order and employments of the holy angels,  
which seems to have taken place during  
the captivity), **and there were given to  
them seven trumpets** (understand, with  
intent that they themselves should blow  
them). {3} **And another angel** (not to be  
identified with *Christ*, as is done by Bede,  
Vitringa, Calovius, and others, and recently  
[for doctrinal reasons] by Elliott :  
for thus confusion is introduced into the  
whole imagery of the vision, in which the  
Lord Jesus is *otherwise* present, viz., as  
the Lamb in the midst of the throne. In  
ch. v. 8, we have the twenty-four elders falling  
down with vials containing the prayers  
of the saints: here we have an angel offering  
incense that it may mingle with the  
prayers on the heavenly altar. Any theological  
difficulty which belongs to the one  
belongs also to the other ; and it is a canon  
which we must strictly observe in interpretation,  
that we are not, on account of  
supposed doctrinal propriety, to depart from  
the plain meaning of words. In ch. vii. 2  
we have “*another angel*” in the sense of a  
created angel [see note there]: and would  
it be probable that St. John would after  
this, and I may add with his constant usage  
of the term throughout the book for angel  
in its ordinary sense, designate our Lord  
by this title?” There is something to me  
far more revolting from theological propriety  
in such a supposition, than in an  
angel being seen in the heavenly  
ministrations offering incense to mix with the  
prayers of the saints. It ought really to  
be needless to remark, in thus advocating  
consistency of verbal interpretation, that  
no countenance is hereby given to the  
invocation of angels: the whole truth of  
their being and ministration protesting  
against such an inference. They are simply  
*ministering spirits*, and the action  
here described is a portion of that their  
ministry. *Through Whom* the prayers  
are offered, we all know. He is our only  
Mediator and channel of grace) **came  
and stood over** (so that his form appeared  
above it; the altar being between  
the Apostle and him) **the altar** (viz.  
the altar named ch. vi. 9, as the repetition  
of the word with the article shews:  
see below on ver. 5), **having a golden censer**(the word used signifies elsewhere the  
*frankincense* itself. But here it unquestionably  
means a *censer;* see below, ver. 5,  
where the word is the same. No argument  
can be derived from the censer being a golden  
one. The spirit of the heavenly imagery  
will account for this without going further:  
we have, throughout, crowns [iv. 4], incense-vials  
[v. 8], vengeance-vials, [xv.  
7], girdles [xv. 6], a measuring-reed [xxi.  
15], &c., all of the costly metal).  
**And there was given to him** (viz. by  
divine appointment, through those ministering:  
not, by the saints who offered the:  
prayers, for tio reasons: 1) because the  
incense is mentioned as something distinct  
from the prayers of the saints; see  
below: 2) because no forcing of the expression,  
**there was given unto him**, will  
extract this meaning from it. It is a  
frequent apocalyptic formula in reference  
to those things or instruments with  
which, or actions by which, the ministrations  
necessary to the progress of the  
visions are performed: compare ch. vi. 2,  
4 [twice], 8, 11, vii. 2, viii. 2, ix. 1, &c.)  
**much incense** (see ch. v. 8, and on the  
difference of the imagery, below), **that he  
might give it to** (so literally: various  
renderings and supplyings of the construction  
have been devised: but the  
simple dative after “*give it*” appears the  
only legitimate one: and the sense as  
expressed by Calovius, “that he might  
add it to the prayers of the saints, and so  
make them prayers of sweet savour.”  
The object was, to *incense* the prayers  
of the Saints: on the import, see below)  
**the prayers of all the saints** (not only  
now of those martyred ones in ch. vi. 9:  
the trumpets which follow are in answer  
to the whole prayers of God’s church.  
The martyrs’ cry for vengeance is the  
loudest note, but all join) **upon** (the preposition  
in the original carries the idea  
of *motion* with it; which thus incensed  
were offered on the golden altar, &c.  
From what follows it would seem that  
the prayers were already before God:  
see below) **the altar of gold which was  
before the throne** (this may be a different