

John 18vs28- 19vs16

The Truth, the whole Truth, and
nothing but the Truth – the Trial

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John 18v28 - 19v16

We will start this study by reading through the whole of Jesus' trial. A key thing to notice is the way in which John stresses the choreography of movement that Pilate is made to go through as these events unfold:

Read John 18v28 – 19v16: *Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³⁰ They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." ³¹ Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." ³² This was to fulfil the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.*

³³ So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." ³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world— to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him. ³⁹ But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" ⁴⁰ They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. ² And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. ³ They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. ⁴ Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." ⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" ⁶ When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." ⁷ The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." ⁸ When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. ⁹ He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered

me over to you has the greater sin.”

¹² From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.” ¹³ So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgement seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” ¹⁵ They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” ¹⁶ So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

Do you notice the choreography of movement that Pilate ends up going through?

- v29: Pilate goes outside his headquarters to talk to the Jews
- v33: Pilate enters his headquarters to talk to Jesus
- v38b: Pilate goes back outside to the Jews
- ch 19 v 1: Pilate (implied) goes back into his headquarters and has Jesus flogged
- ch 19 v 4: Pilate goes back outside again to the Jews
- ch 19 v 9: Pilate enters his headquarters again to talk to Jesus!
- ch 19 v 13: Pilate again goes outside his headquarters to talk to the Jews

It's all believable detail and shows the complexity and the dilemma! It gives us no less than seven “scenes” at the trial of Jesus.

What is the theme of each scene?

vs 28-32: A1) GUILT & THE HYPOCRISY OF THE JEWS

vs 33-38a: B1) KINGSHIP OF JESUS

vs 38b – 40: INNOCENCE OF JESUS OUR SUBSTITUTE

ch 19 vs 1-3: C) THE GUILT OF MAN VS THE INNOCENT KING

ch 19 vs 4-8: INNOCENCE OF JESUS OUR SUBSTITUTE

ch 19 vs 9-11: B2) KINGSHIP OF JESUS

ch 19 vs 12-16: A2) GUILT & THE HYPOCRISY OF THE JEWS

There are 3 major issues:

- 1) The guilt and hypocrisy of the Jews and Pilate
- 2) The innocence of Jesus
- 3) The Royal identity of Jesus

Let's work through the passage scene by scene:

A1) GUILT and HYPOCRISY

Read John 18vs28-32: *Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³⁰ They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." ³¹ Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." ³² This was to fulfil the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.*

What did the religious leaders want to achieve?

- v31b: ***"It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death."***

Why can't they achieve it?

- v31b: ***"It is not lawful for us..."***

Why did the religious leaders not go into Pilate's palace?

- v28: ***... so that they would not be defiled...!!***

= TOTAL AND UTTER RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY

B1) KINGSHIP OF JESUS

Read John 18 vs33- 38a: *So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." ³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world— to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"*

How is the kingly identity of Jesus stressed?

- v33: Pilate asks Jesus straight - ***"Are you the King of the Jews?"***
- v36: Jesus explains the nature of his Kingdom:
"My kingdom is not of this world." i.e. NOT a political, earthly, empire.

- v37: Pilate repeats Jesus' claim - **“So you are a king?”**
- v37: Jesus verifies Pilate's statement – he is King of TRUTH! The TRUE King... whose kingdom is built on TRUTH.

C) THE GUILT OF MAN VS THE INNOCENT KING

Read John 18v38b – 19v8: *After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, “I find no guilt in him. ³⁹ But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?” ⁴⁰ They cried out again, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a robber.*

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. ² And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. ³ They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands. ⁴ Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.” ⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!” ⁶ When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.” ⁷ The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God.” ⁸ When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid.

In the 3 central “movements” of the trial we find Jesus' innocence stressed repeatedly. How is the point made?

- ✓ Found with NO GUILT:
v38 **“I find no guilt in him”**
- ✓ This is stated again:
ch 19 v 4: **“... that you may know that I find no guilt in him.”**
- ✓ Stated again:
ch 19 v 6: **“...for I find no guilt in him.”**

At the same time we find the Kingship and the substitutionary death of Jesus stressed.

How is his Kingship stressed?

- v39b: Pilate asks, **“Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?”**
- ch 19 v 2: **...a crown of thorns and... arrayed him in a purple robe.**
- ch 19 v 3: **“Hail, King of the Jews!”**

- ch 19 v 5: ***So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.***

How is his substitutionary death stressed?

Read John 18vs39-40: *“But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?”* ⁴⁰ *They cried out again, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a robber.*

The King of Truth is to die as if a robber... and a robber is to go free... and all at the request of the people!

It couldn't be clearer, could it? Jesus is to die in the place of a sinner – hence substitution.

AND it is PASSOVER! The day when the people remembered the sacrificial Lamb that had died in their place.

- What a terrible irony! The Jews who were so keen not to defile the Passover... are rejecting the real Passover Lamb!!

We also find the guilt and sin of the Jews stressed. How?

Read John 19 vs 4-5: *Pilate went out again and said to them, “See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.”* ⁵ *So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!”*

- ch 19 vs 4-7: The Jews ask for a guilty man to be free and an innocent man to die.
- They knew exactly what they were doing in demanding death for Jesus... even after he has proved that he was and IS God's Son.

B2) KINGSHIP OF JESUS

Read John 19 vs 9-11: *He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer.* ¹⁰ *So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?”* ¹¹ *Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”*

How is Jesus' Kingship stressed in these verses?

Man's authority:

v10: *So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?"*

versus

Heavenly Kingship:

v11: *Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."*

Again a clear statement: Jesus is supreme over ALL human Kingship and authority.

What impact does this have on Pilate?

v12: *From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar."*

Pilate was already afraid:

v8: *When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid.*

... Now he is on the horns of a real dilemma.

A2) GUILT and HYPOCRISY OF THE JEWS 19 vs 12-16

Read John 19vs12-16: *From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar."¹³ So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgement seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha.¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"¹⁵ They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."¹⁶ So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.*

How do these verses emphasise the guilt and hypocrisy of the Jews?

- The Jews' final statement: We would rather subject ourselves to an earthly empire (Caesar) than God's heavenly King - our Saviour!!

Read v15: *They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."*

How do these verses emphasise the guilt and hypocrisy of Pilate?

- Pilate – seeking to save his own skin - is FULLY aware that Jesus is both innocent and not claiming or trying to be a threat to Caesar.

Conclusion

Let's look at the characters we have "on the table" here:

1) A Heavenly King – in command and innocent – allowing these events and ensuring that he goes to his death, at the Passover, as an innocent victim in place of the guilty!

- Jesus' death - THE FULFILLMENT OF PASSOVER.

2) Pilate - fearing man rather than fearing God!

3) Jews/Priests – rejecting God in order to retain their own powerbase... and the hypocrisy of a life lived "bending" their own law, as well as God's law!

As Jesus goes to the Cross. all the sinful failure and compromise of humanity is exposed – as seen in Peter, Pilate and the Jews.

Together surely they sum up the whole of humanity... don't they?

To consider...

Can we see ourselves implicated in this trial of humanity?

- How might a CEO emulate Pilate today!?
- How might a disciple emulate Peter... and don't we - all the time?!
- How might today's Church leaders emulate the Chief Priests?!
- In what ways do I – weakly – fail to stand for truth?
- In what ways do I – hypocritically – deny God and prefer another king?

- Why then do we need Jesus to do what he does on the Cross?
- How is he qualified to do what he does?!
- How humble and repentant does that make us feel?!

Next time...

The Crucifixion – mission accomplished!!

[John 18v28-19v16](#)

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