*soldiers*,—but to the repentant in the  
world, who, at the time the Gospel was  
written, had begun to fulfil the prophecy :  
and is not without a prophetic reference to  
the future conversion of Israel, who were  
here the real *piercers*, though the act was  
done *by the hand of wicked men*, Acts x. 28.  
  
**38—42.**] *His Burial*.   
  
**38.**] **after  
these things**—not immediately after this,  
but soon after. The narrative implies,  
though it does not mention (as St. Mark  
and St. Luke do), that Joseph himself took  
down the Body from the cross. Lücke  
thinks the soldiers would have done this:  
but their duty seems only to have extended  
to the ascertaining of the fact of death.  
The words of ver. 31, “*that they might be  
taken away*,” need not imply, ‘by their  
hands.’   
  
It was customary to grant  
the bodies of executed persons to their  
friends.   
  
On Joseph, and the other  
particulars, see notes on Matthew.  
  
  
He **came** . . .— to Golgotha.   
  
**39.**] St.  
John alone mentions Nicodemus. The  
Galilæan narrative had no previous trace  
of him, and does not recognize him here.  
Joseph bore too prominent a part not  
to be mentioned by all. Luthardt beautifully   
remarks on the contrast between  
these men’s secret and timid discipleship  
before, and their courage now, “Their  
love to Jesus was called out by the  
might of His love. His Death is the  
Power which constrains men. And thus  
this act of love on the part of both these  
men is a testimony for Jesus, and for the  
future effect of His death. Hence also it  
appears why the Evangelist mentions the  
weight of the spices, as a proof of the  
greatness of their love, as Lampe observes,”   
  
**myrth**,—the gum of an  
aromatic plant, not indigenous in Palestine   
but in Arabia Felix, see Exod. xxx.  
23; Prov. vii. 17; Song of Sol. iii. 6.  
  
**aloes**] The name of various sorts  
of aromatic wood in the East. Both  
materials appear to have been pulverized  
(the wood either by scraping or burning)  
and strewed in the folds of the linen in  
which the body was wrapped. The quantity,   
**about an hundred pound weight**, is  
large; but perhaps the whole Body was  
encased, after the wrapping, in the mixture,   
and an outer wrapper fastened over  
all. The proceeding was hurried, on account   
of the approaching Sabbath: and  
apparently an understanding entered into  
with the women, that it should be more  
completely done after the Sabbath was  
over, This plentiful application of the  
aromatic substances may therefore have  
been made with an intention to prevent  
the Body, in its lacerated state, from incipient   
decomposition during the interval.  
  
  
**40.**] See ch. xi. 44. Little is known  
with any certainty, except from these passages,   
of the Jews’ ordinary manner of  
burying.   
  
**41.**] See note on Matthew,  
ver. 60. The words, **in the place where  
he was crucified**, are *so far* in favour of  
the traditional site of the Holy Sepulchre,  
that Calvary and the Sepulchre are close  
together, under the roof of the same  
church, And those who have found an  
objection in that circumstance have forgotten   
this testimony of St. John.  
  
**a new sepulchre** . . . . ] And therefore  
*given for the purpose*—so that the additional   
particular not here mentioned, that  
it *belonged to Joseph*, is almost implied.  
The *newness* of the tomb was important,  
that it should be seen that no one but  
Jesus had risen thence, and Jesus not by  
the power of another, as was once the case  
at the grave of Elisha: so that no room  
might be left for the CLES of unbelief