



# Jesus, the Accused and Condemned

## Lesson 26 John 18:28 - 19:16a

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### REVIEW

1. In our last lesson, we saw prophecy fulfilled as Jesus was betrayed, arrested, forsaken and denied by His disciples.
2. We also studied John's account of the events in the Garden of Gethsemane and the subsequent trials before Annas and Caiphas.

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### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. In this lesson, we will study the official decision of the Sanhedrin and the subsequent trials of Jesus before the Roman governor, Pilate.
2. We will study John's account of these trials and pay particular attention to the eight questions asked by Pilate.

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### FIRST ROMAN TRIAL BEFORE PILATE (18:28-38)

#### A. The setting of the trial - 18:28

**18:28** "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover."

#### 1. The site of the trial, "*The hall of judgment*"

- a. The "praetorian...was the place where the Roman praetor, or governor, heard and decided cases brought before him."<sup>1</sup>
- b. Same word is translated "*common hall*" in Matthew 27:27
- c. The Jews would not enter the judgment hall "*lest they should be defiled*"  
Acts 10:28, 11:3

#### 2. The time of the trial

- a. Immediately following the trial before Caiaphas  
Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65, 70-72; Luke 22:59-65
- b. "*It was early*". "The civil trial could not be held before sunrise. The term "early" usually meant the fourth watch, from three to six A.M....Since it was yet 'early' when they came, the second 'religious trial' before Caiaphas, must have been as technically illegal as was the first; for it was illegal to condemn a prisoner to death during the night."<sup>2</sup>

#### 3. The governing official, "*Pilate*" - 18:29a

- a. Roman Governor of Judea
- b. Jesus was considered a non-citizen in the Roman law

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<sup>1</sup> Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*, Luke and John (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2005), 363.

<sup>2</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 468.

## B. The accusation against Christ - 18:29-32

**18:29** “Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? **30** They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. **31** Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: **32** That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.”

1. Pilate rightfully asked for the accusation against Christ - **18:29**
2. The Jews thought Jesus’ guilt would be obvious since they had brought Him to Pilate **18:30**
3. Pilate’s first attempt to pass the decision related to Jesus to someone else - **18:31**
  - a. *“Take ye him”*
  - b. *“Judge him according to your law”*
4. The Jews’ accusation against Christ, “He is worthy of death!” - **18:31b; Matthew 26:63-66**
  - a. The trial of the Sanhedrin at the house of Caiaphas
    - i. The high priest’s request - **Matthew 26:63**
      - a) *“I adjure thee by the living God”* means “I put thee upon thy oath before God”<sup>3</sup>
      - b) *“Tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God”*
    - ii. Jesus’ answer - **Matthew 26:64**
  - b. The charge against Christ - **Matthew 26:65**
  - c. The sentence of the Jews - **Matthew 26:66**
    - i. The Jews thought Jesus should die for blasphemy. However, it was *“not lawful for [them] to put any man to death”* - **John 18:31**
    - ii. *“Roman law allowed the local law of each province to be exercised without much interference...One significant exception to this was jurisdiction on matters involving capital punishment which was reserved to the procurator...it may be concluded, then, that the Roman governor had absolute legal authority...to prescribe the death penalty”*<sup>4</sup>

## C. Pilate’s questioning of Jesus - 18:33-38

**18:33** “Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? **34** Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? **35** Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? **36** Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. **37** Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. **38** Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.”

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<sup>3</sup> Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*, Matthew and Mark (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2005), 294.

<sup>4</sup> Pentecost, 467.

1. Pilate's first question, "*Art thou the King of the Jews?*" - **18:33**
  2. Jesus' first answer - **18:34**
    - a. "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself*". Does this question originate in your mind?
    - b. "*Or did others tell it thee of me?*" Or is your question simply the result of pressure from the Jews?
    - c. Jesus was "trying" Pilate's first question
  3. Pilate's second question, "*Am I a Jew?*" - **18:35a**
    - a. He answered Jesus' statement
    - b. It was obvious from this question that Pilate's first question came from the Jews
    - c. "*Thine own nation and chief priests have delivered thee unto me*"
  4. Pilate's third question, "*What hast thou done?*" - **18:35b**
  5. Jesus' second answer - **18:36**
    - a. "*My kingdom is not of this world*"
      - i. Points to the spiritual nature of His kingdom - **6:15**
      - ii. Answers Pilate's first question. If He has a kingdom, then He is a king.
    - b. "*If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews*". His kingdom at this time was a spiritual kingdom. There is a future kingdom in which He and His servants will fight.
    - c. "*But now is my kingdom not from hence*"
  6. Pilate's fourth question, "*Art thou a king then?*" - **18:37a**
  7. Jesus' third answer - **18:37b**
    - a. "*Thou sayest that I am a king*"
      - i. "(Su legeis hoti)...clearly means 'yes, because I am a king.'"<sup>5</sup>
      - ii. "Thou affirmest the truth; thou declarest what is correct, for I am a king."<sup>6</sup>
    - b. His kingdom would be one that bore "*witness unto the truth*"
    - c. Those of His kingdom hear His voice
  8. Pilate's fifth question, "*What is truth?*" - **18:38a**
    - a. "This famous sneer of Pilate reveals his own ignorance of truth, as he stood before Incarnate Truth."<sup>7</sup>
    - b. Pilate was not interested in truth. If he had been interested in truth, he certainly would not have ordered the execution of Christ.
    - c. He turned away from his question and rendered his verdict
- D. Pilate's verdict, "*I find in him no fault at all*" - **18:38b****
- E. Pilate sent Jesus to Herod**
1. According to Luke's gospel, Jesus was sent to Herod, the Roman ruler over Galilee **Luke 23:8-12**

<sup>5</sup> A.T. Robertson, *Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament*, Vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1932), 294.

<sup>6</sup> Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*, Luke and John, 366.

<sup>7</sup> Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 294.

2. Herod was in Jerusalem for the Passover feast as well - **Luke 23:7**
3. Herod *"hoped to have seen some miracle done by him"* - **Luke 23:8**
4. Herod and Pilate *"were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves"* - **Luke 23:12**

F. Herod returned Jesus to Pilate - **Luke 23:11**

## THE SECOND ROMAN TRIAL BEFORE PILATE (18:39-19:16)

### A. Release of Barabbas - 18:39-40

**18:39** "But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? **40** Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber."

1. The Romans would release one prisoner to the Jews at this feast - **18:39**
  - a. The origin of this custom is unknown
  - b. Perhaps it was done to keep relations between the Jews and Romans peaceable
2. The rejection of Christ
  - a. *"Will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?"*
  - b. The Jews chose Barabbas - **18:40**
    - i. He was *"a robber"*
    - ii. According to Luke 23:19, he was in prison *"for a certain sedition...and for murder"*
    - iii. Fulfillment of Isaiah 53:3
    - iv. Peter's statement in Acts 3:14

### B. Jesus is scourged - 19:1

**19:1** "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him."

1. "Among the Romans it was customary to scourge or whip a slave before he was crucified. This was done to inflict greater suffering than crucifixion would be alone, and to add to the horrors of the punishment."<sup>8</sup>
2. Fulfillment of Isaiah 50:6
3. Luke tells us that Pilate's motivation behind the scourging was to appease the Jews and release Christ - **Luke 23:16**

### C. Jesus mocked and beaten - 19:2-3

**19:2** "And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, **3** And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands."

1. They made a crown of thorns to inflict further pain and mock our Lord
2. *"They put on him a purple robe"*
3. They mockingly worshipped Jesus, *"Hail, King of the Jews!"*
4. *"They smote him with their hands"*

<sup>8</sup> Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*, Luke and John, 366.

**D. Pilate repeated his verdict - 19:4-5**

**19:4** “Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. **5** Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!”

1. He repeated what he said in John 18:38
2. He presented Christ to the crowd, “*Behold the man!*”

**E. The bloodthirsty crowd - 19:6a**

**19:6a** “When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.”

**F. Pilate repeated his verdict - 19:6b**

**19:6b** “Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.”

1. It’s obvious that Pilate was trying every avenue possible to keep from having Jesus killed
2. Pilate tried to put Jesus’ crucifixion on the Jews
  - a. “*Take ye him*”. Pilate’s second attempt to put the death of Jesus on someone else
  - b. “*And crucify him*”

**G. The Jewish verdict - 19:7**

**19:7** “The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.”

1. His crime. Blasphemy.
2. His punishment. Death. - **Leviticus 24:16; Deuteronomy 13:1-5**

**H. Pilate’s sixth question, “*Whence art thou?*” - 19:8-9**

**19:8** “When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; **9** And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.”

1. Jesus gave him no answer
2. He had already answered in John 18:36

**I. Pilate’s seventh question - 19:10**

**19:10** “Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?”

1. “*Speakest thou not unto me?*” “Are you not going to answer?”
2. “*Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee*” - **10:18**
3. “*And have power to release thee?*”

**J. Jesus’ answer - 19:11**

**19:11** “Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.”

1. “You couldn’t have power against me unless it is given from heaven”
2. God, in His providence, had worked these events out for the ultimate end of sacrificing His Son
3. The “*greater sin*” is a reference to the Jews who turned Him over to Pilate in spite of the substantial evidence of His identity as the Messiah

**K. The pressure from the Jews - 19:12-14**

**19:12** “And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. **13** When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. **14** And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!”

1. The Jews tried to manipulate Pilate
  - a. Their Jewish accusation against Jesus was blasphemy
  - b. Their “Roman” accusation was sedition, “*Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar*” - 19:12
2. Jesus is presented to the Jews again, “*Behold your King!*” - 19:14

**L. The bloodthirsty mob, “*Away with him, away with him, crucify him*” - 19:15a**

**19:15a** “But they cried out, *Away with him, away with him, crucify him.*”

**M. Pilate’s eight question, “*Shall I crucify your King?*” - 19:15b**

**19:15b** “Pilate saith unto them, *Shall I crucify your King?* The chief priests answered, *We have no king but Caesar.*”

**N. Pilate gives in to the pressure from the Jews - 19:16a**

**19:16a** “Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified.”

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**LIFE LESSONS**

1. Remember His wounds for your transgressions! - **Isaiah 53:5**
2. Be thankful that He was willing to endure the suffering!