xii. 15.

The *names* of the angels, say  
the Rabbis, came up with Israel from  
Babylon. We first read of both Michael  
and Gabriel in the book of Daniel. But  
we are not therefore to suppose that they  
were borrowed from any heathen system,  
as Strauss and the rationalists have done;  
the fact being, that the persons and order  
of the angels were known long before, and  
their *names* formed matter of subsequent  
revelation to Daniel. See Josh. v. 13—16.

**that stand in the presence of God]**  
one of the chief angels near the throne of  
God. They are *seven* in Tobit, as  
above.

**20.]** We must not consider  
this dumbness *solely* as a punishment; it  
was also a *sign*, as Zacharias had required.  
It is impossible for us to say what the  
degree of unbelief in Zacharias was, and  
therefore we can be no judges as to his  
being deserving of the punishment (against  
Strauss and the rationalists).

**and  
not able to speak]** This is not a *repetition*, but an *explanation of the ground*  
and reason of his silence.

**until day  
that these shall be performed]  
‘**What day? that of the birth and the  
giving of the name,’ Euthymius.

**21.]**  
lt was customary for the priest at the  
time of prayer not to remain long in the  
holy place, for fear the people who were  
without might imagine that any vengeance  
had been inflicted on him for some informality;— as he was considered the *representative* of the people.

**22.]** They knew, by some excitement, visible in his  
manner. It was not his office to *pronounce  
the benediction,* but that of the other incensing priest; so that his ‘not being able  
to speak,’ must mean, *in answer to the  
enquiries* which his unusual appearance  
prompted. This answer he gave by a  
sign: and the question was also by signs;  
for (see ver. 62) he was *deaf*, as well as  
dumb, which indeed is the strict meaning  
of the word used in the original.

**23.  
as soon as....]** The week during which  
his course was on duty. Mr. Greswell, by  
much elaborate calculation, has made it  
probable, but only as one out of several  
alternatives, that this week was Tisri  
18-25, i.e. September 20—October 6, of  
the *sixth year before the Christian era.*

A deaf and dumb person, we thus  
see, was not precluded from some of the  
priest ministrations.

**24, 25.] hid  
herself**—either, *to avoid defilement:* see  
Judges xiii. 13, 14,—to *hide her pregnancy*  
from her neighbors till it was certain and  
apparent,—or, from the precaution which  
the first months of pregnancy require.

Kuinoel suggests, that the reason may  
have been, that she might devote herself  
more uninterruptedly to exercises of devotion and thankfulness, and that this is  
expressed by the words following.

**{25} my reproach]** of barrenness: see reff.

**26—38.] ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SAME**