reader.

**3.**] St. John never mentions,  
“*the Scribes*” elsewhere, but usually calls  
the opponents of Jesus “*the Jews*,” or “*the  
rulers*.” “*The Scribes and Pharisees*” is a very common expression in the three  
Gospels.

The account gives no light as  
to the *capacity in which* these Scribes and  
Pharisees acted when they brought the  
woman. Probably, *only* as tempting Jesus,  
and not in the course of any legal proceedings against her. Such would have required (Lev. xx. 10; Deut. xxii. 22) that  
the *man also* should have been put to  
death.

**4**.] The words “s*ay unto him,  
tempting him*” savour much more of the  
three Gospels than of John: see Mt. xvi.  
1; xix. 3; xxii, 18, 35: Mk. viii. 11;  
x. 2; xii. 15, &c. Obviously our ch. vi. 6  
is no example to the contrary. The difficulty is even greater than the last, to say,  
*in what sense this was a temptation, to  
lead to His accusation*. The principal  
solutions of it have been, (1) that the  
command of the law had fallen into disuse  
from the frequency of the crime, and to  
re-assert it would be contrary to the  
known mildness of Jesus. But what  
reason had any of His sayings,—who came  
to fulfil the Law, not to destroy it,—given  
them to expect such mildness in this case?  
And suppose He had re-asserted the law,—  
how could they have *accused Him*? (2)  
That some political snare was hereby laid  
for Him, whereby the Roman power might  
have been brought to bear against Him.  
But this does not in any way appear; for  
(*a*) the Romans certainly allowed to the  
Jews (by connivance) the power of putting  
to death according to their law,—as they  
did in the case of Stephen: (*b*) our Lord’s answer need not have been so worded as  
to trench upon this matter: and (*c*) the  
accusers would have been more deeply  
involved than Himself, if such had been  
the case, being by the law the prominent  
persons in the execution.

So that I  
leave the difficulty unsolved. Lucke  
observes: ‘Since Jesus seems to avoid  
every kind of decision on the question put.  
to Him, it follows that He found in it no  
reference to the great subjects of His  
teaching, but treated it as a purely civil or  
political matter, with which in His ministry  
He had no concern. *Some kind of civil or  
political collision* the question certainly  
was calculated to provoke: but from the  
brevity of the narration, and our want of  
more accurate knowledge of criminal proceedings at the time, it is impossible to  
lay down definitely, wherein the collision  
would have consisted.’

**5**.] I will  
just remark that the very fact of their  
questioning thus, ‘Moses commanded, . . .  
but what sayest *Thou*?’ belongs to the *last  
days* of the Lord’s ministry, and cannot:  
well be introduced chronologically where  
it here stands: nor does St. John any where  
introduce these questions between the  
law of Moses and Jesus; but the other  
Gospels often do.

The command here  
mentioned is not to be found, unless  
“putting to death’ generally, is to be interpreted as *stoning*;—compare Exod. xxxi.  
14; xxxv. 2, with Num. xv. 35, 36, in which  
the special order given by God would sanction such a view. But the Rabbis taught  
that every punishment of death in Scripture put absolutely, without specification,  
was to be understood as meaning *strangulation*. The passage Ezek. xvi. 38, 40