, that the Jews in the early morning  
should have been afraid of rendering themselves   
unclean for the Passover,—since the  
Passover could not be kept till *evening*, i.e.  
*on the next day*, and the uncleanness which  
they dreaded did not, by the law, last till  
the next day. For this reason, the passage  
in John labours under no small exegetic  
difficulties, which we cannot altogether  
solve, from want of accurate knowledge of  
the customs of the time. Possibly the law  
concerning Levitical defilements and purifications   
had in that age been made more  
stringent or otherwise modified ; possibly,  
they called some other meal, besides the  
actual Passover, by its name. This last we  
certainly, with our present knowledge of  
Hebrew antiquities, must assume: for the  
law respecting uncleanness will not allow  
us to interpret this passage of the *proper*  
Passover on the evening of the 14th of  
Nisan, nor indeed of any *evening meal* at  
all.”   
  
The whole depends on this: can  
the words, **eat the Passover**, *mean any  
thing else besides eating the paschal lamb  
in the strict sense?* This is a question  
which in our day we have no power of  
answering. See the matter further discussed   
in the notes to my Greek Test.  
See note on ch. xix. 14. The tendency of  
what is there said is, to warn us, not to be  
rash in assuming a discrepancy between  
the Evangelists, where computations of  
time may have been so vague and various.  
  
  
**29.**] Though Pilate, having granted  
the service of the *band of soldiers* to the  
Sanhedrim, must have been aware of the  
circumstances under which Jesus was  
brought before him, he demanded a formal  
accusation on which legally to proceed:  
“dissimulating his own information on the  
subject.”   
  
**30.**] They do not mention  
the charge of blasphemy brought against  
Him by the Sanhedrim, for fear of the  
entire rejection of their cause, as by Gallio,  
Acts xviii. 16. The Procurators in such  
cases had a discretionary power. On what  
they did say, Grot. observes, “ What was  
wanting to their proofs, they want to  
supply by an appeal to their own authority ”  
  
  
**31.**] This answer is best regarded  
as an ironical reproach founded on their  
apparently proud assertion in ver. 30—  
and amounting to this: ‘If you suppose I  
am to have such implicit confidence in your  
judgment concerning this prisoner as to  
take his guilt on your word, take him and  
put him to death (for so “**judge ye Him**”  
must be understood,—see below) according  
to your law;’ reminding them that the  
same Roman power which had reserved  
capital cases for his jurisdiction, also expected  
proper cognizance to be taken of  
them, and not that he should be the mere  
executioner of the Sanhedrim.   
  
**It is  
not lawful for us to put any man to death**]  
From the time when Archelaus was deposed   
(A.D. 6 or 7), and Judæa became a  
Roman province, it would follow by the  
Roman law that the Jews lost the power  
of life and death. Josephus tells us,  
that it was not lawful to hold a court  
of judgment in capital cases, without the  
consent of the Procurator. Some have  
thought that this power was reserved to  
them in religions matters, as of blasphemy  
and sacrilege; but no proof has been  
adduced of this; the passages commonly  
alleged in Josephus, and Acts vii. 58, not  
applying (see note on Acts). The Talmud  
relates that this had taken place forty  
years (or more) before the destruction  
of Jerusalem.   
  
Biscoe, on the Acts,  
argues at great length that the Jews  
had this power; and that the words  
here merely mean that they could not  
put to death *on the Sabbath*, which, according   
to the usual custom of executing  
the next day after judgment, would now  
have been the case. But this treatment  
of the words is unjustifiable. Can we  
suppose for a moment that this can have  
been meant, when there is not a word in  
the text to imply it? We may hope that  
the day for such forced interpretations  
is fast passing away.   
  
Friedlieb gives