

God for the purpose of forgiveness and salvation.

In the Greek New Testament, the Holy Spirit uses this word “eis” 1,767 times! That’s a lot! And that’s good news because, for a word that is so well used in the biblical text, it will have solid documentation and proof for how it was understood in the First Century. Let’s consider some examples.

“For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28). Here we can see “eis” serving its purpose in the words of Jesus. By using the definition of “eis,” we can see that Jesus taught that the shedding of His blood would be moving toward the purpose of providing forgiveness (“eis” denotes that forgiveness was not yet available). It would not mean that He would shed His blood as an outward sign “because of” the remission of sins that was already made available. I suspect no one would say such a thing, but that is how Acts 2:38 is shamefully treated.

“And He said, ‘Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, ‘My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples’”” (Matthew 26:18). Here we see “eis” translated “into,” consistent with the word’s concept of motion and direction. They were not already in the city for they were told to “Go into the city;” just as in Acts 2:38, when the people’s sins were not yet in remission, for they were told to “be baptized... into the remission of sins.”

“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Galatians 3:24). In this text, “eis” demonstrates the old law’s purpose to move those under it toward Christ. “Eis” controls the situation and the direction, not allowing Christ before the old law, but keeping the old law before salvation through Christ.

In many other scriptures we can see the true use of “eis” as denoting entrance into or motion toward something: as translated “for” (Acts 9:21, 13:2; Romans 4:3, 15:2; Ephesians 2:22, 6:22; Philippians 1:25, Hebrews 3:5, 6:16, 9:15; Revelation 9:15, 22:2),

and as translated “in,” “into,” or “unto” (Matthew 27:53; Mark 9:28; Ephesians 1:10, 4:13). The evidence overflows throughout the scriptures, and begs the question, if the Holy Spirit wanted to communicate that baptism is “because of” our forgiveness, instead of for the purpose to be forgiven, then wouldn’t He have used a word to convey that thought? What about the Greek word “hoti” (the conjunction equivalent to the English “because”) which can also be found in Acts 2 (in verse 6), or what about the Greek word “gar” (meaning because of, seeing that, since) which is exactly the word that false teachers really want to find in Acts 2:38, but it’s just not there. It is, however, in the next verse (Acts 2:39), and fascinatingly translated “for,” using the English ability to use “for” as a conjunction. So then, the Holy Spirit used all three of these Greek words in Acts 2; He was not limited in His knowledge of Greek. To deny the words that He placed in each verse is to deny Him.

In Closing, “eis” does not put the cart before the horse, and no one would have ever said that “eis” could, if it weren’t for Acts 2:38. One text. One text that contains a truth that certain men do not favor. These men teach salvation is by grace alone through faith alone. Now any Bible believer knows that salvation would not be possible if it weren’t for the grace of God sending us His son. But friends, it takes true faith to believe the word of God. The same proponents of a “faith only” salvation, do not have enough faith in God to accept His word as fact. One can say the word “grace” and “faith” 700 times a day, but if they have not faith in what God said, only in the words they put in His mouth, then such have not the faith of the bible (Romans 10:17). Such faith can only be found among those who trust His word as pure, every word, every detail, and have surrendered themselves to it.

Friend, I thought you’d like to read this.

Contact me if you have any questions.

Name: _____

Phone: _____



What’s Baptism Really For?

Is it for the forgiveness of our sins?

Is it necessary for salvation?

“Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’” Acts 2:38 (the original Greek word translated “for” is “eis,” pronounced ice).

There has been a great difference in opinion as to what “for” (Greek - “eis”) means in Acts 2:38. Those who view baptism as essential for salvation believe the word “for” demonstrates the purpose for baptism (to have one’s sins forgiven). Those who view baptism as unnecessary for the forgiveness of sins, take the position that “for” in Acts 2:38 means “because of,” referring to baptism as something done apart from and after forgiveness has been given. Let’s take a look at a couple documented cases of this:

A.T. Robertson, the famous Baptist scholar, wrote in his “Word Pictures” entry on Acts 2:38 that baptism is *“to be done in the name of Jesus Christ on the basis of the forgiveness of sins which they had already received.”* But he lacks any solid evidence for his position on “eis” meaning “because of.” Jimmy Swaggart, in “The Expositor’s New Testament” made a note within Acts 2:38 that *“‘for the remission of sins’ should have been translated, ‘because of remission of sins’; one is Baptized in Water because one’s sins have already been remitted due to Faith in Christ, and not that sins should be remitted.”* Making a statement as a fact is one thing, being able to prove it is another thing; which thing Swaggart did not do. Interestingly, A.T. Robertson admits that *“One will decide the use [of the word “eis”] here [in Acts 2:38] according as he believes that baptism is essential to the remission of sins or not.”* Really now? Is that how one treats the holy scriptures, to decide on the use of words based on what we currently accept in our beliefs? This is not how we treat God’s Word with honor. Our goal here is not to make the words of the Bible into something that fits our ideas, but to transform our minds that we may be conformed to God’s ideas, God’s word.

The English word “for” is a big part of the problem in interpreting the meaning of Acts 2:38, be-

cause it can be used as a preposition and mean “in order to; for the purpose of, or the need of,” which fits the position taken by those who believe Peter is preaching that baptism is done in order to obtain forgiveness. However, the word “for” in English, is also used as a conjunction, thus meaning “because; since, seeing that.” This fits the position of a good portion of denominational churches who are convinced that baptism is an outward showing since/because sins were already forgiven prior to baptism. Friends, if we spend our time looking at the English word “for,” then we are in a standoff with a 50/50 split, and there is no telling who is right. However, there is a way to know the truth of this matter, as Luke, by the Holy Spirit, did not record Acts 2:38 in English, but in common Greek. This brings new light to our research as we can now turn to a Greek Lexicon and see the original meaning of the word. Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon is the world’s most popular lexicon, used by all sorts of religions and denominations. I too, have used this lexicon on a weekly basis in my studies for as long as I’ve been a Bible student, and can attest to the quality of the information. When turning to Thayer’s entry for the Greek word “eis,” one thing to point out is that it takes up over three pages, and in very small font. It can be a very exhaustive reading, but this is very good for our purposes to find the truth, because the lexicon is so detailed in defining “eis.”

The first thing to note about “eis” is that it is a primary preposition (refer back to the English’s use of “for” as a preposition), and unlike the English, it is not used as a conjunction too (because; since). The Lexicon states that “eis” denotes “entrance into, or direction and limit: into, to, towards, for, among.” The text goes on to cover the word’s variety of usage, which I will concisely record now (please consider how these definitions would affect the interpretation of Acts 2:38): **1.** *“Of a place entered, or of entrance into a place, into.”* **2.** *“To, towards; as if it indicated merely motion towards a destination.”* **3.** *“May often be rendered on, upon, unto; to mark the limit reached, or where one sets foot.”* **4.** *“Of motion... where it may be rendered to, near, towards.”* **5.** *“it denotes entrance*

into a period which is penetrated; dawning into or towards.” **6.** *“retains the force of entering into anything; where one thing is said to be changed into another; designating the condition or state into which one passes.”* **7.** *“It is used of the business which one enters into.”* **8.** *“It denotes motion into something; of acts in which the mind is directed towards or looks to something.”* **9.** *“It denotes the end to which a thing reaches; the end which one has in view, i.e. object, purpose; the end by which a thing is completed, i.e. the result or effect.”*

After reading the definitions for the word “eis,” there can be no doubt as to the kind of word that it is. A word referring to movement and motion made toward something to be completed or entered. If we rightfully treat “eis” in Acts 2:38, then the Holy Spirit said to be baptized in purpose and motion toward God to forgive us of our sins. Since the word “eis” has everything to do with heading in the direction towards something, it is impossible to walk away from Acts 2:38 with the interpretation that remission of sins happened prior to baptism. That is putting the cart before the horse, and the word “eis” will not allow it. In the over three pages of the Lexicon that is dedicated to defining “eis,” there is no point where it is defined as “because, since, seeing that” or anything synonymous with those words. It is the assertion of recent false teachers to treat baptism as unnecessary towards the forgiveness of sins, but that is not the opinion of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38, nor is that His opinion when he said that baptism: washes away our sins (Acts 22:16), and it is how we enter Christ’s body (1 Corinthians 12:13), and how we become united with Christ’s sacrifice and resurrection (Romans 6:3-5), and how we are clothed with Christ (Galatians 3:27), or how we are born again (John 3:3-5; Titus 3:5), and how we become recipients of the Holy Spirit’s gift of salvation (Acts 2:38), and when He plainly states that is a part of our being saved (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21). When we consider all that God has to say on the matter of the necessity of our baptism for the working of God to save us, there is no doubt why God used “eis” in Acts 2:38 to speak of baptism as our motion toward