

ESCHATOLOGY

Question #1:

Eschatology as taught by most Nigerian denominations is with the lens of premillennial futurism(along with a certain rapture to take place before millennium age). I don't seems to find a good case for that, and I am looking for good resources to sit down with on the said subject. And, no, I am not about to adopt a view of preterism.

Any recommendation?

Response #1:

I recommend the following studies (I'll add that they are pretty large and intense):

<https://ichthys.com/Coming-Tribulation-Home-Page.htm>

<https://ichthys.com/Satanic-Rebellion-Home-Page.htm>

Both studies should be taken together with the second one preceding the first. But if you don't have the patience for the two, the first one is where you will find a direct treatment of eschatology. It is just easier to understand it properly with the second one.

Snapshot: we are coming up rather quickly to the seven-year Tribulation that will test the whole world, at the end of which time the Lord Jesus will return and resurrect the Church, destroy Satan's kingdom ruling over the earth, recall Israel from exile, reward the Church, renew the Earth and rule it from Jerusalem with the Church for a thousand years. At the end of that time, there will be an uprising against His Rule, which He will destroy and wipe out the universe with fire. Then there will be the Judgment of the Great White Throne where Millennial believers will be given their own eternal rewards and the unbelievers from Cain to the last one to die in the rebellion at the end of the Glorious Millennium will be judged and thrown into the Lake of Fire with Satan and his angels. Then a new universe, infinitely better and larger than this one, will be created to which the New Jerusalem will descend and the Father will return to rule over all Creation with the full Family of God.

Feel free to hit me up with any questions you have. Or you can simply talk with the pastor-teacher in charge of the Ichthys ministry, if you prefer. His email is on the website.

Cheers.

Question #2:

Thanks for the recommendation

Response #2:

Very happy to help.

Question #3:

Daniel learnt by books when he read Jeremiah's prophecy. The whole New Testament is what the different people got inspired with as they read the scripture which in their case was the old testament. Jesus began His ministry by quoting scripture as being fulfilled in Him! Peter did his first sermon from the book of Joel!

All these didn't go about looking for the opinions of the best scholars of their time. No wonder the people said Jesus taught like One that had authority and not like the scholars that quotes long chain of references from one expert to the other.

Once more, I appeal to you. Read it for yourself.

Response #3:

Ephesians 4:11-16 is clear that we are given pastor-teachers in the Church so that we can come to understand what the Bible teaches, just as Apostles and Prophets were given to the Church to provide us with the Revelation of God's Truth, i.e., the Bible, and evangelists are given to teach the Truth to unbelievers and bring them into the Church. Nowhere are we taught in the Bible that we do not need to be taught what the Bible says since we can read it for ourselves. We ought to read it for ourselves so that we can know when we have found a reliable pastor-teacher and when we are being misled by a false teacher.

Question #4:

You are given the Holy Spirit to teach you, not human teachers. I don't know why people misconstrue Paul's teachings always. Yes, there is a place for learning from those who have better knowledge than you but that is not the same as saying certain people are given to teach the rest of us what to know. That is the foundation for every kind of falsehood we find today. But I also agree that one can learn from books written by others but we must read every one of them with a heart of discernment and scrutinise them and like someone suggested, read the bible first. Never read a book first. Read the bible first and test every book you read from what you have read in the bible

1 John 2:27 King James Version (KJV)

27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

Response #4:

first of all, I think that Ephesians 4:11-14 is very straightforward. I don't even have to interpret it in order to demonstrate that the Lord gave certain people to the Church in order to teach other believers the Bible. That is what the passage actually literally says.

I completely agree that we must read the Bible and not merely read things that uninspired people write. In fact, that is the only way to identify reliable pastor-teachers. If you are not very conversant with the Bible, false teachers will seduce you away from the Lord with lies. But if you are conversant with the Scriptures, you can tell when a teaching is not exactly straight.

As for 1 John 2:27, John was talking about the Gospel. A believer does not need to be taught the Truth that the Lord Jesus is God Who became a Man and died on the Cross for our sins and was raised again for our justification. He wrote this to reassure them because of the heresies that were gaining ascendancy around the time regarding the true Humanity of the Lord Jesus. If you hold on to the Gospel, then you need no one to tell you anything about how to be saved.

Question #5:

this is false bro. 1 john is talking about the gospel? Where did you get that from? There is no precedence in scriptures to support interpreting Ephesians 4 to mean that teachers have been set over the church to teach others. No scripture can be taken isolatedly to create a doctrine. Right from the time of the law and prophets, the standard was for the word of God to be read to the congregation and people were not supposed to give you their opinions or interpretation of it, no matter how highly placed in society they

were. That was God's instruction to Moses and the people. What they were asked to do was to discuss it. The concept of one man telling everyone what God's word meant was never a standard. It came with the concept of church overlords. So there was no way Paul would have concocted that up as the meaning of what he wrote in Ephesians 4. Everything listed in Ephesians 4, which were repeated in 1 Cor 12 and more added are gifts or abilities that believers can covet and exhibit as tools to help strengthen each other. They are not pedestals or overreaching positions of superiority like some of you want to make it. In 1 Cor 12, Paul says anyone can desire and have them

Response #5:

I'll try one more time, and then I'll be done. It really makes no difference to me what you choose to believe. I will simply show you what I see in the Bible, and you can make what judgments you will.

8 And of Levi he said,
Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one,
whom thou didst prove at Massah,
and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;
9 Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him;
neither did he acknowledge his brethren,
nor knew his own children:
for they have observed thy word,
and kept thy covenant.
10 THEY SHALL TEACH JACOB THY JUDGMENTS AND ISRAEL THY LAW:
they shall put incense before thee,
and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar.
(KJV) Deuteronomy 33:8-10

8 And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, 9 Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: 10 And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; 11 And that YE MAY TEACH the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.
(KJV) Leviticus 10:8-11

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 FOR THE PERFECTING OF THE SAINTS, FOR THE WORK OF MINISTRY, FOR THE EDIFYING OF THE BODY OF CHRIST...
(KJV) Ephesians 4:11-12

22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. 23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.
24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. IF THAT WHICH YE HAVE HEARD FROM THE BEGINNING SHALL REMAIN IN YOU, YE ALSO SHALL CONTINUE IN THE SON, AND IN THE FATHER. 25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.
26 These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.
(KJV) 1 John 2:22-27

Again, I need not offer any interpretations for this. The writings themselves are crystal. I don't insist that you agree with me. If you do, that would be good for you. If you don't, well, the reward for that is yours, not mine.

Question #6:

So how does this support your concept? I am really trying to understand. God said concerning Abraham, he shall teach his children the way of the lord. Does that mean Abraham also had a teaching ministry? See, the problem with folks is that you need to remove this concept of overlords in God's house from your mind. You need to get rid of it because it will only make you interpret every scripture you read through that prism. It's like when prosperity folks interpret every scripture they read as money or giving. In 1 cor 12, even Paul says anyone can desire the gift of teaching. Anyone! So how can it be the special position you make it out to be if anyone can have it? Again, God's instruction to Moses was for the commandments to be read to all the congregation. So Deut 33:8-10 could not have meant that Levi were the ones with teaching ministry and everyone need to go to them to be taught. And there was never such an arrangement in Israel. God in Deut 33 spoke of Levi as one in whom He trusted will be faithful enough to teach others about Him, same way He spoke in trust about Abraham. That does not translate in any way into the idea that the Israelites were supposed to go to them to be taught please.

Response #6:

1. You are not arguing with me, you are arguing with the Bible.

2. Abraham was a prophet, and he was also a mature believer. As a prophet, he received revelations of the Truth from the Lord and communicated it to others. As a mature believer, he could teach, that is, expound or explain or interpret such revelations to those around him. But since pastor-teaching as a gift was only given to the Church as a result of the Lord Jesus's victorious Sacrifice, and since the Bible did not even exist during Abraham's days, we cannot exactly refer to him as a pastor-teacher.

3. 17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. (KJV) Hebrews 13:17

1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. (KJV) 1 Peter 5:1-3

4. I believe what I see in the Bible. I'm not responsible to believe you, so I won't be getting rid of anything just because you say so. You're not listening to me, after all, so why should I listen to you?

5. Paul said that we should desire the best gifts. He did not say that we will all get the gifts that we desire. Some of us will be given the gift of teaching, others will not. Desire is not everything here.

Question #7:

I think you have tried explaining what you imply in the comment box. And good you stopped the engagement altogether. Some arguments are better left unattended. Not everyone is supposed to agree with one's concept after all.

Response #7:

I agree. I only try to answer any reasonable question and challenge or concern that is presented to anything I say. I am a pastor-teacher, after all. It is my duty to do so. It is not really about being agreed with, it is just to provide clear teaching wherever it may be received.

Question #8:

I haven't really taken a particular view on eschatology. However, I do have some thoughts on the matter based on what I have studied that I don't hear from many people.

When I see prophecies in the Bible that have been fulfilled, I can see how they were fulfilled, and yet I can also see how people did not see it coming in every detail beforehand. There were some things which were prophesied plainly, but many prophecies are veiled and difficult to decipher. If you look at the prophecies of Christ, we can look back and see exactly how Jesus fulfilled them all. But the Israelites did not see it coming. They had hints and imagery, but it was not easy to figure exactly how it would play out. They knew that the Messiah would be a king of the line of David, for example, but there are also prophecies of a Messiah who would suffer and die. They did not know how all that would work out. Some wondered if perhaps there would be two Messiahs. The suffering servant who was stricken and afflicted did not seem the same as the conquering king. How could both events happen to one person? We can look back now and see how both were exactly right, but it was not clear before Christ came. Only some facts were known for sure, and the rest was shrouded in uncertainty.

I think this partial concealment of the future by design. I don't think we are meant to figure it all out before it happens. God gives us enough detail to walk faithfully according to His word and to know the events that were predicted when they happen, but not to know it all before it arrives. It is supposed to take a certain amount of trust on our part to believe God will bring it all to pass. We are not to seek divination, to see events before they come. Rather, we can know what God has revealed, and that is enough, even if we do not know the future in detail. What we do know is that God will be victorious and will perform what He has promised. I am skeptical that we will be able to work out a detailed and accurate timeline of the future. I think we have enough information to see the prophecy fulfilled when it gets here.

I also see no reason to believe Jesus must come back in the very near future. There is nothing preventing Him from coming at any time, but while some see evidence for the end times around every corner, there have always been wars, natural disasters, and many other similar events that some view as signs. Christians have been expecting the end of time for the last 2,000 years. I don't think we have it any worse than most of them had it.

I actually tend to think that God intended for the coming of Christ to be closer to the beginning of time than the end. God's original intention with Adam and Eve was that we humans were to populate the Earth and subdue it. We were designed to take dominion over the planet, shaping and using its resources as we create, invent, build, and transform according to the passions of our minds and hearts. This ability to create is part of the image of God in us. When we take dominion properly, we bring glory to our Creator.

This dominion mandate was God's original plan for mankind, but the fall brought damage to all of creation, making it more difficult for us to take dominion and separating us from God. The coming of Christ was the first step toward repairing the damage done by the fall, but God expects us to do the work of bringing all of creation into subjection to Christ. Christ has paid the sacrifice for our sins and made it possible for us to be reconciled to God. Yet He gives us the privilege to be His hands and feet in a broken world - to bring freedom to the captives, food to the hungry, water to those who thirst, healing to the sick, hope to the broken-hearted, and peace on Earth. We still have a long way to go.

While many in today's churches think of salvation as an individual matter, it's bigger than that. We are not saved solely for ourselves, but to bring others and through our impact to help redeem all of creation so that the knowledge of God may become more known and God more glorified. If that is the case, then it seems to make little sense for Christ to come and begin the mending of creation closer to the end of time. There would be little time for the fulfillment of this purpose if the church exists for just a couple of millennia when there was twice that long spent in awaiting the Messiah's arrival.

To be sure, there is nothing preventing God from gathering all his children and having the final judgment at any time. That He tarries means He has more work for us to do. Rather than just waiting to be raptured or to die and go to heaven, we should be busy doing our part to bring our corner of the world into subjection to Christ and preparing to continue our impact into future generations so that we may be more effective for Christ in the future than we can be in our brief lifespans. If we focus only on waiting for the end at any moment, we will not be effective in planning for a much longer future, if God should delay the end of time for decades, centuries, or millennia. We can't stop planting seeds that may not see fruit for many years yet because we assume that time will never come. This is extremely shortsighted on our part. We are to be personally ready for His coming, whenever that may be, but we can't stop working as if there will be no time beyond our own lives.

Response #8:

The Lord Jesus told us that the Holy Spirit would lead us into ALL Truth. Then, the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostles and their associates to write the New Testament completing the Bible. Since then He has been gifting and empowering pastor-teachers in the Church to interpret the Revelation that is the Bible to other believers. It is the Lord's Will for us to learn and understand everything in the Bible: that, as I just reminded us, is what the Lord Jesus said that He would do for us. We are responsible to learn all of the Truth in the Bible using all the help that the Holy Spirit provides: the now-completed Bible (the work of the Apostles and Prophets) and the ministry of pastor-teachers for understanding the Bible.

Furthermore, the Bible is full of very precise chronological information. It would be interesting to hear anyone argue that that was accidental on God's Part. I think it should be obvious that that much precision was for us to understand that we ought to work out where it is all leading.

If anyone is unwilling to do the work of learning everything that the Bible teaches, that is their own business. I would not force them to do so, but it is not true that that is how we all ought to be. If we are willing to obey the Lord, then our duty is to learn everything the Bible teaches and apply it to our own lives, and help those who will accept our help to do the same.

Question #9:

Here's what i think:

I accept this, namely that the tribulation period [which is the day of the Lord's judgement etc] will be about the Messianic Jews because it is the time of Jacob's trouble. However i do not believe this, namely that only the Jewish elect will exist during that period. Because Matthew 24 verse 29-31 conveys the following to us, that is to say, that immediately after the tribulation Jesus will send his angels to gather his elect from one end of the heaven to the other. If only the Jewish elect exist during the tribulation period, then Israel encompasses the whole heaven, because Jesus stated this, namely that his elect will be gathered from one end of heaven to the other. However Israel does not compass the whole heaven. And subsequently non Jewish elects will also exist during the tribulation period. However they will not be subject to the tribulation that was in Mathew 24.

Because the context makes this apparent.

For example:

Matthew 24 verses 15-21 entails the following:

“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great tribulation.

MY COMMENT:

The following verses, that is to say, verse 15-21, shows us this. that is, that the abomination of desolation [or that the idol that the anti-Christ is going to place in the holy place or the third temple, will not only initiate the desolation of Jerusalem and Israel but the tribulation period in Jerusalem. Bearing in mind this, namely that this is why verses 16-20 entails the exhortation to flee from Judea [i.e the WEST BANK].

By the way Matthew 24 should be read in conjunction of the other synoptic gospels because the other gospels shed more light on the tribulation period.

For example; I know this, namely that they Jewish elect will not only flee from Judea [or the WEST BANK] but from Jerusalem as well. Because Luke entails the same events; however his narrative entails more information.

Consider:

20 “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. [luke chapter 21]

Notice that Luke's narrative is very similar to Matthew except with respect to the part about fleeing from Jerusalem and the time frame of the trampling because Matthew's account does not entail the information. Nevertheless they both alluded to they same period.

Given this we have grounds to believe this, namely that the abomination of desolation [i.e the idol or when the anti-christ appears in the temple of God] is a sign of the imminent destruction of Jerusalem or the beginning of the tribulation period. The Jewish Messianic Jews will know this, namely that the abomination of desolation is something that stands for more than itself or a sign; because Jesus told us what it means in Luke and Matthew and Mark. Not only that For Jesus told them what to do when they see the sign. Which is why they are going to flee to the wilderness; where [according to the book of revelation, God will take care of them for 3.5 years, or 1,260 days, or 45 months.

Bearing in mind that this flight is depicted as the woman fleeing to the wilderness in the book of revelation. Or it is depicted as the woman who fled to the safe haven in the wilderness; where she was cared for for 1, 260 days.

We also know this by means of scriptural revelation, that is to say, that flee Satan [who is depicted as a dragon in the book of revelation] is going to pursue them by means of persecution; but he will fail because God will thwart his power. As a result of this he will return to Israel and Jerusalem with great rage to destroy the saints in Israel and Jerusalem. And he will accomplish all this via that human instrument. i.e The anti-Christ.

Before i continue i need to state the following, that is to say, that the time of the gentiles, even the time of Jerusalem trampling, even the time frame Luke alluded to in his eschatology, is 3.5 years, or 1,260 days, or 45 months, because the book of revelation entails the following, that is to say, that Jerusalem will be trampled under foot for 45 months.

Isn't the bible a remarkable book? Notice how i have used books that were written by different people who lived in different times to shed light on different issues.

Now, let's continue.

Notice this, that is to say, that God has only ordained salvation for those in Jerusalem and Judea.

This implies that not all Messianic Jews are going to escape the tribulation.

I am stating the obvious because even the book of Daniel shows us that Satan is going to wage war via the anti-Christ; particularly against them. Moreover he will prevail by means of God's permissive will.

Now; consider the following scripture:

20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Luke chapter 21 verse 20.

This scripture shows us this, namely that prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, Jerusalem will be surrounded by an army.

It is important to note this, namely that his army will be sent by an ARAB/NORTH AFRICA confederacy. Moreover it will be a northern army. And the anti-christ will be its commander.

I know this by means of the scripture and intense study.

More importantly; all that stuff about a revived roman empire [i.e the European union] is false doctrine because Anti-christ is going to rise from the Middle EAST. In fact he will be an Arab.

Now, it is important to note this, namely that the army will be sent against Israel; particularly because they are going to violate the covenant.

What happens when they do that? Do you remember the prescribed punishment?

Yes, whenever they do so God sends an army against them.

This is why the book of Daniel entails the following:

King James Bible

And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. Daniel 8 verse 12.

The word host can be equated with army. So, we can paraphrase the scripture as follows; And an ARMY was given him.

Why? Because of transgression. Bearing in mind that sin is the transgression of the law. [Biblical definition] And that the covenant is based on the law.

The form of the covenant is as follows:

If you listen to my voice, if you obey my commandments, i will do etc etc

They agreed!

This can be found in the old testament!

Finally:

The war in Luke's eschatology is not the same war as the one in AD 70.

Why here's why:

Because;

1.) The war in Luke's eschatology is going to lead to the erection of the abomination of desolation. Not only that for Luke's eschatological account makes this clear, that is to say, that that time will be time pertaining to the fulfillment of all prophecy; including Christ second coming.

But 2.) the abomination of desolation was not erected in the temple of God [or not all prophecies were fulfilled during the war which took place in AD 70].

3.) Two events are the same if [and only if] the events are about the same things.

Therefore 4.) Luke's eschatological account is necessarily not about the AD 70 WAR.

In fact it has not yet happened.

Finally: The Middle East is going to be the main focal point of the commencing tribulation and the commencing the day of the Lord.

Response #9:

Your submissions here seem to me to be a mixed bag. Some of it I can see in the Bible, others not so much. To save time, let me point out some of those I don't quite see in the Bible:

1. "Non-Jewish elect," whom I take you to mean Gentile believers, will not be subject to the Tribulation. Why Revelation 7:9-17?

2. The Arab/North Africa confederacy as against a revived Roman Empire. Why Revelation 13:7 and Revelation 17:8-11, esp verse 10?

Question #10:

Firstly, yes, I alluded to the gentiles. You are correct! Secondly, Revelation 7 verse 9-17 does not undermine what I wrote. For I did not state the following, that is to say, that the gentile elect will not exist during the tribulation period. In fact I made this clear in the original response to Taiwo, namely that they will exist during the tribulation. However they will not be subject to the time of Jacob's trouble or the tribulation that Jesus alluded to in the synoptic gospel because the focal point of that tribulation will be Israel and Jerusalem.

For example;

Jesus told the disciples who listened to the mount of Olive discourse the following, that is to say, that the abomination of desolation will initiate the tribulation period in Matthew 24. Furthermore this can be found in the gospel of Luke as well. However Luke looks at it from another angle. For, Instead he stated the following, namely that when you see Jerusalem surrounded by an army, then let those who are in Jerusalem and Judea flee; particular because this will not only initiate the destruction of Jerusalem but the tribulation period in Israel and Jerusalem.

The gentiles do not live in Israel and Jerusalem. And subsequently they cannot experience the time of Jacob's trouble or the tribulation.

Furthermore everything that constitutes the tribulation, even things such as the revelation of the anti-christ in the temple of God, the destruction of Jerusalem, the persecution of the saints etc is going to happen in the Middle EAST and Israel.

Now, the great multitude in Revelation 7 is simply every resurrected Saint. It will include those who were subject to the tribulation. However not everyone in the multitude went through the tribulation.

Now, let us consider your number 2.

Revelation 13 verse 7 is not about a revived Roman empire. On the contrary it is about the authority the anti-christ is going to receive from Devil. That is all.

Also Revelation 17:8-11 is not about a revived Roman empire as well.

This is why you guys need to learn with critical thinking. Or it is why you need to stop thinking customarily. For the traditional interpretation, even this interpretation, that is to say, that the current Rome lies on seven hills, and therefore the symbol in the book of revelation represents a revived Roman empire, is not only fallacious but also false. Because the mountains represent strong cities; just as mount zion represents the city of Jerusalem or David's former stronghold.

Not only that. For the woman does not represent a Roman religion because the book of revelation has already revealed what the woman represents.

What does she represent? She represents a city. The question is; which city does she represents? Which city does Babylon represent?

I'll tell you; she represents Jerusalem. And Jerusalem is depicted as a harlot in order to reveal the following, that is to say, that the city is unfaithful to the covenant God made with her or with the Jewish people. Yes, the symbol of the harlot represents the violation of the covenant.

This is why the city is going to be destroyed and rendered desolate. Moreover this is the punishment that has been ordained and prescribed in the Torah.

Before i continue i need to state the following, that is to say, that you guys continue to believe that the woman is a religious institution or that the mountains point to Rome even though the bible reveals what the mountains represent [or what the woman represents].

This is what happens when something is the product of custom rather than of careful reflection.

Now; how do i know that the army Luke alluded to in his eschatology is a Middle EASTERN/north African confederacy?

Before i show you how i know i need to state the following first, that is to say, that i have many ways of showing you this; but i am only going to use one or two ways; because doing so will suffice.

Consider Zechariah 14 verses `6-19:

16 And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18 If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This shall be the [i]punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

MY COMMENT:

The whole context is about the war that will precede Jesus second coming and Jesus reign on earth. Read everything in chapter 14 later.

Now, let us focus on verses 16-19.

The 16th verse shows us this, namely that some of the nations that attacked Jerusalem will be obliged to go to Jerusalem to pay homage to Jesus or THE KING. Furthermore the 17th verse shows us this, namely that a punishment has been prescribed against the nations that attacked Israel if they refuse to do so. And according to the 18th, or the 18th verse shows us this, namely that if EGYPT refuses to do so it will be punished. Hence EGYPT is part of the Nations that will eventually attack Israel. The nation of Egypt is a North African country. Therefore a North African country will be part of the confederacy. Next; The book of EZEKIEL shows us that another North AFRICAN country is Libya.

This is insight!

I can show you ALL the nations that will eventually attack modern day Israel; but i cannot commit to such an extensive response right now.

Response #10:

1. My contention was not that you said that Gentile believers will not be around during the Tribulation. I saw that you said that we will be. The trouble is exactly what you have repeated above, namely, that Gentile believers will not be subject to the Tribulation. Revelation 7 says that the multitude is "those who have come out of the great tribulation" (verse 14 NIV1984), and they are said to be "from every nation, tribe, people, and language" (verse 9 NIV1984). That is, they are Gentiles and Jews who come out of the Tribulation. That means that they all experience the Tribulation. This makes sense in light of Romans 11 that makes clear that Gentile believers become part of spiritual Israel through faith in Jesus Christ (compare also Galatians 6:16 and Romans 9:6-8 as well as Galatians 4:22-31). In other words, Jacob's trouble is also the Church's trouble, since although we are truly Gentiles, we are spiritually part of Israel and therefore share in Israel's fate during the Tribulation. That is what I see in the Bible.

I also don't see the Bible saying that these saints include anyone who did not go through "the Great Tribulation." In fact, that is the identifier there. This is the company of all believers who actually live through the second half of the seven-year Tribulation, the part that is called "the Great Tribulation," that is (see Matthew 24:21). There is also nothing suggesting resurrection here.

2. This is what Revelation 13:7 says:

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.
Revelation 13:7 KJV

The point there is that the Antichrist is given power over the whole world, not just the Middle East and North Africa.

This is what Revelation 17:8-11 says:

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.
9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. 11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.
(KJV) Revelation 17:8-11

Although I said nothing about the Roman empire earlier, and I certainly don't have any argument about the original Roman empire lying on seven hills, if John was told that one of the kings was existing at the time of writing, and that the beast is in that line of kings, what could it mean but that this is the Roman empire revived? From Daniel, we know that the beast is in a line of kings of an empire, not that he constitutes a new empire (Daniel 7,11).

I would rather not get into an excessively complex argument, because I am in no mental shape for such a thing, but since you've mentioned the city, the Bible calls it mystery Babylon and says that it rules over the world. Regardless what nation or city one may want to identify that with, the key thing is that this "city" must be so powerful as to be able to influence the affairs of other nations. That is the meaning of that

passage. So, if you say that the city is Jerusalem, the question would be, "does Jerusalem possess such power?" Or "will Jerusalem possess such power in the Tribulation?" We know too that this Babylon will be destroyed just before Armageddon too, and Armageddon is a war that occurs in Israel ending up with the armies surrounding Jerusalem, so you will also need to account for that in your interpretation.

As for the nations that attack Israel at Armageddon, among a vast array of Scriptures is Zechariah 14:2

2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle;
and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished;
and half of the city shall go forth into captivity,
and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
(KJV) Zechariah 14:2

That is, the Lord says that it is all nations that will come to attack Israel and fight against Jerusalem. This is corroborated by Revelation 13:7, which I shared earlier with you.

In conclusion, I don't think that your interpretations in these two things I queried you about and in the matter of mystery Babylon are correct.

Question #11:

Odi, I qualified the word tribulation or I contextualized it. It appears that you did not see this. For I said that the gentiles or that we [if we are alive then] will not be subject to the tribulation that will happen in the Middle EASTERN area or to the time of Jacob's trouble. Why? Because we do not live in the Middle EAST. Which is why there will be no need for us to flee to the wilderness etc In other words there is a special tribulation for Israel alone. No. You cannot conflate spiritual Israel with natural Israel. And the time of Jacob's trouble is not the time of our trouble. It is apparent that the anti-christ is going to emerge in the temple of God. Is that our trouble? He will oppose the daily sacrifice. According to Daniel. Is that our trouble? Do we offer daily sacrifices? etc The answer is clearly no. But the Jews will; particularly after they build the third temple. So, the trouble is they're's, and not ours.

Response #11:

I hope that you will bear with me for editing my post. Commenting on Facebook on a laptop is hard sometimes. Also, I'm quite wrung out mentally, so please excuse me if I'm not as exhaustive and comprehensive in my responses as you might want. I may miss providing Bible passages in some places. If I do, please feel free to ask me for biblical proof. I will do my best to provide it.

Regarding your last comment, I have already shown why I don't think you are right in this matter. To recap, in short, Jacob's Trouble does affect the Church because the Church IS Israel. In fact, although the Antichrist will take his seat in Jerusalem to rule the world from there beginning from the midpoint of the Tribulation after he kills the two witnesses, Revelation 12:17 and Revelation 13:7 are clear that he will make war upon believers all over the world and "conquer" them. That is why, as our Lord Himself said, the last three and a half years of the Tribulation is called the GREAT Tribulation. During that time, there will be a great apostasy as a result of the pressures of the time with a full third of all believers falling away, another third being murdered in the persecutions, and the final third surviving to see the Lord Jesus return (see Revelation 12:4; Daniel 8:10; Zechariah 13:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:3). This is not limited at all to Israel. It is a thing that will happen all over the world (as Revelation 12:17 shows).

Question #12:

Jacob is not the church. But natural Israel. There is only natural ISRAEL. But the bible mentions spiritual jew and natural jew. Bearing in mind that the word Jew does not mean Israel. You still do not understand that i am not claiming that the world will not experience a tribulation. On the contrary i am saying this, namely that the tribulation period that Jesus alluded to in Matthew 24, particularly the things concerning the abomination of desolation, and the trampling of Jerusalem under the feet for forty five months etc, is not about the word but Israel and the natural Jews. Also if the church is Israel [bearing in mind that this was your claim] the nation of Israel is the church. I'm sure you can see this, namely that this implies that your claim is faulty.

Response #12:

I think that I have answered this: "Jacob is not the church. But natural Israel. There is only natural ISRAEL." I provided Scriptures to prove my position on that. If you think something is wrong in my arguments, you actually have to tell me what it is, or else I really cannot see it. When you say that the nation Israel is the Church, you ignore Romans 9:6-8, which I also shared with you in my comments.

As for what you are saying, it is a bit confusing. What difference is there between the tribulation that the world will go through and the one that the Lord was speaking of in Matthew 24?

Question #13:

i've shown you the difference. ie the world cannot experience the events in Israel. i.e Christians in nigeria etc cannot flee from jerusalem or judea.

Response #13:

what then is the Tribulation that the world goes through?

As for fleeing from Jerusalem or Judea, you are right, of course, Gentile believers living elsewhere cannot flee from Jerusalem, but that does not mean that the Antichrist's persecution of believers is limited to Jerusalem or Judea. Scripture doesn't say that.

Question #14:

I did not say it meant that! All i intended to convey was as follows, that is to say, that there will be certain events; particularly events that only People living in Israel can be subject to.

I have mentioned some of them. But here's another;

Only the elect who live in Israel will be chased by Satan unto the wilderness. Or only the aforementioned elect will be preserved in the wilderness for 3.5 years or 1,260 days.

Of course Christians all over the world will be subject to tribulation; however the nature of the tribulation will be distinct from the ones that God has ordained for the Jews.

By the way the book of Daniel shows us some of the things the elect in Jerusalem will be subject to during the tribulation. It shows us this, namely that a war is going to break out in the Middle East and during this war the anti-Christ will invade Israel.

This event will culminate in the destruction and desolation of Jerusalem and the captivity and dispersion of certain Jews.

Again; the gentiles who will exist during this awful time (bearing in mind that it could be us) can experience this tribulation. Because it occurs in Israel or because it is ordained against them.

Response #14:

I agree that believing Jews will have certain unique experiences especially because the Antichrist will be ruling from Jerusalem from the midpoint of the seven-year. I do see that in the Bible. It is also true that it is Jewish believers for whom the Lord makes special provision in the wilderness beyond the Antichrist's reach throughout the time of the Great Tribulation, so that they will be a remnant for Israel in the desolation that will soon follow in the second half of the Tribulation.

Beyond these things, I am not sure how the Tribulation will be different for Gentile believers. We will be haled before authorities to answer for our Faith, just like any Jewish believer that fails to go into the Wilderness Sanctuary when that window is opened for them. We will be imprisoned, tortured, and murdered for our Faith and our refusal to take the Antichrist's tattoo on our forehead and our right hand, just like Jewish believers will too. Because the seat of the Antichrist's government will be in Jerusalem, it may be expected that the Jews will experience these things more acutely, but considering that the whole world will be subservient to him, I don't see how the difference between the Jewish believer's experience will be substantially different from the Gentile believer's.

As for invading Israel, I'm afraid I don't understand about this war that breaks out in the Middle East. According to Revelation 19 and Zechariah 14, not to mention a host of other Scriptures, the Antichrist musters all the armies of the world to invade Israel upon his return from quelling the trouble in the East and after destroying mystery Babylon. So, I'm not sure what war you are referring to. But I do agree that Armageddon will bring horrendous consequences to the Jews because of their rebellion against their King, with many raped and others sold into slavery during the onslaught.

I don't think it is a question of "can" for the Gentile believers in this matter. The Great Tribulation is the persecution of believers all over the world. Armageddon is specific to Israel because, just like mystery Babylon, Israel will revolt against the Antichrist at the end of the seven years. Just as the Antichrist destroyed Babylon, he will attempt to destroy Israel too. And he will almost succeed too, except for the Return of the True King at just the right moment to destroy him and his armies amassed at Jerusalem having overrun the rest of Israel. If Gentile believers are in Israel at this time (and because of the flight from mystery Babylon, they will be), they will suffer along with Jewish believers too. However, there is a difference to be made between believers and unbelievers, whether they are Jewish or Gentile. Believers will be persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ. Unbelievers will be punished by the Lord for their wickedness, so although some of the trouble that the Antichrist will bring upon Israel at that time will affect believers, much of it will be God's Judgment upon unbelieving Jews.

Question #15:

Hi and good morning, Odi. Thank you for your response.

Here's what I think: You've conceded my position.

I did not mention a distinction beyond those things. Moreover the word substantial does not add anything to the distinction you've already conceded. And I did not dispute the following, namely that tribulation is something all Christians will experience because Saint Paul made this clear, namely that those who will live godly in Jesus will suffer persecution and that we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God. However everyone's experience of tribulation will be different. And although Matthew 24 shows us the following, namely that we will all suffer certain things, his eschatological account [particularly in terms of our shared experiences] stopped as soon as he mentioned the abomination of desolation because everything he [and Luke and Mark] mentioned after that was directed at the Jewish elect.

The book of Daniel, or the book of Lamentation etc, entail an extensive elaboration of those things.

I am surprised at your lack of understanding. For the commencing Middle EASTERN war is in book of the prophets and in the gospel of Luke.

For example: The gospel of Luke shows us the following, namely that Jerusalem will be surrounded by an army. And the book of Daniel shows us this, that is to say, that a host OR ARMY will be given to the ANTI-CHRIST. Why? Because of transgression or sin.

Now Revelation 19 is not about the war against Jerusalem. You've misquoted that chapter. For the confederacy will not gather together against Israel but JESUS.

Here's why:

Consider Revelation 19 verse 19:

And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

You see! It has nothing to do with Israel.

Let us consider the other scripture.

Zechariah 14: 1 The Day of the Lord
Behold, the day of the Lord is coming,
And your [a]spoil will be divided in your midst.
2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem;
The city shall be taken,
The houses [b]rifled,
And the women ravished.
Half of the city shall go into captivity,
But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

MY COMMENT:

I need to state this before i address the main focal point, that is to say, that verse 2 shows us that not everyone in the city will be destroyed in that day.

We know why this is the case. Why? Because the gospels show us the following, namely that the Jewish elect [and perhaps the foreigner amongst them who are Christians] will flee to the wilderness; where they will be protected for 1,260 days, or 3.5 years.

Why am i repeating this again? Bearing in mind this, that is, that i mentioned it in my previous responses.

The reason is because i want to show the following, namely that the scripture of Zechariah compliments the gospels and visa versa.

Now, let us consider your proof. Yes, the scripture does seem to support your position. Notice i used the word SEEM. Because it only looks like that; particularly if you isolate the scripture from the rest of the scriptures.

Why do i believe this? Because Zechariah 12 enables us to perceive the scripture you presented correctly.

Zechariah 12 is as follows:

2 “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of [b]drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. 3 And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.

MY COMMENT:

Firstly; read the whole chapter later. Because the whole chapter makes this clear, namely that this event is an eschatological event.

MY COMMENT: examine Zechariah 12.

Notice this, namely that verse 2 implies this, namely that all the nations nations that are around Israel will lay siege against Jerusalem.

Question; is this not what Jesus prophesied in the gospel of Luke as well? Did he not say this, namely that Jerusalem will be surrounded by armies?

The answer is clearly yes. More importantly, notice this, namely that when we read Zechariah in conjunction with Luke, a clearer picture of where the armies are going to come from can be seen.

In other words the conjunction shows us this, namely that the armies will be sent by the nations AROUND Israel. Or the surrounding nations.

Now, which currently surround Israel?

The answer is clear. All the nations that surround Israel are Middle EASTERN and Arab nations.

This is partly how i know the following, namely that when Jesus prophesied of a coming siege, he alluded to an ARAB ARMY.

Now, notice that verse 3 changed the word surrounding people to all nations. But this does not imply that verse 2 contradicts verse 3. Instead it should be perceived as follows, namely that all peoples can be paraphrased as ALL the nations around Israel.

This is the only interpretation that can resolve what would otherwise be a contradiction. Or it is the only interpretation that is consistent with the belief that scripture is infallible. And that if we perceive a problem, the the problem lies [not in the scripture] but our understanding of the scripture.

Not only that! The view which has the most evidential support is the correct view. What does this mean?

It implies this, namely that if i can find other scriptures [apart from the one i presented], even scriptures about the nations around Israel, then that is the correct interpretation.

I can! But let us consider one more scripture. Let us consider the book of lamentation.

Before i present one scripture. It is important to note this that the book of lamentation is an eschatological book about the tribulation Israel and Jerusalem is going to be subject to.

Now, the scripture i am going to present here is from chapter 1. Bearing in mind that chapter 1 is about the outcome of the day of the Lord. For verse 12 alluded to the day of the Lord's fierce anger.

It is important to note this, namely that whenever you encounter that word, you should equate it with the day of the Lord because the day of the Lord is the day of his fierce anger or of war or of desolation etc

Now, let us consider the evidential scripture.

It is as follows:

Lamentation chapter 1 verse 16: ".....The lord has commanded concerning Jacob that those around him become his adversaries; Jerusalem has become an unclean thing among them.

MY COMMENT;

Notice that verse 16 shows us this, namely that God has ordained the following against Israel, that is to say, that those around it become its adversaries.

The question is; Which nations surround modern Israel?

Answer; Middle Eastern or Arab nations.

Verse 22 says; you have invited as to a feast day the terrors that surround me . In the day of the Lord's anger.

We've already established that the nations around Israel have been ordained to execute the commandment of God at the appointed time. More importantly verse 16 sheds light on verse 22. Because we now know that the terrors around Israel in the day of the Lord or in verse 22 are Arab nations.

Does this undermine the scripture you mentioned? Nope! But it undermines your understanding of the scripture. For the word ALL does not imply ALL nations; but ALL the nations around Israel.

This event should not surprise us because after Israel was established on May 14 1948 an ARAB confederacy attacked it. But they won even though they were outnumbered and outgunned. Not only that! For they recaptured Jerusalem from Jordan and made it the undisputed capital of Israel. But this is not the only instance of an example of an attempted invasion of Israel. For the've fought their Arab neighbours about four times. And although there seems to be some peace this struggle is clearly not over. For Iran continues to call for the destruction of Israel and the Arab league is against them even as i am writing this response. Furthermore at the appointed time they will attack Israel again and they will succeed.

I know this because scripture prophesied the commencing war.

In fact the scripture makes this clear, namely that a time of peace will come; however this time of peace will make them complacent because as soon as this peace has been established the Arab/North African invasion will occur.

You keep mentioning that. But i did not dispute the following, namely that the great tribulation will be world wide. On the contrary i stated this, namely that some of the things Jesus mentioned in the mount of olive discourse can only be applied to Israel.

Next: Mystery Babylon is Jerusalem. And the city [known as mystery Babylon] will be destroyed; but not before the Jewish elect flee away from it.

Response #15:

Thanks for clearing up the bit about the Gentile believers in the Tribulation.

I'll try to answer the issue of the invasion later. I'm really exhausted right now.

Question #16:

Odi; I can empathise with you. Please take your time. Also thank you for this conversation.

Response #16:

Thanks. And I am happy to have this conversation with you.

For purposes of clarification though, I was not quite offering a concession. I was seeking clarification on the things you said. I am content if I can establish that your position agrees with the Bible. It is really not an ego trip for me. Whenever I offer arguments here, it is essentially in order to show why I have doubts and concerns about any position that I am challenging. So, it is not as if we are in a wrestling match. If we are both believers in Jesus Christ who are committed to following the Truth wherever it leads, then an exercise like this should result in a very clear agreement between our positions and the Bible. I don't deny that the ego does get riled up by this, but it is always in our best interest to keep it out of the way.

So, I wouldn't say that I made a concession, since I have actually only been examining your arguments to see if they agree with the Bible. If I misunderstood your position, then I'm grateful for your clarifying things. If perhaps you had misstated things that you meant to say, then I'm also grateful for your clarifying things now. If you were mistaken in some of your submissions, I'm glad that you have now corrected them.

Having said that, regarding the matter of the invasion, this is what I understand from your arguments (please correct me if I am wrong):

1. There is going to be a war in the Middle East some time during the Tribulation.
2. Israel will be invaded by an Arab army:
 - i. The Lord Jesus alluded to this
 - ii. Lamentations 1:16 and Zechariah 12:2 teach this.
3. Revelation 19:19 is not about Israel.

4. Mystery Babylon is Jerusalem.

Before I offer an answer, I need to make clear that this question is a very involved one. There is far more to be said than I am able to say in Facebook comments, so be assured that I am essentially providing far less than I actually see in the Bible regarding this matter. You can tell from the links I posted in response to Taiwo's request that eschatology is a wide-ranging subject in the Bible. So, nothing in the following statements is by any means exhaustive.

Regarding #1, during the Tribulation there will be a war between the Antichrist and the Mahdi, but this is in order to establish the Antichrist as the undisputed ruler of the world:

⁷ For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows.
(KJV) Matthew 24:7-8

⁴⁰ And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.
(KJV) Daniel 11:40

² And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.
(KJV) Revelation 6:2

⁴ And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?
(KJV) Revelation 13:4

Daniel 11:21-30 and 11:40 speaks of the same war that our Lord was talking about in Matthew 24:7-8; Mark 13:8; and Luke 21:10. That is the only major war that I can think of as having anything to do with the Middle East before Armageddon. In this war, the goal is to establish the Antichrist as the ruler of the whole world. The North will include all the territories once ruled by Rome. The South will include all those territories that will come to be ruled by the Mahdi. This war, according to the Lord, will occur during the first half of the Tribulation, i.e., "the beginning of birth-pains." At the end of this war, by the middle of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will emerge undisputed ruler of the world (Revelation 13:4, compare also Revelation 13:7; Daniel 11:40b-43).

This war is not the one where Jerusalem is besieged. In Daniel 11:31-32, we are told that after this war, he enters Jerusalem with his forces to desecrate the Temple, abolish the daily sacrifice, and set up the abomination of desolation (compare Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 11:7-8; 13:14-15). Consider that if this is the war in which, as you believe, Jerusalem is destroyed, then there would have been no Jerusalem for him to enter, no temple for him to desecrate or rule the world from, and certainly no temple court in which to raise an idol of himself up. This war rather is one where he defeats his greatest rival to claim control over the entire world. After this, he will enter Jerusalem under the pretext that he is the Christ and take the throne in the Temple as God.

The reason that desolation is spoken of by Daniel and the Lord is that from this point until the end of the Tribulation, he will cause a massive spiritual corruption that will weary even unbelieving Israel (see

Daniel 11:32,36-38; Revelation 13:4,12-17). It will grow increasingly obvious even to unbelievers in Israel that he is not the God or the Christ that they have been waiting for. That is what will eventually lead to the effort to assassinate him (Revelation 13:3). The result of that will be his breaking of his covenant or treaty with Israel, leading to his invasion of Israel with all the world's forces. That is Armageddon.

In conclusion, while I expect the Middle East and Africa to get embroiled in a major war in the first half of the Tribulation, I see no reason to associate the Middle East with the war in which Jerusalem is pretty much destroyed. More on that in my next response.

Regarding #2(i), this is what the Lord Jesus said,

²⁰ And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with ARMIES, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

(KJV) Luke 21:20

First of all, it says "armies," not "army." Second, judging by the passages from Daniel and more that I haven't shared, this is merely the occupation of Israel, not the destruction of Jerusalem. The flight from Israel by believing Jews actually occurs in the middle of the Tribulation as we see in Revelation 12:6. If this is so, how could Jerusalem then be destroyed at the beginning of the Antichrist's reign over the world? That would violate 2 Thessalonians 2:4. The Antichrist will rule the world for three and a half years, as Revelation 13:5 and a host of other Scriptures teach, and his rule will be from Jerusalem according to 2 Thessalonians 2:4. So, this cannot be the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in Luke 21:20.

The armies with which the Antichrist enters Israel are merely a guard for him. He actually establishes himself as king in Israel by flattery, not by force (Daniel 11:32). Finally, these armies are not described anywhere as Arab armies. Clearly, he does defeat the King of the South and take control of his territories and armies, but he is not said to limit himself to those armies. In fact, he commands all the world's armies at this point and can take any assortment of troops as he pleases wherever he goes.

Regarding #2(ii), I think it is Lamentations 1:17 that you meant. Regarding that, I would say that the Bible also says this:

⁵ Thus saith the Lord God; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her.

(KJV) Ezekiel 5:5

So, that the Lord says that Jacob's neighbors will be her foes does not really limit it to the Arabs. In fact, if we understand the above to be true, it makes "all peoples" and "all nations" completely right to use to describe the armies that come to destroy Israel in Zechariah 12, 14 and numerous other passages in the Bible.

Regarding #3, this is what the Bible says:

¹ For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

² I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel,

whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

³ And they have cast lots for my people;
and have given a boy for an harlot,
and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink.

(KJV) Joel 3:1-3

Compare the above with Zechariah 12:2-5 and Zechariah 14:1-3. Clearly, they are speaking of the same event. In Revelation 19:19, the Antichrist is said to lead the armies of the earth to fight with the Lord Jesus, and in the above we are told that the Lord is actually the one who brings them to Jerusalem in order to use them to judge Israel's rebellion, but in the end, the Lord Himself will fight the nations that come to try to destroy Israel. As the Scriptures say, the task will prove impossible for them. The result will be a destruction of all the armies that came to destroy Israel. Compare this to Daniel 11:45.

That is to say that when the Antichrist returns from consolidating his power in the East, he will summon all the world's armies with him to destroy Israel for their rebellion against him. This decision, however, is a direct provocation to the True King of Israel, and it will result in the Return of the King to destroy all the armies that have overrun Israel and are on the verge of destroying Jerusalem and the Temple. Zechariah 14 describes in great detail how that war will play out, although other parts of the Bible pitch in with valuable detail and insight too.

Regarding #4, the whole of Isaiah and Jeremiah at least (in fact, this is a subject covered by far more of the Bible than I can list out here: I can't even remember them all) completely disagrees with you:

¹ Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon,
sit on the ground: there is no throne,
O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

² Take the millstones, and grind meal:
uncover thy locks, make bare the leg,
uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

³ Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen:
I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.

⁴ As for our redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name,
the Holy One of Israel.

⁵ Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans:
for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

⁶ I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance,
and given them into thine hand:
thou didst shew them no mercy;
upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

⁷ And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever:
so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart,
neither didst remember the latter end of it.

⁸ Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly,
that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me;

I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children:

⁹ But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day,
the loss of children, and widowhood:

they shall come upon thee in their perfection
for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

(KJV) Isaiah 47:1-9

Compare the above to

⁷ How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously,
so much torment and sorrow give her:
for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen,
and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

⁸ Therefore shall her plagues come in one day,
death, and mourning, and famine;
and she shall be utterly burned with fire:
for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

(KJV) Revelation 18:7-8

In fact, you can compare all of Isaiah 47 to Revelation 17-18. If Mystery Babylon was Jerusalem, then the Lord would not be comforting Israel with His Promise to give to Babylon her due for all the damage that she brought on her.

Question #17:

You cannot arrive at the truth of a matter until you consider all sides. We are always in danger of listening to only what we want to or like to hear. This begets dogma.

Response #17:

Why can you not arrive at the truth of a matter without considering all sides?

Question #18:

A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Response #18:

Why?

Question #19:

It makes sense. The more independent they are of each other, the better.

Response #19:

I'm not sure I see how you are right about that. If two brothers saw the same crime and gave the same testimony, would they be lying if 400 other people who were not even at the scene of the crime gave a different testimony?

Question #20:

Why would 400 people give a different testimony if they were not at the scene of the crime ?

In the practice of law, this is why you have cross-examination. Those 400 witnesses would be interviewed independently. SO would the two brothers. It is in their testimony you will be able to tell what the truth is.

Response #20:

The 400 would give a different testimony if they wanted to sell a lie for some reason. Cross-examination can be fooled too. Nonetheless, my point was that independence of testimony is not necessary for the testimony to be true. Also, you don't need multiple witnesses for something to be true. A thing is true if it is true, or else it is not. The number of witnesses and their relative dependence on each other is not really important.

How can we know truth? In my thinking, whatever answers all the questions reasonably must be true. I don't need to hear every single side of every story in order to know which is true. That can lead to even greater confusion about what is true and what is not, especially if you're dealing with a strong enough intellect that is capable of producing multiple convincing and sufficiently mutually exclusive stories to obscure the truth.

The safest thing then is to ask reasonable questions and take the story that answers them all most reasonably.

In matters of philosophy and religion, this too applies. It is neither possible nor necessary to investigate every single religion and philosophy in the world to know which one is true any more than it is useful to examine every single human being in the world to establish who did commit a given crime. The world around us and our own human psyche provide us with the reasonable questions we need to ask. Those questions themselves naturally eliminate a lot of contenders. Then, our business is to ask every philosophy or religion we come across those questions until we come across one that answers them perfectly. You don't find one suspect who fits the crime exactly and then keep searching for someone who might fit it better. That really is a waste of time. If any given philosophy or religion answers all the questions of life perfectly, that is where you should stop searching.

But the arrogance of man is great. Man does not merely reach for conquest of the stars. Man reaches for conquest of the truth. So, while what I have just said is common sense, the vast majority of us prefer to search and search and essentially collect a vast amount of "information" that we weave into a shape that we prefer and call it "truth," pretending not only that we have the right to do so, but that there is no truth but ours. The tolerance we preach and make so much of is merely a balance of power: if you do not threaten my truth, I will not threaten yours. But even that is a lie, because we affect each other. So, whether we like it or not, eventually we try to force others to bend to our "truth." That is just human nature.

So, I don't agree with you that we can only know truth by hearing all the sides of the story. We can only know truth by hearing truth. And the truth does not depend on us.

Question #21:

Again, I am not sure what your argument is. I will be honest I have not read through it all. I am in the middle of something. I saw something about not having to listen to all sides before coming to the truth. Erm, yes you do - if you want to do a proper job. Or else how do you know you have arrived at the truth? You have to listen to every witness to the incident to do a thorough job. I have nothing else to add to that.

Response #21:

When you have read my argument, I will hear what you have to say. Your comment does not address it at all.

Question #22:

This is your conclusion, no? "So, I don't agree with you that we can only know the truth by hearing all the sides of the story. We can only know the truth by hearing the truth. And the truth does not depend on us." That is all I need to read to disagree with you. You need to consider all sides. How do you know the truth? The same thing applies to science and we have hypothesis, theory and laws. Everything is evidence-based but open to new evidence. You can form an opinion without having time to listen to all the evidence but you cannot claim to have arrived at the truth until you have considered all sides and judged what you think is the truth.

Response #22:

As I said, you have to actually read my argument to provide a reasonable response. You can do that at your leisure. I'm not in a tearing hurry.

Question #23:

Now I suspect that you are saying that only the Bible is the truth and once you have heard it you have heard the truth and you need to read nothing else. Well, so do Muslims about their Quran and other religious sects about their holy books. As I keep saying, each person had better be sure about what they believe for when someone is standing over their head with a machete to behead them over their faith.

I have actually gone through it now :) It was not as long as I thought. Be clear that I am not referring to reading every piece of literature in the world. However, I would encourage listening to the main tenets of each belief system and reading further on the ones that interest you. This is what I mean by considering all sides. Christianity was what I was exposed to first. I, however, did explore other belief systems out of curiosity and to find out why they believed what they believed. I still arrived at the same conclusion. This is what gives me reassurance. I know what I believe.

Response #23:

Good. Now that you have, the question would be: are you insisting that it is necessary to examine every last human being alive to be sure who committed a crime? Do you have to hear every single argument in order to know what the truth is? Even in a law court, that would be preposterous. In a science lab too, it would be equally so, since not every hypothesis is even a legitimate shot at explaining a given puzzle. We might as well say that when elephants trumpet, tornadoes hit some part of the world. It is a theory, but is it worth investigating?

You don't need to hear every single thing to know which is true. You only need to know the right questions to ask. Once you find the story that answers all the questions, then that is what you stick with.

As for why I am saying this, it is not merely in order to sell the idea that the Bible is the Truth. I don't often waste my time now arguing that on social media. Those who reject the Bible rarely do so because of a lack of persuasive arguments to the contrary. I made my comments here because your position is wrong. Everyone has a right to believe whatever they want, but it is completely unreasonable to suggest that truth can only be known after you've known every single thing out there. If that is so, how then are you able to make that truth statement that truth can only be known that way? Have you explored the possibilities that truth can be known some other way or that it cannot be known at all and any other possibility in this matter?

I just read through your last response, and I see that you are advocating a way to be confident in what you believe. According to the Bible (Ephesians 4:11-16), the way to attain confidence and become practically invulnerable to apostasy is by learning everything the Bible has to teach.

I am an apologist by spiritual gifting. Understanding other belief systems is not only necessary to my spiritual ministry, but it is also something that I am able to tolerate without cost to my faith. We are not all gifted to be teachers, so when someone who is not does as you advise here, it can actually cause harm to their faith (Colossians 2:8; Ephesians 4:14).

If one knows the Truth, that is enough protection for them. If one does not, then they can be deceived even if they have checked out every single story out there.

Question #24:

Yea sure. If you knew what made up the Bible. Did you write the bible yourself or did God give it to you? The bible you refer to is a collection of 66 books handed down by the roman catholic church and established by the church of England. There are several books referred to by ancient Christians not contained those 66 books. So, while I am happy you are "confident" that you have every piece of the word of God (I am happy for you), please leave me to relate with God the way I have always done since I was a young child. Many thanks and bye :) .

I have never been afraid of apostasy and never will be. I have the best teacher you see. S/he is not human. Faithful companion. You refer to Ephesians. This was a letter written by Paul. This letter did not form part of scriptures when he wrote them. The same way the gospels did not form part of the scriptures when the apostles wrote letters and their memoirs. So, when these letters refer to the scripture and ask for you to study to show yourself approved, they are not talking about the current books of the new testament as you know them. They are referring to others. I bet you have no idea which. But here you are "confidently" boasting about your "spiritual gifting" that helps you learn about what the "bible" teaches whereas you have no idea what scriptures those apostles were referring to. Quite amusing :)

Response #24:

Believe me, I wouldn't dream of telling you what to believe or dictating to you how you must relate to God. I was merely responding to ideas that you shared in public. I have no illusions that you are responsible to me in any way or that you must do as I think is good for you.

As for the Bible, believers have known throughout history what is God's Own Word and what isn't without the help of any council (see Jeremiah 36 and 2 Peter 3:16, for example). So, no council really created the Bible. The Roman Catholic Church really had nothing to do with the Canon of the Bible. The early believers after the Cross knew what was Scripture and what wasn't and it was the 66 books. They did read other writings like the books of the Maccabees, which sometimes provided useful historical information that helped them understand things in the Bible better, but they did not treat these other writings as Scripture. It was, in fact, because of heresies that arose concerning the true Humanity and Deity of the Lord Jesus that the furore about a Canon began.

Those heresies were backed by writings purported to be Scripture too, and that was why some people started to agitate for a formal definition of what was Scripture and what wasn't. But even when the Apostles were still here, fake Scriptures were written and sent to churches too (see 2 Thessalonians 2:2 and consider the tone of John in his first letter)), but it was always clear to the believer what was Scripture and what wasn't.

Scripture has life in it. It has a quality that is very recognizable to those who believe. Other literature don't. That is how we know it.

The Roman Catholic Church, interestingly, does not have 66 books in the Bible that they accept. They have the Apocrypha too, so that they have 73 books, not 66.

Question #25:

I know the Roman Catholic church has more than 66 books. They shared the 66 and kept the others secret. Those 66 books were handed down by the church to the church of England. Those are the books that form part of the modern canon. And in case you do not know, the Roman Catholic church was the official church of Christianity until others broke free about the time King James wanted to divorce his wife and the Catholic church would not let him. That was around the time Martin Luther and others started rebelling. They all came out of the Roman Catholic church, so please do not fool yourselves that the Roman Catholic church had nothing to do with the modern canon. They are the modern canon. They changed the day of worship to Sunday amongst other ordinances.

Response #25:

Wow. I did not realize that I was boasting about something. Nonetheless, I have no idea how you knew that the Apostles' writings were not Scripture. That is really interesting. In case, you didn't quite notice, this is what Peter actually said:

16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the OTHER scriptures, unto their own destruction.

(KJV) 2 Peter 3:16

Question #26:

Do you know what cyclical reference is? To help you answer, ask yourself this which scriptures was Paul referring to? Tell me. While you think about this, ruminate on this, the Roman Empire adopted Christianity between 300 - 400 AD. They took over everything Christian and killed those Christians who insisted on keeping Saturday as the sabbath rather than the new day they ordained which was Sunday. The practice of Christianity by the Romans is what became the Roman Catholic Church :) The Roman Catholic church was Christianity (at least in the western world). Now we have the Eastern churches. They have additional books. However, the bible you talk about came from the Roman church.

Response #26:

I assure you that there is no fooling going on here, not that you'll believe it though. If the books we accept are the Roman Canon, obviously, we should have all the books that the Roman church has and prefers.

I think that your history is wrong. The Roman church came into existence perhaps in the 4th century, certainly not much earlier. So, when you claim that it was the official church until others broke out of it, I'm not sure what you are saying exactly. The Church as a spiritual organism existed prior to the Roman church, alongside it, and will outlast it. It has never been the same thing as the Roman church.

Question #27:

You have said nothing new. Tell me which church existed beside of the Roman Catholic church in the 4th century. The Coptic churches? Which ones? Which ones had custody of the books of the bible that you refer to today?

Why do you go to church on Sunday? Who chose Sunday as your day of worship? You are also yet to say which scriptures Peter and Paul were referring to :D

Response #27:

Suffice to say that I cannot see any reason to believe the following claims:

1. that the Roman Empire took over Christianity and changed it in any way, much less in one that affected what days we kept holy and what days we didn't.
2. that the Roman Catholic Church ever "became Christianity" anywhere.

Question #28:

Just read the history of the Christian church: Do you know the position of the Roman Empire in the statue as dreamed by King Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted by Daniel :) ?

<https://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/history/About.htm?fbclid=IwAR2VeIZf9Cce9SQPyiZazbdNLFGoPqaUjoJCUUqz2k32cYTBGsEUOX8JkLw>

Response #28:

I have reservations about this resource, but I think it is a fair start into the true history of those times. I encourage you to take a look at it:

https://www.britannica.com/topic/Christianity/Relations-between-Christianity-and-the-Roman-government-and-the-Hellenistic-culture?fbclid=IwAR31bdYAg8YZop-hQv7XYoYwZ_6WSfBgPaluiK-C5LBtLCqQFZfykwT5go

Question #29:

Please do not be ridiculous. I have given you an entire historical resource, a source attested to by every living biblical scholar.

Response #29:

I did not realize that one of my comments was not posted. I meant to tell you that I'm really not in any mental shape to pursue any rigorous debate of sources with you. You'll have to bear with me.

Question #30:

You need to stop being sentimental. It is certain you have little knowledge of how the books came together. You need to step out of your dogma and look for the truth. It will not nullify your faith. The Bible was never any one document. The one you hold so dear is a collection of books brought together by various councils - the first being the Roman Catholic church after St Augustine. Once you have got that bit of knowledge, all I am saying will make sense to you and you will approach the scriptures in a different way, in its right context.

Response #30:

You really don't have to talk with me. I don't consider it a law that everyone I talk to must answer me, but if you do, you are obliged to be civil. I don't see how I'm being ridiculous. Is it by offering you another resource? Must I accept your own source? I have not yet examined it, and I have not decided or said that I will not look at it, so why are you calling me ridiculous?

Also, are you presuming to know my pedigree in ancient history? Have I offered or denied any qualifications yet?

Finally, for someone who was complaining about my being boastful just because I said that I have one, you don't seem to mind assuming about my "little knowledge" and bondage to dogma even though we are only just meeting each other here. Who is being arrogant now?

Question #31:

You were being ridiculous! I gave you an attested source and you come up with Britannica? Very insulting.

Response #31:

I was looking up some information quick online to see if I could show you how difficult debates about history can be and why I cannot engage right now on it. That was why I found Britannica. I was in the process of posting my response when yours came in. I decided to go on and post it, since my point was not that Britannica was correct, but to show you that this was not a conversation I really could handle at the moment.

What authority I tend to defer to on historical questions is ichthys.com. But I do have an assortment of other sources that I read, so it's not as if Britannica is my go-to authority. It does help to make my point, is all.

I will discuss this with you again. But I am not in any mental shape to handle it right now.

Philip Schaff comes highly recommended by Ichthys too. So does Williston Walker whom I'm currently reading. And I have actually been studying things like this for a long time now. I have made a point to work through all the volumes of Schaff that I saw on CCEL, but that is not something that I will finish before continuing this conversation. So, if you wish to make a specific reference in the volumes, please do so. I am willing to work with the book's witness. I accept it as an authority albeit with natural limits.

Now, what exactly is your argument? Why did you raise the issue of historicity?

Question #32:

Look to the left. You will see the relevant periods. In particular when the church and state unite.

THIRD PERIOD

THE CHURCH IN UNION WITH THE ROMAN EMPIRE

FROM CONSTANTINE THE GREAT TO GREGORY THE GREAT. A.D. 311–590.

This fulfils Daniel/Nebuchadnezzar vision of the Iron feet mixed with clay (the clay representing the church and the iron, the roman empire)

It was this period that the Roman gods were changed from their idols to Mary and Jesus, Peter etc. They changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. They declared the union as supreme all over the world and put to death anyone that went against their doctrines.

Response #32:

It would be much easier if you could post excerpts.

Question #33:

They had custody of all the holy books and were the authority of what constituted Christian doctrine (at least in the West) until Martin Luther rebelled and King James left the church because he was not allowed to divorce his wife. Other Tawahedo (Ethiopian) and other eastern Coptic churches existed but their influence was nowhere near that of the west's. They were under the roman catholic church as the Romans made sure of that. And this western influence remains till today. It is the canon coming from that hemisphere most popular today.

You need to read it yourself. I won't do the work for you as it will be of little value to you if I do.

There is a video, though about an hour-long that you may find useful. it covers the history and relates it to the Daniel prophesy. Watch it but make sure you are satisfied with the references quoted. Ignore his opinions and concentrate on the evidence therein. This is what I did. Studying is hard work but it is rewarding. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pQvM9ZY41k>

Protestantism came out of the orthodox churches. So this your idea that the modern canon was formed outside the organised church has no evidential basis.

Response #33:

I'm not sure what kind of debates you are used to, and please don't take that the wrong way, but when you have evidence for a position, you don't tell your opposite to go find the evidence for themselves. It is your argument, therefore it is your responsibility to substantiate it. I have elected to read the volumes for myself for my own purposes, not for yours, and, as I told you, I'm not exactly a novice in church or ancient history, even if I'm not an expert yet either.

So, excerpts are what will move this conversation forward. Already much that you have claimed violates the testimony of the Scriptures. I realize that you don't accept the Scriptures to be credible witnesses, but I do, and for me they stand above every other authority. There are no limits to their authority, as far as I'm concerned.

Paul and John, at least, witness to the fact that the early believers after the Cross met on Sundays because that was the Day that the Lord rose from the dead. They didn't make a rule of it, but it was accepted by many.

Because also the writings of the prophets (the Old Testament) and those of the Apostles pre-existed the politics of the 4th century, it makes no sense to claim that the Roman church that came into existence so much later should dictate Christian doctrine. For that to be true, all possibility of preserving prophetic writings both from before the Cross (the Old Testament) and after the Cross (the New Testament) must be truly lost. I don't see that that occurred at any point. That effort was made and sustained to corrupt the Scriptures is not only not surprising, but also normal to the history of the Scriptures. For a long time, there has been effort to corrupt the Scriptures through false prophets, false apostles, and false teachers. It did not begin with the Roman church. Additionally, destruction of the Scriptures too was tried several times, notably by Jehoiakim in Jeremiah 36, but they have never succeeded, so I still find any appeals to Roman politics in this regard inadmissible.

Question #34:

What gave you this idea? " I realize that you don't accept the Scriptures to be credible witnesses" ?

I asked you questions you refused to answer. I have already told you the history of the Christian church and given you the source. What else do you want? The history of the church is not in one line! It is a

history!! At this time, I do not even know what your point is to be honest. You do not know how the books came together. What are you debating exactly?

Response #34:

As for Protestantism, there are two things I have to say about that:

1. Church history does hold that there have been "dissenters" within and outside the Papal church throughout the existence of the church. Before Luther, there was Jan Hus and there was also Wycliffe. Those are only two of very many. Jerome also, of the Latin Vulgate fame, was also one of those who was at least "weird" within the Roman church even very early in its history.

2. Revelation 2-3 holds a prophetic history of the church visible. In that history, it is clear that even when the papal church seemed to have completely subsumed the true Church (that is, all true believers in Jesus Christ), there were always "a few who have not soiled their clothes" (Revelation 3:4). So, while you seem to think that the Church practically disappeared, this is not what God Himself said. The Church has always existed even when it simply couldn't be expected to have. The Reformation is remarkable especially because it brought this "hidden" Church out into the open after centuries of its hiding.

Regarding what gave me the idea that you do not consider the Scriptures a credible witness, it was this and similar statements that you made:

"You refer to Ephesians. This was a letter written by Paul. This letter did not form part of scriptures when he wrote them. The same way the gospels did not form part of the scriptures when the apostles wrote letters and their memoirs."

If I misunderstood you, you should explain what you meant.

Question #35:

I am not saying the Roman catholic church wrote the books of the bible. What I am saying is that the canon, the 66 books of the bible, and the way it is organised in your bible today came from the Roman catholic church, copied by the C of E and copied further down the line by other denominations. Go and read how the King James Version came about. Is this not what you are saying is the scripture. What I am telling you is that the scriptures are more than those 66 books. I have in no way said they are not the word of God. What I am telling you is that you have no idea how they were brought together and therefore it sounds silly when you refer to the 66 books as if that is all and ends all. It is a lot more complicated than that!

You are now interpreting prophecy. Focus. How did the 66 books come together? DO you know? Answer. The "hidden" church did not have its own canon. There is no record of any such thing anywhere. Therefore your 66 books did not come from them. Go and read the list of St Augustine's canon. This was the first known one. See how vastly different it is to the one you have today.

ALL the scripture the disciples referred to in their letters and memoirs are the old testament. So when you quote from Paul's letter referencing the letter by Peter as scripture Paul is referring to, I laugh as you have no idea what you are talking about.

Think in chronological order. The New Testament scriptures were non-existent in Paul and Peter's time. Do you understand? Therefore it is impossible they were referring to them when they talked about scripture. Those memoirs and letters became part of scripture later. They were adopted by Augustine,

then the Roman Catholic church and other churches as time went on. This is where the problem lies. Who chose which letters and which memoirs formed part of the canon? Different councils. And that is why there are many canons today. The most prevalent one being the one from the Roman Catholic church. I call the gospels memoirs because Justin Martyr called them that, including the one by Peter. Justin Martyr wrote the famous "First Apology"

The gospels were nonexistent and they were just writing the letters in that period that formed the NT later. Hide or report this

Response #35:

As for the 66 books, yes, I do know how they came to us.

First of all, although I quote the KJV, I mostly do it because it is the best translation on the Bible app on my laptop. Otherwise, I tend to alternate between the NASB and the NIV1984. So, I'm not one of those who call the KJV inspired, in case that is why you are talking about how the KJV came about.

Today we have manuscripts like the Codex Sinaiticus preserved from about the 3rd century from which new translations are made, so it is not as if all translations in our hands are traced back to the KJV and through it back to the various papal manuscripts and documents and so on. In other words, the Bibles we have in our hands today don't derive from the Roman Catholic church. Consider too that the first translation of the KJV actually had 73 books, not 66, which was customary at the time too.

Also, Martin Luther and his work preceded the King James Bible. Wycliffe's work also preceded him. And there were others before Wycliffe.

I think that you are making too many claims with no evidence. At best, you've told me to go find evidence for myself. That is really a terrible way to go about this. I might tolerate it up to a point, but it really is no way to discuss. If you considered my offering Britannica to you insulting - not considering my reason for doing so, you have no idea just how much more insulting it is to tell someone who is actually willing to hear you out to go and dig up evidence for your own arguments.

As for Peter's reference to other Scriptures, the church did have both the Old Testament and the writings of the Apostles. Those were the Scriptures in question. Scripture did not become Scripture because some council decided that it was. It was Scripture by its own nature, so when Paul wrote and as he wrote, his writing was Scripture. Peter himself recognized it as such. That was why he warned against twisting Paul's words like "other" Scriptures were also twisted. That is to say, Paul's writings were also Scripture to Peter.

In my experience, when people argue as you do, they have numerous pseudepigrapha and some ancient literature used and respected by early believers after the Cross fell away that they intend to claim are Scripture - the books of Enoch, the letter to Barnabas, the Shepherd of Hermes, the gospel of Peter, the gospel of Thomas, etc. There are so many of them that it is impossible to name them all. The idea is that because these books were not popular, they were hidden from the Church. That, of course, is a terrible argument. That is why history is often twisted to make it seem like it is only that elite few that have figured everything out and are willing to read obscure literature who are truly doing the right thing.

Suffice to say that it is not true. Scripture has always been its own witness. Whenever anyone who is a believer encounters Scripture, it is immediately obvious to them that they have. I have read much myself, and I have never seen literature like the 66 books in the Protestant Bible. Nor do I expect to. Those books were specially prepared, transmitted, and preserved for all believers, in spite of all the effort expended by

Satan in various ways to corrupt and destroy them. The history always proves that out, not the other way around.

Question #36:

The New Testament is a collection of 27 books INCLUDING Paul's letters. how can Paul be writing a letter which was already in a book that existed? Are you seriously asking this ?

We are discussing the canon and the NT NOT individual books/memoirs/letters here!

Response #36:

This too demonstrates some deficiency in your history, if you don't mind my saying so. The technology for 'books' in the manner that you seem to be thinking of did not exist until later, perhaps about the 2nd century. Until that time, there was a real limit to how much material could be "bound" together in a volume, so all the letters and books we have been speaking of were actually separate "books" that were kept as scrolls in the various places where believers met to worship together.

That was how they kept their "canon." There were other books besides the inspired ones that they kept too in order to use them for teaching. For example, the books of the Maccabees that I mentioned earlier were used to provide a more effective historical context for some of the things that they read in the inspired books.

The picture was like this. Whenever a new letter or book was written by the Apostles or their associates, each assembly made a copy and kept it in their meeting place for public reading. That way, they soon had the complete Bible in multiple scrolls, along with other scrolls that were written either for expounding the inspired literature they had or for providing historical and cultural context for the inspired literature they had. One thing is clear though: they knew which books and letters were inspired and which were not.