wrath to salvation? Why will they have to still experience wrath during this time if the blood of Christ makes them not destined for wrath. "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him" (Romans 5:9). If, from the pretribulational point of view, to be in the tribulation will be to experience unavoidable wrath that will affect all, what will these saved people be doing in the tribulation if the first place? Upon their salvation, should they immediately be removed from the tribulation? Gundry presents these questions and others in a very thoughtful way. If the 144,000 of Revelation chapter 7 can be sealed and protected, it opens at least the possibility that if the church is present during this time it might be protected during this time if the saints of the tribulation do indeed turn out to be the church since every believer within the church is sealed by the Holy Spirit.

I'm posttribulational and I found Gundry's book to be very valuable in helping me better understand this position. I'm also convinced the issue can be discussed in a calm and courteous manner. If anyone has any comments or thoughts, calm and courteous is the way to go.

Thanks.

Re: Not destined for wrath - how and when?, on: 2013/2/27 14:41

Quote:
 -----Yet if to even be in the tribulation is to experience wrath as many teach, then what of those who are saved during the tribulation and thereby are delivered from wrath to salvation? Why will they have to still experience wrath during this time if the blood of Christ makes them not destined for wrath. docs

I tend not to concern myself too much with post, pre, mid rapture theories mostly because unless the Lord actually reveals the meaning for all believers, all unbelievers and throughout the whole period of time which most identify as a seven year period, there can be no simple answer. Again speaking personally I believe in a state of readiness of those who believe.

eve into Christ and live faithfully or else are brought to faithful living ready for a day when Christ takes them to be with Him. This would probably be called pre-trib rapture. At the same time I have a burden for all believers in the sense that the Lord has led me to think about the condition of those who find themselves in that seven year period and are in many instances faced with a situation in which they discover that they are unable to deny Christ and for that testimony are persecuted and even put to death in some way or other. These could not be included in any rapture because having been martyred for their faith they would go to be with the Lord by the hand of men and not God directly. As a matter of reality I can't even think beyond that point and so the rest is strictly scriptural. To that end Matthew 24 shows up that rapture immediately follows the great tribulation so it cannot be denied as a real event immediately prior to the Lord's visible appearance. Matthew 24 is both tribulation and rapture. This makes for at least three groups of believers, which although they are all believers, experience the end of the age differently.

As for being appointed to tribulation I think it means the Lord has not appointed anyone to go through the tribulation, but as this has to do with a fixed and determined period of tribulation and great tribulation by God on the earth as well as those who dwell on the earth, I would say that anyone found in such a time and was a believer, would enter that period in a state of apostasy, only to find that in the end God's mercy to them was that they are delivered from apostasy by suffering. In contrast to these brethren all other men curse God, even though they suffer supernaturally by the hand of God and refuse to repent completely.

The only way to reconcile this appears to be in accepting that God is merciful and so he shows us in scripture and bears witness to it in other ways, that He has both a perfect will for us, and a knowledge of what is to come because He perfectly knows us. Without knowing God's perfect will some brethren would have no way to dress in readiness. They may not be wicked servants in any deep sense but may still not comprehend or desire true holiness and so may for all of their love of the Lord and faithfulness in what one might call ordinary things, they miss the exceptional opportunity to dress in readiness and become the bride of Christ, taken out of the way by that purpose. These brethren may be the ones who have not neglected the assembling together, have laboured to feed their families, have sought to bring their children into a knowledge of the Lord. They may be in short decent and right minded men and women, but for all that they may still have no deeper understanding of separateness and holiness. They may even think such things are completely impossible.

Those who do have a mind to understand separateness and holiness have nothing to boast in either, because they only understand such things because they have been given to understand them for the Lord's sake. Yet even these may not necessarily walk in the things of separateness and holiness easily.

Then there are those who take the name of Christ yet are in a state of clear apostasy. These are the ones I would say are the most likely to be found in tribulation and great tribulation and then to face the clearest test which will set them apart in that hour either by fleeing and hiding and seeking God and Christ fervently in that hour of fleeing. Or else by a presentiation of death or recant. It must be remembered that there are many millions of people who are not in any way true believers yet who nevertheless take the name of Christ. Most of these men and women are in cults, but in the end many of them will be in churches which also have come to a fully apostate condition.

It's not an easy subject. That's for sure.

Re: Escaping from within the midst of - posted by docs (), on: 2013/3/1 7:02

I was speaking with someone regarding the subject here etc. and he brought up two OT occurrences that he thought might serve as an example of God's judgments during the tribulation. I was in agreement that the two OT occurrences, the flood and the plagues in Egypt, may serve as an example of divine judgment in the tribulation period. The plagues in Egypt are of special interest because God's people were in the midst of these plagues and were effected by them but were preserved through them because the wrath of the plagues was not specifically directed at them. In his book "The Church And The Tribulation", Gundry makes some points that are valid in my opinion in this regard. I'm no fancy wordsmith and I'm only reading his thoughts. Yet one example he uses is Luke 21:36 - "But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man." He notes that the word "escape" here has the meaning of escape "out of the midst of" instead of escaping by being removed beforehand. And he discusses Rev 3:10 - "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I will also keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth." The Greek preposition denoted by the word "from" is a preposition of motion concerning thought or physical direction, meaning out from within. This word from as used here does not denote a stationary position outside its object. So emergence from within seems to denote that the believers being addressed in Rev 3:10 might very well be in the hour of testing or else how could they emerge from within it. Escaping need not automatically carry with it the connotation that to escape will be to be removed beforehand. It raises at least the possibility that the Church could be within the tribulation but delivered

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Not destined for wrath - how and when?

ered from within and out of the midst of it just as in the OT examples - affected by the wrath but not objects of it and preserved and emerging from within the midst of it.