

The Regenerate Seed in the NT (Parallels to 1 John 3:9)

Water of Life

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REVIEW:

(1 John 3:9) Whoever has been born of God does not sin, because His seed abides in Him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

We maintain that 1 John 3:9 speaks of the regenerated part of the believer. Sin cannot be attributed to that which is regenerated within us.

The interpretation of 1 John 3:9 MUST reconcile with 1:8 and 1:10:

Specifically, in one sense a believer does not sin,
while in another sense, the believer does not sin.

The verse contains the clue: God's seed.

A seed must be planted into soil, because it is not part of the soil.



Likewise, in 1 John 3:9, the seed is something that God implants in believers. God's seed is not something that is part of the unbeliever.

Do other passages (in their contexts) make similar points?

(Note: 1 John 3:9 stands on its own. We developed the contextual understanding of 1 John 3:9 entirely from the book's context.)

NEW MATERIAL:

1. John 1:11-13: Despite overwhelming rejection by His own people in Israel, Jesus gave authority for believers to become God's children, whose birth is from God, not through any earthly means

¹₁₁ He came to His own *places* [*own*₁ is neuter] yet His own *people* [*own*₂ is neuter] did not receive Him, ¹₁₂ but to as many as did receive Him, to them He gave authority to become God's children— *specifically* to those who believed in His name, ¹₁₃ who were born neither of bloodlines [*blood* is plural], nor of fleshly will, nor of a husband's [man is *anēr* (unlike *anthrōpos*) always refers to males, often signifying *husband*] will, but *were born* of God.

2. James 1:17-21

Contextual Background

James wrote to a group of dispersed Jewish believers

They are Jewish and have been dispersed (James 1:1)

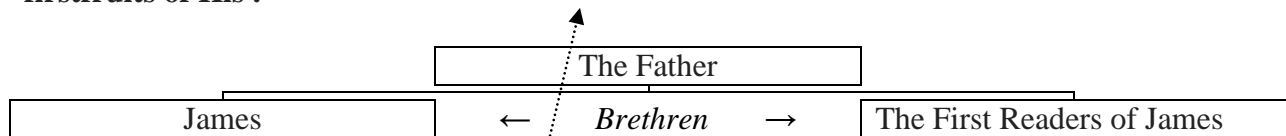
He addresses them as *brethren* fifteen times (James 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9-10, 12, 19).

Page 2 will show from 1:18 that they are believers.

(1:17) Every good and complete gift is from the unchangeable Father.

He is unchanging, He so does not retract His gifts

(1:18) By His [the Father's] will He [as the Father of both James and his readers] brought us [J + Rs] forth by the word (message) of truth, that we [J + Rs] might be a kind of firstfruits of His .



Although Calvinists immediately jump to the conclusion that “of His own will” refers to their doctrines of election and predestination, the passage does not comment on this idea. Rather, it speaks in a more-general-sense of the heavenly Father providing the seed (the message of life = the message of truth) which can germinate (when a person believes).

As the provider of seed which can germinate, He can rightly be called our Father, because He (ultimately) the gives birth from above thru Jesus Christ's promise.

What James says here lines up with John 1:11-13.

(1:19-20)

**Let every man be: swift to hear (1:21-2:26)
slow to speak (3:1-18)
slow to wrath (4:1-5:6),
because man's wrath does not produce God's righteousness.**

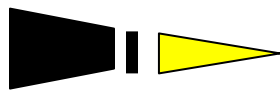
(1:21) Believers are [to be quick to hear the Word (1:19)], namely, they are to receive humbly the implanted word which can deliver their lives, by rejecting wickedness and overflowing wickedness (1:21)

The word of truth is seen as something that has been implanted and has germinated.

3. 2 Corinthians 4:16

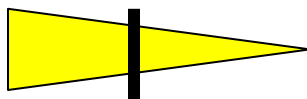
This passage is in the context of Paul's discussion of the contrast between the greater and permanent glory of unveiled New Testament truth as opposed to the passing and lesser glory of the veiled truth that Moses transmitted to Israel in the Law (2 Corinthians 3-4)

2 Corinthians 4:3-4: The gospel is veiled to those who are perishing [unbelievers] whose minds the god of this age [Satan] has blinded [through veiling] in order that [Satan] might hinder the [gospel] light from shining on them [enlightenment, e.g., comprehension, resulting in belief]



The veil prevents light from passing through the veil of an unbeliever's unenlightened heart.

2 Corinthians 4:6: The same God who commanded light to shine out of darkness [Genesis 1] also has shone [the light of the gospel] in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.



God's light shines through the veil into an unenlightened heart, enlightening it.

In the seed imagery, the seed is not part of the soil. The seed entered the soil and germinated. Likewise, light is not part of the heart. However, light can enter the heart, enlightening it.

2 Corinthians 4:16: Paul did not lose heart, despite the fact that his outward man [which he received from physical birth] was perishing, but his inward man [received upon belief] continued to be renewed each day.

4. Ephesians 3:16: [Paul prays] that [the Father] would grant to you [the Ephesian Gentile believers] to be strengthened mightily through the Holy Spirit in the inner man

This passage appears within a prayer that appears between the two main sections of the book. Paul's prayers tend to focus on the readers apprehending the truth of the prior section so they will have the appropriate response to the following section. Therefore, it is important to know what precedes and what follows.

1:3-3:21 (the 1st section of the book) describes believers' wealth in Christ;
4:1-6:20 (the 2nd section) describes the believer's walk (in light of their wealth)

I regard the inner man as equivalent to that which is described in 1 John 3:9; James 1:21; and 2 Corinthians 4:16.

5. In Romans 7:20-22 Paul speaks of the conflict within himself between the flesh [that which came from the first birth] and his [human] spirit.

7:20: He attributes indwelling sin as responsible for doing what he did not will to do

7:21: He speaks of evil being present within him, the one who willed to do good

7:22 He spoke of his real self as delighting in the law of God in the inner man

As we have seen previously, Romans 8 (walking by the Spirit, rather than by the flesh) is the solution to the predicament of Romans 7.

Remember, walking according to the flesh is not to be restricted to the idea of a lascivious lifestyle. Paul spoke of his experience in Romans 7 as living according to the flesh, but he was not lascivious.

CONCLUSION