

LECTURE XXXVII.

COVENANT OF GRACE.

SYLLABUS.

1. Has God ever had more than one covenant with man since the fall? What the opinion of the Socinians hereon? Of Anabaptists? Of Remonstrants?
Turretin, Loc. xii, Qu. 5, § 1-4, for statements, and 5 to end for Arguments. Racovian Catechism. Witsius, bk. iii, ch. 1, 2. Hodge's Theol., pt. iii, ch. 2, § 6.
2. Under how many Dispensations has the Covenant been administered? And why so many?
Turretin, Qu. 7. Witsius, bk. iii, Qu. 3. Ridgeley, Qu. 30, 33. Hodge as above, § 7.
3. How much of the Covenant was revealed to the Antediluvians? A Mediator? Sacrificial Types? Prove that Gen. iii : 15 is a Protevangel.
Turretin, Qu. 7, § 11-17. Heb. xi : 4. Witsius, bk. iv, ch. 1, 2. Dick, Lect. 50. Knapp, § 89-91. Ridgeley, Qu. 30, 33. Discourses of Redemption, Dr. S. Robinson.
4. What additional revelations from Abraham to Moses? Prove that Abraham's was also a Covenant of Grace. Does the Pentateuch reveal a promise of Eternal Life?
Turretin, Qu. 7, § 18 to end. Calvin's Inst., bk. ii, ch. 10. Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses. Knapp and Ridgeley as above.

INASMUCH as the plan of our Seminary directs the teacher of Systematic Theology to give special prominence to the successive developments of revealed truth, found as we proceed, from the Patriarchal to the Mosaic, and thence to the Christian ages, we devote other exercises to the subject above announced. In discussing it briefly, the order of topics indicated in the syllabus of questions will be pursued.

Has God ever had more than one Covenant of Grace with man since the fall? And is the covenant made with the Patriarchs and with Israel substantially the same spiritual covenant with that of the New Testament? The Socinians and Anabaptists give a negative answer to this question, relying on the passages of Scripture represented by Jno. i : 17. They say that the covenant with Abraham and Israel was only national and temporal; that it promised only material good; that those of the Old Testament who were saved, were saved without a revealed promise, in virtue of that common natural religion, known, as they suppose, to good Pagans alike; by which men are taught to hope in the mercy and benevolence of a universal Father. To these views the European Arminians partly assented, teaching that the Gospel through the mediator is only involved implicitly and generally in the Old Testament, and that no special promise through a Christ is there.

The motive of the Socinians is two fold; that they may

Motive of the Socinians. Of the Anabaptists.

escape this insuperable difficulty; if Christ's redeeming work (in the New Testament) is only what they teach, that of a prophet and exemplar, and not vicarious, there is no sense in which He can have redeemed Old Testament saints, and 2nd, that by making the difference of light and grace between the Old Testament and the New, as wide as possible, they may plausibly represent Christ as having something to do in the New Testament, *dignum vindice nodum*, without any atoning work. The Anabaptists, whose Socinian affinities were originally strong, take the same view of the Old Testament, in order to get rid of the doctrine that a gospel Church, substantially identical with that of the New Testament, existed in the Old Testament with its infant church members.

This discussion will be found to have an equal importance, when we come to the Popish theory of sacramental grace. Rome claims for her sacraments under the New Testament an *opus operatum* power. She does not claim it for the sacraments of the Old Testament: for the reason that the Apostle Paul, among other inspired men, expressly contradicts it, as Rom. ii : 25-29, and I Cor. x : 1-5. Now, if we identify the substance of the Covenant of Grace under both Testaments, we found at least a very strong probable argument for concluding that the sacraments of the two Testaments were means of grace of the same kind. Then all the explicit denials of efficiency *ex opere operato* uttered in Scripture as to the Old Testament sacraments, become conclusive as to the sacraments of the Christian Church.

As to the unity of the Covenant, we have already argued this *a priori*, from its eternity. We may pursue this argument thus: If man's fall laid him necessarily obnoxious to certain immutable attributes of God, if man's sin necessarily and everywhere raises a certain definite difficulty between him and redemption in consequence of those inevitable attributes of God, we may fairly conclude, that whatever plan (if there can be any) is adopted by God to reconcile a sinner, that same plan substantially must be adopted to reconcile all other sinners of Adam's race, everywhere and always. To the Socinian indeed, this *a priori* consideration carries no weight; because he does not believe in God's essential, retributive justice, &c. Let us then see from the more sure word of Scripture, whether the covenant of grace set forth in the Old Testament is not substantially identical with that in the New, in the things promised, the parties, the conditions, and the mediator; while a difference of clearness and mode is admitted.

Unity of the Covenant argued Scripturally.

This Scriptural argument cannot be better collected than under the heads given by Turretin, (Ques. v, § 7-23).

The identity of the Covenant is substantially asserted in general terms—e. g., in Luke i : 68-73; Acts

(a) From direct testimony. ii : 16, with vs 38, 39 ; iii : 25 ; John viii : 56 ;

Rom. iv : 16 ; Gal. iii : 8, 16, 17 ; especially

the last. Remark here, that the very words in which the Covenant was formed with the seed of Abraham, Gen. xvii : 7 ; and which are so formally repeated in subsequent parts of the Old Testament are the very terms of the compact in the new dispensation, repeated as such with emphasis. See Jer. xxxi : 33 ; 2 Cor. vi : 16 ; Rev. xxi : 3.

The Mediator is the same. 1 Tim. ii : 5, 6 ; Gal. iii : 16 ;

(b) From sameness of Mediator. Mal. iii : 1 ; Acts iv : 12, x : 43, xv : 10, 11 ; Luke xxiv : 27 ; 1 Pet. i : 9-12 ; Rom. iii : 25 ; Heb. ix : 15 ; with many passages

already cited. We need not depend on such passages as Heb. xiii : 8 ; Rev. xiii : 8 ; for although their application to prove the mediatorial office of Christ under the Old Testament is probably just, plausible evasions exist.

The condition assigned to man is the same in both—e. g., faith. And it is useless for the Socinians,

(c) From its condition. &c., to say, that the faith of the Old Testament was not the specific faith in the Son,

the Messiah, set forth in the New, but only a general trust in God as the Universal Father. For their assertion is not true ; and if true, it would still remain, that the faith of the Old Testament and that of the New, include the same substantial features. Look at the fact that Heb. xi goes for its illustrations of faith, (surely it was inculcating the Christian faith,) exclusively to the Old Testament ! See, also, Gen. xv : 6, with Rom. iv : 3 ; Ps. ii : 12. (Is not this specifically faith in the Son ?) Acts x : 43 ; Ps. xxxii : 10, *et passim*.

In the fourth place, it may be asserted that to this faith of

(d) From its promise. the Old Testament saints, redemption in the true New Testament sense was held forth, with all its several parts ; of justification, Ps. xxxii ; Is. i : 18 ; Regeneration, Deut. xxx : 6 ; Ps. li : 10 : Spiritual gifts—*passim*—e. g., Joel ii : 28, 32, as expounded by Peter, Acts ii : Isaiah xl : 31 ; eternal life : (as we shall more fully argue under a subsequent head, now only noticing,) Heb. iv : 9, xi : 10 ; Exod. iii : 6, as expounded by Christ ; Matt. xxii : 31, 32, and this eternal life, including even the resurrection of the body. Ps. xvi : 10, 11, applied in Acts xiii : 34 ; Job xix : 25 ; Dan. xii : 1, 2. In view of this array of proofs, how weak appears the idea, that nothing more than the Land of Canaan and its material joys was proposed to Israel's faith ? But of this more anon.

An argument for our proposition may be constructed out

(e.) From the Types. of all those types under the old dispensation, which can be proved to have had an evan-

gical meaning. The promised land itself, the deliverance from Egypt, with its significant incidents; circumcision and the passover, ("seals of the righteousness of faith,") with the whole tabernacle ritual, are proved by several parts of the New Testament to have had this evangelical meaning. The argument is too wide to be briefly stated; but every intelligent Bible reader is familiar with its materials. In its very wideness is its strength. As one specimen of it, take the Epistle of Hebrews itself. The Apostle, in interpreting the Levitical ritual, there shows that all prefigured the gospel, and the New Testament, Messiah and redemption. During the Old Testament times, therefore, it was but a dispensation of this same Covenant of Grace.

And in general, all the gospel features sown so thickly over the Old Testament, especially over the books of Psalms and Isaiah, prove our point,

Of such passages as Rom. xvi : 25 ; Gal. iv : 24 ; 1 Pet. i : 12, &c., we are well aware. We shall show their compatibility with the proposition above demonstrated, when we come to unfold the resemblances and differences of the two dispensations.

We conceive the familiar and established division to be correct, which makes two dispensations only, the Old Testament and the New. There seems no adequate reason for regarding the patriarchal age, from Adam to Moses, as essentially a different dispensation from that of Moses. Certainly that representation is incorrect which makes the former a free and gracious dispensation, while the latter only was burdened with the condemning weight of the moral and ritual law. For the moral law as to its substance, was already in force from Adam to Moses. Sacrifices already smoked on altars, and the knife descended in symbol of wrath, on innocent victims. And gracious promises on the other hand, are, at least, as thickly strown over the Scriptures of the Mosaic period, as of the patriarchal. We hardly need cite cases. There are passages, such as Gal. iii : 17 to 19th ; Deut. v : 2, 3, which speak of a ritual burden, and law which could minister only condemnation, as superadded at the Mosaic era. But we shall find that the elements of a moral law impossible for the depraved to fulfil, and of a ritual which typified only wrath to him who persisted in ignoring the Mediator and the Covenant of Grace, were also present in the patriarchal religion. The history of Cain too clearly establishes these traits of the patriarchal age. These elements were only re-affirmed by Moses. If it be said that they were then brought forward with far greater prominence and distinctness, I answer, so were the gospel elements brought forward, to true believers, at the same time, with increased distinctness. When the Apostles bring out so prominently this condemning burden

Two Dispensations only. Objection answered.

of the Mosaic law, they are dealing, for the time, with only one side of the subject. Because, they are dealing with Jews who persisted in looking for justification to this law, which apart from Christ, is only a ministry of condemnation; who persisted in stickling for Moses, Moses, as their authority for their self-righteous perversions of the law and gospel. In dealing with this subject, theologians perpetually forget how necessarily the Apostles had to use the *argumentum ad hominem* against these Jews. That the patriarchal and Mosaic form properly but one dispensation appears from this. Both exhibit the great, prevalent characteristic of types: both were prefigurative instead of being, like the New Testament, commemorative; both had sacrifice, circumcision, priests. The difference between them is only one of degree, and not of contrast. But when we come to the New Testament, there is a real contrast. Human priests, sacrifices and circumcision end. Types give place to antitypes; prefiguring to commemorative ordinances.

To the question why God has administered the Covenant of Grace under two different dispensations, no complete answer can be rendered, except that of Matt. xi : 26. The true difficulty of the question lies chiefly back, in this prior question : Why did God see fit to postpone the incarnation of the mediator so long after the fall? For, supposing this question settled, we can see some reasons why, if the effectuating of the terms of the Covenant of Grace, was to be postponed thus, its declarations to man must be by a different dispensation before and after the surety came. Before, all was prospective. Every promise must, in the nature of things, be a prediction also; and prediction, prior to its fulfilment, must needs be, to finite minds, less plain than experience and history after the occurrence. Every symbolical ordinance (both dispensations for good reasons have such) must needs be a type; foreshadowing. Afterwards it is a commemoration, looking backward. May it not be, that the greater variety and number of the symbolical ordinances under the Old Testament were due to the very fact that they must needs be less distinct? God sought to make up in number what was lacking in distinctness. But to the question: why the mission of Christ was postponed nearly 4000 years, there is no adequate answer. The circumstances which made that era "the fullness of time" have been pointed out by the Church Historians. But the relations of influence and causation in human affairs are too intricate and numerous for man to speculate here.

The causes assigned by Turretin (Que. 7, § 2-6) do indeed indicate the existence of an analogy with God's other working herein. God performs all His grand results by gradations. Childhood and pupilage go before manhood and independence. So majestic a luminary as the Sun of Righteousness may be

expected to rise gradually, and send His twilight before Him! True; but these are only palliations, not answers to the difficulty.

To appreciate correctly the amount of Gospel light possessed in the patriarchal, and even in the Mosaic ages, we must bear in mind a thing often overlooked, that the human race had just enjoyed, in Adam, personal communication with God, in fullest theophanies, which Adam, by the faculties of his perfect manhood, and other patriarchs, through their longevity, were admirably qualified to transmit well. Adam was cotemporary with Methuselah 243 years, Methuselah with Noah 600 years (dying the year of the flood) and Noah with Abram 58 years. Thus Abraham received the revelations of paradise through only two transmissions! We must not suppose that this traditionary knowledge of God was scanty, because the hints of it given in earlier revelations are scanty; for the purposes of the revelation to us through Moses did not require that God should give us full information as to the religious knowledge of the Antediluvians. The Bible is always a practical book, and does not wander from its aim: it concedes nothing to a merely useless curiosity. Now, the object of God in giving to the Church of later ages this brief history of primeval man was to furnish us only with the great facts, which are necessary to enable us understandingly to connect the Covenants of Works and Grace, and to construe the spiritual history of our race. We have seen how briefly and sufficiently the book of Genesis gave us the cardinal facts of man's creation in holiness, his home in paradise, his Sabbath, the institution of his family, the unity of the race, the federal constitution by which God has been pleased from the first to deal with it, the Covenant of Works, its breach, and the far-reaching consequences. So, God next gives us the main facts concerning the changes in His religion, which were necessary to adapt it, as a religion for sinners. These main features are all that were needed for God's purposes: and they contain the whole substance of the Covenant of Grace.

Man's theological relation is founded primarily on the nature of God and His creature; and is essentially permanent. Hence, the theistic worship of paradise, with the Sabbath rest, its necessary means, remained as before. So, the constitution of human society, under a family government founded in monogamy, remained unchanged, with the whole code of ethical duty. But man's sin and depravity had changed his attitude towards God in vital respects. Duty having been violated, the new and hitherto inoperative obligation of repentance has emerged. God teaches man this great doctrine of the religion of sinners, by converting his life from one of ease and bliss, to one of sorrow and discipline. His home is changed from a paradise to a penitentiary. Again; guilt having been con-

tracted, there emerges, out of the moral attributes of God, a necessity of satisfaction for it, in order to the pardon of the sinner. This, the central truth of the religion of sinners, which points also to the central promise of the covenant of grace, had unhappily become the very truth, to which man, by reason of his corruption, would be most obtuse. His selfish depravity would incline him ever to forget the right of God's attributes in the question of a reconciliation; and his selfish fears would prompt him to crave impunity, instead of righteous justification. Hence, in the wisdom of God, the most notable and impressive addition made by Him to the *cultus*, was the one which was devised to teach the great doctrine of the necessity of propitiation, and to hold out its promise. This, indeed, is the only ritual fact which needed recording. God appointed bloody sacrifice, and required it to be the perpetual attendant of the worship of sinners. Thus He taught them, in the most impressive possible way, at once the great need, and the great promise of the Covenant of Grace!

That bloody animal sacrifice was of divine appointment at this time, we argue, first, presumptively from the fact that natural reason would not have suggested it, as a suitable offering to God. The doctrine of substitution, however honourable to God when revealed, is not, and cannot be, a deduction of the natural reason. Whether the Sovereign Creditor will be pleased to accept a substitutionary payment of penal debt, is a question which He only may answer. Again: doubtless the natural reason of Adam and his family saw the obvious truth, which is stated as self-evident, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that "the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins." The mere animal has neither the dignity, nor community of nature, which would suggest even the possibility of its life's being an equivalent for an immortal soul. Hence, we do not believe that the human reason, left to itself, would ever have devised such a mode of appeasing God. This is illustrated by the rationalistic will-worship of Cain. Not having suitable conviction of guilt, regard for God's rights as requiring satisfaction in order to pardon, nor faith in the future, undescribed sacrifice of the "Woman's Seed," he did what all other will-worshippers since have done: he exercised his own rationalistic ideas of the suitable, and his own æsthetic sentiments, in devising another oblation. He probably thought the bleeding and burning flesh unsuitable, because it was abhorrent to natural sensibility, and even to the instincts, and the senses of sight and smell. Does God find pleasure in the death-pangs of an innocent, sentient creature? How much more appropriate the inanimate fruits of His bounty, for an oblation: the brilliant flowers, the blushing fruits, the nodding sheaf, all redolent of peace, abundance and fragrance. But it was precisely this rationalism, which, we are told in Genesis, caused the rejection of his offering. Here we

find a strong proof that Abel's was not will-worship, but the fulfilment of a divine ordinance.

This is strongly confirmed by the language of Heb. xi : 4, which tells us, that the preferableness of Abel's offering arose from this: that he "offered it by faith." Now faith implies a revealed warrant; without this it is presumption. This text virtually tells us that animal sacrifice was by divine appointment. This conclusion is also strengthened by the truth, clearly implied in Gen. ix : 3, 4, that, until after the flood, animals were not killed for food by God's people. Yet in Gen. iii : 21, Adam and Eve are, by God, clad in the skins of animals, in lieu of the frail coverings of fig leaves, which they had devised for themselves, to conceal their shame. Whence came those skins? They might possibly be stripped from the corpses of those that died natural deaths, or were slain by beasts of prey. But it is much more probable, that they were the skins of the sacrifices Adam was then and there taught to offer. Man's superiority to the need of raiment in Paradise was doubtless an emblem of his present holiness and guiltlessness: as his newly born shame was an emblem of his guilt and corruption. How natural then, is the conclusion, that this first effectual clothing of man the sinner was the immediate result of sacrifice, that it was sacrificial raiment he wore; and thus we have here the natural introduction of the great idea of כִּפּוּר, "covering," "propitiation," so fully expanded afterwards.

Once more, when Noah's family was at length authorized to eat animal food, the blood was expressly excepted, because, as God teaches, He had reserved it to make atonement for their souls. Does not this imply that the reservation was, from the first, God's express ordinance? Animal sacrifice was then, God's appointment; and it found its aim in its signification of the need of satisfaction for guilt, and the promise and foreshadowing of a worthy substitute, to be afterwards provided by God. Thus we see, that the maintenance of bloody sacrifice among the Pagans to our day, is a ritual perversion precisely parallel to that we see made, by nominal Christians, of the New Testament sacraments, a reliance on the efficacy, *ex opere operato*, of the symbol, instead of the divine grace symbolized. Trent herself could not define her doctrine of the *opus operatum* more expressly than it was held by the Maori of New Zealand and the classic Pagans, as to their bloody rites.

The third essential truth of the Covenant of Grace taught primeval man, (and the only remaining one,) was that set forth in the *protevangel* of Gen. iii : 15. By becoming an apostate from God, he had become the subject of Satan, who is represented by the serpent. (See Lect. xxvii : Qu. 3). The race was now become his kingdom, instead of the "kingdom of heaven." Already a sad experience was teaching them, that sin was now become a ruling principle, and not a mere incident: as their

outward misery was now ordained to be a permanent state of chastisement. Doubtless the great question with the sinners was: "Is this final?" "Or is there to be a deliverance?" The covenant of Grace answers: "Yes, there shall be a deliverance." Satan's conquest was to be reversed, destructively for Satan, by the "Seed of the Woman." The promise is brief, but wonderfully instructive. Let only faith read it consistently; and it pointed to a Mediator, a Deliverer, human, yet more than human, miraculously reared up, who was to be the antitype to the bleeding lamb even now exhibited, who should experience, in prosecuting the work of delivery, a blood-shedding at the hands of the adversary, like that of the suffering lamb, yet not destructive; inasmuch as He should survive to crush the evil angel, and to deliver the captives.

That this promise is a *protevangel* is argued first, presumptively, from the triviality of the alternative meaning. Did God go out of His way, on this momentous occasion, to describe merely the animal instinct, which prompts the peasant to kill a snake? Second, the "woman's seed," properly weighed, must be seen to promise something supernatural; because in Hebrew language, the seed is always elsewhere ascribed to the male, (which is physiologically accurate). Compare Gen. xxi: 13, where Ishmael is carefully distinguished as Abraham's "seed," while "son" "of the bond-woman." Eve knew that *she* could only have a "seed" supernaturally. Third: the Deliverer must, from the very nature of the promised victory, be superior to Satan, who was superior to Adam. Fourth: subsequent Scriptures, when using language evidently allusive to this promise, represent this warfare as being between Satan and the Messiah. Thus, Jno. xii: "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Luke x: 17-19. Christ's comment on the success of His Apostles in subduing "devils" is: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," and He then promises them farther victory over "serpents and scorpions" and "over all the power of the enemy." Here we have the old warfare of Gen. iii: 15; and it is between Messiah and Satan and his angels, not only symbolized by "scorpions and serpents," but expressly named. This onset of the incoming kingdom of heaven was seen by Christ to give Satan such a blow, that he appears like one dashed violently from his seat, and falling, thunder-smitten and blighted, to the earth. In Rom. xvi: 20, Paul promises God "shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." The allusion is beyond mistake. In Heb. ii: 14, the woman's seed, "through death destroys him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;" where we see an exact reproduction of the bruised heel and crushed head. In Rev. xii: 9, and xx: 2, we have the final victory of Messiah, in the chaining and imprisonment of Satan the dragon.

The short record of Genesis gives us other evidences of a gos-

pel dispensation, in the existence of the two classes, 'sons of God,' and 'sons of men'. Gen. vi : 2. So, the preaching of repentance by Enoch and Noah, and the strivings of the Holy Ghost with carnal minds, Gen. vi : 3, all imply a covenant of Grace. In conclusion, we know that the patriarchs before the flood had a gospel promise, because we are assured by Hebrews, chap. xi, that they had faith.

The second dividing epoch of the old dispensation was the calling of Abraham, the history of which may be seen in Gen. chap. xii to xvii. There was now an important development. All that had been given to believers remained in force, the "Church in the house," the Sabbath, the sacrifices, the moral law, and the promise. The most notable additions made upon the calling of Abraham were, first, the separation of the "sons of God" from the mass of the world, as a peculiar people, and the organization of a visible church-state in the tribe of Abraham; and next, the institution of a sealing ordinance, circumcision, as a badge of membership, and "seal of the righteousness of faith." The repeated tendency of the race, in spite of admonitions and judgments, towards apostasy and idolatry, had at length made the necessity of the visible Church separation obvious: it remained the only human means to preserve a seed to serve God. In that age of the world, every organized society unavoidably took the patriarchal form; hence the family, or clan of Abraham, became the visible Church: and the race-limit tended approximately to be the boundary between Church and world. Abraham and his seed did indeed receive a promise of the temporal possession of Canaan: as in Gen. xii : 3; xv : 5; xvii : 7. But the spiritual and gospel feature implied is clear in some of the promises themselves, and is made plainer by subsequent Scriptures. The best exposition of the Abrahamic covenant is that given by Rom. chaps. iii and iv, and Gal. iii. We are there expressly taught, that the seed in whom the promise was made was Christ: that the central benefit received by Abraham, was gospel salvation through faith: that the sacrament was a gospel one, a seal of the righteousness of faith: that the promise of Canaan was typical of that of heaven; that Abraham is the exemplar and head of all gospel-believers: and that the society founded in his family was, and is, the visible Church of Christ, reformed and enlarged at the new dispensation.

The original meaning of the bleeding lamb was strikingly illustrated to Abraham by the proposed sacrifice of Isaac. This taught, first, that the lamb was insufficient: a more precious substitute must be found. Just at the crisis, when the patriarch was about to offer his only son, a rational victim, God arrests his hand, and substitutes the ram (again a mere type,) which He had provided. Abraham named the place, יְרֵאָה.

יְהוָה "Jehovah hath chosen," thus acknowledging that when he answered Isaac's question, in Gen, xxii : 8, אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֶה, "God will provide Himself a lamb," he had (possibly unwittingly) uttered a great, gospel-truth; that the sinner's real substitute was to be one in the unknown future, which God was to provide, and not the believer. Thus, salvation is to be gratuitous, though only through a divinely constituted substitute, and man's part is to embrace it by faith.

Last, the compact with Abraham was summed up in the words: "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." We have seen that this was the formula of the Covenant of Grace. Such then, was God's compact with the Father of the faithful.

And here we must pause a moment, to consider the question famously debated in the negative, for Eternal Life was revealed to the Patriarchs. instance, by Warburton's *Divine Legat. of Moses*: "Whether the patriarchal ages had any revealed promise of future eternal life?" I would premise that the scantiness of the teachings on this point will not surprise us, if we remember that this fundamental truth is rather assumed than taught. It has been well remarked, that the Bible no where sets itself deliberately to teach the existence of God! We may well suppose the traditionary religion received from Adam made the immortality of the soul and future rewards, so clear that little was then needed to be said about it. The being of a God and the immortality of the soul are the two postulates essential to all religion. We assert then that the natural and proper way for inspiration to proceed, in revealing a religion, is to postulate these two truths, and not to waste time in proving them. The soul's immortality is as essential to the being of a religion as the existence of God. I might prove this experimentally by the fact, that materialists are always virtually without a religion. It follows logically; for experience concurs with revelation in showing, that in this life, "the wicked flourish like the bay tree;" so that, if the future life be denied, there will remain, for the denier, no room whatever for the sanctions of any religion. But let us see if this doctrine was not made sufficiently clear to the patriarchs. (It may be found acutely argued in *Calv. Inst. bk. ii : ch. 10*, which we mainly follow).

(a.) They had promises: The New Testament expressly declares these promises were the gospel. See *Luke i : 69-73, x : 24 ; Rom. iv : 13, &c.*

(b.) The patriarchs embraced the promises they had (be they what they may) with a religious faith. Who can dispute this? It is too expressly declared in *Heb. ch. xi*. But both Testaments tell us, that faith is a principle of eternal life. *Habak. ii : 4 ; Heb. x : 38.*

(c.) The Covenant made with Abraham in Gen. xvii : 7, to be a God to him and his seed, implies the continued existence of the patriarch. All this promise of a prosperous seed and of their continued relation to God as their patron, could have had no interest to Abraham, and could have been no boon to him, if he was doomed to extinction. Besides, as this promise is expounded in the Pentateuch itself, and more fully in subsequent Scriptures, it is the eternity of God, which makes the covenant so great a privilege. See Deut. xxxiii : 27, and Ps. xvi : 5 and end, and xlvi : 14. What interest would a party doomed to early extinction have in the eternity of his benefactor?

(d.) Our Saviour's argument, in Matt. xxii : 32-34, is founded on Exod. iii : 6. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." The peculiar appropriateness of this refutation of Sadduceism is seen in this : That they are said to have admitted only the inspiration of the Pentateuch : and hence Christ goes for His proof-text to that code and not to any later revelation. Materialists as they were, they gloried professedly in the national covenant with God, (as ensuring earthly privilege). Christ therefore cites them to the familiar terms of that covenant, as of itself containing enough to show, that the doctrine of immortality is its very foundation. It is as though He said to them, that it was unnecessary to contend about the authority of the later prophets, who confessedly say so much about immortality. He can find abundant refutation in that most familiar formula, which was in everybody's mouth. The subsistence in Moses' day of a covenant relation with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, implies the continued existence of those parties. And as the parties were not ghosts, but incarnate men, when the everlasting God bargained with them ; it is implied that His power, of which the Sadducees had no proper idea, would restore them by a bodily resurrection to that state.

(e.) If the promise to the patriarchs were only of temporal good, it was never fulfilled ; for they were strangers and pilgrims in the very land promised them.

(f.) Their dying exercises pointed to an immortality. Heb. xi : 16 tells us that they sought a better country, even a heavenly. This is borne out as a fact, by such passages as Gen. xlix : 18, and 33, and Numb. xxiii : 10.

When we resort to the New Testament we find many evidences, that its writers regarded the Old Testament as containing the Covenant of Grace, and the doctrine of immortality, in all its parts. Two passages may be cited, as specimens. In Jno. v : 39, our Lord says to the Jews, "Search the Scriptures" (the Old Testament), "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." In Acts xxiv : 14, 15. Paul, when pleading before Felix, declared that he believed "all things which are written in the law and in the prophets, and had

hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead.”