

## *JESUS' TRIAL*

### 1. Preliminary Considerations.

- a. The Jewish leaders are very worried about Jesus' growing popularity.
  - (1) **Jn 11:47-48** 47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. 48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.
- b. The Jewish leaders have unsuccessfully tried to arrest Jesus before.
  - (1) **Jn 7:32** 32 The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.
- c. This is a show trial. The Jewish leaders' goal is not justice but the death of Jesus.
  - (1) **Jn 11:53** 53 So from that day [Lazarus' resurrection] on they made plans to put him to death.
- d. The Jewish leaders are very concerned how the Jewish crowds will respond.
  - (1) **Mt 21:46** 46 And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.
  - (2) **Mt 26:5** 5 But they said, Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.
- e. During Passover:
  - (1) There is an overflow of visitors camped outside the city walls.<sup>1</sup>
  - (2) Pilate has moved his headquarters from Caesarea to Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup>
  - (3) The Roman garrison has been strengthened.<sup>3</sup>
  - (4) If Jesus is arrested during the feast, he will have to be remanded in custody for up to nine days, until the feast is over.<sup>4</sup>
- f. Jesus has already informed the disciples what will happen.
  - (1) **Mt 16:21-23** 21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him saying, Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you. 23 But he turned and said to Peter, Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.
  - (2) **Mt 17:22-23** 22 As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, 23 and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day. And they were greatly distressed.
  - (3) **Mt 20:17-19** 17 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, 18 See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death 19 and deliver him over to the

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<sup>1</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 44.

<sup>2</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 45.

<sup>3</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 45.

<sup>4</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 45.

Gentiles to be mocked, flogged, and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.

- g. Jesus has already informed the Jewish leaders what will happen.
  - (1) **Mt 21:37-45** 37 Finally he sent his son to them saying, They will respect my son. 38 But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance. 39 And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants? 41 They said to him, He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons. ...45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them.
- h. Jesus' unjust trial was predicted by the prophets.
  - (1) **Ps 2:1-2** 1 Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Yahweh and against his Messiah....
  - (2) **Is 53:7-8** 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away....

## 2. The Jewish Trial: Religious Blasphemy.

### a. Phase one: Annas

- (1) **Jn 18:12-14** 12 So the cohort of [Roman] soldiers, their captain, and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him. 13 First they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. 14 It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.
- (2) **Jn 18:19-24** 19 The high priest [Annas] then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. 20 Jesus answered him, I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. 21 Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them. They know what I said. 22 When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand saying, Is that how you answer the high priest [Annas]? 23 Jesus answered him, If what I said is wrong, testify about the wrong. But if what I said is right, why do you strike me? 24 Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.
- (3) Annas.
  - (a) Annas was the most influential leader of the chief-priestly group in the Sanhedrin.<sup>5</sup> As the chief Sadducee of his day, he was the most powerful Jew of his time and hated by the common people.<sup>6</sup>
  - (b) Annas served as high priest from ad 7-14 until he was deposed from the office by the Roman governor Valerius Gratus for exceeding his jurisdiction.

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<sup>5</sup> F. F. Bruce, *NT History*, 196.

<sup>6</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 55-56.

Although Annas was not the high priest as far as the Romans were concerned, he was still the high priest to the Jews. By Jewish law, the high priest held his office for life. Even though he was deposed, Annas continued to be in control, for he was succeeded by five of his sons, his son-in-law, and then by his grandson. At this time Caiaphas, his son-in-law, served as the high priest.<sup>7</sup>

- (c) As a Sadducee, Annas would have been particularly angered at the report of Lazarus' resurrection and Jesus driving out the money-changers from the temple.<sup>8</sup> He and Caiaphas stood to lose all if Jesus was successful.<sup>9</sup>
- (d) Annas' son Ananus was high priest in ad 62 when James the brother of Jesus was killed, for which he was deposed by Agrippa.<sup>10</sup>
- (4) Previously the Jewish leaders had tried to entrap Jesus in his words.
  - (a) **Lk 11:53-54** 53 As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, 54 lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.
  - (b) **Mt 22:15-16** 15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. 16 And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying....
  - (c) **Mt 22:23** 23 The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question....
  - (d) **Mt 22:34-35** 34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.
- (5) Jesus' first round of abuse.
  - (a) **Jn 18:22** 22 When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand saying, Is that how you answer the high priest [Annas]? 23 Jesus answered him, If what I said is wrong, testify about the wrong. But if what I said is right, why do you strike me?
  - (b) According to law, the prosecution was to produce the charge and not to seek a charge by interrogating the accused. As Jesus demanded they adhere to their own laws, he was struck.<sup>11</sup>
- (6) This first phase was short and a failure, for it produced no specific charge upon which Jesus could be tried in the Sanhedrin court of law.<sup>12</sup>

**b. Phase two: Caiaphas and the Lesser Sanhedrin.**

- (1) Before Caiaphas and the Lesser Sanhedrin.
  - (a) **Mt 26:57** 57 Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered.

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<sup>7</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 9; Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 55.

<sup>8</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 56.

<sup>9</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 57.

<sup>10</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 55.

<sup>11</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 9.

<sup>12</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 9.

- (b) **Lk 22:54** 54 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's [Caiaphas's] house, and Peter was following at a distance.
- (c) **Jn 18:24** 24 Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.
- (2) Caiaphas.
- (a) Joseph Caiaphas was the president of the Sanhedrin. He had been appointed high priest by Valerius Gratus in ad 14 and was finally deposed by Vitellius in ad 36. He was in office when Pilate became governor in ad 26, and he and Pilate were said to be good friends.<sup>13</sup>
- (b) According to the Mishnah, the Lesser Sanhedrin consisting of 23 judges could lawfully try a capital case for blasphemy.<sup>14</sup>
- (3) Failure of the false witnesses.
- (a) **Mk 14:55-59** 55 Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. 56 For many testified falsely against him, but their testimony did not agree. 57 And some stood up and testified falsely against him saying, 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands. 59 Yet even about this their testimony did not agree.
- (b) **Mt 26:57-61** 57 Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ...59 Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, 60 but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward 61 and said, This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.
- (c) The witnesses could not agree on whether Jesus actually said that he would destroy the temple or whether he simply claimed to have the power to do so. Therefore, the two witnesses had to be dismissed, and the seeking of a charge concerning disrespect for the temple failed.<sup>15</sup>
- (d) **Dt 19:15** 15 A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.
- (4) Jesus' first Great Confession.
- (a) **Mt 26:62-66** 62 And the high priest [Caiaphas] stood up and said, Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you? 63 But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God. 64 Jesus said to him, You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.
- (b) This was the great climax of the trial.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 58.

<sup>14</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 59.

<sup>15</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 11.

<sup>16</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 70.

- (c) Jesus' Great Confession relates specifically to three OT passages:
- 1) **Ps 110:1** 1 Yahweh says to my Lord: Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.
  - 2) **Ps 2:7** 7 I will tell of the decree: Yahweh said to me, You are my Son. Today I have begotten you.
  - 3) **Da 7:13-14** 13 I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 And to him was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.
- (5) The Lesser Sanhedrin's verdict.
- (a) **Mt 26:65-66** 65 Then the high priest tore his robes and said, He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. 66 What is your judgment? They answered, He deserves death.
  - (b) "[T]he verdict of guilt was given at night and not in the daytime; this violated a fifteenth commandment. Additionally, the verdict of guilt was pronounced at the same time as the trial itself, whereas the law stated, that the trial and the guilty verdict had to be separated by at least 24 hours. This was the sixteenth violation of the Sanhedrin law."<sup>17</sup>
  - (c) Caiaphas violated the Torah by tearing his clothes.
    - 1) **Le 21:10** 10 The priest who is chief among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil is poured and who has been consecrated to wear the garments, shall not let the hair of his head hang loose nor tear his clothes.
- (6) Second round of abuse.
- (a) **Mt 22:67-68** 67 Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, 68 saying, Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?
  - (b) **Lk 22:63-65** 63 Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him. 64 They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, Prophecy! Who is it that struck you? 65 And they said many other things against him, blaspheming him.
- (7) The Denial of Peter.
- (a) Mt 26:58, 69-75; Jn 18.15-18, 25-27
- c. Phase three: Greater Sanhedrin.**
- (1) Before the Greater Sanhedrin.
    - (a) **Mt 27:1-2** 1 When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. 2 And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.
    - (b) **Lk 22:66** 66 When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led him away to their council....
    - (c) **Mk 15:1** 1 And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders, scribes, and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate.

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<sup>17</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 12.

- (2) The Greater Sanhedrin.
  - (a) The Greater Sanhedrin was composed of seventy-one men, of whom 24 were chief priests, 24 were elders, 22 were scribes, and one was the high priest. For the Sanhedrin to have a legal trial there had to be a minimum of 23 men.<sup>18</sup>
  - (b) “The final phase of the religious trial was only an attempt to legalize an illegal proceeding. But nothing could rectify the many illegalities which had taken place in the first two phases. ... The attempt to legalize the trial of the Messiah at this stage is seen in two ways. First, the religious leaders waited until the very beginning of daylight in order to claim that the trial had not occurred at night. Secondly, this phase of the trial was not held in the privacy of the home of Annas or Caiaphas; it was conducted in the Hall of Judgment of the Temple Compound.”<sup>19</sup>
  - (c) The Jewish people were to be left with the impression Jesus had been formally investigated in the Supreme Court of Israel.<sup>20</sup>
- (3) Jesus’ second Great Confession.
  - (a) **Lk 22:66-23:1** 66 And they led him away to their council, and they said, 67 If you are the Messiah, tell us. But he said to them, If I tell you, you will not believe, 68 and if I ask you, you will not answer. 69 But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God. 70 So they all said, Are you the Son of God, then? And he said to them, You say that I am. 71 Then they said, What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips. 1 Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate.
- (4) At least two members of the Greater Sanhedrin opposed the verdict.
  - (a) **Lk 23:50-51** 50 Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, 51 who had not consented to their decision and action.
  - (b) **Jn 7:50-51** 50 Nicodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them, 51 Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?
- (5) Crucifixion, not stoning.
  - (a) If Rome had not taken away the death penalty from Israel, Jesus would have been stoned to death in accordance with Jewish law.<sup>21</sup> But stoning would not have fulfilled what prophecy demanded.<sup>22</sup>
- (6) The Death of Judas.
  - (a) **Mt 27:3-10** 3 Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders 4 saying, I have sinned by betraying innocent blood. They said, What is that to us? See to it yourself. 5 And throwing down the

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<sup>18</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 10.

<sup>19</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 12-13.

<sup>20</sup> Frank J. Powell, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, 55.

<sup>21</sup> F. F. Bruce, *NT History*, 198.

<sup>22</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 15.

pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. 6 But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money. 7 So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers. 8 Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, 10 and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.

- (b) "Judas was not needed for the religious trial, but he was needed for the civil trial. ... The conspirators no longer had their accuser."<sup>23</sup>

### 3. The Roman Trial: Sedition.

#### a. Phase one: Pilate.

(1) Jesus delivered to Pilate.

(a) **Mt 27:2** 2 And they bound him, led him away, and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

(b) **Lk 23:1** 1 Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate.

(c) **Mk 15:1** 1 And they bound Jesus, led him away, and delivered him over to Pilate.

(d) **Jn 18:28** 28 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.

1) In spite of the early hour, Pilate was dressed and ready (v. 28). People in Pilate's position transacted business early and concluded by noon.<sup>24</sup>

(2) Pilate.

(a) Pilate was procurator of Judea. He served in that position from ad 26-36 and was known for his cruelty.<sup>25</sup>

(b) "Pilate originally had received his procuratorship through a friend named Sejanus, who, at one time, had held much authority in the senate of Rome. But Sejanus had been accused of treason and had been executed. Now, all of Sejanus' friends were under investigation as to their loyalty to Rome. Inasmuch as Pilate had been both a friend of Sejanus and had received his procuratorship through Sejanus, he, too, was under investigation at this time. The emperor of Rome had already received several complaints against Pilate. Should word reach the emperor that Pilate had released a man who claimed to be a king and a competitor to Caesar, Pilate would quickly lose his position and perhaps be killed as well."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 13.

<sup>24</sup> F. F. Bruce, *NT History*, 196.

<sup>25</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 14.

<sup>26</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 21. Also see F. F. Bruce, *NT History*, 201.

- (c) In ad 36, Emperor Caligula exiled Pilate to Gaul, and shortly after his banishment, Pilate committed suicide.<sup>27</sup>
- (3) Jesus' first hearing before Pilate.
- (a) **Mt 27:11-14** 11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, Are you the King of the Jews? Jesus said, You have said so. 12 But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. 13 Then Pilate said to him, Do you not hear how many things they testify against you? 14 But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.
- (b) **Lk 23:2-3** 2 And they began to accuse him saying, We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Messiah, a king. 3 And Pilate asked him, Are you the King of the Jews? And he answered him, You have said so.
- (c) **Mk 15:2-5** 2 And Pilate asked him, Are you the King of the Jews? And he answered him, You have said so. 3 And the chief priests accused him of many things. 4 And Pilate again asked him, Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you. 5 But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.
- (d) **Jn 18:29-32** 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 testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice. 38 Pilate said to him, What is truth?
- 1) “Pilate was not interested in Jewish theology; he was only interested in knowing whether Yeshua claimed to be a competitor to Caesar.”<sup>28</sup>
- (4) Pilate's first attempt at release.
- (a) **Lk 23:4-5** 4 Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, I find no guilt in this man. 5 But they were urgent saying, He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.

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<sup>27</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 22.

<sup>28</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 16.

1) Pilate could only try Jesus on the basis of Roman law. Because there was no accusation, there could be no condemnation or sentence.<sup>29</sup>

(b) **Jn 18:38** 38 After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, I find no guilt in him.

**b. Phase two: Herod Antipas.**

(1) Jesus delivered to Herod Antipas.

(a) **Lk 23:6-7** 6 When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. 7 And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time.

(2) Herod Antipas.

(a) Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great and the murderer of John the Baptist. A descendant of Esau, he wished to be the king of Galilee, but Rome never gave him that title.<sup>30</sup>

(b) "Previous to this there had been animosity between [Pilate and Herod Antipas]. This began when Pontius Pilate first became procurator of Judea. At that time he brought Roman shields with the image of the emperor into Jerusalem and placed them in the palace of Herod the Great, the father of Herod Antipas. This not only desecrated the city of Jerusalem, but it centered the abomination in the home of Herod the Great. Herod Antipas complained to Emperor Tiberius, and the emperor ordered Pilate to remove the shields. From that time on hatred existed between the two men, for Herod felt that Pilate did not recognize his authority. By sending Yeshua to him, Pilate showed Herod that he did recognize his authority over Galilee. Furthermore, Pilate knew well that Herod desired to see Yeshua, so he gave him the opportunity. As a result of all this, the two became friends...."<sup>31</sup>

(c) Pilate's troops has used unnecessary violence against some of Antipas's Galilean subjects months earlier (Lk 13:1).<sup>32</sup>

(d) Pilate's gesture was complimentary, and Antipas appreciate the compliment.<sup>33</sup>

(e) Luke knew a lot more than the other evangelists about Herod and his family. He knew Joanna, whose husband Chuza was Anitpas's steward in Galilee (Lk 8:3). He also knew Menahem, Antipas's boyhood friend who became a Christian teacher at Antioch (Ac 13:1).

(f) "In the year A.D. 39, [Herodias] instigated Herod into going to Rome to request the title of king. At Rome he was deposed by Emperor Caligula and then banished by the senate of Rome to Gaul, where Herod and Herodias died in poverty."<sup>34</sup>

(3) Jesus' hearing before Herod Antipas.

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<sup>29</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 15.

<sup>30</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 16.

<sup>31</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 17. Also see F. F. Bruce, *NT History*, 202.

<sup>32</sup> F. F. Bruce, *NT History*, 202.

<sup>33</sup> F. F. Bruce, *NT History*, 202.

<sup>34</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 17-18.

- (a) **Lk 23:8-10** 8 When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. 9 So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. 10 The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him.
- (4) Third round of abuse.
- (a) **Lk 23:11** 11 And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him.
- (5) Herod's declaration of innocence.
- (a) **Lk 23:15** 15 Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us.
- c. Phase three: Pilate again.**
- (1) Jesus returned to Pilate.
- (a) **Lk 23:11** Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, [Herod] sent him back to Pilate. 12 And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.
- (2) Pilate's second attempt at release.
- (a) **Lk 23:13-16** 13 Pilate then called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people 14 and said to them, You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. 15 Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. 16 I will therefore punish and release him.
- (3) First Barabbas or Jesus option.
- (a) **Mt 27:15-23** 15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. 16 And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. 17 So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Messiah? 18 For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. ...20 Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor again said to them, Which of the two do you want me to release for you? And they said, Barabbas. 22 Pilate said to them, Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Messiah? They all said, Let him be crucified! 23 And he said, Why? What evil has he done? But they shouted all the more, Let him be crucified!
- (b) **Lk 23:18-19** 18 But they all cried out together, Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas— 19 a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder.
- (c) **Mk 15:6-10** 6 Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. 7 And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. 8 And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. 9 And he



answered them, saying, Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews? 10 For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up.

- (d) **Jn 18:39-40** 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.
- (e) “The irony of the situation must not be missed! Barabbas was guilty of the very crime of which Jesus was accused: sedition or rebelling against Rome. Furthermore, we know from other contemporary sources that the entire name of the guilty one was Jesus Barabbas. The name Barabbas means “son of the father.” So the prisoner who was going to be released was “Jesus, son of the father.” But the Lord Jesus, the Son of the Father, was being accused of sedition and would die on the other’s behalf.”<sup>35</sup>
- (4) Pilate’s third attempt at release.
  - (a) **Lk 23:20-21** 20 Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, 21 but they kept shouting, Crucify, crucify him!
- (5) Pilate’s fourth attempt at release.
  - (a) **Lk 23:22-23** 22 A third time he said to them, Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him. 23 But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed.
- (6) Fourth round of abuse.
  - (a) **Mt 27:27-30** 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. 28 And they stripped him, put a scarlet robe on him, 29 and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30 And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head.
  - (b) **Jn 19:1-3** 1 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.
  - (c) **Is 52:14** 14 As many were astonished at you—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind....
  - (d) “Pilate’s third attempt... was another compromise, for he had Jesus scourged. Pilate’s apparent hope was that when the people saw Jesus after His scourging, they would be sympathetic toward Him and would call for His release. The Roman custom of scourging was one of the cruelest forms of torture. Forty lashes were swung against the victim. The whip itself contained numerous leather straps, which had glass and pieces of sharp metal fixed at the end that would lacerate the flesh. The scourging was not limited to the back but was

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<sup>35</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 18.

applied over the whole body. The flesh would be torn away and bone would be exposed. Quite often the prisoners died just from the scourging alone.”<sup>36</sup>

- (e) “The crown of thorns had spiritual significance. In Genesis 3:18 we see that thorns resulted from God’s curse upon man and creation because of man’s sin. When Messiah wore the crown of thorns, He bore the curse upon Himself. Ultimately, because of Messiah’s death, the curse will be removed from this earth, but here we see Yeshua bearing the curse on our behalf.”<sup>37</sup>
- (7) Pilate’s fifth attempt at release.
  - (a) **Jn 19:4-6** 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!
- (8) Pilate’s sixth attempt at release.
  - (a) **Jn 19:6-8** 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.
    - 1) The Jewish leaders revert back to the charge for which Jesus had been tried at the religious trial. The charge of sedition was dropped because it could not be substantiated.<sup>38</sup>
- (9) Pilate’s second interview of Jesus.
  - (a) **Jn 19:9-11** 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.
- (10) Pilate’s seventh attempt at release.
  - (a) **Jn 19:12** 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.
- (11) Pilate’s wife’s declaration of innocence.
  - (a) **Mt 27:19** 19 Besides, while [Pilate] was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.
- (12) Pilate’s eighth attempt at release.
  - (a) **Jn 19:13-15** 13 So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment 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,

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<sup>36</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 18.

<sup>37</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 18.

<sup>38</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, “The Trial of the Messiah,” 20.

Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

- (b) **Mt 27:20-25** 20 Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor again said to them, Which of the two do you want me to release for you? And they said, Barabbas. 22 Pilate said to them, Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Messiah? They all said, Let him be crucified! 23 And he said, Why? What evil has he done? But they shouted all the more, Let him be crucified! 24 So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd saying, I am innocent of this man's blood. See to it yourselves. 25 And all the people answered, His blood be on us and on our children!

1) "This responsibility must not be applied to all Jews of all time but only to that generation and the succeeding one. They placed themselves under a curse, and that curse was fulfilled in the year A.D. 70."<sup>39</sup>

- (c) **Mk 6:11-14** 11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. 12 And Pilate again said to them, Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews? 13 And they cried out again, Crucify him. 14 And Pilate said to them, Why? What evil has he done? But they shouted all the more, Crucify him.

d. Pilate's verdict and fifth round of abuse.

- (1) **Mt 27:26** 26 Then he released for them Barabbas.... and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.
- (2) **Mt 27:31** 31 And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.
- (3) **Mk 15:15** 15 So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.
- (4) **Lk 23:24-25** 24 So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. 25 He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their desire.
- (5) **Jn 19:16** 16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.
- (6) Pilate never officially convicts Jesus of a crime. Jesus is sentenced to crucifixion without a conviction.

#### 4. The Significance of Jesus' Trial.

a. Jesus' trial was totally unjust and lawless, and all the parties knew it.

- (1) **Is 53:7-8** 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away....

b. Afterwards, the apostles charged the Jewish leaders and the residents of Jerusalem with responsibility.

- (1) **Ac 2:23** 23 ...This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

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<sup>39</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, "The Trial of the Messiah," 22.

- (2) **Ac 2:36** 36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.
  - (3) **Ac 3:13-15** 13 ...The God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. 14 But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 and you killed the Author of life....
  - (4) **Ac 3:17** 17 And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.
  - (5) **Ac 4:8-11** 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, Rulers of the people and elders, ...10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Messiah of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. 11 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.
  - (6) **Ac 4:26-31** 26 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Messiah— 27 for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.
- c. Through the free will decisions of the individuals involved, God’s predetermined plan took place.
- (1) **Ac 2:23** 23 ...This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.
  - (2) **Ac 3:18** 18 But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer, he thus fulfilled.
  - (3) **Ac 4:27-28** 27 ...For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predetermined to take place.
- d. Annas, Caiaphas, and the Sanhedrin continued to oppose the Jesus movement.
- (1) **Ac 4:1-6** 1 And as [Peter and John] were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, 2 greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ...5 On the next day their rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, 6 with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.
  - (2) **Ac 4:18** 18 So they called [Peter and John] and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.
  - (3) **Ac 4:21** 21 ...When they had further threatened [Peter and John], they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened.
  - (4) **Ac 5:17-18** 17 But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy 18 they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.

- (5) **Ac 5:27-28** 27 ... When they had brought [the apostles], they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them 28 saying, We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.
- (6) **Ac 5:33** 33 When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them.
- (7) **Ac 5:40** 40 ... And when they had called in the apostles, they beat them, charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.
- (8) **Ac 8:1** 1 And there arose on that day [the day of Stephen's death] a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

## 5. Application.

- a. Be grateful Jesus suffered an unjust death for our salvation.
- b. Realise Jesus is able to empathise with the injustice we experience.
- c. Handle the experience of injustice the way Jesus does.
- d. Don't give up on the truth when you suffer injustice.
- e. Don't let the threat of injustice stop your boldness.
  - (1) **Ac 4:29-31** 29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

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