

and death the Roman soldiers saw to it that the instructions of their Governor were carried out. According to the story as recorded in the Gospels, Jesus was executed on Friday evening. The strongest point of controversy between Jesus and the priests had been about the observance of the Sabbath. Nothing can be done in the way of freeing the masses from the power of the priests as long as the people continue to devote a certain day sacred to sloth, as Juvenal, the famous Roman Satirist, accuses the Jews of doing. It is quite evident if the story as told in the Gospel is relied on, that the disciples and relatives of Jesus did not go near the tomb at all during the Sabbath day. The Roman soldiers could stay at home that day, or they could carry out any arrangements that they had previously concocted to get Jesus away at once and for all from the Jewish people. Jesus had not succeeded in weakening the hold of the Sabbath superstitions on the Jewish people. If they had watched all the time, they could possibly have got more definite information about what had become of their Lord and Master, as the few disciples called Him. The Sabbath superstition, however, had then a stronger hold on even the disciples and friends of Jesus, than their anxiety to know what had become of Him. After waiting a day and a half, however, before going to pay their respects to Jesus, he was not to be found—they never saw him any more, and it served the right. They should have gone to see early next morning whether Jesus was really dead or alive. He had probably by this time been on his way to Rome in a closed carriage. The Romans kept their secret well. It is easy for Gentiles to keep secrets from Jews and for Jews to keep secrets from Gentiles; as the Jew would not eat with the Gentiles when he could get any Jew to eat with, and in Jerusalem, of course, that was an easy matter.

It will likely be objected that it would be contrary to the sublime character of Jesus, to work such a stupendous deception. The fact of the matter is, that the experiment could only have been carried on by a man possessed by the strongest possible philanthropic motives. What higher motives can a man have, than to try to save his countrymen from the baneful influences of a deep rooted superstition. If any reliance is to be placed on the Gospel stories, he tried to win the people away from Moses and his crafty priests to an entirely new philoso-