

The Man Who Is God

“The Man And Pilate”

VPB 06/03/12 & 06/10/12

Vineland Park Baptist Church

Primary John 18:28-40 **Also:** Matthew 27:19-20 / Mark & Luke’s accounts

Sermon Point: *To examine the accounts of the trial of Jesus before the Roman Procurator Pontus Pilate and Herod Antipas and the motivations of these men in proceeding with the unjust prosecution of the Lord Jesus Christ, even though there was no evidence of wrong doing against Him. Also, to show that the motivations of these two men are still the basis for man’s rejection of Christ.*

The Sanhedrin had their charges and had their Man. They no longer needed proof or the false witnesses because they had Jesus by His own words.

“Tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God” “I Am”.

From the very beginning of His ministry the Jewish leaders had sought to silence Him because He was a threat to their enterprises and to their domination of the Jewish people.

The Pharisees ruled the Jewish people in every area of their lives. With the perversion of the law and the many rules and regulations that they had added to it there was not many areas of life that they did not control.

Similar to the false gospel of today. “If you do as we say, give as we say, participate as we say then you’re going to be successful and enjoy a happy and prosperous life. If you don’t you’ll not know the happiness that God wants you to have and experience.

For the Pharisees the power was addicting and the money was good and they did not want anything or anyone changing or affecting their dominion.

However Jesus appears on the scene preaching the Gospel of peace and the freedom from sin by the Grace of God. Fulfilling all that the Scriptures said about the Messiah and disrupting the Pharisees’ perverted endeavors.

While they were the religious authorities and theological “elites”, they should have been the ones who welcomed the Messiah and who should have been the ones helping Him with His ministry and message, they weren’t.

Just the opposite, they were the ones who had resisted Him at every opportunity. They plotted and schemed at every point trying to trip Him up, expose Him as a fraud, and eliminate Him as a threat to their perverted religious philosophies.

Yet they had been unsuccessful in everything they tried because, as our Lord said many times, "My time has not yet come".

They had seen Him and watched Him throughout His ministry even to the point that they may have been one of the best authorities on Who He was because they had watched His every move. *(The devil can quote Scripture better than anyone).*

They had watched as He performed miracles that only God could do. They had heard His preaching and seen the many lives that were changed by His Grace and compassion and yet it had no impact on them at all.

They had tried to kill Him on several occasions only to see Him elude them and go on about His ministry. There were even areas of the region that He would not go to because of their threat to His life.

It even got to the point that it was the main focus of the Pharisees to eliminate Jesus.

John 11:47-48 *Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. 48 "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."*

The opportunity had now presented itself and they finally had Him. And they had the proof because He had committed the sin of sins in claiming to be the Son of God. Although all the evidence they had seen backed up His claim they didn't care.

Now they had Him but there was a problem. What could they do with or to Him other than the physical abuse and horrific blasphemy that they were committing against Him?

They wanted Him dead! But they were powerless to do anything because under Roman authority and law they were not allowed to put anyone to death.

John 18:31B *"We are not permitted to put anyone to death"*

Plus they didn't want to be the ones to do it anyway. They wanted to be able to tell the people that they had not killed Him. That the Romans had tried Him legally and found Him guilty and it was they who had determined Him worthy of death. *(Their hypocrisy knows no bounds).*

So where do they go from here? They had their proof for the Jewish people in case they were questioned. "He has blasphemed and claims to be the Son of God" they would say. And according to Jewish law that wasn't good and He would be worthy of death.

However they didn't only want Him worthy of death they wanted Him dead and there was only one way for that to happen.

They only had one choice since they could not kill Him, and that was to take Him to Pilate the governor and convince him to execute Jesus. So they held a meeting and decided that this was their only choice.

Matthew 27:1-2 *Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death; 2 and they bound Him, and led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate the governor. *Mark says it was the whole Council that held a consultation. (Mk. 15:1)*

So after considering all the options that they had and carefully consulting with everyone on the Council they decided to take Jesus to the Romans because that was the only way to make sure that He was eliminated while being able to claim no responsibility themselves.

Note: *Now they hated the Romans and hated Pilate, resisting them at every point and opportunity. However the saying “the enemy of your enemy is your friend” would play true on this day. Although they would never claim to be friends with the Romans only using them to accomplish their will.*

Now other than the Lord Jesus there are three major players if you will on this morning.

1. The Pharisees
2. Herod Antipas
3. Pontus Pilate

There are also three very important lessons or applications here as well.

1. A refusal to acknowledge a truth seen when the Gospel is plainly evident.
2. An anticipation not realized leading to the rejection of the Gospel and discounting it as useless.
3. The caring more about worldly positions and possessions than the truth of the Gospel.

Note: *Now we’re going to examine this not in an exposition due to the large amount of Scripture text but rather examine the events of this morning as they unfold.*

1. The Pharisees:

So the scene opens up early in the morning with the Jewish leaders taking a bound Jesus to Pilate the governor. They took Him to the governor’s home which was called the Praetorium which also served as a judgment hall. **(John 18:28)**

Note: *Mark says this took place after a conference (Mark 15:1). Also Luke says that the “whole body” brought Jesus to Pilate. (Luke 23:1)*

Again this was a planned event and not just a “knee jerk” decision. The entire body of the Sanhedrin conferred and considered their best options and decided to take Jesus to Pilate, which was their only choice if they wanted Him dead. *(All taking place with a bound, beaten, and bloody Jesus waiting. Remember He is the Man Who is God.)*

Now as they arrive at the Praetorium, right off their hypocrisy is again seen because they won't enter the Praetorium because in doing so would defile them and prevent them from eating the Passover. This was more Rabbinical tradition than Scriptural.

**Note: Jesus and His disciples had already observed the Passover meal the evening before. Galilean Jews and Judean Jews observed it on different days.*

So they would scheme and conspire to murder the Lord Jesus while maintaining a public face of religious piety. (*Isn't that still true in our day?*)

Now the Pharisees knew that their charge of Jesus claiming to be God or the Son of God would carry no weight with the Romans because they didn't care at all about that. So they had to make the charge and show that His claim was a threat to Cesar and the Roman authority.

Their accusations against Jesus:

A) A threat to the stability of the Roman government:

***Luke 23:2** And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King."*

Here they begin their accusations against Jesus accusing Him of trying to disrupt the Roman system and challenge their authority. They knew that this would get the attention of Pilate and the Roman authorities if they could show Him as a threat to their rule.

But what did Jesus really say:

***Matthew 22: 15-21** **15** Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said. **16** And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any. **17** "Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?" **18** But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? **19** "Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius. **20** And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" **21** They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's."*

So this claim was a bold faced lie that had no merit. But it didn't matter to them if it took lies to rid themselves of Jesus. They would do whatever they needed to. They were truly the hypocrites that Jesus had said in the text.

Remember that Jesus is standing right here when they said this and He did not open His mouth to rebuke them in their lie.

Note: If you'll examine the text in each Gospel writers narrative you'll find that Jesus never answered when accused falsely. Not one time did He utter a word. However every time He is asked about Who He is He answers. (Jim Gunn)

B) They had already determined Him to be guilty:

John 18: 29B-30 (Pilate asked) "What accusation do you bring against this Man?" **30** They answered and said to him, "If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you."

A general answer that had no basis of fact. They insinuated that Pilate should just trust their words and comply with the death of Jesus. Also they knew that Pilate would have no choice but to do as they wanted. (We'll see this later when we talk about Pilate's roll.)

C) That not complying with their demands was a sign of disloyalty to Caesar:

John 18:12B "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar."

John 18:15B ".....We have no king but Caesar."

However they had said in John 8:

John 8:33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone....."

But they were willing to compromise this in order to get what they wanted from Pilate and see to the death of Jesus.

They had resorted to lies and half-truths in order to get what they wanted.

They had seen His truth and watched His every move and yet it had come down to this. They refused to see and only had their own sinful desires and lusts in their hearts that were so consumed that they could not see the truth.

O, beloved don't turn your back on the Gospel when it's presented. When you see the truth don't turn and walk away. Can you see what it brings a person to?

Not only a refusal of the truth but a hate of it as well! When one refuses the Gospel and turns their backs on it there is no hope!

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

And these people here had the Truth and the Life right in front of them and still refused to see It!

2. Herod:

Now I want to move to Herod's encounter with Jesus and see what took place when Jesus was sent to him because I want to deal with Pilate all at one time but I do want to preface Jesus being sent to Herod by Pilate.

What took place is that Pilate wanted to have nothing to do with this situation with Jesus and he tried at every point to back away from it.

However, he was in a very bad predicament because he could not afford to anger the Jewish leaders and risk a major issue that would end up back in Rome and possibly cause him a problem with Caesar.

He began immediately to try and find a way out of the situation and fairly early on he found out that Jesus was possibly a Galilean so he saw a way out of this whole affair.

Luke 23:4-7 *Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man." 5 But they kept on insisting, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee even as far as this place." 6 When Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. 7 And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time.*

Galilee was outside of Pilate's jurisdiction so if Jesus had come from there and had been living in and around there He was Herod's problem to deal with. Also Herod was in Jerusalem at the time so it was very convenient to just push it off on him.

Herod Antipas was the man who had murdered John the Baptist and he had an interest in seeing Jesus.

Luke 9:9 *Herod said, "I myself had John beheaded ; but who is this man about whom I hear such things?" And he kept trying to see Him (Jesus).*

Herod was part of the Herodian dynasty and he was known as King Herod and by the nickname *Antipas*. He was the ruler of the Galilee and Perea regions in the first century. He also had the title of Tetrarch which means "ruler of a quarter".

His father was Herod the Great who had tried to deceive the Wise Men and eventually tried to kill Jesus having all the male children two years old and younger murdered. **(Matthew 2:1-18)**

Herod Antipas' home town where his palace was located was the city of Tiberias. The palace was about 10 years old and had been built on ancient burial grounds so the Jews of the day considered it defiled and would not enter it.

There is no record of Jesus ever being there even though it was close to Capernaum where Jesus had spent a lot of time. So Herod would be very familiar with Jesus since they were from the same region of the country. (*Tiberias and Capernaum were both on the shore of the Sea of Galilee*).

He also had a curiosity about Jesus as we saw above in Luke 9:9. Also even though he had John the Baptist murdered, Mark 6:20 states that Herod used to enjoy listening to him.

But he was a dastardly individual who had married his half-brother Philip's wife and who lusted after her daughter to the point that he killed John the Baptist at her request. (**See Mk. 6:14-29**)

Note: According to historical writers In 39 AD Herod Antipas was accused by his nephew Agrippa I of conspiracy against the new Roman emperor Caligula who eventually sent Antipas into exile in Gaul. Accompanied there by Herodias, he died at an unknown date.

Now what did he want to see Jesus for? Was he a seeker of the truth or did he see himself a guilty sinner in need of a Savior? Did he want to understand Jesus better?

No, he wanted to see Jesus perform a miracle or a magic trick of some sort. He had heard about Jesus and was curious about Him from an entertainment standpoint not from a real desire to hear the truth.

The text states that: "*Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him*" (**Luke 23:8**) **Note:** Luke is the only writer who tells of the encounter with Herod.

But as it turned out after questioning Jesus and receiving no reply from Him Herod began to make fun of Him and treat Him with contempt and mock Him.

Contempt (ex-oo-then-eh'-o) = to make of no account, utterly despise. IOW to consider useless and worthless.

Mocking (emp-ahead'-zo) = to play with, trifle with, or deceive and trick.

**Same word used in describing how the Magi had tricked Herod the Great. (Mt. 2:16)*

Root: (paheed'zo) = to play with like a child, to make a joke of something, to sport or jest hilariously.

Remember what Jesus would have looked like by this time. Face swollen, blood and spit dried and caked on His face and hair, He was dirty sweaty. He would have looked like anything but a King or a miracle worker and this would have only added to their fun.

After this Herod put a "gorgeous" robe on Him and sent Him back to Pilate.

Now this act is significant because it was done to add to Jesus' shame and embarrassment. With the whole Council being at the home of Pilate when Jesus is sent to Herod this would have drawn the

attention of a lot of people. Plus Pilate would have added a Roman guard or escort to make sure that Jesus arrived at Herod.

By the time Jesus was sent back to Pilate from Herod the crowd would have grown to a very large group. And the robe that Herod put on Him would have caused a great deal of attention.

Gorgeous (lam-pros') = shining, brilliant, splendid. Root: (lam-pas') = a torch or a flame.

So Herod's intention was to add to Jesus' shame by bringing as much attention to Him as possible as He is marched back through the streets to Pilate.

Isaiah 53:3 *He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*

Paraded as a joke through town. Worn down, horrendous looking, laughed at, made fun and sport of. As Isaiah said men did not esteem Him (give Him any worthwhile value). (**Isaiah 53:3**)

Now there wasn't anything that Herod could do to Jesus because he didn't have any jurisdiction in Jerusalem. He just had an opportunity to have a little fun.

O, beloved a person can be genuinely curious, enjoy listening to the truth, and happy at the anticipation of it and still be lost.

One can even seem to be committed to the Gospel but after a while it just doesn't live up to their expectations and they abandon the truth.

An anticipation not realized leading to the rejection of the Gospel and discounting it as useless

On this day Herod and Pilate became friends. Former foes are now in agreement in their rejection of the truth.

Is He of value to you? Or is He just a point of curiosity?

Part 2, Before Pilate and Condemned (06/10/12):

Beginning Notes: This is the 14th sermon in this series and the 11th since Jesus entered the garden. Through these sermons I have tried to bring the picture of the suffering Savior. How He suffered not only publically but inwardly. How He anguished as He faced the anger of God for sin. Also in the last few sermons since His "arrest" how He was subjected to physical abuse and public humiliation.

As we move forward in this study today I want to assume that you have all these things in mind because I want to focus here more on the events as they unfold. How the people of Jerusalem who were present when these events took place reacted to them and contributed to the decision made by Pontius Pilate to execute the Son of God.

There are so many different sermons in this portion of Scripture that it would take months and probably years to expound on all of them if exhausting them would even be possible.

I want to show how the providence of God which is part of His eternal Being purposed events in history to bring about the death of the Lord Jesus Christ at the time in history when He was on the earth.

There are no circumstances involved in the events of the death of Christ happened by accident or was just mere chance. Every person who participated in these events was here for a reason and even some who had lived and died before they even happened, were contributors to these events.

However we don't need to lose sight of the fact that Jesus is the Man Who is God.

(Last study covered numbers 1 & 2 in both categories) *Very short review.

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Part 2, Pilate:

Introduction to Part 2:

Psalm 22:14-18 *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death. 16 For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. 17 I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; 18 they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.*

This is the Psalm of the cross, the Psalm of the suffering Messiah, the Psalm of Christ the Savior that describes His suffering as He pays the penalty for sin. Written centuries / millennia before the event happened in Jerusalem in approximately 29 AD.

Isaiah 53:5 *He was pierced through for our transgressions. (Some 700 years before the event)*

Matthew 20:17-19 *As Jesus was about to go up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them, **18** "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, **19** and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up."*

So we see that the Messiah was to die by the method of crucifixion and that even centuries before the event took place prophesy assured its occurrence.

How was all this going to happen? How would it be that the Messiah would die by crucifixion, the most heinous and horrible mode of execution ever devised by man? What would assure that this would take place?

The Providence of God in the Death of Christ:

In the year 63 BC, approximately 59 years before the birth of Christ, the Roman general Pompey the Great (106 BC-48 BC) conquered Jerusalem and made the Jewish kingdom a client of Rome. In 40 BC-39 BC, Herod the Great (73 BC-4 BC) was appointed "*King of the Jews*" by the Roman Senate.

Note: *The term "King of the Jews"; Pilate may have been familiar with the term. Every Gospel writer records this question. (John 18:33, Luke 23:3, Mark 15:2, Mt. 27:11)*

However in 6 AD, when the Lord Jesus was about 10 years old, the last political leadership of Judea was deposed by the emperor Caesar Augustus (Gaius Octavius Thurinus, ruled Roman Empire for 42 years 27 BC-14 AD). At that time the Judean territories were annexed and came under direct Roman administration.

While this would mean many things it established strict Roman rule in society especially when it came to handing down punishment to Jewish citizens pertaining to, what we would call, capital offenses.

The Jewish authorities would no longer be allowed to pronounce the death sentence to offenders.

John 18:31 *So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death,"*

The Roman method of execution was crucifixion when it came to criminals who were subjects of occupied territories.

Crucifixion was used for slaves, pirates, and enemies of the state of Rome. It was considered a most shameful and disgraceful way to die. Condemned Roman citizens were usually exempt from crucifixion (like nobles from hanging, dying more honorably by decapitation). However there were exceptions for major crimes against the state, such as high treason.

Crucifixion was in use at a high rate among the Romans from about the 6th century BC to the 4th century AD. In the year 337, Emperor Constantine I abolished crucifixion in the Roman Empire.

However in the time of our Lord Jesus crucifixion was the mode of execution for “non-Roman” offenders.

John 18:32 “to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.”

So the providence of God has put in place the method by which the Savior would die.
“A Holy God used the wickedness of sinful men to accomplish His purpose.” (Jim Gables)

Bringing about at the exact time in history through the acts of sinful men the circumstances that would come about to accomplish His will and that would make it a certainty that the death of the Messiah would be by crucifixion.

Proverbs 16:33 *the lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD.*

Jesus and Pilate:

Pontius Pilate was known as the “Perfect” of the Roman province of Judaea, the fifth man to hold the office. He held title from 26 to 36 AD, mostly during the rule of Emperor Tiberius.
Perfect = *the one put in charge.*

Pilate was the man who had to deal with Jesus and He had been brought to him very early in the morning of this terrible day by the members of the Sanhedrin. (**Luke 23:1, Jn. 18:28, Mk. 15:1**)

Jesus was subject to five “trials” on this day and the evening prior.

1. Annas, **2.** Sanhedrin, **3.** Pilate (first time), **4.** Herod, **5.** Pilate (second time)

So if you remember from our last study Pilate had already seen Jesus on this morning. He had already told the Jewish leaders that he did not find any fault in Jesus. (Luke 23:4)

He found out that Jesus was a Galilean and thought he could push Him off on Herod since it was his jurisdiction. So he sent Jesus to Herod hoping that would be the last time he saw Him.

Pilate wanted no part in this event. He tried at every point to avoid this and over and over again tried to release Jesus. However in the end he could not do it. (If you remember I’ve told you that these people could do anything to Jesus they wanted to except release Him.)

When we left off in our last study Jesus had been send back to Pilate by Herod who only had an idle curiosity in Him. Remember when he got no response from Jesus he dressed Him in a “gorgeous” robe and sent Him back? (See notes pg. 8) *Gorgeous (lam-pros’)* = *shining, brilliant, splendid.*

Now what this did besides add to the suffering and humiliation of our Lord was that it attracted a large crowd of people. He contributed to making a spectacle of Jesus that would insure curiosity. Not that Herod was that smart. He just wanted to make a joke of our Lord.

There was already a fair sized crowd that had brought Jesus to Pilate the first time.

Mark 15:1 *Early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the **whole** Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate.*

Luke 23:1 *Then the **whole body** of them got up and brought Him before Pilate.*

Luke's word: *hap'-as = the whole, all together. Root (pas) = each, every, everyone.*

The Crowd After Jesus Left Herod:

It's not so early now and the city is starting to stir. People are out going about their business. So seeing this large crowd and Jesus standing out like He did served to ignite their curiosity. So as people do they followed to see what was going on.

Jesus was well known in the city and He had just made His triumphal entry a week before so there were not many people who had not at least heard about Him. So seeing Him as He is now only adds to their curiosity and the crowd begins to swell. Also remember that it's Passover and the city is packed with people.

This is going to be very important in a little while and serve to again accomplish Gods providential Will.

Having Jesus sent to Herod was not a mistake or an accident of opportunity!

Now to Pilate:

Why would Pilate, the governor and Roman authority in Jerusalem, not just merely tell the Jewish leaders to shut up and leave Jesus alone? A Man in whom he found no guilt whatsoever. A Man whom he knew was handed over to him because of the envy of the Jewish leaders. **(Mark 15:10)**

Luke 23: 13-16: *Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people, **14** and said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and behold, having examined Him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him. **15** "No, nor has Herod, for he sent Him back to us; and behold, nothing deserving death has been done by Him. **16** "Therefore I will punish Him and release Him."*

Again why would Pilate then punish a Man who he knew to be innocent?

Pilate was trying to satisfy their thirst for blood while at the same time he would be able to maintain his position as the authority of Rome. He thought if they saw Jesus scourged they would be satisfied and he (Pilate) would be off the hook.

You see Pilate was more concerned about his position in life and his standing with Rome than he was about Jesus. He could have cared less about Jesus from the very beginning.

He had already tried to get them to deal with Jesus when he seemingly gave them permission to execute Him themselves. **John 18:31***"Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law."*

But they threw it right back at him reminding him that they could not execute a person. Not that they wouldn't have been willing to kill Jesus they wanted to make it look like they had no part in it.

Every time Pilate tried to release Jesus something happened to keep him from doing it. Mostly because he didn't want a problem with the Jewish leaders to cause him problems in Rome.

Pilate had already had a few major incidents with the Jewish population that had caused him problems with Rome and he did not want this to turn in to another one and it was about to. The Pharisees and the crowd were becoming more and more insistent and he was running out of options.

Problems with the Jews:

While Pilate's predecessors had respected Jewish customs by removing all images and effigies on their standards when entering Jerusalem, Pilate allowed his soldiers to bring them into the city at night. When the citizens of Jerusalem discovered these the following day, they appealed to Pilate to remove the likeness of Caesar from the city. After five days of deliberation, Pilate had his soldiers surround the demonstrators, threatening them with death, which they were willing to accept rather than submit to desecration of Mosaic law. Pilate finally removed the images.

In a similar incident in which Pilate was chastened by Emperor Tiberius after antagonizing the Jews by setting up gold-coated shields in Herod's palace in Jerusalem. The shields were ostensibly to honor Tiberius, and this time did not contain engraved images. The shields were set up not so much to honor Tiberius as to annoy the multitude. The Jews protested the installation of the shields at first to Pilate, and then, when he declined to remove them, by writing to Tiberius. Upon reading the letters, Tiberius wrote to Pilate with a host of reproaches and rebukes for his actions and told him at once take down the shields and have them transferred from the capital to Caesarea.

Pilate feared a delegation that the Jews might send to Tiberius protesting the gold-coated shields, because if they actually sent an embassy they would also expose the rest of his conduct as governor by stating in full the briberies, the insults, the robberies, the outrages and wanton injuries, the executions without trial constantly repeated, the ceaseless and supremely grievous cruelty.

So he was worried about his place in life and his wellbeing and did not want an incident to cause him more problems with Tiberius. Besides if it happened again he was likely to lose his position and possibly even his life.

So with all this he had no choice but to try to appease them. So he had Jesus scourged. **(John 19:1)**

Note: Matthew, Mark & John use the term "scourge", Luke mentions "punish". The Scriptures have little to say about this. "Pilate scourged Him"; "There they crucified Him". No description of the events.

Scourging was a horrendous act that in some cases even killed the person subjected to it. It was so vicious and caused so much damage to the external human tissue that sometime the person's internal organs were visible afterward.

And in the case of the Lord Jesus the soldiers who did this would have made sure to hurt Him as badly as possible because they knew Who He was.

After the scourging they continued their abuse and mocking of Him.

Mark 15:16-19 *The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium), and they called together the whole Roman cohort. 17 They dressed Him up in purple, and after twisting a crown of thorns, they put it on Him; 18 and they began to acclaim Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19 They kept beating His head with a reed, and spitting on Him, and kneeling and bowing before Him.*

After this Jesus was brought out to public view.

John 19: 4-5 *Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him." 5 Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold, the Man!"*

At this point Jesus would not even look human.

Isa. 52: 14 *so His appearance was marred more than any man And His form more than the sons of men.* Now again Pilate is hoping that the sight of Jesus will satisfy them, but it didn't.

John 19: 6 *So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!"*

What is in the hearts of sinful men beloved? Can we see just how much a human heart is deprived apart from the Grace of God?

Pilate tries to use the release of a prisoner at the Passover. Hoping that it would cause at least some of the crowd to ask for the release of Jesus.

Matthew 27: 15-17 *now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the people any one prisoner whom they wanted. 16 At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. 17 So when the people gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you? Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?"*

Pilate is trying everything he can to release Jesus. (**Luke 23:20** says that he wanted to release Jesus)

He wanted to release Him, he had the authority to release Him, and he had pretty much made up his mind to release Him.

But then something very interesting happens.

Matthew 27:19-20 *While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him."*

Now a man in any situation may not be able to be interfered with but you get that man's wife involved and it changes the whole thing.

What this served to do was to distract Pilate giving the Jewish leaders enough time to stir up the crowd and have them ask for Barabbas and demand Jesus' death.

Matthew 27:20 *But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death*

By the time Pilate's attention was back on the situation it was completely out of hand. You see what an important role that the crowd that began to gather in earnest during the trip back to Pilate from Herod now plays in this situation?

Matthew 27: 21-26 *but the governor said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." 22 Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Crucify Him!" 23 And he said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they kept shouting all the more, saying, "Crucify Him!" 24 When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this Man's blood; see to that yourselves." 25 And all the people said, "His blood shall be on us and on our children!" 26 Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.*

He was challenged again by the Jewish leaders insinuating that he would be committing an act of treason if he released Jesus.

John 19: 12: *....."If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar."*

So they took Him out and they crucified Him.

Pilate could have stopped it. He could have refused to comply with the demands of the Jewish leaders. But in the end he was like so many other people.

Our third point of application:

The caring more about worldly positions and possessions than the truth of the Gospel.

So they crucified Him. They watched Him die. And they were finally rid of Him.

The Scriptures tell us the when Jesus said “It is finished” that the vial of the temple was torn from top to bottom. Exposing the Holy of Holies.

I wonder how many of the Pharisees were in the temple when that happened.

Man now had access to God.

However there was price for denying the Gospel and for executing the Blessed Lord Jesus.

Jewish Nation:

In 70 AD:

A man names Titus, *Titus Flavius Caesar Vespasianus Augustus, (39-81 AD, Roman Emperor 79-81 AD)* destroyed much of Jerusalem and much of the population was killed or dispersed. Josephus claims that 1,100,000 people were killed during the siege, of which a majority was Jewish. 97,000 were captured and enslaved. The temple was completely destroyed.

In 135 AD:

A man named Hadrian, *Publius Aelius Traianus Hadrianus Augustus, (76-138 AD, Roman Emperor 117–138 AD)* completely obliterated what was left of Jerusalem. Killing over 580,000 Jews, destroying 50 towns and 985 villages. After the siege Hadrian only allowed the Jews to bury their dead after a period of six days.

He attempted to root out Judaism, which he saw as the cause of continuous rebellions, prohibited the Torah law, the Hebrew calendar and executed Judaic scholars. The sacred scroll was ceremonially burned on the Temple Mount. In an attempt to erase the memory of Judaea, he renamed the province Syria Palaestina (after the Philistines), and Jews were forbidden from entering its rededicated capital.

Roman Nation:

In 313 *Constantine I (Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus Augustus (272-337 AD, Roman Emperor 306-337 AD)* converted to Christianity giving birth to what came know was the Church of Rome or the Roman Catholic Church. Through the coming centuries this “church” would pervert the true Gospel into a works based religion, led by a man called the Pope. Through the dark ages it would oppose the true Gospel for a thousand years* and become a formidable foe of the true church; murdering many who stood for the truth. **Opposition continues today.*

However God would raise up men who would bring about the great Protestant Reformation during the period of Renaissance in the 14th through the 18th centuries. Through them He would bring to light again the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. Men who stood face to face with death, imprisonment, and harm brought on by those who considered themselves religious. Showing again, as in the time of our Lord, religion is not always a sign of the true knowledge of God.

We, as believers in the Gospel of Grace, sit here today as “decedents” if you will from these brave men who stood for the truth of the Gospel. The Gospel that was perverted by a nation that stood by and allowed the murder of the Lord Jesus around the year 29 AD. While God’s Will was being accomplished as His Providence intended, responsibility of the actions of sinful men fell completely on their shoulders.

O beloved, can we see the price that men and nation pay in rejecting the Gospel?

Do you know Him?

Seek Him!

-Amen

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