

FORBIDDEN GOSPELS AND EPISTLES - VOLUME 4 - NICODEMUS

ARCHBISHOP WAKE*

THE GOSPEL OF NICODEMUS,
FORMERLY CALLED THE ACTS OF PONTIUS PILATE.

The Gospel of NICODEMUS, the disciple,
concerning the Sufferings and Resurrection
of our Master and Saviour, JESUS CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

1 Christ accused to Pilate by the Jews
of healing on the Sabbath.
9 Summoned before Pilate by a messenger
who does him honour.
20 Worshipped by the standards bowing down to him.

ANNAS and Caiphas, and
Summas, and Datam, Gamaliel,
Judas, Levi, Nepthalim, Alexander,
Cyrus, and other Jews, went
to Pilate about Jesus, accusing
him with many bad crimes.

2 And said, We are assured that
Jesus is the son of Joseph, the
carpenter, and born of Mary, and
that he declares himself the Son of
God, and a king; and not only so,
but attempts the dissolution of the
Sabbath, and the laws of our
fathers.

3 Pilate replied, What is it
which he declares? and what is it

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which he attempts dissolving?

4 The Jews told him, We have a law which forbids doing cures on the Sabbath day; but he cures both the lame and the deaf, those afflicted with the palsy, the blind, the lepers, and demoniacs, on that day, by wicked methods.

5 Pilate replied, How can he do this by wicked methods? They answered He is a conjurer, and casts out devils by the prince of the devils; and so all things, become subject to him.

6 Then said Pilate, Casting out devils seems not to be the work of an unclean spirit, but to proceed from the power of God.

7 The Jews replied to Pilate, We entreat your highness to summon him to appear before your tribunal, and hear him yourself.

8 Then Pilate called a messenger, and said to him, By what means will Christ be brought hither?

9 Then went the messenger forth, and knowing Christ, worshipped him; and having spread the cloak which he had in his hand upon the ground, he said, Lord, walk upon this, and go in, for the governor calls thee.

10 When the Jews perceived what the messenger had done, they exclaimed (against him) to Pilate, and said, Why did you not give him his summons by a beadle, and not by a messenger?—For the messenger, when he saw him, worshipped him, and spread the cloak which he had in his hand upon the ground before him, and said to him, Lord, the governor

calls thee.

11 Then Pilate called the messenger, and said, Why hast thou done thus?

12 The messenger replied, When thou sentest me from Jerusalem to Alexander, I saw Jesus sitting in a mean figure upon a she-ass, and the children of the Hebrews cried out, Hosannah, holding boughs of trees in their hands.

13 Others spread their garments in the way, and said, Save us, thou who art in heaven; blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 Then the Jews cried out, against the messenger, and said, The children of the Hebrews made their acclamations in the Hebrew language; and how couldst thou, who art a Greek, understand the Hebrew?

15 The messenger answered them and said, I asked one of the Jews and said, What is this which the children do cry out in the Hebrew language?

16 And he explained it to me, saying, they cry out, Hosannah, which being interpreted, is, O Lord, save me; or, O Lord, save.

17 Pilate then said to them, Why do you yourselves testify to the words spoken by the children, namely, by your silence? In what has the messenger done amiss? And they were silent.

18 Then the governor said unto the messenger, Go forth and endeavour by any means to bring him in.

19 But the messenger went forth and did as before; and said, Lord come in, for the governor calleth thee.

20 And as Jesus was going in by the ensigns, who carried the standards, the tops of them bowed down and worshipped Jesus.

21 Whereupon the Jews exclaimed more vehemently against the ensigns.

22 But Pilate said to the Jews, I know it is not pleasing to you that the tops of the standards did of themselves bow and worship Jesus; but why do ye exclaim against the ensigns, as if they had bowed and worshipped?

23 They replied to Pilate, We saw the ensigns themselves bowing and worshipping Jesus.

24 Then the governor called the ensigns, and said unto them, Why did you do thus?

25 The ensigns said to Pilate, We are all Pagans and worship the gods in temples; and how should we think anything about worshipping him? We only held the standards in our hands, and they bowed themselves and worshipped him.

26 Then said Pilate to the rulers of the synagogue, Do ye yourselves choose some strong men, and let them hold the standards, and we shall see whether they will then bend of themselves.

27 So the elders of the Jews sought out twelve of the most strong and able old men, and made them hold the standards, and they

stood in the presence of the governor.

28 Then Pilate said to the messenger, Take Jesus out, and by some means bring him in again. And Jesus and the messenger went out of the hall.

29 And Pilate called the ensigns who before had borne the standards, and swore to them, that if they had not borne the standards in that manner when Jesus before entered in, he would cut off their heads.

30 Then the governor commanded Jesus to come in again.

31 And the messenger did as he had done before, and very much entreated Jesus that he would go upon his cloak, and walk on it; and he did walk upon it, and went in.

32 And when Jesus went in, the standards bowed themselves as before, and worshipped him.

CHAPTER II.

2 Is compassionated by Pilate's wife,
7 charged with being born in fornication.
12 Testimony to the betrothing of his parents.
15 Hatred of the Jews to him.

NOW when Pilate saw this, he was afraid, and was about to rise from his seat.

2 But while he thought to rise, his own wife who stood at a distance, sent to him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered much

concerning him in a vision this night.

3 When the Jews heard this they said to Pilate, Did we not say unto thee, He is a conjuror? Behold, he hath caused thy wife to dream.

4 Pilate then calling Jesus, said, thou hast heard what they testify against thee, and makest no answer?

5 Jesus replied, If they had not a power of speaking, they could not have spoke; but because every one has the command of his own tongue, to speak both good and bad, let him look to it.

6 But the elders of the Jews answered, and said to Jesus, What shall we look to?

7 In the first place, we know this concerning thee, that thou wast born through fornication; secondly, that upon the account of thy birth the infants were slain in Bethlehem; thirdly, that thy father and mother Mary fled into Egypt, because they could not trust their own people.

8 Some of the Jews who stood by spake more favourably, We cannot say that he was born through fornication; but we know that his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, and so he was not born through fornication.

9 Then said Pilate to the Jews who affirmed him to be born through fornication, This your account is not true, seeing there was a betrothment, as they testify who are of your own nation.

10 Annas and Caiphas spake to Pilate, All this multitude of people

is to be regarded, who cry out,
that he was born through fornication,
and is a conjurer; but they who deny
him to be born through fornication,
are his proselytes and disciples.

11 Pilate answered Annas and
Caiphas, Who are the proselytes?
They answered, They are those
who are the children of Pagans,
and are not become Jews, but
followers of him.

12 Then replied Eleazer, and
Asterius, and Antonius, and James,
Caras and Samuel, Isaac and Phinees,
Crispus and Agrippa, Annas and Judas,
We are not proselytes, but children
of Jews, and speak the truth,
and were present when Mary was
betrothed.

13 Then Pilate addressing
himself to the twelve men who
spake this, said to them, I conjure
you by the life of Caesar, that ye
faithfully declare whether he was
born through fornication, and those
things be true which ye have related.

14 They answered Pilate, We
have a law whereby we are forbid
to swear, it being a sin: Let them
swear by the life of Caesar that it
is not as we have said, and we will
be contented to be put to death.

15 Then said Annas and Caiphas
to Pilate, Those twelve men will
not believe that we know him to be
basely born, and to be a conjurer,
although he pretends that he is
the Son of God, and a king: which
we are so far from believing, that
we tremble to hear.

16 Then Pilate commanded
every one to go out except the
twelve men who said he was not
born through fornication, and

Jesus to withdraw to a distance,
and said to them, Why have the Jews
a mind to kill Jesus?

17 They answered him, They
are angry because he wrought
cures on the sabbath day. Pilate
said, Will they kill him for a
good work? They say unto him,
Yes, Sir.

CHAPTER III.

1 Is exonerated by Pilate.
11 Disputes with Pilate concerning truth.

THEN Pilate, filled with anger,
went out of the hall, and said
to the Jews, I call the whole
world to witness that I find no
fault in that man.

2 The Jews replied to Pilate,
If he had not been a wicked person,
we had not brought him before thee.

3 Pilate said to them, Do ye take
him and try him by your law.

4 Then the Jews said, It is not
lawful for us to put any one to
death.

5 Pilate said to the Jews, The
command, therefore, thou shalt
not kill, belongs to you, but
not to me.

6 And he went again into the
hall, and called Jesus by himself,
and said to him, Art thou the king
of the Jews?

7 And Jesus answering, said
to Pilate, Dost thou speak this
of thyself, or did the Jews tell

it thee concerning me?

8 Pilate answering, said to Jesus, Am I a Jew? The whole nation and rulers of the Jews have delivered thee up to me. What hast thou done?

9 Jesus answering, said, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, and I should not have been delivered to the Jews: but now my kingdom is not from hence.

10 Pilate said, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king: to this end was I born, and for this end came I into the world; and for this purpose I came, that I should bear witness to the truth; and every one who is of the truth, heareth my voice.

11 Pilate saith to him, What is truth?

12 Jesus said, Truth is from heaven.

13 Pilate said, Therefore truth is not on earth.

14 Jesus saith to Pilate, Believe that truth is on earth among those, who when they have the power of judgment, are governed by truth, and form right judgment.

CHAPTER IV.

1 Pilate finds no fault in Jesus.

16 The Jews demand his crucifixion.

THEN Pilate left Jesus in the hall,
and went out to the Jews, and said,
I find not any one fault in Jesus.

2 The Jews say unto him, But
he said, I can destroy the temple
of God, and in three days build it
up again.

3 Pilate saith to them, What
sort of temple is that of which he
speaketh?

4 The Jews say unto him,
That which Solomon was forty-six
years in building, he said he
would destroy, and in three days
build up.

5 Pilate said to them again, I
am innocent from the blood of that
man! do ye look to it.

6 The Jews say to him, His
blood be upon us and our children.
Then Pilate calling together the
elders and scribes, priests and
Levites, saith to them privately,
Do not act thus; I have found
nothing in your charge (against
him) concerning his curing sick
persons, and breaking the sabbath,
worthy of death.

7 The priests and Levites replied
to Pilate, By the life of Caesar,
if any one be a blasphemer, he is
worthy of death; but this man hath
blasphemed against the Lord.

8 Then the governor again
commanded the Jews to depart out
of the hall; and calling Jesus,
said to him, What shall I do with
thee?

9 Jesus answered him, Do according
as it is written.

10 Pilate said to him, How is it

written?

11 Jesus saith to him, Moses and the prophets have prophesied concerning my suffering and resurrection.

12 The Jews hearing this, were provoked, and said to Pilate, Why wilt thou any longer hear the blasphemy of that man?

13 Pilate saith to them, If these words seem to you blasphemy, do ye take him, bring him to your court, and try him according to your law.

14 The Jews reply to Pilate, Our law saith, he shall be obliged to receive nine and thirty stripes, but if after this manner he shall blaspheme against the Lord, he shall be stoned.

15 Pilate saith unto them, If that speech of his was blasphemy, do ye try him according to your law.

16 The Jews say to Pilate, Our law command us not to put any one to death. We desire that he may be crucified, because he deserves the death of the cross.

17 Pilate saith to them, It is not fit he should be crucified: let him be only whipped and sent away.

18 But when the governor looked upon the people that were present and the Jews, he saw many of the Jews in tears, and said to the chief priests of the Jews, All the people do not desire his death.

19 The elders of the Jews answered to Pilate, We and all the people came hither for this very purpose,

that he should die.

20 Pilate saith to them, Why should he die?

21 They said to him, Because he declares himself to be the Son of God and a King.

CHAP. V.

1 Nicodemus speaks in defence of Christ, and relates his miracles.

12 Another Jew,
26 with Veronica,
34 Centurio, and others,
testify of other miracles.

BUT Nicodemus, a certain Jew, stood before the governor, and said, I entreat thee, O righteous judge, that thou wouldst favour me with the liberty of speaking a few words.

2 Pilate said to him, Speak on.

3 Nicodemus said, I spake to the elders of the Jews, and the scribes, and priests and Levites, and all the multitude of the Jews, in their assembly; What is it ye would do with this man?

4 He is a man who hath wrought many useful and glorious miracles, such as no man on earth ever wrought before, nor will ever work. Let him go, and do him no harm; if he cometh from God, his miracles, (his miraculous cures) will continue; but if from men, they will come to nought.

5 Thus Moses, when he was sent by God into Egypt, wrought the miracles which God commanded him, before Pharaoh king of Egypt; and though the magicians of that country, Jannes and Jambres,

wrought by their magic the same miracles which Moses did, yet they could not work all which he did;

6 And the miracles which the magicians wrought, were not of God, as ye know, O Scribes and Pharisees; but they who wrought them perished, and all who believed them.

7 And now let this man go; because the very miracles for which ye accuse him, are from God; and he is not worthy of death.

8 The Jews then said to Nicodemus, Art thou become his disciple, and making speeches in his favour?

9 Nicodemus said to them, Is the governor become his disciple also, and does he make speeches for him? Did not Caesar place him in that high post?

10 When the Jews heard this they trembled, and gnashed their teeth at Nicodemus, and said to him, Mayest thou receive his doctrine for truth, and have thy lot with Christ!

11 Nicodemus replied, Amen; I will receive his doctrine, and my lot with him, as ye have said.

12 Then another certain Jew rose up, and desired leave of the governor to hear him a few words.

13 And the governor said, Speak, what thou hast a mind.

14 And he said, I lay for thirty-eight years by the sheep-pool at Jerusalem, labouring under a great infirmity, and waiting for a cure which should be wrought by the

coming of an angel, who at a certain time troubled the water: and whosoever first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

15 And when Jesus saw me languishing there, he said to me, Wilt thou be made whole? And I answered, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool.

16 And he said unto me, Rise, take up thy bed and walk. And I was immediately made whole, and took up my bed and walked.

17 The Jews then said to Pilate, Our Lord Governor, pray ask him what day it was on which he was cured of his infirmity.

18 The infirm person replied, It was on the sabbath.

19 The Jews said to Pilate, Did we not say that he wrought his cures on the sabbath, and cast out devils by the prince of devils?

20 Then another certain Jew came forth, and said, I was blind, could hear sounds, but could not see any one; and as Jesus was going along, I heard the multitude passing by, and I asked what was there?

21 They told me that Jesus was passing by: then I cried out, saying, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. And he stood still, and commanded that I should be brought to him, and said to me, What wilt thou?

22 I said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

23 He said to me, Receive thy

sight: and presently I saw, and followed him, rejoicing and giving thanks,

24 Another Jew also came forth, and said, I was a leper, and he cured me by his word only, saying, I will, be thou clean; and presently I was cleansed from my leprosy.

25 And another Jew came forth, and said I was crooked, and he made me straight by his word.

26 And a certain woman named Veronica, said, I was afflicted with an issue of blood twelve years, and I touched the hem of his garment, and presently the issue of blood stopped.

27 The Jews then said, We have a law, that a woman shall not be allowed as an evidence.

28 And, after other things, another Jew said, I saw Jesus invited to a wedding with his disciples, and there was a want of wine in Cana of Galilee;

29 And when the wine was all drank, he commanded the servants that they should fill six pots which were there with water, and they filled them up to the brim, and he blessed them and turned the water into wine, and all the people drank, being surprised at this miracle,

30 And another Jew stood forth, and said, I saw Jesus teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum; and there was in the synagogue a certain man who had a devil; and he cried out, saying, let me alone; what have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?

I know that thou art the Holy One of God.

31 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, unclean spirit, and come out of the man; and presently he came out of him, and did not at all hurt him.

32 The following things were also said by a Pharisee: I saw that a great company came to Jesus from Galilee and Judea, and the sea-cost, and many countries about Jordan; and many infirm persons came to him, and he healed them all.

33 And I heard the unclean spirits crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And Jesus strictly charged them, that they should not make him known.

34 After this another person, whose name was Centurio, said, I saw Jesus in Capernaum, and I entreated him, saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy.

35 And Jesus said to me, I will come and cure him.

36 But I said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant shall be healed.

37 And Jesus said unto me, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed so be it done unto thee. And my servant was healed from that same hour.

38 Then a certain nobleman said, I had a son in Capernaum, who lay at the point of death; and when I heard that Jesus was come

into Galilee, I went and besought him that he would come down to my house, and heal my son, for he was at the point of death.

39 He said to me, Go thy way, thy son liveth.

40 And my son was cured from that hour.

41 Besides these, also many others of the Jews, both men and Women, cried out and said, He is truly the Son of God, who cures all diseases only by his word, and to whom the devils are altogether subject.

42 Some of them farther said, This power can proceed from none but God.

43 Pilate said to the Jews, Why are not the devils subject to your doctors?

44 Some of them said, The power of subjecting devils cannot proceed but from God.

45 But others said to Pilate, That he had raised Lazarus from the dead, after he had been four days in his grave.

46 The governor hearing this, trembling, said to the multitude of the Jews, What will it profit you to shed innocent blood?

CHAPTER VI.

1 Pilate dismayed by the turbulence of the Jews,
5 who demand Barabbas to be released, and Christ to be crucified.

9 Pilate warmly expostulates with them,
20 washes his hands of Christ's blood,
23 and sentences him to be whipped and crucified.

THEN Pilate having called
together Nicodemus, and the
fifteen men who said that Jesus
was not born through fornication,
said to them, What shall I do,
seeing there is like to be a tumult
among the people.

2 They say unto him, We know
not; let them look to it who raise
the tumult.

3 Pilate then called the
multitude again, and said to them,
Ye know that ye have a custom, that
I should release to you one prisoner
at the feast of the passover:

4 I have a noted prisoner, a
murderer, who is called Barabbas,
and Jesus who is called Christ, in
whom I find nothing that deserves
death; which of them, therefore,
have you a mind that I should
release to you?

5 They all cry out, and say,
Release to us Barabbas.

6 Pilate saith to them, What
then shall I do with Jesus who is
called Christ?

7 They all answer, Let him be
crucified.

8 Again they cry out and say to
Pilate, You are not the friend of
Caesar, if you release this man;
for he hath declared that he is the
Son of God, and a king. But are
you inclined that he should be
king, and not Caesar?

9 Then Pilate filled with anger
said to them, Your nation hath

always been seditious, and you are always against those who have been serviceable to you.

10 The Jews replied, Who are those who have been serviceable to us?

11 Pilate answered them, Your God who delivered you from the hard bondage of the Egyptians, and brought you over the Red Sea as though it had been dry land, and fed you in the wilderness with manna and the flesh of quails, and brought water out of the rock, and gave you a law from heaven.

12 Ye provoked him all ways, and desired for yourselves a molten calf, and worshipped it, and sacrificed to it, and said, These are thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt:

13 On account of which your God was inclined to destroy you; but Moses interceded for you, and your God heard him, and forgave your iniquity.

14 Afterwards ye were enraged against, and would have killed your prophets, Moses and Aaron, when they fled to the tabernacle, and ye were always murmuring against God and his prophets.

15 And arising from his judgment seat, he would have gone out; but the Jews all cried out, We acknowledge Caesar to be king, and not Jesus;

16 Whereas this person, as soon as he was born, the wise men came and offered gifts unto him; which when Herod heard, he was exceedingly troubled, and would have killed him:

17 When his father knew this,
he fled with him and his mother
Mary into Egypt. Herod, when
he heard he was born, would have
slain him; and accordingly sent
and slew all the children which
were in Bethlehem, and in all the
coasts thereof, from two years old
and under.

18 When Pilate heard this
account, he was afraid; and
commanding silence among the
people, who made a noise, he said
to Jesus, Art thou therefore a king?

19 All the Jews replied to
Pilate, he is the very person
whom Herod sought to have slain.

20 Then Pilate taking water,
washed his hands before the people
and said, I am innocent of the
blood of this just person; look ye
to it.

21 The Jews answered and said,
His blood be upon us and our
children.

22 Then Pilate commanded Jesus
to be brought before him, and
spake to him in the following
words;

23 Thy own nation hath charged
thee as making thyself a king;
wherefore I, Pilate, sentence thee
to be whipped according to the
laws of former governors; and
that thou be first bound, then
hanged upon a cross in that place
where thou art now a prisoner;
and also two criminals with thee,
whose names are Dimas and Gestas.

CHAP. VII.

1 Manner of Christ's crucifixion

with the two thieves.

THEN Jesus went out of the hall, and the two thieves with him.

2 And when they came to the place which is called Golgotha, they stript him of his raiment, and girt him about with a linen cloth, and put a crown of thorns upon his head, and put a reed in his hand.

3 And in like manner did they to the two thieves who were crucified with him, Dimas on his right hand and Gestas on his left.

4 But Jesus said, My Father, forgive them, For they know not what they do.

5 And they divided his garments, and upon his vesture they cast lots.

6 The people in the mean time stood by, and the chief priests and elders of the Jews mocked him, saying, He saved others, let him now save himself if he can; if he be the son of God, let him now come down from the cross.

7 The soldiers also mocked him, and taking vinegar and gall, offered it to him to drink, and said to him, If thou art king of the Jews, deliver thyself.

8 Then Longinus, a certain soldier, taking a spear, pierced his side, and presently there came forth blood and water.

9 And Pilate wrote the title upon the cross in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek letters, viz., THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

10 But one of the two thieves

who were crucified with Jesus,
whose name was Gestas, said to
Jesus, If thou art the Christ,
deliver thyself and us.

11 But the thief who was
crucified on his right hand,
whose name was Dimas, answering,
rebuked him, and said, Dost not
thou fear God, who art condemned
to this punishment? We indeed
receive rightly and justly the
demerit of our actions; but this
Jesus, what evil hath he done.

12 After this, groaning, he said
to Jesus, Lord, remember me
when thou comest into thy kingdom.

13 Jesus answering, said to
him, Verily I say unto thee, that
this day thou shalt be with me in
Paradise.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 Miraculous appearance at his death.
10 The Jews say the eclipse was natural.
12 Joseph of Arimathea embalms Christ's
body and buries it.

AND it was about the sixth
hour, and darkness was upon
the face of the whole earth until
the ninth hour.

2 And while the sun was eclipsed,
behold the veil of the temple was
rent from the top, to the bottom;
and the rocks also were rent, and
the graves opened, and many
bodies of saints, which slept,
arose.

3 And about the ninth hour
Jesus cried out with a loud voice,

Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani? which being interpreted is, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?

4 And after these things, Jesus said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said this, he gave up the ghost.

5 But when the centurion saw that Jesus thus crying out gave up the ghost, he glorified God, and said, Of a truth this was a just man.

6 And all the people who stood by, were exceedingly troubled at the sight; and reflecting upon what had passed, smote upon their breasts, and then returned to the city of Jerusalem.

7 The centurion went to the governor, and related to him all that had passed:

8 And when he had heard all these things, he was exceedingly sorrowful;

9 And calling the Jews together, said to them, Have ye seen the miracle of the sun's eclipse, and the other things which came to pass, while Jesus was dying?

10 Which when the Jews heard, they answered to the governor, The eclipse of the sun happened according to its usual custom.

11 But all those who were the acquaintance of Christ, stood at a distance, as did the women who had followed Jesus from Galilee, observing all these things.

12 And behold a certain man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus, but

not openly so, for fear of the Jews, came to the governor, and entreated the governor that he would give him leave to take away the body of Jesus from the cross.

13 And the governor gave him leave.

14 And Nicodemus came, bringing with him a mixture of myrrh and aloes about a hundred pounds weight; and they took down Jesus from the cross with tears, and bound him in linen cloths with spices, according to the custom of burying among the Jews;

15 And placed him in a new tomb, which Joseph had built, and caused to be cut out of a rock, in which never any man had been put; and they rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre.

CHAPTER IX.

1 The Jews angry with Nicodemus:
5 and with, Joseph of Arimathaea,
7 whom they imprison.

WHEN the unjust Jews heard that Joseph had begged and buried the body of Jesus, they sought after Nicodemus, and those fifteen men who had testified before the governor, that Jesus was not born through fornication, and other good persons who had shown any good actions towards him.

2 But when they all concealed themselves through fear of the Jews, Nicodemus alone showed himself to them, and said, How can such persons as these enter into the synagogue?

3 The Jews answered him, But how durst thou enter into the synagogue, who wast a confederate with Christ? Let thy lot be along with him in the other world.

4 Nicodemus answered, Amen; so may it be, that I may have my lot with him in his kingdom.

5 In like manner Joseph, when he came to the Jews, said to them, Why are ye angry with me for desiring the body of Jesus of Pilate? Behold, I have put him in my tomb, and wrapped him up in clean linen, and put a stone at the door of the sepulchre:

6 I have acted rightly towards him; but ye have acted unjustly against that just person, in crucifying him, giving him vinegar to drink, crowning him with thorns, tearing his body with whips, and praying down the guilt of his blood upon you.

7 The Jews at the hearing of this were disquieted and troubled; and they seized Joseph, and commanded him to be put in custody before the Sabbath, and kept there till the Sabbath was over.

8 And they said to him, Make confession; for at this time it is not lawful to do thee any harm, till the first day of the week come. But we know that thou wilt not be thought worthy of a burial; but we will give thy flesh to the birds of the air, and the beasts of the earth.

9 Joseph answered, That speech is like the speech of proud Goliath, who reproached the living God in speaking against David. But ye

scribes and doctors know that God saith by the prophet, Vengeance is mine, and I will repay to you evil equal to that which ye have threatened to me.

10 The God whom you have hanged upon the cross, is able to deliver me out of your hands. All your wickedness will return upon you.

11 For the governor, when he washed his hands, said, I am clear from the blood of this just person. But ye answered and cried out, His blood be upon us and our children. According as ye have said, may ye perish for ever.

12 The elders of the Jews hearing these words, were exceedingly enraged; and seizing Joseph, they put him into a chamber where there was no window; they fastened the door, and put a seal upon the lock;

13 And Annas and Caiaphas placed a guard upon it, and took counsel with the priests and Levites, that they should all meet after the Sabbath, and they contrived to what death they should put Joseph.

14 When they had done this, the rulers, Annas and Caiaphas, ordered Joseph to be brought forth.

(In this place there is a portion of the Gospel lost or omitted. which cannot be supplied. It may, nevertheless, be surmised from the occurrence related in the next chapter, that the order of Annas and Caiaphas were rendered unnecessary by Joseph's miraculous escape, and which was announced to an assembly of people.)

CHAPTER X.

- 1 Joseph's escape.
- 2 The soldiers relate Christ's resurrection.
- 18 Christ is seen preaching in Galilee.
- 21 The Jews repent of their cruelty to him.

WHEN all the assembly heard this (about Joseph's escape), they admired and were astonished, because they found the same seal upon the lock of the chamber, and could not find Joseph.

2 Then Annas and Caiaphas went forth, and while they were all admiring at Joseph's being gone, behold one of the soldiers, who kept the sepulchre of Jesus, spake in the assembly,

3 That while they were guarding the sepulchre of Jesus, there was an earthquake; and we saw an angel of God roll away the stone of the sepulchre and sit upon it;

4 And his countenance was like lightning and his garment like snow; and we became through fear like persons dead.

5 And we heard an angel saying to the women at the sepulchre of Jesus, Do not fear; I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified; he is risen as he foretold;

6 Come and see the place where he was laid; and go presently, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and he will go before you into Galilee; there ye shall see him as he told you.

7 Then the Jews called together
all the soldiers who kept the sepulchre
of Jesus, and said to them, Who are
those women, to whom the angel spoke?
Why did ye not seize them.

8 The soldiers answered and said,
We know not who the women were;
besides we became as dead persons
through fear, and how could we
seize those women?

9 The Jews said to them, As the
Lord liveth, we do not believe you;

10 The soldiers answering said to
the Jews, when ye saw and heard
Jesus working so many miracles,
and did not believe him, how should
ye believe us? Ye well said,
As the Lord liveth, for the Lord
truly does live.

11 We have heard that ye shut
up Joseph, who buried the body of
Jesus, in a chamber, under a lock
which was sealed; and when ye
opened it, found him not there.

12 Do ye then produce Joseph
whom ye put under guard in the
chamber, and we will produce
Jesus whom we guarded in the
sepulchre.

13 The Jews answered and said,
We will produce Joseph, do ye
produce Jesus. But Joseph is in
his own city of Arimathaea.

14 The soldiers replied,
If Joseph be in Arimathaea,
and Jesus in Galilee, we heard
the angel inform the women.

15 The Jews hearing this, were
afraid, and said among themselves,
If by any means these things
should become public, then
everybody will believe in Jesus.

16 Then they gathered a large sum of money, and gave it to the soldiers, saying, Do ye tell the people that the disciples of Jesus came in the night when ye were asleep, and stole away the body of Jesus; and if Pilate the governor should hear of this, we will satisfy him and secure you.

17 The soldiers accordingly took the money, and said as they were instructed by the Jews; and their report was spread abroad among all the people.

18 But a certain priest Phinees, Ada a schoolmaster, and a Levite, named Ageus, they three came from Galilee to Jerusalem, and told the chief priests and all who were in the synagogues, saying,

19 We have seen Jesus, whom ye crucified, talking with his eleven disciples, and sitting in the midst of them in Mount Olivet, and saying to them,

20 Go forth into the whole world, preach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and whosoever shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved.

21 And when he had said these things to his disciples, we saw him ascending up to heaven.

22 When the chief priests and elders, and Levites heard these things, they said to these three men, Give glory to the God of Israel, and make confession to him, whether those things are true, which ye say ye have seen and heard.

23 They answering said, As the

Lord of our fathers liveth, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, according as we heard Jesus talking with his disciples, and according as we saw him ascending up to heaven, so we have related the truth to you.

24 And the three men farther answered, and said, adding these words, If we should not own the words which we heard Jesus speak, and that we saw him ascending into heaven, we should be guilty of sin.

25 Then the chief priests immediately rose up, and holding the book of the law in their hands, conjured these men, saying, Ye shall no more hereafter declare those things which ye have spoken concerning Jesus.

26 And they gave them a large sum of money, and sent other persons along with them, who should conduct them to their own country, that they might not by any means make any stay at Jerusalem.

27 Then the Jews did assemble all together, and having expressed the most lamentable concern said, What is this extraordinary thing which is come to pass in Jerusalem?

28 But Annas and Caiaphas comforted them, saying, Why should we believe the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre of Jesus, in telling us, that an angel rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

29 Perhaps his own disciples told them this, and gave them money that they should say so, and they themselves took away the body of Jesus.

30 Besides, consider this, that there is no credit to be given to foreigners, because they also took a large sum of us, and they have declared to us according to the instructions which we gave them. They must either be faithful to us or to the disciples of Jesus.

CHAPTER XI.

1 Nicodemus counsels the Jews.
6 Joseph found.
11 Invited by the Jews to return.
19 Relates the manner of his miraculous escape.

THEN Nicodemus arose, and said, Ye say right, O sons of Israel; ye have heard what those three men have sworn by the Law of God, who said, We have seen Jesus speaking with his disciples upon mount Olivet, and we saw him ascending up to heaven.

2 And the scripture teacheth us that the blessed prophet Elijah was taken up to heaven, and Elisha being asked by the sons of the prophets, Where is our father Elijah? He said to them, that he is taken up to heaven.

3 And the sons of the prophets said to him, Perhaps the spirit hath carried him into one of the mountains of Israel, there perhaps we shall find him. And they besought Elisha, and he walked about with them three days, and they could not find him.

4 And now hear me, O sons of Israel, and let us send men into the mountains of Israel, lest perhaps the spirit hath carried

away Jesus, and there perhaps we shall find him, and be satisfied.

5 And the counsel of Nicodemus pleased all the people; and they sent forth men who sought for Jesus, but could not find him; and they returning, said, We went all about, but could not find Jesus, but we have found Joseph in his city of Arimathaea.

6 The rulers hearing this, and all the people, were glad, and praised the God of Israel, because Joseph was found, whom they had shut up in a chamber, and could not find.

7 And when they had formed a large assembly, the chief priests said, By what means shall we bring Joseph to us to speak with him?

8 And taking a piece of paper, they wrote to him, and said, Peace be with thee, and all thy family, We know that we have offended against God and thee. Be pleased to give a visit to us, your fathers, for we were perfectly surprised at your escape from prison.

9 We know that it was malicious counsel which we took against thee, and that the Lord took care of thee, and the Lord himself delivered thee from our designs. Peace be unto thee, Joseph, who art honourable among all the people.

10 And they chose seven of Joseph's friends, and said to them, When ye come to Joseph, salute him in peace, and give him this letter.

11 Accordingly, when the men came to Joseph, they did salute

him in peace, and gave him the letter.

12 And when Joseph had read it, he said, Blessed be the Lord God, who didst deliver me from the Israelites, that they could not shed my blood. Blessed be God, who hast protected me under thy wings.

13 And Joseph kissed them, and took them into his house. And on the morrow, Joseph mounted his ass, and went along with them to Jerusalem.

14 And when all the Jews heard these things, they went out to meet him, and cried out, saying, Peace attend thy coming hither, father Joseph.

15 To which he answered, Prosperity from the Lord attend all the people.

13 And they all kissed him; and Nicodemus took him to his house, having prepared a large entertainment.

17 But on the morrow, being a preparation-day, Annas, and Caiaphas, and Nicodemus, said to Joseph, Make confession to the God of Israel, and answer to us all those questions which we shall ask thee;

18 For we have been very much troubled, that thou didst bury the body of Jesus; and that when we had locked thee in a chamber, we could not find thee; and we have been afraid ever since, till this time of thy appearing among us. Tell us therefore before God, all that came to pass.

19 Then Joseph answering,
said Ye did indeed put me under
confinement, on the day of
preparation, till the morning.

20 But while I was standing at
prayer in the middle of the night,
the house was surrounded with
four angels; and I saw Jesus as
the brightness of the sun, and fell
down upon the earth for fear.

21 But Jesus laying hold on my
hand, lifted me from the ground,
and the dew was then sprinkled
upon me; but he, wiping my face,
kissed me, and said unto me, Fear
not, Joseph; look upon me for
it is I.

22 Then I looked upon him, and
said, Rabboni Elias! He answered
me, I am not Elias, but Jesus of
Nazareth, whose body thou didst
bury.

23 I said to him, show me the
tomb in which I laid thee.

24 Then Jesus, taking me by the
hand, led me unto the place where
I laid him, and showed me the
linen clothes, and napkin which I
put round his head. Then I knew
that it was Jesus, and worshipped
him, and said; Blessed be he who
cometh in the name of the Lord.

25 Jesus again taking me by the
hand, led me to Arimathaea, to my
own house, and said to me, Peace
be to thee; but go not out of thy
house till the fortieth day; but
I must go to my disciples.

CHAPTER XII.

1 The Jews astonished and confounded.
16 Simeon's two sons, Charinus and Lenthius,
rise from the dead at Christ's crucifixion.
19 Joseph proposes to get them to relate the
mysteries of their resurrection.
21 They are sought and found,
22 brought to the synagogue,
23 privately sworn to secrecy,
25 and undertake to write what they had seen.

WHEN the chief priests and Levites heard all these things, they were astonished, and fell down with their faces on the ground as dead men, and crying out to one another, said, What is this extraordinary sign which is come to pass in Jerusalem? We know the father and mother of Jesus.

2 And a certain Levite said, I know many of his relations, religious persons, who are wont to offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings to the God of Israel, in the temple, with prayers.

3 And when the high-priest Simeon took him up in his arms, he said to him, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which then halt prepared before the face of all people; a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

4 Simeon in like manner blessed Mary the Mother of Jesus, and said to her, I declare to thee concerning that child; He is appointed for the fall and rising again of many, and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

5 Yea, a sword shall pierce
through thine own soul also, and
the thoughts of many hearts shall
he revealed.

6 Then said all the Jews, Let
us send to those three men, who
said they saw him talking with
his disciples in mount Olivet.

7 After this, they asked them
what they had seen; who answered
with one accord, In the presence
of the God of Israel we affirm,
that we plainly saw Jesus talking
with his disciples in Mount Olivet,
and ascending up to heaven.

8 Then Annas and Caiaphas took
them into separate places, and
examined them separately; who
unanimously confessed the truth,
and said, they had seen Jesus.

9 Then Annas and Caiaphas said
”Our law saith, By the mouth of
two or three witnesses every word
shall be established.”

10 But what have we said?
The blessed Enoch pleased God,
and was translated by the word of
God; and the burying-place of the
blessed Moses is known.

11 But Jesus was delivered to
Pilate, whipped, crowned with
thorns, spit upon, pierced with a
spear, crucified, died upon the
cross, and was buried, and his
body the honourable Joseph buried
in a new sepulchre, and he testifies
that he saw him alive.

12 And besides, these men have
declared, that they saw him talking
with his disciples in Mount Olivet,
and ascending up to heaven.

13 Then Joseph rising up, said to Annas and Caiaphas, Ye may be justly under a great surprise, that you have been told, that Jesus is alive, and gone up to heaven.

14 It is indeed a thing really surprising, that he should not only himself arise from the dead, but also raise others from their graves, who have been seen by many in Jerusalem.

15 And now hear me a little We all knew the blessed Simeon, the high-priest, who took Jesus when an infant into his arms in the temple.

16 This same Simeon had two sons of his own, and we were all present at their death and funeral.

17 Go therefore and see their tombs, for these are open, and they are risen: and behold, they are in the city of Arimathaea, spending their time together in offices of devotion.

18 Some, indeed, have heard the sound of their voices in prayer, but they will not discourse with anyone, but they continue as mute as dead men.

19 But come, let us go to them, and behave ourselves towards them with all due respect and caution. And if we can bring them to swear, perhaps they will tell us some of the mysteries of their resurrection.

20 When the Jews heard this they were exceedingly rejoiced.

21 Then Annas and Caiaphas, Nicodemus, Joseph, and Gamaliel, went to Arimathaea, but did not

find them in their graves; but walking about the city, they found them on their bended knees at their devotions:

22 Then saluting them with all respect and deference to God, they brought them to the synagogue at Jerusalem; and having shut the gates, they took the book of the law of the Lord,

23 And putting it in their hands, swore them by God Adonai, and the God of Israel, who spake to our fathers by the law and the prophets, saying, If ye believe him who raised you from the dead, to be Jesus, tell us what ye have seen, and how ye were raised from the dead.

24 Charinus and Lenthius, the two sons of Simeon, trembled when they heard these things, and were disturbed, and groaned; and at the same time looking up to heaven, they made the sign of the cross with their fingers on their tongues,

25 And immediately they spake, and said, Give each of us some paper, and we will write down for you all those things which we have seen. And they each sat down and wrote, saying:—

CHAPTER XIII.

1 The narrative of Charinus and Lenthius commences.

3 A great light in hell.

7 Simeon arrives, and announces the coming of Christ.

O LORD Jesus and Father, who art God, also the resurrection

and life of the dead, give us
leave to declare thy mysteries,
which we saw after death, belonging
to thy cross; for we are sworn by
thy name.

2 For thou hast forbidden thy
servants to declare the secret
things, which were wrought by
thy divine power in hell.

3 When we were Placed with
our fathers in the dept of hell,
in the blackness of darkness,
on a sudden there appeared the
colour of the sun like gold,
and a substantial purple-coloured
light enlightening the place.

4 Presently upon this, Adam,
the father of all mankind, with
all the patriarchs and prophets,
rejoiced and said, That light is the
author of everlasting light, who
hath promised to translate us to
everlasting light.

5 Then Isaiah the prophet cried
out and said, This is the light
of the Father, and the Son of God,
according to my prophecy, when I
was alive upon earth.

6 The land of Zabulon, and the
land of Nephtholim, beyond Jordan,
a people who walked in darkness,
saw a great light; and to them
who dwelled in the region of the
shadow of death, light is arisen.
And now he is come, and hath
enlightened us who sat in death.

7 And while we were all rejoicing
in the light which shone upon us,
our father Simeon came among us,
and congratulating all the company,
said, Glorify the Lord Jesus Christ
the Son of God.

8 Whom I took up in my arms when

an infant in the temple, and
being moved by the Holy Ghost,
said to him, and acknowledged,
That now mine eyes have seen thy
salvation, which thou hast prepared
before the face of all people; a
light to enlighten the Gentiles,
and the glory of thy people Israel.

9 All the saints who were in
the depth of hell, hearing this,
rejoiced the more.

10 Afterwards there came forth
one like a little hermit, and was
asked by every one, Who art thou?

11 To which he replied, I am
the voice of one crying in the
wilderness, John the Baptist, and
the prophet of the Most High, who
went before his coming to prepare
his way, to give the knowledge of
salvation to his people for the
forgiveness of sins.

12 And I, John, when I saw
Jesus coming to me, being moved
by the Holy Ghost, I said, Behold
the Lamb of God, behold him who
takes away the sins of the world.

13 And I baptized him in the
river Jordan, and saw the Holy
Ghost descending upon him in the
form of a dove, and heard a voice
from heaven saying, This is my
beloved Son, in whom I am well
pleased.

14 And now while I was going
before him, I came down hither to
acquaint you, that the Son of God
will next visit us, and, as the
day-spring from on high, will come to
us, who are in darkness and the
shadow of death.

CHAPTER XIV.

1 Adam causes Seth to relate what he heard from Michael the archangel, when he sent him to Paradise to entreat God to anoint his head in his sickness.

BUT when the first man our father Adam heard these things, that Jesus was baptized in Jordan, he called out to his son Seth, and said,

2 Declare to your sons, the patriarchs and prophets, all those things, which thou didst hear from Michael, the archangel, when I sent thee to the gates of Paradise, to entreat God that he would annoint my head when I was sick.

3 Then Seth, coming near to the patriarchs and prophets, said, I, Seth, when I was praying to God at the gates of Paradise, beheld the angel of the Lord, Michael, appear unto me, saying, I am sent unto thee from the Lord; I am appointed to preside over human bodies.

4 I tell thee, Seth, do not pray to God in tears, and entreat him for the oil of the tree of mercy wherewith to anoint thy father Adam for his head-ache;

5 Because thou canst not by any means obtain it till the last day and times, namely, till five thousand and five hundred years be past.

6 Then will Christ, the most merciful Son of God, come on earth to raise again the human body of Adam, and at the same time to raise the bodies of the dead, and when he cometh he will

be baptized in Jordan;

7 Then with the oil of his mercy he will anoint all those who believe in him; and the oil of his mercy will continue to future generations, for those who shall be born of the water and the Holy Ghost unto eternal life.

8 And when at that time the most merciful Son of God, Christ Jesus, shall come down on earth, he will introduce our father Adam into Paradise, to the tree of mercy.

9 When all the patriarchs and prophets heard all these things from Seth, they rejoiced more.

CHAPTER XV.

1 Quarrel between Satan and the prince of hell, concerning the expected arrival of Christ in hell.

WHILE all the saints were rejoicing, behold Satan, the prince and captain of death, said to the prince of hell,

2 Prepare to receive Jesus of Nazareth himself, who boasted that he was the Son of God, and yet was a man afraid of death, and said, My soul is sorrowful even to death.

3 Besides he did many injuries to me and to many others; for those whom I made blind and lame and those also whom I tormented with several devils, he cured by his word; yea, and those whom I brought dead to thee, he by force takes away from thee.

4 To this the prince of hell
replied to Satan, Who is that so
powerful prince, and yet a man who
is afraid of death?

5 For all the potentates of the
earth are subject to my power,
whom thou broughtest to subjection
by thy power.

6 But if he be so powerful in his
human nature, I affirm to thee for
truth, that he is almighty in his
divine nature, and no man can
resist his power:

7 When therefore he said he was
afraid of death, he designed to
ensnare thee, and unhappy it will be
to thee for everlasting ages,

8 Then Satan replying, said to
the prince of hell, Why didst thou
express a doubt, and wast afraid to
receive that Jesus of Nazareth,
both thy adversary and mine?

9 As for me, I tempted him and
stirred up my old people the Jews
with zeal and anger against him;

10 I sharpened the spear for his
suffering; I mixed the gall and
vinegar, and commanded that he
should drink it; I prepared the
cross to crucify him, and the nails
to pierce through his hands and
feet; and now his death is near
at hand, I will bring him hither,
subject both to thee and me.

11 Then the prince of hell
answering, said, Thou saidst to me
just now, that he took away the
dead from me by force.

12 They who have been kept here
till they should live again upon
earth, were taken away hence,

not by their own power, but by prayers made to God, and their almighty God took them from me.

13 Who then is that Jesus of Nazareth that by his word hath taken away the dead from me without prayer to God?

14 Perhaps it is the same who took away from me Lazarus, after he had been four days dead, and did both stink and was rotten, and of whom I had possession as a dead person, yet he brought him to life again by his power.

15 Satan answering, replied to the prince of hell, It is the very same person, Jesus of Nazareth.

16 Which when the prince of hell heard, he said to him, I adjure thee by the powers which belong to thee and me, that thou bring him not to me.

17 For when I heard of the power of his word, I trembled for fear, and all my impious company were at the same disturbed;

18 And we were not able to detain Lazarus, but he gave himself a shake, and with all the signs of malice he immediately went away from us; and the very earth, in which the dead body of Lazarus was lodged, presently turned him out alive.

19 And I know now that he is Almighty God who could perform such things, who is mighty in his dominion, and mighty in his human nature, who is the Saviour of mankind.

20 Bring not therefore this person hither, for he will set at liberty

all those whom I hold in prison
under unbelief, and bound with
the fetters of their sins, and will
conduct them to everlasting life.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 Christ's arrival at hell-gates;
the confusion thereupon.
19 He descends into hell.

AND while Satan and the Prince
of hell were discoursing thus
to each other, on a sudden there
was a voice as of thunder, and the
rushing of winds, saying, Lift up
your gates, O ye princes; and be
ye lift up, O everlasting gates,
and the King of Glory shall come in.

2 When the prince of hell heard
this, he said to Satan, Depart from
me, and begone out of my habitations;
if thou art a powerful warrior,
fight with the King of Glory.
But what hast thou to do with
him?

3 And he cast him forth from his
habitations.

4 And the prince said to his
impious officers, Shut the brass gates
of cruelty, and make them fast with
iron bars, and fight courageously,
lest we be taken captives.

5 But when all the company of
the saints heard this they spake
with a loud voice of anger to the
prince of hell,

6 Open thy gates, that the King
of Glory may come in.

7 And the divine prophet David

cried out, saying, Did not I, when
on earth, truly prophesy and say,
O that men would praise the Lord
for his goodness, and for his
wonderful works to the children
of men!

8 For he hath broken the gates
of brass, and cut the bars of iron
in sunder. He hath taken them
because of their iniquity, and
because of their unrighteousness
they are afflicted.

9 After this, another prophet,
namely, holy Isaiah, spake in like
manner to all the saints, Did not
I rightly prophesy to you when I
was alive on earth?

10 The dead men shall live, and
they shall rise again who are in
their graves, and they shall rejoice
who are in the earth; for the dew
which is from the Lord, shall
bring deliverance to them.

11 And I said in another place,
O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting?

12 When all the saints heard
these things spoken by Isaiah,
they said to the prince of hell,
Open now thy gates, and take
away thine iron bars; for thou
wilt now be bound, and have no
power.

13 Then was there a great voice,
as of the sound of thunder, saying,
Lift up your gates, O princes; and
be ye lifted up, ye gates of hell,
and the King of Glory will enter
in.

14 The prince of hell perceiving
the same voice repeated, cried out,
as though he had been ignorant,
Who is that King of Glory?

15 David replied to the prince of hell, and said, I understand the words of that voice, because I spake them in his spirit. And now, as I have before said, I say unto thee, the Lord strong and powerful, the Lord mighty in battle: he is the King of Glory, and he is the Lord in heaven and in earth.

16 He hath looked down to hear the groans of the prisoners, and to set loose those that are appointed to death.

17 And now, thou filthy and stinking prince of hell, open thy gates, that the King of Glory may enter in; for he is the Lord of heaven and earth.

18 While David was saying this, the mighty Lord appeared in the form of a man, and enlightened those places which had ever before been in darkness.

19 And broke asunder the fetters which before could not be broken; and with his invincible power visited those who sate in the deep darkness by iniquity, and the shadow of death by sin.

CHAPTER XVII.

1 Death and the devils in great horror at Christ's coming.

13 He tramples on death, seizes the prince of hell, and takes Adam with him to Heaven.

IMPIOUS death and her cruel officers hearing these things, were seized with fear in their several kingdoms, when they saw

the clearness of the light,

2 And Christ himself on a sudden
appearing in their habitations,
they cried out therefore, and said,
We are bound by thee; thou seemest
to intend our confusion before
the Lord.

3 Who art thou, who has no signs
of corruption, but that bright
appearance which is a full proof of
thy greatness, of which yet thou
seemest to take no notice?

4 Who art thou, so powerful,
and so weak, so great and so little;
mean, and yet a soldier of the first
rank, who can command in the form
of a servant and a common soldier?

5 The king of Glory, dead and
alive, though once slain upon the
cross?

6 Who layest dead in the grave,
and art come down alive to us,
and in thy death all the creatures
trembled, and all the stars were
moved; and now hast thy liberty
among the dead, and givest
disturbance to our legions?

7 Who art thou, who dost release
the captives that were held
in chains by original sin, and
bringest them into their former
liberty?

8 Who art thou, who dost spread
so glorious and divine a light over
those who were made blind by the
darkness of sin?

9 In like manner all the legions
of devils were seized with the like
horror, and with the most submissive
fear cried out, and said,

10 Whence comes it, O thou

Jesus Christ, that thou art a man
so powerful and glorious in majesty
so bright as to have no spot, and
so pure as to have no crime? For
that lower world of earth, which
was ever till now subject to us,
and from whence we received
tribute, never sent us such a
dead man before, never sent such
presents as these to the princes of
hell.

11 Who therefore art thou, who
with such courage enterest among
our abodes, and art not only not
afraid to threaten us with the
greatest punishments, but also
endeavourest to rescue all others
from the chains in which we hold
them?

12 Perhaps thou art that Jesus,
of whom Satan just now spoke to
our prince, that by the death of
the cross thou wert about to
receive the power of death.

13 Then the King of Glory
trampling upon death, seized the
prince of hell, deprived him of all
his power, and took our earthly
father Adam with him to his glory.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 Beelzebub, prince of hell, vehemently upbraids Satan for
persecuting Christ and bringing him to hell.

14 Christ gives Beelzebub dominion over Satan forever,
as a recompence for taking away Adam and his sons.

THEN the prince of hell took
Satan, and with great indignation
said to him, O thou prince of
destruction, author of Beelzebub's
defeat and banishment, the scorn
of God's angels and loathed by all

righteous persons! What inclined thee to act thus?

2 Thou wouldst crucify the King of Glory, and by his destruction, hast made us promises of very large advantages, but as a fool wert ignorant of what thou wast about.

3 For behold now that Jesus of Nazareth, with the brightness of his glorious divinity, puts to flight all the horrid powers of darkness and death;

4 He has broke down our prisons from top to bottom, dismissed all the captives, released all who were bound, and all who were wont formerly to groan under the weight of their torments, have now insulted us, and we are like to be defeated by their prayers.

5 Our impious dominions are subdued, and no part of mankind is now left in our subjection, but on the other hand, they all boldly defy us;

6 Though, before, the dead never durst behave themselves insolently towards us, nor being prisoners, could ever on any occasion be merry.

7 O Satan, thou prince of all the wicked, father of the impious and abandoned, why wouldest thou attempt this exploit, seeing our prisoners were hitherto always without the least hope of salvation and life?

8 But now there is not one of them does ever groan, nor is there the least appearance of a tear in any of their faces.

9 O prince Satan, thou great
keeper of the infernal regions,
all thy advantages which thou didst
acquire by the forbidden tree, and
the loss of Paradise, thou hast
now lost by the wood of the
cross;

10 And thy happiness all then
expired, when thou didst crucify
Jesus Christ the King of Glory.

11 Thou hast acted against thine
own interest and mine, as thou
wilt presently perceive by those
large torments and infinite
punishments which thou art
about to suffer.

12 O Satan, prince of all evil,
author of death, and source of all
pride, thou shouldest first have
inquired into the evil crimes of
Jesus of Nazareth, and then thou
wouldest have found that he was
guilty of no fault worthy of death.

13 Why didst thou venture,
without either reason or justice,
to crucify him, and hast brought
down to our regions a person
innocent and righteous, and thereby
hast lost all the sinners, impious
and unrighteous persons in the
whole world?

14 While the prince of hell was
thus speaking to Satan, the King
of Glory said to Beelzebub the
prince of hell, Satan the prince
shall he subject to thy dominions
for ever, in the room of Adam and
his righteous sons, who are mine,

CHAPTER XIX.

1 Christ takes Adam by the hand,
the rest of the saints join hands,
and they all ascend with him to Paradise.

THEN Jesus stretched forth his
hand, and said, Come to me,
all ye my saints, who were created
in my image, who were condemned
by the tree of the forbidden fruit,
and by the devil and death;

2 Live now by the wood of my
cross; the devil, the prince of this
world, is overcome, and death is
conquered,

3 Then presently all the saints
were joined together under the
hand of the most high God; and
the Lord Jesus laid hold on Adam's
hand, and said to him, Peace be
to thee, and all thy righteous
posterity, which is mine.

4 Then Adam, casting himself
at the feet of Jesus, addressed
himself to him with tears, in
humble language, and a loud voice,
saying,

5 "I will extol thee, O Lord, for
thou hast lifted me up, and hast
not made my foes to rejoice over
me. O Lord my God, I cried
unto thee, and thou hast healed
me."

6 "O Lord thou hast brought up
my soul from the grave; thou
hast kept me alive, that I should
not go down to the pit."

7 "Sing unto the Lord, all ye
saints of his, and give thanks at
the remembrance of his holiness,
for his anger endureth but for a

moment; in his favour is life.”

8 In like manner all the saints,
prostrate at the feet of Jesus,
said with one voice, Thou art come,
O Redeemer of the world, and hast
actually accomplished all things,
which thou didst foretell by the
law and thy holy prophets.

9 Thou hast redeemed the living
by thy cross, and art come down
to us, that by the death of the
cross thou mightest deliver us
from hell, and by thy power from
death.

10 O Lord, as thou hast put the
ensigns of thy glory in heaven,
and hast set up the sign of thy
redemption, even thy cross on earth;
so, Lord, set the sign of the victory
of thy cross in hell, that death
may have dominion no longer.

11 Then the Lord stretching
forth his hand, made the sign of
the cross upon Adam, and upon
all his saints.

12 And taking hold of Adam by
his right hand, he ascended from
hell, and all the saints of God
followed him.

13 Then the royal prophet, David,
boldly cried, and said, O sing
unto the Lord a new song, for he
hath done marvellous things; his
right hand and his holy arm have
gotten him the victory.

14 The Lord hath made known
his salvation, his righteousness
hath he openly shewn in the sight
of the heathen.

15 And the whole multitude of
saints answered, saying, This
honour have all his saints, Amen,

Praise ye the Lord.

16 Afterwards, the prophet
Habbakuk cried out, and said,
Thou wentest forth for the salvation
of thy people, even for salvation
with thine anointed.

17 And all the saints said,
Blessed is he who cometh in the
name of the Lord; for the Lord
hath enlightened us. This is our
God for ever and ever; he shall
reign over us to everlasting ages.
Amen.

18 In like manner all the prophets
spake the sacred things of his
praise, and followed the Lord.

CHAPTER XX.

1 Christ delivers Adam to Michael the archangel.
3 They meet Enoch and Elijah in heaven,
5 and also the blessed thief, who relates
how he came to Paradise.

THEN the Lord, holding Adam
by the hand, delivered him
to Michael the archangel; and he
led them into Paradise, filled with
mercy and glory;

2 And two very ancient men
met them, and were asked by the
saints, Who are ye, who have not
yet been with us in hell, and have
had your bodies placed in Paradise?

3 One of them answering, said,
I am Enoch, who was translated
by the word of God: and this man
who is with me, is Elijah the
Tishbite, who was translated in a
fiery chariot.

4 Here we have hitherto been, and have not tasted death, but are now about to return at the coming of Antichrist, being armed with divine signs and miracles, to engage with him in battle, and to be slain by him at Jerusalem, and to be taken up alive again into the clouds, after three days and a half.

5 And while the holy Enoch and Elias were relating this, behold there came another man in a miserable figure, carrying the sign of the cross upon his shoulders.

6 And when all the saints saw him, they said to him, Who art thou? For thy countenance is like a thief's; and why dost thou carry a cross upon thy shoulders?

7 To which he answering, said, Ye say right, for I was a thief, who committed all sorts of wickedness upon earth.

8 And the Jews crucified me with Jesus; and I observed the surprising things which happened in the creation at the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus.

9 And I believed him to be the Creator of all things, and the Almighty King; and I prayed to him, saying, Lord remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom.

10 He presently regarded my supplication, and said to me, Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.

11 And he gave me this sign of the cross, saying, Carry this, and go to Paradise; and if the angel who is the guard of Paradise will not admit thee, show him the sign

of the cross, and say unto him
Jesus Christ who is now crucified,
hath sent me hither to thee.

12 When I did this and told the
angel who is the guard of Paradise
all these things, and he heard
them, he presently opened the
gates, introduced me, and placed
me on the right hand in Paradise,

13 Saying, Stay here a little
time, till Adam, the father of all
mankind, shall enter in, with all
his sons, who are the holy and
righteous servants of Jesus Christ,
who was crucified.

14 When they heard all this
account from the thief, all the
patriarchs said with one voice,
Blessed be thou, O Almighty God,
the Father of everlasting goodness,
and the Father of mercies, who hast
shown such favour to those who were
sinners against him, and hast
brought them to the mercy of
Paradise, and hast placed them
amidst thy large and spiritual
provisions, in a spiritual and
holy life. Amen.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 Charinus and Lenthius being only allowed
three days to remain on earth,
7 deliver in their narratives, which miraculously
correspond; they vanish,
13 and Pilate records these transactions.

THESE are the divine and
sacred mysteries which we saw
and heard. We, Charinus and
Lenthius are not allowed to declare
the other mysteries of God, as the
archangel Michael ordered us,

2 Saying, ye shall go with my brethren to Jerusalem, and shall continue in prayers, declaring and glorifying the resurrection of Jesus Christ, seeing he hath raised you from the dead at the same time with himself.

3 And ye shall not talk with any man, but sit as dumb persons till the time come when the Lord will allow you to relate the mysteries of his divinity.

4 The archangel Michael farther commanded us to go beyond Jordan, to an excellent and fat country, where there are many who rose from the dead along with us for the proof of the resurrection of Christ.

5 For we have only three days allowed us from the dead, who arose to celebrate the passover of our Lord with our parents, and to bear our testimony for Christ the Lord, and we have been baptized in the holy river of Jordan. And now they are not seen by any one.

6 This is as much as God allowed us to relate to you; give ye therefore praise and honour to him, and repent, and he will have mercy upon you. Peace be to you from the Lord God Jesus Christ, and the Saviour of us all. Amen, Amen, Amen.

7 And after they had made an end of writing, and had written on two distinct pieces of paper, Charinus gave what he wrote into the hands of Annas, and Caiaphas, and Gamaliel.

8 Lenthius likewise gave what he wrote into the hands of Nicodemus

and Joseph; and immediately they were changed into exceeding white forms and were seen no more.

9 But what they had written was found perfectly to agree, the one not containing one letter more or less than the other.

10 When all the assembly of the Jews heard all these surprising relations of Charinus and Lenthius, they said to each other, Truly all these things were wrought by God, and blessed be the Lord Jesus for ever and ever, Amen.

11 And they went all out with great concern, and fear, and trembling, and smote upon their breasts and went away every one to his home.

12 But immediately all these things which were related by the Jews in their synagogues concerning Jesus, were presently told by Joseph and Nicodemus to the governor.

13 And Pilate wrote down all these transactions, and placed all these accounts in the public records of his hall.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 Pilate goes to the temple; calls together the rulers, and scribes, and doctors.

2 Commands the gates to be shut; orders the book of the Scriptures; and causes the Jews to relate what they really knew concerning Christ.

14 They declare that they crucified Christ in ignorance, and that they now know him to be the Son of God, according to the testimony of the Scriptures; which,

after they put him to death, were examined.

AFTER these things Pilate went to the temple of the Jews, and called together all the rulers and scribes, and doctors of the law, and went with them into a chapel of the temple.

2 And commanding that all the gates should be shut, said to them, I have heard that ye have a certain large book in this temple; I desire you, therefore, that it may be brought before me.

3 And when the great book, carried by four ministers of the temple, and adorned with gold and precious stones, was brought, Pilate said to them all, I adjure you by the God of your Fathers, who made and commanded this temple to be built, that ye conceal not the truth from me.

4 Ye know all the things which are written in that book; tell me therefore now, if ye in the Scriptures have found any thing of that Jesus whom ye crucified, and at what time of the world he, ought to have come: show it me.

5 Then having sworn Annas and Caiaphas, they commanded all the rest who were with them to go out of the chapel.

6 And they shut the gates of the temple and of the chapel, and said to Pilate, Thou hast made us to swear, O judge, by the building of this temple, to declare to thee that which is true and right.

7 After we had crucified Jesus, not knowing that he was the Son of God, but supposing he wrought his miracles by some magical arts,

we summoned a large assembly in this temple.

8 And when we were deliberating among one another about the miracles which Jesus had wrought, we found many witnesses of our own country, who declared that they had seen him alive after his death, and that they heard him discoursing with his disciples, and saw him ascending into the height of the heavens, and entering into them;

9 And we saw two witnesses, whose bodies Jesus raised from the dead, who told us of many strange things which Jesus did among the dead, of which we have a written account in our hands.

10 And it is our custom annually to open this holy book before an assembly, and to search there for the counsel of God.

11 And we found in the first of the seventy books, where Michael the archangel is speaking to the third son of Adam the first man, an account that after five thousand five hundred years, Christ the most beloved son of God was to come on earth,

12 And we further considered, that perhaps he was the very God of Israel who spoke to Moses, Thou shalt make the ark of the testimony; two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

13 By these five cubits and a half for the building of the ark of the Old Testament, we perceived and knew that in five thousand

years and half (one thousand) years,
Jesus Christ was to come in the
ark or tabernacle of a body;

14 And so our Scriptures testify
that he is the Son of God, and the
Lord and King of Israel.

15 And because after his suffering,
our chief priests were surprised
at the signs which were wrought
by his means, we opened that book
to search all the generations down
to the generation of Joseph and
Mary the mother of Jesus,
supposing him to be of the
seed of David;

16 And we found the account of
the creation, and at what time he
made the heaven and the earth,
and the first man Adam, and that
from thence to the flood, were two
thousand seven hundred and forty-
eight years.

17 And from the flood to Abraham,
nine hundred and twelve.
And from Abraham to Moses, four
hundred and thirty. And from
Moses to David the King, five
hundred and ten.

18 And from David to the Babylonish
captivity five hundred years.
And from the Babylonish captivity
to the incarnation of Christ, four
hundred years.

19 The sum of all which amounts
to five thousand and half (a thousand.)

20 And so it appears, that Jesus
whom we crucified, is Jesus Christ
the Son of God, and true Almighty
God. Amen.

(In the name of the Holy Trinity,
thus end the acts of our Saviour
Jesus Christ, which the Emperor

Theodosius the Great found at Jerusalem, in the hall of Pontius Pilate, among the public records; the things were acted in the nineteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, Emperor of the Romans, and in the seventeenth year of the government of Herod, the son of Herod and of Galilee, on the eighth of the calends of April, which is the twenty-third day of the month of March, in the CCIId Olympiad, when Joseph and Caiaphas were rulers of the Jews; being a History written in Hebrew by Nicodemus, of what happened after our Saviour's crucifixion.)

REFERENCES TO THE GOSPEL OF NICODEMUS, FORMERLY CALLED THE ACTS OF PONTIUS PILATE.

[Although this Gospel is, by some among the learned, supposed to have been really written by Nicodemus, who became a disciple of Jesus Christ, and conversed with him; others conjecture that it was a forgery towards the close of the third century by some zealous believer, who, observing that there had been appeals made by the Christians of the former age, to the acts of Pilate, but that such acts could not be produced, imagined it would be of service to Christianity to fabricate and publish this Gospel; as it would both confirm the Christians under persecution, and convince the Heathens of the truth of the Christian religion. The Rev. Jeremiah Jones says, that such pious frauds were very common among Christians even in the first three centuries; and that a forgery of this nature, with the view above-mentioned, seems natural and probable. The same author, in noticing that Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History, charges the Pagans with having forged and published a book, called "The

Acts of Pilate," takes occasion to observe that the internal evidence of

this Gospel shows it was not the work of any Heathen, but that if in the latter end of the third century we find it in use among Christians (as it was then certainly in some churches), and about the same time find a forgery of the Heathens under the same title, it seems exceedingly probable that some Christians, at that time, should publish such a piece as this, in order partly to confront the spurious one of the Pagans, and partly to support those appeals which had been made by former Christians

to the Acts of Pilate; and Mr. Jones says, he thinks so more particularly as we have innumerable instances of forgeries by the faithful in the primitive ages, grounded on less plausible reasons. Whether it be canonical or not, it is of very great antiquity, and is appealed to by several of the ancient Christians. The present translation is made from the Gospel, published by Grynaeus in the *Orthodoxographa*, vol. i, tom. ii, p. 613.]

Notwithstanding the diversity of opinions here alluded to, the majority of the learned believe that the internal evidence of the authenticity of this Gospel is manifested in the correct details of that period of Christ's life on which it treats, while it far excels the canonical Evangelists narrative of the trial of our Saviour before Pilate, with more minute particulars of persons, evidence, circumstance, &c.