

GOSPEL OF JOHN 19B (7-16)

7 scenes, 7 signs, 7 witnesses (Truth on Trial, by Lincoln)

- a.) Outside the court Pilate demands to know the charges
- b.) Inside the praetorium dialogue between Jesus and Pilate about nature of his kingship
- c.) Pilate goes outside finds no crime offers to release a prisoner
- d.) Returning inside Pilate has Jesus flogged and beaten and mocked
- e.) Outside – Pilate proclaims him innocent again, Jesus is mocked before the crowd and they demand crucifixion on the grounds of Him making Himself the Son of God.
- f.) Inside: Pilate questions Jesus about His origins and discusses power and authority
- g.) Outside: the Jews persuade Pilate to crucify Jesus and declare their loyalty to Caesar

7 signs – the marriage at Cana; Jesus heals the official's son; the paralyzed man who laid 38 years at the Sheep Gate pool; the multiplication of the loaves; Jesus walking on water; the healing of the man born blind; the raising of Lazarus from the dead

7 Witnesses: John the Baptist; Jesus Himself; Jesus' works; God the Father; the Scriptures; the Samaritan women; the crowd who bore witness to the raising of Lazarus from the dead

The Conclusion of the Trial

Fr. Behr: "The abandonment of the God proclaimed by Isaiah and brought to focus by John in Christ, abandoned by both Jews and Gentiles, means that what appears to be the judgment of Jesus and His condemnation to death, turns out to be *the* judgment of this world, putting it in crisis and demanding a response. The cosmic trial, enacted throughout the narrative of John, culminates at this point; the case is closed: the world, both Jew and Gentile, have been shown to be hostile to God and to have abandoned His ways. (The Paschal Gospel, pg. 178)

⁷The Jews answered him, "We have a law (Deut. 13:1-6, *a false prophet shall die*), and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself Son of God." ⁸Therefore, when Pilate heard this saying, he was *the* more afraid. ⁹And

- ❖ They needed Pilate's approval for him to carry out Capital punishment – the charge of blasphemy is a religious issue that the Jews could decide
- ❖ Bp. Gerasimos: Greek mythology and Roman pagan both knew that gods became men, such as emperors who were considered *sons of a god*. Pilate becomes fearful having just flogged a man who claims divine powers.

¹¹*And after the crowds saw what Paul did, they lifted up their voice in Lycaonian, saying, "The gods, having become like men, came down to us." [Acts 14:11]*

he entered into the Prætorium again, and said to Jesus, "From what place are You? (Bp. Gerasimos: are you from heaven or earth? Are you a man or are you a God?) But Jesus did not give him an answer. ¹⁰Then Pilate said to Him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to crucify You, and authority to release You?" ¹¹Jesus answered, "You would have no authority at all against Me, except it were given to you from above.

These words are repeated when preparing the “lamb” at the Eucharist

Augustine: “So it was not in vain that the prophecy regarding Him had preceded, ‘As the lamb before its shearer was dumb, so he opened not His mouth’(Isaiah 53:7) ...

Origen: “Since He willed to suffer on behalf of the world, he is silent when examined and beaten by Pilate. For if He had spoken, he would not have been crucified in weakness (2 Cor. 13:4), since there is no weakness in the words that the Word speaks.”

- ❖ Bp. Gerasimos” Jesus affirms that God, not Rome had given Pilate the authority to carry out the crucifixion

Therefore, the *one* delivering Me up to you has the greater sin.”

❖ He is referring to Caiaphas the president of the Sanhedrin who delivered him to Pilate
Bp. Gerasimos: “But you (Pilate) too have sin, because you did not judge as your conscience required of you. Here Jesus became the judge of His judges...”

¹²From this time on Pilate was seeking to release Him; but the Jews were crying out, saying, “If you should release this *One*, you are not a friend of the Cæsar. Everyone who makes himself a king speaks against the Cæsar.” ¹³Therefore Pilate, having heard this saying, brought out Jesus, and took his seat upon the tribunal (the platform on which the governor sat) in a place which is called Lithostrotos (The Stone Pavement), but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

Fr. Behr: “The ambiguity of the Greek in 19:13, *took his seat upon the tribunal*, with no direct object, could be taken as Pilate sitting Jesus upon the throne rather than sitting upon it himself. (Pg. 178)

¹⁴Now it was *the* preparation of the passover, and about *the* sixth hour (noon). And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” ¹⁵But they cried out, “Take *Him* away, take *Him* away, crucify Him.” Pilate said to them, “Your King shall I crucify?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king except Cæsar.” ¹⁶Therefore he then delivered Him up to them, in order that He might be crucified.

Fr. Behr: “That Jesus was handed over to be crucified on the Day of Preparation at the sixth hour is significant. Unlike the synoptics, where Jesus eats the Passover meal with the disciples and is crucified on the following day, in John, Jesus is crucified at the moment when the Passover lambs were to be slain in the Temple. Exodus 12:6 specifies that the lambs were to be slain towards the evening on the fourteenth day of that month, which, in the first century...after the midday hour, as the sun begins to decline.”

Bp. Gerasimos: “With this argument (we have no king except Caesar), the Jews were in effect accepting their incorporation into the Roman empire and denying their national ideals and their hope for a messianic liberation...He (Pilate) gave in to the pressure of the Jewish leaders. ”

Bp. Gerasimos: “The heart of John, who was following these events, stopped. He described in detail the Pavement, the day and the hour. . . He wants to underscore the significance of this critical moment for mankind, but also the impatience of the Jews to bring to conclusion the trial of Jesus and the execution and punishment before the end of the day.”

And they took Jesus and led *Him* away.

Bp. Gerasimos: "...the angry leaders of Israel, who would lead Him to the Cross. Crucifixion the most painful death, was the usual punishment for slaves, rebels and false prophets and could only be carried out by order of the Roman authorities and executed by Roman soldiers."