

In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit . . . is associated in the work of creation . . . strives with sinful man . . . enlightens the spirit of man . . . gives skill of hand . . . bestows physical strength . . . and qualifies the servants of God for a various ministry . . . To this should be added that operation of the Spirit by which the men of faith in the Old Testament ages were regenerated. While this doctrine is not explicitly taught in the Old Testament (except prophetically), our Lord's words in John iii.5, and Luke xiii. 28, leave no doubt as to the fact itself. Since the new birth is essential to seeing and entering the kingdom of God, and since the Old Testament saints are in that kingdom, it follows necessarily that they were born of the Spirit.¹

Another well-known Dispensational writer, William Kelly, asserts:

I rejoice to begin . . . with that which spreads itself over the entire dealings of God in His mercy toward His saints at all times. . . . what comes before us now is universal for God's children, was found in the earliest days since sin entered into the world, was never superseded, nor can be, till the last trace of sin is gone for ever . . . God would make Himself known, would reveal Himself; it might be only partially, after sundry measures, and in many manners, as the apostle tells us in Hebrews i.; but, whatever the measure of the mode of His revelations, God has always wrought in sovereign mercy to souls, and He has given of His own nature to those who believe here below. This is what is meant by being born again. . . .

Across the whole course of these varying dispensations, as I gladly allow, we have this great blessing enjoyed. And the reason is manifest; a God of goodness on the one hand, and lost man on the other. . . .

There is such a thing as spiritual life; and there always was such a thing; for it is the necessary condition of having to do with God. There always was, as there is, a positive new nature given to the believer; that is, it is not merely a question of faith, but of a new life. . . .²

It is to me no question whether the Old Testament saints have not been quickened as really as ourselves: assuredly they must be and were. I hold, that there never was but one Saviour, and consequently that the new birth, which all need for God's kingdom, is ever the impartation, by the Spirit, of

¹C. I. Scofield, Plain Papers on the Holy Spirit (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1899), pp. 30-31.

²William Kelly, Lectures on the New Testament Doctrine of the Holy Spirit (London: G. Morrish, 1915), pp. 1-4.