

FAQ 6

There's No Contradiction Here !

Q #6 You have a problem, do you not? You say God's people in Jesus Christ will not incur the WRATH of God, but then are unbiblical due to the biblical TEXT'S clear statement that the wrath of God comes before the trumpet blasts. Here's the Bible quote at the time the sixth Seal is opened: "... calling to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand? (Revelation 6:16,17 ; ESV ; emphasis ours) Since your teaching position states the wrath of God begins at the bowls of wrath, you have a problem in light of the fact the biblical text teaches to the contrary [of your position].

Good question! It's here where we need to give an answer that includes several important aspects. But first, please note: God's disobedient people have incurred His wrath at times throughout history. Also, please note who it is who is saying, "the great day of His wrath has come." It is the people of the earth (unbelievers) who make this statement, **not** God nor God's heralds. In light of this, are there any other possible interpretive options as to the intended meaning of this passage?

We believe this: God will not pour His wrath upon His obedient people. To do so would be a violation of His character. But He will, as He has done in the past, judge His wayward people. It is most likely that He will allow His people (who do not take the mark of the beast and who are not martyred during the tribulation period) to go through the time of the trumpets, **BUT** nowhere in Scripture are these called the "wrath of God." Yes, we agree the people of the earth will say "the great day of His wrath has come," but these are earth dwellers who make this statement and they do so while observing that something indeed is about to take place having seen the One on the throne and the Lamb at the time the heavens *scroll apart* (Rev. 6:14ff). Could it be this passage is simply recording the response of the earth dwellers without intending to teach the time of His wrath has now arrived? Is it possible this verse is not prescribing their response but only intending to record their response to the awesome event of the sky scrolling apart and exposing the throne, the One who sits thereon and His Lamb?

Also, they do not exactly say when it is that the wrath will be brought. In other words, they understand that they are going to receive the wrath, but do not know (nor specifically state nor state it in a way that is immediately prescriptive) exactly when it is that His wrath comes! Remember who they are.

A few important observations:

1. They only say, "the time of His wrath has come," but do not specifically state when it does indeed begin being poured out (and again, the wrath of God is clearly defined in the *Bowls of Wrath*; the trumpet blasts are never directly called the "wrath of God"). Do keep in mind that they are, for the most part, earth dwellers who are not saying God's

wrath will now begin to be extended, but only that God's judgment has come. What a contrast to the much more clear account that follows later in the same book. ...

2. It's the people of God (namely, the **twenty-four elders**) who say, AFTER the blowing of the **Seventh Trumpet**, "Your wrath has come ..." They state the wrath of God has come, NOT that it had already come. This is affirmed by the text which goes on to state how that wrath is delivered—in the **Bowls of Wrath**. It fits wonderfully IF a theological presupposition is not mandating the text be seen in a more strained way in light of the simple statement of the text. Immediately following the statement by the elders, if one accepts the historical parenthetical of Revelation 12 - 14, the **Bowls of Wrath** are delivered.

3. Also keep in mind the text quotes these earth dwellers but is not necessarily saying this is indeed the case—there's a huge difference between the two. In other words, Scripture records the false statements of men, even, at times, when they are in error. (e.g., The prophet who said to the other prophet, "God has told me to tell you that you are to come back with me" when indeed it is not stated that God had done so, and most likely had not indeed done so.) It is surely a possibility that this understanding is the intended meaning. It is the whole context that illumines the event. Given Revelation 11 and the **Bowls of Wrath** in Revelation 16, these verses may simply be recording what the people of the earth say (after seeing the scrolling of the sky), not necessarily a divine affirmation that the wrath has now come. Due to the context of Revelation 15 and 16, we do go on to teach the statement of the elders does refer to what follows—the **Bowl Judgments**.

The issue concerning "the Wrath of God" in Revelation 6:17 pertains to multiple concerns.

1. The way in which $\eta\lambda\theta\epsilon\nu$ is translated in Rev. 11. "Your wrath has come" or "Your wrath came." The context would lean in which direction? How is the word usually translated? How do the versions that translate it "came" go on to translate the same word in other passages (e.g., Rev. 6:17)? Is this not odd, especially given the context of Revelation 11:18 and that which follows in Revelation 15 and 16? Remember, terms have a clear parameter of meaning which is further clarified in the setting of the context in which they are found.

2. The event of Revelation 11 fits the flow of the book: the ungodly are cursed—they have only wrath ahead; the godly are blessed (gathered up as accounted in Rev. 14:14-6). Please note: We believe, like the observation of the context of chapters 12 - 14 surely allows for **AND**, like many Bible commentaries teach, these chapters represent a *historical parenthetical*.

The position we've articulated above is a viable interpretive option. In other words, it is a legitimate way to view the text—nothing, biblically, prohibits the possibility of this particular understanding, especially in light of the Revelation 11 declaration by the elders that God's wrath (now that the Seventh Trumpet has been blown) has come ... and all this in light of the fact that the trumpet blasts are never called "the wrath of God."

We readily confess less than certainty here, but the possibility of this scenario concerning the statement of the earth dwellers about the event of the scrolling apart of the skies developed above is clearly a viable option.

So, in answer to your question, **no, there is no contradiction given the above explanations.** *The Final Trumpet Rapture Gathering* position has biblical support, including no biblical prohibition against this understanding concerning some of the details of the Rapture or Gathering event. Respectfully: What about the position you currently embrace — Is it really **Bible** evidenced?