

# 1 Peter 1:23

by John Gill

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*Being born again refers to spiritual regeneration, where one becomes a new creature in Christ, with a lively hope of a glorious inheritance.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 40:8, John 1:13, John 3:5-6, John 12:34, Romans 10:17, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15, Ephesians 2:1-5, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 Peter 1:25

**Topics:** "New Birth", "Spiritual Family"

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## Description

John Gill emphasizes the transformative power of being born again through God's mercy, highlighting that believers are regenerated not by corruptible seed but by the incorruptible seed of God's Word. This new birth establishes a spiritual family among believers, urging them to love one another as they share the same Father and inheritance. Gill explains that this regeneration is facilitated by the Holy Spirit and the living Word of God, which remains effective and eternal. He contrasts the corrupt nature of the first birth with the purity of the new birth, underscoring the importance of the Gospel in sustaining spiritual life. Ultimately, believers are called to live in accordance with their new identity as children of God.

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## Transcript

Ver. 23. Being born again,.... As they were of God, according to his abundant mercy, by the resurrection of Christ, to a lively hope of a glorious inheritance; as in 1Pe 1:3 and therefore seeing they were brethren in a spiritual relation, they ought to love as brethren; being children of the same Father, belonging to the same family and household, having the same spirit, and the same nature and disposition, and being members one of another, and heirs of the same grace and glory; and not only so, but were taught of God their Father, in regeneration, to love one another: it became them highly, therefore, to exercise that grace, and particularly since they were born,

not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; referring not to seed cast into the earth, which first corrupts and dies, and then is quickened, and rises, and brings forth fruit; but to human seed, and which the Jews call *hwxro hpj*, "the filthy drop" {k}; which is in itself corrupt, and is corrupted, and whereby the corruption of human nature is propagated; for whatsoever is born of the flesh is carnal and corrupt; and so the apostle has reference to the first birth, or natural generation of men, in which they are polluted and depraved, and confirms what the evangelist says, Joh 1:13 that regenerate persons are not "born of blood"; or become new creatures, and holy men, by their natural descent, or first birth, be it from whom it will; for all men are of one blood originally, and that is tainted with sin; nor by the will of fallen creatures, of

corruptible men, themselves or others; but of water, and of the Spirit, of the grace of the Spirit of God, which is seed pure and incorruptible, having no mixture or taint of sin, nor any degree of pollution in it, and which remains so; nor can it be corrupted by all the wickedness there is in man's heart; nor by all the pollutions of the world, or temptations of Satan; and this seed is conveyed into the heart by the Spirit of God, in regeneration, and it contains all grace in it;

by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever; for the incorruptible seed, and the ever living and abiding word, are two distinct things; though interpreters generally confound them: and by "the word of God" is either meant the essential Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; who is concerned in regeneration as well as the Father and the Spirit; by whose resurrection, and in consequence of it, the elect of God are begotten again; and who, as the Word, is able to build up all the sanctified ones, and give them the inheritance they are born heirs unto: or the Gospel, the word of truth, which is made use of as a means of begetting souls again; and the rather, since it seems to be so interpreted, 1Pe 1:25 the phrases, "which liveth and abideth forever", may be either read in connection only with "God", and as descriptive of him, who is the living God, is from everlasting to everlasting, in distinction from idols; and here added, to show that he can give power and efficacy to his word, to regenerate and quicken, and will continue to preserve and make it useful to all his saving purposes; so Jarchi explains the passage in

Isa 40:8 after referred to, "the word of our God shall stand for ever";

"because he lives and abides, and it is in his power to confirm it therefore it follows, "O Zion, that bringeth good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain"; for because he lives forever, this promise is published."

Or else with the word of God, and is true both of Christ, and of the Gospel. Christ is the Word which lives; in him, as such, is life; he has life in himself as God, as man, and as Mediator; and is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and, eternal; and abides for ever in his person, without any change; and in his offices and grace, and righteousness; he abides a priest continually, has an unchangeable priesthood, and ever lives to make intercession, and of his kingdom there is no end: the same is said of the "Memra", or Word of God, in the Chaldee paraphrase on Ho 11:9 "I am God",

yrmy, "my word abideth for ever": compare Joh 12:34. The Gospel also may be said to live, in opposition to the law, which is the killing letter; and because it points out the way of life and salvation to sinners; and is a means of quickening dead sinners, and of ingenerating that faith by which men live on Christ; and of revealing to them that righteousness which is unto justification of life; and of supporting and maintaining spiritual life in them; and of reviving drooping saints; the Syriac version renders it, "the living Word of God": and it remains, and will abide; all its promises, blessings, doctrines, and ordinances, are lasting; it will continue in the world until all the elect of God are gathered in, until the second coming of Christ, and to the end of the world; notwithstanding all the persecutions of men, and cunning, craft of false teachers, and all the ridicule and contempt it is treated with by mockers and scoffers: and will abide in the effects of it, in the hearts of the saints, to all eternity.

{k} Pirke Abot, c. 3. sect. 1. & Bartenora in ib. Zohar in Exod. fol. 62. 1. & 78. 2.

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