

While dealing with this cardinal doctrine of freedom, human and divine, it is fit to observe in passing that divine freedom is the logical basis of the possibility of revelation, incarnation and every other kind of miracle. The limitations of divine freedom by human and other spiritual activities not in harmony therewith have made the world abnormal. To argue with Professor Green that the continuity of nature is contained in our very conception of nature is to wrongfully convert an empirical generalization into a first principle of consciousness. The untutored savage who knows nothing of the learning of the schools has always believed in the possibility of the supernatural, and all children, with the exception of a few precocious specimens, revel naturally in fairyland. The Old Testament has some difficult problems in its miracles of smiting and destruction, but its passing theophanies are small wonders compared with the incarnation, and its supernatural acts of beneficence are on a par with the miracles of Jesus and His disciples as instances of divine freedom restoring portions of a world out of joint to a temporary normal condition. On the basis of miracle, the Old Testament and the New stand or fall together, and, if they fall, revelation falls with them, and, what is more, the Free God ceases to be, and human freedom, deprived of its only sufficient cause, becomes a figment of the imagination. The logical outcome of the denial of Old Testament miracle is fatalism, irresponsibility, moral chaos.

Dr. Goldwin Smith objects to the local character of Old Testament revelation and contrasts it with the catholic dispensation of Christ. Yet Jesus, unlike Apollonius of Tyana, who journeyed over the habitable world, rarely passed beyond the bounds of ancient Israel, and His apostles had to be scattered abroad by the persecution that arose about Stephen. The Protestant churches came into existence in the first part of the sixteenth century, but, before the end of the eighteenth, they did next to nothing for missions. It is natural to man to keep good things to himself, to found clubs and institute secret societies. Did the God of the Old Testament sanction this, or was it allowed on account of the hardness of men's hearts, thus constituting for the Gentiles a time of ignorance that God winked at? All the second progenitors of the race after the deluge knew God. When Abram, led out of a life of idolatry, came to Canaan, he found a Canaanitic King Melchizedec there, a reviver of religion and the founder of a prophetic oracle that remained such in the time of Isaac. God is represented as speaking to Abimelech the Philistine, to Hagar, the fugitive slave, to Laban the Syrian. One of the books of the Old Testament canon is concerned with one who was no Israelite, Job, the Hittite king of Uz. One of the two men who entered the land of promise of the generation that came out of Egypt was Caleb, a Kenezite prince of the line of the Amenhoteps of Tel el Amarna.