ch. xviii. 35, Pilate at once recoils from his  
better conscience into the state-pride of  
office. As Lampe remarks, this speech is  
directly contrary to his previous expression  
of fear, This very boast was a self-conviction   
of injustice. No just judge has any  
such power as this, to punish or to loose  
(see 2 Cor. xiii. 8); but only patiently to  
enquire and give sentence according to the  
truth.   
  
**unto me**, emphatic: it perhaps  
being implied, ‘Thou hast, I know, refused  
to reply to others before.’ That Pilate  
should put the *releasing* first, as it stands  
in the most ancient authorities, seems most  
natural, as appealing most to the prisoner:  
the power of *crucifying* follows as the  
alternative in case the other is rejected.  
  
  
**11.**] This last testimony of our Lord  
before Pilate is a *witness to the truth*:  
opening in a wonderful manner the secret  
of Pilate’s vaunted power, of His own  
humble submission, and the sinfulness of  
His enemies. This saying, observes Meyer,  
breathes truth and grace. The great stress  
is on the term **from above**, on which Grotius   
strikingly says, “*thence, that is, from  
whence I am sprung;*” so that it furnishes  
a remarkable answer to the above. We  
must not dream of any allusion to *Rome*, or  
the *Sanhedrim*, in this question “ *Whence  
art thou*?” as the sources of Pilate’s  
power :—the word was not so meant, nor  
so understood: see ver. 12.   
  
The word  
it does not refer to *power against me*, but  
embraces in itself the whole delegation  
from above, power included: and the words  
“except it were given thee from above,”  
are equivalent to *except by appointment  
from above*. Lampe remarks: “ Our Lord  
concedes to Pilate 1) Power. He acknowledged   
the authority of a human court,  
because His kingdom was not earthly, destroying   
human magistrates: nor did He  
dispute the authority of Pilate and the  
Romans over the Jews. 2) He even amplifies   
that power, as given from above.  
For this is the Christian doctrine, that all   
power is from God (Rom. xiii.1,2). 3) He  
acknowledges that that power extended  
even over Himself, since all concerning  
Him was being done by divine decree (Acts  
iv. 28).”   
  
**for this cause**] viz. because  
of what has just been asserted, ‘ *Thou  
wouldest have no power &c*.”   
  
The  
connexion is somewhat difficult. I take it  
to be this: ‘God has given to thee *power  
over* me ;—not insight into the character  
which I claim, that of being the Son of  
God—but simply *power* : that insight belonged   
to others, viz. the Sanhedrim, and  
their president, whose office it was to judge  
that claim; *they* have judged against the  
clearest evidence and rejected me, the Son  
of God; thy sin, that of blindly exercising  
thy *power*, sin though it be, is therefore  
*less than theirs*, who being God’s own  
people, and with God’s word of prophecy  
before them (and the High Priest, with his  
own prophetic word before him,—see ch.  
xviii. 14), deliberately gave me over into  
thy hand.’ It is important to this, which  
I believe to be the only right understanding   
of the words, to remember that Pilate,  
from ver. 6, was making himself simply  
their tool;—He was the sinful, but at the  
same time the blind instrument of their  
deliberate malice.   
  
**he that delivereth  
me unto thee**] Beyond question, *Caiaphas*,  
—to whom the initiative on the Jewish side  
belonged; by whose authority all was done.  
At the same time the whole Sanhedrim are  
probably included under the guilt of their  
chief.   
  
  
In this word **sin** is an implied  
reference to a higher Judge—nay, that  
Judge Himself speaks.   
  
**12.**] **Upon this**:  
or **from this time**: but the words in the  
original hardly bear so much as this latter  
meaning. See ch. vi. 66, where the same  
correction has been made.   
  
Pilate himself   
was deeply struck by these words of  
majesty and mildness, and almost sympathy   
for his own weakness; and he made  
a last, and, as this verse seems to imply, a  
somewhat longer attempt than before, to