

In the light of the above meanings of the Greek preposition *eis*, Romans 6:3-4 should read, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into (with respect to) Jesus Christ were baptized into (with respect to or on the basis of) his death? Therefore we are buried with him by (through) baptism into (with respect to) death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in (*en*, a different preposition) newness of life."

Jesus did all that is necessary for your salvation, and John 4:2 plainly says, "Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples." As Peter so plainly states it in his sermon, you are to repent of sin and trust in the death and resurrection of Jesus for your salvation.

What then is the place of baptism? You are not baptized into the kingdom of God, but into the membership of the local church. In so doing you join with the body of Christian witnesses who like

yourself have trusted in Jesus' saving work for salvation. With them you become a partaker of the gift of the Holy Spirit who came upon the church for effective witnessing. Thus not only is your soul saved from sin, but your Christian life will be saved from failure as you become a witness to a lost world regarding the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.

My plea is that you repent of your sin and trust in Jesus for salvation right now. Then present yourself on the basis of that experience for baptism into the membership of one of His churches. In beautiful baptism symbolize that which Jesus did for your salvation and which is involved in your Christian experience. Then give yourself fully to the power of the Holy Spirit as a living testimony as to what Jesus is able to do for anyone who will call upon Him in faith. Write to tell me about it as I join with you in prayer for our mutual service for our wonderful Saviour.

THE ANSWER TO INQUIRY

April 12, 1959

Scripture: Acts 4:1-12

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"—Acts 4:12

The Sanhedrin was within its right in inquiring of Peter and John, "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" (v.7). For Deuteronomy 13 instructed them that if any prophet performed a sign among them designed to lead them away from Jehovah, they were to examine him. If he were found guilty they were to put him to death.

That a miracle had been performed they could not deny. For the lame man who begged at the gate Beautiful now stood before them healed.

This afforded Peter an opportunity to

preach. Courageously and plainly he replied, "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole" (v.10). Note that the Sanhedrin asked first about the *power* and then about the *name*, as though the power were a demonic one. In Peter's reply he reversed the order. First, he declared the name—Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He did not simply say the Messiah. Nor did he merely call Him Jesus. But he said, "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified." There must be no question as to His identity. Second, he named the power—"whom God raised from the dead." Thus he drove home to them the truth that Jesus of Nazareth was their Messiah whom they had cruci-

fied, but who was now alive and working by the power of God. It must have been a convincing argument, for the Sanhedrin did not put them to death as Deuteronomy 13 required of an imposter.

Nor did they accept Jesus as their Saviour.

Therefore, my message is directed toward those of you who see about you the evidence of the continuing work of Jesus. Yet because of your predisposed attitude of unbelief, you refuse to accept the evidence by a full surrender of your hearts to Him. To you I would say, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Three things stand out in this verse: the need for salvation; the effort to achieve salvation; the impossibility of salvation outside of Jesus Christ.

First, consider the need of salvation. It must have seemed strange to the Sanhedrin that Peter would suggest that they needed to be saved. They were the religious leaders of their nation. As children of Abraham they regarded themselves as children of God. They were paragons of virtue. They were rich and cultured. They were students of the Bible. Even now they were zealous for the worship of Jehovah.

But what does the Bible say about them? To their number John the Baptist in Matthew 3:9 said, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Of them Paul wrote in Romans 10:1-2, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." To Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, Jesus said in John 3, "Ye must be born again."

Many of you are like the Sanhedrin. You say, "Why speak to me of salvation? That word is foreign to my vocabulary." You are cultured. You enjoy enough of

this world's goods. You have been well-born. You are a good citizen and neighbor. Perhaps you read your Bible, pray every night, and even go to church on occasion.

But like the Sanhedrin you still need salvation. You are lost from God. Of you Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

After the first night of the Billy Graham Crusade in New York a cynical reporter wrote in his newspaper that the crowd in attendance was well-dressed. Said he, "There were not present any of the people from Skid Row that Billy Graham came to New York to convert." Is this your attitude? You say that if a man is cultured, well-dressed, well-fed, and well-housed, he does not need salvation. But my friend, whether you live on Park Avenue or Skid Row does not matter with God so far as your salvation is concerned. In Matthew 21:31 Jesus said to the cultured Pharisees that publicans and harlots who repented would go into heaven before them who were without repentance. And so He says to you.

Second, note the effort to achieve salvation. Although the Sanhedrin insisted that they needed no salvation, yet their efforts denied this claim. This is seen in the words "salvation in any other." "Other" translates a Greek word meaning *other of like kind*. Thus Peter notes that they were actually endeavoring to achieve salvation through another means similar to Jesus. This suggests their allegiance to the law of Moses, implying not only the keeping of the Ten Commandments but the Levitical laws of sacrifice. And they did a good job at observing both. Such a claim involved both their selfrighteousness and their observance of the Jewish rites of sacrifice. But note what the Bible says about this. In Luke 18 a certain ruler asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus told him to keep the Ten Commandments. When the young man replied that he had kept them from his youth, Jesus said, "Yet lackest thou one thing"

(v.22). The import of Jesus' reply was that he must remove all that stood between him and Jesus, and follow Him. Again in Hebrews 9:12 we are told that "neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his (Jesus') own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Thus the Bible plainly teaches that they could not be saved by keeping the commandments or by mere animal sacrifice. They were to be saved by accepting Jesus as their Saviour.

Nor can you be saved otherwise. Though you do not perform animal sacrifice, you regard your own self-righteousness as sufficient for you to obtain the better life. Admitting no need for salvation, yet you unconsciously set about to establish your own righteousness by adhering to a rigid code of moral conduct based upon the Ten Commandments. Some of you even follow religious rites and ceremonies thinking that in their observance you shall obtain eternal life.

But the Bible in Isaiah 64:6 tells you, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." In Romans 10 Paul says of such as you, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (vv.3-4). The climax of his statement is in verse 9. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (Jesus is Lord), and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

This means simply that if you would be saved, you must in your heart believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus as the basis of salvation. The terms of salvation are set not by you but by a sovereign God. Either you accept them and be saved, or reject them and be eternally lost.

Thus you can understand God's wrath

against you if you reject His terms. Hebrews 9:26-28 says that Jesus "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once (once-for-all) offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." This means that Jesus came once to be your Saviour. If you trust in Him He will come again as your Saviour. If you reject Him, He will come as your judge. Then you will be judged not according to your righteousness, but His. Therefore, I plead with you to accept Him today as your Saviour.

Third, this emphasizes the impossibility of salvation outside of Jesus Christ. When Peter said, "For there is none other name . . . whereby we must be saved," he used another Greek word for "other." It means *another of a different kind*. This suggests the ways of salvation outside the Jewish religion offered the first century man. The Greeks sought salvation through philosophy or wisdom. The Romans worshipped their emperor calling him *saviour*. Both sought salvation in the worship of their pagan gods who to them were the embodiment of the various virtues and graces desired by cultured men. The more materially-minded ones worshipped at the shrines of Bacchus, the god of wine, Mars, the god of war, or Diana, the goddess of fertility or sex. The Mystery Religions offered salvation through their mystical cults of rite and ceremony. But Peter says that in none of these could they find salvation.

Examining these you will find that they correspond to twentieth-century efforts at salvation. Some of you seek refuge in your superior knowledge. Others deposit your security with government. Multitudes of you rest your eternal security in your possession of the virtues of love, truth, charity, fair-dealing, or purity. Tragically many endeavor to numb your spiritual senses in an orgy of wine and sex. Millions look for peace in the mystical rites

and ceremonies of cults which are devoid of the basic principles of true religion.

To every one of you Peter is saying, "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." All the above efforts are nothing more than a rebellion against God as He has revealed Himself through Jesus Christ. Try these things if you will. But some day, maybe soon, you will look upon Him whom your sins have crucified. What will you say then? God will not see your knowledge, virtues, or faith-

ful observance of rites and ceremonies which are outside of Christ. He will see only the blood of Jesus which alone can cover your sins. Without it you will hear only the fateful words of Luke 13:27, "I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."

While there is still time and opportunity, I beg you to turn in faith to Jesus. Trust in Him this very second as your Saviour. For apart from Him there is no salvation!

THE ANSWER TO INTIMIDATION

April 19, 1959

Scripture: Acts 5:25-32

"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men"—Acts 5:29

Despite the opposition of the Sanhedrin, Jerusalem was filled with Christian teaching. Finally, all the apostles were arrested and brought before the Jewish rulers. The high priest charged, "Did we not straitly command that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." To which the apostles replied, "We ought to (must) obey God rather than men." This was their answer to intimidation.

The Christian Gospel was a threat to the Sanhedrin, but they were also a threat to the Christian message. The Sanhedrin was composed of Sadducees and Pharisees. The Sadducees were rationalists. They accepted only the first five books of the Bible as inspired scripture, rejecting all else which did not fit their preconceived views in religion. They denied the existence of angels, the reality of miracles and the resurrection. In short, they were opposed to a spiritual concept

of religion. The Pharisees, on the other hand, believed all these and accepted all of the Old Testament as God's Word. However, they went to seed in the observance of rites and ceremonies in the expression of their religion. Thus, they lost all concept of the vital meaning of religion. So actually the formidable forces which opposed these early Christians were rationalism and ritualism.

It is in this light that this incident has value for our present day. For in rationalism and ritualism New Testament Christianity meets its strongest test. This is true in regard to personal salvation. Under the guise of Christian witness rationalism tells you to accept only that portion of the Bible which adapts itself to an intellectual and humanistic approach to religion. Its emphasis is on self-righteousness and social reform in meeting the deepest needs of men. Ritualism, on the other hand, insists that it accepts all of the Bible while seeking to combine Old Testament form with New Testament truth. Thus it empties the Gospel of its vital reality and deprives the seeking soul of a personal experience with Jesus Christ.