

Matthew 27:11-14 **THE FIRST HEARING OF JESUS BEFORE PILATE**

**Introduction:**

There were a total of six different hearings for Jesus before He was carried to the cross. The first three were before the Jews. The next three were before the Roman authorities.

The first was before Annas, a former high priest and father-in-law to Caiaphas, the high priest at that time. The chief purpose of this hearing was not to bring charges against Jesus, but rather to get Annas to question Him and to see if Annas could get Jesus to say something which could be used against Him in the trial which would follow.

The second hearing was before Caiaphas, the high priest, and members of the Sanhedrin Council. In that hearing Jesus was charged with blasphemy and pronounced worthy of death. This sentence of death was unofficial for two reasons. First, it was unofficial because the trial was held at night which was not a lawful trial. The second was because only the Roman government could give the death penalty which they desired.

The third hearing, was held after daylight. At this hearing there was no trial. It was held for the purpose of giving a semblance of legality to the verdict which had been given in the earlier hearing. They just rubber stamped the verdict given in the previous meeting and discussed how to go about persuading Pilate to give Jesus the death penalty. They changed the charges from blasphemy, which they did not think would bring a death penalty from Pilate, to treason against the Roman government, which they knew that Pilate could not ignore.

In this message the first of the three hearings before the Romans was held. It was before Pilate, who was governor in that district.

**I. Jesus carried to Pilate for trial**

A. In the John's gospel John mention something that Matthew does not.

1. When the Jews arrived at the judgment hall, the Jews did not enter the building because they did not want to take a chance of touching a Gentile or touching something which a Gentile had touched .
  - a. They did not wish to be considered ceremonially unclean on the day of the Passover because if they did they would not be permitted to enter the temple grounds.
  - b. They especially did not want this to happen on the Passover Day which was a special day of celebration. .
2. So when they arrived at the judgment hall they turned Jesus over to soldier to be carried inside for his trial and they stayed outside.

B. Pilate then came outside and inquired about the charges against Jesus.

1. The Jewish leaders responded with a surprising answer.: They said, "If he were not a malefactor (a bad fellow; a trouble maker) we would not have brought him to you.."
2. Now this was a smart aleck answer.
  - a. Now here they had come to him to Pilate to get him to rule in their favor and put Jesus to death, but they gave this smart aleck answer. Why?
  - b. Because they did not like Pilate one little bit and they would not fail to show their contempt of him no matter what the occasion.
3. They then charged that Jesus had tried to persuade the Jews to stop paying taxes to Caesar. (If this had been true, it would have been an act of treason.)

4. But the most damaging charge was that Jesus claimed to be the king of the Jews. (This was a charge of treason.)
- C. Having heard the charges Pilate went back inside to question the accused; he asked Jesus outright, ***“Art thou the king of the Jews?”***, V. 11.
1. He ignored the charge that Jesus was a malefactor, a trouble maker. (He was governor and if Jesus had caused any trouble it would have been reported to him.)
  2. He also ignored the charge that Jesus had tried to get the Jews to stop paying taxes to Caesar.
    - a. Pilate had tax collectors throughout the land.
    - b. If Jesus had interfered with their efforts to collect taxes they would have known about it and reported it to Pilate.
    - c. But not one report of such effort had been reported by his tax collectors.
  3. But Pilate could not ignore the charge that Jesus claimed to be king of the Jews and so he asked Jesus the direct question: ***“Art thou the king of the Jews?”*** V.11.
- D. Jesus answered, ***“Thou sayest,”*** V. 11. (That is, “You have said it right. I am king of the Jews
1. However, John said that Jesus explained by saying, ***“My kingdom is not of this world...,”*** *John 18:36.*
  2. Pilate understood this to mean that Jesus did not claim to be a king of the Jews at this time and that Jesus was not guilty of treason as the Jews had charged Him.
  3. According to John 18:38 Pilate went right back out to the Jews and announced to them, ***“I find in him no fault at all.”***
  4. Therefore, Pilate found Jesus to be innocent of all three charges against Him.

## **II. Pilate faced with a big question**

- A. When Pilate announced to the Jewish leaders and to the huge crowd that had gathered by this time that he found no fault in Jesus that should have settled the matter, but it didn't.
1. When the Jews learned that Pilate found Jesus not guilty and would set Him free, they were really disturbed.
  2. They let Pilate know in no uncertain terms that they were highly displeased with him.
- B. He was now faced with a great problem pertaining to his own wellbeing.
1. Historians say that Pilate had been in trouble with the Caesar before and there was a great danger that this situation could get him in trouble again. .
  2. If those Jewish leaders were to write letters back to Caesar saying that he had set free a man who was a known troublemaker and who was trying to become the king of Israel and had tried to persuade the people to stop paying taxes to Caesar then he would be in big trouble with Caesar.
  3. The charges against him would be false, but he would stand little chance of defending himself against those false charges.
- C. Here was the question that he faced: Would he be willing to have a man killed whom he knew to be innocent or would he set that man go free and face almost certain imprisonment or death at the hands of Caesar?
1. It was a very frightening situation.
  2. He must have been about ready to panic.
- D. Then it hit him.
1. He did not have to decide between those two terrible choices.
  2. He said to himself, “This man is a Galilean. I will declare that I have no jurisdiction over this Galilean and turn Him over to Herod who rules over Galilee. Herod is right here in town and I will turn Jesus over to Him. It will be his headache.”

3. So he sent Jesus to Herod thinking that he was off the hook.

### **III. A big question for people today**

- A. The Bible teaches that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, Mt. 16:16.
1. It teaches that Jesus came to the world to provide salvation for lost sinners, John 3:16.
  2. It teaches that if a lost sinner repents of his sin and trusts Jesus to save his soul that Jesus will cleanse him of all sin and save his soul, Acts 20:21..
  3. It teaches that Jesus will keep that person out of hell and that he will go to heaven when he dies, John 5:24.
- B. Therefore, every lost sinner faces these questions:
1. Do I believe what the Bible says?
  2. Do I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Savior of men.
  3. Am I willing to acknowledge that I am a lost sinner headed for the fires of hell and in need of being saved?.
  4. Am I willing to call upon Jesus and trust Him to save my soul?
  5. Am I ready to do it right here right now?

### **Conclusion:**

- 1, The Devil will want you to put it off until some other time.
2. He will want you to keep putting it off until some other time.
3. There will never be a better time than now.
4. There may never be another time but now.

