

On the particular question of regeneration in the Old Testament, Kuyper states:

Hence the important question: Whether the generations that lived during the long period of preparation before Christ, in whom the work of re-creation was finally revealed, were partakers of its blessings?

The Scripture answers affirmatively. In the ages before Christ God's elect shared the blessings of the work of re-creation. Abel and Enoch, Noah and Abraham, Moses and David, Isaiah and Daniel were saved by the same faith as Peter, Paul, Luther, and Calvin. . . . God's elect of both Dispensations entered the same gate of righteousness and walked the same way of salvation which they still walk to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.

But how could Abraham, living so many years before Christ, in whom alone grace and truth have been revealed, have his faith accounted unto him for righteousness, so that he saw the day of Jesus and was glad?

This difficulty has confused many minds regarding the Old and New Dispensations, and causes many vainly to ask: How could there be any saving operation of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament if He were poured out only on Pentecost? The answer is found in the almost unsearchable work of the Holy Spirit, whereby, on the one hand, He brought into the history of our race that eternal salvation already finished and complete which must run through the periods of preparation, revelation, and fruit-bearing; and whereby, on the other hand, during the preparatory period, this very preparation was made the means, through wondrous grace, of saving souls even before the Incarnation of the Word.¹

If there had been no elect before Christ, then it is self-evident that, before the Advent, the Holy Spirit could have had but one work of re-creation, viz., the preparation of the coming salvation. But . . . the Spirit's re-creative work must consist of two parts: first, of the preparation of redemption for the whole Church; and secondly, of the sanctification and consolation of the Old Testament saints.²

The Holy Spirit seems to act upon a human being in a twofold manner--from without, or from within. . . .

In the beginning we discover only an outward imparting of certain gifts. . . .

But in the Old Testament there was also an inward operation in believers. Believing Israelites were saved. Hence they must

¹Kuyper, op. cit., p. 51.

²Ibid., p. 52.