seeking after the gospel, but seeks it with  
unworthy ends in view.’

**22. if perhaps**] The uncertainty refers, not to the  
doubt whether Simon would repent or not  
(see below): but as to whether or not his  
sin may not have come under the awful  
category of those unpardonable ones specified by our Lord, Matt. xii. 31, to which  
words this sentence seems to have a tacit  
reference. Peter does not *pronounce* his  
sin *to have been such*, but throws in this  
doubt, to increase the motive to repent,  
and the earnestness of his repentance.  
This verse is important, taken in connexion  
with John xx. 23, as shewing *how completely the Apostles themselves referred  
the forgiveness of sins to, and left it in,  
the sovereign power of God, and not to  
their own delegated power of absolution.*

**23.**] For gives the reason, not why  
it would be *difficult for forgiveness to take  
place, but why he had such extreme need  
of repentance and prayer,* as being tied  
and bound by the chain of sin.

**the gall of bitterness**] See Deut. xxix. 18;  
Lam. iii. 15,—‘the gall which is the very  
seat and essence of bitterness’—**a very  
gall of bitterness.** The poison of serpents  
was considered to be seated in their gall:  
so *“the gall of asps is within him,”* Job  
xx. 14.

**24.**] Simon speaks here much  
as Pharaoh, Exod. (viii. 28; ix. 28) x. 17,  
—who yet hardened his heart afterwards.  
It is observable also that he wishes merely  
for the *averting of the punishment.* The words, “that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me,” seem remarkably to set forth the mere terror of the carnal man, without any idea of the  
me becoming *another man* in thoughts and  
aims.

**25–40.**] Conversion of THE ÆTHI0PIAN EUNUCH BY PHILIP’S TEACHING.

**25.**] So then indicates (*see note on  
ver.* 4) that the paragraph should begin  
here, not at ver. 26 as commonly.

**villages of the Samaritans**] It is interesting to recall Luke ix. 52, where on their  
entering into a *village of the Samaritans*,  
*the same John* wishes to call down fire from  
heaven, and consume them. The gradual  
sowing of the seed further and further  
from Jerusalem is advancing: not only  
is this eunuch to carry it to a far distant  
land, but Philip is sent to a desert road,  
away from town or village, to seek him.  
The imperfect tenses, *“were returning  
&c.,”* are significant. They were on their  
way back to Jerusalem, and were evangelizing the Samaritan villages, when the  
angel spake to Philip.

**26.**] An angel,  
*visibly appearing:* not in a dream,—which  
is not, as some suppose, implied by the  
command to *arise*. The ministration of  
angels introduces and brings about several  
occurrences in the beginning of the church,  
see ch. v. 19; x. 3; xii. 7 (xxvii. 23). The  
appearance seems to have taken place in  
Samaria, after the departure of Peter and  
John. He would reach the place appointed  
by a shorter way than through Jerusalem:  
he would probably follow the high road (of  
the itineraries, see map in Conybeare and  
Howson’s St. Paul) as far as Gophna, and  
thence strike across the country south-westward to join, at some point to which he  
would be guided, the road leading from Jerusalem to Gaza.

**GAZA**] The southernmost