

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE WORD "SEED"  
IN 1 PETER 1:23

by

Daniel L. Anderson

Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements  
for the degree of Master of Divinity in  
Grace Theological Seminary  
May 1975

LIBRARY  
GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
WINONA LAKE, INDIANA

Accepted by the Faculty of Grace Theological Seminary  
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree  
Master of Divinity

Grade A

Advisor

Paul R. Smith



## PREFACE

Salvation is so simple that Christ said it only necessitates the faith of a little child (Mk. 16:17, 18). Yet the more one examines Scripture the more it becomes apparent that many elements are involved in salvation. It is difficult to define simply what actually occurs in the new birth. Thus the study of 1 Peter 1:3 has expanded this awareness of the greatness of salvation.

The past weeks and months of research in the area of regeneration has given a greater sense of appreciation for salvation. Also the research has given an increased awe for the unfathomable scope and depth of God's riches. To have spent so much time and research on one word of Scripture has caused me to echo the words of Paul in Romans 11:33, " . . . How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

I am indebted to many people for their guidance in directing me thus far in my Christian life. I would like to express special appreciation to Dr. Paul E. Fink for his helpful suggestions and comments. Likewise a special thanks is in order to Mrs. Della Miller for her patient translation of the scribbles to produce the typed copy. Above all special thanks goes to my wife, Bevelle, for her loyal

companionship and her encouragement which gives me initiative  
to research to the full. PREFACE pth of God's riches.

## PREFACE

Salvation is so simple that Christ said it only necessitates the faith of a little child (Mt. 18:3, 4). Yet the more one examines Scripture the more it becomes apparent that many elements are involved in salvation. It is difficult to define simply what actually occurs in the new birth. Thus the study of 1 Peter 1:23 has expanded this awareness of the greatness of salvation.

The past weeks and months of research in the area of regeneration has given a greater sense of appreciation for salvation. Also this research has given an increased awe for the unfathomable scope and depth of God's riches. To have spent so much time and research on one word of Scripture has caused me to echo the words of Paul in Romans 11:33, " . . . How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

I am indebted to many people for their guidance in directing me thus far in my Christian life. I would like to express special appreciation to Dr. Paul R. Fink for his helpful suggestions and comments. Likewise a special thanks is in order to Mrs. Dave Miller for her patient translation of the scribbles to produce the typed copy. Above all special thanks goes to my wife, Rosalie, for her loyal



companionship and her encouragement which gives me incentive to research to the fullest the depth of God's riches.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE . . . . .	iv
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	ix
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	2
Chapter	
I. STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS OF 1 PETER 1:23 . . . . .	7
Grammatical and Textual Problems Examined Genuineness of $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\alpha\varsigma$ Evaluated Significance of $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\alpha\varsigma$	
II. INTERPRETATIONS OF $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\alpha\varsigma$ . . . . .	18
Divine Word of Baptism View Resultant New Life View Seed-Equals-Christ View Seed-Equals-Word of God View Regeneration View	
III. EXEGETICAL SUPPORT FOR PROPER VIEW . . . . .	31
Nature of Context Nature of Regeneration Nature of Seed Presence of Similar Modifiers Significance of $\xi\kappa$ and $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$	
IV. CONCLUSION . . . . .	44
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	47

Table	Page
1. List of Tables	14
2. List of Figures	32

# LIST OF TABLES



## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Chart of Cognates . . . . .	14
2. Chart of Meanings of Seed . . . . .	32

INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

During the incarnate ministry of Jesus it is recorded that one of his purposes in coming to earth was to provide life--super-abundant life (Jn. 10:10). This new life principle became the chief characteristic in the resultant body of believers.

The concept of being born again is a frequent topic in the writings of the New Testament. However, this frequency is not purely repetition but is the expansion and blossoming forth of a broad subject. The New Testament writers use different descriptions and note various characteristics which accompany the new birth.

### The Purpose of this Study

In 1 Peter 1:23 this new birth is described as being "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible." What was the intent and truth regarding the new birth which was being emphasized in this passage? To what does the word "seed" refer? The answer to these questions is the purpose of this paper.

### The Assumptions Underlying this Study

The author is approaching this research with an acceptance of Petrine authorship for the book of 1 Peter as it was originally composed in about 65 A.D. The view of



such scholars as Francis Wright Beare who states of 1 Peter that " . . . in short, it is a baptismal discourse, addressed to a group of recent converts . . . " <sup>1</sup> is not accepted. This view is supposedly based upon the internal completeness of 1 Peter 1:3-4:11 as being not a letter but a sermon. Rather 1 Peter in total is seen as a letter composed by the Apostle Peter to the scattered Jewish believers.

#### The Procedure of this Study

The search for the meaning of  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  will be directed in three primary areas. First, a research of the structural problems and variants of 1 Peter 1:23 will be presented. Secondly, a presentation of the various interpretations of  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  will be given. The final area will be an in-depth exegetical examination supporting the proper view of the topic.

#### Review of Pertinent Literature

There are several sources which proved to be especially helpful in this study. Because of the highly specialized nature of this research, the field of resources for further study includes much which does not directly pertain to the subject. However, the following literature is noteworthy.

---

<sup>1</sup>Francis Wright Beare, The First Epistle of Peter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), p. 26.



### Commentaries

The best single volume on this study is Edward G. Selwyn's<sup>1</sup> work. He gives extensive discussion on the whole verse. F. W. Beare<sup>2</sup> has an excellent introduction to the book of 1 Peter covering the manuscript evidence for the epistle. He too gives good exegesis of the passage. Helpful material was presented on the phrase "living and abiding" by J. N. D. Kelly<sup>3</sup> and R. C. H. Lenski.<sup>4</sup>

### Periodicals

Two periodicals are worthy of special study. An excellent article by F. W. Beare<sup>5</sup> is given on the contributions of P<sup>72</sup> to the text of 1 Peter. Beare also gives some charts and observations of P<sup>72</sup> as it compares with other manuscripts. E. F. F. Bishop<sup>6</sup> has done extensive research on the problem of determining the object of the

---

<sup>1</sup>Edward G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: MacMillan & Co., 1947).

<sup>2</sup>Francis W. Beare, The First Epistle of Peter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970).

<sup>3</sup>J. N. D. Kelly, A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969).

<sup>4</sup>R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude (Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1945).

<sup>5</sup>Francis W. Beare, "Text of 1 Peter in Papyrus 72," Journal of Biblical Literature, 80 (September, 1961), 253-60.

<sup>6</sup>E. F. F. Bishop, "Word of a Living and Unchanging God," Muslim World, 43 (January, 1953), 15-17.



modifiers "living and abiding." Although his conclusions are not in agreement with this particular study, Bishop does have some thought-provoking contributions.

### Grammatical Studies

Since this study is primarily a word study the greatest contribution to this research was in the area of grammatical studies. The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament<sup>1</sup> is very thorough and helpful in its discussion of the word family of σποράς. Extra-biblical literature is noted which further expands the possibility for additional reading. Vine's<sup>2</sup> word study is an asset because of its organized presentation in noting the relationships between the various cognates of σπέρμα. An old but excellent work on the grammatical factors of 1 Peter 1:23 is Henry Alford's<sup>3</sup> volume. He clearly presents the difference and significance of ἐκ and δα.

---

<sup>1</sup>S. Schulz, "σπέρμα," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. VII, ed. by Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971).

<sup>2</sup>W. E. Vine, "Seed," An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1966).

<sup>3</sup>Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, Vol. IV (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1894).



## CHAPTER I

### STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS OF 1 PETER 1:23

Within the specific content of 1 Peter 1:23 there are no major textual variants. There are three structural problems which must be considered in order to understand fully the intended meaning of the author.

#### Grammatical and Textual Problems Examined

There are two problems which must be examined. The grammatical problem involves the determination of the object for the participles  $\eta\upsilon\omega\varsigma$  and  $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon\omega\varsigma$ . The textual problem deals with the determination of the inclusion or exclusion of  $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \alpha\iota\omega\upsilon\alpha$  in the text.

## CHAPTER I

### STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS OF 1 PETER 1:23

#### Object of Participles

It is necessary to determine what is the object of the modifying participles  $\eta\upsilon\omega\varsigma$  and  $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon\omega\varsigma$ . In considering grammar alone, it is possible to connect either  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omega\varsigma$  or  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  with these modifiers. The sense would then be either "the living and abiding word" or "the living and abiding God." Both of these phrases make sense and could legitimately be used. However, both possibilities cannot be the intent of the author Peter.

## CHAPTER I

### STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS OF 1 PETER 1:23

Within the specific content of 1 Peter 1:23 there are no major textual variants. There are three structural problems which must be considered in order to understand fully the intended meaning of the author.

#### Grammatical and Textual Problems Examined

There are two problems which must be examined. The grammatical problem involves the determination of the object for the participles  $\eta\omega\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ . The textual problem deals with the determination of the inclusion or exclusion of  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\alpha$  in the text.

#### Object of Participles

It is necessary to determine what is the object of the modifying participles  $\eta\omega\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ . In considering grammar alone, it is possible to connect either  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\upsilon$  or  $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  with these modifiers. The sense would then be either "the living and abiding word" or "the living and abiding God." Both of these phrases make sense and could legitimately be used. However, both possibilities cannot be the intent of the author Peter.



### Modifiers with God

The earliest known source which connects the modifiers with  $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  is the Vulgate.<sup>1</sup> The verse appears in the Vulgate as follows: "renati non ex semine corruptibili, sed incorruptibili per verbum Dei vivi, et permanentis in aeternum." A translation of this would be "Being reborn not out of corruptible seed, but incorruptible through the word of the living God and enduring unto eternity." It is apparent that living (vivi) and enduring (permanentis) are modifying God (Dei) because of their agreement in case and number--both are genitive singular, the same as Dei. However, the word for "word" (verbum) is in the accusative case and therefore cannot be connected with the modifiers vivi and permanentis.

"Many editors, with the Vulgate, prefer to construe 'through the word of the living, abiding God,' quoting Daniel 6:26 where precisely the same epithets qualify 'God'."<sup>2</sup> Although the citation of the Vulgate and the allusion to Daniel 6:26 are viable arguments the evidence for associating the modifiers with "word" is stronger.

### Modifiers with "word"

The following two reasons indicate that the better interpretation is to connect  $\eta\omega\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$

---

<sup>1</sup>J. N. D. Kelly, A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1969), p. 80.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



with λόγου .

Because of the argument of the author

The argument of Peter in this passage supports the assigning of the modifiers with λόγου . "That the two participles belong to λόγου , not to Θεοῦ , is decisively shown by the sequel, where the abiding nature of God is set forth."<sup>1</sup> The quotation of Isaiah 40:6-8 is clearly a reference to the word of God as being eternal in comparison to the temporality of man and his surroundings. Thus Peter seems to be stating his conviction--God's word is living and eternal--and then he cites the Old Testament passage as his supporting evidence.

Because of the Greek word order

The word order of the verse supports the interpretation that the modifiers belong to λόγου . Because Θεοῦ is positioned between the participles rather than before or after them they do not appear to be tied with Θεοῦ .<sup>2</sup>

#### Validity of εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα

There is little real issue regarding the validity of the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα . This phrase has been included

---

<sup>1</sup>Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, Vol. IV (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1894), p. 343.

<sup>2</sup>Edward G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: MacMillan and Co., 1947), p. 151.



in the Authorized Version and is translated by the word "forever." Those who support the inclusion of these words do so on the basis of the ninth century uncials K, L and P as well as some versions. These are legitimate claims.

However, the majority of manuscript evidence excludes the phrase from the text. Uncials  $\aleph$ , A, B and C, which are considered to be some of the best preserved manuscripts, all exclude  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \tau\acute{o}\nu\ \alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\alpha$ . These uncials date back to the fourth and fifth centuries. One of the more recent manuscript discoveries relating to 1 Peter is P<sup>72</sup> dating back to the early third century. This papyrus copy also excludes the words in question.

Beare has concluded that  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \tau\acute{o}\nu\ \alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\alpha$  should not be included in verse 23 because it is an intrusion from verse 25.<sup>1</sup>

#### Genuineness of $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ Evaluated

The second structural problem of 1 Peter 1:23 involves the defense of the authenticity of  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ .

#### Reason for Questioning

There is legitimate reason for questioning the genuineness of  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ . This word is a hapax legomenon in 1 Peter. Singular occurrences are not unusual to find

---

<sup>1</sup>F. W. Beare, The First Epistle of Peter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), p. 112.



in Scripture. However, in this case there are two other cognate words which are more frequently used.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it can rightfully be asked if σπορᾶς is the intended word in Peter's autograph or did he use σπέρμα or σπόρος and textual transmission has brought about the insertion of σπορᾶς.

### Verification of Word

The following reasons can be noted as verification of the genuineness of σπορᾶς.

#### Acceptable cognate

The word σπορᾶς was an acceptable cognate in the Greek. Schulz cites the usage of σπορᾶς in the writings of such Greek authors as Euripedes, Sophicles and Aeschylus.<sup>2</sup> These extra-Biblical usages are found to contain meaning comparable to Peter's meaning.

#### Manuscript evidence

Extant manuscript evidence exists which supports the authenticity of σπορᾶς. The chief evidence is the Bodmer Papyri VII and VIII officially designated P<sup>72</sup>. These Greek manuscripts are from the third century and

---

<sup>1</sup>The analysis of these words is given on p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>S. Schulz, "σπέρμα," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. VII, ed. by Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), p. 537.



contain the text of Jude and of 1 and 2 Peter. In these uncials the word  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\hat{\alpha}s$  is used. Also supporting this reading is Codex B of the fourth century. Two significant codices which have variants are A and  $\aleph$ . These uncials omit the word  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\hat{\alpha}s$ , and thus read, "Being born again not of corruptible but incorruptible. . . ." <sup>1</sup> Textual critics of the Bible Societies' text do not even list this as a possible variant. <sup>2</sup>

### Scribal purity

If it should be assumed that a scribal copyist had made a change in the manuscript it would have been most likely that conformity and not divergence would have been inserted. However, such is not the case. Rather than using the more frequent cognate forms, a singular usage is found, thus adding strength to the authenticity of its usage as being the intended word of the autograph.

### Reliability of the book

A final summary reason may be observed by stating that there is no reason to doubt that Peter intended  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\hat{\alpha}s$  in the original manuscript. The book of 1 Peter on the

---

<sup>1</sup>F. W. Beare, "The Text of 1 Peter in Papyrus 72," Journal of Biblical Literature, 80 (September, 1961), 253, 256.

<sup>2</sup>Kurt Aland, et al., The Greek New Testament (London: United Bible Societies, 1966), p. 793.



whole has experienced little controversy over its canonicity and thus the presence of such hapax legomenon as σποράς can be seen as legitimate characteristics of Peter's writing.

### Significance of σποράς

Having established the genuineness of σποράς as being the original intention of the autograph, it rightly follows that the significance of the word should be presented.

The basic cognate family of σποράς includes five basic words. These are: σπέρμα, σπείρω, σπορά, σπόρος and σπόριμος. The root meaning of these words includes in one fashion or another the concept of "seed" or "sowing of seed." Thus σπέρμα means "seed," σπείρω means "to sow," σπορά originally meant "sowing," σπόρος means "sowing" and σπόριμος is an adjective meaning "sown" or "adopted for sowing," or "to be sown."<sup>1</sup> All of these forms are used in the New Testament.<sup>2</sup>

The original meaning of all of these cognates referred to literal "seed" or a literal "sowing." However, a figurative sense of "seed" and "sowing" developed. Thus these words were frequently used in writing and speech to refer to the human implanting of semen to cause conception.

---

<sup>1</sup>S. Schulz, "σπέρμα," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. VII, ed. by Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), pp. 537, 538.

<sup>2</sup>Note chart of cognates, p. 14.



The resultant children were known as the "seed" signifying "off-spring" or "progeny."

TABLE 1

## CHART OF COGNATES

GREEK WORD	TRANSLATION (times used) <sup>a</sup>
σπείρω	sow (43) sower (6) receive seed (4)
σπέρμα	issue (1) <sup>b</sup> seed (43)
σπορά	seed (1)
σπόρος	seed (4) seed sown (1)
σπόριμος	corn (1) cornfields (2)

<sup>a</sup>Robert Young, Analytical Concordance to the Bible (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., n.d.), p. 89.

<sup>b</sup>The writer holds that the translation "issue" of the Authorized Version in this verse is the Old English way of indicating the fertilization process and thus is rightfully understood as related to progeny (cf. Mt. 22:24).

In this development σποράς took on the meaning of "generation," "birth," "progeny," "race" and finally, "the one begotten" or "child." Schulz notes that these meanings are found throughout the classical writings of such noted Greek literary scholars as Euripides, Sophocles



and Aeschylus.<sup>1</sup>

The question could be asked, "Why did Peter choose to use σπορᾶς here instead of σπέρμα or σπόρος?" The latter two forms are much more predominant in the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> Vine notes that σπορᾶς is closely related to σπέρμα and is like σπόρος in its meaning.<sup>3</sup> Thus there appears to be no significant importance in the usage of any one of these three nouns. Therefore it can safely be concluded that the reason Peter selected σπορᾶς is not evident nor available but likewise it is not important in the determination of the meaning of the verse.

### Summary

#### Purpose of this Chapter

It has been concluded that the object of the modifiers ἡῶντος and μένοντος should be λόγου and not Θεοῦ. Also the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα was found to be not authentic in the original text. Peter's use of σπορᾶς rather than more common words for "seed" was determined to be genuine, although no unique significance

---

<sup>1</sup>S. Schulz, "σπέρμα," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. VII, ed. by Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), pp. 537, 538.

<sup>2</sup>Note chart of cognates, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>W. E. Vine, "Seed," An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1966), p. 339.



can be drawn from this particular usage.

#### Contribution of this Chapter

The internal problems of 1 Peter 1:23 must be handled before the proper interpretation of the passage can be given. Having given workable solutions to these problems it is then possible to build upon these conclusions and to move directly into the area of interpretations for *σποῦς* . These interpretations are presented in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### INTERPRETATIONS OF σποράς

In order to secure an awareness of the content of I Peter 1:11 note its content: "καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν ἔτι σποράς, ἀλλὰ ἡ ἐκλεκτοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ σποράς, ἡ ἡμετέρας, ἡ ἡμετέρας, ἡ ἡμετέρας." The point of controversy involves the correct interpretation of "seed." There are five major interpretations which will be presented. Names have been assigned to each of these views for the convenience and clarity of the reader. These names are not the titles of the adherents.

## CHAPTER II

### INTERPRETATIONS OF σποράς

In discussing each view the procedure will be to define the particular view under discussion, present the valid points of support for the view and then to note the representative adherents of the view. The refutations of the improper views will be handled in the following chapter as the proofs for the proper view are presented.

#### Meaning Word of Baptism View

##### Definition of View

In the divine word of baptism view "seed" is defined as referring to the rite of water baptism. Baptism is considered to be the means of being born again, as to be born again of incorruptible seed, as I Peter 1:23 states, is to



## CHAPTER II

### INTERPRETATIONS OF σπορᾶς

In order to assure an awareness of the content of 1 Peter 1:23 note its content: "ἀναγεγεννημένοι οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς ἀλλὰ ἀφθάрту, διὰ λόγου ἡῶντος Θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος." The point of controversy involves the correct interpretation of "seed." There are five major interpretations which will be presented. Names have been ascribed to each of these views for the convenience and clarity of the reader. These names are not the titles of the adherents.

In discussing each view the procedure will be to define the particular view under discussion, present the valid points of support for the view and then to note the representative adherents of the view. The refutations of the improper views will be handled in the following chapter as the proofs for the proper view are presented.

#### Divine Word of Baptism View

##### Definition of View

In the divine word of baptism view "seed" is defined as referring to the rite of water baptism. Baptism is considered to be the means of being born again, so to be born again of incorruptible seed, as 1 Peter 1:23 states, is to



be baptized.

### Support for View

There are three lines of support given for the baptism interpretation.

#### Baptismal homily

A primary factor used for support is the critical interpretation that the epistle of 1 Peter is not a singularly composed letter, but rather incorporates an early Christian baptismal homily with some actual epistolary content.<sup>1</sup> Thus 1 Peter 1:3-4:11 is defined as being the baptismal sermon and the remainder of the book is original material. Approaching the book with this concept allows ἀναγεννήσας to be associated with baptism in their interpretation of "seed."

#### Meaning of ἀναγεννήσας

A second supporting factor is to apply a technical interpretation to ἀναγεννήσας, so that the word becomes a reference to baptism. The use of the term in 1 Peter 1:3 and 1 Peter 1:23 is thought to be related to convey the idea of baptism throughout the baptismal homily.

#### Citation of Isaiah 40

A parallel between Isaiah 40 and Peter's quotation in 1 Peter 1:24, 25 is used as a third line of support.

---

<sup>1</sup>Note introduction p. 3.



Scharlemann<sup>1</sup> believes that Isaiah 40 is to be understood in the light of the Jews returning from Babylon in anticipation of the return of Jehovah in His strength to have a dominion. In similar fashion in 1 Peter he notes that Peter is writing from "Babylon" (symbolically referring to Rome). Peter compares baptism of the believer as an act of separation from the Babylonish philosophy of the world with Israel's separation from Babylon.<sup>2</sup>

This third line of support is a legitimate parallelism. However, the parallel is colored by the presupposition that tampers with the text of Peter, which is not legitimate. The lesson of the parallel can be maintained without tying it with the baptism symbol.

#### Adherents of View

The chief adherents interpreting  $\sigma\tau\omicron\rho\alpha\varsigma$  as referring to baptism are J. N. D. Kelly and Siegfried Schulz. Kelly states concerning 1 Peter 1:23:

This takes up the image of baptismal rebirth already used in 1:3 and contrasts natural generation, which is brought about by human and therefore perishable seed, with the new birth in Christ which men undergo in baptism, in which results from the impact of divine and therefore imperishable seed.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>M. H. Scharlemann, "Why the Kuriou in 1 Peter 1:25?" Concordia Theological Monthly, 30 (May, 1959), p. 354.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>J. N. D. Kelly, A Commentary on the Epistle of Peter and of Jude (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1969), p. 80.



Schulz adds that "in a transferred sense it ( $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\hat{\alpha}s$ ) denotes here the living and abiding divine word of baptism by which Christians are born again (parenthesis mine)."<sup>1</sup>

### Resultant New Life View

The second interpretation of  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\hat{\alpha}s$  is the resultant new life view. A common characteristic of this view is that its adherents frequently seem confused with the seed-equals-Word of God view<sup>2</sup> in their interpretation.

### Definition of View

The primary definition of this view is that  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\hat{\alpha}s$  is referring to the subsequent new life initiated by the new birth. Thus the unique feature is that "seed" is not a point-in-time occasion but rather a process of the new life of the believer. The emphasis is upon the outward evidence rather than upon the inward nature, although that new nature is acknowledged.

### Support for View

#### "Incorruptible" emphasized

The basic support for the resultant life view is the emphasis of the word "incorruptible." The stress is

---

<sup>1</sup>S. Schulz, " $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\hat{\alpha}s$ ," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. VII, ed. by Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), p. 537.

<sup>2</sup>Discussed under seed-equals-Word of God view, p. 24.



made that the contrast is between a corruptible life which will end and an incorruptible life which is introduced in this verse (1 Pet. 1:23) as initiating an unending process.

This is a commendable observation--a new endless life is beginning. However, this is an over-simplification of the interpretation which fails to handle completely the detailed meaning of the verse.

### Adherents of View

The variations of the resultant new life view are noted by citations from its advocates. English states:

" . . . through the Spirit we are born anew, we have new life. This new nature is not as the old nature, but it is abiding; it never dies."<sup>1</sup> Later he also states that by the Word "we have been born again into new life, incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever."<sup>2</sup> Beare notes:

The new life of the Christian believer . . . springs from "incorruptible seed," in that it is of God's sowing and is inherently immortal. . . . It is the property of the new life which he receives by the creative act of God.<sup>3</sup>

George Cramer clearly conveys this view by writing that "the good seed of divine life is implanted by the word

---

<sup>1</sup>E. Schuyler English, The Life and Letters of Saint Peter (New York: Publication office "Our Hope" Arno C. Gaebelstein, Inc., 1941), p. 171.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Francis Wright Beare, The First Epistle of Peter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), p. 111.



which the apostles preached."<sup>1</sup>

### Seed-Equals-Christ View

In the seed-equals-Christ view an attempt is made to draw a parallel between the meaning of "incorruptible seed" and the "living and abiding word" found in the following phrase.

#### Definition of View

The definition of this view is that "incorruptible seed" is referring to the person of Christ, the divine λόγος.

#### Support for View

##### Christ the λόγος

The support for the seed-equals-Christ view is based on the use of the word λόγος in John chapter one where it refers to Christ. Since λόγος is also used in 1 Peter 1:23, it is interpreted as referring to Christ. Thus the phrase "by the living and abiding Word of God" becomes an explanation and expansion of σποράς.

It is true that Christ is referred to as the λόγος. Likewise the adjective "incorruptible" makes sense as associated with Christ. Also Christ is the source and provision of the believer's new birth. Thus it is possible to see Christ as the "seed" and still maintain loyalty to the overall teaching of Scripture. However,

---

<sup>1</sup>George H. Cramer, First and Second Peter (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967), p. 32.



to make Christ equal λόγος in 1 Peter 1:23 is not the best solution for the total interpretation of the verse.

#### Adherent of View

The main adherent of the seed-equals-Christ interpretation is James Moffatt.<sup>1</sup> It must be acknowledged that Moffatt is a bit confusing as to what his exact interpretation is. At first it appears he thinks of the seed as being the written Word of God, but further investigation indicates his interpretation to be that seed equals the divine Logos. He develops this through the allusion to the Stoic notion of logos spermatikos which taught a divine word was reproductive in human life.<sup>2</sup> In applying this concept to 1 Peter 1:23 Moffatt associates Christ as being this divine reproduction in human life. "You are born of immortal seed, i.e. you owe your being as Christians to the revelation of the living God in Christ incarnate and risen. Such is your regenerate nature."<sup>3</sup>

#### Seed-Equals-Word of God View

The most frequent interpretation of "seed" in 1 Peter 1:23 is the seed-equals-Word of God view.

---

<sup>1</sup>James Moffatt, The General Epistles (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.), p. 111.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



### Definition of View

This view may be defined as stating that  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  equals the written Word of God. Thus the phrase "being born again . . . of incorruptible (seed)" is amplified by the subsequent phrase "by the Word of God."

### Support for View

There are two basic factors which are used to support this view.

#### Statement of Luke 8:11

In the parable of Jesus dealing with the seed and the sower it is recorded in Luke's account that Jesus interprets the seed as being the Word of God. Because of the presence of "seed" and the phrase "Word of God" in 1 Peter 1:23 the association is then made with the Luke 8:11 passage to state that  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  equals God's Word.

This understanding of Luke 8:11 is a proper one. Jesus definitely states in that parable that the seed is the Word. However, it is an oversimplification to assume that because the two words appear together in Peter's epistle the meaning is the same. The grammatical structure does not support this.

#### Quotation of Isaiah 40

The closeness of the reference to the Word of God and the further quotation from Isaiah 40 which definitely



refers to the Word of God causes the adherents of this view to equate seed and word. Furthermore it is noted that 1 Peter 1:24 contrasts the word as enduring in comparison to the transitory nature of flesh. Since this contrast definitely refers to the Word of God, it is then argued that it is only natural to see the contrast of corruptible seed and incorruptible seed as referring to the same thing. Thus Demarest explains that the Apostle adds the phrase "by means of God's Word, living and abiding forever" to drive away any doubt as to the meaning of the figurative terms used before: "it is his exposition of the foregoing clause."<sup>1</sup>

#### Adherents of View

Lenski writes "the incorruptible seed of the Word brings forth life everlasting" and "what this seed really is: by means of God's living and abiding Word."<sup>2</sup> Calvin<sup>3</sup> states that the Gospel is not preached, that it may be only heard by us, but that it may as seed of immortal life,

---

<sup>1</sup>John T. Demarest, Translation and Exposition of the First Epistle of the Apostle Peter (New York: John Moffett, 1851), p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude (Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1945). p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>John Calvin, Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), p. 57. An editor's footnote dogmatically states that Calvin represents the seed as the word.



altogether reform our hearts. Bigg<sup>1</sup> cites Luke 8:11 as being the explanation for seed and thus equates it with Word of God.

### Regeneration View

The last view to be presented is the regeneration view. Since this is the view which this research has found to be correct it will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

### Definition of View

The regeneration view holds that "seed" refers to the process of regeneration. Within this view there are various scopes of regeneration which are held. For example, Fink<sup>2</sup> holds that only the aspect of the new nature is in view, while Jowett<sup>3</sup> includes the full scope of regeneration.

### Adherents of View

Selwyn notes that "the supernatural origin or source from which believers have been begotten again is here not

<sup>1</sup>Charles Bigg, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930), p. 123.

<sup>2</sup>Paul R. Fink, "An Analysis of the Literary Styles of the Petrine Epistles and its Contribution to the Exegesis of the Petrine Epistles" (Unpublished doctoral dissertation for Dallas Theological Seminary, 1967), p. 199.

<sup>3</sup>J. H. Jowett, The Redeemed Family of God (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), p. 65.



the Word but God's creative grace, the Word being the means of their regeneration."<sup>1</sup> From Alford's writing it is noted that "the Word of God is not the begetting principle itself, but only that by which the principle works."<sup>2</sup> Brown describes this incorruptible seed as being a spiritual change known as the new or second birth.<sup>3</sup> Jowett adds to this by stating that "it was through the Word of God there was given to us the seed of a regenerated life."<sup>4</sup> Likewise Fink states that "the seed of 1:23 is not the Word of God but rather is better understood to be the new nature (cf. 1 Jn. 3:9) which is implanted by God by the instrument of the Word of God."<sup>5</sup>

### Summary

#### Purpose of this Chapter

It has been seen that there are five primary interpretations of  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ . The views have been defined

---

<sup>1</sup>Edward G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: MacMillan & Co., 1947), p. 150.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, Vol. IV (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1894), p. 343.

<sup>3</sup>John Brown, Expository Discourses on the Epistle of the Apostle Peter, Vol. I (Evansville: The Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1958), p. 176.

<sup>4</sup>J. H. Jowett, The Redeemed Family of God (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.), p. 65.

<sup>5</sup>Paul R. Fink, "An Analysis of the Literary Styles of the Petrine Epistles and its Contribution to the Exegesis of the Petrine Epistles" (Unpublished doctoral dissertation for Dallas Theological Seminary, 1967), p. 199.



along with the main supporting points for each view. Also the main adherents for the particular views were noted.

### Contribution of this Chapter

In evaluating the views it could be said that the divine word of baptism view is least legitimate while the rest of the views do have commendable observations on 1 Peter 1:23.

It is then necessary to examine these observations in the light of the evidence to see what the proper interpretation of  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\hat{\alpha}\varsigma$  should be. In the subsequent chapter this evidence will be presented.



## CHAPTER II

### EXEGETICAL SUPPORT FOR PROPER VIEW

The proper view of the text is that it is a statement of the normal, correct usage, not a statement of "variation" or "usage". The interpretation may be proved by noting the following considerations:

#### 1. The Text

It is the simplest of words, and its meaning is clear to understand the original author.

#### CHAPTER III

### EXEGETICAL SUPPORT FOR PROPER VIEW

The interpretation of the text is supported by the following considerations:

#### 1. The Text

The Apostle Paul is quoted as saying: "The Lord is saying the word of God to the world" (1. Cor. 7:8). This is a statement of the normal, correct usage, not a statement of "variation" or "usage". The interpretation may be proved by noting the following considerations:

However, when Paul says "the word of God" he is referring to the word of God as it is used in the Bible.

The word of God is the word of God as it is used in the Bible.



### CHAPTER III

#### EXEGETICAL SUPPORT FOR PROPER VIEW

The proper view of  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\alpha\varsigma$  is to interpret it in its normal derived usage, that being a reference to "generation" or "progeny." This interpretation may be proven by noting the following observations.

##### Nature of Context

It is the Biblical interpreter's responsibility to try to understand exactly what the original author was intending to say by his choice of words. Likewise the interpreter must try to perceive the impression upon the minds of the first readers.

##### Jewish Heritage

The Apostle Peter is recognized throughout the New Testament as being the chief Apostle to the Jews (cf. Gal. 2:9). Being a proud Jew himself, he was unashamed to allude to his rich heritage. One element of that heritage was the fleshly tie to Abraham. Repeated references are made throughout the Old Testament to this tie by the description of being of the "seed" of Abraham.<sup>1</sup>

However, when Peter began to understand the meaning

---

<sup>1</sup>Note chart of meanings, p. 32.



of regeneration, he also began to see the folly of depending upon his Jewish heritage for his eternal life. Thus he states that he is born again, not of the corruptible seed or heritage of his Jewish background, but rather he was born again of incorruptible seed. "St. Peter's own name Bar-jona or Bar-johanan, 'son of the Grace of God,' may have fostered this idea as he thought on it. His readers were children of nature and have now become children of grace."<sup>1</sup>

TABLE 2

CHART OF MEANINGS OF "SEED"<sup>a</sup>

<u>MEANING</u>	<u>O.T. OCCURRENCES</u>	<u>N.T. OCCURRENCES</u>
Literal Seed	37	7
Progeny	181	54
Figurative	3	11

---

<sup>a</sup>The categories and occurrences are based upon the writer's research and are his tabulations.

## Jewish Readers

The initial addressees of 1 Peter are identified as being the "elect sojourners scattered . . . " (1 Pet. 1:1). These were first century Christians who were predominantly

---

<sup>1</sup>Edward G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: MacMillan & Co., 1947), p. 150.



Jewish and who had been scattered due to the persecutions within the Roman Empire. In spite of their dispersed conditions they still highly valued their Jewish history, as seen by the very use of the title diaspora (*διασποράς*). They were the "seed throughout" the areas named. Peter cautions them however, by saying that they are not born again by this corruptible blood tie, for such a tie could have been severed by death. Rather their regeneration is an incorruptible seed. They undoubtedly understood the parallel that was being presented.

#### Literary Device

One further factor regarding the context bears notation. Is a strictly symbolic literary device being employed here? The answer to this question is "No." Rather, Peter is using a derived meaning which was accepted in the mind and vocabulary of the Jews. This might be compared to the contemporary usage of "kid" to refer to a child. In the contemporary example no one would interpret this to refer to a goat or some other object. Likewise in the mind of the contemporary Jewish reader of Peter, the usage of seed was understood to refer to the progeny of Abraham.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>John Brown, Expository Discourses on the Epistle of the Apostle Peter, Vol. I, (Evansville: The Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1958), p. 175.



### Nature of Regeneration

A second line of proof that  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  refers to regeneration may be seen in the very nature of regeneration. By the use of ἀναγεννημένοις Peter indicates that he is referring to a special kind of birth. The compounds of this word mean "born again" or "born above." Peter states that this new birth is not of a corruptible seed but this new birth is of an incorruptible seed. If regeneration is defined and examined, then the incorruptible seed could be better understood.

### Regeneration Examined

#### Definition of regeneration

Regeneration is that supernaturally creative work of God through the Holy Spirit, whereby the principle of eternal life is imparted to the one confessing Christ as Savior. This action occurs at the moment of salvation. The result of this renewal is the impartation of the new nature and the establishment of fellowship between God and individual people. Just as human birth is a point-in-time occurrence, likewise spiritual birth is a point-in-time happening.

#### Explanation of regeneration

Chafer notes five facts concerning the nature of regeneration:



- 1) a new life has been begotten which is eternal;
- 2) that life is the divine nature; 3) the believer is begotten by the Spirit; 4) God the Father becomes his legitimate Father; 5) therefore, all believers are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.<sup>1</sup>

The first two of these facts are clearly related to the birth referred to by Peter's description of "incorruptible seed." The aspects of eternality (incorruptible) and the divine nature (seed) thus are evident and show the relationship of regeneration to the passage.

#### Refutation Factors

The nature of regeneration refutes the claims of the baptismal view and the resultant life view for σποράς. Since regeneration is not brought about by water baptism, the incorruptible seed cannot be referring to this rite. Likewise, since the incorruptible seed refers to regeneration then incorruptible seed cannot be referring to a process or resultant life as the resultant life view claims.

#### Nature of Seed

The very nature of seed is an argument for the regeneration view. From the physical standpoint, σποράς demonstrates the picture of an element containing initial life which then produces a living object. Thus σποράς must be defined in terms that fit this picture.

---

<sup>1</sup>Lewis S. Chafer, Systematic Theology, Vol. VII: Doctrinal Summarization (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), p. 265.



### Normal Meaning in Scripture

More importantly the proper meaning of σποράς may be understood in the light of its normal usage in Scripture. From table two<sup>1</sup> it can be seen that the predominant usage of seed is to refer to progeny. The Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word family for "seed" has been traced also. In the Old Testament usage, the Jewish sense of "seed" is overwhelmingly clear as predominantly being the concept of "progeny." However, the significant factor is that in the New Testament "progeny" is the most frequent meaning.

### Usage in Scripture

#### Literal usage

The literal seed meanings are those occasions when a physical plant seed is being mentioned, for example in the first chapter of Genesis reference is made to the seed within the created plants (Gen. 1:11, 12, 29).

#### Figurative usage

The figurative usages of seed are primarily found within poetic or parabolic passages. In the instances of the parables the regular pattern is for the literal sense of "seed" to be used with some alluded meaning to be then drawn from some characteristic of the literal seed. The most familiar example is the parable of the sower of the

---

<sup>1</sup>Note chart of meanings, p. 32.



Gospels (Lk. 8:4-15 and Mt. 13:1-9, 18-23). In this parable Jesus uses literal seed and then draws the figurative meaning from it. The seed in this parable is clearly identified as representing the Word of God (Lk. 8:11).

### Refutation Factors

Three general conclusions can be made from the nature of seed which will serve as refutations for the seed-equals-Christ view and the seed-equals-Word of God view, which require figurative meanings.

#### Predominant meaning

First, the most predominant meaning of "seed" in Scripture is a reference to progeny. The least predominant usage of "seed" is in a figurative sense. Therefore the probabilities are greater that in 1 Peter 1:23 the meaning of "seed" is indicating "progeny."

#### Conditions for figurative meaning

Secondly, the occasions when "seed" is used figuratively occur within poetic or parabolic passages. The only questionable passage is 2 Corinthians 9:10. Since 1 Peter 1:23 is neither a poetic nor a parabolic passage, the weight of evidence lies against the possibility for  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  to have a figurative meaning.



### Comparable objects

A final factor from the nature of seed should be noted. It is clear that the corruptible seed is referring to a physical progeny. Since the contrary description "incorruptible" has an implied object it must be comparable to the stated object. Therefore since the stated object  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  is a fleshly birth then the implied object must be some type of birth. It cannot be a means to another birth as those views state which seek to interpret incorruptible seed as being either Christ or the Word of God.

### Presence of Similar Modifiers

Within the text of 1 Peter 1:23 it is possible to see a fourth proof that  $\sigma\pi\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  is best interpreted as referring to regeneration. This proof is seen in the presence of the similar modifiers to describe "seed" and "Word of God."

### "Seed" Modifiers

The seed is described both negatively and positively, but the resultant description is equal. The "seed" is incorruptible. The word for incorruptible is  $\alpha\phi\theta\alpha\rho\tau\omicron\varsigma$  and has the meaning of "uncorrupted," "not liable to corruption or decay," "imperishable."<sup>1</sup> Thus the seed is eternal and abiding.

---

<sup>1</sup>J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: American Book Co., 1889), p. 88.



### "Word of God" Modifiers

The "Word of God" has been proven to be modified by  $\eta\omega\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ .<sup>1</sup> These words are well defined by the Authorized translations of "living" and "abiding." Thus the Word of God is described as being eternally alive.

### Refutation Factor

#### Purposeless ambiguity

The refutation factor is this. If the incorruptible seed and the Word of God are synonymous as the seed-equals-Word of God view states then there is needless and purposeless ambiguity. The sense would be that one is born again of incorruptible (eternal) seed (Word of God) by the eternal Word of God. The sense of such interpretation is impossible.

There is a reasonable necessity for describing the Word of God as being eternal and living as is done through the Isaiah quotation in verses 24 and 25. In the construction of the Greek it is apparent that the Word of God is the instrument of the regeneration. To confirm in the reader's mind that the regeneration process is reliable Peter assures them that not only is the product incorruptible but the agent is likewise eternal. Furthermore, it is impossible to have a product that is greater than its

---

<sup>1</sup>Note pp. 7-9.



producer. So the confirmation of the Word of God as being eternal and living is crucial to affirm the validity of the incorruptible seed, but to equate word and seed and describe them as Peter does would indeed be redundant.

### Significance of ἐκ and δια

The concluding proof for the regeneration view is taken from the significance of the Greek prepositions ἐκ and δια as used in 1 Peter 1:23.

#### Meaning of Prepositions

The basic meaning of ἐκ is "out of," "from within."<sup>1</sup> The only case that it is used with is the ablative case. The root meaning of δια is "two," but as used in composition it carried the idea of "between" or "through." Used with the genitive, as appears here in this verse, it has the meaning of "through."<sup>2</sup>

#### Distinction of Prepositions

Because of the closeness of appearance in the verse of the two prepositions it is evident that Peter was not referring to the same thing when saying "incorruptible seed" and Word of God. Several factors are to be noted in this observation.

---

<sup>1</sup>H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek Testament (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1927), p. 102.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 101.



### Origination from ἐκ

First, the use of ἐκ denotes origination.<sup>1</sup> Robertson designates this as being the use of ἐκ as the source with the ablative case.<sup>2</sup> Thus the source of the new birth is the incorruptible seed.

### Instrumentality from δα

On the other hand δα is used with the genitive case λόγου and denotes instrumentality.<sup>3</sup> Faith cometh by (ἐκ) hearing and hearing by (δα) the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). The Word of God is the means by which the new birth is fostered but it is not the source of that new birth. The use of ἐκ denotes the origin or source of life and the use of δα denotes the medium through which this life is imparted.<sup>4</sup>

### Conclusion from Prepositions

Because of the different prepositions and the difference of case it becomes conclusive that σποράς and

---

<sup>1</sup>Bradley Alford, Dean Alford's Greek Testament (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co., 1869), p. 567.

<sup>2</sup>A. T. Robertson, The General Epistles and the Apocalypse, Vol. VI: Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1933), p. 93.

<sup>3</sup>Bradley Alford, Dean Alford's Greek Testament (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co., 1869), p. 567.

<sup>4</sup>M. R. Vincent, The Synoptic Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Epistles of Peter, James, and Jude, Vol. I: Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), p. 640.



λόγου are not synonymous. They must be interpreted as related to the same process of salvation, but different in their functions.

### Summary

#### Purpose of this Chapter

Throughout this chapter the evidence to support the regeneration view of σποράς has been given. This was developed through five arguments: nature of context, nature of regeneration, nature of seed, presence of similar modifiers and significance of ἐκ and ὁαί .

#### Contribution of this Chapter

It is the conviction of this writer that there is clear and adequate evidence to support the regeneration view as being the only correct view. However, there may be legitimate variations in the scope of regeneration intended here.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

#### Intent of this Study

The intent of this study was to determine the meaning of "seed" in 1 Peter 1:23. Structural problems were handled with tentative solutions given for the structural and textual problems.

#### Interpretations of "Seed"

### CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

There are three interpretations for "seed." The first is the divine word of baptism view which holds that the seed is the divine word of baptism. Secondly, the resultant new life view holds that the process of a new life is being born. Thirdly, the seed-Christ view holds that "seed" and Christ are synonymous terms. The seed-Christ view of God states that the seed is the word of God.

Each of these views was presented with their definitions, their points of support and their chief arguments. In weighing the evidence it was determined that the proper interpretation was the regeneration view which defines seed as being the regeneration process.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

#### Intent of this Study

The intent of this study was to determine the meaning of "seed" in 1 Peter 1:23. Structural problems were handled with tentative solutions given for the grammatical and textual problems.

#### Interpretations of "Seed"

There are five interpretations for "seed." The first is the divine word of baptism view which holds that seed equals water baptism. Secondly, the resultant new life view holds that the process of a new life is being taught here. Thirdly, the seed-equals-Christ view holds that "seed" and Christ are synonymous terms. The seed-equals-Word of God view states that the seed is the Word of God.

Each of these views was presented with their definitions, their points of support and their chief adherents. In weighing the evidence it was determined that the proper interpretation was the regeneration view which defines seed as being the regeneration process.



### Definition of Seed

The regeneration view was supported by five proofs. These include the proofs from the nature of the context, from the nature of regeneration, and from the nature of seed. The presence of similar modifiers also lends evidence to support the definition that seed equals regeneration. Proof was also found in the examination of the separate prepositions ἐκ and ἐκ τῆς used together in the verse.

### Importance of Study

Having handled all the structural problems and having dealt with the various interpretations to arrive at the proper view, it must then be understood why all the investigation.

The main value of this study is that its truth deals with the most important area of the believer's life, that being his salvation. Since σποράς has been defined here as meaning regeneration, the message of this verse is a link to our increased knowledge in our salvation. We are born again not out of the corruptible seed but out of the incorruptible seed by means of the Word of God.

One concluding value is that the power of the Word of God is again seen. Our regeneration is through the Word of God. It behooves every believer to research the depths of God's Word to be able to effectively use its power.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alford, Bradley. Dean Alford's Greek Testament. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, & Co., 1849.
- Alford, Henry. The Greek Testament. Vol. IV. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1876.
- Barth, Kurt; Black, Matthew; Katzer, Bruce M.; and Wikgren, Allen. The Greek New Testament. London: United Bible Societies, 1962.
- Barth, W. F. and Gingrich, F. W. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957.
- Barnes, Francis Wright. "Text of 1 Peter in Papyrus 72." Journal of Biblical Literature, 80 (September, 1961), 213-25.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The First Epistle of Peter. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970.
- Berkhof, Louis. Manual of Reformed Doctrine. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1933.
- \_\_\_\_\_. English Version in Modern English. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1954.
- Brian, Felix Valentinus Valtinius. Edict Valentinus Loch. Paris: Societ. Instit. Librar. Fridrich G. J. Manz, 1800.
- Clark, Charles. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude. In The International Critical Commentary. Edited by C. A. Briggs, et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Word of a Living and Unchanging God." Muslim World, 43 (January, 1953), 13-17.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Expository Discourses on the Epistle of the Apostle Peter. Vol. I. Evansville: The Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1938.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alford, Bradley. Dean Alford's Greek Testament. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, & Co., 1869.
- Alford, Henry. The Greek Testament. Vol. IV. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1894.
- Aland, Kurt; Black, Matthew; Metzger, Bruce M.; and Wikgren, Allen. The Greek New Testament. London: United Bible Societies, 1966.
- Arndt, W. F. and Gingrich, F. W. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957.
- Beare, Francis Wright. "Text of 1 Peter in Papyrus 72." Journal of Biblical Literature, 80 (September, 1961), 253-60.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The First Epistle of Peter. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970.
- Berkhof, Louis. Manual of Reformed Doctrine. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1933.
- Berkley Version in Modern English. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1959.
- Biblia Sacra Vulgatae Editionis. Edidit Valentinus Loch. Ratis Bonae: Instit. Librar. Pridson G. J. Manz, MDCCCLXXXVIII.
- Bigg, Charles. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude. In The International Critical Commentary. Edited by C. A. Briggs, et al. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930.
- Bishop, E. F. F. "Word of a Living and Unchanging God." Muslim World, 43 (January, 1953), 15-17.
- Brown, John. Expository Discourses on the Epistle of the Apostle Peter. Vol. 1. Evansville: The Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1958.



- Buchsel, F. "γεννάω." Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Vol. I. Edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971.
- Bullinger, Ethelbert W. A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament. London: The Lamp Press Ltd., 1967.
- Calvin, John. Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles. Translated and edited by John Owen. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1948.
- Chafer, Lewis S. Systematic Theology, Vol. VII: Doctrinal Summarization. Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948.
- Cramer, George H. First and Second Peter. Chicago: Moody Press, 1967.
- Dana, H. E. and Mantey, Julius R. A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1927.
- Demarest, John T. Translation and Exposition of the First Epistle of the Apostle Peter. New York: John Moffett, 1851.
- Easton, Burton. "Seed." The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. Gen. Editor James Orr. Vol. IV. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939.
- Elliott, Leslie R. A Comparative Lexicon of New Testament Greek. Kansas City: Central Seminary Press, 1946.
- English, E. Schuyler. The Life and Letters of Saint Peter. New York: Publication office "Our Hope" Arno C. Gaebelein, Inc., 1941.
- Fink, Paul R. "An Analysis of the Literary Styles of the Petrine Epistles and its Contribution to the Exegesis of the Petrine Epistles." Unpublished doctoral dissertation for Dallas Theological Seminary, 1967.
- Gingrich, Raymond E. "An Outline and Analysis of the First Epistle of Peter." Unpublished doctoral dissertation for Grace Theological Seminary, n.d.
- Hort, F. J. A. The First Epistle of St. Peter 1:1-2:17. London: MacMillan and Co., 1898.



- Jerusalem Bible. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966.
- Jowett, J. H. The Redeemed Family of God. New York: Hodder & Stoughton, n.d.
- Kelly, J. N. D. A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969.
- Lampe, G. W. H. A Patristic Greek Lexicon. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1961.
- Leighton, Robert. Commentary on First Peter. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1972.
- Lenski, R. C. H. The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude. Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1945.
- Liddell, H. G. and Scott, Robert. A Greek-English Lexicon. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1867.
- Love, J. P. "First Epistle of Peter." Interpretation, 8 (January, 1954), 63-87.
- Lumby, J. Rawson. The Epistles of St. Peter. In The Expositor's Bible, ed. by W. Robertson Nicoll. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1900.
- Mason, A. J. "The First Epistle of St. Peter." In vol. VIII of Ellicott's Commentary on the Whole Bible. Edited by Charles John Ellicott. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970.
- Moffatt, James. The General Epistles. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.
- Moulton, J. H. and Milligan, George. The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949.
- New American Standard Bible. Glendale, Ca.: Regal Books, 1971.
- New Scofield Reference Bible. New York: Oxford Press, 1967.
- Robertson, A. T. A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934.



- \_\_\_\_\_. "The General Epistles and the Apocalypse." In vol. VI of Word Pictures in the New Testament. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1933.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament. New York: Harper & Brothers Publisher, 1933.
- Scherlemann, M. H. "Why the Kuriou in 1 Peter 1:25?" Concordia Theological Monthly, 30 (May, 1959), 352-56.
- Schulz, S. "σπέρμα." Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Vol. VII. Edited by Gerhard Friedrich. Translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971.
- "Seed." Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature. Edited by John McClintock and James Strong. Vol. IV. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970.
- Selwyn, Edward G. The First Epistle of St. Peter. London: MacMillan & Co., 1947.
- Simcox, William H. The Language of the New Testament. London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1889.
- Smith, Charles R. "Christian Theology: Salvation and the Christian Life." Unpublished class syllabus, Grace Theological Seminary, 1974.
- Summers, Ray. Essentials of New Testament Greek. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1950.
- Thayer, J. H. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. New York: American Book Co., 1889.
- Van Unnik, W. C. "Christianity According to 1 Peter." Expository Times, 68 (December, 1956), 79-83.
- Van Wyk, William P. My Sermon Notes on Salvation. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961.
- Vincent, M. R. "The Synoptic Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Epistles of Peter, James, and Jude." In vol. I of Word Studies in the New Testament. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908.
- Vine, W. E. "Seed." An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1966.



Weymouth, Richard F. The New Testament in Modern Speech.  
Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1943.

Wordsworth, Charles. "St. Paul's Epistles, the General  
Epistles, the Book of Revelation." In vol. II of  
The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ  
in the Original Greek with Introduction and Notes.  
London: Rivingtons, Waterloo Place, 1870.

Young, Robert. Analytical Concordance to the Bible. New  
York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, n.d.