belong to the discovery.

**19. husband**]

so called, though they were as yet but  
betrothed: so in Gen. xxix. 21. Deut. xxii.  
24.

**just**] **“and not willing”** is, not  
the explanation of **just**, but an additional  
particular. He was a strict observer of the  
law,—and (yet) not willing to expose her.  
The sense of ‘*kind*,’ ‘*merciful*,’ proposed  
by some instead of **just**, is inadmissible.

**privily**] Not ‘*without any writing  
of divorcement*,’ which would have been  
unlawful; but according to the form prescribed in Deut. xxiv. 1. The husband  
might either do this, or adopt the stronger  
course of bringing his wife to justice openly.  
The punishment in this case would have  
been death by stoning. Deut. xxii. 23.

**20. behold**] answers to the Hebrew  
“hinneh,” and is frequently used by Matt.  
and Luke to introduce a new event or  
change of scene: not so often by Mark,  
and never with this view in John.

**an angel**] The announcement was made  
to Mary openly, but to Joseph in a dream;  
for in Mary’s case faith and concurrence  
of will were necessary—the communication  
was of a higher kind,—and referred  
to a thing future; but here it is simply  
an advertisement for caution’s sake of an  
event which had already happened, and is  
altogether a communication of an inferior  
order: see Gen. xx. 3. But see on the  
other hand the remarks at the close of the  
notes on ver. 21.

**son of David**] These  
words would recall Joseph’s mind to the  
promised seed, the expectation of the  
families of the lineage of David, and at  
once stamp the message as the announcement of the birth of the Messiah. May it  
not likewise be said, that this appellation  
would come with more force, if Mary also  
were *a daughter* of David? The addition,  
“**thy wife**,” serves to remind Joseph of  
that relation which she already held by  
betrothal, and which he was now exhorted  
to recognize. See above on ver. 19.

**21. Jesus**] The same name as Joshua, the  
former deliverer of Israel. Philo says,  
“Jesus is, being interpreted, ‘The salvation of the Lord.’”

**He**]  
emphatically: **He alone**: best rendered, perhaps,  
‘*it is He that*.’

**his people**] In  
primary sense, *the Jews*, of whom alone  
Joseph could have understood the words:  
but in the larger sense, all who believe on  
Him: an explanation which the tenor of  
prophecy (cf. Gen. xxii. 18: Deut. xxxii.  
21), and the subsequent admission of the  
Gentiles, warrant. Cf. a similar use of  
‘Israel’ by St. Peter, Acts v.31.

**from their sins**] It is remarkable that in this  
early part of the evangelic history, in the  
midst of pedigrees, and the disturbances of  
thrones by the supposed temporal King of  
the Jews, we have so clear an indication  
of the *spiritual nature of the office of  
Christ*. One circumstance of this kind  
outweighs a thousand cavils against the  
historical reality of the narration. If I  
mistake not, this announcement reaches  
further into the deliverance to be wrought,  
by Jesus, than any thing mentioned by the  
Evangelist subsequently. It thus bears  
the internal impress of a message from  
God, treasured up and related in its original formal terms.—“Sins” is not put  
for the *punishment of sin*, but is the sin  
itself— **the practice of sin**, in its most  
pregnant sense. ‘How suggestive it is,’  
remarks Bishop Ellicott, ‘that while to the  
loftier spirit of Mary the name of Jesus is  
revealed with all the prophetic associations  
of more than David’s glories—to Joseph,  
perchance the aged Joseph, who might  
have long seen and realized his own spiritual needs, and the needs of those around  
him, it is specially said, thou shalt call his  
name Jesus: *for He shall save his people  
from their sins.*’ Historical Lectures on  
the Life of our Lord, p. 56.

**22. that it might be fulfilled**] It is impossible  
to interpret that in any other sense than