

JOHN 18 D & 19 A

³⁸And having said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, “I do not find even one cause for accusation in Him.” ³⁹“But it is a custom with you that I should release to you one (prisoner) at the Passover. Do you then wish that I release to you the King of the Jews?” ⁴⁰Then they all cried again, saying, “Not this One, but Barabbas.” Now Barabbas was a robber.

Bp. Gerasimos: Pilate publically proclaims the innocence of Jesus. Pilate does not have the integrity appropriate to a judge to actually release the innocent Jesus...he equates him with a condemned criminal and attempted to be pleasing to both sides.

Saint Ambrose: “Those who violently ask the death of an innocent Man fittingly seek the release of a murderer. Wickedness has such laws as to hate innocence and love criminality. In this, however, the interpretation of the name gives the likeness of the image, for ‘Barabbas’ means ‘son of the father.’ Thus, he belongs to those to whom it is said, ‘You are of *your* father, the devil [Jn. 8:44],’ and who are revealed as about to choose the Antichrist as son of their father, rather than the Son of God.” [Ib., Bk. X, § 102.]

CHAPTER 19

¹Therefore Pilate then took Jesus and scourged *Him*.

Scourging was a Roman punishment performed with a whip made of leather strips with bits of metal or bone at the tips. Pilate hopes in vain to satisfy Jesus’ accusers by having him whipped and released. (Orthodox Study Bible)

²And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns, and put *it* on His head, and threw around Him a purple outer garment, ³and kept on saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they kept on giving Him slaps on the face with the palms of their hands. ⁴Pilate then went out again, and said to them, “Behold, I bring Him out to you, in order that you might know that I do not find even one cause for accusation in Him.”

Bp. Gerasimos: “The scene, in effect, was a mocking ridicule of the Jewish kingdom by the Romans. Pilate believed that with this humiliation of Jesus he could appease the passion of the Jews and convince them that such a man could not be a dangerous rebel. The cruelty of the crowd, however, observing everything could not be appeased; cruelty has no heart. Clearly, Pilate did not have the courage to act according to his conscience.”

⁵Then Jesus came out, wearing the thorny crown and the purple outer garment. And *Pilate* said to them, “Behold, the Man (human being).” [Jn. 18:38 - 19:5]

Fr. Behr: “It is through the Passion that Jesus is born as a ‘human being’ who now comes to us...enabling Christians to become His body, to become themselves human, and to join Him with the Father in the heavens. The words of Pilate also hearken back to the Prophecy of Zacharias (6:12)

“Behold the Man whose name is the Branch; and He shall spring up from His stem and build the Temple of the Lord and shall bear royal honor and shall sit and rule upon His throne.”

Melito of Sardis: “This is the *One coming* from heaven onto the earth by means of the suffering One, and robes Himself in the suffering one by means of the virgin womb, and goes forth a Human Being; He accepted the suffering of the suffering one through suffering in a body that could suffer, and set free the flesh from suffering. Through the Spirit which cannot die He slew the manslayer death. (homily given Pascha night 160-170 AD).”

Hyppolytus: “For the Word of God being fleshless, put on the holy flesh from the holy virgin, as a Bridegroom a garment, having woven it for Himself in the sufferings of the Cross, so that having mixed our mortal body with His own power, and having mingled the corruptible with the incorruptible, and the weak with the strong, He might save the perishing human being.”

Fr. Behr: *The Coming One* - In the Jewish Passover meal of the 2nd century a portion of unleavened bread is taken as the Messiah by the company. The traditional word for designating the fragment of bread taken was the *Coming One*. The piece is broken off at the beginning of the Passover meal, hidden, and then revealed and consumed at the end, resembled the Christian celebration of the Liturgy in which bread is broken off, hidden (placed under a cloth), and revealed at the end, as the Body of Christ to be consumed.

“Therefore, when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, “Crucify, crucify Him.” Pilate said to them, “You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no cause for accusation in Him.”

Chrysostom: “The devil has never been in as shameful plight as he was on that day. For while he expected to have Christ, he lost even those he had, because when that body was nailed to the Cross, the dead arose...For the devil would have done everything to persuade people that Jesus did not die and that instead he had the power...It is a marvel that, while the world was looking on, the serpent was slain on high on the Cross.