*“the fathers,”* see Rom. ix. 5; Heb. i. 1)  
**were testified of** (it is of course implied,  
that the testimony was a good one).

**3.**] The Writer now begins his  
series of examples of the power of faith.  
But instead of opening them with the example   
of our first parents, which he probably   
passes over as not sufficiently recorded   
in Scripture, he adduces the great  
and primary postulate of faith, which has  
regard to a fact contemporaneous indeed  
with them, and holding this first chronological   
place in the series: viz. the creation  
of the world itself. **By faith** (*faith* is  
the instrumental cause, and the expression  
is nearly equivalent to **through faith**,  
with which indeed it is interchanged in  
ver. 33) **we perceive** (we have intellectual  
perception. The world itself, and the  
therein, are *seen* by us: but the  
its eration by God is *apprehended*,  
with our rational or spiritual faculties)  
the **ages** (see note on ch. i. 2, where I  
have maintained that this expression includes  
in it all that exists under the conditions   
of time and space, together with  
those conditions of time and space themselves,   
conditions which do not bind God,  
and did not exist independently of Him,  
but are themselves the work of His word)  
**to have been framed** (so A.V.: and we  
cannot perhaps do better. It is rather  
however, *furnished forth*, “made to be,  
and to be what we find them”) **by the  
word of God** (the *spoken word*, the command,   
as throughout Gen. i.:—the term in  
the Greek is not *logos*. Not must it here  
be taken for the personal word: ch. i. 2,  
is on a different matter), **so that not out  
of things apparent hath that which is  
seen** (i.e. the visible world) **been made**(in all that we see with our sense, of recreation   
and reproduction, *that which is  
seen is made out of that which appears.*  
The seed becomes the plant: the grub,  
the moth. But that which is above sight,  
viz., faith, leads us to apprehend, that this  
has not been so in the first instance: that  
the visible world has not been made ont  
of apparent materials).

**4.**] **By faith**  
(see above) **Abel offered to God a more  
excellent sacrifice** (literally, more sacrifice)   
**than Cain** (than Cain did. But  
how a **more excellent sacrifice?** First,  
there can be no doubt that the adjective  
must be taken not of quantity, but of  
quality: it was not a more abundant, but:  
a more excellent. But how was it so?  
Our text answers us: *because of, by, faith.*  
The more excellence must be looked for  
then rather in the disposition with which  
the sacrifice was offered, than in the nature  
of the sacrifice itself. Gregory the Great  
[cited by Delitzsch] says well, “All that is  
given to God, is weighed according to the  
disposition of its giver: whence it is  
written, ‘God had regard to Abel, and  
to his gifts, but had uo regard to Cain  
and his gifts’ The Scripture docs not  
say, ‘He regarded the gifts of Abel, and  
did not regard the gifts of Cain,’ but first  
says, that “He regarded Abel,” and then  
adds, ‘and his gifts.’ So we see that it  
was not the gifts which made Abel to be  
acceptable, but Abel who made the gifts to  
be so.” This beyond doubt is the principal   
ground of the designation **more**  
**excellent**. With regard to the sacrifices  
themselves; with our present knowledge  
of type and sacrifice, many reasons might  
be alleged why that of Abel should be  
more according to God’s will than that.  
of Cain; but none of those reasons can  
be safely or decisively applied here. That  
Abel's consisted of the firstlings of his  
flock and of the fat thereof—the *first and  
the best*, whereas Cain’s was merely an  
offering of the fruit of the ground, perfunctory   
and common-place, may be a  
circumstance not without weight in appreciating   
the term **by faith**. That Abel’s was  
offering of slain animals, God’s own appointed   
way, so soon after, of the sinner’s  
approach to Him, whereas Cain’s was only  
a gift, as if he could approach God without  
shedding of blood,—this may also be an