

impervious to the research of human reason, and had hitherto remained shaded in obscurity. Previously to its being brought to light by the gospel, it was *hid* in God. But, it may be asked—Was this important part of the redeeming plan concealed; was the voice of inspiration entirely silent as to the purpose of God to call the Gentiles into his church, until the period arrived for its *practical* manifestation? Is it not plainly involved in the magnificent promise made to Abraham, that in his seed *all the nations* of the earth should be blessed? Did not the evangelical prophet with characteristic clearness declare, “It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved Israel: I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the end of the earth?” And was it not a prominent object of the apostle in reasoning with the christians of Rome, to evince that the accession of the Gentiles to the fold of the Redeemer was perfectly in accordance with the anticipations of prophecy? All this is readily admitted. Yet—if the light emitted by the prophetic oracle on this subject shone in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not; if “they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, (*ἐξέστησαν*, literally, *were in an ecstasy*) because that on the *Gentiles* also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost;” if an *immediate* revelation was necessary to make known to Paul himself—deeply versant though he was in the writings of the prophets—“the *mystery*, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel;” then may it with truth be affirmed—that, till the day spring from on high hath visited us, this benignant purpose of the Deity was virtually *concealed* within his own bosom,—that, to adopt the apostle’s words in the previous part of this chapter, it “was not made known unto the sons of men *as*” (in a manner so perspicuous and specific) “it is *now* revealed