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SCRIPTURAL PROOFS OF SPIRIT-BEGETTING

"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth."
– James 1:18.

THE SCRIPTURES tell us that our Lord left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was and came to earth, becoming a man, "for the suffering of death," that He might give Himself "a Ransom for all." At the age of thirty, we are told, He went to Jordan and presented Himself as a Sacrifice to God. After His baptism, as He came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, "the Heavens were opened unto Him." He was then led of the Spirit (this newly begotten Spirit) into the wilderness for forty days, to commune with the Father, to study the types and prophecies of the Scriptures, and to be tested of the Adversary. Thereafter, He was able to see clearly the course which the Father had marked out for Him, as shown in these types and prophecies.

In inviting His disciples to follow Him, our Lord made it very plain that in so doing they must of necessity be baptized into His death and partake of His cup of suffering, that they might live and reign with Him. Throughout the Scriptures it is pointed out that the Church are to be members of the Body of Christ, of which He is the Head. They declare that He is our Forerunner, the Captain of our salvation; that "as He was, so are we, in this world"; that His experiences are to be our experiences. They declare that He is "leading many sons" – His brethren – to God, to glory.

The steps that we are to take, then, are exactly the steps that *He* took whom we are to follow. He is our great Pattern. We are enabled by faith to see, under Divine guidance, the redemption which Jesus accomplished [R5580 : page 349] for us, and our opportunity of becoming His disciples, of being baptized into His

death. Baptism into death would be far from desirable, unless there were some way by which it might be made a gateway unto life; and this way was provided by God. It was opened first for His Son.

JESUS' HUMAN AND SPIRIT NATURES TYPIFIED

In the type of the Atonement Day, our Lord's human nature was represented in the bullock, which was offered for sacrifice. The high priest, clothed in the white linen garments of sacrifice, represented Him as a spirit-begotten New Creature, after His human sacrifice was accepted, and while the actual consuming of His human body was in process. The high priest, clothed in the "garments of glory and beauty," represented Him after His resurrection to the Divine nature, after He was born of the Spirit and highly exalted to glory, honor and immortality by the Father, as a reward for His faithfulness. – John 3:3-8.

So at the time when we present ourselves to God in consecration, and our sacrifice is accepted of Him, we die as men; but we are likewise begotten to the new nature, the new life. And this new life, begotten from above, continues to grow by the assimilation of spiritual nourishment, until it will, in due time, be born a fully developed spirit being, like unto our Lord. (1 John 3:2; Romans 8:29.) This process and its outcome are brought to our attention in the Scripture which declares of our Lord that He was "the First-born from the dead." And this word *born [gennao]*, in the Greek] is the same word which is translated *begotten*. It relates to the entire process of bringing forth. This is a *progressive* matter; first there is the begetting, then the period of gestation, then birth.

Our Lord's baptism to the new life was at the time He made His consecration unto death at His baptism. The New Creature there begun was growing during the three and a half years thereafter. This period, as before mentioned, was represented in the high priest in the type. At His baptism He was begotten as a Son of God on the highest plane – the Divine. John the Baptist here bore witness of

Him, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him." The record of the Scriptures is that only those who are begotten of the Spirit can see spiritual things. – 1 Corinthians 2:9-16.

DEEP TRUTHS NOT VISIBLE ON THE SURFACE

It is asked: Why is it that a fact of so great importance as the Lord's begetting of the Spirit is not stated in so many words, but must be proven by deduction? We reply: To those who are spiritually minded there is very strong evidence indeed, yet it might be passed over by others and not recognized at all. This is likewise true of other important Scriptural doctrines. There is one Scripture which declares that through the exceeding great and precious promises we may be made partakers of the Divine nature. Other Scriptures state that the followers of Christ shall share His glory, honor and immortality. These latter Scriptures imply the same thing as the first, though only the one text (2 Peter 1:4) states the matter in just those words.

In respect to our Lord's resurrection, it is declared that "He was put to death in flesh, and made alive in Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18 – *Diaglott*.) This Scripture does not say that He was raised a Spirit, but this is the evident meaning; and we know that this was the case: "Now the Lord is that Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:17.) In Colossians 1:18 we read of our Lord: "And He is the Head of the Body, the Church, who is the beginning [of this New Creation], the First-born from the dead." As our Lord was *born* from the dead a spirit Being, He must have been previously begotten of the Spirit, as birth is always preceded by begetting.

In speaking of the resurrection of the Church, which is declared to be Christ's resurrection (Philippians 3:10), the Apostle Paul says: "It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body." So it is "here a little and there a little" that we must find these precious truths. This seems to be the way in which the Lord has

prepared the Bible – giving here a little and there a little of these jewels of Truth. Those who are superficial in their search will overlook the most important features of Truth, to find later that they have only a small part.

CLEARER LIGHT NOW SHINING

As we search the Scriptures, and learn how to rightly divide and rightly combine its various elements, now that the dawning light of the New Dispensation is shining on the Word, making it more luminous to our view, we see the wonderful whole – the great Plan that we and others had previously passed over and failed to discern. Those who are not of the right class will not be able to see the Truth in all its wondrous clearness, beauty and harmony. If we have the right spirit as children of God, we shall want to know what God has in reservation for His people.

This gives an opportunity for the operation of the Spirit of the Truth upon our hearts and minds. This desire leads us to come together for Bible study, when the worldly would say: Let us play billiards or chess or pool. They complain to us: You have already read that Bible several times. We tell them that we *have* and with a great deal of blessing.

Thus, as we are desiring to know the Lord's Plan and His will concerning us, He reveals it to us more and more; and thus, little by little, we gain a great aggregate of Truth, which greatly rejoices our hearts, gives us an intelligent understanding of the wonderful day in which we are living, and gives us calmness and confidence, while the hearts of others are failing them for fear.

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