(literally, **have been a citizen before God**)  
will have its full and proper meaning: and  
the words are no vain-glorious ones, but an  
important assertion of his innocence.

**2. Ananias**] He was at this time the *actual  
high priest* (ver. 4). He was the son of  
Nebedæus—succeeded Joseph son of Camydus—and preceded Ismael, son of Phabi.  
He was nominated to the office by Herod,  
king of Chaleis, in A.D. 48; and sent to  
Rome by Quadratus, the prefect of Syria,  
to give an account to the emperor Claudius;  
he appears, however, not to have lost his  
office, but to have resumed it on his return.  
This has been regarded as not certain,—and the uncertainty has produced much  
confusion in the Pauline chronology. But  
as Wieseler has shewn, there can be no  
reasonable doubt that it was so, especially  
as Ananias came off victorious in the cause  
for which he went to Rome, viz. a quarrel  
with the Jewish procurator Cumanus,—who went with him, and was condemned  
to banishment. He was deposed from his  
office not long before the departure of  
Felix, but still had great power, which he  
used violently and lawlessly: he was assassinated by the *sicarii* (see ch. xxi. 38, note)  
at last.

**3.**] It is perfectly allowable  
(even if the fervid rebuke of Paul be considered exempt from blame) to contrast  
with his conduct and reply that of Him  
Who, when similarly smitten, answered  
with perfect and superhuman meekness,  
22, 23. Our blessed Saviour is  
to us, in all His words and acts, *the  
perfect pattern for all under all circumstances:* by aiming at whatever He did in  
each case, we shall do best: but even the  
greatest of his Apostles are so far our  
patterns only as they *followed* Him, which  
certainly in this case Paul *did not*. That  
Paul thus answered, might go far to excuse  
a like fervent reply in a Christian or a  
minister of the gospel,—but must never be  
used to *justify* it: it may serve for an  
*apology*, but never for an *example*.

**God shall** (**is about to**, literally) **smite  
thee**] Some have seen a prophetic import  
in these words;—see above on the death of  
Ananias. But I would rather take them  
as an expression founded on a conviction  
that God’s just retribution would come on  
unjust and brutal acts.

**thou whited  
wall**] Lightfoot’s interpretation, that St.  
Paul used this term because Ananias had  
only the semblance of the high priesthood  
and had lost the thing itself, is founded on  
the hypothesis (*for it is none other*) that  
the high priesthood was vacant at this  
time, and Ananias had thrust himself into  
it. The meaning is as in Matt. xxiii. 27;  
and in all probability Paul referred in  
thought to our Lord’s saying.

**sittest  
thou to judge me**] This must not be taken  
as favouring the common interpretation of  
ver. 5 (see below): for the *whole Sanhedrim* were the judges, and sitting to  
judge him according to the law.

**4.**]  
Hence we see, that not only by the Jews,  
but by the tribune, who was present, Ananias was regarded as the veritable high  
priest.

**5.**] (1) The ordinary interpretation of these words since Lightfoot,  
is, that Ananias *had usurped the office  
during a vacancy*, and therefore was not  
recognized by Paul. They regard his being  
sent to Rome as a virtual setting aside  
from being high priest, and suppose that  
Jonathan, who was murdered by order of  
Felix, was appointed high priest in his  
absence. But (*a*) there is no ground whatever for believing that his office vacated. He won the cause for which he  
went to Rome, and returned to Jerusalem:  
it was only when a high priest was detained as hostage in Rome, that we read  
of another being appointed in his room:  
and (*b*) which is fatal to the hypothesis,  
*Jonathan himself the high priest was sent  
to Rome with Ananias*. Jonathan was  
called by the title merely as having been  
previously high priest. He succeeded  
Caiaphas, and he was not high priest again  
afterwards, having expressly declined to  
resume the office. Nor can *any other  
Jonathan* have been elevated to it,—for  
Josephus gives, *in every case*, the elevation