

# CHAPTER 23

## INTRODUCTION TO LUKE 23

**Ver. 1.** *And the whole multitude of them*, etc.] Of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders; the whole of the sanhedrim, excepting Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, having in their court condemned Christ to death:

*arose*; from the council chamber, where they sat in judgment upon him:

*and led him unto Pilate*, the Roman governor, and into the praetorium, or judgment hall, where causes were tried by him; hither they brought Jesus, having bound him as a prisoner and a malefactor, that their sentence might be confirmed by civil authority, and that he might be put to the death of the cross, which was a Roman punishment.

**Ver. 2.** *And they began to accuse him*, etc.] After they found that Pilate would not receive him as a malefactor upon their word, and delivery of him to him as such; but insisted on knowing what they had to charge him with, and what accusation they had to bring against him:

*saying, we have found this fellow perverting the nation*; the nation of the Jews. Three of Beza's copies read, "our nation"; and so do the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; and it is to be understood, either of his perverting the nation from the true doctrine of Moses and the prophets; by spreading among them new notions, and false principles of religion; whereby he was a troubler of God's Israel, as Ahab charged Elijah, (<sup><1187></sup>1 Kings 18:17) where the Septuagint use the same word as here; and so is a charge of heresy, or innovation in religion against Christ: and thus Jesus stands charged in their writings <sup>f682</sup>; on those words in (<sup><3910></sup>Psalm 91:10). "Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling", they have this note;

"that thou mayest not have a son, or a disciple, that corrupts his food publicly (i.e. his doctrine, who departs from the true doctrine and worship, to heresy and idolatry, and propagates the same),

*yrxwnh wcy ^wgk*, "as Jesus the Nazarene"."

Which last clause, in some later editions of the Talmud, is left out: or it may be understood of his perverting the nation in their politics, and so is a charge of sedition against him, as follows;

*forbidding to give tribute to Caesar*; than which, nothing was more false; (see <sup>4271</sup>Matthew 22:21, 17:24-27) nor does what is after alleged, support this charge:

*saying, that he himself is Christ, a King*; or Christ the King, or the King Christ; that is, he whom the Jews so frequently in their writings call *j ycmh AEl m*, “the King Messiah”, for so he might be, and was, without any hurt to Caesar's dignity, or revenue; for though he was a king, yet not an earthly one; and though he had a kingdom, yet not of this world: indeed they would insinuate by this, that he set himself up as an earthly king, in opposition to Caesar, to draw off the people from him, and their allegiance and duty to him; and so the Jews say of Jesus of Nazareth, that he was put to death, and had no mercy shown him, because he was *twkl ml bwrq*, “near to the kingdom”<sup>f683</sup>. The whole of this charge was untrue; he was so far from perverting the nation with false doctrine and worship, that he taught the true doctrine, and right way of worship, and refuted the false glosses of the Pharisees, and opposed the vain traditions of the elders, by which both were corrupted; and so far was he from any seditious principles and practices, or doing any injury to Tiberius Caesar, the then reigning emperor, that he taught the people to give Caesar the things that were Caesar's, and he himself paid the tribute money; and when the people would have took him by force, and have made him a king, he avoided it by getting out of the way, (<sup>4885</sup>John 6:15).

**Ver. 3.** *And Pilate asked him, saying*, etc.] Observing that it was said, he had given himself out to be a king; for as for what regarded religion, he took no notice of it; he put this question to him,

*art thou the King of the Jews?* that their prophecies speak of, and they have expected;

*and he answered him and said, thou sayest it*; that is, thou sayest well; it is as thou sayest, I am the King of the Jews; (see Gill on “<sup>4271</sup>Matthew 27:11”) though he did not leave this without an explanation; without informing him what sort of a king he was, and what kind of a kingdom he had; (see <sup>4886</sup>John 18:36,37) which made Pilate perfectly easy, and desirous to release him, as appears by what follows.

**Ver. 4.** *Then said Pilate to the Chief priests, and to the people*, etc.] Both to the sanhedrim, and to the mob that were gathered together about the governor's palace on this occasion; and who were standing without the judgment hall, into which they would not enter, lest they should be defiled, and be unfit to eat the passover: wherefore Pilate came out to them; and this was the second time of his coming out to them, when he said the following words, (<sup><4188></sup>John 18:28,38).

*I find no fault in this man*; no cause, or reason, why any punishment should be inflicted on him, and especially he be put to death; no crime that can be fastened on him, or accusation proved against him, or any thing that amounts to a charge of sedition: the man is an harmless and innocent man, that has done nothing against Caesar, or the government, and good of the nation; and therefore is not worthy of death, or of stripes, but should be discharged. This was Pilate's sense.

**Ver. 5.** *And they were the more fierce*, etc.] Or urgent to have him put to death; so the Hebrew word **qzj** is rendered in (<sup><4123></sup>Exodus 12:33) which answers to that here used. “They cried out”, as the Syriac, Persic, and Ethiopic versions read; they were more clamorous and noisy; they cried out louder, and exerted themselves with great fury and violence, and added strength to their clamour, and increased their charges:

*saying, he stirreth up the people*; to sedition and rebellion:

*teaching throughout all Jewry*; or “Judea”; not in one, or a few places only, but every where:

*beginning from Galilee*; where indeed our Lord did begin his ministry, and where he chiefly taught; (see <sup><4042></sup>Matthew 4:12,17,23) and which they rather chose to mention, because that the Galilaeans were reckoned a seditious people, and had been drawn into rebellion, and had suffered for it; (see <sup><4157></sup>Acts 5:37, <sup><4131></sup>Luke 13:1)

*to this place*; the city of Jerusalem, the metropolis of the nation; suggesting, that he taught seditious principles not only in Galilee, but all the way from thence throughout Judea, and even in their chief city, and had drawn many disciples after him every where; so that it was a notorious case, as well as of great consequence, and much danger, and ought not to be trifled with.

**Ver. 6.** *When Pilate heard of Galilee*, etc.] “The name of Galilee”, as the Syriac and Persic versions read when that was mentioned,

*he asked*; the Ethiopic version says, the “Galilaeans”; some of which might be present, being come to the feast of the passover, and were very proper persons to inquire of:

*whether the man were a Galilean*; so Jesus was reputed to be: for though he was born at Bethlehem of Judah, he was brought up at Nazareth in Galilee, where he spent the greater part of his private life, and his public ministry was chiefly exercised in those parts; hence the Jews thought, that he came out of Galilee, and was a Galilean, (~~ἄρα~~ John 7:41,52) and so he used to be called by Julian the apostate; and it seems, that the answer returned to Pilate was, that he was a Galilean; and so the Persic version adds, and they said, yes; for it follows,

**Ver. 7.** *And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction*, etc.] The country which was under his power, and he had the government of; for Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, (~~ἄρα~~ Luke 3:1). This was Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the great, and the same that beheaded John the Baptist; wherefore as soon as Pilate found that Jesus was one of his province, immediately he sent him to Herod: to be examined, and to have his cause tried before him: and this he did partly, that he might be rid of this troublesome business; and partly that he might show to Herod what a regard he had to his jurisdiction, and power; and that he was unwilling to break in upon it, or usurp that to himself, which did not belong to him: the way from Pilate's hall, to the place where Herod was, is computed, by Adrichomius, to be about three hundred and fifty steps:

*who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time*; or “in those days”; the days of the passover; for Herod being born a Jew, and the son of a proselyte, was come to Jerusalem, at this time, to keep the feast of the passover.

**Ver. 8.** *And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad*, etc.] For though he had been brought up in his country, and had so frequently preached, and wrought miracles there, he had never seen him before; and to have a sight of him, was a great indulgence to his curiosity:

*for he was desirous to see him of a long season*; perhaps ever since he had heard of his fame, and had entertained a notion that Christ was John the

Baptist risen from the dead, whom he had beheaded; and therefore was desirous of seeing him, that he might know whether he was John or not:

*because he had heard many things of him*; concerning his doctrine, and miracles, and especially the latter; how that he cast out devils, and healed all manner of diseases, and even raised the dead to life:

*and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him*; which would have still more gratified his curiosity, and have been the subject of further inquiry and conversation.

**Ver. 9.** *Then he questioned with him in many words*, etc.] Or talked very much to him, inquiring who he was, whether John the Baptist, or no; whether it was true that he had wrought such miracles he had heard of, and how he wrought them, and by what power he performed them, and how he came by it; and used many arguments to persuade him to work a miracle at that time:

*but he answered him nothing*; would not give him one word in return to his many words, nor work any miracle in his presence; he answered him neither by words nor deeds; he would not indulge his curiosity, though he might have obtained his liberty by it.

**Ver. 10.** *And the chief priests and Scribes*, etc.] The sanhedrim that followed him from Pilate's hall, to Herod's palace; fearing, lest Herod should be disposed to let him go, should he gratify him by working a miracle:

*stood*; before Herod; so witnesses, and accusers, used to do; (see Gill on <sup>“~~41457~~”</sup>Mark 14:57”)

*and vehemently accused him*; of the same things they had accused him before Pilate, with great bitterness and constancy, increasing, and aggravating the charges against him.

**Ver. 11.** *And Herod, with his men of war*, etc.] Or his soldiers, his bodyguards that attended his person, who came with him from Galilee, and were both for his security and service, and for his pomp and magnificence:

*set him at nought*; made nothing of him; had him in no account; treated him as a silly, and contemptible creature, that could not do any thing that was reported of him; nor able to say any thing for himself; but took him to be a mere fool and idiot; and so they used him:

*and mocked him*; as a king, and made sport and pastime with him:

*and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe*. The Vulgate Latin renders it, “a white robe”; a token of his innocence, though not so designed by them, but rather by way of derision, as a symbol of his simplicity and folly. The Syriac version renders it, “scarlet”; and the Arabic and Persic versions, “red”. It is very likely that it was an old worn-out robe of one of the officers, or soldiers, which they put on him; in contempt of his being a king, as the Roman soldiers afterwards did, upon the same account:

*and sent him again to Pilate*; uncondemned, not knowing what to make of him, or the charge against him, and he might be unwilling to have any hand in his death, not having forgotten the case of John the Baptist; and therefore remits him to Pilate, to do as he thought fit with him.

**Ver. 12.** *And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together*, etc.] For it pleased Herod, that Pilate should show such a regard to his authority and power, as to send one that belonged to his jurisdiction to take cognizance of his case; and especially as it was a person that was much talked of, and he had long wanted to see; and Pilate, on the other hand, was pleased with Herod, that though he was one that was under his jurisdiction, and so had a right of trying the cause, and either absolve or condemn, yet chose not to use this his power, but referred the case to the Roman governor:

*for before they were at enmity between themselves*; it may be on account of the Galileans, the subjects of Herod, whom Pilate had slain, whilst they were sacrificing at Jerusalem, (<sup>423E</sup>Luke 13:1), which Herod might resent, as an infringement upon his authority and power; for had they been ever so deserving of punishment, it ought to have been left to him, to have inflicted it, and not the governor of Judea, who had nothing to do with them: but now matters were made up by this step of Pilate's, in sending Christ to him, supposed to be a Galilean, and so of Herod's jurisdiction; which was tacitly acknowledging his former conduct to be wrong, and showed a regard to Herod's authority: and thus they were reconciled together, and agreed in their contemptuous usage, and ill-treatment of Christ, and so fulfilled (<sup>423E</sup>Psalm 2:1,2).

**Ver. 13.** *And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests*, etc.] That is, after Herod had sent back Christ unto him, he then summoned the

chief priests together, to consider what should be done to him: and with them also,

*the rulers and the people*; both the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and the chief among the people, who had been forward in accusing Jesus, and seeking his death: the latter of these is not read in the Persic version; and both are joined together in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, and read thus; by the former, “the princes, or chiefs of the people”: and by the latter, “the judges of the people”: in a word, he convened the whole sanhedrim, which consisted of the chief priests, Scribes, and elders of the people.

**Ver. 14.** *Said unto them, ye have brought this man unto me*, etc.] Pointing to Jesus, who stood before him;

*as one that perverteth the people*; from their religion, and laws, and allegiance to Caesar. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “your people”; of the same nation with them, and that were under their care and jurisdiction; at least in an ecclesiastical way:

*and behold, I having examined him before you*; not only privately, and alone, between themselves in the judgment hall, (~~4883~~ John 18:33 19:9) but openly in the presence of them, when he brought forth Jesus to them, and heard their charges, and urged him to answer to them, (~~4271~~ Matthew 27:11-14)

*have found no fault in this man*; cannot perceive any charge proved against him, or any crime he is guilty of, for which punishment should be inflicted on him; or at least, that he should be put to death:

*touching*, or with regard to

*those things, whereof ye accuse him*. The Syriac and Persic versions read, “all those things”; intimating, that he had carefully looked into, and examined every thing, and had omitted nothing, and that all their accusations, and charges, put together, did not make it appear that he was guilty of a single crime.

**Ver. 15.** *No, nor yet Herod*, etc.] Who was a Jew, and better versed in their religious affairs, and understood the nature of such charges, and the amount of them, and what was sufficient proof in such cases; and who had also examined Jesus, and that in their presence, and had heard all that they

had to accuse him with, and yet found no fault in him of any such kind, as to condemn him to death for it:

*for I sent you to him*; along with Jesus, to make your allegations against him good before him; or, “I sent him to him”, as the Syriac version reads; that is, Jesus to him, as the Persic version expresses, he being of his country, and belonging to his jurisdiction; or, “he sent him back to us”; as the Arabic version reads, and three of Beza's copies: that is, Herod, after he had examined Jesus, and found no fault in him, sent him again to us; not being able to make out any crime against him, or to pass any judgment on the matter, for it follows;

*and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him*; or “by him”: the sense is, either that it appeared to Herod, that Christ had done nothing that deserved death; or that nothing was done to him by Herod, which showed that he thought he was worthy of it; since he passed no sentence on him, nor ordered him to be scourged, nor delivered him into the hands of an executioner, or to be imprisoned until things could be cleared up.

**Ver. 16.** *I will therefore chastise him*, etc.] Give him some correction, as by scourging, or beating with rods: this he proposed, not because he thought him deserving of it, but in complaisance to the Jews; since it would look as if their charges were not altogether weak and groundless; and that Jesus was not entirely innocent: this would carry a show of guilt and punishment, and he hoped this might be thought sufficient, and so he should please them, and save Jesus from dying, which he much desired: and release him; from his bonds, and let him go.

**Ver. 17.** *For of necessity he must release one*, etc.] And therefore proposed to release Jesus

*unto them at the feast*; of passover, which now was; not that there was any law that obliged to it, but it having been customary with the Roman governor to do so, the people expected it; custom had made it necessary: and so the Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions render it, “it was a custom to release”, etc. not at each feast, or every feast, as the last of these versions read, only at the passover, as is expressed, (~~4889~~ John 18:39).

**Ver. 18.** *And they cried out all at once*, etc.] The chief priests, rulers, and people, not bearing to hear of a release of him, now they had got him in their hands; and enraged at the proposal, in a most clamorous way, cried out, as one man, immediately:

*Saying, away with this man*; to the cross; to Calvary, the place of execution; away with him out of the world; he is not fit to live:

*and release unto us Barabbas*; whose character is given in the next verse; (see Gill on “<sup>417/16</sup>Matthew 27:16”).

**Ver. 19.** *Who, for a certain sedition made in the city*, etc.] Of Jerusalem: he had made an insurrection in it, in opposition to the government, in order to have thrown off the yoke, and to have asserted and maintained their liberties, as a free people; or rather to have seized and plundered the properties of other people, since he is represented elsewhere as a robber:

*and for murder*; which had either been committed by himself, or his accomplices, in the insurrection; and for these things, sedition, and murder, he

*was cast into prison*; where he lay till this feast, in order to be executed.

**Ver. 20.** *Pilate therefore willing to release Jesus*, etc.] Being more and more convinced of his innocence; and still seeing more clearly into the wickedness, malice, and envy of his accusers; and having received a message from his wife:

*spake again to them*; putting it again to them, which he should release; asking them what he should do with Jesus; plainly signifying his mind, that he thought him innocent, and that it would be right to let him go. The Ethiopic version represents him, saying, “will ye that I save for you, or release to you the Lord Jesus?”

**Ver. 21.** *But they cried, saying, crucify him, crucify him.*] They were fierce and furious, more noisy and clamorous, the more they perceived Pilate was for saving him; and they were more desirous to have him crucified, and more impatient until it was done, as the repetition of the word shows.

**Ver. 22.** *And he said unto them the third time*, etc.] After Christ had been sent back to him from Herod; for he had declared before he had sent him to him, that he found no fault in him, (<sup>418/38</sup>John 18:38).

*Why, what evil hath he done?* what capital crime has he committed? is he guilty of murder? or sedition? or blasphemy? or robbery, and theft? or any other enormous a crime?

*I have found no cause of death in him*; why he should be put to death at all; and much less to this shameful and painful death of the cross, which was the punishment of slaves, and of the vilest of men, which they were desirous of:

*I will therefore chastise him, and let him go*; this he said, not as if he was determined to do it, whether they liked it, or not; but as signifying what he willed, or chose, and hoped they would be contented with, that he should be scourged, or beaten, and dismissed, as he at first proposed.

**Ver. 23.** *And they were instant with loud voices*, etc.] They were urgent, and insisted upon his crucifixion, and pressed hard for it, and exerted their voices, and more loudly called:

*requiring him, that he might be crucified*: desiring it in the most importunate manner; signifying, that it must be, that nothing else would content them:

*and the voices of them, and the chief priests, prevailed*; upon Pilate to grant their request, contrary to the dictates of his own conscience, the conduct of Herod, and the message of his wife; the people being set on by the chief priests, and the chief priests joining with them, their numbers were so great, and their requests were pressed with so much force, and violence, and importunity, that Pilate could not withstand them.

**Ver. 24.** *And Pilate gave sentence*, etc.] Resolved, determined, and gave out:

*that it should be as they required*; that they should have their request, what they asked for; namely, that Jesus should be crucified, and Barabbas released.

**Ver. 25.** *And he released unto them, him*, etc.] Barabbas, who is not named, as being a detestable person, and unworthy to be named; and is therefore described by the infamous, though just character of him, as follows:

*that for sedition and murder was cast into prison*, as in (~~23:19~~ Luke 23:19)

*whom they had desired*; to be granted to them, and released; (see ~~4:14~~ Acts 3:14)

*but he delivered Jesus to their will*; to do as they would with him, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him.

**Ver. 26.** *And as they led him away*, etc.] From Pilate's hall, and out of the city of Jerusalem, towards Calvary; which was done by the Jews and Roman soldiers, after they had stripped him of his own clothes, and put on him a scarlet coat, and had platted a crown of thorn, and put it on his head, and a reed in his hand, and bowed the knee, and mocked him, saluting him as King of the Jews; after they had finished their sport and pastime with him, and had put on him his own clothes again:

*they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian*; father of Alexander and Rufus, (<sup>4152</sup>Mark 15:21), (see Gill on "<sup>4173</sup>Matthew 27:32").

*coming out of the country*; either out of the country part of Judea, to the city of Jerusalem; or out of the field where he had been about rural business, and was now returning home, and perhaps knew nothing of the matter, what had been doing at Jerusalem:

*and on him they laid the cross*; on which Jesus was to be crucified, and which he was bearing himself; but finding that he was weak, and languid, and unable to carry it himself, and fearing, should he die by the way, they should be disappointed of glutting their malice, and seeing him in shame and agony on the cross, and of triumphing over him there; and being in haste for the execution of their malicious designs, they put the cross, at least one end of it, upon this man's shoulders:

*that he might bear it after Jesus*: either the whole of it, following Jesus; or only one end of it, Jesus going before with the other end on his shoulder; which seems to be the order in which it was carried between them.

**Ver. 27.** *And there followed him a great company of people*, etc.] Not only of the common people, but of the principal inhabitants of the city; for among these were the chief priests, Scribes, and elders: some went for one thing, and some another; some pitying, and others mocking at him, and all to see the melancholy sight, (<sup>4238</sup>Luke 23:48) as is usual at executions: and what might make the crowd the greater, was the number of people in the city, which were come from all parts to the passover; as also the fame and character of the person, who was going to suffer:

*and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him*; not that these were the same with the *preficae* of the Romans, or the *ιηλεμιστριαι* of the

Grecians; for though the Jews had their *twnnwqm*, or mourning women, who were hired to assist in mourning; by using mournful gestures, tones, and songs, (see <sup>2497</sup>Jeremiah 9:17), yet public mourning was not allowed for persons that were executed as malefactors; and therefore it is the more remarkable, that here, and in (<sup>4238</sup>Luke 23:48) any public tokens of sorrow should be expressed: for,

“those that are executed by the sanhedrim, *^hyl [ ^yl batm ^ya*, “they do not mourn for them”; but their near relations come and ask the peace of, or salute the witnesses, and they salute the judges, to show, that they have not any thing in their hearts against them, seeing they have passed a true sentence; but though they do not use mourning, lo, they grieve for them; for there is no grief but in the heart <sup>f684</sup>.”

The reason why they did not mourn was, because their ignominy and death atoned for their crime <sup>f685</sup>: but it seems, there was a difference between those that were put to death by the order of the Roman government, and those that were put to death by the sanhedrim:

“all that are put to death by the government, although they are executed by the order of the king, and the law gives power to slay them, lo, “they mourn for them”; and they do not restrain any thing from them, and their substance goes to the king, and they are buried in the sepulchres of their fathers; but all that are put to death by the sanhedrim, “they do not mourn for them”; but they grieve for them; for there is no grief but in the heart; and they are not buried with their fathers, till their flesh is consumed; and their substance goes to their heirs <sup>f686</sup>.”

And since Christ was condemned to death by the Roman governor, hence it may be public mourning was allowed of, and might be done without notice; but these still were not the mourning women, but persons that followed on their own accord: some expressed their concern and sorrow through a natural tenderness of spirit, and from a principle of humanity, being grieved that so useful and innocent a person, as Christ appeared to be, should be put to such a cruel and shameful death; and others from a spirit of gratitude, they, or their friends, having received cures from him, being healed by him of sicknesses, or dispossessed of devils; and others from a spiritual, as well as natural affection for him; among whom were his own

mother and his mother's sister, and Mary Magdalene, and other women that followed him out of Galilee.

**Ver. 28.** *But Jesus turning unto them,* etc.] These women being behind Christ, at the back of him; and he knowing who they were, and what they were doing, turns himself to them, and addressed them in the following manner: and said,

*daughters of Jerusalem;* or ye Jerusalem women; just as the inhabitants of Jerusalem are called daughters of Zion in (<sup>21816</sup>Isaiah 3:16)

*weep not for me;* signifying, that they need not be under any concern on his account, for he was very willing to die; he desired nothing more; this was that he came into the world about; nor was he afraid to die; death was no king of terrors to him; he went to the cross with the greatest courage and intrepidity: besides, his sufferings, though he knew they would be very great and painful, yet that they would be soon over; nor could he be long held in the power of death, but would be raised again, and go to his Father, and be exalted at his right hand, and which should be matter of joy: to which might be added, that hereby his Father's counsels and covenant, purposes and promises, would have their accomplishment, the law would be fulfilled, justice satisfied, and all the perfections of God glorified, and the salvation of his chosen people effected; which, as it was the joy set before him, is a ground of rejoicing to believers: not that weeping on account of his sufferings and death was sinful; for he had offered prayers to God with cries and tears himself on this head; nor that it was altogether unreasonable, stupid, and preposterous; but Christ's meaning is, that when things were rightly considered, there would be great reason to assuage their grief, on this account, and rather express it on another;

*but weep for yourselves, and for your children;* not themselves personally, but their nation and posterity; and either for sin, their own, and others; the sins of professors, and of the profane; particularly the sin of crucifying him, which would be more injurious to that people than to him, and do them more hurt than him, since they had imprecated his blood upon them, and their children; or rather, and chiefly on account of those distresses and calamities, that would come upon them, in a short time, for their rejection and crucifixion of him; on account of which he himself had wept over Jerusalem, and its inhabitants, (<sup>21941</sup>Luke 19:41,42).

**Ver. 29.** *For behold the days are coming*, etc.] The time is hastening on; yet a little while, a few years more, and such times of distress will be:

*in the which they shall say*; or it shall be commonly said; it will be in every one's mouth:

*blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck*; that is, happy wilt those persons be who have no children, to be starved to death, for want of bread; or to be killed with the sword before their eyes, which must greatly enhance their own miseries. Dr. Hammond thinks, that one passage particularly is referred to, related by Josephus; that when Titus had so closely encompassed the city with a wall, that there was no coming out for provisions, upon which a sore famine commenced, so that they fed on dung and dirt, and shoes, and girdles, one rich and noble woman, whose name was Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, being stripped of all she had, by the seditious, killed her own child, and dressed it, and ate part of it; and the other part being found by the soldiers that broke in upon her, the news of this shocking fact was spread all over the city, and every one looked with horror upon it, and with the same compassion, as if they had done it themselves: and then might those words be said, “blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare”, etc. who, though starving themselves, were under no temptation to do such a detestable action.

**Ver. 30.** *Then shall they begin to say*, etc.] The Syriac, Arabic, and Persic versions read, “then shall ye begin to say”; the tribulation being so great, as never was the like since the creation of the world, nor never will be to the end of it; and being so sore pressed with the sword and famine; with the enemy without, and divisions, robberies, and murders within; and their miseries being inexpressible, and intolerable, they will seek to go into the holes of the rocks, and caves of the earth, as is prophesied of them, (<sup>2119</sup>Isaiah 2:19) and as Josephus says, many of them did, when the city was taken; and, like those in (<sup>2108</sup>Hosea 10:8) will say, “to the mountains fall on us, and to the hills cover us”; will choose rather that the mountains and hills round about Jerusalem, should fall upon them, and they be buried under the ruins of them, than live in such terrible distress, or fall into the hands of their enemies! Compare with this (<sup>2165</sup>Revelation 6:15,16).

**Ver. 31.** *For if they do these things in a green tree*, etc.] Or it may be rendered impersonally, “if these things are done in a green tree”; by which is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who is often compared to a tree, as to a

green fir tree, an apple tree, a vine, and is called the tree of life: and may be said to be a moist or green tree; because, as a green tree is full of juice, so is he of grace and goodness; as that is flourishing, so was he in the fame of his doctrine and miracles, in the spread of his Gospel, and in the increase of his kingdom and interest; and as that is fruitful and useful, so was he in preaching the Gospel, and healing diseases; and as that is not proper to be cut down, nor fit fuel for the fire, so he was not deserving of death, or to be used in the manner he was; the metaphor seems designed to express the righteousness and innocence of Christ; (see ~~20:47~~ Ezekiel 20:47 24:4) who was pure in his nature, without sin in his life, harmless in his conversation, and did no hurt to any man's person or property: his enemies could find nothing, nor prove any thing against him; nor even the devil himself, but owned him to be the Holy One of God; and he was also declared innocent by his judge, the Roman governor: and yet, how many hard and grievous things were done unto him! He was persecuted in his infancy, and his life was sought for; he was despised and reproached by men all his days; he was apprehended as if he had been a thief, and was bound as a malefactor; and arraigned at the bar of men, as if he had been the greatest criminal on earth; he was mocked, buffeted, and spit upon in the palace of the high priest; he was scourged by Pilate, and misused by his soldiers, who arrayed him with a scarlet robe, put a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed in his hand, and in a mock way bowed the knee to him, and saluted him as King of the Jews; they crucified him between two thieves, and as he hung on the cross mocked him, and gave him gall and vinegar to drink. To which may be added, that he was forsaken by his God, and Father, and his wrath was poured out upon him, as he sustained the persons, and bore the sins of his people; the curse of the law was executed on him: and justice drew its sword, and sheathed it in him: and now if all these things were done to such an useful, holy, harmless, and innocent person, what shall be done in the dry? by whom wicked men are designed; who, as dry trees are without juice, so are they destitute of grace and righteousness, and all that is good, and bring forth no fruit, neither to God, nor themselves, nor others; but, like dead and withered trees, are dead in trespasses and sins, and full of all manner of sin, and rottenness, and impurity; and are deserving to be cut down, and are fit fuel for the fire of divine wrath and displeasure, both in this, and in the other world. The wicked Jews that rejected Christ, and crucified him, are particularly meant; and if such evil things were done by them to so just a person, what may not be expected will fall on them in retaliation for such usage? and if the Roman soldiers, under their

encouragement acted such a part to Christ, who had never done them any injury, what will they not do to these men, when provoked by their insults and rebellions? and if such things were done to Christ by his Father, according to the requirement of the law, and the strictness of divine justice, when he was made sin for his people, though he knew none, nor committed any himself, what vengeance will fall on them, who must answer for their sins in their own persons? What devouring flames, and everlasting burnings, will such dry trees be exposed to, as being fit for them, and deserving of them? so the children of men are, by the Jews, in their writings, called, **μυῆες μυχ** [ , “dry trees” <sup>f687</sup>; the Targumist on (~~3172~~ Ezekiel 17:24) paraphrases the words thus;

“I have humbled the kingdom of the nations, which was strong as a green tree, and I have strengthened the kingdom of the house of Israel, which was weak as a dry tree.”

It is a common proverb with the Jews <sup>f688</sup>;

“two dry sticks, or brands, and one green, the dry burn up the green:”

intimating, that a few righteous persons among wicked men suffer with them; but if righteous men suffer, how much more the wicked? (see ~~4047~~ 1 Peter 4:17,18).

**Ver. 32.** *And there were also two other malefactors*, etc.] Not that Christ was one, though indeed he was looked upon and treated as one by the Jews; but as the words may be read, there were also two others that were malefactors; really such, two thieves, who had been guilty of theft and robbery, and were condemned to die: and these were led with him; for the greater ignominy and reproach of Christ, that it might be thought he was equally a malefactor, and as deserving of death as they:

*to be put to death*; the death of the cross, which was the death the Romans put slaves, thieves, and robbers, and the worst and basest of men to.

**Ver. 33.** *And when they were come to the place which was called Calvary*, etc.] Or Cranion, which signifies a skull; so called from the skulls of persons that lay about, who were executed. It is a tradition of the ancients <sup>f689</sup>, that Adam was buried in this place where Christ was crucified, and that his skull lay here. It was usual to crucify on high places, and on mountains, such an one as this was <sup>f690</sup>:

*there they crucified him, and the malefactors*; the two thieves;  
*one on the right hand, and the other on the left*; and so fulfilled the  
 prophecy in (<sup>25312</sup>Isaiah 53:12).

**Ver. 34.** *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them*, etc.] When he was crucified between the two thieves, and as he hung upon the cross, and while insulted and abused by all sorts of men, and put to the greatest pain and torture, he addressed himself to God his Father: the Arabic version reads, “my Father”, who was so to him, not as he was man; for as such he had no father; but as he was God, being as a divine person, his beloved, and only begotten Son: and this he uses, whilst, as man, he is praying to him; partly to express his faith of relation to him; his confidence of being heard; and partly to set believers an example of praying, as he has directed, saying, “our Father”, etc. and the petition put up by him is for forgiveness; which is with God, and with him only; and that for his enemies, his crucifiers: not for those who sinned the sin unto death, the sin against the Holy Ghost, who knowing him to be the Messiah, maliciously crucified him, for whom prayer is not to be made; but for those who were ignorantly concerned in it, as the next clause shows, even for his own elect, whom the Father had given him out of the world, which were among his crucifiers; for those, and not the world, he prays: and the fruit of this his prayer quickly appeared, in the conversion of three thousand of them under Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, next following, in six weeks time. Though such might be his affection, as man, in general, as to wish for, and desire, as such, was it consistent with the divine will, forgiveness for all of them; adding,

*for they know not what they do*, or “are doing”, meaning, in crucifying him, which was the case of many of them, and of their rulers; they did not know that Jesus was the Messiah, nor the prophecies concerning him, nor the evil they were committing in putting him to death: not that their ignorance excused their sin; nor was it without sin; nor does Christ use it as a plea for pardon, or found his intercession upon it, which is always done upon his own propitiatory sacrifice; but this is mentioned as descriptive of the persons Christ prays for, and points out a branch of his priestly office he exercises, in having compassion on the ignorant, and them that are out of the way;

*and they parted his raiment, and cast lots*: that is, upon his vesture, or seamless coat, and so fulfilled the prophecy in (<sup><39218></sup>Psalm 22:18). (See Gill on "<sup><4173></sup>Matthew 27:35"). (See Gill on "<sup><4192></sup>John 19:23-24").

**Ver. 35.** *And the people stood beholding*, etc.] This dismal and affecting sight; insulting and reviling him, and wagging their heads at him, as did also those that passed by: and the rulers also with them derided him; the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, the members of the sanhedrim, whose characters should have restrained them from such an inhuman conduct. The phrase, "with them", is wanting in the Oriental versions, and in one of Beza's copies: saying,

*he saved others*; by healing their diseases, or raising them from the dead:

*let him save himself*; from death, by unnailing himself, and coming down from the cross; (see Gill on "<sup><4172></sup>Matthew 27:42")

*if he be Christ*; the Messiah, he and his followers give out he is; even the chosen of God, referring to (<sup><2341></sup>Isaiah 42:1). The Arabic version reads, "the chosen Son of God", very wrongly; for Christ was not chosen to be the Son of God; he was so by nature; but he was chosen to be a servant, as the text cited shows, to be a Mediator between God and man, and the Saviour of his people.

**Ver. 36.** *And the soldiers also mocked him*, etc.] The Roman soldiers, to whom the execution was committed, who crucified him, and parted his garments, and stood at his cross watching; these joined in the insult, which is not to be wondered at. Coming to him and offering him vinegar; which was what was a part of their allowance, and was their drink; (see Gill on "<sup><4192></sup>John 19:29").

**Ver. 37.** *And saying, if thou be the King of the Jews*, etc.] Or their Messiah, who was spoken of as a divine person; for otherwise he might have been their king, and not have been able to have done what is proposed:

*save thyself*: or deliver thyself from the cross.

**Ver. 38.** *And a superscription also was written*, etc.] Containing the crime he was charged with, and accused of; (see Gill on "<sup><4173></sup>Matthew 27:37"); (see Gill on "<sup><4191></sup>John 19:19-20").

**Ver. 39.** *And one of the malefactors, which were hanged*, etc.] On the cross, one of the thieves crucified with Christ; the Oriental versions add, “with him”; according to the Evangelists Matthew and Mark, both of them reviled him, and threw the same things in his teeth as the priests, people, and soldiers did; which how it may be reconciled, (see Gill on “~~47:4~~ Matthew 27:44”)

*railed on him, saying, if thou be Christ, save thyself, and us*; taking up the words of the rulers, and adding to them, perhaps, with a design to curry favour with them, hoping thereby to get a release; or, however, showing the wickedness and malice of his heart, which his sufferings and punishment, he now endured, could make no alteration in; (see ~~6:11~~ Revelation 16:9).

**Ver. 40.** *But the other answering, rebuked him*, etc.] That is, the other malefactor made answer to him, and reprov'd him for his baseness and wickedness:

*saying, dost not thou fear God*; or “neither dost thou fear God”, any more than these priests, people, and soldiers, that are acting such a barbarous and inhuman part to a man in misery: and wilt thou do the same, and show that thou art an impious wretch, now thou art just going out of the world, and neither fears God, nor regards man, and art without compassion to a fellow sufferer, adding sin to sin,

*seeing thou art in the same condemnation?* undergoing the same sort of punishment, though not on the same account, which might be the reason why they suffered on the same day: for the Jews say <sup>f691</sup>, they never judge (or condemn) two in one day, but one today, and the other tomorrow; but if they are in one transgression,

“*tj a htymw*, “and one death”, as an adulterer with an adulteress, they condemn them both in one day; but if the adulterer lies with a priest's daughter, seeing he is to be strangled, and she to be burnt, they do not execute them both in one day.”

**Ver. 41.** *And we indeed justly*, etc.] For sins committed against the law; our sentence is just, we are righteously punished: which shows that he had a true sense of sin; for where that is, there will be not only an acknowledgment of the offence, but a vindication of the justice of God, should he proceed to deal according to the demerit of sin: for we receive

the due reward of our deeds; though, according to the law of Moses, theft was not punishable with death, but with a restoration, either double, or fourfold, or fivefold, according to the nature of it; (see <sup><0220></sup>Exodus 22:1,4). It may be these men had committed murder along with the robbery:

*but this man hath done nothing amiss*; or absurd, unreasonable, wicked, and detestable: he did no injury to God, or man; wronged no man's person or property; did all things well; obeyed the law of God perfectly, and always did the things which were pleasing to God. Thus, from the mouth of one of the malefactors Christ suffered with, was he declared innocent; when the Jews designed, by crucifying him with them, to have led the people to have believed that he suffered for a crime equal, or superior to theirs.

**Ver. 42.** *And he said unto Jesus, Lord,* etc.] Acknowledging him to be the Messiah, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; the Lord of all, and especially of his church and people, and his own Lord. So the Syriac and Persic versions read, “my Lord”: however, he said this by the Spirit of God, who enlightened his understanding, and wrought faith in him to believe in Christ; (see <sup><4128></sup>1 Corinthians 12:3) “remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom”; or rather in thy kingdom, as in (<sup><4168></sup>Matthew 16:28) for this man had not only faith in the kingdom of Christ, as being of a spiritual nature, and not of this world, and not coming with outward pomp and observation; in which respect his faith exceeded that of the apostles themselves, who were looking for, and expecting a temporal kingdom; and he not only was without all doubt, or scruple, about Christ's entering into his kingdom and glory after death, but he had knowledge of, and faith in his second coming, when his glorious kingdom should appear, or his kingdom appear in glory; and when he desired he might be remembered by him, have favour shown him, and he share in the glories and happiness of it. This was great faith indeed to be exercised on Christ at such a time as this, when he was under the greatest reproach and ignominy; while he was insulted and derided by all sorts of people; and when he was forsaken by his own apostles, and was suffering a shameful punishment, and now dying.

**Ver. 43.** *And Jesus said unto him,* etc.] Jesus immediately answered him, though he said not one word to the other that railed at him, or to the multitude that abused him; and promised him more than he asked for, and sooner than he expected.

*Verily I say unto thee, today thou shall be with me in paradise;* <sup>^d[ ^gb,</sup> “in the garden of Eden”; not the earthly paradise, nor the church militant, but the future place, and state of the happiness of the saints, even heaven, and eternal glory, which the Jews frequently call by this name; (see Gill on <sup>“2 Corinthians 12:4”</sup>) and is so called, because, as the earthly paradise, or Eden's garden, was of God's planting, so is the heavenly glory of his providing and preparing: as that was a place of delight and pleasure, so here are pleasures for evermore; as there was a river in it, which added to the delightfulness and advantage of it, so here runs the river of God's love, the streams whereof make glad the saints now, and will be a broad river to swim in to all eternity: as there were the tree of life, with a variety of other trees, both for delight and profit, so here, besides Christ, the tree of life, which stands in the midst of it, are an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect: and as the inhabitants of that garden were pure and innocent creatures, so into this paradise shall nothing enter but what is righteous, pure, and holy: and whereas the principal enjoyment of man in Eden was conversation with God, and communion with him, the glory of the heavenly paradise will lie in fellowship with God, Father, Son, and Spirit, in beholding the face of God, and seeing him as he is: and this is the happiness promised by Christ to the penitent and believing thief, that he should be here; and not only so, but with him here, which is far better than being in this world, and than which nothing can be more desirable: and which, when enjoyed, will be for ever: and this he was to enter upon that very day; which shows, that Christ's soul did not descend into hell, locally and literally considered, or into the “Limbus Patrum”, the Papists talk of, to fetch the souls of the patriarchs thence, but as soon as it was separated from the body was taken up into heaven; and also, that the souls of departed saints are immediately, upon their separation from the body, there; which was the case of this wonderful instance of the grace of God; and shows the swiftness of the soul, or the velocity of angels in conveying it thither immediately: and this agrees with the sense of the Jews, who say <sup>f692</sup>, that

“the souls of the fathers, or patriarchs have rest, and in a moment, immediately enter into their separate places, or apartments, and not as the rest of the souls; of whom it is said, all the twelve months the soul ascends and descends, (goes to and fro,) but the souls of the fathers, <sup>^drphb dym</sup>, “immediately, upon their separation”, return to God that gave them.”

Some would remove the stop, and place it after “today”, and read the words thus, “I say unto thee today”; as if Christ only signified the time when he said this, and not when the thief should be with him in paradise; which, besides it being senseless, and impertinent, and only contrived to serve an hypothesis, is not agreeably to Christ's usual way of speaking, and contrary to all copies and versions. Moreover, in one of Beza's exemplars it is read, “I say unto thee, **οτι σημερον** that today thou shalt be with me”, etc. and so the Persic and Ethiopic versions seem to read, which destroys this silly criticism. And because this was a matter of great importance, and an instance of amazing grace, that so vile a sinner, one of the chief of sinners, should immediately enter into the kingdom of God, and enjoy uninterrupted, and everlasting communion with him and that it might not be a matter of doubt with him, or others, Christ, who is the “Amen”, the faithful witness, and truth itself, prefaces it after this manner: “verily I say unto thee”; it is truth, it may be depended on. This instance of grace stands on record, not to cherish sloth, indolence, security and presumption, but to encourage faith and hope in sensible sinners, in their last moments, and prevent despair. The Papists pretend to know this man's name; they say his name was Disma; and reckon him as a martyr, and have put him in the catalogue of saints, and fixed him on the “twenty fifth” of March.

**Ver. 44.** *And it was about the sixth hour*, etc.] Or twelve o'clock at noon; and so the Ethiopic version, when it was noon; (see Gill on “<sup><475></sup>Matthew 27:45”).

**Ver. 45.** *And the sun was darkened*, etc.] There was an eclipse of it, which was preternatural, it being now full moon, and lasted three hours, and so total, as to darken the whole earth; and now was the prophecy in (<sup><389></sup>Amos 8:9) literally fulfilled: and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. The Persic version renders it, “the gate of the temple”; and so the Syriac version, “the face of the gate of the temple”; (see Gill on “<sup><475></sup>Matthew 27:51”).

**Ver. 46.** *And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice*, etc.] A second time; for at the first loud cry, he uttered these words, “Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani”; and at the second what follows; (see <sup><474></sup>Matthew 27:46-50).

*he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit*; not the Holy Spirit, nor his divine nature, but his human soul: for that he had a reasonable soul, as well as a true body, is certain; from his having an human understanding, will, and affections, ascribed to him; and indeed, without this he would not

have been a perfect man, nor like unto us; and could not have been tempted, bore sorrows and griefs, and endured the wrath of God; nor could he have been a Saviour of souls: now just as he was expiring, as he made his soul an offering for sin, and which he offered unto God, he committed it to his divine care and protection; and to enjoy his presence, during its separation from his body, using the words of the Psalmist in (<sup>39:10</sup> Psalm 31:5) and this shows, that his spirit, or soul, belonged to God, the Father of spirits, and now returned to him that gave it; that it was immortal, and died not with the body, and was capable of existing in a separate state from it, and went immediately to heaven; all which is true of the souls of all believers in Christ; and what the dying head did, dying members may, and should, even commit their souls into the same hands: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost; breathed out his soul dismissed his spirit, laid down his life, freely and voluntarily, and which no man, or devil, otherwise could have taken away from him.

**Ver. 47.** *Now when the centurion saw what was done*, etc.] The eclipse of the sun, the darkness upon the land, the earthquake, the rocks rent, and Jesus expire in so uncommon a manner:

*he glorified God*; by confessing that Christ was the Son of God, and declaring him an innocent person:

*saying, certainly, this was a righteous man*; clear of the charges exhibited against him, and has suffered wrongfully; and this he concluded from those unusual appearances, and which he considered as tokens of divine resentment.

**Ver. 48.** *And all the people that came together to that sight*, etc.] To see the execution of Jesus; and some of them might be his inveterate enemies, and came to insult him, and did insult him; many of these, though not every individual of them:

*beholding the things which were done*; the eclipse, earthquake, etc.

*smote their breasts*; as conscious of guilt, and as fearing some dreadful judgment would fall upon them, and their nation, for this sin of crucifying Christ. The Persic version reads, “they went back, and kneeled down, and prostrated themselves to the ground”; as being in the utmost astonishment, confusion, fear, and dread:

*and returned*; to the city, and to their own houses, where they might more seriously, and with the greater composure of mind, reflect on these things.

**Ver. 49.** *And all his acquaintance*, etc.] That were related to him in a natural, or in a spiritual sense, or both, as his own mother, and beloved disciple John, who were both present, (<sup><439></sup>John 19:26) or those that were known unto him, and familiar with him, who attended on his ministry, and often conversed, and were intimately acquainted with him:

*and the women that followed him from Galilee*; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Joses, and Salome the mother of Zebedee's children:

*stood afar off*; from the cross:

*beholding these things*; with wonder, as well as looking upon their dear suffering Lord, with aching hearts, and flowing eyes.

**Ver. 50.** *And behold, there was a man named Joseph*, etc.] (See Gill on <sup><417></sup>Matthew 27:57”).

*a counsellor*; Mark says, he was an “honourable” one; he was either one of the council of the high priest, or a member of the great sanhedrim; (see Gill on <sup><415></sup>Mark 15:43”).

*and he was a good man, and a just*; he was kind and beneficent in his temper, and just, and righteous in his life and actions; a like character is given of Joseph the husband of Mary, the mother of our Lord, (<sup><419></sup>Matthew 1:19).

**Ver. 51.** *The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them*, etc.] Though he was with the Jews, the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, in the high priest's palace, being one of that great council; yet he did not agree with them; nor was it his advice and counsel, that they should put Christ to death; he was against it, at least did not consent to it:

*he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews*; (see Gill on <sup><427></sup>Matthew 27:57”). This clause in the Syriac and Persic versions stands in the preceding verse, and follows after the mention of his name and office, and where it seems most natural;

*who also himself waited for the kingdom of God*; (see Gill on <sup><415></sup>Mark 15:43”).

**Ver. 52.** *This man went unto Pilate*, etc.] Mark says, he went “boldly” to him; (see Gill on “<sup>415B</sup>Mark 15:43”).

*and begged the body of Jesus*; knowing he was dead; that he might bury it, as the Ethiopic version adds, and prevent its being inferred with the two malefactors, or abused by the mob.

**Ver. 53.** *And he took it down*, etc.] From the cross, with the help of others, having obtained leave of Pilate so to do;

*and wrapped it in linen*; as was the custom of the Jews in burying their dead; (see Gill on “<sup>417B</sup>Matthew 27:59”).

*and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone*; cut out of a rock; (see Gill on “<sup>417D</sup>Matthew 27:60”).

*wherein never man before was laid*; so that it could not be said it was another body, and not that of Christ's, that was raised from the dead. This circumstance, serves to confirm the truth of his resurrection.

**Ver. 54.** *And that day was the preparation*, etc.] Both for the sabbath, and for the “Chagigah”, or grand festival, which they kept on the fifteenth day of the month, in a very pompous manner; so that the day following was an high day;

*and the sabbath drew on*, or “shone out”; which is so said, though it was evening, on account of the lights, which were every where, in every house, lighted up at this time, and which they were, by their traditions, obliged to: for so run their canons <sup>f693</sup>;

“three things a man is obliged to say in the midst of his house on the evening of the sabbath, when it is near dark, have ye tithed? have ye mixed? (i.e. the borders of the sabbath, the courts and food) *rnh wqyl dh*, “light the lamp”.”

This was what could by no means be dispensed with; for so they say <sup>f694</sup>,

“the lighting of the lamp on the sabbath is not in a man's power, (or at his liberty,) if he pleases he may light, and if not, he may not light. — — But it is what he is obliged to, and every man and woman are bound to have in their houses a lamp lighted up on the sabbath; and though he has nothing to eat, he must beg, and get oil, and light a lamp; for this is included in the delight of the sabbath. —

— And he that lights, ought to light within the day, before the setting of the sun.”

So that when these lamps were every where lighting, before the sun was set, and the sabbath properly come, it might be said to draw on, or to be shining forth. Besides, it was usual to call the evening of any day by the name of “light”: thus it is said <sup>f695</sup>,

“**rç** [ **bral rwa**, on the light (i.e. the night) of the fourteenth (of the month “Nisan”), they search for leaven, etc.”

So that the evangelist might, very agreeably to the way of speaking with the Jews, say, that the sabbath was enlightening, or growing light, though the evening was coming on.

**Ver. 55.** *And the women also which came with him from Galilee*, etc.] (See Gill on “<sup>4239</sup>Luke 23:49”).

*followed after*; Joseph; and those that were with him, when they carried the body of Jesus, in order to inter it:

*and beheld, the sepulchre*; took notice of it, what an one it was, whereabouts it stood in the garden, that they might know, and find it again:

*and how his body was laid*; in what position, form, and order; and observed that it was only wrapped in linen, and not anointed, or embalmed.

**Ver. 56.** *And they returned*, etc.] To the city, and to their own houses, or to some one of them;

*and prepared spices and ointments*; for the anointing, and embalming the body of Christ, called by the Jews the spices of the dead; see the note on (<sup>4165</sup>Mark 16:1)

*and rested the sabbath day, according to the commandment*, in (<sup>4218</sup>Exodus 20:8-11) not knowing as yet the abolition of it, with the rest of the ceremonial law; and therefore, though they had bought and prepared the spices and ointments, they did not carry them to the sepulchre to anoint the body with them, till the sabbath was over; for this was forbidden to be done on a sabbath day. It is asked <sup>f696</sup>,

“what is that thing that is lawful to be done to a living man, and is forbidden a dead man? It is said, **hkys hz**, “this is anointing”.”

Though elsewhere <sup>f697</sup> this

“is allowed of; for so runs one of their traditions; they do all things necessary for the dead, (i.e. on a sabbath day,) <sup>^yKS</sup>, “they anoint”, and wash him, only they may not move a limb of him.”

But how he could be anointed, and washed, without a limb being moved, is not very easy to say, as his foot, or hand, or eye brows, which are the parts one of their commentators instances in <sup>f698</sup>.