

Born Again?

I recently attended a large campaign in a venue which must have held at least ten thousand arm-waving people, with the repeated name of Jesus on their lips. There was hardly a spare seat in the vast auditorium. I'd never seen so many people in one place! All of them believed that they did not need to keep the Ten Commandments, as Christ had fulfilled the law for them.

As I heard this taught, and looked around at the thousands, my mind was drawn to Revelation 12:9, **'And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.'** ESV. There are many deceivers in this world. You might be one. I might be one. The only words you can rely upon 100% are the words of our Saviour, and the Bible, but even the Bible contains just a few words not found in the original text, which have been added by men to deceive.

It is a great tragedy that a deliberate alteration in the text of John 3:5 is the origin of the rejection of the clear words of our Saviour, John 14:15, **'If ye love me, keep my commandments.'** No wonder our Saviour said in Matthew 7:22-23, **'On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name? And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'** ESV. 'Lawlessness', here, is translated from the Greek word 'anomia', Strong's 458, meaning "violation of law", "one who acts contrary to law". It is much easier to accept that someone else has kept the law for you.

So it is that this mistranslation from the original autograph eventually led to a perverted grace, which is today accepted by the majority in modern Christianity. It all started with Jerome's translation of the Latin Vulgate Bible in 383AD, where we find the deliberate insertion of the word 'again' into verse 5: 'born *again* of water.' Not one earlier Greek manuscript contains the word 'again'. The King James Version has it right in verse 5: **'born of water and of spirit'**. Even in verse 3, the King James margin explains that the word 'again' there, should be translated **'from above'**. William Tyndale, for example, translated John 3:3 and 5 correctly. He translated **'gennao anothen'** as 'born from above' in John 3:3, and **'gennao'** as 'born' in verse 5.

Consequently, this mistaken belief, which stems from ancient Babylon's teaching that a new birth was conferred by baptism, led to the Apostle Paul's warning to the Thessalonians about the 'mystery of lawlessness', 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10, **'for the mystery of lawlessness is already working In those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved.'** What is the truth? In Jesus' words, Mark 7:9, **'And he said unto them, Full well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition.'**

The Greek word 'gennao', Strong's 1080, "from a variety of 1085; to procreate, to regenerate... Gennao, as a verb means 'to beget' and in the passive voice means 'to be born.'" Predominantly in scripture it means 'begotten', rather than 'born'."

However, in John 3, the King James has it correct in verses 3,4, 5,6 and 7 in using the word 'born'. In verse 5 the Latin Church Fathers introduced the word 'again' where it does not exist in the Greek,

to back up the anti-scriptural Babylonian belief in the immortality of the soul; that Christians who do good, go to heaven when they die, or purgatory or hell if they are evil, rather than the resurrection of the dead, which Paul had to defend in 1 Corinthians 15 (verse 12) , *'Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?'*

Infant baptism was required by this false Babylonian belief so that if an infant died, its soul would go to heaven. Thus it was necessary for one to be born *'again' at baptism*, rather than at the resurrection. The King James translation, however, is correct: John 3:5, *'Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'* To be born of water is a depiction of our natural birth through the mother's waters. To be born of the Spirit, as we will see, only occurs **at the resurrection**, without which we cannot enter the Kingdom of God.

As always, the context determines whether 'gennao' should be translated 'begotten' or 'born'. In John 3 it is obvious that the word means a change from flesh to spirit, verse 6, *'that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which has been born of the spirit is spirit'*, ie. no longer made of human flesh. So, like the wind, *'is everyone who has been born of the spirit'*, verse 8. They can move quite invisibly, just like the wind.

The Apostle Paul agrees with Christ's words here in verse 5, that a human being *'cannot enter into the Kingdom of God'* - in 1 Corinthians 15:50: *'I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.'* *'But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?"* 1 Cor. 15:35. *'It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.'* Verse 44. *'Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven,'* verse 49. Which of us does not now have a perishable, flesh and blood body?

Born again then, truly means a transformation from human flesh to spirit, which occurs not at baptism, but at our resurrection. Jesus Christ was the *'firstborn from the dead'*, Revelation 1:5. As *'born again'*, He appeared to the Apostles behind safely closed doors. A spirit being is not limited by the physical laws which prevent mortals from walking through walls, and can appear or disappear at will, just as He did to the two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus. He can appear as flesh and bone, as He did to the disciples, but also as a glorious spirit being, Revelation 1:12-16, *'Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.'* ESV.

Just as Christ is, **so will we be**, Romans 8:29, 29 *'For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.'* 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, *'But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own*

*order: Christ the firstfruits, **then at his coming** those who belong to Christ.’* ESV. Matthew 13:43, *‘Then the righteous will **shine like the sun** in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.’* ESV. At the harvest of the firstfruit saints, the first resurrection, we will receive our spiritual body. Only then, will we be truly born again and inherit the glory of our bridegroom, Jesus Christ, Philippians 3:20-21, *‘But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.’*

Then, when we are like Him, we will be a fitting partner to our Bridegroom, because we will have prepared ourselves for this marriage, Revelation 19:7, *‘Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, **and his wife hath made herself ready.**’* How?

Revelation 22:14, *‘Blessed are they that **do his commandments,** (‘wash their robes’ ESV.) that **they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.**’*

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