

## Response Of Multitude

### Acts 2:37-41

#### Part 5

**2:37 Now when they** [the multitude] **heard {this}, they were pierced** [cut] **to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren** [brothers], **what shall we do?"**

1. "This" refers to Peter's declaration of the Messiahship of Jesus and to the fact they had crucified Him. (Acts 2:36).
2. They addressed the apostles with the word "brothers" - the same word Peter used to address them. (Acts 2:29).
  - a. They were fellow Jews.
  - b. They were not yet brothers in Christ.
3. Some think that the Jews were asking if anything could save them from destruction since they had been guilty of decide, the act of killing a divine being.
4. From Peter's response it is evident that they now believed and were asking how to be saved from sins including the killing of Jesus, the Son of God. (Acts 2:38). See Lk.13:10; Acts 16:30; 22:10.
  - a. It is certainly possible they feared destruction because of the horrible sin they had committed, but Peter did not threaten them with destruction in his sermon.
  - b. He told them how to have **their sins forgiven** and to be blessed by God.
5. Peter had convinced them Jesus was the Messiah [the Anointed One] and they were lost in sins.
6. Incredible as it must appear, Peter informs them that there is hope even now. (Acts 2:38).

**2:38 And Peter {said} to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized** [immersed] **in [by] the name** [authority] **of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

2:38. Then Peter answered, "Change your hearts and each one of you must be immersed by the authority of Jesus the Messiah, so that your sins may be forgiven. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **Simple English Bible**

1. "Repent" - Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Acts 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20
  - a. Repentance is not just sorrow or even godly sorrow. (2 Cor. 7:10).
    - 1) "Godly sorrow" and repentance are not the same.
    - 2) "Godly sorrow" comes first and it only has value if it leads to repentance.
    - 3) Judas had "Godly sorrow," but he did not repent and was not saved. (Matt. 26:24).

Matt 26:24 "The Son of Man {is to} go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

- b. Repentance is a change of mind, a change of heart, a change of life.
- c. It is a turning from evil to good.
- d. It is an acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus.

**Note:**

- The imperative word “repent” is in the plural and was addressed to those gathered on Pentecost.
  - The verb “be baptized” is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular.
  - It stresses the individual nature of baptism.
2. "Baptized" - Acts 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21.
- a. Lk. 24:47; Matt. 28:19,20; Mk. 16:16; Tit. 3:5
  - b. The Greek "baptizo" [bahp tee zoh] means "dip, immerse, submerge."

### **Water**

- c. Water is the element of baptism. (Jn. 3:23; Acts 8:36; Jn. 3:5).

JOH 3:23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming and were being baptized

ACT 8:36 As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?"

JOH 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

- d. See Matthew 3:6, 16-17 where it is recorded John was baptizing in the river Jordan and Jesus Himself was baptized in that river by John.

### **Baptism Is A Burial**

- e. Baptism involves burial in water. (Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 2:12; Jn. 3:23). See 1 Pet. 3:20, 21.

1) There is no emphasis on the place of the water.

2) It can be a river, a lake, a pond, a baptistry or any place where there is enough water for immersion.

3. "in the name" - by the authority. (Acts 10:48; 8:16; 19:5).

- a. “epi” [eh pee]- this preposition precedes the words “the name” and is synonymous with “en” and “eis” used elsewhere in regard to the “name” of Jesus.

- b. It is interesting to examine the use of these words.

1) “eis” [ace] is used in Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:16; 19:5

Matt 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in [eis] the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

Acts 8:16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in [eis] the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 19:5 When they heard this, they were baptized in [eis] the name of the Lord Jesus.

2) "epi" [eh pee] is used in Acts 2:38; 4:17,18; 5:28, 40.

Acts 2:38 Peter {said} to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in [epi] the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 4:17 "But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in [epi] this name."

Acts 4:18 And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in [epi] the name of Jesus.

Acts 5:28 saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in [epi] this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

Acts 5:40 They took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them not to speak in [epi] the name of Jesus, and {then} released them.

3) "en" [ehn] is used in Acts 3:6; 4:10.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In [en] the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene--walk!"

Acts 4:10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead--by [en] this {name} this man stands here before you in good health.

- c. This is an abbreviated form of Matthew 28:19. See also Acts 19:5. One was to be baptized "in" [by] the name of Jesus Christ" and rely on His authority to guide him in all things.

Acts 19:5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

- d. It has reference to what is done at baptism, not what is said.
- e. Though it is most often educational for the baptizer to state what is being done, there is no requirement that anything be said at baptism.
- f. We have no record of what was said, if anything, at the time a person or persons were baptized.

### **Understanding Is Essential**

- e. **It is essential that the one being baptized understand why he or she is baptized.**
- f. There is no evidence that on Pentecost the Jews understood everything about baptism. (Rom. 6:3,4; 1 Pet. 3:20, 21; Gal. 3:26, 27).

- 1) It must be assumed that they understood that baptism was “for remission of sins” since Peter stated that fact.
- 2) This was not a new idea. (Mk. 1:4, 5; Lk. 3:3).

MAR 1:4 John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.  
 MAR 1:5 And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

Luke 3:3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins;

### Meaning of εις

4. "unto" - This comes from Greek "eis" meaning "to, for, into, unto."
  - a. **H. Thayer** in his Lexicon notes that “eis” [ace] means “to obtain the forgiveness of sin.”
  - b. **Arndt & Gingrich** rendered it “in order to..for the forgiveness of sins, so that sins might be forgiven.”
  - c. “eis” is used in the New Testament about 1,750 times. Its basic thrust is that of direction toward a goal.
    - 1) It is used in Acts 2:38 to express purpose.
    - 2) The identical phrase is used in Matthew 26:28.

MAT 26:28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

### Liberals

- 3) Liberals understand Matthew 26:28 to mean Jesus shed His blood to remove sins, but choke on the thought of baptism is “for the remission of sins.”
- 4) Liberals want to make repentance and baptism a **sign of redemption** rather than conditions of salvation.

*It is hard to imagine Peter saying you are saved. Now repent and be baptized in view of that fact your sins have already been forgiven.*

- 5) MAT 12:41 "The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented **at** [εις, unto, in view of] **the preaching of Jonah**; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.
  - a) It is argued that “eis” [ace] means “because of” there.
  - b) The word “eis” does not mean “because of” in Matthew 12:41, but has the meaning of “at, in view of, unto, into” the preaching of Jonah the prophet.
  - c) Repentance is always before salvation. (Lk. 13:3, 5; 24:47; Acts 3:19; 17:30). See Mk. 1:15; Mk. 6:12; Lk. 16:30).

### Some Twist The Scriptures

5. Some have thought they were to be baptized "because of" "remission" of sins.

- a. This is not the meaning of "eis".
- b. This makes forgiveness of sins before repentance.
- c. **No major translation makes “eis” mean “because of” in Acts 2:38.**

ASV “unto the remission of sins”

NASB “for the forgiveness of sins”

KJV “for the remission of sins”

NIV “so that your sins may be forgiven”

RSV “for the forgiveness of your sins”

NKJB “ for the remission of sins”

NRSB “so that your sins may be forgiven”

NEB “for the forgiveness of your sins”

Simple Eng. “so that your sins may be forgiven.”

Amp “for the forgiveness of and release from your sins.”

Confra “for the forgiveness of your sins”

- d. I did not find any translation that rendered “eis” “because of” in this verse.
- e. Some translators render “eis” “so that” in an attempt to make clear what Peter was affirming.
- f. Paul was certainly not baptized because his sins had already been forgiven. (Acts 22:16).

Acts 22:16 'Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'

- g. Peter most certainly did not have this understanding of baptism being because one was already saved. (1 Pet. 3:21).

1 Pet 3:21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you--not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience--through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

### Peter & Salvation

| Acts 2:38                     | Acts 3:19 | Acts 10                      | 1 Peter 3:20, 21 |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Gospel Preached - Acts 2:5-37 |           | Gospel Preached - Acts 11:14 |                  |
|                               |           | Believed - Acts 10:43        |                  |
| Repent                        | Repent    |                              |                  |
| Baptized                      |           | Baptized - Acts 10:48        | Baptized         |

|                         |                     |                   |                                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Remission of Sins       | Sins be blotted out | Remission of sins | Salvation - 1 Pet. 3:20             |
| Gift of the Holy Spirit |                     |                   | Appeal To God for a good conscience |

- 1) The above chart reveals genuine faith led one to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.
- 2) Those who believed were baptized to receive remission of sins.
6. "The gift of the Holy Spirit" is the Holy Spirit Himself (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:19,20; Gal. 4:6; Acts 5:32; Eph. 1:13, 14).
  - a. It is in the genitive case and it is a genitive of definition.
  - b. The words "of the Holy Spirit" are defining the gift.
  - c. "The gift of the Holy Spirit" (the Holy Spirit Himself) is distinguished from the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:11).
  - d. The gift of the Holy Spirit is not the word of God, but comes by receiving the word. (Jn. 8:32; Jn. 5:45; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:18, 21; 1 Pet. 1:23).
  - e. **Repentance and baptism are the prerequisites for receiving the Holy Spirit.**
  - f. They did not have to speak in tongues or have the apostles lay their hands on them to receive the Spirit. (Acts 2:4; 8:17).

**2:39 "For the promise [the blessings of salvation through Christ] is for you and your children, and for all [the Gentiles and Samaritans] who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."**

1. "for all who are far off" - Samaritans, Gentiles - male, female, slave, free. See Gal. 3:26, 27

**EPH 2:13** But now in Christ Jesus you who **formerly were far off** have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

2. The words "your children" means salvation would be for their children and grandchildren who accepted Christ.
  - a. Forgiveness was not something the children would receive because of their parents obedience.
  - b. Salvation is not inherited, but certainly godly parents make it more likely that one will trust and obey Jesus. (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:1-4).
  - c. One is baptized after he/she receives the word. (Acts 2:41).
  - d. Acts 2:39 is not proof of infant baptism.
    - 1) Infant have no sin and could not receive the word.
    - 2) See notes on infant baptism toward the end of this lesson.
  - e. Salvation is for "as many as the Lord our God shall called to Himself."
    - 1) The "call" is not forced or irresistible. This would amount of predestination.

2) The “call” of God is through the gospel. (Matt. 28:19, 20, Mk. 16:15; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:21; 2 Thess. 2:13,14; 1 Pet. 1:23).

3) God is not a respecter of persons and does not arbitrarily choose some to be saved and others to be lost.

4) God desires that all men be saved. (Jn. 3:16; Acts 10:34,34; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

3. **Peter did not understand the full import of these words spoken in this verse.** (Acts 2:39). See Acts 11:17

Acts 11:17 "Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as {He gave} to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"

a. Up until this time Peter had not preached to Gentiles, and reluctantly went to his home.

b. Cornelius and his family receiving the outpouring of the Holy Spirit convinced Peter that salvation was also for Gentiles. (Acts 10:34, 35).

### **Jews And Then Samaritans**

4. They preached to the Jews and then to Samaritans. (Acts 1:8; 8:14-25).

a. Jesus had an early and fruitful ministry in Samaria. (Jn. 4:28-30).

b. He had forbidden the twelve to go into a Samaritan city during the third tour of Galilee (Matt. 10:5,6).

MAT 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them, saying, "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans;

MAT 10:6 but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

c. This was a temporary prohibition withdrawn before Jesus ascended on high. (Acts 1:8).

ACT 1:8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. "

5. It was years after this before Peter realized salvation was also for the Gentiles. (Acts 10:34, 35).

6. The other apostles had also been of the same persuasion as Peter and Peter had to convince them he had done the right thing by baptizing and receiving into fellowship Gentiles. (Acts 11:13-18).

### **Many Other Words Of Peter**

**2:40 And with many other words he solemnly testified [warned] and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse [wicked, perverse] generation!"**

1. We have only part of Peter's marvelous sermon - “many other words”.

a. He may have preached for hours, but we cannot know how long he preached.

b. It is clear that Luke only gives us an abbreviation of Peter’s sermon.

c. He may have answered questions from those who were submitting to Christ.

2. "Be saved"

- a. They are exhorted to escape the consequences of their sins including the crucifixion of Jesus.
- b. Man is saved by grace (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8), but he has an unmerited and essential part in his own salvation.
- c. "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation" - NIV.
  - 1) "Save yourselves from this crooked generation" - ASV & KJV
  - 2) In the original Greek this is a passive imperative literally translated "be saved."
  - 3) The words "be saved" demanded the imperatives of Acts 2:38 to "repent and be baptized" be obeyed.
  - 4) Faith, repentance, and baptism are all works, but they are not works of merit. (Jn. 6:29).
- d.. See Phil. 2:12.

Phil 2:12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;

- e. "Repent, and let each of you be baptized" - NASB
  - (1) Each person had to repent and be baptized to be saved.
  - (2) Someone could not do this for a person.

3. "perverse generation" - Luke 9:41.

LUK 9:41 Jesus answered, "You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here."

4. "generation" refers to those living at that time.
5. In context it shows those living at the time of Peter's sermon were wicked and perverse.

### **Results of Accepting Christ**

6. Those who obeyed Peter rejected the authority of the religious hierarchy and accepted the authority of Christ.
  - a. This meant a major life change since they would now submit to the Lordship of Jesus
  - b. This meant persecution. **The Jewish leaders would soon viciously turn on them.**

### **Number Baptized**

**2:41 So then, those who had received [accepted] his word [gospel message] were baptized [immersed] ; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.**

- The word "unto them" in the KJV are in italics and not in the original Greek.



- They may correctly express the meaning of Luke since some were in a saved state.
  - There is no indication or implication that the apostles and the one hundred and twenty and others who had received John's baptism were rebaptized.
1. The number of "those who had received his word" is defined in this verse, but we do not know how many heard and rejected the message.
    - a. It appears that this number included both men and women.
    - b. Later numbers included the men only. (Acts 4:4).

ACT 4:4 But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

- c. Acts 5:14 reveals that both men and women continued to be "added to the Lord."

Acts 5:14 And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to {their number,}

- d. Acts 2:41 marks the beginning of the answer to Jesus' prayer. (Lk. 23:34).
  - e. They were not forgiven until they obeyed Acts 2:38.
2. We must hear and believe word. (Jn. 6:45; 8:32; Jas. 1:18,21; Rom. 10:17; 2 Thess. 2:13,14; 1 Pet. 1:23).

### **Greater Works**

3. "three thousand souls" brings to mind John 14:12

JOH 14:12 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father.

- a. These words, uttered by Jesus, may refer to the results of the preaching of the apostles.
  - b. **They did not perform greater works than Jesus**, but they did have fantastic results.
    - 1) Thousands responded to the gospel message they preached.
    - 2) Both Jews and Gentiles came to Christ through the preaching of the apostles.
    - 3) Both Jews and Gentiles were united in one body through the gospel message.
4. A conservative estimate is that there were 20,000 Christians in Jerusalem prior to the persecution following Stephen's death. (Acts 8:1b).

### **Excitement**

5. How exciting it must have been when 3,000 were baptized that day.
6. Some have questioned the possibility of 3,000 being baptized on one day.

a. There were plenty of pools and waters in Jerusalem for baptisms.

### **How Many Were Doing The Baptizing?**

b. We do not know how many were baptizing.

1) The twelve were all likely baptizing.

2) Some of the hundred and twenty may have helped. (Acts 1:15).

3) Those newly baptized once they had been baptized may also have helped.

c. The twelve could easily baptize 12 a minute or 720 an hour.

d. At this rate the 3,000 could have been baptized in a little more than 4 hours.

e. There is no reason to think these baptisms took a very short time.

f. Peter had begun his sermon at 9 A.M. that morning. (Acts 2:15).

g. There would then be hours of daylight for the thousands of baptisms.

### **Location of Baptisms**

h. We do not know the location of the baptisms.

i. This was not evidently something Luke deemed significant.

j. The significant fact was that 3,000 were immersed into Christ. (Gal. 3:26,27).

### **No Infants Baptized**

7. It is clear that those baptized were not infants “that day.” (Acts 2:41).

a. There is not the slightest hint that infants were baptized with John’s baptism or the baptism of the Great Commission.

b. Infants are not able to believe and repent nor would they have any comprehension of sin.

1) They have no belief in God or His Son.

2) They are incapable of having “Godly sorrow.” (2 Cor. 7:10).

c. Most people would not think of actually immersing infants.

d. Infants have no sins.

1) Physical death, not spiritual death, was passed on to all humanity. (Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22, 23).

2) Infants are not accountable since they are not able to discern between good and evil and have no sins.

3) Infants have no concept or understanding of sin.

- e. We are not responsible for the sins of others. (Ezek. 18:20, 21).
- f. Infants are not accountable for Adam and Eve's sins nor the sins of their parents or the sins of anyone.
- g. Some have tried to use the example of households being baptized to prove infant baptism. (Acts 10:48; 16:15, 33).
  - 1) This is an argument from silence.
  - 2) Many households [families] then and now do not have an infant or small children.
  - 3) To argue for infant baptism contradicts what the Bible teaches about the innocence of little children and contradicts what the Bible teaches about faith, repentance, confession, self-denial that must precede baptism.

### **Challenging Problems Of Fantastic Growth**

1. The early Christians were faced with the problem of having a meeting place or places.
  - a. They had no church buildings, but had previously met in Synagogues.
  - b. They met in homes or the temple courts. (Acts 2:46; 5:42).
2. There was the challenge of identifying and keeping up with all the members.
  - a. About three thousand were baptized on Pentecost. (Acts 2:41).
  - b. It is not likely the apostles had the names and addresses of where all of these converts lived.
3. There was the challenge or problem of meeting the physical needs of those from other places that remained in Jerusalem.
4. Enemies of Christ seeking to dissuade those who had accepted Christ would be a major problem.
  - a. The Jewish leaders would be enraged by those identifying with Christ.
  - b. Many friends and relatives would also be enraged by those choosing to follow Christ that they regarded as an apostate.
5. There was the problem of some Christians not having food and other essentials.
  - a. Jews were there from many places outside of Palestine. (Acts 2:5, 9-11).
  - b. Some might have financial resources to remain in Jerusalem, but others did not.
6. There was the challenge of having sufficient teachers to edify such a large group.
  - a. Only the apostles had the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:2, 5, 8; 2:4),
  - b. The others were new Christians who had to be taught by apostles.
  - c. The apostles had a tremendous responsibility in overseeing all of this. (Acts 2:42; 5:12).
  - d. They would need help. See Acts 6:1-6.

7. There was the problem of developing leadership to assist the apostles and to lead God's people everywhere the church would be established.
8. There was the problem of getting the new converts to accept Christ and the new covenant rather than depending on the Mosaic law for justification.
  - a. There were no elders or deacons when the church began.
  - b. There were no evangelists until after Acts 6. (Acts 6:1-6).
    - 1) Both Philip and Stephen became evangelists.
    - 2) We read of their work in Acts 6-8. (Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-58; 8:5-40).
  - c. We do not know when elders were first appointed in the Jewish congregations.
    - 1) They are first mentioned in Acts 11:29-30 in regard to the relief for the brethren in Judea.
    - 2) Elders were appointed in the Gentile churches Paul established on his first missionary journey, A.D. 45-49).
    - 3) These appointments were made near the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> journey. (Acts 14:23).
    - 4) In both the Jewish and Gentile churches faithful men were appointed elders not many years after becoming Christians.
    - 5) This may shed some light on the qualification that elders were not to be new converts. (1 Tim. 3:6).  
 1 Tim 3:6 {and} not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil
    - 6) There may have been some bad experiences from the quick appointments of men to be elders, but we cannot be sure this was the case.
    - 7) It would seem that Paul did not mean a man remained "a new convert" for years and years.
    - 8) How long a man remains a new convert is never discussed in the Scriptures.
    - 9) It is clear that a man must meet the qualifications Paul listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9).
    - 10) Some men grow and develop in Christian maturity much quicker than others.
9. There was the challenge of reaching out to all the prospects who became interested in Jesus and the church.
  - a. There would have been a large number.
  - b. Reaching people quickly is most often essential if they are going to be reached for Christ.

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