and infancy, as theocratic myths—advancing to the denial of His miracles—  
then attacking the truthfulness of His own  
sayings which are grounded on the O.T.  
as a revelation from God—and so finally  
leaving us nothing in the Scriptures but,  
as a German writer of this school has expressed it, ‘a mythology not so attractive as that of Greece.’ That this is the course  
which unbelief *has run* in Germany, should  
be a pregnant warning to the decriers of  
the O.T. among ourselves. It should be a  
maxim for every expositor and every student, that Scripture is a *whole*, and stands or falls together. That this is now beginning to be deeply felt in Germany, we have  
cheering testimonies in the later editions  
of their best Commentators, and in the  
valuable work of Stier on the discourses of  
our Lord. [Since however these words  
were first written, we have had lamentable  
proof in England, that their warnings  
were not unneeded. The course of unbelief which has issued in the publication of  
the volume entitled “ Essays and Reviews,”  
has been in character and progress, exactly  
that above described: and owing to the  
injudicious treatment which has multiplied  
tenfold the circulation of that otherwise  
contemptible work, its fallacies are now  
in the hands and mouths of thousands,  
who, from the low standard of intelligent  
Scriptural knowledge among us, will never  
have the means of answering them. 1862.  
To this it may now be added, that even a  
Bishop of the Church of England has come  
before the world as a champion of that unbelief, in its first phase as described above.  
We may hope that his work, judging from  
the blunders already in the renderings of Hebrew words on which his arguments are founded, will soon be added  
to the catalogue of attacks by which the  
enemies of our holy faith have damaged  
nothing save their own reputation and  
influence. 1863.]

**19.**] There is  
little difficulty in this verse, if we consider it in connexion with the verse preceding, to which it is bound by the  
**therefore** and the **these**, and with the following, to which the **for** (ver. 20) unites it.  
Bearing this in mind, we see (1) that  
**break**, on account of what follows in ver.  
20 and after, must be taken in the higher  
sense, as referring to the *spirit* and not  
the letter: **whosoever shall break** (have  
broken), in the sense presently to be laid  
down. (2) That **these least commandments** refers to **one jot or tittle** above,  
and means one of these minute commands  
which seem as insignificant, in comparison  
with the greater, as the *jot* and *tittle* in  
comparison with great portions of writing.  
(3) That **shall be called least** does not  
mean ‘*shall be excluded from,*” inasmuch  
as the question is not of *keeping or not  
keeping* the commandments of in a  
legal sense, but of *appreciating, and causing others to appreciate*, the import and weight of even the most insignificant parts  
of God’s revelation of Himself to man; and  
rather therefore applies to teachers than  
to Christians in general, though to them  
also through the “*break*” and “*do.*”  
(4) That *no deduction can be drawn from  
these words, binding the Jewish law, or  
any part of it, as such, upon Christians*.  
That this is so, is plainly shewn by what  
follows, where our Lord proceeds to pour  
upon the letter of the law the fuller light of the spirit of the Gospel: thus lifting  
and expanding (not destroying) every jot  
and tittle of that precursory dispensation  
into its fall meaning in the life and practice of the Christian; who, by the indwelling of the divine Teacher, God’s Holy  
Spirit, is led into all truth and purity.  
(5) That *these words of our Lord are  
decisive against such persons,* whether  
ancient or modern*, as would set aside the  
Old Testament as without significance, or  
inconsistent with the New*. See the preceding note, and the Book of Common  
Prayer, Article vii.

On **shall be called**, see note on ver. 9.

**20.**) An expansion of the idea contained **fulfil**,  
ver. 17, and of the difference between  
**break**, which the Scribes and Pharisees did by enforcing the letter to the neglect  
of the spirit—and **do and teach**, in which  
particulars Christians were to exceed the  
Pharisees, the punctilious observers, and  
the Scribes, the traditional expounders of  
the law.

**righteousness**, *purity of  
heart and life*, as set forth by example in  
the doing, and by precept in the teaching.