

# The Holy Spirit's Ministry of Regeneration in the Old Testament Period

## CHAPTER I

### A SURVEY OF HISTORICAL VIEWS BEARING ON THE QUESTION

In the introductory note to Abraham Kuyper's The Work of the Holy Spirit, Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield makes the following statement:

The doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit is a gift from John Calvin to the Church of Christ. He did not, of course, invent it. . . . Hints of its apprehension are found widely scattered in all Christian literature, and in particular the germs of the doctrine are spread broadcast over the pages of Augustine. Luther did not fail to lay hold upon them; Zwingli shows time and again that he had them richly in his mind; they constituted, in very fact, one of the foundations of the Reformation movement, or rather they provided its vital breath. But it was Calvin who first gave them anything like systematic or adequate expression; and it is through him and from him that they have come to be the assured possession of the Church of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with this suggestion by the eminent doctor, this survey will begin with the view of John Calvin, continue with the views of the Puritan writers, some of their successors, and certain other writers; note Abraham Kuyper's view; move on to a variety of writers, from Kuyper to the present; and finally conclude this section with the views of some Dispensational writers.

#### THE VIEW OF JOHN CALVIN

John Calvin, in his Institutes of the Christian Religion, asserts:

Here we must take our stand on three main points. First, we hold that carnal prosperity and happiness did not constitute

---

<sup>1</sup>Abraham Kuyper, The Work of the Holy Spirit, trans. Henri De Vries (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1900) pp. xxxiii, xxxiv.