

Yochanan ~ Part 35

Yeshua Flogged and Mocked

Pilate seems to be aware that **Yeshua**, who hadn't yet shown any real threat to **Roman** rule, was much less of a threat than **Barabbas** (see Yochanan 19:12 below). Thinking that the **Jewish** authorities are more likely to want **Barabbas** executed to prove their point about loyalty to **Rome**, **Pilate** presents him as an option. The **Jewish** authorities want to have **Yeshua** executed instead, allowing even **Pilate** to recognize their hypocrisy.

19¹ Pilate then took Yeshua and had Him flogged. ² The soldiers twisted thorn-branches into a crown and placed it on His head, put a purple robe on Him, ³ and went up to Him, saying over and over, "Hail, 'king of the Jews'!" and hitting Him in the face. ⁴ Pilate went outside once more and said to the crowd, "Look, I'm bringing Him out to you to get you to understand that I find no case against Him."

Even though he is certain that **Yeshua** is innocent, **Pilate** sentences Him to be crucified at the insistence of the crowd, fearing an uprising if he does not.

Pilate Sentences Yeshua to Death

⁵ So Yeshua came out, wearing the thorn-branch crown and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look at the man!"

In His mock regal clothes, **Yeshua** made a heartrending sight. In the context of **Yochanan's Gospel**, the statement may also highlight **Yeshua's** humanity and invoke messianic passages such as Zechariah 6:12.

⁶ When the head cohanim and the Temple guards saw Him, they shouted, "Put Him to death on the stake! Put Him to death on the stake!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him out yourselves and put Him to death on the stake, because I don't find any case against Him."

Pilate used sarcasm, being fully aware that the **Jews** did not have the authority to impose the death penalty

⁷ The Judeans answered him, "We have a law; according to that law, He ought to be put to death, because He made Himself out to be the Son of God."

The Jews' comment may refer to Leviticus 24:16: *"Whoever blasphemes the name of Yahweh is to be put to death"*

⁸ On hearing this, Pilate became even more frightened.

Pilate was more afraid than ever. Earlier that morning his wife's dream had disturbed him (Mattityahu 27:19).

⁹ He went back into the headquarters and asked Yeshua, "Where are you from?" But Yeshua didn't answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said to Him, "You refuse to speak to me? Don't you understand that it is in my power either to set You free or to have You executed on the stake?" ¹¹ Yeshua answered, "You would have no power over Me if it hadn't been given to you from above; this is why the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

It was an unspeakably great sin for **Pilate** to fail to exercise his power to prevent **Yeshua's** execution. But it was a still greater sin for **Judah** from **K'riot** - for whom it would have been better had he never been born (Mattityahu 26:24) - to deliver **Yeshua**, with full knowledge of who He was and of His innocence, to an unjust death penalty.

¹² On hearing this, Pilate tried to find a way to set Him free; but the Judeans shouted, "If you set this man free, it means you're not a 'Friend of the Emperor'! Everyone who claims to be a king is opposing the Emperor!"

"Friend of the Emperor." This was a technical term sometimes used as a title of honor for provincial governors and here as a sign of loyalty.

¹³ When Pilate heard what they were saying, he brought Yeshua outside and sat down on the judge's seat in the place called the Pavement (in Aramaic, Gabta);

The **judge's seat** served as the platform for the judge's formal verdict (Acts 25:6, 17). The **Stone Pavement** mentioned here has been excavated on the lower level of the **Fortress of Antonia**, one of the two possible sites for the **Governor's residence**.

¹⁴ it was about noon on Preparation Day for Pesach. He said to the Judeans, "Here's your king!"

The **Preparation Day for Pesach** (Passover) may refer to the day before the **Sabbath** of **Pesach** week (Matityahu 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54). If so, all four Gospels concur that **Yeshua's Last Supper** was a **Pesach** meal eaten on Thursday evening (which, by **Jewish** reckoning, was the beginning of Friday).

¹⁵ They shouted, "Take Him away! Take Him away! Put Him to death on the stake!" Pilate said to them, "You want me to execute your king on a stake?" The head cohanim answered, "We have no king but the Emperor."¹⁶ Then Pilate handed Yeshua over to them to have Him put to death on the stake. So they took charge of Yeshua. ¹

By professing to acknowledge **Caesar** alone as their **King**, the **Jewish** leaders betrayed their national heritage and denied their own messianic expectations based on the promises of **Scripture**. After the sentence was pronounced, the person was scourged and then executed.

Reflecting on the scene from John 19:1-16, it's clear that **Yeshua** faced severe injustice despite being innocent. In your public life, you may encounter situations in community gatherings or social events where injustices are overlooked, such as conversations about social issues that aren't right. By acting on your faith and making a visible difference, you contribute positively to society while upholding the principles of justice that **Yeshua** exemplified.

¹ Yochanan 19:1-16