

Harmonized History of the Suffering & Death of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the Four Evangelists ✠ by Dr. Johannes Bugenhagen

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5TH READING: Jesus' Suffering at the Hand of the Secular Authorities

Then the whole multitude of them arose and bound Jesus, led Him from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning.

Then Judas, who had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned to death, felt remorse and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying: I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. And they said: What is that to us? You see to that! And he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple, departed, and went and hanged himself and he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out.

And the chief priests took the silver pieces and said: It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood. And they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem, so to this day that field is called in their own language, Akeldama, that is the Field of Blood. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.

But the Jews did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover. Pilate then went out to them and said: What accusation do you bring against this Man? They answered and said to him: If He were not an evil doer, we would not have delivered Him up to you. Then Pilate said to them: You take Him and judge Him according to your law. Therefore the Jews said to him: It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death, that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die.

And the chief priests and elders began to accuse Him vehemently, saying: We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King. Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and asked Him, saying: Are You the King of the Jews? Jesus stood before him and answered: *Are you speaking for yourself, or did others tell you this about Me?* Pilate answered: Am I a

Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done? Jesus answered: *My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.* Pilate therefore said to Him: Are You a king then? Jesus answered: *You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born and for this cause I came into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.* Pilate said to Him: What is truth? And when he had said this he went out again to the Jews, and said to them: I find no fault in Him at all. And the chief priests and elders accused Him of many things, but He answered nothing. And Pilate asked Him again, saying: Do You answer nothing? See how many things they testify against You! Do You not hear? But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled. But they were the more fierce, saying: He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.

When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time. And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. And he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. And Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. And the same day Pilate and Herod became mutual friends, for before they had been at enmity between themselves.

And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them: You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; no, nor did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing worthy of death has been done by Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him. Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to

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releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. And there was at that time a notorious prisoner named Barabbas, who had been thrown into prison with his fellow insurrectionists, who had committed murder in the insurrection made in the city. And the multitude, crying aloud, began to ask him to do just as he had always done for them. And when they gathered together, Pilate answered: You have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Whom do you want me to release to you, Barabbas or Jesus, the king of the Jews, who is called Christ? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered Him because of envy.

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying: Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.

But the chief priests and the elders stirred up the people and persuaded them that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them: Which of the two do you want me to release to you? The whole crowd cried out, saying: Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas. Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, spoke again to them: What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ? They all said to him: Crucify Him, crucify Him! And he said to them the third time: Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go. And they cried out more exceedingly: Crucify Him! And they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed.

And Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole band of soldiers around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. And when they had twisted a crown out of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him and began to salute Him, saying: Hail, King of the Jews! And they struck Him in the face and spat on Him and took the reed and struck Him on the head; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him.

Pilate then went out again, and said to them: Look, I am bringing Him out

to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him. Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them: Behold the Man! Therefore when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying: Crucify Him, crucify Him! Pilate said to them: You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him. The Jews answered him: We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.

Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus: Where are You from? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then Pilate said to Him: Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You? Jesus answered: *You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.* From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying: If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews: Behold your king. But 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.

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he gave sentence that it should be as they requested. And he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it. And all the people answered and said: His blood be on us and on our children.

Then he released to them Barabbas, whom they requested, who had been thrown in prison for insurrection and murder; but he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to their will, to be crucified. *(End of 5th Passion Reading)*

P: ♪ O Lord, have mercy upon us.

C: ♪ Thanks be to You, O Lord!

OPENING HYMN *Hail, Thou Once Despiséd Jesus ELH #270 (4v) IN BABILONE*

📖 **The PSALMODY: Penitential Psalm 143** *Please read responsively* 📖

P: ¹ Hear my prayer, O LORD, Give ear to my supplications! In Your faithfulness answer me, And in Your righteousness.

C: ² Do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For in Your sight no one living is righteous.

³ For the enemy has persecuted my soul; He has crushed my life to the ground; He has made me dwell in darkness, Like those who have long been dead.

⁴ Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me; My heart within me is distressed.

⁵ I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your works; I muse on the work of Your hands.

⁶ I spread out my hands to You; My soul longs for You like a thirsty land.

⁷ Answer me speedily, O LORD; My spirit fails! Do not hide Your face from me, Lest I be like those who go down into the pit.

⁸ Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, For in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, For I lift up my soul to You.

⁹ Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies; In You I take shelter.

¹⁰ Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.

¹¹ Revive me, O LORD, for Your name's sake! For Your righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

¹² In Your mercy cut off my enemies, And destroy all those who afflict my soul; For I am Your servant.

(All) Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, One True God, now and forever. Amen.



CHIEF HYMN *On My Heart Imprint Thine Image #593+ (209 verses) DER AM KREUZ*

15. On my heart imprint Thine Image, Blessed Jesus, King of Grace, That life's riches, care, and pleasures Have no power Thee to efface.

This the superscription be: Jesus, Crucified for me, Is my Life, my Hope's Foundation, And my Glory and Salvation.

**1 See how Pilate now is seated On his judgment seat to view
Jesus once again is greeted Now before His judge anew:
Pilate now will make his claim That he finds no cause of blame,
That this Man should not be dying; His accusers must be lying.**

**...9 O my Jesus, how I wonder That my heart for Thee must bleed,
For my conscience sad doth ponder How I scourged Thee oft indeed.
And my sins so crude and rash Hang upon each strike and lash
Every time that Thou art smitten And with many woes art beaten. ↗**

**...12 Therefore never shall my sinning With God's judgment me condemn
Jesus now for me is winning Grace and mercy without end.
Therefore grace I shall receive And from judgment full reprieve;
Thou didst suffer condemnation, Innocent for my salvation. A-men.**

EVENING HYMN Now the Day Is Over #560 (5 verses) S.Baring-Gould MERRIAL

FIFTH READING ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ COMMENTS

Tonight we read about the day that a man named Jesus of Nazareth stood trial before a Governor named Pontius Pilate. That's the description that a history book would record – it was simply a trial like many others. But the words that these two men exchanged show this conversation to be something much more important, much more pivotal in the cosmic history of the human race. The Romans were the most powerful government at least in the ancient world, and possibly the most powerful empire that has ever existed. They were the summit and pinnacle of mankind's power in this world. And, in the reading, we see the representative of the emperor given the power to pass a judgment of life or death over the Son of God. **It is a trial unlike any other before or since**, where the powers of earth stand in judgment over the powers of Heaven. All of history in Heaven above and on the earth below watches these proceedings.

One thing that jumps out at a person reading this account right away is that **Jesus talks the way a king would talk**. He is not afraid of the power that others have. He doesn't rail away at false accusations, vehemently protesting His innocence of the charges brought against Him. He is not even upset or worried that the trial might not go His way. **He, of all people, knows the outcome that this trial must have**. And so, while everyone else is consumed by the drama and while the Jewish leaders lobby for their position, and Pilate anxiously considers the politics, Jesus stands there and calmly watches salvation history unfold around Him. He knows where the guilty verdict will come from, and what it is for. He knows that one day the tables will be turned, and He will be exalted to the right hand of the Father. He can stand there and look ahead to **a Day far in the future when He will return with glory to judge** the Heavens and the earth, including this governor of a little state in the Middle East and the Jewish men who were leading this particular little mob of people – including us.

We still sit here this evening and **wonder when that day will come** when Christ will return as Judge. But we don't need to wonder about what the verdict will be for us on that day. We can look back at the verdict given to Christ, and, from the verdict given then, we can know **what the verdict will be for us** as well. The verdict given to us at the Judgment will be "unjust," just as the verdict given to Christ was unjust. He was innocent, but He was found guilty. Because of that, **we will be found innocent, even though we are guilty**. That is the point of this trial, although Pilate doesn't know it, although the Jewish leaders don't know it, although the angry mob doesn't know it., Christ knows it, and, Thanks be to God that, by faith, we know it too. **All the faithful of all times and to the ends of the earth watch this trial** and we see God declaring our innocence by declaring Christ guilty. We see *"the Lord of Life arraigned"* and we look to Him in faith and love for His innocence and perfect obedience.

Notice what happens when Pilate tries to intimidate Jesus with the power that he has over Him. He says, *"Don't you realize that I have power either to free You or to crucify You?"* Pilate is trying to shake Jesus up to get Him to beg for mercy, to try and save Himself. But Jesus recognizes the threat for what it is. **It is a temptation to disobey the Father in His Heart**. ... and Jesus was a True Man, with a (true) **heart like yours and mine**, and so He definitely felt this temptation just like we would in His situation. Jesus didn't need to be told about Pilate's power or the awful suffering that would come after the verdict was spoken. Jesus tells Pilate that God has given him (Pilate) all the power he has. That is not a rebellious response by Christ. He is not trying to "one-up" Pilate or get the best of him. If anything, Christ's Words strengthen Pilate's power over Him, and Christ is unafraid. Christ had already spent hours in prayer with the One Who had given Pilate his power. Jesus asked God the Father, if it were possible, for the Cup of Suffering to be taken away from Him. **Jesus did not want to suffer, but He also prayed with humility and with perfect obedience** before the Father that *His Will* should be done. Next to God's Will, Pilate's will was of little importance. And Christ's only desire was that God's will be done.

And God's Will certainly was done. Thanks be to God in Christ our Savior that we are saved by **the Father's Will and by the Son's Love**. All the sufferings that we have in this life, Jesus has suffered **with us – and for us**. All the suffering that the King of kings endured, He endured out of love for us, and all the glory that He has before the Father, He gives to us. Out of thanks, we live our whole lives with gratitude, seeking ways to show the humble love to others that He has shown to us. We are unafraid of this world's suffering and we are not moved to vengeance or anger. Instead we look only for the cross of obedience in this world, knowing with sure and certain hope that Christ has established His Kingdom for us from everlasting to everlasting. That's what it means to have Christ as our King. Thanks be to God. **Amen**.