of these two first chapters) *document*.

**5. of the course of Abia (Abijah)]**  
This was the *eighth* of the *four-and-twenty  
courses* of the priests (see ref. 1 Chron.).  
These courses kept their names and order,  
though not their descent, after the captivity. The courses were of a *week's*duration each.

**Elisabeth]** This is  
the Septuagint rendering, Exod. vi. 23, of  
Elisheba, the wife of Aaron: signifying,  
*God* (is my) *oath:* i.e. a swearer by,—worshipper of, God. John was thus of  
priestly descent by both parents.

**9.]** This was the *most honorable office* which  
was allotted among the priests each day,  
and the same person could not serve it  
more than once.

**the temple] the  
holy place:** see Heb. ix. 1—6, and Exod. xxx. 7.

An account of John Hyrcanus  
the high priest having a vision at the time  
of offering incense is given in Josephus:  
see the extract in my Greek Testament.  
There also we are told that the people were  
outside (in the courts of the men and  
women):—their prayers were offered *while  
the incense was burnt,* as the *smoke was  
symbolical* of the ascent of prayer, Rev.  
viii. 3, 4.

It appears, from the allot-  
ment having been just mentioned, to have  
been the *morning* incense burning. Theophylact and others understand the whole  
as describing the entry into the Holy of  
holies on the great day of Atonement,  
Levit. xvi. But this is manifestly an  
error: for it would necessitate Zacharias  
having been *high priest*, which he never  
was; and in this case there would have  
been no casting of lots.

**11.]** the  
*altar of incense,* Exod. xxx. 1, must not  
be confounded with the *large altar of  
burnt-offering: that* stood *outside the holy  
place,* in the court of the priests. It was  
during the sacrifice on the great altar that  
the daily burning of the incense took place:  
one of the two priests, whose lot it was  
to offer incense, brought fire from off the  
altar of burnt-offering to the altar of  
incense, and then left the other priest  
there alone, who, on a signal from the  
priest presiding at the sacrifice, kindled  
the incense: see Exod. xl. 5, 26.

This is no *vision*, but an actual *angelic  
appearance.* The right is the *favorable side:* see Matt. xxv. 83. “We must understand the right as regarded the officiating priest, who stood with his face to the  
altar. It would thus be on the N. side  
of the holy place, where the table of shew  
bread stood, whereas on the S. side was  
the golden candlestick,” Bleek.

**13.]**  
He had then *prayed for a son—*but as  
appears below, long since—for he now had  
ceased to look for an answer to his prayer.  
Many Commentators have thought his