

me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God." Gen. xvii. 1—8. "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Gen. xxii. 17, 18. We notice here, that the first engagement in this covenant was, that God would *greatly bless* Abraham. That this promise comprehended temporal blessings we do not deny; but that it referred more particularly to a spiritual blessing—that of justification by the imputation of his faith for righteousness, with all the spiritual blessings concomitant therewith, and consequent therefrom—St. Paul satisfactorily shows, "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. iii. 14.

The second promise in the covenant was, "that he should be a father of many nations;" which, according to St. Paul, refers more particularly to his spiritual seed than to his natural descendants. "That, the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all." Rom. iv. 16.

The third promise was, "to be a God unto Abraham, and to his seed after him," a promise which implies the highest spiritual blessings, such as the remission of sins and the sanctification of our nature; as also a visible Church state. It is even used to express the felicitous state of the Church in heaven. "And God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Rev. xxi. 3.

The fourth stipulation in this covenant was, to give to the patriarch and to his seed after him "all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession." This was more than a temporal promise, being the type of the higher promise of a heavenly inheritance.