

## The Gospel of Luke

### Who Is Jesus: His Trial Before the Gentiles

Luke 23:1-12

#### 1. **The Accusations** (v.2)

A command from Pilate was necessary in order to secure Jesus' death (Jn. 18:31). The Jews had to convince Pilate of the secular danger so as to secure the cohort of soldiers used in Jesus' arrest, and so they were surprised by Pilate's request that they present charges against Jesus for his judgment (Jn. 18:28-32).

##### A. A Vague Generalization: Misleading the People

This was a legal charge akin to disturbing the peace. This was a completely subjective charge, but it was their primary concern because Jesus was not teaching the people in accord with their system (see Mt. 5:21-6:18; 23:13-36).

##### B. A False Accusation: Forbidding to Pay Taxes to Caesar (cf. Lk. 20:19-26)

This is a serious charge that is tantamount to treason. There had been a revolt in the recent past which was propelled by a refusal to pay taxes to Rome. Though serious, this charge is demonstrably false and a multitude of witnesses could have been called upon to refute it (Lk. 20:19-26).

##### C. A True Characterization: Jesus Claims to be King

This is absolutely true, but not as many Jews hoped or as Pilate feared. This is the primary accusation upon which both the Jews and Pilate seem to focus (cf. Lk. 23:14) because, if true, insurrection would justify the death penalty.

#### 2. **The Examinations** (vs.3, 8-9)

##### A. Pilate's Focussed Interrogation (v.3; cf. Jn. 18:33-38a)

Pilate's questions to Jesus appear sincere in order to understand exactly what He has done in order to earn the ire of the Sanhedrin (Jn. 18:35; cf. Mt. 27:18). Pilate finds Jesus to offer no threat of a revolution, but stops short of any meaningful interaction with Him (Jn. 18:38a; cf. Jn. 4:7ff).

##### B. Herod's Prolonged Investigation (vs.8-9)

There is no record of Herod's inquisition, but we know that it was both long and one-sided (v.9). Since Herod was unable to be entertained by Jesus and His reputed miraculous powers (v.8; cf. Lk. 9:9), he contented Himself with cruelly entertaining Himself with Jesus (v.11a).

#### 3. **The Adjudications** (vs.4, 14)

Though both Pilate and Herod found Jesus worthy of scorn and mistreatment (v. 11, J. 19:1-5), they also found Him not guilty of the charges brought against Him (vs. 4, 14). Both of these rulers are men who would sacrifice justice on the altar of political pressure and expediency (cf. Mk. 14:26-27; Lk. 23:24).