

Nicodemus should have known....

A quote from EW Bullinger from "How To Enjoy The Bible" --written originally in 1916

***i. The Importance of the Context Shown.***

*We have already seen something of this in the consideration of the Structure of the Word and the Words of God.*

*The order of the words is as perfect as the truth revealed by them, and contained in them.*

*This order is Divine: and it is nothing less than a crime for any human hand to subvert that order, either by ignoring it or changing it.*

*Beware of any teacher to whom the context is not manifestly essential. Beware of any teaching that is not based upon it.*

*Some passages of Scripture derive their chief importance from some remarkable words employed; others derive their chief importance from some wonderful truth revealed; while others derive their chief importance from the place where we find them. Every passage has its own importance in this last respect. When we find a passage in its own particular place, there is a Divine reason why it is there, and also why it is not in any other place.*

*It is essential to our understanding of the "words" to find out why they are where we find them. It is essential to our enjoyment of the words that we should discover not only what they mean, but why they are not in any other passage. If we would find the words and the Word of God to be a delight to us, instead of a perplexing jumble, we must have special regard to the Context.*

*If this be disregarded, then a word, a sentence, or a verse, may be taken out from its context and interpreted of something quite foreign to its original intent.*

*We have all heard the proverbial saying that "the Bible may be made to prove anything." Exactly so; but this, very often, is only when, and because, a verse is taken apart from its context: otherwise it could never be made to teach anything different from the context in which God has set it.*

*Every sentence and every verse has something going before it and something following after it. We call this the context. This is regarded as being essential even in the case of human writers. How often are complaints made by public speakers and writers that only a part of what they have said is quoted; whereas, if the whole had been given, or even the sentence that preceded or followed, quite a different complexion would have been given to the point referred to.*

*If this be so important where man is concerned, how essential it must be when we remember that, in the case we are considering, it is God's context and not man's.*

*How great must be the presumption if we disregard or disturb that context.*

*Yet this is constantly done in order to prop up some tradition.*

**1 Peter 1:1** Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, **2** who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood:

Grace and peace be yours in abundance. **3** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy **he has given us new birth into a living hope through the**

**resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you,** **5** who through faith are shielded

by God's power **UNTIL the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.** **6** In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had

to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. **7** These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor **WHEN Jesus Christ is revealed.**

**8** Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, **9** for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

**10** Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, **11** trying to find out the time and

circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ **and the glories that would follow.** **12** It was revealed to them that

they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from

heaven. Even angels long to look into these things. **13** Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; **set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ**

**is revealed.** **14** As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. **15** But just as he who called you is holy, **so be holy in all you do;** **16** for

it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." **17** Since you call on a Father **who judges each man's work** impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. **18** For you know

that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, **19** but with the precious blood

of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

**20** He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. **21** Through him you believe in God, **who raised him from the dead and glorified him**, and so your faith and hope are in God. Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. **23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.** **24** For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, **25** but the word of the Lord stands forever." And this is the word that was preached to you.

**John 3:1** 1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. **2** He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." **3** In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, **no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.**", *is Jesus saying that we have to have it now-NO he is saying that in order to see the future Kingdom a person must be born from above)* **4** "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" **5** Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God **(so Jesus repeats what the context is, what He is referring to, the Kingdom is THE context of what Jesus is talking about so do not take this out of context-the majority do)** unless he is born of water (cleansing) and the Spirit. *(no THE or capital "S" here)* **6** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. *(the question is WHEN?)*

**7 You should not be surprised at my saying,** 'You must be born again.' **8** The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." **9** "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. **10 "You are Israel's teacher,"** said Jesus, **"and do you not understand these things?"** **11** I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony.

**12** I have spoken to you of earthly things (*The Resurrection*) and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?

**13** No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. **14** Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, (*again Jesus reaffirms the context it's The Resurrection*).

**15** that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life (*when does that turn up age-lasting life turns up at the time of The Resurrection-NOT right now*) **16** "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (*again when does this "age-lasting" life turn up? It's again at the time of The Resurrection-not now*) **17** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (*when will this world referred to be saved?- It's again a future event*)

**18** Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. (*standing condemned comes at a time of judgment-it's a future event to come*).

**19** This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. **20** Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. **21** But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

**Ezekiel 36:1** "Son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say, 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD. **2** This is what the Sovereign LORD says: The enemy said of you, "Aha! The ancient heights have become our possession." ' **3** Therefore prophesy and say, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because they ravaged and hounded you from every side so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations and the object of people's malicious talk and slander, **4** therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Sovereign LORD : This is what the Sovereign LORD says to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys, to the desolate ruins and the deserted towns that have been plundered and ridiculed by the rest of the nations around you-

**5** this is what the Sovereign LORD says: In my burning zeal I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, for with glee and with malice in their hearts they made my land their own possession so that they might plunder its pastureland.' **6** Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel and say to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I speak in my jealous wrath because you have suffered the scorn of the nations. **7** Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I swear with uplifted hand that the nations around you will also suffer scorn. **8** "'But you, O mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home. **9** I am concerned for you and will look on you with favor; you will be plowed and sown, **10** and I will multiply the number of people upon you, even the whole house of Israel. The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. **11** I will increase the number of men and animals upon you, and they will be fruitful and become numerous. I will settle people on you as in the past and will make you prosper more than before. Then you will know that I am the LORD. **12** I will cause people, my people Israel, to walk upon you. They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; you will never again deprive them of their children. **13** "'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because people say to you, "You devour men and deprive your nation of its children," **14** therefore you will no longer devour men or make your nation childless, declares the Sovereign LORD. **15** No longer will I make you hear the taunts of the nations, and no longer will you suffer the scorn of the peoples or cause your nation to fall, declares the Sovereign LORD.'" **16** Again the word of the LORD came to me: **17** "Son of man, when the people of Israel were living in their own land, they defiled it by their conduct and their actions. Their conduct was like a woman's monthly uncleanness in my sight. **18** So I poured out my wrath on them because they had shed blood in the land and because they had defiled it with their idols. **19** I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered through the countries; I judged them according to their conduct and their actions. **20** And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, 'These are the LORD's people, and yet they had to leave his land.' **21** I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone. **22** "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone.'

**23** I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes. **24** " 'For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. **25** I will sprinkle clean **WATER** on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. **26** I will give you a new heart and put a new **SPIRIT** in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. **27** And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. **28** You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God. **29** I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you. **30** I will increase the fruit of the trees and the crops of the field, so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famine. **31** Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices. **32** I want you to know that I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Sovereign LORD. Be ashamed and disgraced for your conduct, O house of Israel! **33** " 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: On the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will resettle your towns, and the ruins will be rebuilt. **34** The desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass through it. **35** They will say, "This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden; the cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited." **36** Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the LORD have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it.' **37** "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Once again I will yield to the plea of the house of Israel and do this for them: I will make their people as numerous as sheep, **38** as numerous as the flocks for offerings at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts. So will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**Ezekiel 37:1** The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. **2** He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. **3** He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "O Sovereign LORD, you alone know."

**4** Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! **5** This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. **6** I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.' " **7** So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. **8** I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. **9** Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.' " **10** So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army. **11** Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.' **12** Therefore prophecy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. **13** Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. **14** I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.' " **15** The word of the LORD came to me: **16** "Son of man, take a stick of wood and write on it, 'Belonging to Judah and the Israelites associated with him.' Then take another stick of wood, and write on it, 'Ephraim's stick, belonging to Joseph and all the house of Israel associated with him.' **17** Join them together into one stick so that they will become one in your hand. **18** "When your countrymen ask you, 'Won't you tell us what you mean by this?' **19** say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am going to take the stick of Joseph—which is in Ephraim's hand—and of the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah's stick, making them a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand.' **20** Hold before their eyes the sticks you have written on **21** and say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. **22** I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms.

**23** They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God. **24** " 'My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. **25** They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince forever. **26** I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. **27** My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. **28** Then the nations will know that I the LORD make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever.'