18; iv. 1, where we have the separating  
effect of this fire in its completion at the  
great day: see also Matt. iii. 12.  
  
  
On the passage itself, see notes on Matt. x. 35, 36.  
  
**54—59.**] REPROACHES FOR BLINDNESS  
TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The connexion   
of this with the foregoing is natural   
and close. *From henceforth* (ver.  
52), the distinction shall begin to be  
made ;—the discord and division between  
those who discern *this time* (ver. 56) and  
those who do not. Our Lord then turns  
to the crowd (**also**. He not only said to  
the disciples the foregoing, but to the  
crowd the following), and reproaches them  
(1) for their *blindness*, in not being able  
to discern it, as they did the signs in the  
natural heavens; and (2) for their *want of  
prudence* (vv. 57—59), in not repenting  
and becoming reconciled to the law of God  
while yet there was time.  
  
**54.**] There  
is a somewhat similar saying of our Lord  
at Matt. xvi. 2 ff., but differing both in its  
occasion and its substance.   
  
**the cloud**,  
—that usually rises there; see 1 Kings  
xviii. 44. The west, in Judæa, would  
the direction of the sea.   
  
**56.**] **the  
face of the earth**—perhaps referring to  
other signs of rain or heat from the appearance   
of the hills, &c.  
  
**this time**] The signs of this time were very  
plain;—the sceptre had departed from  
Judah ;—the general expectation of the  
coming of the Messiah is testified even by  
profane authors ;—the prophets had all  
spoken of Him, and the greatest of them,  
the Baptist, had announced His arrival.  
  
  
**57.**] In what follows, our Lord  
takes occasion from the *request about the  
inheritance*, which had begun this discourse,   
to pass to infinitely more solemn  
matters. There is, I think, no denying  
that the “*judging what is right*” and the  
“*thine adversary*” have a reference to  
that request, in the ability and duty of  
every man to ‘judge what is right :’—but  
the sense of the words far outruns that reference,   
and treats of loftier things. ‘ *Why  
do ye not discern of yourselves your true  
state—that which is just—the justice of  
your case as before God?* *You are going*  
(the course of your life is the journey)  
*with your adversary* (the just and holy  
law of God) *before the magistrate* (God  
Himself) ; *therefore by the way take pains  
to be delivered from Him* (by repentance,  
and faith in the Son of God, see Ps. ii. 12),  
*lest he drag thee to the judge* (who adjudges   
the case and inflicts the fine; that  
is, the Son to whom alt judgment is committed),   
*and the judge deliver thee to the*