existing.” Meyer)**, until the seed shall have  
come to whom** (ver. 16) **the promise is** (not  
was) **made** (this seed is of course Christ);  
**being enjoined by means of angels** (angels  
were, according to the Rabbinical view, the  
enactors and enjoiners of the law: so Josephus speaks; “We,” he says, “have  
been taught the best desires and the  
holiest laws by means of angels from God.”  
See also Heb. ii. 2; and note on Col. ii. 15.  
Of course no explaining away of the term  
**angels** into men [Moses, Aaron, &c.] can be  
allowed. Observe, the angels are not the  
*givers* of the Law, but its *ministers*, and  
*instrumental enactors:* the Law, with St.  
Paul, is always *God’s* law; see especially  
Rom. vii. 22), **in the hand of a mediator**  
(viz. MOSES, who came from God to the  
people with the tables of the law in his  
hands. Compare his own words, Deut. v.  
5, “I stood between the Lord and you at  
that time, to shew you the word of the  
Lord.” Philo calls Moses by this very name  
of *Mediator*: and numerous examples are  
cited from the Rabbinical books, in which  
the name *Mediator* is given to Moses. *Why*  
does the Apostle add this last clause? I am  
inclined to think with Meyer that it is,—  
not to disparage the Law in comparis  
with the Gospel or with the promise, but to  
enhance the solemnity of the giving of the  
law as a preparation for Christ, in answer  
to the somewhat disparaging question,  
“what is the use of the law?” If the  
being given *by means of angels* had been  
here disparaging, as in Heb. ii. 2, “*by the  
Lord*” or the like must have been expressed, as there, on the other side.  
the intervention of a *mediator* is certainly no disparagement of the old covenant in comparison with the new, for this it  
has in common with the other. The fact  
is (see below on ver. 20), that no such  
comparison is in question here).

**20.]** The explanations of this verse, so  
obscure from its brevity, are so numerous  
(Winer counted 250: Jowett mentions 430)  
that they require a bibliography of their  
own. I believe we shall best disentangle  
the sense as follows. (1) Clearly, the  
terms **a mediator** and **God** are opposed.  
(2) As clearly **cannot be of one** and **is  
one** are opposed. (3) From this contrast  
arises an apparent opposition between the  
law and the promises of God, which gives  
occasion to the question of ver. 21. Taking  
up therefore again (1),—*a mediator,* by  
whose hand the law was enacted, stands  
opposed to *God*, the giver of the promises.  
And that, in this respect (2) ;—(a) *a mediator* is not *of one,* but (b) *God* is *one*. And  
herein lies the knot of the verse; that is, in  
(b),— for the meaning of (a) is pretty clear  
on all hands; viz. that *a mediator* does not  
belong to *one party* (masculine) but to  
*two*, as going between one party and  
another). Then to guide us to the meaning  
of (b), we must remember, that the numerical contrast is the primary idea: *a mediator* belongs not to *one*, but *God is one.*  
Shall we then say, that all reference of the  
term *one* (as applied to *God*) beyond this  
numerical one is to be repudiated? I cannot  
think so. The proposition “*God is one”*  
would carry to the mind of every reader  
much more than the mere *numerical* unity  
of God—viz. His Unity as an *essential*  
*attribute*, extending through the whole  
divine Character. And thus, though the  
proposition *a mediator is not of one,*would not, by itself, convey any meaning  
but that a mediator belongs to more than  
one, it would, when combined with *God is  
one,* receive a shade of meaning which it  
did not bear before,—of a state of things  
involved in the fact of a *mediator* being  
employed, which was not according to the  
*oneness* of God, or, so to speak, in the main  
track of His unchanging purpose. And  
thus (3), the law, administered by the  
*mediator*, belonging to a state inconsistent.  
with *oneness*, a state of two at variance, is  
apparently opposed to the *promises*, belonging entirely to THE ONE, the one  
(faithful) God. And observe, that the  
above explanation is deduced entirely from  
the *form of the sentence itself,* and from  
the idea which the expression *“God is  
one*” must necessarily raise in the mind of  
its reader, accustomed to the proposition as  
the foundation of the faith;—not from any  
preconceived view, to suit which the words,  
or emphatic arrangement, must be forced.  
Notice by the way, that the objection, that  
the Gospel too is *in the hand of a mediator,*does not apply here: for (*a*) there is no question here of the Gospel, but only of the *promises,* as direct from God: (*b*) the *mediator*