

The Separation of Tribulation and Wrath in the Book of Revelation.

There are those who combine the idea of tribulation with wrath. They would acknowledge we are in a form of “tribulation,” but it isn’t *the* tribulation or the *Great* Tribulation.

I emphatically believe the church [the believer] is exempt from God’s wrath. And I do believe there will be an intensifying of evil and thus, tribulation at the coming of Jesus, but I do not believe the church is exempt from tribulation. **And I do not believe there is coming an isolated seven-year period of tribulation.** I do not for the following three reasons.

A. In the Book of Revelation, the word “wrath” occurs only in conjunction with the 2nd coming of Jesus. Otherwise, the people of God are in tribulation.

2 nd Coming - 6:12-17 [Wrath - 6:16, 17]	2 nd Coming - 11:15-19 [Wrath - 11:7, 18]	2 nd Coming - 14:14-20 [Wrath - 14:10]	2 nd Coming - 16:12-16; 19:17-21; 20:7-10ff [Wrath - 16:19; 19:15]
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B. Nowhere in 1 and 2 Thessalonians are tribulation and wrath combined. In addition, the emphasis between 1 Thess. 4 and 5 is one of audience, not time.

1. The distinction between Tribulation and Wrath in 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

Tribulation | Suffering

Thlipsis | Thlibo

- 1Thess. 3:3 that no one be moved by these **[tribulations]**: For you yourselves know that **we are destined for this**. 4 For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that **we were to suffer [tribulation]; just as it has come to pass**, and just as you know. 7 for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and **[tribulation]** we have been comforted about you through your faith.

Wrath

- 1Th 5:9 **For God has not destined us for wrath**, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2. The Structure of 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

The structure of this passage (1 Thess. 4, 5) forces us to treat the two paragraphs singularly. The difference is perspective. Chapter four speaks to those who have died

before Jesus comes. Chapter five speaks to those who are alive when Jesus comes. Both end with the same words. It is a word of encouragement for those who are afflicted (4:18; 5:11).

The point of both paragraphs (4:13-18 and 5:1-11) is not sequence, but event. The two form one indivisible truth – Jesus is coming. It is this hope that brings comfort to the sorrowing and strength to the weak.

This paragraph is often cited as evidence of a pre-tribulation gathering. Yet, there is nothing in this passage or letter teaching or even suggesting that this resurrection and coming is before a severe period of coming tribulation. In fact, the Bible consistently teaches otherwise.

- C. The New Testament writers place the believer [i.e. the church] in tribulation. The church is never spoken of as being exempt from tribulation, but rather as being kept in tribulation.

Consider with me several verses of Scripture (Acts 14:22; Phil. 1:27-30; 1 Thess. 3:3, 4; 2 Tim. 3:10-12).

- John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. **In the world you have tribulation**, but take courage; I have overcome the world."
- Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "**Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.**"
- Second Timothy 3:10-12
¹⁰ Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, ¹¹ persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! ¹² **Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.**

This tribulation described in the New Testament is a present reality. By looking at the church global, we see a church in tribulation.

IN ADDITION

What about 2 Peter 2:4-11, where it talks about God knowing how to rescue his people from TRIALS (not wrath)? He uses two references (Noah & Lot) to illustrate how the godly are being taken out before impending judgement.

See further:

Date: September 28, 2014

Title: God's Word is Sure

Text: 2 Peter 2:4-10

Theme: God's Word is certain and the outcome on the unbelieving and believing is inevitable.

Introduction:

The intent of this text is two-fold. First, to assure the readers of the inevitable and certain end for those who reject the person and work of Jesus Christ. Second, to assure the readers of their own perseverance in the faith because of God's preservation of the faith-filled. He uses two Old Testament examples to prove his point. The first example is the flood narrative and the preservation of Noah, a preacher of righteousness. The second example is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the rescuing of righteous Lot.

The larger *Story* in which each story fits is the promise of God's future deliverance in the fulfillment of the Seed Promise and Satan's desire to see the promise unfulfilled. Each of the two accounts are attacks against the Seed Promise. Both attacks desire to see the promise crushed. Nevertheless, God is faithful to keep His promise to deliver His people from sin and death.