

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 11

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass that as he was praying*, etc.] The following directions concerning prayer, though they agree with those in (^{<4069>}Matthew 6:9) etc. yet were delivered at another time, and in another place, and upon another occasion: Christ was then in Galilee, now in Judea: he gave the former directions unasked for, these at the request of one of his disciples; the other were given as he was preaching, these immediately after he had been praying; as soon as he had done a work he was often employed in, as man and mediator, on account of himself, his disciples, cause, and interest: and this was done

in a certain place; perhaps in the Mount of Olives, which was not far from Bethany, where we hear of him last, since this was a place where he used to abide in the night, and pray, (^{<42137>}Luke 21:37). The Arabic version reads, “in a desert place”; and after he had been at Bethany, he did go to a country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, (^{<431154>}John 11:54)

when he ceased; from praying; when he had concluded his prayer, and finished all his petitions, and was off of his knees:

one of his disciples; perhaps one of the seventy disciples who had not heard the summary of prayer, and the directions about it before given on the mount, (^{<4069>}Matthew 6:9) The Persic version reads, “his disciples”: as if they all united in the request:

and said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples, who, as Tertullian says ^{f368}, brought in a new order and method of praying, and gave his disciples some instructions and directions concerning it, much better than what the Jews in common had: and this disciple looking upon his Lord and master as much better qualified to give directions in this important affair than even John himself was, requests of him that he would; and what might put him upon it at this time seems to be, his observing that Christ had now been at prayer.

Ver. 2. *And he said unto them*, etc.] That is Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions express, who directed his speech to all the disciples; for though but one of them addressed him, it was in the name of the rest: and besides, the instructions Christ was about to give concerned them all, even those that heard them before, and those that had not:

when ye pray, say, our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth; the last petition is left out in the Vulgate Latin; (see Gill on “^{416D}Matthew 6:9”), (see Gill on “^{416D}Matthew 6:10”).

Ver. 3. *Give us day by day our daily bread.*] Or “for the day”; or “every day”, as the Syriac version renders it; (see Gill on “^{416E}Matthew 6:11”)

Ver. 4. *And forgive us our sins*, etc.] Beza's most ancient copy reads “debts”, as in (see Gill on “^{416E}Matthew 6:12”); and which best agrees with the phrase “indebted”, after mentioned:

for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; (see Gill on “^{416E}Matthew 6:12”), (see Gill on “^{416E}Matthew 6:13”). The doxology there used, and the word “Amen”, are here omitted. Some of the petitions in this prayer are not delivered in the very same words as they are in Matthew. The three first petitions are word for word the same; for though the third petition is different in our translation, it is the same in the original. The fourth and fifth vary: in Matthew the fourth is, “give us this day our daily bread”; here in Luke, “give us day by day our daily bread.” The fifth in Matthew is, “and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”; here, “and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us”. And these verbal variations, though the sense is the same, together with the omission of the doxology, and the word “Amen”, show, that this prayer was not designed to be an exact form, and to be so used, but as a directory of prayer. I have, in my notes (see Gill on “^{416E}Matthew 6:9”) etc. shown the agreement there is between the petitions in this prayer, and some that were made use of among the Jews; and have supposed that our Lord took notice of such petitions, which the good people among the Jews frequently used; and which he approved of, and singled out, and put them into the order and method in which they stand, with some alterations for the better, to be a directory to his disciples and followers. Which to suppose, I apprehend, does not at all countenance the making and using stinted forms of prayer; since the petitions used by good men among the Jews, were not used as

forms of prayer, but what they were led unto by the Spirit of God from common and constant experience to make use of; just as we may observe now, that good people in different parts, who use no form of prayer, nor have ever heard one another pray, and yet make use of the same petitions, and almost, if not altogether, in the selfsame words, their wants, necessities, cases, and circumstances being the same; and these frequently returning, oblige to a repeated use of them, in the same words, or near unto them. And though forms of prayer might not be in use among the Jews in the times of Christ, yet it is easy to account for it, how Christ came to be acquainted with the petitions in general use with good men; since not only he is God omniscient, and knows all the prayers of his people, both in public and private; but, as man, must know what were used, by his attendance on public worship, and by the private communion he had with the saints and children of God. It must indeed be owned, that forms of prayer very early obtained among the Jews; and if not in Christ's time, yet in the times of his apostles. There is frequent mention ^{f369} of the eighteen prayers in the times of Gamaliel, the master of the Apostle Paul; and of a nineteenth composed by one of his disciples ^{f370}, Samuel the little, who is thought, by some, to be Saul himself, whilst he was a scholar of his; and which is directed against the heretics, or Christians, as they were called by the Jews; and this easily accounts for, how the petitions of the ancient good men among the Jews came to be put with others into their forms of prayer, where we now find them. For that they should take these petitions from this directory of Christ's, is not reasonable to suppose, considering their implacable enmity against him. Moreover, supposing, but not granting, that these petitions which our Lord took, and put into this order, for the use and instruction of his disciples, had been used by good men as forms of prayer, it will not justify the use of forms by any authority of Christ, or as being agreeably to his will; since it is certain, that however these petitions were used by good men before, our Lord never designed they should be used as an exact, precise form of prayer by his disciples; seeing there are several variations in them as here delivered, from what they are as they stand in Matthew; whereas, had they been intended as a stunted form, they would have been expressed in the selfsame words: and moreover, to approve of here and there a petition, which for their matter are excellently good, and to approve of them all together, as a form, are two different things: to which may be added, that though there is an agreement between the petitions, as used by the Jews, and those our Lord

directs to; yet there are some variations and alterations much for the better, which destroy the form of them.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, which of you shall have a friend,* etc.] A neighbour, or acquaintance:

and shall go unto him at midnight; which may seem a very unseasonable time, and which nothing but real distress, not knowing what otherwise to do, would put a man upon:

and say unto him, friend, lend me three loaves: it was usual of the Jews to borrow bread of one another, and certain rules are laid down, when, and on what condition, this is to be done; as for instance, on a sabbath day^{f371},

“a man may ask of his friend vessels of wine, and vessels of oil, only he must not say, lend me: and so a woman, **twrkk htrbj m**, “bread of her friend”.”

Again^{f372},

“so said Hillell, let not a woman lend **htrbj l rkk** “bread to her friend”, till she has fixed the price; lest wheat should be dearer, and they should be found coming into the practice of usury.”

For what was lent, could not be demanded again under thirty days^{f373}.

Ver. 6. *For a friend of mine in his journey,* etc.] Or “out of the way”; having lost his way, being benighted; and has rambled about for some time, and at length,

is come to me; for lodging and entertainment:

and I have nothing to set before him; to refresh him with, after such a fatigue, before he goes to bed, which was very requisite and proper.

Ver. 7. *And he from within shall answer and say,* etc.] The friend within doors, shall reply to him that is without at his door, in the street:

trouble me not; by knocking at the door, and importuning to rise and lend loaves; whereby his rest would be disturbed, and trouble given him;

the door is now shut; being very late at night, and which could not be opened without noise and inconvenience:

and my children are with me in bed: sleeping, as the Persic version adds; there were none, children, or servants up, to let him in:

I cannot rise; without disturbing them:

and give thee; the loaves desired.

Ver. 8. *I say unto you*, etc.] This is the accommodation of the parable; to these words are premised, in the Vulgate Latin version, the following, “if he continue knocking”:

though he will not rise and give him, because he is a friend; though mere friendship will not influence and engage him to rise from his bed, at such an unseasonable time, and fulfil the request of his friend;

yet because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth: as he asks for, or more, if necessary: the design of this parable, is the same with that of the widow and the unjust judge, in (~~280~~ Luke 18:1-6) which is to show the force of importunity, where friendship, as here, and the fear of God, and regard of men, which were wanting there, have no influence; and so to encourage to constancy and perseverance in prayer, with earnestness; taking no denial at the hand of God, but still continuing to make pressing instances.

Ver. 9. *And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you*, etc.] This is said by Christ, to encourage to prayer, and importunity in it; that if any one asks of God, in the name of Christ, and in faith, whether it be bread for the body, or food for the soul; or any blessing whatever, whether temporal or spiritual, it shall be given; not according to their deserts, but according to the riches of the grace of God; who is rich unto all that call upon him, in sincerity and truth:

seek, and ye shall find: whether it be Christ, the pearl of great price, or God in Christ; or particularly, pardoning grace and mercy through Christ, or the knowledge of divine things; and both grace here, and glory hereafter, as men seek for hidden treasure; such shall not lose their labour, but shall enjoy all these valuable things, and whatever they are by prayer, and in the use of other means, seeking after:

knock, and it shall be opened to you; the door of mercy with God; the door of fellowship with Christ; the door of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it and of the Gospel dispensation and church state, into which is admission,

to all that seek; and the door of heaven, into which there is entrance by the blood of Jesus: the several phrases denote prayer, the continuance of it, and importunity in it; (see Gill on “^{<400>}Matthew 7:7”)

Ver. 10. *For every one that asketh receiveth*, etc.] Some indeed ask and receive not, because they ask amiss, (^{<300>}James 4:3) who either apply to a wrong person, or ask in a wrong manner, or from wrong principles, or with wrong ends in view: but when a man is right in the object of prayer, and in the matter and manner of prayer, and in the end he proposes to himself, let him be what he will, of whatsoever nation, or ever mean a person, he has the petitions which he asks, either immediately, or, at least, he may be assured he shall have them in God's due time:

and he that seeketh findeth; whoever not only prays, but makes use of means, as attendance on other ordinances, and is diligent in the use of them, sooner or later finds his account herein, and what his soul seeks for:

and to him that knocketh it shall be opened; not only who prays heartily, and seeks diligently, but who is importunate, and will have no denial; continues knocking; though there may be some time a seeming delay, yet the door will not always be shut to him; after much knocking it will be opened; (see Gill on “^{<400>}Matthew 7:8”)

Ver. 11. *If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father*, etc.] Our Lord illustrates and confirms what he had said before by an instance common among men: the relation between a father and a son is natural, and it is very near; and it is usual for a son, when hungry, and at the proper times of meals, to ask bread of his father: and when he does,

will he give him a stone? should he do so, he would show that his heart was as hard, or harder than the stone he gives:

or if he ask a fish, will he, for a fish, give him a serpent? And endeavour to deceive him by the likeness of the one to the other, especially some sort of fish, which would poison or sting him, but not refresh and nourish him: such inhuman brutish parents are not surely to be found; (see Gill on “^{<400>}Matthew 7:9”), (see Gill on “^{<400>}Matthew 7:10”).

Ver. 12. *Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion* etc.] Of which there are three sorts; some are terrestrial, or land scorpions, scorpions of the earth, a kind of serpents, very venomous and mischievous, to whom the wicked Jews are compared, (^{<200>}Ezekiel 2:6) and the locusts

in (~~401B~~ Revelation 9:3,5) others are airy, or flying scorpions, a sort of fowl; and others are sea scorpions; of the fish kind: it is not easy to say which of them is here meant. There is an herb which is called *ynbrq* [^{f374}], “the scorpion”: its leaves are like unto a scorpion, as the Jewish commentators say [^{f375}]. This is observed with the same view as the former. By it may be meant here, either the fish that is so called, since a fish is mentioned before; or rather, the land scorpion, which is of the serpent kind; this brings forth little worms, in the form of eggs, as [^{f376}] Pliny says: and it is said, that a scorpion put into an empty eggshell, has been used to be given to persons, whose death has been desired; which it bursting from, at once strikes and kills: but what father would do so to a child!

Ver. 13. *If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children,* etc.] (see Gill on “~~401B~~ Matthew 7:11”).

How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? instead of the Holy Spirit here, the Vulgate Latin version reads, “good Spirit”, and so two copies of Beza’s; and the Ethiopic version, “the good gift of the Holy Spirit”; and doubtless intends the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, in distinction from, and as preferable to the good things given by earthly parents, to their children.

Ver. 14. *And he was casting out a devil,* etc.] At a certain time, either the same that is recorded in (~~402B~~ Matthew 9:32) or in (~~402B~~ Matthew 12:22) for both of them were attended with the same effect upon the people, and with the same calumny of the Pharisees, mentioned here:

and it was dumb. The Ethiopic version reads, “deaf and dumb”; that is, the devil, which possessed the man, made him both deaf and dumb; if the same as in (~~402B~~ Matthew 12:22) he was blind, as well as dumb:

and it came to pass, when the devil was gone out; of the man possessed by him, by the command of Christ:

the dumb spake; as other men did, and as he had done before; the cause being removed, the effect ceased:

and the people wondered; at the power of Christ, and concluded that he must be the Messiah, the son of David.

Ver. 15. *But some of them said*, etc.] The Pharisees, (^{<4108>}Matthew 9:34) (^{<4124>}Matthew 12:24) who could not bear that he should be thought to be the Messiah, and therefore put an ill construction on the miracle:

he casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of devils; in several copies he is called Beelzebub, and in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; which last adds these words, “and he answered and said, how can Satan cast out Satan?” (see Gill on “^{<4120>}Matthew 12:20”).

Ver. 16. *And others tempting him*, etc.] Others of the Scribes and Pharisees, or Sadducees: *sought of him a sign from heaven*; (see Gill on “^{<4128>}Matthew 12:38”), (see Gill on “^{<4161>}Matthew 16:1”).

Ver. 17. *But he knowing their thoughts*, etc.] Being God omniscient, *said unto them*; the following parables, as they are called in (^{<4123>}Mark 3:23) or proverbial expressions, very pertinent to the purpose, and sufficient to set aside the base calumnies of the Pharisees:

every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation; in process of time, division will end in destruction; and as it does in the kingdoms of the world, of which there have been fatal instances, so it would in the kingdom of Satan, was there in it a division, which the calumny of the Pharisees supposes:

and an house divided against an house, falleth. The Persic version renders it, “an house divided from the foundation, falls”; the sense is, a family, in which one part is opposed to the other, issues in the ruin of both; (see Gill on “^{<4125>}Matthew 12:25”), (see Gill on “^{<4124>}Mark 3:24”), (see Gill on “^{<4125>}Mark 3:25”).

Ver. 18. *And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?* etc.] This is the accommodation of the above parables, or proverbial sentences; suggesting, that Satan must be against himself, if what the Pharisees said was true; and consequently, his kingdom and government, could not long subsist:

because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub; which is all one as to say, that Satan is divided against himself, which is not reasonable to suppose; (see Gill on “^{<4126>}Matthew 12:26”) and (see Gill on “^{<4126>}Mark 3:26”).

Ver. 19. *And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils*, etc.] Which is what the Pharisees charged him with; in the Greek copies, and so in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions it is read, “by Beelzebub”, and so in the preceding verses; (see Gill on “⁴⁰⁰⁵Matthew 10:25”)

By whom do your sons cast them out? by whose help? or in whose name? for the Jews pretended to cast out devils, and to heal those that were possessed with them; which they did sometimes, by making use of the names of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and sometimes of the name of Solomon: Josephus^{f377} speaks of many in his time, who had this power of healing; and he himself saw one Eleazar, in the presence of Vespasian, his children, officers, and soldiers, cure many that were possessed of devils: and his method was, by putting a ring to the nose of the possessed, under the seal of which, was a root directed to by Solomon, and thereby brought out the unclean spirit; and as soon as the man was healed, he adjured the devil never to return more; at which time he made mention of the name of Solomon, and rehearsed the enchantments written by him: the said Eleazar, to give a specimen of the efficacy of his art, set a cup full of water upon the ground, and commanded the devil when he went out of the man, to turn it over, as a sign that he had left the man, and the devil immediately obeyed his order: now if these sons of theirs cast out devils, which they would not say were done by the help of the devil, or in his name, why should they ascribe the ejection of devils by Christ, to a diabolical assistance?

therefore shall they be your judges; or “judges against you”, as the Arabic version; or “shall reprove you”, as the Ethiopic; convict and condemn you; (see Gill on “⁴⁰²⁷Matthew 12:27”)

Ver. 20. *But if I with the, finger of God*, etc.] The power of God, referring to (⁴⁰⁸⁹Exodus 8:19) and so the Cabalistic Jews^{f378} explain it,

“the finger is one of the five in the hand, and is that finger which works by the power of Elohim;”

it is the same with the Spirit of God; (see Gill on “⁴⁰²⁸Matthew 12:28”) which is often called the hand of the Lord, (⁴⁰⁰⁸Ezekiel 1:3 3:22 37:1 40:1).

Ver. 21. *When a strong man armed*, etc.] By the strong man, is meant the devil; (see Gill on “⁴⁰²⁹Matthew 12:29”) and who may be said to be “armed”, both with his own temptations, which are as fiery darts, and which are thrown by him thick and fast, suddenly and swiftly, privily, and

with great art and cunning, and with great strength, and are very injurious; and also with the sins and lusts of men, which are armour of unrighteousness, and which Satan turns upon them, and makes use of against them, to their great detriment; and who

keepeth his palace: which is the corrupt heart of an unregenerate man, where he dwells as a king, has his throne, keeps his court, and has his courtiers, and attendants, the lusts of the flesh, and the desires of the will, and the carnal affections; and which, as filthy a palace as it is, is perfectly agreeable to his nature; and this is kept by a guard of devils, and worldly lusts, till its strong holds are demolished by the Gospel, and Christ the King of glory enters in; till such time,

his goods are in peace: there is no concern in such an heart about sin, no uneasiness on that account, no sense of danger, nor inquiry after salvation; no dread upon the mind at the curses of the law, nor fears of hell, and damnation; but such a man lives in entire security, crying Peace, Peace, to himself.

Ver. 22. *But when a stronger than he*, etc.] By whom is meant Christ, who is the mighty God, the Almighty; and appears to be so, in the creation of all things, in upholding them by the word of his power, in the government of the world, and the works of providence, in the redemption of his people from sin, Satan, and the law, and in the conversion of them, by the efficacy of his grace, and in the preservation of them by his power; and who is manifestly stronger than Satan; not only by these instances, but by what follows:

shall come upon him; as he did in person, when he dispossessed him from the bodies of men; and does by his Spirit in conversion, when he enters into his palace, the heart of man, binds him, and looses men from him, and turns them from the power of Satan, to God, and sets up a throne of grace, where he himself dwells and reigns: so he comes upon him as an adversary, and often at an unawares; and always with great power and strength, and succeeds: Satan came upon Christ in the wilderness, in the garden, and on the cross, and attacked him, but without success; whence it is clear, that he is stronger than he:

and overcame him; he overcame him in the wilderness, and obliged him to retreat; and on the cross, when he obtained a complete victory over him, destroyed him, his principalities and powers, and all his works, and led him

captive; and in conversion, so as to deliver his people from him, that were led captive by him, as that he can never regain his dominion over them more; and though he is suffered to tempt them; he cannot destroy them; and the saints shall overcome him at last, and have him bruised under their feet: and at the same time,

he taketh from him all his armour, wherein he trusted; as his temptations, which he himself repelled in the wilderness, and wrenched out of his hands, and made them useless, and he gives power to his people to resist them, and succours them under them, and delivers them out of them; and also the sins of men, which he took away on the cross, when he bore them, and the punishment of them there: and in conversion, he greatly weakens the power of sin, and takes away the dominion of it; and though the being of it is not removed, hence Satan has something to work upon, yet its power is so far gone, that neither that nor Satan, can destroy such who are truly called by the grace of God:

and divideth his spoils: he spoils his house, the heart of man, from being any longer a palace for him, and his goods, his mind and conscience, which are enlightened and awakened, and purged: or by his spoils are meant, the souls of men; which are taken as a prey out of his hands, and become trophies of victorious grace.

Ver. 23. *He that is not with me, is against me,* etc.] Our Lord does not mean one, that was not personally with him; for there might be some, and doubtless were many, who were not in person with him, and yet were not against him, but friends to him, and to his interest; nor one that was not a professed disciple of his, or not a follower of him, and his apostles; for there were some who called themselves John's disciples, and did not attend on Christ, and yet were not against him, but cast out devils in his name; and such an one perhaps was he, that is made mention of in (~~408~~ Mark 9:38-40) on occasion of whom, Christ there says some words, which may seem at first view, not so well to accord with these: but such are intended, who acted a neutral part between him and the Pharisees; who could bear to hear them accuse him of casting out devils by the prince of devils, and be easy at it: and such persons are condemned, who can hear all manner of blasphemy against the deity, sonship, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and express no indignation at it; these, as they cannot be said to be with Christ, may be truly ranked among those that are against him:

and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth; whoever did not encourage persons to attend on the ministry of Christ, which was confirmed by such miracles the Pharisees spoke so reproachfully and contemptuously of, were reckoned by Christ as such, who were the means of hindering persons gathering unto him; as well as those who menaced and excommunicated them for so doing: the allusion is either to the gathering of the sheep into the fold, and the scattering of them by the wolf; or to the gathering of the wheat, and binding it in sheaves, and bringing it home in harvest; and to the scattering of the wheat loose in the field, whereby it is lost, and comes to nothing; (see Gill on “⁴⁰²³Matthew 12:30”).

Ver. 24. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man*, etc.] That is, the devil, who is in, and works in the children of disobedience, whether under a profession of religion or not; whose hearts are unclean like himself, wherefore there he delights to dwell; and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “the evil demon”: who may be said to go out of a man in appearance, when he outwardly reforms and takes up a profession of religion.

He walketh through dry places; or “a desert”, as the Ethiopic version; to which the Gentile world is sometimes compared in the Old Testament (²³⁸¹Isaiah 35:1, 41:18,19, 42:11) whither Satan might go, being disturbed in Judea, through the many dispossessions by Christ; or rather leaving for a while the Scribes and Pharisees, who outwardly appeared righteous before men, he went to the Gentiles;

seeking rest, and finding none; being also made uneasy among them, through the preaching of the Gospel, which was sent unto them after Christ's resurrection; and not being able to keep his place in the hearts of men, nor do the mischief he was desirous of.

He saith, I will return unto my house, whence I came out; to the Jews again, who were blinded and filled with rage and enmity to the Gospel by him, and whom he instigated to persecute the apostles of Christ, and preachers of the word, wherever they came; (see Gill on “⁴⁰²⁸Matthew 12:43”) and (see Gill on “⁴⁰²⁴Matthew 12:44”).

Ver. 25. *And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.*] In Matthew it is also said to be “empty”; and so it is read here in the Arabic version; and in the Ethiopic version, “empty of men”: but rather the sense is, that he found it empty of all goodness, notwithstanding all the sweeping and garnish of an outward reformation. The Persic version renders it,

“heated and prepared”; heated with wrath and fury against Christ, and his Gospel, and so was prepared and fitted to be a proper habitation for Satan; and in such a case as this was the Jewish nation from the time of Christ's death to the destruction of Jerusalem; (see Gill on “⁴¹²⁴Matthew 12:44”)

Ver. 26. *Then goeth he and taketh to him seven other spirits*, etc.] Or “demons”, as the Ethiopic version, whom he took to him as his consorts and companions, as the same version calls them.

More wicked than himself; for it seems there are degrees of wickedness among the devils, as well as among men:

and they enter and dwell there; the unclean spirit, and the other seven: so seven devils were in Mary Magdalene, and a legion in another man; and indeed the evil heart of man is an habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit: here it may chiefly design the place and power which the devil had among the Jews before their destruction:

and the last state of that man is worse than the first; the Persic version adds, “and more miserable”; as was the case of the Jews, to which this parable refers; as appears by what is subjoined in Matthew, which manifestly applies it to them,

even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation; (see Gill on “⁴¹²⁵Matthew 12:45”).

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass as he spoke these things*, etc.] That is, as Christ spoke, or “had finished these sayings”, as the Persic version expresses it, before related, in vindication of himself and his miracles, from the blasphemy of the Scribes and Pharisees to their entire confusion, and had delivered the above parable concerning the unclean spirit, which had a particular regard to them:

a certain woman of the company: observing the miracle he had wrought, in casting out a devil, and being affected with his discourse, in which he so fully cleared himself, and so strongly confuted his enemies, and set them forth in so just a light:

lift up her voice, and said unto him, aloud, in the hearing of all the people, and with great earnestness and fervour:

blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked: whether this woman personally knew Mary, the mother of Christ, is not

certain; it may be that she was now present, or at least not far off; and this woman hearing that she, with the brethren of Christ, were without, and desired to speak with him, might be the occasion of her uttering these words; (^{<4026>}Matthew 12:46) though they are said not so much in praise, and to the honour of Mary, as in commendation of Christ, from whom, and for the sake of bearing and suckling so great a person, she was denominated blessed as before, both by the angel and Elisabeth, (^{<4028>}Luke 1:28,42) This was a form of blessing among the Jews: so it is said ^{f379} of R. Joshuah ben Chananiah, a disciple of R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, who lived about these times, *wtdl wy yrça*, “blessed is she that bore him”: and they had also a form of cursing among them, much after the same manner, as *qnyya ^kd azyb j yl*, “cursed be the paps that suckled him” ^{f380}. The Jews, in their blasphemous rage against Christ, and all that belong to him, say of Mary, the daughter of Eli, by whom they seem to design the mother of our Lord, that she hangs in the shades by the fibres of her paps ^{f381} but this woman had a different opinion of her.

Ver. 28. *But he said*, etc.] Christ said “to the woman”, Persic version reads, as correcting her, though not denying it, nor reproving her for it, but improving upon it:

yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it; intimating, that though his mother was happy in bearing and suckling such a son, yet it was a far greater happiness to hear the word of God; meaning either himself, the eternal “Logos”, so as to embrace him, believe on him, and have him formed in the heart; or the Gospel preached by him, so as to understand it, receive it as the ingrafted word, and bring forth fruit, and act in obedience to it, observe it, and abide by it, and never relinquish it. This is a greater happiness than to be related to Christ in the flesh, though ever so nearly. The Ethiopic version reads, “that hear the word of God, and believe, and keep it”: for faith comes by hearing, and shows itself in doing. Barely to hear the word, and even give an assent to it, will be of little avail, unless what is heard and believed is put in practice.

Ver. 29. *And when the people were gathered thick together*, etc.] Upon this woman's lifting up her voice, and saying the things she did; or rather to see what sign he would give, which some had desired (^{<4116>}Luke 11:16)

he began to say, this is an evil generation. The Alexandrian copy, two copies of Beza's, and the Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions read, “this

generation is an evil generation”; and also it was an “adulterous one”, as is added in (⁴¹²³Matthew 12:39)

they seek a sign; for they had asked one of him, (⁴¹¹⁶Luke 11:16)

and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet; one like unto it: (see Gill on “⁴¹²³Matthew 12:39”)

Ver. 30. *For as Jonas was a sign to the Ninevites*, etc.] As he was by lying three days and three nights in the whale's belly, and then cast on shore alive; which sign, or miracle was wrought to confirm his mission and message, and to engage the Ninevites to give credit to him, and repent, or they might assure themselves they would be utterly destroyed;

so shall also the son of man be to this generation; by lying three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and then rising again from the dead the third day; and which should be done to confirm the truth of his Messiahship, and to declare him to be the Son of God with power, and to engage persons to believe in him; and to assure that wicked generation, that in case they remained, after such a sign, impenitent and unbelieving, wrath would come upon them to the uttermost; (see ⁴¹²⁴Matthew 12:40).

Ver. 31. *The queen of the south*, etc.] That is, the queen of Sheba, which was a country of Arabia, which lay south of Judea; of whom it is said, that

she shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: the sense is, that at the last day, when all shall rise from the dead, both Jews and Gentiles, this Heathen queen shall rise together with the men of the present generation among the Jews, stand in judgment with them, and against them; and that her conduct would be brought as an evidence against them, and be improved as an aggravation of their condemnation:

for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here: the difference between them, and what aggravates the case is, that she was a Gentile that knew not God, they were Jews, his professing people; she came from afar, they were near, upon the spot, where Christ was, he was preaching in their streets, temple, and synagogues; she came to hear only natural or moral wisdom, but they might have heard spiritual and heavenly wisdom, with which eternal happiness is connected; she came to hear only a mere man,

but they might have heard him who is the wisdom of God, and the only wise God, and our Saviour; (see Gill on “^{<412B>}Matthew 12:42”).

Ver. 32. *The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it*, etc.] Luke changes the order of these instances; Matthew mentions this before the instance of the queen of Sheba; but Luke puts it last: this circumstance is not material, and the design of it is the same with the former:

for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here: what in this case will aggravate the condemnation of the Jews in the day of judgment is, that these men were Heathens, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, and were not used to have prophets sent to them; and yet as soon as Jonas, a mere man, came to them, and preached but one sermon among them, they repented of their sins, and turned from them; whereas the Jews, who had a better notion of religion, and who, though they had the Son of God himself among them, and preached to them, and that many sermons, and whose ministry was confirmed by miracles, and afterwards his apostles for a course of years, had yet remained impenitent and unbelieving; (see Gill on “^{<412B>}Matthew 12:41”).

Ver. 33. *No man when he hath lighted a candle*, etc.] These words are often repeated by Christ on different occasions, (see Gill on “^{<415I>}Matthew 5:15”) and (see Gill on “^{<418G>}Luke 8:16”) and here seem to design the free, open, and clear ministry of Christ, who excelled Solomon in wisdom, and Jonas in powerful preaching. It being as a candle, which, when lighted, no man

putteth in a secret place; as under a bed, (^{<410E>}Mark 4:21) where it cannot be seen, and its light be of any use:

neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come may see the light; intimating, that Christ and his disciples did not preach in corners, or in private houses, and secret places, but in the streets of the city, and in the temples and synagogues, the public places of worship: and therefore the Jews were the more inexcusable, that they did not attend to the ministry of the word; and this would be their condemnation, that light was come among them, and they preferred darkness to it, (^{<418F>}John 3:19).

Ver. 34. *The light of the body is the eye*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin and all the eastern versions read “the light of thy body is thine eye”. The sense is,

that as the eye gives light, to the body, and the several members of it, by which they are guided and directed; so the understanding is the light of the soul, and the guide to all the powers and faculties of it;

therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light: as when the eye is free from vicious humours, and its sight is clear, the whole body reaps the advantage of it, and is perfectly illuminated by it; so when the eye of the understanding is opened and enlightened by the Spirit of God, into the truths of the Gospel, and a single regard is had unto them, and to the glory of Christ in them, the whole soul is filled with light, joy, and comfort:

but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness; as when the eye of the body is attended with any bad humours that hinder the sight, all the members of it are in darkness; so, when the understanding is darkened through the blindness and ignorance there is in men, with respect to Gospel truths, all the powers and faculties of the soul are in a very miserable and uncomfortable condition. The 35th and 36th verses are not in Beza's most ancient copy.

Ver. 35. *Take heed therefore,* etc.] By attending to the light of the Gospel, shining in the ministration of it, and do not neglect and despise it:

that the light which is in thee be not darkness; lest being given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, not only the light of nature, which the Jews had in common with the Gentiles, but even that notional light and knowledge of divine things, which they had by being favoured with an external revelation, the writings of the Old Testament, should be lost.

Ver. 36. *If thy whole body therefore be full of light,* etc.] That is, if the whole soul, as the Ethiopic version reads, be full of Gospel light, through the illuminating influences of the blessed Spirit accompanying the word:

having no part dark; every power and faculty of the soul being affected with it, and influenced by it, though, as yet, the light and knowledge of evangelical things is not perfect in any:

the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light; the whole soul shall be as full of light and joy, which the Gospel always brings with it, as a room is full of light, when a candle is lighted, and shines brightly, and burns clearly in it.

Ver. 37. *And as he spake*, etc.] Either the above words, or others at another time:

a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: as one of the same sect had before, in (^{<43736>}Luke 7:36) and who either was better affected to Christ than the generality of them were; or had a design upon him to get him into company with others, in private, and ensnare him if they could, and overcome him, who was an overmatch for them before the people; among whom they feared, should they go on thus publicly to attack him, their credit and reputation would sink, and be lost.

And he went in and sat down to meat: whatever were the intentions of the Pharisee, Christ, who was always affable and free with all sorts of men, readily accepted of the invitation, and at once went along with him to his house; and dinner being ready, and on the table, he immediately sat down without any ceremony.

Ver. 38. *And when the Pharisee saw it*, etc.] That Christ laid himself down on one of the couches and began to eat:

he marvelled; that so great a prophet as he was, and a man of so much religion and holiness, should show no regard to a common custom with them, and which was one of the traditions of their elders, and which they put upon a level with the commands of God. The Vulgate Latin version, and so Beza's most ancient copy, and another exemplar, read, "he began to say, thinking" (or judging) "within himself": he was "moved" at it, as the Persic version renders it; he was filled with astonishment and indignation,

that he had not first washed before dinner; especially since he had been in a crowd of people, (^{<21129>}Luke 11:29) for the Pharisees not only washed their hands, by immersing them up to the elbow before eating; but when they had been at market, or among any large number of people, or had reason to think they had, or feared they had touched any unclean person or thing, they immersed themselves all over in water: and which is the sense of the word βαπτισμοι, here used; (see Gill on "^{<4002>}Mark 7:2-4").

Ver. 39. *And the Lord said unto him*, etc.] Jesus, as the Syriac and Persic versions read; the Lord Jesus, as the Ethiopic.

Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup, and the platter; being very tenacious of the traditions of the elders, concerning the washing of cups and pots, which had been of late years brought in among them, and

therefore the word “now” is used; (see Gill on “^{<425>}Matthew 23:25”) and (see Gill on “^{<400>}Mark 7:4”),

but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness: meaning either their souls, which were full of all manner of sin, the cleansing and purity of which they had no concern about, whilst they were very strict and curious in washing their bodies, their cups and platters; or rather the vessels which were filled with meat and drink got by extortion, rapine, and oppression; (see ^{<425>}Matthew 23:25).

Ver. 40. *Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without*, etc.] That is, made clean that which is without, or the outside of the cup and platter;

make that which is within also? does not he make the inside clean likewise? whoever washes a cup or platter, but washes and makes clean the inside, as well as the outside? and so ye who are so very careful to have your cups and platters clean, should be as careful what you put in them, that they are clean also; not only that they are clean according to the law, in a ceremonial sense, but in a moral sense, that they are honestly and lawfully got. The word, ποιέω, rendered “made” and “make”, answers to the Hebrew word הִצִּיחַ [, which sometimes signifies to beautify and adorn, and to cleanse, and remove away filth, as by paring nails, and washing the feet; so in (^{<4212>}Deuteronomy 21:12) it is said of a captive woman that a man takes into his house for his wife, among other things, הִצִּיחַ [וּ, “she shall make her nails”; that is, “pare” them, as we render it, and remove the filth from them. Again, in (^{<4092>}2 Samuel 19:24) it is said of Mephibosheth, that from the day king David departed, he had not, הִצִּיחַ [, “made his feet”; that is, as the Targum renders it, Pj ç al , “he had not washed his feet”; and so other Jewish interpreters understand it, either of his having not washed his feet, much less his whole body ^{f382}, or of not having pared his nails ^{f383}; and so the Vulgate Latin renders it, that he came to meet the king “with unwashed feet”; which may serve to illustrate and confirm the sense before given: though interpreters generally understand this of God, as the maker of the soul, as well as of the body; and therefore the purity of the former should be regarded, as well as that of the latter.

Ver. 41. *But rather give alms of such things as ye have*, etc.] The phrase τὰ ἐνοῦντα, is variously rendered, and so furnishes out various senses: the Syriac version renders it, “give that which is”, which is yours; or “which is given to you”, as the Persic version, and agrees with ours, “such things as

ye have”; and which carries in it but a very odd sense; for none can give of that which they have not. The Vulgate Latin version reads, “that which is over and above”; superfluous substance, and which may be easily spared without hurting a man, or his family: others, “as much as you can”: according to a man's ability, and as God has prospered him in the world. The Ethiopic version renders it, “that which is necessary”; which the necessities of the poor call for, and is right and proper to give them: and the Arabic version, very foreign from the sense of the phrase, reads, “before every thing”; above all things give alms. But the true sense of it is contained in the literal version of it, “things that are within”; that is, that are within the cup and the platter; give meat and drink to the poor, your platters and cups are full of, gotten by injustice and oppression. Some read it not imperatively, “give”, but indicatively, “ye do give”: you oppress and defraud men, devour widows' houses, and fill your own with the spoils of others; and then give out of your cups and platters drink to the thirsty, and meat to the hungry, to make atonement for your avarice and extortion:

and behold all things are clean unto you; that is, according to their own opinion, who fancied that alms deeds justified them in the sight of God, cleansed them from their sins, delivered them from hell, and gave them a title to eternal life; (see Gill on “~~406~~ Matthew 6:1”) for it can never be thought to be our Lord's meaning in earnest, that either their persons, or what they had, should be pure and clean unto them, by giving a part of their ill-gotten goods to the poor; but he speaks their sense, in an ironic way. From this opinion of theirs it is, that the Hebrew word, **hkz**, which signifies “to be clean”, is used by them for giving alms: so it is said ^{f384}, that

“R. Jonathan and Resh Lekish went down to bathe themselves in the baths of Tiberias; and a certain poor man met them, and said unto them, **yb ^yykz**, “give me alms”; they said unto him, when we come back we will **Æb ^yykz**, “give thee alms”:]”

and so the Mahometans call alms by the same name, because they imagine that they cleanse their other substance from pollution, and their souls from avarice.

Ver. 42. *But woe unto you Pharisees*, etc.] Though these words, with several other passages in this chapter, are much alike with those in Matthew 23 yet it is clear that they were spoken at different times, these in the house of a Pharisee, and they in the temple at Jerusalem:

for ye tithe mint and rue; (see Gill on “⁴¹²³Matthew 23:23”) the Persic version here reads, “mint and anise”, as there; and the Ethiopic version only “hyssop”:

and all manner of herbs; or “every herb”; that is, all sorts of herbs that grow in the garden, and were not common to all;

and pass over judgment, and the love of God: by “judgment” may be meant justice, or doing that which is right between man and man, both publicly and privately, which was greatly neglected by these extortioners and unjust men: and by “the love of God” may be intended, both love to God, which shows itself in the observance of the first table of the law, and love to the neighbour, which God requires, and regards the second table:

these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone; (see Gill on “⁴¹²³Matthew 23:23”).

Ver. 43. *Woe unto you Pharisees, for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues*, etc.] And also the uppermost rooms at feasts, (⁴¹¹⁶Matthew 23:6)

and greetings in the market; (see Gill on “⁴¹¹⁶Matthew 23:6-7”).

Ver. 44. *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, etc.] As they are all along called by Matthew; though only here by Luke. The Vulgate Latin only reads, “woe unto you”, leaving out all the rest: but the whole is retained in all the Oriental versions;

for ye are as graves which appear not; being covered with grass; “or which were not marked”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; that is, were not whited or covered with lime, as some were, that they might be seen at a distance, and be known what they were; that so men might avoid going near them, and prevent their being defiled with them; (see Gill on “⁴¹²⁷Matthew 23:27”)

and the men that walk over them

are not aware of them; and so are defiled by them. Christ compares the Pharisees, because of their hypocrisy, and secret iniquity, both to whited sepulchres, and to those that were not: to those that were, because, like them, they looked beautiful without, and righteous in the sight of men, and yet were inwardly full of all manner of pollution and sin; and to those that were not, because they did not appear to be what they were, and men were

deceived by them; and under specious pretences to religion and holiness, were by their corrupt doctrines and practices unawares drawn into the commission of sin. Regard may not only be had to graves covered with grass, or not marked with lime, by which they might be known; but also to what the Jews call, $\mu\omega\eta\theta\eta\ \rho\beta\eta\kappa$, “the grave of the abyss”^{f385}; a grave that is not known no more than if it was in the bottomless pit: so uncleanness by touching a dead body, which a man is not conscious of, is called the uncleanness of the abyss, or an unknown one^{f386}.

Ver. 45. *Then answered one of the lawyers*, etc.] Or Scribes, as the Syriac and Persic versions read: and so the Ethiopic version calls him, “a Scribe of the city”: the Scribes and lawyers were the same sort of persons who were interpreters of the law, and equally tenacious of the traditions of the elders Christ had referred to, as the Pharisees, and in general were Pharisees; though some of them might be of the sect of the Sadducees. This man observing that Christ, in his last words, joined the Scribes and Pharisees together, and charged them both with hypocrisy, and pronounced a woe upon them, was very uneasy at it:

and saith unto him, master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also; us lawyers, or Scribes also; both by mentioning their names, and accusing the Pharisees of the same things, which they must be conscious to themselves they were equally guilty of; so that if the one were criminal, the others were also. The Ethiopic version reads by way of interrogation, “what thou sayest, does it not injure us?”

Ver. 46. *And he said, woe unto you also, ye lawyers*, etc.] Christ was so far from calling back what he had said or suggested, that he repeats and confirms it, and more particularly names them, and enlarges on their evil practices:

for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers; (see Gill on “^{4E04}Matthew 23:4”).

Ver. 47. *Woe unto you*, etc.] Meaning particularly the lawyers or Scribes, together with the Pharisees, and even the whole body of the people, who in general were of the cast and complexion here described:

for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets; (see Gill on “^{4E09}Matthew 23:29”)

and your fathers killed them; the prophets; “or whom your fathers killed”, as read the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions; the one put them to death, and the other erected stately monuments over them, or adorned them; and yet both had the same malignant spirit against the faithful servants and messengers of God; and which showed their great hypocrisy.

Ver. 48. *Truly ye bear witness, that ye allow the deeds of your fathers*, etc.] Or “ye bear witness, and ye allow”; that is, they both witnessed that their fathers killed the prophets, and they consented to what they did, and approved of their actions:

for they indeed killed them; it must be owned, and not their sons:

and ye build their sepulchres; which was a bearing and keeping up a testimony against them, and a continuing a remembrance of their crimes; and which looked as though they approved of them, or otherwise they should have been content to have the prophets lie buried in silence, and not erected stately monuments over them, which seemed to be raised more for the honour of those that put them to death, than of the prophets themselves. Or, whereas they did this under specious pretences of disliking their fathers' sins, which yet secretly they loved, and were of the same wicked disposition against the ministers of the word, and which they would quickly show; this discovered their hypocrisy, and confirmed the character Christ had before given of them; for it follows,

Ver. 49. *Therefore also said the wisdom of God*, etc.]. The Syriac version only reads “wisdom”; by which seems to be meant not the perfection of God's wisdom: though it is usual with the Jews to represent the divine perfections as speaking, as the justice and mercy of God. They say^{f387}, that

“when the holy blessed God sought to make Hezekiah the Messiah, and Sennacherib, Gog, and Magog, *ʿydh t dym*, “the property of judgment”, or “justice, said” before the holy, blessed God, Lord of the world, etc.”

and so the sense may be here, that the infinite wisdom of God said within himself, determined in his own breast, to do what follows. But I rather think that Christ is intended, who, as God, is the essential wisdom of God; and, as man and mediator, has the spirit of wisdom resting on him, and the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him; since this is said by Christ, (^{423b}Matthew 23:34) though the words here seem to be the words of the

evangelist relating what Christ had said. Some have thought, that some book, under the name of “The Wisdom of God”, is here cited, which had in it the following words,

I will send them prophets and apostles; which, in Matthew, are called prophets, wise men, and Scribes; and by whom are meant the apostles of Christ, and the ministers of the Gospel. The Persic version reads, “Io, I send to you”, as in (^{<4234>}Matthew 23:34),

and some of them they shall slay and persecute; some of them they shall put to death, and others they shall persecute from one place to another; (see Gill on “^{<4234>}Matthew 23:34”).

Ver. 50. *That the blood of all the prophets*, etc.] The same with “all the righteous blood”, or the blood of all the righteous men, in (^{<4235>}Matthew 23:35),

which was shed from the foundation of the world: for there were prophets from the beginning, which prophesied of Christ, (^{<4170>}Luke 1:70) and whose blood was shed very early; for Abel, the son of the first man, and who was the first whose blood was shed, was not only a righteous man, but a prophet; for by the sacrifice which he offered up, he gave a prophetic hint of the sacrifice of Christ, in that he spoke beforehand of it, as being dead he yet speaks: and now the Lord was about to send apostolical prophets, whom the Jews would slay, and he would suffer them to slay, that so the blood of all the former ones,

may be required of this generation; and they be punished for it: just as in Babylon will be found, when God makes inquisition for blood, as he sooner or later always does, the blood of the prophets and saints, and of all that are slain upon earth, ever since Rome papal has been in power, (^{<6824>}Revelation 18:24).

Ver. 51. *From the blood of Abel*, etc.] “Righteous Abel”, as in (^{<4235>}Matthew 23:35) and so read the Arabic version here, and two manuscripts in the Bodleian library, and three of Stephens's copies; the Persic version renders it, “innocent Abel”: he is mentioned because he was the first man that was slain, and he was slain because of his righteousness.

Unto the blood of Zacharias; in the Cambridge copy of Beza's, it is added, “the son of Barachias”, as in (^{<4235>}Matthew 23:35) and so the Arabic

version, “the son of Barasciah”; who he was, (see Gill on “^{<4235>}Matthew 23:35”) “^{<4235>}Matthew 23:35”)

which perished between the altar and the temple; or “the house”, that is, the holy place: and the Ethiopic version renders it, “the holy house”; here he died, being slain by the Jews; see the note, as before.

Verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation; as it was at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 52. *Woe unto you lawyers*, etc.] Who are particularly addressed again in distinction from the Pharisees, though much the same things are said to them both in (^{<4213>}Matthew 23:13)

for ye have taken away the key of knowledge; of the Scriptures, of the law, and the prophets, and the true interpretation of them, and especially of such places as refer to the Messiah, and the Gospel dispensation, called the kingdom of heaven, (^{<4213>}Matthew 23:13) they had not only arrogated the knowledge of these to themselves, setting up for the only interpreters of the sacred writings; but they had took away from the people the true knowledge and sense of them, by their false glosses upon them, so that they were destroyed for lack of knowledge: and hence came that famine of hearing the word, which they say ^{f388} should be before the coming of the King Messiah, and now was. The Syriac and Arabic versions read, “the keys of knowledge”; and the Ethiopic version, “the key of righteousness”. The Jews sometimes speak of “the keys of the law”, and represent the oral law as the root and key of the written law ^{f389}: but, alas! it was by the oral law, or traditions of the elders, that they took away the key, or obscured the true sense of the written law. Some think, that here is an allusion to the custom of delivering a key to any one, when he was ordained or promoted to the dignity of a doctor: it is said of R. Samuel ^{f390}, that

“when he died they put, **wj tpm**, “his key”, and his writing book into his coffin, because he was not worthy of a son”

to succeed him:

ye entered not in yourselves; into the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel dispensation, neither receiving doctrines, nor submitting to its ordinances:

and them that were entering in ye hindered; by reproaching the miracles and ministry of Christ; by threatenings and excommunications; (see Gill on “⁴²¹³Matthew 23:13”).

Ver. 53. *And as he said these things unto them*, etc.] Denounced the above woes upon them, charging them with the above crimes, and threatening them with divine vengeance:

the Scribes and Pharisees began to urge him vehemently; to fall upon him with their tongues, and express great rage, wrath, and virulence against him:

and to provoke him to speak of many things; they put questions to him, and urged him to answer them, and did all they could to irritate him to say things that they could improve against him, to draw words out of his mouth, and then wrest and pervert them.

Ver. 54. *Laying wait for him*, etc.] To ensnare and entangle him, watching his words, observing what he said, and laying hold thereon:

and seeking to catch something out of his mouth; like beasts of prey, or hunters, that were watching for their prey; or lay ambush, diligently looking out, and greedily catching at every thing they thought for their purpose:

that they might accuse him; either of heresy or sedition, to the Jewish sanhedrim, or the Roman governor.