sent you’ (ch. xiii, 43).

**27.**] *An  
expansion of the duty of freeness and  
boldness of speech implied in the last  
verse*. The words may bear *two meanings*:  
either (1) that which Chrysostom gives,  
taking the expressions relatively, of His  
speaking to them only, and in a little  
corner of Palestine, as compared with the  
subsequent publicity of the Word; or (2)  
as this part of the discourse relates to the  
*future* principally, the *secret speaking* may  
mean the communication which our Lord  
would hold with them hereafter by His  
Spirit, which they were to preach and proclaim. See Acts iv. 20. These senses do not exclude one another, and are possibly  
both implied.

There is no need, with  
Lightfoot and others, to suppose any allusion to a custom in the synagogue, in the  
words **hear in the ear**. They are a common expression, derived from common  
life: we have it in a wider sense Acts xi.  
22, and Gen. 1. 4.

**upon the housetops**] On the flat roofs of the houses.  
Thus we have in Josephus, “Going up on  
the roof, and with his hand quieting their  
tumult...he said....”

**28.**] On  
the *latter part* of this verse much question  
has of late been raised, which never was,  
as far as I have been able to find, known  
to the older interpreters. Stier designates it as ‘the only passage of Scripture  
whose words may equally apply to God  
and the enemy of souls.’ He himself is  
strongly in favour of the *latter* interpretation, and defends it at much length;  
but I am *quite unable to assent to his  
opinion*. It seems to me *at variance with  
the connexion of the discourse*, and with  
the *universal tone of Scripture regarding  
Satan*. If such a phrase as “*to fear the  
devil*” could be instanced as equivalent to  
“*to guard against the devil,*” or if it could  
be shewn that any where power is attributed  
to Satan analogous to that indicated by  
“*able to destroy both soul and body in  
hell,*” I then should be open to the doubt  
whether he might not here be intended ;  
but seeing that “**fear not,**” indicating terror, is changed into “*fear*” so usually followed by “God” in a higher and holier  
sense (there is *no such contrast* in ver. 26,  
and therefore that verse cannot be cited  
as ruling the meaning of this), and that  
GOD ALONE is throughout the Scripture  
the *Almighty dispenser of life and death  
both temporal and eternal*, seeing also  
that Satan is ever represented as the *condemned* of God, not one able to destroy, I  
must hold by the general interpretation,  
and believe that both here and in Luke xii.  
3–7 our Heavenly Father is intended, as  
the right object of our fear. As to this  
being inconsistent with the character in  
which He is brought before us in the next  
verse, the very change of meaning in  
“*fear*” would lead the mind on, out of  
the terror before spoken of, into that  
better kind of fear always indicated by  
that expression when applied to God, and  
so prepare the way for the next verse.  
Besides, this sense is excellently in keeping with ver. 29 in another way. ‘Fear  
Him who is the only Dispenser of Death  
and Life: *of death, as here; of life*, as in  
the case of the sparrows for whom He cares.’  
‘Fear Him, above men: trust Him, in spite  
of men.’

In preparing the 2nd edn. of  
my Greek Test., I carefully reconsidered the  
whole matter, and went over Stier’s arguments with the connexion of the discourse  
before me, but found myself more than  
ever persuaded that it is quite impossible,  
for the above and every reason, to apply  
the words to the enemy of souls. The  
similar passage, James iv. 12, even in the  
absence of other considerations, would be  
decisive. Full as his Epistle is of our  
Lord’s words from this Gospel, it is hardly  
to be doubted that in “*there is one lawgiver*[*and judge*] *who is able to save and to  
destroy,*” he has this very verse before him.  
The depth of this part of the discourse I  
take to be, the setting before Christ’s messengers their Heavenly Father as the sole  
object of childlike trust and childlike fear  
—the former from His love,—the latter  
from His power,—His *power* to destroy, it  
is not said *them*, but absolute, *body and  
soul*, in hell. Here is the true depth of  
the discourse: but if in the midst of this  
great subject, our Lord is to be conceived  
as turning aside, upholding as an object of  
fear the chief enemy, whose ministers and  
subordinates He is at the very moment,  
commanding us *not to fear*, and speaking  
of *him* as *he that is able to destroy both  
soul and body in hell*, to my mind all true  
and deep connexion is broken.  
  
**29. sparrows**] any small birds.