



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

JOHN 18:28-40

LESSON: PILATE: WHAT IS TRUTH? — February 13, 2022

INTRODUCTION:

CHAPTER 18:25-27 It was a short time that Peter denied his Lord: "25And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself" by the fire, and those standing by asked, "Art not thou also one of his disciples? Peter denied it, and said, I am not." This is his second time denying the Lord. 26One of the servants of the high priest was kin to the one whose ear Peter cut off and said, "Did not I see you in the garden with Him?" 27After Peter had denied Jesus again, immediately the cock crowed. This is the third time Peter denies Jesus.

LESSON: I. DELIVERED TO THE GENTILES JOHN 18:28-32

18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: — Three trials occurred:

1. The first trial was before Annas, former high priest (18:12-14, 19-23).
2. The second trial was before Caiaphas, current high priest (18:24).
3. The third trial was before, Pilate, the Roman governor (18:28-32).

Now we are in the Roman governor's palace of residence.

18:28b ...and it was early; — Early morning probably means shortly after sunrise when the Sanhedrin met in formal session and pronounced its verdict on Jesus.

18:28c ...and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover. The Jews refused to enter Pilate's palace. They would not enter Gentile quarters because they didn't want to defile themselves. To enter the judgment hall would have polluted and contaminated them ceremonially and they would have been disallowed from participating in the Passover. Look at the religious leaders who had arrested an innocent man and had already broken a number of their own laws were more interested in ceremonial purity or cleanness than seeing to Jesus' innocence.

18:29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said,— The Jews despised Pilate for many reasons, yet they had to come to him for this matter. On many occasions they threatened to exercise their right to report Pilate to the emperor (even higher than Pilate). And Pilate despised the Jews in particular for their intense practice of religion, and since Pilate didn't live in Jerusalem, he had to come there by order of the Emperor Tiberius Caesar Augustus because of Passover to deal with any disturbance of Roman peace or rule. So, to accommodate the Jewish leaders, Pilate goes out to them, being sensitive to keep the peace during Passover, since the city was flooded with Jewish pilgrims.

18:29b He asks the question: **...What accusation bring ye against this man?** — This was a logical question; however, the Jews had not prepared a formal indictment. All they wanted to do was bring Jesus before the Romans, so they could find Him guilty because the Jews had no power to execute. That was the Romans job. Therefore, according to Scripture, all this had to take place. Jesus had to be delivered to the Gentiles.

18:30 They answered and said unto him, **If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered**





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him up unto thee. They wanted Pilate to accept the fact that they would not bring a person to him if he were not a malefactor (an evildoer or criminal). This is how the Jews wanted the Romans to see Jesus; not as innocent, but as a criminal.

18:31 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: — I assume that Pilate knew what was going on with Jesus and the Jews, but really didn't want to get involved. He found out for sure that the Jews really wanted to go as far as death. They wanted the Romans to judge the case and pass sentence according to Roman law because they, the Jews couldn't legally execute anyone, especially on the Sabbath or on feast days. Therefore, they wanted Pilate to pass sentence on Jesus. Normally, the Jewish leaders would have stayed clear of Pilate, but he was their only hope of carrying out the death penalty on Jesus. This is how bad they wanted this done, and how far they were willing to go.

18:32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. Jesus had told His disciples many times of what would happen to Him; regarding His death. The Jews used the method of stoning to execute criminals. If Pilate were to authorize death, it would be by means of crucifixion. The Roman's method of execution had been prophesized by Jesus. Jesus specifically said they would "crucify" Him in Matthew.

II. FACED WITH THE TRUTH JOHN 18:33-38a

18:33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? — The judgment hall was inside where Jesus was kept while he talked to the Jewish leaders outside. Pilate was able to question Jesus without the interference of the Jewish leaders. He would not examine Jesus in the crowd. ¹His question to Jesus is not have you committed a crime, but "are you king of the Jews?" John skips this part- (*but Pilate's wife had warned him of a dream she had about Jesus. She told Pilate to have nothing to do with this*). ²Pilate's question revealed doubt. He asked it because Jesus didn't look like a revolutionary or a criminal.

18:34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? — It was to say, "*Are you speaking for yourself or are you speaking on hearsay by My accusers?*" Jesus desired to know whether Pilate was asking this question for the Jews or for himself. Jesus answers by asking a question, not by giving the answer to Pilate's question. Jesus challenges Pilate to think through the issue for himself, so he could make a real decision. So, if you're going to judge Jesus, a person is responsible for his own answer, not someone else's.

18:35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? — Pilate arrogantly speaks back by saying: (*I'm going to paraphrase*): '*Am not Jew? Cause this is not my fight. Do you know who I am? This is between you and the Jews; your own nation and chief priests. They're the ones that delivered you to me.*' Jesus was before Pilate for some reason and Pilate now wants to simply know what He has done, never mind if He is king or not; never mind about His kingship!

18:36 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

¹ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/john/49.html>

² http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=2&contentID=7950&commInfo=31&topic=John
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>





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hence. Jesus now gives clarity of His kingdom. He's really saying '*yes I am a king*, because there is no kingdom without having a king; *'but my kingdom is not of this world.'* To the Romans, "king" meant a political rival. Though Jesus was a King, He was not a political rival in the sense Pilate thought. As far as Pilate could see, because Jesus told him that there were no servants fighting to prevent Him from being delivered to the Jews or anyone using force against the Jews or Romans, so Jesus' kingdom was not from here.

³Pilate may have been relieved at Jesus' answer that His kingdom was not of this world or not from here, because he didn't know which is the stronger of the two kingdoms.

[The eternal King who rules over the souls of men is mightier than an external foe with powerful armies. Rome is gone, Napoleon is gone, Hitler is gone, but the Kingdom of Jesus marches on].

We know that Jesus was speaking of a spiritual kingdom in which Pilate or the Jewish leaders could not understand, but Pilate wanted Jesus to come right out and say He is a King, from the very beginning when he asked in verse 33.

18:37 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. Now Pilate is still confused. That's why he asking again. He just wanted Jesus to admit that He is a king. With Jesus' answer, He didn't want Pilate to get hung up on kingship. But He takes time to tell Pilate about what He was born to do and why He came into the world. "To this end was I born"—not for political gain, but it shows His humanity. "...for this cause came I into the world"—means that He existed before His birth in Bethlehem, therefore indicating His deity. "...that I should bear witness unto the truth"—He's speaking of His ministry to testify to the truth. "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice"—His was a spiritual kingdom of truth, and He won people to His cause not through force, but through the conviction of the Him speaking God's Word (TRUTH). Jesus says, '*all I have done is tell the truth. Those who recognize the truth hear me.*' That really had gotten Pilate's attention.

18:38a Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? All the while Jesus was speaking truth, Pilate still didn't understand. He didn't understand about Jesus being King so how is he going to know truth at this particular time? He wanted Jesus's version of or about truth, but Jesus doesn't answer. Jesus set the challenge up so Pilate could think through the issue for himself. Again, we are responsible to seek Jesus for ourselves. Then, and only then can we know **"Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."** in salvation is, you will make the choice and truly confess. John 17:17 says "...thy Word is truth." John 14:6 says "I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life..." Therefore, truth is a Person! —**"What is truth?" He is The Word!**

III. TRUTH DISCARDED JOHN 18:38b-40

18:38b ...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. So, Pilate goes back out to the people to see if their answer has changed by what he says next. He went back out again to the Jews who were standing and waiting on Pilate's answer. Pilate says to them, "I find in him no fault at all."

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?— But in order to please the Jews, he says there is a custom Pilate puts before them. At the Passover he could release one criminal. Now it is their choice to choose. He puts

³ http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=2&contentID=7950&commInfo=31&topic=John
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>





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it back into their hands, and takes it out of his hands. *"Do you want me to release the King of the Jews to you?"*

18:40 Then cried they all again, saying, **Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.** These Jews were adamant, for they all cried **"Not this man, but (give us) Barabbas "** The majority wanted a robber, a bandit, an outlaw. That's what they preferred instead of Jesus. Their King whom they earlier hailed Hosanna –Blessed be the King that cometh—all in the Name of the Lord. The people just outright rejected Pilate's offer of Jesus.

SUMMARY:

⁴We need to understand that long before the Jewish leaders arrested Jesus in the garden, they had planned to kill Him (John 11:47-51). However, these Jews did not have the right to execute anyone; so it was necessary to get the approval of Rome. This is why Jesus is brought into the Judgment Hall before Pilate (18:28). It is interesting to note that the Jewish leaders did not hesitate to condemn an innocent man and yet they were careful not to defile themselves by walking into a Gentile house (the Governor's Palace). They were more interested in ceremonial purity than in real true justice (18:28). Pilate was not anxious to get involved in a Jewish court case, especially at Passover time, so he had tried to evade the issue. After all, if the prisoner was creating problems for the Jews, let them try Him under their own law. Pilate asks these Jews for a formal accusation that they have against Jesus and they did not have one (18:29). They just wanted Pilate to accept the fact that they would not bring anyone to him unless he was a criminal (18:30). Pilate, unaware that they wanted to kill Jesus, asked them why they didn't pass sentence on Him according to their own law (18:31). The Jews could use only the method of stoning to execute criminals and if Pilate were to authorize death it would mean crucifixion (18:32). **(18:28-32)**.

Crucifixion was the method that had been predicted by Jesus (Matthew 20:17-19). Pilate has a private interview with Jesus and asks Him if He is *"King of the Jews"* (18:33). Jesus wants to know why Pilate was asking this question (18:34). Pilate avoids the question and instead asks *"what hast thou done?"* (18:35). Jesus answers that, He had no political motives in mind, but instead His kingdom is a spiritual one (18:36-37). Pilate wanted Jesus' idea on truth—*"What is truth?"* But Jesus doesn't answer (18:38a). **(18:33-38a)**.

So, Pilate goes back out to the people and tells them, *"I find in him no fault at all."* There is a custom that Pilate puts before them. He could release one at Passover. *"Do you want me to release the King of the Jews to you?"* The Jews all cried *"Not this man, but (give us) Barabbas "* They wanted a robber **(18:38b-40)**.

APPLICATION:

When truth is told, some can't take it and can't understand it. Jesus' purpose was clear to Him, but not to those around Him. Therefore, when you begin to tell others what the Lord told you, don't get upset when they don't want to understand it, just follow God. As you apply this lesson, know that there will be accusers, but there is still exaltation by God!

⁴ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/jesus-is-innocent-before-pilate/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

