Deut. xi. 13 ff., the Jews had written on  
their phylacteries, and recited night and  
morning: but not the second; so that  
the idea that Jesus *pointed* to the phylactery of the lawyer, will not hold.

Meyer thinks the man answered thus,  
because he had before heard our Lord cite  
these in connexion, and with an especial  
view to asking the question “*who is my  
neighbour?*” It may have been so;—  
but I should rather believe the same spirit  
with which he began, to have carried him  
on to this second question. The words  
**willing to justify Himself** seem to imply  
this; but see below.

**29.**] Meyer explains this: The questioner, having been  
by our Lord’s enquiry, “*how readest  
thou?*” himself thrown into the position  
of the answerer, yet, “*willing to justify  
himself,*” wishing to carry out the purpose  
with which he asked at first, and to cover  
what otherwise would be his shame at  
being answered by so simple a reply, and  
that his own,—asks, “*who is my neighbour?*”—I may observe that we need not  
take the whole of this explanation, but  
may well suppose that “*to justify himself*” may mean, ‘to get himself out of  
the difficulty:’ viz. by throwing on Jesus  
the definition of *one’s neighbour*, which was  
very narrowly and technically interpreted  
among the Jews, excluding Samaritans  
and Gentiles.

**30.**] **answering**, literally, **taking him up**,—implies that the  
question was made an occasion of *saying  
more than the mere answer*.

**went down**, both because Jerusalem was higher,  
and because ‘*to go up*’ is the usual phrase  
for journeying towards a metropolis.  
  
**from Jerusalem to Jericho**, about 150  
stadia (i.e. about 18 miles 6 furlongs) distant. The road through a wilderness (Josh. xvi. 1) which was notorious for  
the robberies committed there. “Arabs,  
... which race, given to habits of plunder,  
to this day infests the borders of Palestine,  
and lies in wait for travellers from Jerusalem to Jericho, as our Lord relates in  
the Gospel.” Jerome, Commentary on Jer.  
iii, 2. The same Father, who lived for  
many years in the neighbourhood, mentions that a part of the road was so infamous for murders, as to be called the  
red or bloody way, and that in his time  
there was a fort there garrisoned by Roman soldiers, to protect travellers.

**fell among**: i.e. they surrounded him.

**stripped him**, not merely of his  
clothing, but of all he had;—“*despoiled  
him,*” as the Vulgate renders it.

**31.**] Many priests journeyed this way, for  
Jericho was a priestly city; this man is  
perhaps represented as having been up to  
Jerusalem in the order of his course, and  
returning.

The Law and Prophets  
enjoined the act of mercy which this priest  
refused; see Exod. xxiii. 4, 5: Deut. xxii.  
1–4: Isa. lviii. 7, not, it is true, *literally*,  
—and therefore he neglected it. He did  
not even go up to him to examine him, but  
passed by on the opposite side of the road.

**32.**] The Levite, the inferior minister of the law, did even worse; when he  
was at the place, he came and saw him;—  
came near, and then passed, as the other.

**33–35.**] {33} The Samaritans were *entirely, not half*, Gentiles.

Why our Lord mentions the name here, see below.