city of Canaan (Gen. x. 19), in  
the portion of Judah (Josh. xv. 47), but  
soon taken from that tribe by the Philistines, and always spoken of as a Philistian  
city (1 Sam. vi. 17; 2 Kings xviii. 8; Amos  
i. 6–8; Zeph. iii. 4; Zech. ix. 5). In Jer.  
xlvii. 1, we have ‘before Pharaoh (Necho?)  
smote Gaza,’—implying that at one time it  
was under Egypt. Alexander the Great  
took it after a siege of five months, but  
did not destroy it, for we find it a strong  
place in the subsequent Syrian wars, see  
1 Macc. ix. 52; xi. 61 f.; xiii. 43; xiv. 7;  
xv. 28; xvi. 1.—It was destroyed by the  
Jewish king Alexander Jannæns (96 A.C.),  
after a siege of a year, but rebuilt again  
by the Roman general Gabinius,—afterwards given by Augustus to Herod, and  
finally after his death attached to the province of Syria, Mela, in the time of Claudius, calls it ‘a vast city, and strongly  
fortified,’ with which agree Eusebius and  
Jerome. At present it is a large town by  
the same name, with from 15,000 to 16,000  
inhabitants. The above chronological notices shew that it cannot have been *“desert”* at this time: see below.

**this is desert**] The words, I believe, of the  
*angel*, not of St. Luke. There appear to  
have been two (if not more) ways from  
Jerusalem to Gaza. But Robinson found,  
besides, an ancient road leading *direct*  
from Jerusalem to Gaza, through the *Wadi  
Musurr*, and over the Beit Jiibrin, which  
certainly *at present* is *“desert,”* without  
towns or villages. Thus the words will  
refer to the *way:* and denote, **the way of  
which I speak to thee is desert**. See in  
my Greek Test. further proofs of the inapplicability of the epithet *“desert”* to  
Gaza.

**27. an eunuch**] The very general use of eunuchs in the East for filling  
offices of confidence, and the fact that this  
man was minister to a female sovereign,  
makes it probable that he was literally an  
eunuch. If not so, the word would hardly  
have been expressed. No difficulty arises  
from Deut. xxiii. 1, for no inference can be  
drawn from the history further than that  
he may have been a proselyte of the gate,  
in whose case the prohibition would not  
apply.—Nay, the whole occurrence seems

to have had one design, connected with  
this fact. The walls of partition were one  
after another being thrown down: the  
Samaritans were already in full possession  
of the Gospel: it was next to be shewn  
that none of those physical incapacities  
which excluded from the congregation of  
the Lord under the old covenant, formed  
any bar to Christian baptism and the inheritance among believers; and thus the  
way gradually to be paved for the great and  
as yet incomprehensible truth of Gal. iii. 28.

**Candace** (pronounced Candăcé, not  
Candācé)] As *Pharaoh* among the Egyptians was the customary name of kings, so  
Candăcé of the queens among the Æthiopians in upper Egypt, who dwelt in the  
island of Meroe, where Pliny relates that  
a queen reigned named Candace, and adds,  
“which name has now for many years  
passed from one queen to another.”

**had come to Jerusalem for to worship**…]  
This did not only Jews and proselytes, but  
also those pious Gentiles who adhered to  
Judaism,—the proselytes of the gate, see  
John xii. 20. Eusebius, taking for granted  
that this eunuch was a Gentile, calls him  
“the firstfruits of the Gentiles throughout  
the world.” There were (see below, ch.  
xi. 21) cases of Gentile conversion before  
that of Cornelius; and the stress of the  
narrative in ch. x. consists in the miscellaneous admission of all the Gentile company of Cornelius, and their official reception into the church by that Apostle  
to whom was especially given the power.  
We may remark, that if even the plain  
revelation by which the reception of Cornelius and his company was commanded  
failed finally to convince Peter, so that  
long after this he vacillated (Gal. ii. 11, 12),  
it is no argument for the eunuch not being  
a Gentile, that his conversion and baptism  
did not remove the prejudices of the Jewish  
Christians.

**28. read Esaias**] aloud,  
see next ver. Schöttgen quotes from the  
Rabbis: “He who journeyeth and hath no  
companion, let him study the Law.”—He  
probably read in the LXX, the use of which  
was almost universal in Egypt.

**29.**)  
This is the first mention of that *inner  
prompting* of the Spirit, referred to again