they *prepared spices and ointments, and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.*

**62–66.**] THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES OBTAIN FROM PILATE A GUARD FOR THE SEPULCHRE. Peculiar to Matthew.

**62. the next day**] not on that night, but  
on the next day. A difficulty has been  
found in its being called the day *after  
the Preparation,* considering that it was  
*itself the sabbath,* and the *greatest sabbath in the year*. But I believe the expression to be carefully and purposely  
used. The chief priests, &c. did not go  
to Pilate on the sabbath,—but *in the  
evening, the termination of the sabbath.* Had the Evangelist said *“ which is  
the sabbath,”* the incongruity would at  
once appear of such an application being  
made on the sabbath—and he therefore  
designates the day as the first after that,  
which, as the day of the Lord’s death,  
the *preparation*, was uppermost in his  
mind.

The narrative following has  
been undeservedly impugned, and its historical accuracy given up by even the best of the German Commentators, and  
by others. The chief difficulties found  
in it seem to be: (1) How should the  
chief priests, &c. *know of His having said,*  
‘in three days I will rise again,’ when the  
saying was hid even from His own disciples? The answer to this is easy. The  
*meaning* of the saying may have been,  
and **was,** hid from the disciples; but the  
*fact of its having been said* could be no  
secret. Not to lay any **stress** on John  
ii. 19, we have the direct prophecy of  
Matt. xii. 40—and besides this, there  
would be a rumour current, through the  
intercourse of the Apostles with others,  
that He had been in the habit of so saying.  
As to the *understanding* *of* the words,  
we must remember that *hatred is keener sighted than love ;*—that the *raising of Lazarus* would shew, *what sort of a thing rising the dead was to be;*—and  
that the fulfilment of the Lord’s announcement of his *crucifixion* would naturally lead them to look further, to *what  
more* he had announced. (2) How should  
the women, who were solicitous about the  
*removal* of the stone, not have been still  
more so about its being sealed, and a guard  
set? The answer to this has been  
given above—*they were not aware of the  
circumstance, because the was not  
set till the evening before.* There would  
be no need of the application before the  
*approach of the third day*—it is only  
made for a watch **until the third day,**ver. 64—and it is not probable that the  
circumstance would transpire that night  
—certainly it seems not to have done so.  
(3) That Gamaliel was of the council, and  
if such a thing as this, and its sequel ch. xxviii. 11—15, had really happened, he need not have expressed himself doubtfully, Acts v. 39, but would have been certain that this was from God.

But, first, it does not necessarily follow  
that *every member* of the Sanhedrim was  
present and applied to Pilate, or even had  
they done so, that all bore a part in  
the act of ch. xxviii. 12. One who, like  
Joseph, had not consented to their deed  
before—and we may safely say that there  
were others such—would naturally withdraw himself from further proceedings against the person of Jesus.On Gamaliel and his Character, see note on Acts, as above. (4) Had this been so, the three  
other Evangelists would not have passed over so important a testimony to the Resurrection. But surely we cannot argue  
in this way—for thus every important fact  
narrated by *one Evangelist alone* must be  
rejected—e. g. (which stands in much the  
same relation) the *satisfaction of Thomas,*—and other such narrations. Till *we know  
much more about the circumstances under which, and the scope with which, each*