

spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." And therefore we call attention at once to the amazing dignity which the Gospel receives from association with such a Being as its Founder and source, and remind you, at the same time, of the solemn and imperious claim which the Gospel, because of its connexion with Him, has on the profound reverence, implicit faith and uniform obedience of man. The Apostle of the Gentiles forms precisely the same conclusions from the same premises, when, after announcing the Divinity of our Lord in Hebrew 1, he goes on to mark the solemn conclusion: "Therefore we ought to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Living as we do, under the Gospel, take heed that you render that earnest attention to it, which is so distinctly and solemnly demanded, and beware lest, by your scorn, indifference, or neglect, you shall encounter that far sorer punishment which is to arise from the anger of Him into whose hands it is a fearful thing to fall, and of whom it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

II. The Gospel is fraught with abundant blessings to the world. The very meaning of the term Gospel verifies this statement, for the word signifies *glad tidings*. When the angel appeared to the shepherds to announce this to the world, he said, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be for all people," and then, as if that very announcement had given new energy to the raptures and harmonies of heaven, "there was heard a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men."

Notice, first, the nature of the blessings which the Gospel imparts. Here we scarcely know where to commence and where to close. When we speak of the blessings of the Gospel, we seem as though we stood at the entrance of some fair and beautiful garden, where we cannot stir a step without plucking flowers

and beholding fruits on the tree of life, whose very leaves are for the healing of the nations. We can only notice a few of its chief blessings, which, however, you will find to extend over the wide sphere of life and immortality.

1. The Gospel reveals to man a knowledge of God and all spiritual truth. This knowledge, on account of the state into which man has fallen by his own voluntary and wilful depravity, would, apart from christianity, have been entirely and utterly impossible. Moral revelations of truth were given to men in the early ages of the world; they were given to the Patriarchs, they were given at a subsequent period, under the economy of Moses to the Jewish nation; but nations have, in the process of time, changed the truth of God into a lie, and have plunged themselves into the deepest abysses of idolatry. The Jews, by their traditions, had perverted the commandments of God, so that they became of no effect, and had it not been for the advent of new and brighter disclosures, man would have remained enveloped in a midnight darkness, from whose horrors no finite influence, however powerful, could have relieved him. Now, the Gospel comes in consequence of the plan of eternal mercy, that it might supply the deficiencies, remedy the evils, and impart the appropriate boon; and it throws a bright and steady lustre over the otherwise dark realities of the world to come—lighting up every truth pertaining to the character and government of God, and the duties and destinies of man, in such a way that no truth is hid which it is important for man to know.

It is to the communication of this knowledge that the Apostle refers when he speaks of the "revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of the faith," &c.

This spiritual knowledge is essential to all real dignity, essential to all moral worth, essential to the introduction of man into that state by which alone he can be prepared for future and everlasting happiness, of which we read that that which is in part shall be done away, and we shall know even as we are known.