

from God. **God be with him**—Acts 10: 38. God could not be with one who claimed to be his Son, if he was not.

II. THE NEW BIRTH. Except a man be born anew (R. V.)—Christ means a change resembling a birth repeated a second time. The kingdom of God—John uses this expression on only one other occasion (ch. 18: 36). By this Nicodemus would understand the kingdom of the Messiah.

4. How can a man be born when he is old?—“How can such a complete change take place in one whose habits and disposition have become fixed. It would be as impossible as for him to undergo the natural birth a second time.” The answer of Jesus points out the supernatural character of the new birth.

5. Born of water and of the Spirit—The truth stated here is that which was afterwards embodied in the sacrament of baptism. Christ in effect says “Repentance must be accompanied by a spiritual renewal and this is the work of the Holy Spirit.” Compare Acts 2: 38. **6. Is flesh**—Membership in the kingdom of God must rest upon a spiritual birth. “There is a natural birth and there is a spiritual birth. The spiritual can never rise out of natural, as no stream can rise higher than its source.” (Reith.) **Is spirit**—is kindred in character, in essential being, with the Spirit of God. Rom. 7: 6; 8: 2—10; 2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 15; Eph. 4: 23; 1 Pet. 1: 23. This is Christ’s answer to Nicodemus’ question. “How can a man &c?” He is born by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

8. This illustrates the unrestrained action of the Spirit. You cannot bid the wind blow, or dictate its direction. We know the Spirit’s work by its fruits (Gal. 5: 22), but his modes of action are diverse and the

laws of his working unrevealed.

III. THE UPLIFTED SAVIOUR. **10. Art thou a teacher of Israel (R. V.)**—i. e. the wellknown, illustrious teacher. **Knowest not**—He ought to have known all these things from Jer. 31: 33; Ezk. 36: 26-28; Ps. 143: 10, 11 and such passages.

11. We speak—Some of his disciples may have been present. **Ye receive not our testimony**—Ye Jews, people and rulers.

12. Earthly things—“Things which take place on the earth.” The new birth as experienced by men. **Heavenly things**—“The heavenly side of the new birth and the salvation of man, in the eternal counsels of God regarding his only begotten Son.” (Alford.)

13. But he that came down—at the incarnation (ch. 6: 33; 16: 28.) and who will ascend back to the place whence he descended. **Son of man**—A title by which the Messiah was known. Dan. 7: 13. **Which is in heaven**—Compare ch. 1: 18.

14. The reference is to Num. 21: 8ff. In no other way can sinners be saved. Matt. 16: 21.

15. That whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life (R. V.)—A look brought sin into the world, a look takes it away.” (Reith.) **Eternal life**—ch. 17: 3. “Life in the true sense is fellowship with God through faith in Jesus Christ; and this, the possession of which is a matter of certainty now to the believer, lasts for ever.” (Reith.)

16. For—the reason of the “must be lifted up.” **So loved**—the measure of divine compassion is the sacrifice made to save men. Rom. 5: 8; 1 John 2: 2; 4: 8. **The world**—1 John 4: 9. The case of Abraham offering up Isaac is suggested. Heb. 11: 17; Rom. 8: 32.

1. Why did Nicodemus come at night to see Jesus? (5)
2. What was the first thing that Jesus said to him? (4)
3. What kind of a change is the new birth, and who brings it about? (5)
4. In what respects did Christ resemble the brazen serpent? (5)
5. How did God shew his love to the world? (3)
6. Who alone have everlasting life? (3)

Name

Dear Teacher—Please excuse my absence from Sabbath School to-day, I cannot come because I have read the

“Daily Portions” and answered the questions as well as I could. I have committed to memory verses in addition to the Golden Text, and Questions in the Catechism and have recited them to I was at church

I send with this my Weekly Offering of cents.