

Overview of Midtribulationism

Description of Midtribulationism

The midtribulation view holds that the rapture of the church will occur at the midpoint of the seven years of tribulation, after the first three and one half years. In this view, only the last half of Daniel's seventieth week is the tribulation period.

History of Midtribulationism

This view came about through Norman Harrison who wrote The End: Rethinking the Revelation in 1941. Contemporary advocates include J. O. Buswell, Harold J. Ockenga and Gleason Archer.

Nevertheless, this view remains held by only a very small minority of scholars.

Argument for Midtribulationism

Supporters of this view define the wrath of God in the tribulation period as confined to the last half or final three and one-half years. The trials and judgments of the first half of the tribulation are due to the wrath of men, not the wrath of God.

The church then escapes the wrath of God on earth in the rapture at the mid point of the tribulation. Midtribulationists view the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11 as the beginning of God's wrath (Revelation 11:18 - "Thy wrath has come").

Also, this view argues that the seventh trumpet of Revelation 10:7 corresponds to the last trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52. Since the seventh trumpet occurs at the mid point of the tribulation, then the rapture of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is at the mid point.

Analysis of Midtribulationism

While certainly the judgments of God during the tribulation are intensified in the last half of the tribulation, it does not follow that God's wrath is limited to the final three and one-half years.

Revelation 11:18 does not say that the wrath of God on earth is only beginning at the mid point of the tribulation, but that it has come. Revelation 6:16-17 also says the wrath of the Lamb has come. Therefore, to fit midtribulationism, the seal judgments must occur in the second half of the tribulation.

The argument that the last trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11 is debatable. In Jewish literature, the blowing of trumpets occur for a variety of reasons.

In 1 Corinthians 15:52 the trumpet is sounded for resurrection and deliverance, it is the last trumpet for the church. In Revelation 11 the seventh trumpet is of judgment. Also, in Revelation 11 the seventh trumpet is only the last of a series. The last trumpet of the tribulation is Matthew 24:31 and the second coming of Christ.