*from the proved superiority of the Son of  
God to the angels.*

**1] On this account** (viz. because Christ, the Mediator  
of the New Covenant, is far above all the  
angels who were the mediators of the  
former Covenant) **it behoves us** (*“being  
aware of this difference,”* Theodoret: it is  
a moral necessity, arising from the previous  
premises: so Matt. xviii. 33; xxv. 27; 2 Tim. ii. 6. There is no stress on us) **to give heed more abundantly** (we must not understand after the comparative, **more abundantly,** “than we did to the law,” as  
Chrysostom and others; or the aim of the  
Writer to be, to shew the superiority of  
the Gospel over the law, as Theodoret :  
but the comparative intimates how much  
our attention ought to be increased and  
intensified by our apprehension of the dignity of Him whose record the gospel is, and who is its Mediator) **to the things  
heard [by us], lest haply we be diverted**  
(Aristotle uses the same passive form of  
this Greek verb to indicate that which we  
familiarly call food *going the wrong way*  
in course of swallowing. Plutarch uses it  
of a ring *falling off from the finger.* See  
other illustrations in my Greek Test. The  
meaning of the verb seems then to be clear  
—to flow past, or away, or aside, to fall off,  
deflect from a course. We, going onward  
in time, living our lives in one or another  
direction, are exhorted ‘to adhere to the  
things we have heard’ [see above], and  
that, *‘that we do not at any time float  
past them,’* be not carried away beside  
them, led astray from the course on which  
they would take us. Two mistakes respecting the word are to be avoided:  
a) that of A. V., *‘lest at any time we  
should let them slip.’* From what has  
been above said of the tense and voice, it  
will be clear that such cannot be the  
meaning. b) Still worse is that of those  
who have thought of a comparison with a  
sieve, or a leaking vessel. So Calvin,  
Owen, and others: and I find it reproduced in Tait’s commentary on the He-  
brews: *“lest.... we should run out as  
leaking vessels.”* The meaning is as untenable, as the simile is irrelevant. The Greek expositors, whose authority in matters  
of Greek verbal usage is considerable, all  
explain it as above. So also all the more  
accurate of the moderns) **from them** (such  
is the most natural object to supply after  
the verb: turned aside from and floated  
away from the course on which the *adhering* to them would have carried us).

**2.] For** (introduces an argument  
[vv. 2–4] *from the less to the greater.*  
The law was introduced by the mere subordinate messengers of God, but was enforced with strict precision: how much  
more shall they be punished who reject  
that Gospel, which was brought in by the  
Son of God Himself, and continues to be  
confirmed to us by God’s present power)  
**if the word which was spoken by means  
of angels** (i.e. the law of Moses. The cooperation of angels in the giving of the law at Sinai was not merely a rabbinical  
notion, but is implied in both the Old and  
New Testaments. There can consequently  
be little doubt that the Writer, in mentioning **the word spoken by angels,** had  
reference to the law of Moses, and not, as  
some think, to the scattered messages  
which were, at different times in Old Test.  
history, delivered by angels. It has been  
sometimes supposed that the **angels** spoken  
of here are not angels, but merely human  
messengers. Chrysostom says, “Some think  
that Moses is pointed at: but not with justice: for the writer speaks of many *angels*.” Bleck remarks that the Writer would  
hardly have used this argument of depreciating contrast, had he regarded the Law as given either to Moses or to the people by  
the direct ministry of the Son of God Himself) **was made** (*“became,”* on being thus spoken by angels) **binding** (*firm, ratified :  
“stedfast,”* as A.V.: as applied to commands,  
*—imperative,—*not to be violated with impunity), **and every transgression** (overstepping of its ordinances, or more properly  
walking alongside of, and therefore not in,  
the path which it marked out) **and disobedience** (the relation of these two words to one another in point of sense seems accordingly