

Jesus and the End Time | FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

Part I: General Questions:

Why should readers take this End Time prophecy website seriously?

One reason readers should take this End Time prophecy website seriously is that the writer is not affiliated with any church or religious institution and, consequently, has no preconceived ideas about what the King James Version of the Bible (or KJV Bible) does or should say. The writer is therefore in a doctrinally neutral position from which he can present the actual words of KJV Bible texts that (1) quote or describe End Time teachings of Jesus, (2) point out and discuss other Bible texts that seem to shed light on their possible meanings, and (3) in appropriate cases go on to discuss how these words and meanings may affect the relative merits of different interpretations of those teachings. This, in turn, assures that this website not only treats the words of the Bible as more important than any claims or arguments made by the writer, but also allows readers to use the Bible to verify the correctness of any claims or arguments he does make. This approach also helps the writer realize his ultimate goal of making it easier for readers to understand what the Bible has to say about the End Time teachings of Jesus when it is allowed to speak for itself. Thus, one answer to the question of why readers should take this website seriously is that it takes the words of the Bible seriously.

Another reason that readers should take this End Time prophecy website seriously is that it does not provide any financial incentive for the writer to "spin" his presentation in a way that favors some interpretations of End Time prophecies of Jesus over others. This is because neither this website nor this writer is subsidized or supported in any way by any ministry, denomination or other group that engages in religious or political activities. As a result, the writer is able to explore and discuss End Time prophecies of Jesus which are clearly supported by the words of the KJV Bible, but which established religious or political groups may be motivated to gloss over or interpret away. Thus, another answer to the question of why readers should take this website seriously is that it is not subject to the corrupting influence of money or political advantage.

Why should readers take the writer seriously?

Although the writer is not a formally trained Biblical scholar, he believes that there are good reasons for taking seriously the things he says in this writing. One is that he is a well-educated person who earned degrees in both engineering and law at a large state university, and went on to have a long and successful career as an attorney-at-law and patent attorney. During this career, he gained valuable experience preparing and interpreting complex legal documents, and writing and obtaining patents on inventions of all kinds, many which involved ideas as complex and multi-faceted as those included among the End Time teachings of the Bible. Another is that this career provided him with ample opportunities to develop and sharpen his skills at reading and using words carefully, and at drawing fine distinctions between them. Still another is the fact that the writer has a deep and abiding interest in the Bible, and in the history of the time just before, during, and after the time Jesus lived. As a result, he has spent countless hours studying the Bible, and books about it and the history of late second-temple and early Christian times, with the same care that he spent studying the cases and controversies on which he worked as an attorney. Thus, one answer to the question of why readers should take the writer seriously is that he has had a long and successful career which demonstrates that he is a well-informed and serious person.

While the writer does not claim to be an authority on the Bible in the strict, academic sense of that word, he is a serious student of it, and is in a good position to present and explain his findings to other serious Bible students. His reasons for claiming this can be understood by thinking about reading this writing

as analogous to taking a guided tour through the Grand Canyon. This is because the kind of person who is best suited to serve as a tour guide depends on the kind of tour his guests are interested in. For a guided tour through a place like the Grand Canyon what is required (other than honesty and general trustworthiness) is not necessarily a person who is a highly educated earth scientist or geologist, but rather a person who has read a lot about it and studied it carefully during countless trips through it, who has a lot of experience describing things, and who wants to help his guests see and understand the things they are most likely to be interested in. In any case, it is the latter kind of guide through the End Time teachings of Jesus that the writer tries to be. Thus, another answer to the question of why readers should take the writer seriously is that he has all the knowledge and experience necessary to perform the task he has set for himself.

What does the writer hope to accomplish by creating this website?

The main thing the writer hopes to accomplish by creating this website is to provide a Bible study resource that people can use to raise and discuss important questions that involve the End Time or things closely associated with it. Arguably the most important of these is the soundness of *interpretations* of the teachings of Jesus about hell which claim that it is a place of punishment by fire that continues without end for all eternity, a fate once commonly described as everlasting punishment, but now often described as eternal conscious torment. Related to it are questions like whether the words 'eternal' and 'everlasting' accurately convey the meanings of the words from which they were translated into English, and whether these meanings can be reconciled with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures as Jesus probably knew them. While questions like these can be difficult to answer, they could hardly be more consequential. As a result, people are often afraid to even try to decide for themselves whether the Bible actually describes and supports the idea of eternal conscious torment. This, however, can make them easy prey for those who offer easy and foolproof ways to avoid this fate, but who may be more interested in getting peoples' money and political support than they are in the truth. By creating this website the writer offers an alternative to these choices. This is to face up to the difficulties such questions present, identify the issues on which their answers depend, and then discuss the merits of the facts and arguments that determine how these issues ought to be decided. By supporting these efforts with Biblical or other information that can be verified, the writer hopes to enable readers to feel confident that the decisions they reach are sound or, at very least, that they have a solid foundation for subjecting them to further scrutiny. Proceeding in this way will not always be easy but, as scholars have told kings and princes since ancient times, "There is no royal road to knowledge."

One thing the writer did not seriously hope to accomplish by creating this website was to make money for himself. In fact, he has so far used only his own time, effort and money to create it and, as anyone who has read it knows, nowhere asks for money. He does, however, cherish the hope that this website will eventually expand and develop into an online video forum on which Bible scholars and ordinary people with a serious interest in the End Time can appear and discuss or debate this subject in real time. Until such time, if ever, that there is enough financial support to take that step, he will content himself with maintaining a Facebook page on which readers may comment on items posted by the writer, or add and invite comments on posts of their own. Readers may reach this page by clicking on the Facebook link on the Home page of this website.

If I can read only a few parts of this website, which parts should they be?

If a reader is unable to read all parts of this website, the writer recommends that he read at least the page titled 'Introduction', and the PDF document titled 'Issues'. He recommends the Introduction page because this page includes definitions of the key terms that are used throughout this website, and gives examples of the kinds of Biblical words, phrases, and concepts that do and do not fall within these definitions. This page then goes on to describe the scope of this website by discussing which subjects

are covered, and which are not, and why. The Introduction page also includes a description of how the documents that make up this website are divided into Main and Auxiliary End Time Files, and how readers may take advantage of this division to quickly find the documents or parts of documents where the End Time teachings of Jesus that they are most interested in may be found. Once these documents or parts of documents have been found, readers can then use the search capabilities and Special Display Features described later on this page to find groups of Bible texts that relate to the same subject, and show them adjacent to one another in ways that make them easier to compare on a line-by-line or word-by-word basis. This ability to show and compare Bible texts in this way is important because it enables readers to quickly determine how they are related, and if and how they may affect each other's meanings.

The other document that the reader recommends to those who are unable to read all parts of this website is the PDF document titled 'Issues'. He recommends this document because it shows, in one place, at least the most important ones of the questions raised by the KJV Bible texts that are shown and discussed in all other parts of this website, and discusses them in an order that makes them easier to understand as related parts of a single coherent whole. To this end the writer devotes Issues 1 through 6 of the Issues PDF to a well-documented, step-by-step discussion of the way that the Bible describes the prophecies and other teachings of Jesus about the End Time. He then devotes Issues 7 and 8 of this PDF to a careful discussion of how historical developments may have affected the continued viability of these prophecies and teachings. Finally, in Issue 9, the writer discusses proposed answers to questions about the things which will happen before or during the End Time that have been the subject of controversy from early Christian times down to the present day. Whether readers agree with these proposed answers or not, the writer hopes that this discussion will help readers better understand these questions, and make better informed decisions about their answers.

Why does this website rely so heavily on the King James Version of the Bible?

The writer is aware that the KJV Bible has a number of shortcomings. He knows, for example, that, since it was first published, scholars have learned that its translators did not use what Bible scholars now regard as the best manuscripts or readings of the documents from which they translated it. He also knows that it also contains words or passages the meanings of which did not become clear until after the discovery of better manuscripts or translations of its books, or of older versions of these books found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. In spite of these shortcomings, he believes that the KJV Bible has advantages that justify its continued use. One of these is that it has been around for so long and been so widely distributed that it is readily available to almost everyone in the English speaking world. Another is that KJV Bible was translated and published at about the same time that William Shakespeare wrote his works, a fact that endows its words with a Shakespearean quality and patina of antiquity that has caused many people to become quite fond of it, the writer among them.

The KJV Bible also has a number of practical advantages. One is that it is foundational in the sense that many later translations of the Bible can reasonably be thought of as improvements to or corrections of it. This, in turn, allows readers of writings like this one to use it to introduce themselves to and orient themselves within those later translations. Another is that readers can use its texts as a text finding tool that helps them find the most nearly similar texts in other translations, in spite of differences in the words used in those translations. Arguably the most important of its advantages, however, is that the words of the KJV Bible are in the public domain and, consequently, can be copied and discussed freely, without violating the legal rights of the owners of the copyrights on more recent translations. This is important because it means that the owners of those copyrights cannot use them to stop the publication of works that express points of view they do not agree with.

Why does this website spend so much time discussing the Old Testament?

While the things Jesus said about the End Times are of great importance, they are not things he said in a vacuum. On the contrary, he said these things not only in a particular place and time, but also to a people whose religious world view was shaped by the Holy Scriptures as they existed in that place and time. As a result, it would not be reasonable to interpret the things Jesus is described as saying in the New Testament without taking into account the Scriptural background against which he said them. With the exception of certain second-temple writings that did not make it into the canon of the KJV Bible (the apocrypha, 1 Enoch, Jubilees, etc.), the Holy Scriptures that existed in the time of Jesus included versions of the books that Christians now call the Old Testament. As a result, it makes sense to use those books whenever possible to shed light on the true meanings of the teachings of Jesus about the End Time in general, and about hell and eternal conscious torment in particular.

Based on his own experience, the writer believes that the better a person knows the Old Testament the more he is struck by how often the things Jesus said are taken from or patterned after things said in the Old Testament. Importantly, these things include not only statements that he quotes from a named prophet, but also words that he uses to paraphrase or allude to the words of an unnamed prophet, or of a Psalm or of one of the Books of Moses. These things also include terms like the kingdom of God, the elect, the children of God, and the Judgment which he does not define or explain, apparently because he expected his listeners to understand what he meant by them from their study of Scripture. By citing a large number of texts that identify the parts of the Old Testament that Jesus quotes from, or that he seems to paraphrase or allude to, the writer hopes to enable readers to understand these terms in something like the same way as the people who heard them from the mouth of Jesus himself.

Part II: The Form and Punctuation of Documents on This Website

Why does this writing use different citation formats to cite Bible texts?

Consistent with his belief in the importance of the context in which a verse appears, the writer often uses a citation format that includes both the number of the verse or verses he is discussing and the numbers of all the other verses he considers to be necessary to understand those verses in context. A typical example of a citation of this kind is "v. 64 of Matt. 26:62-66", a citation which refers to the words Jesus speaks in Matt. 26:64, but indicates that the writer believes that readers ought to consider all of Matt. 26:62-66 before concluding that they understand these words in context. While some readers may consider the use of this two-part citation format to be unnecessary, the writer believes that it has the advantage that it enables readers who believe that Matt. 26:64 should be considered in the context of some other set of verses to better understand the reasons why they and the writer may interpret that verse somewhat differently.

Because citations that use a two-part citation format occupy more space than citations that do not, their use may conflict with the writer's desire to show Bible texts and their associated Notes as compactly as possible, and thereby increase the amount of text that a reader may read from his monitor without scrolling. In order to resolve this conflict, the writer has adopted different ways of showing two-part citations that he may use interchangeably, as necessary, to reduce the number of lines occupied by a given amount of text. Instead of using the two-part citation "v. 64 of Matt. 26:62-66", for example, the writer may use shorter but equivalent two-part citations, such as "Matt. 26:62-66/64" or "Matt. 26:62-66 (v. 64)". In cases in which the presence of even a few extra characters will result in the showing of an otherwise unnecessary line, the writer may simply not use any two-part citation format, and instead cite the verse or verses of interest without its context. In such cases, readers can find the missing part of the citation by referring to the List of Included Texts.

Why does the writer sometimes use quotation marks in unusual ways?

The writer has a good general knowledge of the rules of English grammar and punctuation. He also knows, however, that the English language allows writers to bend or ignore such rules, if doing so serves some useful purpose, an allowance that is often referred to as literary license. Because of the unusual nature and structure of this writing, the writer will take full advantage of this license in order to make this writing more compact, more true to the text of the Bible, easier to read and (not least) easier to proofread. The writer will now discuss examples of rules of the kind he has found it convenient to bend or ignore.

Why does the writer use straight quotes the way he does?

The writer uses straight quotes (") rather than curly (or smart) quotes throughout this writing because he considers their plainness and simplicity as appropriate for the simple and direct approach he uses to discuss the subjects he covers. More importantly, he uses these marks not only in the traditional way, i.e., to set off directly quoted words or phrases from the words or phrases that precede and follow them, but also to set off other kinds of words or phrases from those that precede and follow them. Examples of these other kinds of words or phrases include: (1) words or phrases that the writer uses as a unitary whole (e.g., Jesus often uses the phrase "the kingdom of God" when he...), (2) words or phrases he uses in special senses or as figures of speech and (3) miscellaneous fragments of Biblical passages that he uses repeatedly or mentions only in passing. In short, the writer uses straight quotes to set off any combination of words and/or punctuation marks he wants to show or discuss as complete units---including those which many writers show between pairs of single quotes ('...') and punctuate using punctuation rules different from those they use for double quotes. By using the same kinds of quote marks and punctuation rules for usages of both of these kinds, the writer has made this writing both easier to write and easier to proofread.

Why does the writer punctuate words between quotes the way he does?

While writers, including the present writer, know that the punctuation marks of sentences that include quoted words or phrases should be shown "inside" of the closing quotation mark, the writer will not show them this way in many cases. The main reason for not following this rule is that following it would leave unclear whether a punctuation mark shown inside of a closing quote is a part of the quoted text, or is a part of the sentence that includes the quoted text. In order to avoid this ambiguity, the writer will use the following alternative punctuation rule: each punctuation mark that is shown inside of a pair of quotes is a punctuation mark that the Bible shows as a part of the quoted text, and each punctuation mark that is shown outside of a pair of quotes is a punctuation mark that is a part of the sentence in which the quoted text appears. Thus, by using this alternative punctuation rule, the writer is able to provide potentially important information about the immediate context of the quoted text, namely, whether the quoted text stops at that point, or merely pauses there before going on to add to, change or qualify those words.

Another reason for using the above-described alternative punctuation rule is that there are many words or phrases which the writer uses not only as quoted parts of Bible texts, but also as stand-alone descriptive terms which he finds it convenient to use to discuss those texts, to include on lists of similar terms, or to coin new terms that are generic to such lists. The use of this alternative punctuation rule can also help solve problems that can occur when text search engines search for words or phrases that appear in combination with punctuation marks between a pair of quotes. Problems of this kind occur when search engines treat all of the characters that appear between pairs of quotes literally, i.e., as parts of the words or phrases being searched for, and thus fail to find those words or phrases. Naturally, situations of these kinds can result in conflicts with those described in the preceding paragraph. Instead of trying to resolve such conflicts by adopting rigid punctuation rules that provide for every possible situation, the writer has adopted a more flexible approach, namely, to not show

punctuation marks between pairs of quotes unless there is a good reason for doing so, and to not show quote marks around descriptive terms which appear in lists of terms that are separated by commas.

Part III: The Use of Special Display Features Like Horizontal Tiling

Horizontal tiling is a special display feature that allows parts of two (or more) different documents to be shown at the same time on different parts of the same screen. When parts of two documents are shown at the same time, with a part of one document positioned above or below part of the other, the documents are said to be horizontally tiled. This is because they look like two rectangles that have their long axes aligned in a horizontally parallel relationship with one another. The technical term that is used to describe these rectangles is the word "pane".

The reason that horizontal tiling is so useful is that it allows a person to scroll up or down through the text of either document while the text of the other document remains stationary. Importantly, once he has scrolled up or down to the text of interest in one document, he may click on the other document (i.e., make it the active pane) and scroll up or down to the text of interest in that document. By doing this first in one document and then in the other, a user can bring any parts of any two documents into close proximity to one another, and then compare those parts with one another on a line-by-line or word-by-word basis. One example of a situation in which a person might want to compare two texts this closely is a case in which one Bible text makes a prophecy while another Bible text describes a later event as a fulfillment of that prophecy. Another example is a case in which two Bible texts describe Jesus using different words to speak about the same subject on different occasions. Situations like these, among many others, can be important because they allow a person to gain insight into the nuances of Jesus' teachings and thereby understand those teachings in more nearly the same way that Jesus understood them.

How do I horizontally tile two or more sets of verses?

The Adobe ® PDF documents shown on the Table of Contents page of this site may be opened, read, tiled, etc. using either any compatible Adobe Acrobat program or any compatible Adobe reader program. Adobe Acrobat programs are able to both make and read Adobe PDF documents, but must be purchased from their owner. Adobe reader programs are only able to read Adobe PDF documents, but may be downloaded free of charge using the link included on the Table of Contents page of this website. Except where otherwise stated, all descriptions that follow assume that a user has only an Adobe PDF reader program. Since Adobe Acrobat and free Adobe PDF reader programs have such similar reader options, the writer will refer to both as Adobe readers, without distinguishing between them, unless he is saying something that applies to only one of them.

Adobe PDF documents are easy to horizontally tile once they have been saved in a folder. While there are various ways to save them in such a folder, the easiest is to open them by clicking on their names on the Table of Contents page, and then saving them in the desired folder using the "File" and "Save as" options of the browser's Menu bar. Once the documents of interest have been saved in a folder, they may be opened by double clicking their names. Alternatively, they may be opened by opening the Adobe PDF reader, browsing to the folder where they have been saved and then opening them from there in the usual way. After all of the PDF documents that are to be horizontally tiled are open, their names will appear on the list that opens when the user clicks on the Window option of the Adobe reader Menu bar. At this point only one of the documents will be shown on the computer screen, i.e., the document that is shown as checked on the last-mentioned list. Once the reader is in this state, the documents of interest may be horizontally tiled by simply moving the mouse pointer to the "Tile" option that appears above the list, clicking on it, and then clicking on the word "Horizontally". While there is,

in principle, no limit to the number of documents that may be horizontally tiled, there is a practical upper limit of three such documents. This is because each horizontally tiled document appears in a pane the upper portion of which is occupied by one or more toolbars.

How can I increase the number of words displayed in horizontally tiled texts?

There are a number of things a user can do to increase the number of words that are displayed in sets of verses that are horizontally tiled. One is to turn off (or "hide") one or more of the toolbars that are shown in one or both of the read panes. These toolbars can be controlled by clicking on the View option of the Menu bars of the read panes, and then moving the mouse pointer to the Show/Hide option of the drop down menu. This will, in turn, cause a further drop down menu to appear. When this menu appears, a user may hide all but the Menu bar by clicking on the "Hide Toolbars" option. The user can later restore these toolbars by repeating these steps and then clicking on the "Show Toolbars" option.

Another thing a user can do to increase the number of words that are displayed in sets of verses that are horizontally tiled is to decrease the sizes of the letters and words they include. One simple way of doing this is to click on the "+" and "-" icons that are shown on the Icon toolbar of each pane and thereby increase or decrease the amount of zoom that the reader uses to display text. Another is to click on the View option of the Menu bar, then click on the words "Zoom to". Doing this opens a window that allows user to click on a down arrow, select the zoom level he wants. He can then click on OK to put the selected zoom level into effect.

Can Adobe readers be used in a split-screen display mode?

Yes, they can, although Adobe readers call this display feature the "Split-Window" view. When this feature is used, a user can move widely separated parts of the same document into positions in which they can be seen in an above-below relationship to one another. This display feature may therefore be thought of as a special kind of horizontal tiling in which both of the tiled texts happen to be located in the same document. This feature makes use of a splitter bar that divides the screen into two panes, and allows a user to scroll the text in either pane up or down while the text shown in the other pane remains stationary. Because the Split-Window view is available in the full version of Adobe Acrobat, but not in free Adobe PDF readers, the writer will here include only the following abbreviated description of how to use it. Once a document is opened and moved to a position where the desired location of the splitter bar is visible on the screen, a user may activate the splitter bar by clicking on the word "Split" under the Window option of the Menu bar. Once the splitter bar appears, a user may move it up and down to resize the two panes. The user can later remove the splitter bar by clicking on the words "Remove Split".

How can I search a document for particular words or phrases?

Adobe readers include options that enable users to search a document for words or phrases of interest in a number of different ways. Simple searches may be performed by entering part or all of the word or phrase of interest in a text box that a user can open by clicking on the word "Find" under the Edit option of the Menu bar. Once the word or phrase has been entered, Adobe readers automatically move to and highlight the first occurrence of that word or phrase. Users can then press the associated right pointing arrow to cause the reader to move down to and highlight each later occurrence of that word or phrase. Pressing the left pointing arrow reverses the process and causes the reader to move up to each earlier occurrence of that word or phrase.

Users can perform more sophisticated kinds of searches by clicking on the words "Advanced Search" under the Edit option of the Menu bar. As in the case of simple searches, these actions cause the appearance of a box into which a user can enter a word or phrase of interest. When he has done this

and pressed the associated search button, the reader opens a "Results" window that displays a list of all of the occurrences of that word or phrase, together with single lines of the texts in which it occurs. If a user clicks on any of the listed results, the reader will move to and highlight the part of the document in which the word or phrase of interest occurs. One reason that the Advanced Search option is called advanced is that this option allows a user to limit the displayed search results to occurrences of the word or phrase of interest that meet user specified limitations. Examples of the most commonly used limitations of this kind include limiting the search results to whole words and limiting the search results to case-sensitive forms of the searched word or phrase.

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