compare the two, that of St. Matthew is the  
more particular, and more likely to give  
rise to this one, *as a general inference*  
*from the buying of the field*, than *vice  
versâ*. Whether Judas, as Bengel supposes,   
began the purchase, and so gave  
occasion for its being completed by the  
Chief Priests, we cannot say: such a thing  
is of course *possible*, but is certainly not  
contemplated by St. Matthew’s account,  
where the priests settle to buy the field,  
on deliberation, what they should do with  
the money. At all events we hence clearly  
see that *St. Luke could not have been  
acquainted with the Gospel of St. Matthew  
at this time*, or surely this apparent discrepancy   
would not have been found.  
The various attempts to reconcile the two  
narratives, which may be seen in most of  
our English commentaries, are among the  
saddest examples of the shifts to which  
otherwise high-minded men are driven by  
an unworthy system. A notable example  
occurs in a solution lately proposed, that  
as the *Jews* are said to have crucified  
our Lord when they were only the occasion   
of his being crucified, so Judas may be  
said to have bought the field when he only  
gave occasion to its being bought by the  
Chief Priests. I need hardly say to any  
intelligent and ingenuous reader, that this  
is entirely precluded here by the words  
**with the reward of his iniquity**, which  
plainly bind on the purchase to Judas  
as his personal act.   
  
**and falling  
headlong**] The connexion of this with  
the former clause would seem to point to  
the death of Judas having taken place  
*in* the field which he bought. See also  
ver. 19.   
  
**falling headlong** will hardly  
bear the meaning assigned to it by those  
who wish to harmonize the two accounts,  
—viz. that, having hanged himself, he fell  
by the breaking of the rope. It would  
rather point, as the word used is explained,   
to a sudden fall forward on the  
face by a stroke from God, or by an accident.   
Nor again is it at all probable that  
the Apostle would recount what was a  
*mere accident accompanying his death*,  
when that death itself was the accursed one  
of *hanging*. What then are we to decide  
respecting the two accounts? That there  
should have been a double account actually  
current of the death of Judas at this  
early period, is *in the highest degree improbable*,   
and will only be assumed by  
those who take a very low view of the  
accuracy of the Evangelists. Dismissing  
then this solution, let us compare  
accounts themselves. In this case, *that* in  
Matt. xxvii. is *general*,—ours *particular*.  
*That* depends entirely on the exact sense  
to be assigned to the word which we  
render “*hanged himself*:” whereas *this*  
*directly assigns the manner* of his death,  
without stating any cause for the falling  
on his face. It is obvious that, while the  
general term used by Matthew points  
mainly at *self-murder*, the account given  
here does not preclude the catastrophe  
related having happened, in some way, as a  
divine judgment, *during the suicidal attempt*.   
Further than this, with our present   
knowledge, we cannot go. *An accurate  
acquaintance with the actual circumstances*  
would account for the discrepancy, but  
*nothing else*.—Another kind of death is  
assigned to Judas by Œcumenius, quoting  
from Papias: “ Papias, the disciple of the  
Apostle John, relates, that Judas, as he  
walked about, was a great example of God’s  
judgments on impiety in this world; for  
that he swelled up to a fearful size, and  
once on attempting to pass through (a  
gateway) at the same time with a waggon  
which left ample space, he was crushed by  
the waggon, so that his bowels gushed  
out.” This tradition may be in accordance  
with, and may have arisen from an exaggerated   
amplification of, our text. See  
more in the note in my Greek Test.  
  
**he burst asunder**: the word implies bursting   
with a noise. It is quite possible that  
this catastrophe happening in the field,  
as our narrative implies, may have suggested   
its employment as a burial-place  
for strangers, as being defiled.   
  
**19.**]  
It is principally from this verse that it has  
been inferred that the two verses 18, 19 are  
*inserted by St. Luke*. But it is impossible  
to separate it from ver. 18; and I am  
disposed to regard both as belonging to  
Peter’s speech, but freely given by St.  
Luke, inserting *into the speech itself* the  
explanations, “*in their proper tongue*,”  
and “ *that is to say, the field of blood*,” as  
if the speech had been spoken in Greek  
originally. This is much more natural,  
than to parenthesize these clauses ; it is, in  
fact, what must be more or less done by all  
who report in a language different from