

**WHAT MEAN WE BY THE WORD
REGENERATION? THE QUESTION;
PROPOSED UNDER A
CATECHETICAL FORM, AND ANSWERED
BY ANALYSIS AND INDUCTION OF THE
SCRIPTURES ONLY**

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WHAT MEAN WE BY THE WORD
REGENERATION?

The Question

PROPOSED UNDER A CATECHETICAL FORM,
AND ANSWERED BY ANALYSIS AND INDUCTION OF
THE SCRIPTURES ONLY

BY

THOMAS WILLIAMSON PEILE, D.D.

AUTHOR OF

"ANNOTATIONS ON THE APOSTOLICAL EPISTLES."

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye agree in believing ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me."—JOHN v. 39.

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WHAT MEAN WE BY THE WORD REGENERATION?

Question. What mean we by the word
REGENERATION?

Answer. In the Scriptural sense and use of the word, a NEW ERA in Man's position, as spiritually corrupt and "guilty before God;" consequent on the fact of our Saviour, the God-Man "who was delivered because of our offences," having been "raised because of our being held guiltless" and free thenceforth to live (as He in our redeemed nature, so we by being made partakers of that nature, as it now is) in Him. A new era commencing, historically, from that day of His resurrection from the dead when, having suffered and died for us in our accursed and God-forsaken humanity, He was marked off from Gal. iii. 13, Matt. xxvii. 46. Mark xv. 34. Heb. v. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 18; iv. 1.

John xiv. 17, 19;
xvii. 23.
Rom. v. 18.
1 Cor. xv. 22. Col. i. 27.
Luke xxii. 44, 53.
John xii. 27.
2 Cor. v. 21.

Rom. i. 4. all other men as "Son of God invested
 John xiii. 8; (thenceforth) with power" to make our
 xvii. 2. sinful bodies clean, by giving us part with
 1 Pet. iii. Him in His spiritual body—"so that the
 21; iv. 6. judgment (under which we are born)
 should be on us *as we are men, in flesh* ;
 2 Pet. i. 4. but that *as having part with God*, (our
 Redeemer and Sanctifier,) we yet should
 have life, *in Spirit*."

Q. Where do we find the word used in the Scriptures to denote a new era in the history of mankind ?

A. In Matt. xix. 28, where THE REGENERATION is definitively described by our Lord as "the time when the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of His glory ;" and when, He further declares, there shall be twelve that have followed Him "seated on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Q. May not our Lord have spoken there of "the times of restitution of all things," and of the end of this world ?

A. Not surely of "the end, when *He shall have delivered up His* (mediatorial) *kingdom to God the Father*;" when, all things having become subject unto Him, "the Son also Himself shall be subject unto *Him that put all things under Him*;" but of those times, until the expiration of which (*ἀχρι χρόνων ὧν κ.τ.λ.*) received up as *Son of Man* into Heaven, "He must

1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.
 Rom. xiv. 9.
 Acts iii. 21.
 1 Cor. xv. 25.
 Heb. x. 12, 13.

reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet." Of those "times of *re-constitution of all things* (*ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων*) in this lower world, of which, since the world began, God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets;" those times which the coming of the Elijah of the New Covenant was to pave the way for (*Ἡλίας μὲν ἔρχεται πρῶτον καὶ ἀποκαταστήσει πάντα*); and so "the days whereof Moses, and all the Prophets from Samuel and his successors, had foretold"—even the days that are NOW, IN THE CHURCH, that last and crowning Economy of Divine Grace, under which to the Jews first, but not less to the Gentiles also, "God, having raised up His Son Jesus, hath sent Him to bless us in turning away every one of us from our iniquities."

Q. Understanding THE REGENERATION, then, in our Lord's use of the term, to have pointed to that period subsequent to His Resurrection from the Dead, when the Son of Man (made perfect, as such, through sufferings) should have "entered into His glory," and be seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as "Head over all to His Church" from that time to be militant on earth—in what sense now are the Twelve also "seated on twelve thrones, *judging* the twelve tribes of Israel?"

A. Not in that sense, assuredly, in

- John v. 22 which "the Father hath committed all judgment (τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν δέδωκε) unto the Son:" not in that sense in which, as the test of its righteousness (i. e. its final acceptance with Him), God will one day judge the world by that One Pattern Man, of whom this is His precise and positive declaration to us: **HE THAT HATH THE SON, HATH LIFE: HE THAT HATH NOT THE SON OF GOD, HATH NOT LIFE.**
- Acts xvii. 31. But, as "the chosen witnesses" who from the Day when Christ was raised in the glory of that Spiritual Humanity, in which before their eyes He ascended to God the Father (from that time to be revealed as in Him *our* God and Father), have made known "what they heard, what they saw with their eyes, what they gazed upon, and their hands palpably demonstrated to them of that **DIVINE LIFE IN HUMAN FLESH**, of which He is **THE WORD**"—the Personal, the immediate, the unmistakable though unseen Exponent to every listening ear, and to every understanding heart: as, ministerially and instrumentally, the spiritual fathers and first-fruits of that **COMMUNION OF SAINTS** in which, being dead, they yet live and invite us to have "fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ:" as, in their peculiar relation to the Visible Church and succession to this day of men in Christ,
- John v. 22—27.
- 1 John v. 11—12.
- Luke xxiv. 48. John xv. 27. Acts i. 2, 8; x. 39—42.
- John xx. 17.
- 1 John i. 1—3.

furnishing the test (*κρίνοντες*) as to *who are*, and *who are not*, of that People called after His Name, who continuing steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and discipline are "*their* followers even as they were Christ's"—in all these particulars we see that our Lord (speaking to them as children of that older Covenant which God made with their fathers) has aptly described the relation in which His Apostles and Prophets stand now to Himself and to the *spiritual* Israel; just as St. Paul (he too connecting these last days with the days that were before them) speaks of the yet unfinished building of the Christian Temple as *resting on them as its foundation*, "JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief corner-stone." Acts viii. 21. 1 Cor. v. 5. 1 Tim. i. 20. 2 Tim. ii. 17. Acts xv. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 1. Acts iii. 25. Heb. ii. 13. Eph. ii. 20.

Q. Is this interpretation of Matt. xix. 28, borne out by any other passage of Scripture ?

A. Yes, by Luke xxii. 28—30: where our Lord, in like manner, addressing those whose faith in Him had held out under all His humiliation as the Son of Man, promises that they shall enter with Him into that glory wherewith "in Himself"—*i. e.* still in that human nature so soon to be bought off in Him from the curse of mortality—"God shall straightway glorify Him." And this, as the spiritual "King of Israel," He presents to their minds under the image of John xiii. 32.