

In this Readers' Mailbag I'll deal with two questions that involve modern myths about the Council of Nicaea in the year 325. Is it true that this is when the church fathers decided which books would be in the New Testament? And that these authorities also removed all references to reincarnation from the Bible? If you have a question you would like me to address in a future Mailbag, go ahead and ask!

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QUESTION: I've noticed many people have the misconception that the NT canon was decided at the Council of Nicaea. Where are people getting this misconception, and can it be quashed?

QUESTION: I have often heard that original scrolls make reference to reincarnation but that such references were removed at the Council of Nicaea to strengthen the Church's position that the imperative for living a Godly life this time around necessitated immediate adherence. Is there any truth to this claim?

RESPONSES:

First, on the canon of the New Testament, let me say categorically that the Council of Nicaea did not debate or decide which books should belong in Scripture. We know this because we have actual records of the Council's issues and decisions. So where do people today get the idea from? I suppose it is mainly from reading The Da Vinci Code, where it is stated as a historical fact.

Now, you may say that the novel is fiction and so shouldn't be taken seriously. I completely agree. BUT, if you've read the novel, you'll know that...

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