



BIBLE WORD STUDY

But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken. (Isaiah 28:13).

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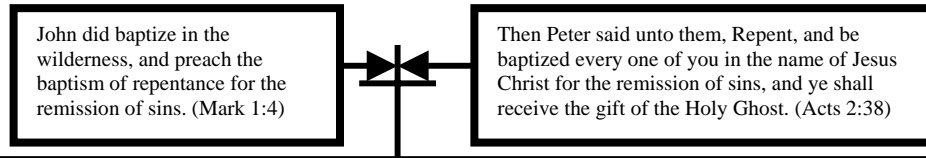
For the Remission of Sins

We use the term, King James Bible, to designate the product of the translators' work from John Wiclif to the crowning achievement in 1611. When the English language was in its infancy, the Bible began to make its way into the language. This produced a unique "warp and woof" of language and Bible. Very few principles of what we now call "right division" can be found in the individual translators' writings, a span of about four centuries, but their composite work in the finished KJB, requires right division.

Among other features, the KJB translates prepositions in such a way that right division of the Bible is essential to its integrity. This is from the flesh, devil, or God. Those who deny our English Bible is from God must face the consequences of such a charge. Most who find errors in the KJB choose one of the lesser charges: ignorance; no access to later manuscripts; or outdated translation methods. Practice exercised in the translation such as Mark 1:5 "for the remission of sins" and Acts 2:38 "for the remission of sins" instead of substituting "because of" (a possible translation following strict Greek grammar rules) affords incontrovertible proof that the baptism of John and the baptism of Peter had the same purpose and mode, and both had to do with Israel, while the Apostle Paul's message and mode is different and relates to the church, which is the body of Christ.

Textus Receptus folks who are settled on the Greek manuscripts but are convinced the KJB can or should be corrected by the Greek, fail just as the Westcott Hort proponents do. By ignoring the KJB *context* and using the TR Greek, a man can believe Mark 1:5 (translate the preposition as "for") is to the Jew while Acts 2:38 (translate the preposition as "because of") is to the church. The ***ONLY*** way a person can believe the "King James Bible" and properly divide the word of God, is to be more than a TR respecter. Reservation as to the accuracy of the KJB produces blindness to the same degree. You must believe the BOOK in your hand, without reservation. This conviction separates me from some who profess to believe the Bible, while they reserve the right to change it, and from certain ones who teach extreme right division.

Here is an illustration of how the doctrine of remission of sins looks in chart form ***if*** "for the remission of sins" in Mark 1:5 and Acts 2:38 means "*because of* remission of sins."



If this is the case, then both John the Baptist and Peter were baptizing because they both believe baptism looked toward the finished work of Jesus Christ. Sins were already totally blotted out and the baptism simply pictured the believer's prior and vital identification with the finished work of Christ.¹ It seems simple enough. We only have to (1) charge the KJB with failure to properly translate the preposition "for" and correct the Bible by the Greek, or in order to give some respect to the KJB, (2) search for examples in English where "for" means "because of."

As to the first error, the Greek rules of grammar allow for either translation. The second error is also possible in English. We call both approaches *errors* because the *context* in which both verses are given does not allow either one.

It is true that in both instances the basic Greek structure is the same:

ΕΙΣ ΑΦΕΣΙΝ ΑΜΑΡΤΙΩΝ

The preposition "eis" can be translated either by "for" or "because of" (among others).² The English preposition "for" *can* be *understood* as "because of" although that is somewhat strained in this context.³

A. T. Robertson says, "Unto remission of sins (eis apheresin hamartiôn). This is a difficult phrase to translate accurately. Certainly John did not mean that the baptism was the means of obtaining the forgiveness of their sins or necessary to the remission of sins. The trouble lies in the use of eis which sometimes is used when purpose is expressed, but sometimes when there is no such idea as in Mt 10:41 and Mt 12:41. Probably "with reference to" is as good a translation here as is possible." (Robertson's NT Word Pictures).

Dr. Robertson admits, "This is a difficult phrase to translate accurately." It is--if you believe the KJB has errors. He then concludes that baptism was not "necessary to the remission of sins." Dr. A. T. Robertson was an Amillennialist. He believed there was one gospel throughout the Bible. He believed in a general judgment and resurrection. He did not believe in a literal 1000-year reign of Christ. His amillennial theology affected his understanding of many passages. Premillennial scholars match all of the scholarship on

¹ If both Peter and John baptized with the cross in view, either in prospect of the cross, or looking back on it, immediately upon the occurrence of the resurrection of Christ, sins were totally dealt with. Paul, in that case, simply told what had been done; his revelation included no gospel of grace at all and was confined to the mystery of the "one body." The KJB must be charged with major errors in this situation.

² The various translations of "eis" as given by Strong shows the complexity of the Greek preposition. "a primary preposition; to or into (indicating the point reached or entered), of place, time, or (figuratively) purpose (result, etc.); also in adverbial phrases: [abundantly-], against, among, as, at, [back-] ward, before, by, concerning, + continual, + far more exceeding, for [intent, purposefore], + forth, in (among, at, unto, -so much that, -to), to the intent that, + of one mind, + never, of, (up-) on, + perish, + set at one again, (so) that, therefore (-unto), throughout, til, to (be, the end, -ward), (here-) until (-to), ... ward, [wherefore-], with. Often used in composition with the same general import, but only with verbs (etc.) expressing motion (literally or figuratively)."

³ See the following study for an amusing incident that occurred in 1984 over this subject.

the Amillennial side; the issue is not scholarship. The difference is in whether the Bible is *interpreted* in a normal-literal fashion or whether passages are non-literal with *spiritual* meanings where the *mind of the interpreter* is substituted for the plain words of the Bible. As someone noted, "If God did not mean what He said, why did he not say what He meant?"

It is true that baptism in itself does not take away sins. Peter knew it could not put away **the filth of the flesh** (1 Peter 3:21). However, when a person refused baptism, it was tantamount to refusing the message of John the Baptist and Peter. Baptism was a definite condition to receiving both messages and a vital part of their ministry. To reject baptism was to reject John, and to reject John was to reject God, who sent him to baptize. We need not search for some mysterious or hidden meanings in the words; we should understand the normal sense of language, lest we get nonsense.

John's baptism was that Christ **should be made manifest to Israel**; it was not to picture the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as the sin Substitute of mankind. **And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. (John 1:31).**

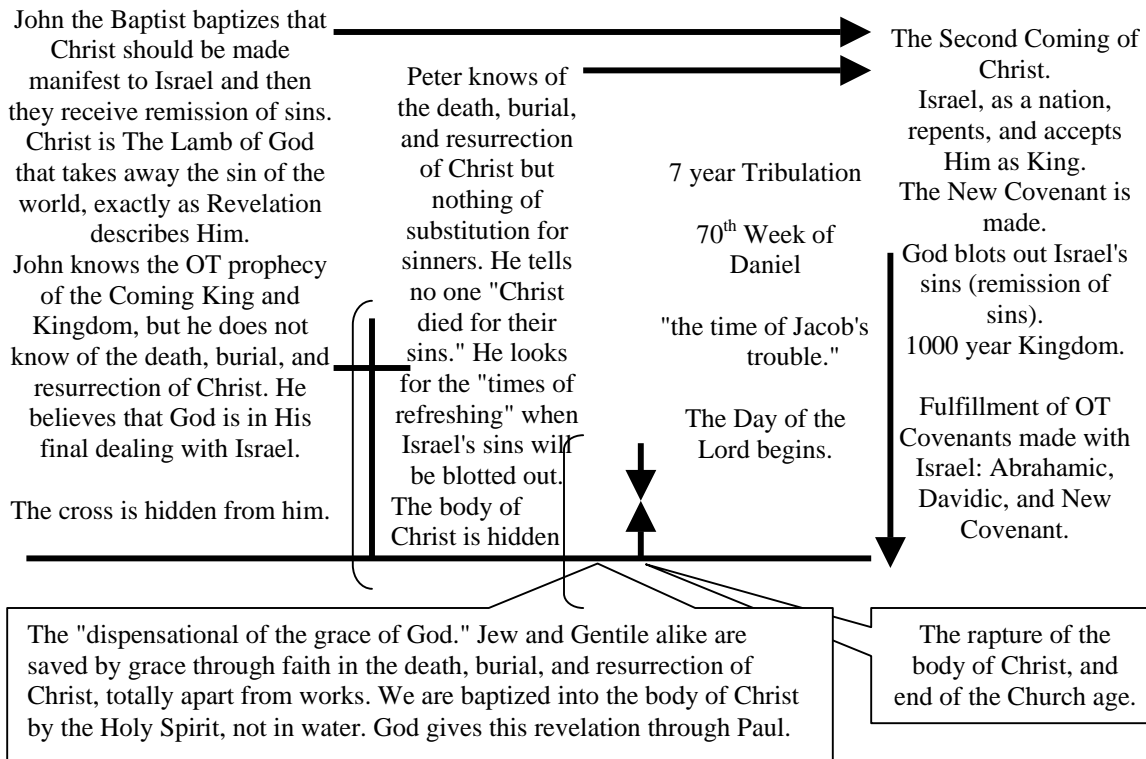
John's commission to baptize was not received from men or from so-called Jewish practice. **"He that (God) sent me (John) to baptize."** There is no baptism in the Bible before John. That is one reason why he is called John the Baptist.⁴ **And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. (John 1:33).**

Those who refused to be baptized essentially rejected **the counsel of God.**
29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.
30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. (Luke 7:29-30).

The real issue is this: In the light of scripture context, could John the Baptist and Peter both mean that water baptism is a picture of the prior vital identity of the believer with the substitutionary death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

I wish to propose a chart, which outlines the basis of both John the Baptist's and Peter's baptism. We will then look at both John and Peter, and instead of inventing their doctrine, we will let them tell us what they believe.

⁴ John the Baptist derives his title from the fact that (1) the baptism was "his baptism" (Matthew 3:7) i.e., both messenger and message is vitally connected (2) it was the central point of his message, i.e., "preaching the baptism of repentance" (Luke 3:3) and (3) it was a divine commission, God sent him to baptize (John 1:33) and (4) the fact that he was the first man in the Bible said to perform baptism. The designation of John as "the Baptist" is much like the same designation of Adam as "*the son* of God" in Luke 3:38. Adam was the first human being created directly by God and is correctly called "*the son* of God."



If John the Baptist is looking upon a finished work, where is it? John could only look back to the blood of bulls and goats, which could never take away sins.⁵ The cross had not occurred when John baptized. Therefore, he had to look toward a future work not yet done. If this is so (looking toward a future work) then why could we not also say Peter was looking toward a future work? The grammar in Greek and English is the same. Are we to resort to a kind of cross-eyed theology where John is looking forward to a work he does not understand, and is not yet done, and Peter is looking backward to a finished work he does not preach? The problem is compounded for this theology when we look at what both men understood and said while they were "baptizing for the remission of sins".

The fact is that no such cross-eyed theology can exist if we read language in a normal manner. Both the Greek and English say the same thing in Mark 1:4 and Acts 2--- and the cross occurs between the two---this gives us the dilemma that if John was looking forward, then Peter also must look forward. If Peter was looking back, then John must also look back.

Is it possible that John the Baptist believed Christ would die upon the cross for his sins? The teaching that all men, including John and the twelve, understood from the OT

⁵ And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (Hebrews 10:11).

that Christ would die for our sins is a common assumption. The clearest way to answer this assumption is to look at:

- (1) John's ministry description and his evident confusion, when suffering replaced the expected judgment upon the world and glory of the Kingdom.
- (2) The usage of "the Lamb of God" by John the Baptist and the Book of Revelation. Christ is never called or pictured as a "lamb" in Romans through Philemon. (Paul's letters).
- (3) The disciples understanding of the gospel who were students of the Teacher of Teachers for three years. Surely, if anyone before the cross knew and understood the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the twelve would have known and understood it.

We will examine in detail all three of the statements above in the following issues of "Bible Word Studies."

Peter, in Acts 2-5, did not believe or know that Christ died for our sins. The Bible student who carefully reads those passages discovers that Peter tells no one that Christ died for their sins. He does not believe sins are blotted out until the Second Coming of Christ.

- 19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;**
20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:
21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.
(Acts 3:19-20).

This is in perfect harmony with passages that deal with the future New Covenant that the Lord makes with Israel at His Second Coming.

- 31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:**
32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:
33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.
34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

- 25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**
26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:
27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. (Romans 11:25).

The note in the Old Scofield Reference Bible changes Acts 3:19 so that Peter is not looking towards a future remission, or blotting out of sins that occurs “from the presence of the Lord. “ The NKJV reflects the same translation and thereby, confuses the doctrine.

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, (Acts 3:19 NKJV).

This translation makes it appear that if they repent, their sins are blotted out, and then the Lord will return sometime later to bring the times of refreshing as a result of their conversion.

Until the New Covenant is made with Israel, their sins cannot be blotted out, and until the Lord returns to the earth, the New Covenant can not be ratified. The Bible order is: (1) Israel repents (2) The Lord returns (3) The New Covenant is ratified with Israel and sins are blotted out (4) Times of refreshing.

Although the suffering of Christ and the glory to follow are found in the Old Testament in symbols and types, the understanding of those symbols and types cannot occur until the revelation is given through the Apostle Paul. Even when the plainest of prophecies regarding the suffering and glory of Christ were given, the OT saints, as well as angels, remained puzzled as to what they meant, and were unable to work out the order of chronology. Long after Acts 2:38, Peter confirms that difficulty.

10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into. (1 Peter 1:10-12).

The only thing they understood was that the prophecy was *not unto themselves* but to someone else.