

Sunday, April 17, 2022—Pontius Pilate & The Execution of Jesus

### **Mark 15:1-5**

- **1) And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried [him] away, and delivered [him] to Pilate.**
- **2) And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest [it].**
- **3) And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.**
- **4) And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.**
- **5) But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.**
- Mark 15:1—“straightway” or immediately after standing before the whole Jewish council Jesus was delivered to stand before Pilate. This verse picks up the chronology in Mark 14:64-65 before the discussion of Peter’s denial in verses 66-72. Having found Jesus guilty of blasphemy and therefore worthy of death the Jewish council brings Jesus to Pilate the Roman governor.
  - Luke 3:1—Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea.
  - Luke 13:1— Pilate had people executed while they were offering sacrifices. Therefore, he was not sympathetic to Judaism. Pilate should be viewed as a cold, callous man.
- Mark 15:2-5—Pilate asks Jesus, “Art thou the King of the Jews?” Initially Jesus responded by saying, “Thou sayest it.” Upon hearing Christ’s response, the chief priest proceed to accuse Jesus of “many things” in verse three to which Jesus says nothing. In verse four, Pilate upon hearing the accusations of the Jewish elders asks Jesus, “Answerest thou nothing?” According to verse five, Jesus kept his silence and answered nothing, thereby causing Pilate to marvel.
  - John 18:29-30— this is an evasive response. The Jews’ reason for why Christ is detained is "we wouldn't have arrested him if he hadn't done something." The Jewish leadership does not have a good reason, or they would have said it. Pilate may be spiritually blind but recognized that his question was being avoided.
  - John 18:31— Pilate responds to the Jews’ evasion by saying, “Okay if you don’t want to give me the information, I obviously need to make a judgment, then go handle it yourself.” The Jews respond that they need Pilate because they can’t put people to death.
  - Acts 13:28-- The Jews know they are delivering the LJC without any basis. They just want him dead. It is one thing to say that so and so is a bad apple that needs to be punished without providing specifics. It is quite another to say that so and so should be put to death and not provide any specifics. There are lots of crimes that are not punishable by death. If one is seeking the death penalty, one ought to be able to articulate

the basis for why the person should receive the death penalty. This situation is very odd, and Pilate no doubt recognized it as being such.

- John 18:33-35— Pilate has no idea who is before him. It is not that Pilate is hostile to Christ. It is that he has no idea who he is.
- Matthew 27:13-14— what Pilate does is ask the LJC what is going on. The LJC does not respond. The natural human instinct is to offer a defense. Pilate marvelled at Christ's silence in the face of accusation. Pilate has been presented with quite an extraordinary situation. He is trying to figure out what is going on. The Jews want the death penalty for a crime they can't specify, and the accused won't say anything.
- Luke 23:4-5—Pilate found no fault in Christ.
- Luke 23:6-7— Pilate sends Christ to Herod, who has jurisdiction over Galilee. Matt 2:22 Christ is a Galilean. This is not simply an act of deference to another official. It is an attempt to avoid having to resolve the issue.
- Luke 23:8-12—Jesus does not answer Herod either. Herod does not hesitate to mock Christ and put a robe upon him.
- Luke 23:13-16— after Herod returns Christ to Pilate, Pilate states that neither Pilate nor Herod has found any fault in Christ. Pilate says that he will chastise Christ, whom he has just found innocent and release him.
- John 19:4-5— Pilate presents Christ to them with the crown of thorns and a robe and declares that he can find no fault with Christ. This is outrageous and again demonstrates that Pilate does not really care about the truth or about justice. If there is no fault in Christ, it is wrong to punish him with the crown of thorns and mock him with the purple robe. Notice that Pilate understands Christ simply to be a man. Innocent but a man.
- John 19:6— Pilate says there is no basis for what the Jews want.
- John 19:7-8— finally, the truth comes out as to why the Jews want Christ crucified – the LJC claims to be God. Notice that Pilate was already afraid. Pilate is not afraid in the sense that someone is going to harm him. He is afraid because he is caught up in something that he doesn't quite understand, and he is fearful about how to handle it. Recall Pilate was not troubled by mingling the blood of Galileans with their sacrifices – he is not a man given to qualms about whether he is doing the right thing. This is a dramatic moment. All of the sudden Pilate realizes that this might be worse than he ever imagined. He might not simply be dealing with an innocent man. Pilate previously felt some fear because he understood he was dealing with an innocent man. Pilate now realizes the LJC may be much more than simply an innocent man. When Pilate learns that

Christ claims to be God, he is afraid. What that tells you is that Pilate did not consider the claim to be wholly frivolous.

- Matthew 27:18-19-- Pilate's wife told him to have nothing to do with Christ because of her dream. Pilate's wife is not a believer. She just knows that the LJC is a just man. She has a dream and is so troubled by it that she tells Pilate not to have anything to do with the LJC. This was good advice.
- John 19:9-11— Pilate is wondering about the LJC's origin. Pilate implores/threatens the LJC to tell Pilate what is going on. When the LJC finally speaks, it is the equivalent of a knockout punch. The LJC states that Pilate has no real power but what God has given him AND that Pilate is on the verge of committing a major sin. This is a massive rebuke by the LJC. Without specifically stating that he is the Son of God, the LJC answers with such assurance, such clarity, such power and such equanimity that it demonstrates beyond doubt that he is the Son of God.
- John 19:12-- Pilate is immediately convinced that he needs to find a way to release Christ. Pilate is convinced that the LJC is correct in what he said about Pilate's sin. Pilate should unilaterally release the LJC at this point. But Pilate is fearful of being portrayed as disloyal to Caesar.
- Acts 3:13—Pilate was determined to find a way to release Christ.
- John 19:13— If it were a crazy man claiming to be King of the Jews, Pilate would not need to fear being portrayed as sympathetic to the Jews. But the LJC looks like the real thing. Pilate allows himself to be manipulated by the insinuation that he is disloyal to Caesar.

### **Mark 15:6-15**

- **6) Now at [that] feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.**
- 7) And there was [one] named Barabbas, [which lay] bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.**
- 8) And the multitude crying aloud began to desire [him to do] as he had ever done unto them.**
- 9) But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?**
- 10) For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.**
- 11) But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.**
- 12) And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do [unto him] whom ye call the King of the Jews?**
- 13) And they cried out again, Crucify him.**
- 14) Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.**

**15) And [so] Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged [him], to be crucified.**

- Mark 15:7-10—in an attempt to set Jesus free Pilate tried to present the Jews with an offer they cannot refuse. He offers them a chose between Barabbas and Jesus.
  - Matthew 27:15-18—it seems that it was customary around the time of Passover for the Roman authorizes to release a prisoner unto the Jews.
- Mark 15:11-14
  - Matthew 27:20-21—the nation of Israel wanted Barabbas over the Lord Jesus Christ.

	Barabbas	Satan
Insurrectionist / publisher of sedition	Mark 15:7 (he is the leader of the rebellion); Luke 23:18-19	Isa 14:12-14
Murderer	Luke 23:18-19	John 8:44
Robber	John 18:40	Mark 4:15

- Barabbas = son of the father. John 8:44 Ye are of your father, the devil. The nation of Israel chooses Satan and rejects Christ.
- John 19:15— Pilate refers to Christ as the King of the Jews. Israel chooses Caesar as their king.

### **Conclusion**

- Mark 15:15—Pilate being more willing to make the people content than to execute justice released Barabbas and delivered Jesus to be crucified.
- Luke 23:23-24
- Matthew 27:24—this is an attempt to disclaim responsibility, but the fact is it was Pilate’s decision to make. Pilate washes his hands to try to soothe his conscience.
- Acts 4:26-28— God had already determined beforehand what he wanted to occur. Pilate doesn’t have the strength to stand against the consensus of the world. Perhaps the reason that the LJC remains silent is that God’s word can empower a man to stand against the consensus of the world.