

HAS THE BIBLICAL TRIBULATION ALREADY OCCURRED, CIRCA AD70?

The answer to this question consists of a resounding “NO.” Yet, there are Christians who affirm that it did, in order to uphold the notion that the Kingdom of God must be established on earth by the Church, PRIOR TO the literal and physical return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This makes the Rapture of the Church irrelevant and unnecessary, since the Church must remain on earth, fulfilling its purpose for establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. In order to uphold this prophetic perspective, the Tribulation spoken of by our Lord in Matthew 24 and the apostle John in the book of Revelation, is best viewed as an event in the distant past; consisting of the Roman army’s destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD70. This is why proponents of this viewpoint go to extraordinary lengths in seeking to date the writing of Revelation by John to a time prior to AD70 (cf. Revelation 1:1-3); completely contradicting the early church fathers’ dating in the AD90’s. So, how can we know for certain that this theory about the tribulation has no merit? The proof resides within Scripture itself, and is found in Matthew 24:29-30 –

“But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.”

As Jesus Himself provides us with this descriptive portrayal of His Second Coming, we cannot overlook the key word which pertains to the subject at hand. And that word is **“immediately.”** It is the Greek word “eutheos” and it means “at once” or “directly.” Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines immediate as “occurring, acting or accomplished without loss or interval of time.” J. I. Rodale in his book: “The Synonym Finder,” provides the following words as synonyms for immediately: “instantly, at once, right away, forthwith and without delay.” If Jesus is telling us that His Second Coming will “immediately” follow this period of God’s judgment on earth, and if the Tribulation occurred circa AD70, then where is He? Or was He guilty of misspeaking in v29? We all know that He was not guilty of any such error and that He has not returned to earth. Jesus remains seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, until that time when He returns for His Church, in an event described for us in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, commonly referred to as the Rapture. Then and only then, will the Tribulation begin, lasting for seven years, and ending with Jesus return to earth, in order to establish His Millennial reign on earth.

So, what does this mean for the legitimacy of this theory that the Tribulation took place in AD70, contained within the larger prophetic perspective known as Dominion Theology? The Kingdom of God on earth will be established by Jesus Christ, when He returns to earth; and NOT by Christians individually and the Church collectively, prior to His return. It means that Dominion Theology is a complete falsehood, with no Biblical validity whatsoever. It also means that all of us need to stop listening to such fabricated nonsense. Or, as the apostle Paul states it in Ephesians 4:14-15 –

“As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to GROW UP (emphasis added), in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ...”