

Behold the Man

Pilate came out and said to the Jews, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him.”—John 19:4

When the supper was finished, Jesus went with eleven of his apostles to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. While they were there, Judas came to Jesus with a band of men armed with swords. They took Jesus to the high priest, Caiaphas. This priest and all the council wanted to put Jesus to death and accused him of many things.

Then they took him to Pontius Pilate, the Roman ruler of the country. Pilate could see that Jesus was a good man and that the Jewish priests wanted to kill him for their own selfish reasons (Mark 14:55).

Just the week before, Jesus had ridden on a donkey into Jerusalem and the people hailed him as a king. The priests thought the Romans would surely put Jesus to death for that!

Learning that Jesus was from Galilee, Pilate tried to get rid of the responsibility of condemning a man he believed to be innocent. He sent him to King Herod, ruler of Galilee. But Herod was fearful of dealing with Jesus for he had heard about the miracles he had performed, so he sent Jesus back to Pilate.

Even though Pilate did not like the Jews, he did like this man they had brought to him. Hoping to avoid more trouble from the Jews, Pilate tried to satisfy them by having Jesus beaten. But this did not satisfy the mob and they cried, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

Jesus was not their idea of a king and conqueror. They expected someone like Alexander the Great who would save them from their Roman captors. They despised him for his nonviolent ways and for the meekness, gentleness, patience, and love he expressed to everyone. The Jewish leaders knew many were praising him as the son of God and that Jesus was warning people about dishonest and greedy priests. They wanted this stopped!

At Passover time it was customary to release one criminal from prison. Pilate offered the Jews their choice of releasing Jesus or Barabbas, a convicted criminal. The mob chose Barabbas (Luke 23:13-25). Although Jesus could have asked God to save him from his enemies, he knew his death was needed to save all mankind so he did not try to escape.



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Pilate did not want to have Jesus crucified,
but felt he had no other choice.