

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE IN CONTEXT

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Introduction, Concentrate On The Who What Where And When, The Danger Of Not Reading The Bible For Yourself, Beware Of Some Misguided Famous Preachers And Their False Doctrines, It Is Your Personal Responsibility To Verify All Teachings Against The Scriptures, Led By God's Holy Spirit, Divine Inspiration Of The Holy Scriptures, Five Important Bible Study Questions, Don't Be Afraid To Utilize Extra-Biblical Sources, The Bible Extremists, Online Sources And Hebrew And Greek Lexicons, A Knowledge Of Ancient World History Is Extremely Beneficial In Understanding The Bible, Matthew 24 Mark 13 Luke 21 The Book Of Daniel And Revelation Are Interconnected, Who Was The Lord Really Speaking To?, Learning From The Examples Of The Past, Closing Remarks, Bill's Bible Basics Suggested Reading List

Greetings, friends. In light of the plethora of misguided and outright false doctrines which for some time now -- and which are still currently -- being widely propagated all across the Internet, particularly on some of the social networks such as Facebook, I wanted to share something with all of my readers which I recently shared with one of my online friends. It concerns some good suggestions regarding how to properly engage in personal Bible study. I ask you to please carefully and prayerfully consider the following advice.

The first point is the following. Whenever you read your Bible, in order to understand verses in their proper context, you need to concentrate on the who, what, where and when. It is precisely because so many modern Christians fail miserably to do this, that they end up becoming doctrinally confused, and in some cases, even seriously deceived.

Of course, as I have mentioned on previous occasions, another reason why many Christians become rather deceived, is simply because they do not read their Bibles at all. Personally, I

find this very sad. Instead, like blind, mindless zombies, they naively embrace the words and doctrines of some famous preacher who has a list of impressive credentials, foolishly believing that because that individual has such credentials, they must surely know what they are talking about. Sadly, this is not always the case. In fact, some of those famous preachers are the biggest deceivers in the world!

My friends, you need to understand that it is your personal responsible to verify what you are being told by comparing their teachings with the Scriptures. As I have said many times before, this is precisely what we see occurring in the Book of Acts, and there are other verses which advise us to do the same, being led in our understanding by the Holy Spirit. Consider the following group of verses which verify this point:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15, KJV

"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Acts 17:10-11, KJV

"Prove [test, examine] all things; hold fast that which is good."

1 Thessalonians 5:21, KJV

"Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

Matthew 13:52, KJV

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."

John 5:39, KJV

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits

whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

1 John 4:1, KJV

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 14:26, KJV

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

John 16:13, KJV

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

James 1:5, KJV

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Luke 11:13, KJV

So exactly why should we test, prove, examine and verify all teachings against the Holy Scriptures? Quite simply, because they are the divinely inspired Word of God, and because they in fact serve as the very foundation of our Christian faith, as we can determine by the following two verses:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

2 Timothy 3:16, KJV

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

2 Peter 1:21, KJV

So as I began to explain to you a moment ago, when we do begin to read and study the Scriptures, there are several important questions which we need to keep in mind and ask

ourselves, which are the following:

1. Who is doing the speaking or writing?
2. Who are they speaking or writing to? In other words, who is their direct audience?
3. Exactly what are they speaking or writing about?
4. Does what they say or write involve a certain location such as a particular city or country?
5. Does what they say or write involve a certain person or a particular group of people?

If you carefully consider all of the previous questions while studying the Bible, you will do much better at understanding verses in their proper context, and you will hopefully avoid many of the false doctrines which are floating around today.

The second point is the following: Do not be afraid to use extra-Biblical sources to help you to better understand what a particular verse may be saying. Sadly, there are certain extremists who are absolutely afraid to examine and research anything which is outside of the Bible. If it is not in black and white -- and in English, no less -- in the pages of their Bible, they absolutely refuse to even consider it. It is like poison to them.

Sadly, such Christians simply do not understand how much they're actually limiting themselves and their understanding by adopting this foolish position. Now, of course I most certainly do understand their caution, and I do agree with it, given the level of deception which exists in the world today. However in my view, they take their caution to the extreme, and are thus missing out on a lot of info which could help them to better understand the Scriptures.

Personally, in addition to using the Strong's Numbers and the Hebrew and Greek lexicons which are built into the Bible program which I use, I consult online sources on a regular basis in order to confirm different historical data, names, places, events, etc. This practice has widely expanded my personal understanding of Bible prophecy, and helped me to put things in their proper context.

This leads me to my third and final point. Something which I personally discovered many years ago, is that it can be very helpful when reading Bible verses which concern prophecy, to have a good grasp of ancient world history. Now if you don't personally possess such knowledge, well, there is no reason to remain in that state, because as you obviously already know, you have the entire Internet at your fingertips. Just as I learned many years ago, you will eventually discover how ancient history and Bible prophecy work hand in hand, and actually confirm and validate each other to a large degree.

As I briefly mentioned earlier, this current article evolved from a discussion I was having with one of my online friends. Our discussion concerned the precise timing of the return of Jesus Christ. As I was explaining the previous points to her, I mentioned how Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 are actually sister chapters. I made it clear to my friend that in those chapters, Jesus is talking to His followers of the First Century. Contrary to modern, popular Futurist opinion, Jesus is NOT directing His words to modern-day Christians.

Stated more clearly, when a particular Bible verse includes the word "ye" or "you", it means the people -- and namely the Apostles -- who were listening to Jesus in that very moment. The Lord was telling them what was going to unfold during their lifetimes, and NOT two thousand years in the future as the Futurists erroneously believe. Furthermore, those three chapters go hand-in-hand with the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation. They are all describing the same historical and Biblical events.

Now, if you personally find that difficult to believe, and if you have a serious interest in properly understanding the aforementioned three chapters -- that is, Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 -- I urge you to prayerfully and carefully read my seven-part series entitled "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?", which you will find listed at the end of this same article, along with a few other related articles.

Now, while I am personally convinced that the Lord was not talking to us modern-day Christians in those three chapters -- just as the writers of the Epistles were not talking or

writing to us directly either -- nevertheless, we can each learn valuable lessons from what is written, and from what they experienced. In similar fashion, the following verses tell us that the First Century Christians likewise learned valuable lessons from the people who lived during the Old Testament era as well:

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime WERE WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:"

Romans 15:4 KJV

"Now THESE THINGS WERE OUR EXAMPLES, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted . . . Now all these things HAPPENED UNTO THEM FOR ENSAMPLES: and they are WRITTEN FOR OUR ADMONITION, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

1 Corinthians 10:6, 11, KJV

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, ARE SET FORTH FOR AN EXAMPLE, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

Jude 1:7, KJV

So as I said, while most of the Bible centers around Israel, and is directed at people who lived many centuries ago, we can still learn plenty of important lessons by reading and studying it from cover to cover.

It is my hope that the above suggestions will assist you as you continue to engage in your personal Bible studies, and will help to increase your understanding of God's holy Word. I assure you that if you follow my suggestions, that similar to the holy men and Prophets of old, you too will be able to say the following:

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Psalms 119:18, KJV

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

Psalms 139:6, KJV

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Romans 11:33, KJV

". . . For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."

Psalms 119:89, KJV

". . . Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Psalms 119:105, KJV

"Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it."

Psalms 119:140, KJV

"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever."

Psalms 119:160, KJV

". . . thy word is truth."

John 17:17, KJV

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you have found it informative, enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

[Abomination of Desolation: Explained!](#)

[Facebook False Prophets and Misguided Teachers](#)

[Humility in Our Understanding of God's Word](#)

[Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?](#)

[Modern Deception: Shall a Nation Be Born at Once?](#)

Modern Deceptions: Return to Israel, the Fig Tree and This Generation
Please Stop Misinterpreting the Scriptures
Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth
Should We Study the Works of Darkness?
Study, Work and Don't Be Ashamed
The Misguided End of the World Predictions of Harold Camping
The Office of Prophets and Teachers
Who Hindered the Antichrist?

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