**PARTICIPANT 9**

**Research Questions:**

1. **How would you describe your personal and chosen approach to scripture?**

*His background was on the Historical Jesus and he looked at Jesus, the Galilean Jew in Palestine. He investigated what did the people that saw Jesus at that time think of him? From the beginning there was so many diverse opinions of Jesus, even during Jesus’ lifetime and in the early church. The various disciples interpreted the details about Jesus in various ways. What ultimately was the conclusion of the study was that Jesus is everything that everyone needed because of grace meeting people where they are. Because of Emperor Constantine’s efforts to bring the church and the state together, diversity was lost to Christianity. In the Old Testament, there are also varied opinions about God and what he believed. However, some diversity in Christianity has remained and what he believes is that there are various, diverse opinions and approaches to Scripture because there are different ways of understanding the Scripture.*

*He uses the historical critical approach to interpreting scripture as his system of interpretation is a broad sense.*

1. **What has led you to adopt this approach to scripture?**

*How one comes to his conclusions about the approach to Scripture has a lot to do with the Church one comes from, the studies one has been involved in and one’s unique personality.*

1. **What one word best describes your approach to scripture besides the answer in Question 1?**

*One has to have a consistent approach to interpreting the Scripture because each one of us who interpret the Scriptures have presuppositions and sometimes we are unaware that these exist and we often fail to admit that we have these presuppositions no matter what they may be. Even the fact that he believes in Jesus as his saviour and has a personal relationship with Jesus is also a presupposition resulting in him something mysterious takes place inside. As a biblical scholar or bible scientist the mysterious aspects of the Bible (viz. faith) may not be acknowledged and the Bible becomes just another book.*

1. **What principle(s) would you consider as important to all biblical interpretation?**

*One needs to consider the social conditions and the context of the people that were living at the time of the writing of the scripture to understand what the original author intended and meant to say to his hearers. For example, when we read Paul, because he lived so long ago we may disrespect the original writers if we try to understand what Paul said without considering the author’s original intent viz. wearing a hat in church.*

1. **For example, how would you understand Zechariah 14 from the Old Testament?**

*In order to understand Zechariah 14 one needs to try to get into the head of Zechariah to understand the passage. This aim or means of understanding the Bible was lost during the enlightenment. During the enlightenment Westerners lost the ability to grasp an alternate state of consciousness which impacts our ability to understand the text from the author’s perspective. For example, the early church did not see time in a linear fashion but rather they saw time as a circle. This then is how Zechariah 14 needs to be seen: in a circular fashion. This idea of time being circular is seen in the cycle of days, weeks and even the seasons. This then would mean that Zechariah 14 would refer to events that have always happened and will happen again.*

*If the interviewee was to perhaps preach or share from Zechariah 14 then he would try to note and understand the concept of the day of the Lord which itself is portrayed in various ways in the Old Testament. In the day of the Lord, the Nations will come to serve God. There will initially be some sort of battle, like Armageddon, but the nations will eventually come serve the Lord. This is seen in the way that the New Testament writers also reinterpret the concept of the day of the Lord saying to their audience that God had done something in the past and he is doing it again. The writers of the New Testament were not looking forward but rather looking back at the Old Testament to help them understand what God is currently doing (in Christ) and what the church needs to do. So, this event described in Zechariah 14 would be describing an event that happened sometime in the past history of Israel and will happen again and again where God would deliver the Nation again.*

*The outcome of Zechariah 14 is rooted into an actual event where God delivered Israel from nations who had attacked them in the past. (For instance; where King Ahaz was delivered). “It is my belief that the interviewee possibly mistook Ahaz for Hezekiah, his son.”*

1. **For example, how would you understand Romans 11 in particular V26-27 from the New Testament?**

*The same reasoning then about the cyclical nature of scripture would also be applied to Romans 11 where God delivered Israel in the past, he will do so in the same way again.*

1. **What do you understand or know about how the Church, at various times, interpreted scripture?**
2. **Have you been exposed to dispensationalism and what are your thoughts of it?**

*If the writer of the Bible and the early church perceived time as cyclical rather than linear, then there cannot be dispensations where something new starts and ends and then something else starts and ends. There are things that have always happened and these things will happen again.*

1. **Are you familiar with one John Nelson Darby and what is your evaluation of him?**

*NO.*

1. **What do you know about the history of dispensationalism before JN Darby?**
2. **If you were made aware of the history of dispensationalism, would you be willing to discuss and give your personal perspectives on the following claims of dispensationalism:**

* ***God has always had varied and distinct arrangements (called dispensations) with humanity throughout History.***

*The way to understand this is to understand the writers of the books. For instance the account of Adam and Eve and their story, was only written after Israel’s return from exile. We must also remember that the people who lived at that time were people who lived off the land, trying to get something out of the ground. So in order to explain why the earth did not yield bountifully, the story of Adam and Eve would provide the reasons. Also we need to remember that we are carbon based life forms and all carbon based life forms are subject to pain, suffering and death. So what actually changed in the story of Adam was his mind and then knew and realized things he did not know of before. In a way Adam did not know about sickness and death but now we know about death and sickness that we could have done without. However, we sought sickness and death and found it even though God said we did not need it. In our knowledge now of pain and death, God is with me and is real in a way so that I am not alone.*

*The concept of God came from the Kenites who lived in the desert. In a desert there was no need for a triumphal God or a fertility God because the desert is not fertile and all one needs in the desert is to know that God is near and present.*

* ***Israel, as a nation and the Church, as a whole, have two distinct origins, missions and destinies.***

*The origins of the church comes from Israel. The church is an offshoot of Israel. In fact, Judaism, Christianity and Islam all originated with the religion of Israel. Israel was the main “stem” and these religions grew out of this system and went into their own directions. It is profound that God would call Himself, the God of Israel seeing they are a little nation that never amounted to much. In some sense, Israel and the church have the same origin.*

*As far as the mission of the church is to help people to see God and to be aware of God. In Judaism this is the same to see God and to show God.*

*As far as the destiny of these two go: The church is not the Kingdom of God but an instrument of the Kingdom of God and in the same way the role of Israel is the same as the rest of humanity.*

* ***There is a future, physical removal of the church (called the rapture) prior to the coming wrath of God on the Earth (called the tribulation).***

*The view of the interviewee is that the events and words described called the rapture is not a removal but rather a presence of God with us and for us to be with him.*

* ***There is a coming literal 1000 Year kingdom reign of Jesus Christ on Earth (called the millennium) fulfilling God’s covenant promises to Abraham and his descendants.***

*Looking at the number One Thousand we understand that Christ has come, he died and he rose so we are living in the time of the so called millennium as he is with us. We are living in the time after Christ has come and his presence is with us. Because Jesus rose from the dead and is alive he is with us. Even through there are so many terrible things going on in the world, satan we destroyed on the cross and as a result we are now in the millennium.*

* ***The ultimate purpose of all creation and history, is the eternal Glory of God in His Kingdom.***

*The Glory of God is why we are here.*

1. ***Are there any questions or concerns you have with the dispensational approach to scripture?***

*It is important that we speak to each other and find out why the various people believe differently. Most of the differences are as a result of our attempt to understand the scripture. If we take the time to understand why we believe differently, we will find that there are many commonalities between the various belief systems. We must also remember that the Bible is greater us.*