

Introduction: Lambs to Rams Generation, De-generation, Re-generation

When we think of the whole scheme of redemption and why it was necessary for God to send “His only begotten Son” (*Jn 3:16*) to die for the ungodly, questions abound on ‘why?’. What was it that caused such a need in the first place and why have I been subjected to a sinful environment because of something someone else (*Adam*) did? We first must return to the beginning to get some background if we wish to answer these and other questions.

Generation

Mankind was first “generated” as a combination of what God had already made in the physical realm (*dust*) along with having added to that a spiritual component (*breath of life*).

Gen 1:26 Then God said, “Let Us (*Father, Son, Holy Spirit- Gen 1:2; Jn 1:1-3*) make man in Our image (*Heb.6754-resemblance*), after Our likeness. (*He was not speaking to the angels since angels are created beings and don’t create- Mat 22:30.*) And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 So God created man in His Own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (*ESV*)

And mankind was “formed... of dust from the ground” God having “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature” (*2:7*).

God did not perform CPR on dust and the ‘breath of life’ was not oxygen. What God breathed into man was an immortal spirit that continues after the physical life has been shed in death. It is formed in the womb (*Ps 139:13-15*) at conception “in the likeness” of his Creator as a spirit being since God is spirit (*Jn 4:24*) and man’s origin (*Lk 3:38*). The animal kingdom

didn't have this component after being formed "out of the [same] ground" (*Gen 2:19*). This special addition to the mix made man superior to the rest of the creation (*1 Cor 15:48*) as it put man in a special relationship with God, but with added responsibility since man was given free agency (*having choice between good and evil- Gen 2:17*). He is placed in a position over the inferior creation which would include every other living thing or inanimate object, except for death (*Heb 2:7-8, 15*). His rational makes him like God in that he has the instinct to reason, whereas in the animal kingdom the instinct to reason is replaced with an instinct for survival. But because of man's choice to rebel against God, he fell from grace into depravity, away from the presence of his Creator (*Ex 33:20; 2 Thes 1:9*).

De-generation

There has always been a moral law imbedded in the inner man (*1 Pet 3:4*) that cannot be touched or exposed to do evil. And every person who has ever lived, has (*or has had until death*) this innermost part. Without it there would be no ability to choose between good (*based on godly nature- "the breath of life"*) and evil (*based on human nature- "the dust of the earth"; Col 3:5; Jas 3:15*). It has continued through each age or dispensation and will do so until the end of time. Even the Gentile nations in existence from their beginnings had laws that exposed their "thoughts and intents" (*Heb 4:12*) as they related to the Law God gave to the Israelites, and their own salvation (*Rom 2:14*). Thus man has been given choice from the beginning to either cultivate the good in his innermost or be subject to evil (*Rom 6:16*) by not distancing himself from a "former manner of life" which is "corrupt through deceitful desires" (*Eph 4:22*). We don't sin "after the similitude of Adam's transgression" (*Rom 5:14*) since he sinned in a sinless environment, whereas sin, since Adam and Eve's expulsion, has been like a virus which spreads because of the human nature which continually seeds it. Adam and Eve were the ones who introduced the seed to sin into the world and thus brought about the origin of mankind's degeneration. (*Jn 8:42; Gal 3:26*)

Gen 6:5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts (*Heb.4284- contrivance*) of his heart (*Heb.3820- intellect*) was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD regretted (*Heb.5162- to sigh, that is, breath strongly*) that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved (*Heb.6087- anger*) Him to His heart. (*ESV*)

Any time a godly person mixes with the ungodly, the godly seem proportionately higher to yield to the ungodly. This frustrated (*Heb.5162*) God because He saw how sin negatively affected man's relationship with Him. And even though the flood cleansed the earth of the ungodly it wasn't long after that man once again degenerated into falling from God's grace. In the beginning God told Adam and Eve to "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it" (*Gen 1:28*) but after the flood it was by man's stubborn human nature that he began to build a tower "lest we be dispersed over the face of the earth" (*Gen 11:4*). Disobedience continued.

After the fall of man and before he was expelled from Eden, God promised that the day would come "in the fullness of time" (*Gal 4:4*) when Satan's head (*his very power of death- Heb 2:14*) would be bruised through the resurrection of Christ as Jesus is the seed of the woman Who would have to suffer death ("*His heel*" bruised- *Gen 3:15*) as the final sacrifice for sin (*Heb 7:27*). This was the first prophecy of the coming of the Messiah to save man from his sin, bringing in the opportunity for regeneration through obedience via His will that none should perish (*2 Pet 3:9*).

Re-generation

According to Titus 3:5 a "regeneration" is necessary to bring mankind back into his currently severed covenant relationship with his Maker. The word is from the Koine Greek (*Gk.3824*) which invokes a spiritual *rebirth* or *renovation*; specifically a Messianic *restoration*.

Tit 3:3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. 4 **But** when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing (*Gk.3067- baptism*) of regeneration (*Gk.3824*) and renewal (*Gk.342- renovation*) of the Holy Spirit, 6 Whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (*ESV*)(*Emp. added*)

All this is done through obedience to the Holy Spirit inspired Gospel of the New Testament sealed with the blood of Christ (*Mk 14:24*). Believers receive the promise of the Holy Spirit (*Act 2:38-39*) through obedience to the ordinance of baptism (*Act 2:38*) as a “guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it” (*Eph 1:14; see also 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5*).

Example: Washing clothes requires both water and detergent, water being the activating agent and detergent being the cleansing agent. In the same way baptism requires both cleansing and activating agents. The water shows faithful obedience (*activation*) along with the blood of Christ as the only agent that can cleanse.

It is our hope that the foundational material of the faith composed in this volume will aid the new Christian along with those who are still pursuing the truth in all things spiritual.

Charli Yana