either to the liberation of the sabbatical  
year, or to the subject of Heb. iii. 5, 6.

**37.**] ‘Ye are Abraham’s seed, according to the flesh and the covenant:  
but’—and here the distinction appears—’ye *are doers of sin* by seeking to kill Me,  
because My word (see above on ver. 31)  
**gaineth no ground**—*does not work* (*spread,  
go forward*,—‘*ne marche pas*’) in you’  
(not, *among you*).

**38.**] We have the  
same remarkable relation between *speaking*  
and *doing*, as in ver. 28: except that here  
the doing is applied to the Jews only;  
*speaking* being used in the same comprehensive sense as there.

But  
notice the distinction in the restored  
text between **I have seen with my  
father** and **ye heard from your father**.  
The possessive pronouns *my*, and *your*,  
are not expressed in the original; the  
term **father** is common to both sentences, and on it the stress should be  
laid in reading. The speaking and doing  
were in each case from the **father** of each.  
But Jesus was “*with God,*” in a relation  
of abiding unity with His Father: they  
were *sprung from their father the devil*,—he was the suggester of their course, the  
originator of their acts. Jesus was the  
**son**, who remains in the house and sees the  
father’s acts: they the **bond-slaves**, merely  
prescribed to, and under coercion.

The word **too** implies **accordingly**,—**by the  
same rule**.

**39, 40.**] {39} There is a distinction between seed and children. The  
former our Lord grants that they were  
(ver. 37), but the latter (by implication;  
see below on the construction) He denies  
them. See Rom. ix. 6, 7, “*They are not all  
Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the* **seed** *of Abraham, are they all* **children***.*”

**41. We were not born  
of fornication**] Stier remarks, that they  
now let fall Abraham as their father, being  
convicted of unlikeness to him. They see  
that a *spiritual* paternity must be meant,  
and accordingly refer to God as their  
Father. This consideration will rule the  
sense of the words **not born of fornication**,  
which must therefore be spiritual also.  
And spiritually the **children of fornication**  
(see Hos. ii. 4) are idolaters. Ishmael  
cannot well be alluded to; for they would  
not call the relation between Abraham and  
Hagar one of *fornication*. Still less can  
there be, as Origen thought, any allusion  
on the part of the Jews to our Lord giving  
Himself out as being miraculously born,  
but being in reality that which they would  
insinuate: for our Lord never proclaimed  
this of Himself. There may possibly be a  
reference to the *Samaritans* (ver. 48), who  
completely answered in the spiritual sense  
to the children of fornication: see Deut.  
xxxi. 16; Isa. i. 21; Ezek. xvi. 15 ff;  
xx. 30 al.

**42.**] ‘If you were the  
children of God, the *moral proof* of such  
descent would be, that you would love Me,  
who am specially the Son of God, and  
who am come by the mission, and bearing