

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 150 – May 30th – John 18:28-19:16

Works frequently referenced in these notes on John

Barrett, CK	<i>The Gospel According to John</i> , London, SPCK, 1967
Beasley-Murray, GR	<i>John</i> , <i>Word Bible Commentary</i> , vol 36, Word Books, 1987
Carson, DA	<i>The Gospel According to John</i> , Leicester, IVP (Apollos), 1991

18:28-19:16a – Jesus' Trial Before Pilate

John's account of Jesus' trial before Pilate is longer than that of the Synoptics. Beasley-Murray comments, "For John this is the *real* trial of Jesus, wherein the Jewish rulers are the accusers and the representative of the Roman State the judge... The trial scene in the Fourth Gospel ... is dominated by the claim of Jesus to be King and the nature of his sovereignty."

Verse 28

Ἄγουσιν οὖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ Καϊάφα εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον· ἦν δὲ πρωΐ· καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐκ εἰσῆλθον εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον, ἵνα μὴ μιανθῶσιν ἀλλὰ φάγωσιν τὸ πάσχα.

Cf. Mk 15:1. John provides us with no details of the trial before Caiaphas.

πραιτωριον, ου n headquarters or residence (of an army or governor)

"The praetorium was the official residence of a governor of a province; here, Pilate's residence. The procurator of Judaea normally lived at Caesarea (where there was another praetorium, Acts 23:35), but came to Jerusalem for the great feasts, to quell disturbances." Barrett.

Beasley-Murray comments, "It is uncertain whether this was Herod's palace in the western part of the city, near the Jaffa gate, a suitable location since it dominated the city, or whether it was the Antonia fortress, north of the temple area, where the praetorian cohort was stationed during festivals to quell potential riots. The latter identification is adopted by most recent scholars in view of the discovery of a pavement of great flagstones in the Antonia area, thought to be the *Lithostrotos* of 19:13; but others favour the former, since according to Philo and Josephus the Roman procurators usually stayed there when in Jerusalem."

πρωΐ adv (in the) early morning

Barrett comments, "The last two watches of the night (on the Roman reckoning) were ἀλεκτοροφωνία and πρωΐ. Cockcrow was now past, and early morning (before 6 a.m.) had arrived." Beasley-Murray, citing the only other use of πρωΐ in this Gospel, namely at 20:1, argues that the technical Roman use of the term is not intended here.

εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in
μιανθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl μιανω
defile, contaminate

"The irony of this intention is characteristically Johannine: those who plot the murder of the Son of God mind to the last detail their formal religious punctilio." Barrett.

Beasley-Murray comments, "One result of this decision of the Jewish leaders, however, should be noted: by remaining outside the praetorium they occasion the interchange of scenes wherein Pilate goes into his residence to speak with Jesus and comes out to confer with them. The trial of Jesus before the governor thus is played out like a drama on two stages, front and back (Dodd's imagery, *Historical Tradition*, 96). The effect of this is not only to enhance the dramatic quality of the narrative, but to exclude the Jewish leaders from the revelation of truth given to the Roman governor."

φάγωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl ἐσθιω eat
πάσχα n Passover, Passover meal

Carson interprets this as meaning that they wanted to be able to *continue* participation in the entire feast of which the Passover meal of the previous evening was only the beginning.

Verse 29

ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Πιλάτος ἔξω πρὸς αὐτοὺς καὶ φησίν· Τίνα κατηγορίαν φέρετε κατὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τούτου;

ἐξω adv. out, outside
φησίν Verb, pres act indic, 3 s φημι say
κατηγορια, ας charge, accusation
φερω bring

Verse 30

ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· Εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος
κακὸν ποιῶν, οὐκ ἂν σοι παρεδώκαμεν αὐτόν.

κακος, η, ον evil, bad, wrong, harm

The noun κακοποιός (A C³ D^{supp} K X Δ Θ etc) instead of κακὸν ποιῶν (K^c B L W etc, adopted in the UBS text) could have been suggested by 1 Pet 2:12; 4:15 (Metzger).

ἂν particle indicating contingency
παρεδώκαμεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl
παραδίδωμι hand over, deliver up

Barrett says that this does not ring true and that it is part of the attempt by the early church to fix the responsibility for Jesus' death more firmly upon the Jews. He thinks that the phrase κακον ποιων reflects the charges that were being brought against Christians when John wrote this Gospel.

Morris, however, points out that there had been previous communication between the Jewish leaders and Pilate. "They had had his co-operation in making the arrest. Now they apparently expected that he would take their word for it that the man the Romans had helped to arrest was dangerous and should be executed." Beasley-Murray similarly writes, "It is possible that, having already consulted Pilate concerning Jesus, they anticipated that he would not trouble to investigate further, but would simply rubber-stamp their decision. If such was their hope they were mistaken. Pilate decided to make an investigation of his own. Bruce rightly concludes, 'It was evident that Pilate was in effect opening a new trial, instead of simply confirming the death penalty which, as they had maintained, Jesus had incurred in terms of Jewish law'."

Verse 31

εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· Λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς, καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐτόν. εἶπον αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· Ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα·

λάβετε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl λαμβανω
νομος, ου m law
κρινω judge, pass judgement on,
condemn

ἔξεστιν impersonal verb it is permitted, it is lawful

ἀποκτεῖναι Verb, aor act infin ἀποκτενω
kill, put to death

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

John's statement here is the cause of much debate concerning the legal powers of the Jews at this time, but the statement finds plenty of historical support.

Beasley-Murray comments, "Pilate's reply, accordingly, was both ironic and humiliating for the Jewish leaders. If by their answer they wished to give the impression that Jesus was offending against their laws, let them judge him according to those laws. If however they wanted to bring about his death they must speak up and state their case clearly, for, as they themselves acknowledged, they had no power to carry out the death penalty; that authority lay in the hands of the governor alone."

Verse 32

ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πληρωθῆ ὃν εἶπεν
σημαίνων ποίω θανάτῳ ἤμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν.

πληρωθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s πληρωω
fill, fulfill

σημαινω indicate, make known

ποιος, α, ον interrog pro. what, of what kind
θανατος, ου m death

ἤμελλεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s μελλω
be going, be about

ἀποθνήσκω die

Cf. 12:32f. Carson comments, "And thus, too, Jesus' words are fulfilled in the same way that Scripture's words are fulfilled."

Verse 33

Εἰσηλθεν οὖν πάλιν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ὁ
Πιλάτος καὶ ἐφώνησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ εἶπεν
αὐτῷ· Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων;

εἰσηλθεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s εισερχομαι
enter, go in

παλιν again, once more

φωνεω call, call out

βασιλευς, εως m king

The *you* is emphatic. Pilate cannot believe that this man could be the king of the Jews. The question, "presupposes that the charge levelled against Jesus before Pilate was cast in these terms (cf. 19:21)." Carson.

Verse 34

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· Ἀπὸ σεαυτοῦ σὺ τοῦτο
λέγεις ἢ ἄλλοι εἶπόν σοι περὶ ἐμοῦ;

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply

σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself

ἢ or

ἄλλος, η, ο another

"It is impossible for Jesus to answer the question until he knows what it means. It is conceivable that Pilate is inquiring because he has himself apprehended the true and unique royalty of Jesus; but if, as is much more probable, he is merely testing a political charge brought by the Jews further explanation is necessary (v.36)." Barrett.

Verse 35

ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Πιλάτος· Μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖός εἰμι; τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς παρέδωκάν σε ἐμοί· τί ἐποίησας;

μητι Negative particle, used in questions expecting a negative answer

"He at once disclaims any interest in peculiar Jewish notions and denies any reason to know anything about Jesus other than what people have told him." Beasley-Murray.

ἔθνος, οὗς n nation, people
 σος, ση, σον possessive adj. your, yours
 παρέδωκάν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl
 παραδίδωμι hand over, deliver up
 σε Pronoun, acc s σὺ

"Pilate's response also suggests that he is less than satisfied with the Sanhedrin's charges against Jesus. There must be *something* behind the virulence of their animosity, even if it is unclear; and a cynical Roman governor in a political hotbed like first-century Judea was unlikely to be swayed into thinking that the Jewish authorities would take such pains with someone intent on doing damage to Rome – unless their own interests were at risk. Hence the question: *What is it you have done?*" Carson.

Verse 36

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· Ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου· εἰ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἦν ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ, οἱ ὑπηρέται οἱ ἐμοὶ ἠγωνίζοντο ἄν, ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· νῦν δὲ ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντεῦθεν.

ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my

"Jesus admits that he is a king, but proceeds at once with such a definition of his kingship as removes it from the sphere of sedition and rebellion." Barrett.

ὑπηρέτης, ου m attendant, servant
 ἀγωνίζομαι struggle, fight
 ἄν particle indicating contingency
 παραδοθῶ Verb, aor pass subj, 1 s
 παραδίδωμι
 ἐντεῦθεν from here

"Jesus does not deny that his kingdom or kingship affects this world, for the world will be conquered by those who believe in him (1 John 5:4). But he denies that his kingdom belongs to this world; *like himself, it comes from above.*" Brown.

Verse 37

εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· Οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σὺ; ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι. ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα μαρτυρήσω τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς.

οὐκοῦν adv so then

The argumentative particle οὐκοῦν seeks a definitive answer, "Very well then, so you are a king?"

Jesus does not give a direct answer which would have misled, since his kingship is not understood by Pilate, instead he "proceeds to define his mission in fresh and more suitable language." Barrett. Beasley-Murray provides a number of detailed examples to demonstrate that σὺ λέγεις amounts to an affirmation.

γεγέννημαι Verb, perf pass indic, 1 s γεννω
 bear; pass be born

ἐλήλυθα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s ἐρχομαι
 μαρτυρεω bear witness, testify
 ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

Cf. 1:14; 3:3,21; 10:3,16,27. Beasley-Murray comments, "Manifestly, Jesus is not speaking of truth in an abstract, or even general way, but specifically in relation to his ministry. He came among men with a mission from God to bear witness to the truth of God's saving sovereignty, and to reveal it in word and deed." Carson adds, "Disclosing the truth of God, of salvation and of judgment, was the principal way of making subjects, of exercising his saving kingship."

Verse 38

λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· Τί ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια; Καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν πάλιν ἐξῆλθεν πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ἐγὼ οὐδεμίαν εὕρισκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν·

Haenchen observes, "If Pilate, face to face with this Truth standing before him, asks, 'What is truth?' it is evident that he does not belong to those whom the Father has given to Jesus."

πάλιν see v.33

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing
 εὕρισκω find, discover
 αἰτια, ας f cause, accusation, guilt

"Like the earlier evangelists John does not lose the opportunity of emphasising the political innocence of Christianity." Barrett.

Verse 39

ἔστιν δὲ συνήθεια ὑμῖν ἵνα ἕνα ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν ἐν τῷ πάσχα· βούλεσθε οὖν ἀπολύσω ὑμῖν τὸν βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων;

"If Pilate had been stamped with integrity, his verdict would have ended the matter: Jesus would have been released, and the Jewish authorities dismissed." Carson.

συνήθεια, ας f custom, practice
εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
ἀπολυω release, set free

The only evidence for this custom is that contained in the New Testament, but this is no reason to doubt its authenticity.

βουλομαι want, desire, wish

Sanders suggests that Pilate had been tricked by the Jews who had negotiated with him before Jesus' arrest. Pilate, anxious to escape from his undertaking to the Sanhedrin, now appeals directly to the crowd. On the other hand, "It has been suggested that he wanted to make it possible for the Jewish leaders to save face, for by acting on this custom Jesus would not have been formally acquitted of the charges they had brought against him, but he would have been given an amnesty." Beasley-Murray.

Verse 40

ἐκραύγασαν οὖν πάλιν λέγοντες· Μὴ τοῦτον ἀλλὰ τὸν Βαραββᾶν. ἦν δὲ ὁ Βαραββᾶς ληστής.

κραυγᾶζω call out, shout

Suggests a mob; cf. 19:6.

πάλιν again, once more

Cf. Mk 15:13.

ληστής, ου m robber, insurrectionist

Beasley-Murray comments, "The tragic irony of the situation runs deeper, the more it is examined, for the term used in description of Barabbas (ληστής, lit. 'one who takes booty') was used especially of violent men, whether robbers, or pirates, or rampaging soldiers on the loot. Josephus consistently uses it of the Zealots. From the Roman point of view these latter were guerrillas who had to be exterminated; from the popular Jewish point of view such men were heroic freedom fighters. In Mark 15:7 Barabbas is said to be one of 'the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising.' He will have been a leader among those who sought to make way for the kingdom of God through violence... So it came about that the leaders of Israel, their henchmen, and the supporters of the popular hero asked for the release of one who had been guilty of violent political assault against the state, entailing murder, and demanded the death of him who came to realize the nation's true destiny through the almighty but peaceful divine love."

John 19:1

Τότε οὖν ἔλαβεν ὁ Πιλάτος τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἔμαστιγώσεν.

τοτε then, at that time

ἔλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαμβανω
μαστιγοω beat with a whip

Carson comments, "Since Pilate has already declared Jesus to be innocent (18:38), at first sight it is surprising to read, *Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged* (ἔμαστιγώσεν). The context shows, however, that this is nothing but a fresh strategy to set Jesus free (cf. notes on vv. 4-6). Pilate orders a flogging which, he thinks, will meet the Jews' demand that Jesus be punished, and perhaps evoke a little sympathy for him as well, and thus dissipate the clamour for his crucifixion. The scene parallels Luke 23:13-16: Pilate tells the Jewish officials that Jesus 'has done nothing to deserve death', and concludes, 'Therefore, I will punish (παιδεύσας) him and then release him'."

Beasley-Murray says that there were various forms of flogging used by the Romans. The most severe, the *verberatio* is described thus by Blinzler, "The delinquent was stripped, bound to a post or a pillar, or sometimes simply thrown on the ground, and beaten by a number of torturers until the latter grew tired and the flesh of the delinquent hung in bleeding shreds. In the provinces this was the task of soldiers. Three different kinds of implements were customary. Rods were used on freemen; military punishments were inflicted with sticks, but for slaves scourges or whips were used, the leather thongs of these being often fitted with a spike or with several pieces of bone or lead joined to form a chain. The scourging of Jesus was carried out with these last-named instruments.... It is not surprising to hear that delinquents frequently collapsed and died under this procedure, which only in exceptional cases was prescribed as a death sentence."

Carson, however, argues that Jesus was submitted to a lesser flogging at this point in the narrative, a flogging intended partly to appease the Jews and partly to teach Jesus a lesson. Only later, after the sentence of crucifixion was passed, did he receive the more severe flogging which commonly preceded crucifixion. It was because of the more severe flogging that Jesus was unable to carry his cross all the way to the crucifixion.

Verse 2

καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται πλέξαντες στέφανον ἐξ ἀκανθῶν ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῦ τῇ κεφαλῇ, καὶ ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν περιέβαλον αὐτόν,

"The mockery of Jesus by the soldiers was motivated by a spontaneous desire for some crude and cruel horseplay." Beasley-Murray.

στρατιωτης, ου m soldier
 πλεκω weave, twist together
 στεφανος, ου m wreath, crown
 ἀκανθα, ης f thorn-plant
 ἐπέθηκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἐπιτιθημι
 place on, place, put
 κεφαλη, ης f head

Beasley-Murray comments, "The crown that the soldiers made, though primarily intended as a caricature and not as an instrument of torture, will have been unspeakably painful. Its form will have been an imitation of the radiate crown of the divine rulers, such as had figured on coins in the east for centuries prior to the episode in the Gospels. It was most likely made from great thorns of the date palm, which were easily available. The appearance of the crown was not as commonly represented in modern attempts to make a crown of twigs with thorns, but will have appeared more like an American Indian's headdress, with thorns as large as the feathers... The use of such a crown signifies that Jesus was decked out as a king who was God."

ἱματιον, ου n garment, robe, cloak
 πορφυρους, α, ουν purple (garment)
 περιέβαλον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl
 περιβαλλω put on, clothe, dress

Cf. Mk 15:17. "Probably a military cloak flung around Jesus' shoulders, mocking dress-up for a royal robe." Carson.

Verse 3

καὶ ἤρχοντο πρὸς αὐτόν καὶ ἔλεγον· Χαῖρε, ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων· καὶ ἐδίδοσαν αὐτῷ ῥαπίσματα.

χαίρω rejoice; imperat used as a greeting

Cf. Mk15:18,19.

ἐδίδοσαν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 pl δίδωμι
 ῥαπισμα, τος n a blow (with a stick); slap
 (with the hand)

Beasley-Murray comments, "So the soldiers bowed the knee to him, as they would before a Hellenistic ruler of that time. They cried, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' in imitation of the greeting accorded to the Roman emperor, 'Ave, Caesar!' But instead of the kiss of homage they spat at him and slapped his face (according to Mark and Matthew they also hit him on the head with the rod in his hand, Mark 15:15 par.)."

"Almost certainly John recorded this incident with a similar motive as when he recounted the prophecy of Caiaphas (11:49–52), and the immediately following *Ecce Homo* scene, and Pilate's title of Jesus on the cross, with his refusal to change it when requested. Mockery it certainly was, accompanied by cruel despising and hate, but back of their enthronement of Jesus and mocking worship of him as King of the Jews stood the God who was the prime mover in the whole process, and who made their crude acknowledgment a profound reality. For it is precisely in that suffering, culminating in the cross on which he hung, that Jesus revealed his royalty and the glory of a love that gives itself to the uttermost for the redemption of a world that knows not what it does."

Verse 4

καὶ ἐξῆλθεν πάλιν ἔξω ὁ Πιλάτος καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ἴδε ἄγω ὑμῖν αὐτὸν ἔξω, ἵνα γνῶτε ὅτι οὐδεμίαν αἰτίαν εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ.

πάλιν see 18:40

ἔξω adv. out, outside

γνῶτε Verb, aor pass subj, 2 pl γινωσκω
οὐδεις, οὐδεμία, οὐδεν no one, nothing
αἴτια, ας f see 18:38

Verse 5

ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔξω, φορῶν τὸν ἀκάνθινον στέφανον καὶ τὸ πορφυροῦν ἱμάτιον. καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ἴδοὺ ὁ ἄνθρωπος.

φορεω wear

ἀκανθινος, η, ον of thorns, thorny

στεφανος, ου m see v.2

"His statement on bringing out Jesus, 'that you may know that I find no ground of complaint against him,' and his cry, 'Look, the Man!' must be to demonstrate the harmlessness of Jesus. Dressed in his wretched clothes that made him look more like a clown than a king, bleeding profusely, in pain and with bruised face through the additional beatings, Jesus must have looked a shocking sight, enough to horrify any who knew him. Yet, as with his description of the mockery of the soldiers, the Evangelist will have wished his readers to recognize that the pathetic figure on whom the Jews are bidden to gaze is the Man sent from God, who, in that state of humiliation and woe, was in the process of bringing the kingdom of heaven for all humankind, including those thirsting for his blood and those who were shedding it." Beasley-Murray.

Bultmann comments, "Clearly the purpose in this is to make the person of Jesus appear to the Jews as ridiculous and harmless, so that they should drop their accusation. Hence Jesus has to step forth as the caricature of a king, and Pilate presents him with the words, 'That is the man! Look at the pitiful figure!' But to the mind of the Evangelist the entire paradox of the claim of Jesus is in this way fashioned into a tremendous picture. In very truth, it is just such a man who asserts that he is the king of truth!"

Tom Wright in *John for Everyone* thinks the words reflect Johannine irony – 'Behold the man who is the true image of God'. He writes, "*Here's the man!* Here is the true image of the true God. Here is the one who has brought God's wisdom into the world. Here is the living embodiment of God, the one who has made the invisible God visible... It says, in particular, that when the living, loving God comes in person, in the person of his own son, to live among us rebels, in the world he made and still loves, the appropriate form for him to take is not the super-hero, sweeping through the rebel states with horses and chariots, defeating the rebellion in a blaze of glory. The appropriate form for him to take – the form of living statue which will tell his subjects who he is, granted their wickedness – is the form Jesus has now taken. The king of the Jews crowned with thorns. The innocent king, the true man, the one who told the truth and was accused of blasphemy. 'Here's the man!'"

"The words hang over the whole of chapter 19 as Jesus goes to the cross. This, John is telling us, is the reflection of God. This is what it means that Jesus, the eternal **Word**, took our flesh. Look at this man, and you'll see your living, loving, bruised and bleeding God."

Verse 6

ὅτε οὖν εἶδον αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ ὑπηρέται ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες· Σταύρωσον σταύρωσον. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· Λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ σταυρώσατε, ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐχ εὐρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.

ὅτε conj when

εἶδον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl ὁραω see
ὑπηρετης, ου m see 18:3

κραυγαζω see 18:40

σταυρωω crucify

λάβετε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl λαμβανω

Pilate's words were probably intended as a taunt. This is something that the Jews could not do. Carson comments, "It is a sarcastic taunt: You bring him to me for trial but you will not accept my judgment."

αἴτια, ας f see 18:38

Verse 7

ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· Ἡμεῖς νόμον ἔχομεν, καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὀφείλει ἀποθανεῖν, ὅτι υἱὸν θεοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν.

ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply, say
νομος, ου m law

Used here in the sense of a particular statute – the law of blasphemy, Lev 24:16.

ὀφείλω ought, must
ἀποθνήσκω die, face death, be mortal
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/herself, itself

Jesus blasphemes in claiming for himself essential equality with God. Carson comments, "A Roman prefect was not only responsible for keeping the peace but, within the constraints of Rome's priorities, he was to maintain local law as well. So the Jews expound the point of law they want Pilate to grasp... Moreover, in the Fourth Gospel the charge of blasphemy has been a rising theme (e.g. 5:18; 8:58, 59; 10:33, 36)."

Verses 8-12 – Pilate's Second Interrogation

"This second questioning of Jesus by Pilate should be compared with the first (18:33–37), for similar issues and emphases appear in both (notably regarding Jesus' origin and the nature of his authority), and the reactions of both Pilate and Jesus in the second interrogation become more comprehensible in the light of the first." Beasley-Murray.

Verse 8

Ὅτε οὖν ἤκουσεν ὁ Πιλάτος τοῦτον τὸν λόγον, μᾶλλον ἐφοβήθη.

ὅτε conj when
μᾶλλον adv more

Here probably used in an elative sense, 'he was very much afraid'

ἐφοβήθη Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 s
φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

Pilate's fear may simply have arisen from an awareness of the trap in which he was now caught, but more probably was caused by Jesus' claim to supernatural dignity. Beasley-Murray comments, "The idea that gods could come down and appear in the likeness of men was common enough in the pagan society of his time. (An example is seen in Acts 14:11: when the inhabitants of Lystra witnessed a healing by Paul, accompanied by Barnabas, they cried, 'The gods have come down to us in human form.'...)... Doubtless this fear would be increased by the thought of the vengeance that could be taken by a divine being on one who had maltreated him (Pilate had had Jesus flogged!)."

Verse 9

καὶ εἰσηλθὲν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον πάλιν καὶ λέγει τῷ Ἰησοῦ· Πόθεν εἶ σύ; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀπόκρισιν οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ.

ποθεν interrog adv. from where
ἀποκρισις, εως f answer, reply
ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

"This question (like the question 'Art thou a King?') is not capable of a simple answer." Barrett.

Beasley-Murray comments, "The silence of Jesus in this setting recalls Isa 53:7 (cf. also Mark 14; 61; 15:5)... The reason for Jesus' silence is doubtless due to Pilate's reactions to Jesus' revelation in the first interrogation; after Pilate's skeptical response to Jesus' statement that he had come into the world to bear witness to the truth, how should Pilate now comprehend Jesus' origin?"

Verse 10

λέγει οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος· Ἐμοὶ οὐ λαλεῖς; οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχω ἀπολύσαι σε καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω σταυρῶσαί σε;

ἐμοὶ Pronoun, dat s ἐγώ
οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know
ἐξουσία, ας f authority, power
ἀπολυω release, set free
σταυροω crucify

Jesus' silence disturbs Pilate since he is looking for a way to release Jesus.

Verse 11

ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς· Οὐκ εἶχες ἐξουσίαν κατ' ἐμοῦ οὐδεμίαν εἰ μὴ ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν· διὰ τοῦτο ὁ παραδούς μέ σοι μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀποκρίνομαι
εἶχες Verb, imperf act indic, 2 s ἔχω

δεδομένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n
nom/acc s δίδωμι
ἀνωθεν from above

"All human authority is derived from God's (cf. Rom 13:1). For ἀνωθεν see on 3:3. It is implied primarily that in condemning and crucifying Jesus, Pilate acts with divine consent – the crucifixion does not contravene the authority of God but lies within his purpose." Barrett.
Beasley-Murray, however, writes concerning Pilate, "He was conscious of possessing authority from the most powerful man on earth and representing the most powerful nation on earth. He therefore reminds Jesus that he has authority to release him and authority to destroy him. Jesus, however, was also conscious of authority, and that of an infinitely greater power than the emperor of Rome, namely, the almighty God, who in that very moment was granting Pilate the authority to dispose of his life, but in accordance with his own will, not that of his unwitting instrument (note the imperfect tenses of the conditional sentence, indicating the present time in which the authority is delegated). The authority to which Jesus refers, accordingly, is specifically related to the present situation, regarding Jesus in this trial; he is not speaking in general terms of the relation of the state to God, in the manner of Paul in Romans 13."

παραδούς Verb, pres act ptc, m nom s
παραδίδωμι hand over, deliver up

Barrett argues from the singular that the reference is to Judas, cf. 13:21. Sanders, Morris and Beasley-Murray think that the reference is most likely to be to Caiaphas who was the one who delivered Jesus up to Pilate. Beasley-Murray comments, "He was the prime mover in instigating Jesus' death (11:49–53), and he was responsible for eliciting and formulating the charge that Jesus was king of the Jews and guilty of blasphemy (Mark 14:61–64), of which the Evangelist shows his awareness. Like Pilate, he was given authority over Jesus, but he abused it, and for political expediency handed Jesus over to Pilate on a trumped-up charge of sedition to secure his death. For this reason Pilate, though a guilty man, was not so guilty as the High Priest of God."

μειζων, ον greater, greatest
ἀμαρτια, ας f sin

Here meaning 'guilt.'

Verse 12

ἐκ τούτου ὁ Πιλάτος ἐζήτει ἀπολύσαι αὐτόν· οἱ δὲ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐκραύγασαν λέγοντες· Ἐὰν τοῦτον ἀπολύσῃς, οὐκ εἶ φίλος τοῦ Καίσαρος· πᾶς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐαυτὸν ποιῶν ἀντιλέγει τῷ Καίσαρι.

ζητεω seek, attempt
κραυγαζω call out, shout
ἐὰν if
ἀπολύσῃς Verb, aor act subj, 2 s ἀπολυω
φίλος, ου m and φιλη, ης f friend

I.e. 'loyal subject'.

βασιλέα Noun, acc s βασιλευς, εως m king
ἀντιλεγω object to, oppose

This would have been a particularly sensitive charge to bring against Pilate whose position was rather precarious. Beasley-Murray comments, "It is the height of irony that the Jewish leaders, of all people, should succeed in embarrassing the Roman governor in this way.' What a grotesque situation!" commented Blinzler. "The highest Roman official in Judea has to endure being accused of lack of loyalty to the emperor by the representatives of a nation more passionately seething with hatred for the Roman yoke than almost any other in the empire'." Beasley-Murray goes on to quote again from Blinzler, concerning Pilate, "His fear of the sinister and suspicious emperor was even greater than his awe of the mysterious personality of the Accused; his own safety appeared to him more important than a passing triumph over the accusers who were unsympathetic to him."

Verse 13

Ὁ οὖν Πιλάτος ἀκούσας τῶν λόγων τούτων ἤγαγεν ἔξω τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ βήματος εἰς τόπον λεγόμενον Λιθόστρωτον, Ἑβραϊστί δὲ Γαββαθα.

ἤγαγεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἄγω
ἔξω adv. out, outside
καθίζω intrans sit down; trans cause to sit,
set

Barrett says that the transitive may be meant here, i.e. that Pilate sat *Jesus* on the βημα. This would give dramatic force to his words in the following verse, ἰδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν and would explain why Pilate does not here pass sentence. However, Barrett thinks it more likely that John meant that Pilate sat on the βημα, though he deliberately uses ambiguous language. "We may suppose that John meant that Pilate did in fact sit on the βημα, but that for those with eyes to see behind this human scene appeared the Son of man, to whom all judgement has been committed (5:22), seated upon his throne."

βημα, τος n judicial bench, place of judgement

Used elsewhere of the judgement seat of God (or of Christ), cf Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10.

τοπος, ου m place

λιθοστρωτον, ου n pavement

Ἑβραϊστί in Hebrew or Aramaic

Here the form of the word Gabbatha shows clearly that Aramaic is meant. It would seem to mean 'a raised place'.

Verse 14

ἦν δὲ παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα, ὥρα ἦν ὡς ἕκτη. καὶ λέγει τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις· Ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν.

παρασκευη, ης f day of preparation (before a sacred day)

πάσχα n Passover

ὥρα, ας f hour

ἕκτος, η, ου sixth

The UBS committee rejected the poorly attested 'third hour' as an attempt to harmonise with Mark.

Barrett says that an earlier time of trial is necessary to Mark who later, during the crucifixion, reports 'darkness at noon'. John, however, wants to stress that Jesus' crucifixion takes place at the same time as the passover lambs were sacrificed.

Beasley-Murray writes, "It is the sixth hour (noon) of the Preparation Day; at this hour three things take place: Jews cease their work, leaven is gathered out of the houses and burned, and the slaughtering of the Passover lambs commences. The Passover festival, for all practical purposes, now begins... The Evangelist's thought is plain: Passover is the great celebration of Israel's deliverance from slavery by God's almighty power; then it was that he showed himself as King, and they became his people. In *this* celebration the Jews gathered before Pilate are about to play a decisive part in the fulfillment of the Passover, a second Exodus, wherein God would achieve an emancipation for all nations, not for Israel alone, giving them life in the promised land of his eternal kingdom. The crucial hour of destiny for Jew and Gentile has arrived." Carson, however, argues that the 'day of preparation' is a regular way of speaking of Friday, the day of preparation for the Sabbath. παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα hence means the Friday of Passover week. He concludes, "In this view, John and the Synoptics agree that the last supper was eaten on a Thursday evening (i.e. the onset of Friday, by Jewish reckoning), and was a Passover meal."

Ἴδε ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν Beasley-Murray comments, "Pilate's statement to the Jews, however, was unexpected. They were awaiting the announcement of a decision, i.e., the death sentence of Jesus. Instead of announcing the crime for which Jesus is now to be put to death (e.g., 'This man made himself king'), Pilate calls to the crowd, 'Look, your king!' He makes the moment of condemnation of Jesus one of proclamation of his kingship, and that in a formal yet dramatic way. Unlike the presentation of Jesus in 19:4–6, this was not intended to ridicule Jesus. Since that occasion, Pilate had been moved by Jesus and defeated in his attempt to rescue him. Now he makes the moment of *his* decision the moment of decision *for the Jews*. They have a final and crucial opportunity of declaring their mind on Jesus and recanting, if they will, on their unjust and bitter accusations of him."

Carson adds, "Like Caiphas before him (11:49-52), Pilate spoke better than he knew. The long-awaited king of the Jews stood before them, and they did not recognise him."

Verse 15

ἐκραύγασαν οὖν ἐκεῖνοι· Ἄρον ἄρον, σταύρωσον αὐτόν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· Τὸν βασιλέα ὑμῶν σταυρώσω; ἀπεκρίθησαν οἱ ἄρχιερεῖς· Οὐκ ἔχομεν βασιλέα εἰ μὴ Καίσαρα.

Pilate's tactics infuriate the crowd.

ἄρον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s αἰρω take, take away

σταυρωω see v.10

Pilate's irony leads to the Jews' blasphemy.

ἀρχιερεως, εως m high priest, member of high priestly family

"Cf. Judges 8:23; 1 Sam 8:7, and many other passages of the Old Testament, where it is insisted that the only true king of Israel is God himself, and that even a Jewish king can be tolerated only on condition of his obedience to God and fidelity to the national religion. In denying all claim to kingship save that of the Roman Emperor Israel abdicated its own unique position under the immediate sovereignty of God." Barrett. Beasley-Murray similarly writes, "The implications of this statement are to be weighed. In the context of the trial of Jesus, of the Man who proclaimed to the nation the kingdom of God, and manifested it in his deeds, and called on Israel to repent and believe, it is nothing less than the abandonment of the messianic hope of Israel."

Verse 16

τότε οὖν παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς ἵνα
σταυρωθῇ.
Παρέλαβον οὖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν·

τοτε then

παραδιδωμι see v.11

I.e. Pilate handed Jesus over to the fate the
Jews had determined for him.

σταυρωθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s σταυρωω

παρέλαβον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl

παραλαμβάνω take

Those who took him were the Jewish leaders
and the Roman soldiers who would carry out
the crucifixion. Carson and Beasley-Murray
say that the reference is to the soldiers who
formed the execution squad.