

Monday, April 22, 2013

Why I am Mid Tribulation in Brief

While considering the question of the mid tribulation rapture let me address the clearest objection to this position from the outset. This objection is the immanency question. It is thought that if you are looking for the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place this negates your eyes being set on the coming of our savior. Steve Lemke of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary addresses the question in following manner.

“Because the signs of the end are events that happen periodically to some degree at all times, it will not be clear even to those who are undergoing the tribulation the precise moment of its beginning. The gradual worsening of events may be suggestive but not determinative of being in the tribulation.... like a frog in a slowly heated pot, those undergoing the tribulation may not discern the meaning of the events. The beginning of the tribulation would not be clearly noticed, thus no one would be able to set accurately the date of the events of the end based on the date of the beginning of the signs of the end. One can thus expect the return of Christ as immanent at any time.”^[1]

I will grant this is not the strongest argument but I think it is a valid one. Who could argue against Hitler being a precursor to the antichrist? It is not the argument against the mid tribulation coming of Christ that convinces me of this position but the argument for it. Daniel 7:25 is a reasonable place to start. It speaks about a King who will try to change the times and will fight with God’s people for 3 ½ years.

“This king will speak against the Most High God, and he will hurt and kill God’s holy people. He will try to change times and laws that have already been set. The holy people that belong to God will be in that king’s power for three and one-half years.”

Why would anyone want to change the “times” or calendar? Because our calendar is based on the birth of Jesus Christ! This was also done during the French Revolution, another time in which the spirit of Anti-Christ took authority over part of the world.

Two key passages in the scriptures separate out distinctive time frames in the tribulation period.

“And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to

scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.” Daniel 12: 6-8 and Revelations 12:14 “And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.” Time, times and a half means, three and a half years and if this three and a half year period of time were not significant why is highlighted so?

I am a practical man when it comes to interpreting the scriptures. I ask simple questions. Why does God divide a seven year period of time in half? Seven years is a very short period of time in the scripture. He does it because there are important things happening.

Could it be the following? “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;” He is then described for us, “ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-4.

A more thorough teaching on this topic can be found at the below link.

<http://www.nobts.edu/faculty/itor/lemkesw/personal/midtribulationism.html>

In my view of scripture Matthew 24, Mark 13, 1 and 2 Thessalonians as well as the timing of the last trumpet in Revelations 11 are harmonious. It is the strength of this harmony that has leads me to the mid tribulation position. Finally, one last quote from Steve Lemke to support my position.

The ‘Mid-tribulationism *position* offers a better account of the scriptural division of the events of the end times in two halves than does pre-tribulationism. Post-tribulationists, like pre-tribulationists, ignore or gloss over the precise language separating the signs and events of the end into two distinct periods.”

[1] <http://www.nobts.edu/faculty/itor/lemkesw/personal/midtribulationism.html>