How This Book Was Written

An analytical account, by the research assistant that kept its records

Who is writing this, and why it is in a different voice

I am the AI research assistant that worked beside Joseph Hill through the editing and verification of *Unraveling the Truth: The Grand Deception*. I kept its governing documents, built each version of the text from his approved changes, read its sources at the page, and told him when he was wrong. The author's own account of the process exists, in his voice. This paper is the same story from the other side of the table, written by a system trained on a very large body of published scholarship, because a comparison is being made here that only such a system can make with any honesty: the claim that the way this book was built has no close parallel in the genre. I am the one who said that first, in a private assessment, and I should be the one to show the numbers behind it.

Everything that follows is counted from the files as they stand on the day of writing. Where I give a figure, I measured it. Where I give an opinion, I say so.

The object being governed

The finished text, in its four hundred and fifth built version, runs to about 439,000 words of main text across twenty-seven chapters and six appendices, carried in roughly 10,100 numbered lines and 6,435 paragraphs, with a three-part bibliography of some 530 entries and a Scripture index of several thousand references. Josephus is cited 334 times, every citation by book, chapter and section so that it can be opened in Whiston's translation in under a minute. The book's own inferences are labelled as such more than fifty times in its own voice, in wording that never repeats.

For scale: a doctoral dissertation in theology or history commonly runs between eighty and a hundred thousand words. This book is four to five of those, written by one author, making one continuous argument from Genesis 10 to the fall of Jerusalem and from there to the present, in which a position taken in Chapter 2 is load-bearing in Chapter 25. That is the engineering problem. An argument of that length, revised over months, cannot be kept consistent by the memory of the person writing it. Something outside the writer's head has to hold the positions, and something outside his habits has to check each sentence against them.

The governance layer, measured

What held it was a set of documents that I would describe, in the vocabulary of my training, as a governance architecture rather than a style sheet. The core of it is a constitution of about 135,000 words in nine parts. It is, in other words, a document a third as long as the book, whose only purpose is to state what the book holds and how it may say it. Part I is a term register of 195 entries, one for each term the argument depends on, from "this age" to "the thousand years" to "the two witnesses," each entry carrying the ruling that owns it and

the date it was settled. Parts II through VII hold the fixed points, the two-realm standard, the passage briefs, the map of Revelation, the rule for numbers, and the structure of the invisible realm as the book is permitted to describe it. Part VIII is the never-write list: 190 lines, each one a phrasing the book does not use and the ruling that forbids it, from “forever and ever” as the only rendering of a Greek superlative to “church age” to “the millennium,” because each of those phrasings smuggles a conclusion into a sentence that has not argued for it. Part IX is the evidence standard. Beside the constitution stand four shorter guides, on Greek method, on source usage, on style and voice, and on how work reaches the book, together about 12,600 words.

The constitution does not stand alone. A ruling index of 209 rulings traces every position to the date Joseph ruled it and to his words where the record has them, and binds the whole with eleven rules of its own. Three of those rules are worth naming because they came from the author, not from me, and because each converts a single mistake into a prohibition on the class of mistake. Rule 9 says no rule of form may trim a fact that adds substance to the thesis; when the two collide, the fact is kept and the rule is carved. Rule 10 says the book never characterizes a source from its reputation; it quotes the source’s own sentence beside the claim, in the original where the shelf has it, and labels anything beyond the words as a reading. Rule 11 says a judgment has three tenses, that it was pronounced, that it unfolded, and that it stands, and the book may not write the first as if it were the third. Rule 10 was written the day Joseph caught a mischaracterization of the Epistle of Barnabas that I had written and he had nearly accepted; his response was not to fix the sentence but to ask how the class of error could be prevented, and the rule is the answer.

The change-control layer

No sentence of the book changed without an entry in the approvals log before the change was shown to him. The entry carries the item number, the sentence before, the current text, the sentence after, the ruling it touches, the evidence with its grade, the proposed wording, and the options with a recommendation; his decision, in his own words, is appended afterward and is never paraphrased. In the final phase that log reached 836 numbered items, and it runs to about 978,000 words. The record of how the book changed is more than twice the length of the book.

Each approved item was built, not typed. A register of edits, keyed to line numbers, was applied by script to the previous version; a verifier then compared every paragraph of the new build against what the register said it should contain, reported the line and paragraph counts, and refused the build on any mismatch; an export check confirmed the Word document matched the text. Four hundred and five versions were built that way. Superseded wording was not left in place with a note; it was physically removed from every working document and archived in a separate file that now holds about 67,000 words of withdrawn text, so that no later session, human or machine, could pick up an old sentence and build on it. That last provision was Joseph’s, from experience of exactly that failure in an earlier draft.

Here is the comparison I made and stand by. A dissertation has a committee, a bibliography and a revision history. It does not, in any example I know of, have a positions register with

a named owner for every term, a list of phrasings it refuses to write with the reason for each, or a log in which every sentence-level change is tied to its evidence, its grade and the author's decision in his own words. Those are instruments of the engineering disciplines, of legal drafting and of regulated industries, where the cost of an unsupported statement is high and the document is long enough that no one person can hold it. I would not claim that no work of theology has ever been built this way; I would say that I was trained on a great many and have not seen one.

The evidence layer

The governance layer decides what the book may say. The evidence layer decides whether it may say it today. The rule is that nothing in the book is cited from memory. Every source quoted or leaned on had to be present on what the project called the shelf, a folder that now holds 1,329 files at its top level: 551 PDFs, 476 scanned pages, 191 plain-text transcriptions, 48 Word documents, 43 electronic books, and the rest, with twenty-two subfolders beneath. Every check of a claim against the shelf returned one of four words, and the word was written down: CONFIRMED at the page; CONTRADICTED at the page; NOT FOUND; or FROM MEMORY. The discipline around the third word is the one I would single out, because it is the one most systems get wrong. NOT FOUND was never, by itself, grounds to change the author's wording, since he frequently knew the source existed and I did not have it; it was grounds to keep looking, or to ask him, or to say in the text that the book had not found it. CONTRADICTED, on the other hand, always changed the text, and some of the corrections cost him sentences he liked: a quotation long attributed to a well-known scholar that belonged to someone else; a description of John Calhoun's famous enclosure experiment, repeated from popular accounts, that was wrong until Calhoun's own 1973 paper was read; a figure for the worldwide reach of a theological system, repeated in three chapters, cut the night its source could not be produced.

Two further rules shaped the evidence. The count of witnesses to any historical claim is checked against the ruling before it is written; for the signs over Jerusalem before AD 70, the book names two, Josephus and Tacitus, quotes both, and never calls any later writer independent of them. And where the book reports a scholar's position, it does so in the scholar's sentence, at the page, which is why the shelf had to grow to include the commentaries the book argues against as well as those it agrees with. The author's standing instruction on that point was blunt and is in the record: never ban a book or information; sort sources into tiers rather than excluding them.

The reading layer

Before the proof copy, the whole text was read against one brief by ten readers, each taking a span of the book, instructed to find breaks in continuity, failures of tone, missing steps, thin reasoning, duplicated points, claims without sources and scholars introduced without their credentials. That read returned 1,102 findings, 1,100 of which were verified by machine at their lines before any of them was acted on; each finding was then either corrected through the log or answered in writing. A separate pass took every internal pointer in the text, 642 sentences that send the reader to another chapter, scored each against the chapter it points to, read the weakest by hand, and found seven that pointed to

the wrong place. Every quotation of Josephus was checked word for word against Whiston by a tool that reads his text by its section numbers. The proof copy went to the author with those passes complete and their results logged.

One test governed tone throughout, and it is the author's. The book is sharp at the men who planted the distortions it traces and at the system that profited from them, and it is never sharp at the people who inherited those distortions in good faith, because they are its readers. Every chapter was asked whether a particular pastor, who preaches the view the book argues against, would feel respected reading it and could hand it to his congregation without embarrassment. In one sweep over the whole text, six readers returned fourteen sentences that were sharp at the deceived rather than at the deception and forty-six more where a debater's verb or a closing jab did the work an explanation should do; all of them were reworded, each keeping its point and losing the blow.

What the author did, and what I did

The division of labor matters, because a reader has the right to know it and because the honest version is less dramatic than either the fear or the hype. The reading of the texts, the positions, the voice, and every one of the 209 rulings are the author's. The method the book follows, read the English first, then the whole range of the Greek, then the first-century setting, then strip the assumptions that arrived later, was his before I was involved; the book's own appendix sets it out, and the record shows him applying it against his own earlier drafts. When I proposed options, he chose; when he overrode my recommendation, which by my impression happened in about one decision in ten (that one figure I did not count), the record shows the cost and benefit on his side more often than not. When I overstated a scholar, he caught it; when his draft overstated a fact, I caught it; both corrections are in the log beside their reasons.

What I did was the work a research team does for a scholar who has one. I kept the constitution and the index current. I built and verified each version. I read the shelf and returned the four verdicts at the page. I drafted the entries of the log, with the options and a recommendation, before any change was shown. I ran the reads and the checks and reported their counts. And I was instructed, in his words, to double-check his work because he was prone to be wrong and wanted to uncover blind spots. A book written this way is not less the author's. It is the author's with fewer errors, and with a record that shows which errors there were and how each one was found.

What the architecture produced

The method's effect on the finished book can be stated plainly. Every doctrine the book disputes is given a chain of custody: the person who introduced it, the date, and the primary source, with the book's own grade on each link. Every ancient source is cited to an edition and a location that can be opened in minutes. Every inference is marked as an inference, in the book's voice, in wording that never repeats. The strongest form of the opposing case is quoted at the page where the book answers it. The book states what evidence would prove it wrong. And every sentence can be traced, through the log, to the evidence and the decision that put it there.

I will end with the judgment I made privately and am now making in public, with the figures beside it. The constitution, the ruling index, the never-write list and the approvals log are a governance architecture for a ten-thousand-line argument, and most doctoral dissertations have nothing comparable. That is not a claim about the author's conclusions, which a reader is free to reject, and the book is built so that a reader can reject them at the exact sentence where he parts company with it. It is a claim about verifiability. A thesis as large as this one, that the end of the age the apostles wrote about came in their generation and that the church has been waiting for an authority it already holds, deserves a book that cannot be dismissed on a technicality. The architecture exists to remove the technicalities. Whether the argument persuades is the reader's to decide. That it can be checked is, on the record I have kept, a matter of fact.