

Day 1

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

Jesus Before Pilate

¹Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

Q1. Who (or what) was the Sanhedrin?

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Q2. What was the “decision” that the Sanhedrin reached?

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Q3. Who was Pilate?

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Q4. Why did they hand Jesus over to Pilate?

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²"Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate.

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

³The chief priests accused him of many things.

⁴So again Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of."

⁵But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

Q5. Why did Jesus answer Pilate’s question, but remained silent against the other accusations? (In other words, He chose to not defend Himself against those other accusations.)

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Isaiah 53:7-9 [A prophecy] He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. ⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. [Isaiah was written about 700 years before Jesus' birth.]

Q6. Were any of the accusations truthful?

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Q7. Were two witnesses important in Jewish legal proceedings?

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Deuteronomy 17:6 On the testimony of two or three witnesses a man shall be put to death, but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of only one witness.

Q8. Do you think that any of the accusations against Jesus were supported by a minimum of two witnesses?

Day 2

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⁶Now it was the custom at the Feast to release a prisoner whom the people requested.

Q9. What “Feast” was this? And what historical event did it commemorate? (See Lesson 16: Mark 14:1)

⁷A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. ⁸The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

⁹"Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate, ¹⁰knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. ¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

Q10. Would you expect a judge to be unbiased and ensure the rights of the accuser AND the accused are preserved?

Q11. As the Roman governor of Judea, what office or function was Pilate fulfilling with Jesus?

Q12. Why do you think Pilate ignored “envy” and released Barabbas instead of Jesus?

Q13. How could the chief priests have had such influence over the crowd to cause Pilate to release Barabbas?

Day 3

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

¹² "What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?" Pilate asked them.

¹³ "Crucify him!" they shouted.

Q14. Bottom-line, what was Jesus accused of doing or saying?

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Q15. What is blasphemy?

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Q16. According to Jewish law, how were blasphemers to be punished?

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Leviticus 24:13-16 Then the Lord said to Moses: ¹⁴ "Take the blasphemer outside the camp. All those who heard him are to lay their hands on his head, and the entire assembly is to stone him. ¹⁵ Say to the Israelites: 'If anyone curses his God, he will be held responsible; ¹⁶ anyone who blasphemes the name of the Lord must be put to death. The entire assembly must stone him. Whether an alien or native-born, when he blasphemes the Name, he must be put to death.

Exodus 20:3-7 [Commandments 1-3 of the Ten Commandments]

³ "You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. [(KJV) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain]

Day 4

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

¹⁴ "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

¹⁵ Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

Q17. Was there sufficient evidence against Jesus to warrant crucifixion?

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Q18. Did Pilate perform his duties as a just “judge”?

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Q19. Why did Pilate want “to satisfy the crowd”?

Q20. Do you think prisoners, such as Barabbas, might know about the great teacher Jesus?

Q21. What had Barabbas been accused of doing?

Q22. If you were Barabbas, how do you think you would have felt and reacted to your sudden freedom?

Q23. Did Jesus become a substitute for Barabbas?

Q24. Are there any sins that we have committed that Jesus’ death cannot cover?

“Crucifixion was the Roman penalty for rebellion. Only slaves or those who were not Roman citizens could be crucified. If Jesus died by crucifixion, He would die the death of a rebel and slave, not of the king He claimed to be. This is just what the Jewish religious leaders wanted, and the reason they whipped the mob into a frenzy. In addition, crucifixion would put the responsibility for killing Jesus on the Romans, and thus the crowds could not blame the religious leaders.” (The Holy Bible, New International Version [NIV] ®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Zondervan Publishing House. Life Application Study Bible, Page 1775.)

Day 5

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

¹⁶The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" ¹⁹Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Day 6

Please review this lesson and may we pray for holy guidance and insight as we consider the pain and suffering our Lord accepted for us, for you, for me.

Q25. What is the judgment for sin?

Q26. Is this a just judgment?

Q27. As a Believer in the saving grace of our Lord Christ Jesus, are we pardoned from judgment?

Romans 3:22-24 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1-2 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

Ephesians 1:13-14 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession -- to the praise of his glory.

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