

The Bible Student

V. 175 1900 (Jan. Jan) W. #1 Jan
#3 Mar
 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
*JPr under in 6 *** vol 2.*

Editors:

WILLIAM M. MCPHEETERS, D. D.

BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, D. D., LL. D.

SAMUEL M. SMITH, D. D.

GEORGE T. PURVES, D. D., LL. D.

DANIEL J. BRIMM, D. D.

JOHN D. DAVIS, PH.D., D. D.



Contents:

I. EDITORIAL NOTES: Individualism in Work. Christ's Dealing with Doctrinal Difficulty. Not Ritual Baptism. Christ's Dealing with the Sinner. Inadequacy of Personal Influence. Scientific Biblical Study. S.....	61
NEW TESTAMENT NOTES: "New Testament Theology." Fragmentary and Incomplete. Adoption. The Son of Man. The Holy Spirit. Why not Synthesize? A Distinction. Reform the Sunday School. International Lessons. Why Not Grade? Seek Teaching. Popular Lives of Christ. B.	66
II. THE SYMBOLISM OF THE LAMB. <i>John D. Davis</i>	71
III. THE SIN OFFERING. <i>John D. Davis</i>	72
IV. IS THE CHRONICLER A VERACIOUS HISTORIAN FOR THE POSTEXILIAN PERIOD? No. III. <i>Willis J. Beecher</i>	77
V. THE LIVING WATER. <i>Caspar Wislar Hodge</i>	84
VI. THE NEW BIRTH. <i>R. A. Webb</i>	94
VII. SHECHEM AND ITS ENVIRONS. <i>R. L. Stewart</i>	101
VIII. OUTLINE STUDY OF ISAIAH XL-LXVI. <i>W. H. Marquess</i>	107
IX. FOREIGN BIBLICAL THOUGHT: Evolution and Theology. Dr. Dickson on Dr. McGiffert. A Fruitless Discussion. The Prophets and the Pentateuch. Scholz on the "Logia." Anglican View of "The Study of Holy Scripture." B. B. W.....	113
The New Theory of Deuteronomy. Prof. Mitchell's Theory. A Dilemma. Dr. Toy on the Origin of the Sabbath. The Tabernacle an Oriental Tent. The Pentateuch the Word of God. KERR D. MACMILLAN. The New "Journal of Theological Studies." Dr. Sanday on Origin of the Creed. Trustworthiness of Acts. An Interesting Feature. Harnack on Haeckel and Thudicum. WM. PARK ARMSTRONG, JR.	116
X. BOOKS, PAMPHLETS AND ARTICLES: Robinson's "The Decalogue and Criticism." Stevens' "The Theology of the New Testament.".....	120

The Bryan Printing Co. Press, Columbia, S. C.

ON SALE BY—FLEMING H. REVELL CO., New York, Chicago and Toronto.

JOHN WANNAMAKER, New York and Philadelphia.

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION, Philadelphia.

PRESBYTERIAN COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION, 2001 Main St., Richmond, Va.

The Bible Student.

CONTINUING

The Bible Student and Religious Outlook.

Vol. I., New Series.

FEBRUARY, 1900

Number 2.

Our Saviour's work seems to have been largely personal, chiefly individual. The disciples were selected singly and called individually; after having chosen and called them, his chief care seemed to be their development by personal association and teaching; the paramount object of his earthly ministry was to train them into instruments fit to carry on the work to be committed to their care when he should leave the world; this was the essential feature of his ministry, all else, however important, was incidental to this.

The first accessions to discipleship were made by individual, personal appeal; Christ calls Andrew and Andrew first findeth his own brother Simon, Christ enlists Philip and Philip brings Nathaniel; thus the gracious call through personal influence is passed on, transmitted as it were through individual contact.

We have record of more than one public address delivered to a large audience, but what may have been the result of such addresses we are left to conjecture alone to deter-

mine, the presumption is that the immediate, visible fruit was small; the fact that three years' work by both Christ and his disciples shows only one hundred and twenty adherents gained, indicates an absence of anything like great gatherings. Wherever there is any certain knowledge of a disciple secured, it was through individual influence, by personal appeal. We find in business a distinction recognized between goods hand-made and machine-made, preference and price being always in favor of the former as presumption of greater care in selection and greater fidelity in construction. The terms are not the choicest in spiritual connections, yet inasmuch as the word "machinery" has won recognition as descriptive of revival measures, it may not be inept to say that Christ's own method is against it, and to note that the individualism that marked his work is strong indication that in the spiritual husbandry, as in the natural, "hand picked fruit" is likely to be sounder and less subject to speedy deterioration than the other sort.

or in the Christian, implies the sufficiency for every creature: The springing up into everlasting life is not for himself alone, but for others. Nicodemus became an example to his nation. The woman led her townsfolk to Christ. At the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, "if *any man thirst*, let him come unto me and drink."

6. And the freeness of it! What so free as water! It is a *gift*, invaluable, eternal—yet a gift.

7. Giving supposes taking. Drinking presupposes thirsting. May our faith be as ready as the woman's—our prayer as sincere: "Lord, evermore give me this water."

THE NEW BIRTH.

PROFESSOR R. A. WEBB, D. D., SOUTHWESTERN PRESBYTERIAN UNIVERSITY, CLARKSVILLE, TENN.

The origin and nature of Spiritual Life is a topic of perennial interest; every Christian has a valuable stake in the discussion; every system of soteriology is vitally affected by the final decision; at no point does velvet-footed error more noiselessly slip in.

The idea of the *New Birth*, as a concept for the beginning of Spiritual Life in the Soul, is quite familiar and thoroughly Biblical. While it is not an exclusively Johannine thought, it is so prominently employed by this Apostle, that I shall limit this study to his Gospel and Epistles.

In the Johannine Scriptures, the concept of the New Birth occurs in eight passages, counting Jno. iii. 3-8 as one passage. I begin with Jno. i. 12, 13: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

In the opening of his gospel, John introduces us to our Lord as the Word with God, unincarnate; then he tells us that this Word, coming into our world, was at once the Life and the Light of men. As such, he came first to his own people, the Jews, and was rejected by them as a people, but there were some that "received him," which is the same thing as saying that there were some that

"believed on his name." To as many such persons as "received him" as their Life and Light, to them he gave the "power"—the authority (*ἐξουσία*), the legal right—"to become the sons of God." There are two things necessary to his sonship: namely, *filial rights* and a *filial nature*. Faith in Christ instrumentally secures legal standing in the house and family of God just as it secures instrumentally legal standing in the state and kingdom of God. "Adoption" is the theological technicality for legal reinstatement in the house of God, as "Justification" is the theological technicality which reinstates in the state and kingdom of God. *Adoption by faith* is parallel in meaning with "Justification by faith"—one being a formula for restored filial standing, and the other for restored civil standing, before God. To as many as received him, to them he gave all the rights and privileges of the sons of God.

But how do these persons get the other great requisite—a *filial heart*? It is not enough to have the rights of a child; it is equally important that the restored sinner have the heart and disposition of a child. If Paul stresses the objective legal side of Adoption, John lays emphasis on the subjective and vital side of sonship in the house of God. What is the origin of the filial heart? The Apostle safeguards his answer with great care. (1) Sons of God are not born of "blood." The filial nature of the believer is not hereditary, not the product of physical descent. Godly parents, even Abraham, the father of the faithful—cannot beget godly children. Religion does not run in the blood. (2) Nor yet do believers become filial in heart by the "will of the flesh;" that is, by the efforts and exertions of their own natural hearts. Nature cannot change itself. Species are fixed. "Like begets like." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." There is no chance for the forces of nature to evolve the heart of a sinner into the heart of a saint. (3) Nor yet can believers obtain the filial heart by the "will of man," that is, by the acts and deeds of others. No ordained ministry, no ecclesiastical sacraments, no human reformatory institutes, can change the heart of a "child of Satan" into the heart of a "child of God." (4) But believers get the new nature of a child of God by the action "of God." By the elimination of all other possible causes, the Apostle represents God as the sole author of regeneration.

Believers are adopted by faith; they are regenerated by the Spirit. The New Birth precedes a conscious adoption, and is here mentioned, first, because it suits John's thought to allude to adoption in such a way as to show that he intends developing the subject from its vital side rather than from its objective side.

The next passage in our sources is Jno. iii. 3-8: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. . . Ye must be born again."

The first passage (Jno. i. 12, 13) carried the origin of Spiritual life to God—to his *ἐξουσία*, authority, and also to his *δύναμις* his strength. This passage (Jno. iii. 3-8) does two things: (1) it shows us that the *δύναμις*, of the New Birth is the Spirit, "born of the Spirit;" but (2) it emphatically shows us the absolute necessity of the New Birth.

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit"—there is the personal agent in the New Birth. In redemption all the offices of agent are performed by the Third Person in the Godhead; and to be "born of God" and to be "born of the Spirit" mean to be born of God by the power of the Spirit. In the text there is no reference whatever to ritual baptism; that ordinance is not in all the thought of the speaker; that sacrament has not yet even been instituted; there would be absolutely no logical justification in introducing that ordinance in this connection. All the elements of religion under the Old Economy were symbolized under two heads—Water and Blood. All the objective blessings of redemption were symbolically conveyed by the blood of victims, and all the subjective elements of purification were symbolically conveyed by "divers washings" with water. *Water*, then, was the Old Testament symbol for the work of the Spirit, as *blood* was the Old Testament symbol for the work of Christ. To be "born of water and of the Spirit" is but emphatic repetition.

But the emphasis of this passage is upon the *necessity* of the New Birth, for the mode is distinctly said by Christ to be too mysterious to be considered with edification. This conversation is with a Jewish theologian; and our Lord has it as his main purpose to impress upon him that his disciple must have a change of heart

before he can be fit for heaven; that a Jewish ceremonialism that is only outward is inadequate; that a washing with ritualistic water is only cleansing the outside, and is thoroughly unclean unless the heart itself is washed by the Spirit.

The third text (1 Jno. ii. 29) shows us the indisputable proofs of the New Birth: "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." This is but the application of the Master's maxim by his disciple, "By their fruits ye shall know them." That man who practices righteousness knows that he is born of God, and the world knows that he is born of God, because the fruit is like the tree; if the fruit is good, then the tree is good also, and as a necessary pre-condition.

The fourth text (1 Jno. iii. 9) asserts the impeccability of the filial nature born of God: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." There is in the Christian a something which is of God, call it nature, disposition, principle, or what you like; and there is also in the Christian another something, by whatever name it may be known, which is of Satan and not of God. This dualism of motive principle in the Christian heart, requires us to make apparently the most contradictory statements about him, as the peculiar dual constitution of Christ necessitates our making about our Lord apparently the most contradictory statements, such as he is man but he is God. He is mortal but he is immortal. He is peccable but he is impeccable. Whenever Christ acts through his divine nature he acts divinely, and whenever he acts through his human nature he acts humanly: it must be so; it cannot be otherwise. So whenever the Christian acts in accordance with that which is born of God, he acts sinlessly, and whenever he expresses himself under the influence and domination of that which is not of God he acts sinfully. The "seed" of God is implanted in the nature, and "remains" therein; it cannot perish; it cannot bear evil fruit; its very origin and nature make it impeccable. But inasmuch as the sinful dynamic center also remains in the same heart, it may be said of every imperfectly sanctified Christian, He is sinless but he is sinful; he is sinless as to that which is born of God, but he is sinful as to that which is not born of God; he is both peccable and impeccable

at one and the same time. Such impeccability is true, not of some eminent Christians, but of every converted soul.

The doctrine of the two natures in the believer is a heresy, if by "nature" is meant anything else than principle or disposition. All that is meant by this dualism of Christian character is that there are two action-fountains in the heart, two ruling inclinations; these two are opposites—one sends forth sweet water, and the other sends forth bitter water; one inclines to death and the other inclines to life. The streams are necessarily like the fountains.

There is, however, no dualism of life and responsibility for the child of God, because he is a personal unit. When he yields to the sinful propensity of his heart, it is his sin; and when he yields to the holy principle planted of God, it is his praise. In this way dual motives do not make a double or divided life.

In the fifth Johannine Scripture (1 Jno. iv. 7, 8), we have specified the central attribute of the child of God: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." In the two passages just preceding, the doing of righteousness and the not-doing of sin were made tests of being born of God; so here the possession of a loving heart for God and the people of God, is made one of the especial practical evidences of sonship of God. The doing of righteousness and the not-doing of sin are but the positive and negative poles of the objective test of conduct; while the possession of a godlike love is an internal test, as when the stream is judged by the spring from which it flows. Righteousness and sinlessness are the effects in conduct of the divine begetting; love is the fountain motive that is opened up in the heart by this divine action of the Spirit in making men new creatures in Christ Jesus.

In the sixth place (1 Jno. v. 1), we have the claim to a New Birth certified to from another point of view: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." Nothing is here intimated as to the chronological or logical order of faith and the spiritual begetting; it is only said that every one who believes in Jesus is begotten of God and is a child of his. Such faith is the unfailing mark of spiritual sonship

of God. Faith is not the cause of regeneration, but one of the evidential manifestations of it.

The seventh text (1 Jno. v. 4) is a paean: "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." Here is prophecy: the child of God shall triumph over the "world." The "world" is that wicked order of things which opposes God, and is full of all unhappiness—this present fallen world. Over this Old World of sin and sorrow the child of God shall gloriously triumph and attain to life in the New World—the world wherein dwells righteousness and heavenly felicity.

The eighth text is 1 Jno. v. 18: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Here again is triumphant language—the language of assurance. That which is born of God is impeccable; such a man stands guard over himself; the Devil cannot lay his evil finger upon him. For these reasons the child of God is safe. Once regenerated, regenerated forever.

Now let us make a resumé, with a view to gathering the thoughts here presented into a closer and easier view.

(1). The legal rights of sonship are conveyed by God to all who believe (Jno. i. 12).

(2). The nature of a son is imparted by God through the Holy Spirit (Jno. i. 13; iii. 5, 6).

(3). The necessity of the New Birth is absolute, and there is nothing that can take its place (Jno. iii. 3, 7).

(4). The most obtrusive external proof of the New Birth is the practice of righteousness—a righteous conduct (1 Jno. i. 29).

(5). The negative side of this last test is not-sinning; and the argument is that sinlessness would prove birth from God because what is begotten by God, "his seed," is essentially impeccable (1 Jno. iii. 9).

(6). The test of the New Birth, when looked at from the centre towards the circumference, is love—the true motive of all righteousness (1 Jno. iv. 7).

(7). Still another test of the New Birth, derived by looking at its relation to the great principle of the Christian system, is faith (1 Jno. v. 1).

(8). Then come the two texts of triumph—overcoming the

world, and a spiritual life out of reach of the Devil (1 Jno. v. 4, 18).

One question remains: Is the New Birth literal or figurative? The law of nature is, "Like begets like:" that which begets communicates its substantive nature to that which is begotten. The offspring is *homoiousian* with the parent; that is the offspring is of the same substance and kind of being with the parent. The colt is the same sort of animal as the sire; the child is the same sort of being as its parents. If God literally and prosaically begets Christians, then he communicates to them his divine nature, and after regeneration they cease to be men and become Gods; or, if it is the nature of Christ which is imparted by divine generation, then they cease to be exclusively human, and become like Christ, divine-human. Or, if it is the Spirit which imparts his nature to Christians, then they become like their sire in true and proper nature; they are as much Holy Ghosts as the children of human beings are human children.

Regeneration cannot be a change of substance, because that would mean a transmutation of the species sinner into the species saint, when there is no such thing as a species sinner; the species is man, and the sinner is a sort of man. After regeneration, he remains man, but another sort of man. That which differentiates a sinner from a saint is not specific, in the physical sense of specific, but a certain trait of character, a ruling and determining principle of the heart.

Regeneration, the New Birth, is a figure of speech, under which the great change in conversion is exhibited. Natural birth is a metaphor of spiritual birth, because by the one we enter into the present world with powers and duties and privileges growing out of the environment, and by the other we similarly enter upon the future life with its distinctive environment, privileges and duties. The metaphor must not be pressed unduly. That is a fruitful vice of interpretation which takes the figures of Scripture and presses them into a literal extreme of comparison which was never intended by the author of them.

This is the prolific vice of Pantheistic interpreters. They look upon and treat regeneration as a literal impartation of the divine nature of God by the Spirit to the subject of the regenerating act, so that to regenerate is to really deitize the Christian. In the first

generation the human substance was imparted to the child; so, in the new generation by the Spirit, according to this heresy, the nature of God is literally communicated to the Christian convert.

Other Biblical writers describe the regeneration act as "creating" (Eph. iv. 24); "quickening" (Eph. ii. 5); "calling" (1 Pet. ii. 9); "resurrection" (Jno. v. 25); and sundry other words are used to describe the act of passing from a state of sin into a state of grace. It is unwarranted to say that the mode of that passage is by a literal and exact generation—the communication of the divine essence or nature to the persons so converted. The idea of a "new creation" is just as much a favorite with Paul as that of a "new birth" is with John.

Our Lord distinctly said to Nicodemus, The mode is too mysterious to be described. To insist that the mode is the exact analogue of human generation is to explain the inexplicable.

In regeneration the Spirit originates a new dynamic centre, opens a new fountain of action. If John says this great change is by a "begetting," Paul says it is by a "creating," and our Lord says it is by a "resurrection." There are no contradictions.

SHECHEM AND ITS ENVIRONS.

PROFESSOR R. L. STEWART, D. D., LINCOLN UNIVERSITY, PA.

The most conspicuous elevations along the line of the Patriarchal Highway from Judea to Galilee are the twin mountains, Ebal and Gerizim. The rugged summits of these celebrated mountains rise side by side on the western edge of the broad upland plain of Mukhna, in the very heart of the rich heritage of the children of Joseph.

As seen from the south or east they appear to be conical peaks, but in reality they are parallel ridges, running nearly east and west and terminating abruptly in rounded masses on the border of the plain. The distance between the bases of Ebal and Gerizim at this point is scarcely more than 500 yards. The long, narrow valley between the mountains has been known from time immemorial as the vale of Shechem. It enters the plain of Mukhna almost at right angles to its general direction and about one-third of the length from its northern end.