be drawn that these persons were not  
Pharisees (as Greswell has done), and consequently

that the charge proceeded from  
a different quarter.

**16.**] This is  
not mentioned *here* by St. Matthew, but  
further on in the discourse, ver. 38. No  
distinction can be drawn, as Greswell has  
done, for the purpose of maintaining that  
the two incidents were distinct, between  
“*a sign*” and “*a sign heaven*:” for  
(l) our Lord answers the demand in both  
places *by the same reply*, the sign of Jonas;  
see also Matt. xvi 1—4; and (2) the ordinary

Jewish idea attached to *a sign*  
would imply *from heaven* : see notes on  
Matt. xvi. 1.

**17.**] knowing their  
thoughts : so Matthew also, ver. 25.

**20.**] with the finger of God] “*by the Spirit  
of God*,” Matthew. No distinction can  
be established, as Greswell attempts. The  
one expression explains the other. What

was done (Hebraistically speaking) by the

*finger* of God, was done by the Spirit of

God. We have much greater variations

than this in sayings demonstrably the

same.

**21.**] This parabolic sentence

is in close connexion with many prophetic

sayings, Isa. xl. 10 marg., liii. 12, and most

pointedly Isa. xlix. 24, 25. It will be remembered

that the Baptist called the

Lord by this name, a stronger, or one who

is mightier—placing after it, it is true,

“*than I*,” but still using it as indicative

of the Almightiness of the Son of God,  
rather than in comparison with himself.

The strong man is the adversary,  
Satan ; his palace this present world, —  
John xii. 81; xiv. 80; xvi. 11. His goods  
or tools, or spoils —are *the sons of men*,—  
2 Tim. ii, 26; 1 John v. 19 (margin).  
With these he is clothed and armed, or  
rather with their *evil capacities*, which he  
furbishes and brightens for his use: with  
this *whole armour of the devil*, compare  
by way of contrast, the “*whole armour of  
God*,” Eph. vi. 11—20. Without these  
arms and tools he would be powerless:  
the evil one must have evil men—something

receptive of evil—to work upon.  
But these the Stronger than he takes from  
him, and divides his spoils, Isa. lii. 12.  
He *divides his spoils* —turns to His own  
use and that of His followers all that good  
which the enemy had corrupted into evil.

The Stronger had already come  
into the strong man’s house—the the *Saviour*,  
into the world—and was robbing him of  
his captives, and making them into His  
own disciples—e. g. Mary Magdalene and  
others: but the work was not fully completed

yet, till the Lord, by and in His death,  
overcame him that had the power of death,  
i.e. the devil. And that His great victory  
is still proceeding ;—He is still taking from  
him one and another,— rescuing the sons  
of men by the power of His Gospel, till  
the end, when He shall (Rev. xx.1 ff) bind  
him in the abyss; and though he be