

THE NEW BIRTH

By

Elder Samuel Trott

July 27, 1853

[While perusing the Volume by Trott for the article on eternal vital union of Christ with His people, I saw the following article on the subject of the New Birth. Since we always connect the two subjects, eternal vital union consisting of the spiritual life conveyed by the Holy Spirit in the New Birth, I thought I would post this for anyone interested in a "Present Beebe" writer. I shall skip part of the introduction to Elder Beebe, but copy the important prologue that is at the core of Trott's presentation in **bold characters**. Stanley C. Phillips].

Drother Woody, in replying to your enquiries, in order, if possible, for me to make my views plain, I wish first, if I can command language to do it, to explain myself on one important point connected therewith. The point is this: **that a person, one who exists as an individual being, may have a distinct nature from what he before existed in, superadded to him, so as to be made to exist in that distinct nature, without destroying his former personality, and yet his personal relations into conformity to his new nature, or new birth; for since the creation of Adam and Eve, I know of no way in which an individual existence in nature is produced but by a birth**. Many brethren seem not only entirely indisposed to admit the correctness of such an idea as the above, but also to **allow me and others to believe it**. But if the above position, in substance, is not correct, I am ignorant, and must remain so, of the testimony of Scripture concerning both the **new birth** and the incarnation of Christ; as well as concerning His **spiritual Headship**.

As I understand the Scriptures, the correctness of the position I have above laid down is fully demonstrated in the testimony given concerning the incarnation of Christ. According to the testimony of Scripture, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word **was God***" John 1:1. Again in verse 14, it is said, "*And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.*" And according to Gal. 4:4, "*God sent forth His Son, made of a woman and made under the law.*" Now I presume no Old School Baptist will understand by the declaration, John 1:14, that the Word, the Godhead, was **changed into flesh**, nor by that of Gal. 4:4, that the pre-existence of the Son **was destroyed**, and that He was made the Son of God of the woman. Yet the declaration, "*made of a woman and made under the law*, is affirmed of the *Son*, as in the other text, the affirmation is, "*The Word was made flesh.*" What is it then but that a fleshly nature, in which He **did not before exist**, was **superadded** to Him personally, as the **Word**, and as the "*Son sent forth*"? Here then my position is fully proved. Christ is made to exist distinctively in a *fleshly nature*, or as man, in being born of the Virgin, yet this flesh birth in **no sense destroys** His personal identity as the Son, or as the Word, but He **remains** the Son "*sent forth to serve, and to learn obedience by the things He suffered*, is still the *Word made flesh, is one with the Father*, is God manifest in the flesh, and brings into His servitude under the law, and in the things which He suffered, all the majesty, power, dignity, and even all the fullness of the Godhead. Yet while **His original personality is not changed**, His personal relation ***is*** changed; from being the giver of the law, He now in *being made of woman is made under the law*, made subject to its demands; and we behold Him in the flesh of a *servant* under it, a *minister of the circumcision, come to minister, and not to be ministered unto*. So I understand Christ's **existing in the beginning**, as the *only begotten of the Father*, as the production of God, or the beginning of the creation of God, in that **life** which is ***the light of men***, and which

constitutes Him the *Head of His church*, the *life* of His people, and their *elder brother*, to be His existing in that superadded life to His Godhead, and which in no sense destroyed His personal identity as God, but that He remains, whilst thus personally related to, and one with His people, to be the Jehovah, the self-existing God. The reason why some have charged me with being an Arian for holding Christ to exist in this near relation to His people, is that they will not allow, notwithstanding the proof I have presented of the fact, that a *distinct nature can be **superadded***, of God, personally to Himself, **without destroying His personal identity as God.**

I now come, brother Woody, to give you my views, briefly, on the new birth, as to what it is. Regeneration, as I hold in, is the implanting in an individual, or adding to him, that *incorruptible seed* which Peter speaks of, even the spiritual seed of Abraham, which Paul declares "is Christ." "*Christ in you,*" and which is that *life* that was in the Word, "*which is the light of men; for Christ "is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."* John 1:9. Hence this individual sees his relation and accountability to God and to the law, and sees his sinfulness as he never saw or felt it before, for "*by the law is the knowledge of sin.*" He sees this as the natural man **cannot see it**, for the law is *spiritual*. And he so sees and knows the reality of these things, that he cannot shake off or drive them from him as he could former impressions, which arose from mere fleshly views, or a natural conscience. The reason of this is, that whilst the implantation of this seed is of God, and of God only, and not through any instrumentalities of men, the seed itself being life and light, quickens the mind and conscience to such a sense of the reality of these things, that the individual feels himself as standing before a heart searching and re-trying God; and in the ultimate view of this, and of the purity of the law, all his goodness and doings are turned to corruption, and he falls helpless at the footstool of mercy, or at the feet of that God against

whom he has sinned. Being thus stripped and killed by the law, he is prepared to be married to another, even Christ, or brought to view in his relation to a crucified and risen Jesus.

The new birth I understand to be the "*being born again of the incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.*" Whether by the *word of God* in this text is understood the essential Word, who is God, or, as is frequently intended by the *word of God*, that which God directly speaks or communicates to a person, is immaterial, for both ideas are true. For Christ said, "*Verily, verily I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the **voice of the Son of God**, and they that hear shall live.*" John 5:25. This person being, as we showed, dead, killed by the law, is now made to hear the voice of the Son of God, the proclamation of pardon and salvation through Christ's atonement. And every child of grace knows that it took something more than the power of man to make him hear; that it came with the power and as the word of God; and he already having Christ or the seed of life in him, he is enabled to receive, believe and rejoice in that word, and feels himself standing in a new relation to God, no longer a condemned and banished one, but a pardoned, justified one; has peace with God, and is enabled to cry Abba, Father; that is, he feels that God is his Father. Thus in the new birth there is a striking correspondence to the natural birth; to each there **is a seed implanted**, and then a quickening by which life is *manifested*. And when the natural child is brought to the birth, the sorrows of the woman in travail, the fetus being broke loose from that by which alone it had been hitherto nourished, strongly represents the agonies and the killing by the law belonging to the second birth. But then there is a contrast in the births. In the first birth the child comes into the world in the image of Adam, an alien from God and subject to pain, disease and death, as the fruits of depravity and condemnation. In the second birth, he comes into the kingdom of heaven, where

"grace reigns through righteousness;" has communion with God as a Father through Christ; stands manifested as one with Christ; and having a common interest with all the members of Christ's body, in all that Christ accomplished by redemption, in all the promises of God, and in that inheritance which is reserved for the saints in light.

I now come, brother Woody, to your second point of enquiry, namely:

"What is it that is born again?" If by this enquiry, you mean what is the production of the new birth? I answer, the "New man, which **after God is created** in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. 4:24). This *new man* I believe to be "*Christ in you the hope of glory;*" for Paul said, *It was Christ that lived in him.*" (See Col. 1:27 & Gal. 2:20.) But I presume that your enquiry relates to that which has been the matter of discussion in the SIGNS formerly. I therefore answer, our Lord said, "*Except a **man** be born again;*" and I know not what right I have to suppose He did not mean as He said, did not mean the man. In conformity to this I say, in reference to brother Woody's being born again, that it is brother Woody himself in his whole person that was *born again*. And here is the application of the position with which I started, namely: That a distinct nature may be superadded to a person so that he shall actually exist in that **new** nature, without *destroying* his former personal identity, or his former existence. This I illustrated in the case of the Word *being made flesh*. So I understand that a spiritual nature called **life** has been superadded to brother Woody by the ***spiritual seed being implanted***, and he being brought to the birth, by his being brought to live the *life he now lives in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God*, that is, as before God. Yet his individuality **is not changed**, it is Davis S. Woody, his old man or nature is the same as it was before, his rational powers the same. And yet his personal relations by the new birth are altogether changed. He no

longer belongs to Adam's family, but to Christ's; is a living member of Christ's body; is not under the law, but under grace; is not of the world, as Christ is not of the world; is not under condemnation, but in a state of justification; although he feels the workings of depravity in all he does, it is no more *he* that does it, but *sin that dwells in him*. He is, in a word, a son of God, and a joint heir with Christ to glory; although he has in the old man all the elements that would constitute him a child of hell if still standing in his relation to Adam and under the law.

In reference to the idea that the principles laid down by brother Dudley favoring the non-resurrection notion [**a false charge made by the Means Baptists, and totally without foundation in fact-SCP**], I will say that so far as I have understood brother Dudley, I know of no material difference between his views and mine in relation to the new birth. And the views I have above advanced as to what is *born again* are the only views, in my estimation, consistent with the idea of the resurrection of **the bodies of the saints to glory**. For I cannot believe that whatever is not born again of God can ever enter heaven to participate in the glory of Christ; whilst what ever is born of God through Christ, the only begotten of the Father, must partake with Him in glory. Hence if I believed that only the "souls" of persons were the subject of regeneration and the new birth, I must believe that only their "souls" enter heavenly glory. But believing as I do, that it is *the man* that is born again; that after the second birth he exists personally in a spiritual life, whilst he retains that in which he before existed as a natural person, and in which he still exists in his fleshly life, and therefore believing that his whole person was represented by Christ in His atonement, I must believe that in his whole person, soul and body, he must enter glory, as a member of Christ's body, and as a trophy of Christ's redemption and of His conquest over death. And I can see

nothing in this sentiment concerning the new birth that can possibly favor the non-resurrection notion.

Thus, my brother, I have tried with plainness to give my views on these points, it is for you to examine the Scriptures for yourself, to judge of their correctness. Yours with kind regards,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia.

July 27, 1853.

S. Trott.

From the Signs, Vol. 31: (1853).