

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 7.-Of God's Covenant with Man.

IV. This Covenant of Grace is frequently set forth in Scripture by the name of a Testament, in reference to the death of Jesus Christ the Testator, and to the everlasting inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed.¹

Question 1.—*Is the Covenant of Grace frequently set forth in Scripture by the name of a Testament?*

Answer.—Yes. Heb. 9:15, 16, 17; 7:22; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25. This word *diatheke* (διαθήκη) occurs thirty-three times in the New Testament, and is almost uniformly translated (in our Authorized version) *covenant* when it refers to the dealings of God with his ancient church, and *testament* when it refers to his dealings with his church under the gospel dispensation, Acts 3:25; Rom. 9:4; Mark 14:24. Its fundamental sense is that of disposition, arrangement; in the classics, generally that specific form of arrangement or disposition called a testament, which sense, is in several passages in the New Testament, viz., Heb. 9:16, 17; Gal. 4:24. Although it is seldom used to designate that eternal Covenant of Grace which the Father made with the Son as the second Adam, in behalf of his people, cf. Heb. 13:20; yet it always designates either the old or the new dispensation, i.e., mode of administration of that changeless covenant, or some special covenant which Christ has formed with his people in the way of administering the Covenant of Grace, e.g., the covenants with Abraham and with David, Acts 7:8; 2 Cor. 3:6, 14.

Question 2.—*Wherein does it appear that this name of Testament has reference to the death of Jesus Christ the Testator?*

Answer.—In this, the gospel is herein considered as a testament, the new and last will and *testament* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Matt. 26:28. It is observable that the solemn transactions that pass between God and man are sometimes called a covenant, here a *testament*, Luke 22:20. A covenant is an agreement between two or more parties about things that are in their own power, or may be so, and this either with or without a mediator; this agreement takes effect at such time and in such manner as therein declared, Gen. 17:7; Josh. 9:6. A testament is a voluntary act and deed of a single person, duly executed and witnessed, bestowing legacies on such legatees as are described and characterized by the testator, and which can only take effect upon his death, Gen. 48:21. A testament is not a law, but a donation or free gift, Rom. 11:27; yet, by reason of the death of the testator, its provisions create a legal obligation where one did not previously exist, Gal. 3:15. Heirs look not for law, exactions, or any burdens to be laid upon them by a testament, but they look for the inheritance, Heb. 7:22; 9:15. Christ's dying is considered as a Testament of a dying friend, John 14:27. Now the living friends, by virtue of a Testament as a Testament, do not have a *jus* and right by buying and selling those goods tested, Isa. 55:1. The essence and nature of a Testament stands in the *bequeathed right* of those goods tested, Zech. 9:11. Christ hath 1.) bequeathed to believers these goods (i.e., gospel promises), Heb. 8:6. 2.) The Testament is no

¹ Heb. 9:15, 16, 17; Heb. 7:22; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25.

Testament, except the Testator be dead, Heb. 9:16, 17. No man can sue by law tested goods, if the Testator himself be alive, Heb. 12:24. Nor can we have a right to a new heart, forgiveness, perseverance, eternal life, to grace and glory, except Christ our Testator had died, Rom. 7:2. Thus, we see the Old Testament was confirmed by the blood of beasts, so, too, the New Testament by the blood of Christ prefigured in these, Heb. 9:18-23. Now neither Covenant nor Testament was confirmed by blood simply, but by the blood of a living creature slain, Ex. 24:6; Heb. 9:22. Therefore, the great confirmation of the New Testament, the raising of Christ from the dead is said to be by that blood shed, Heb. 13:20. The confirmation of a Testament by the death of the Testator makes that Testament incapable of being altered, Gal. 3:15.

Question 3.—*Does this also pertain to the everlasting inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed?*

Answer.—Yes. This Covenant of Grace is called a Testament or Disposition; because by this, God has appointed to his sons an heavenly inheritance, Heb. 2:10, to be obtained by the mediation of His own Son's death, Heb. 8:10; 9:15, 16.