



Grace Fellowship Church  
Pastor/Teacher, Jim Rickard  
Tuesday, March 12, 2023

Luke Chapter 23

E. Wednesday - Jewish, Thursday - Roman, **Luke 22:54-23:56.**

**6. Christ again before Pilate; the 6<sup>th</sup> Trial of Jesus Christ, vs. 13-25.** This section is paralleled in **Mat 27:12-31; Mark 15:3-20; John 18:38b-40; 19:1-15.**

Vs. 22

**Luke 23:22, “And he said to them the third time, “Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt demanding death; therefore I will punish Him and release Him”.”**

“**And he said to them the third time,**” uses the ordinal Numeral TRITOS meaning, “**third.**” Three being the number of Divine Completeness and Perfection, shows that Pilate’s attempts to free Jesus are now complete according to the will of God and His Divine perfect plan. It also means that Jesus’ fate is now sealed and He will be crucified.

The other two statements of Jesus’ innocence by Pilate are found in **vs. 4, 14.** Each is silently different but all have the phrase, “**I find or found no guilt,**” which uses the Verb HEURISKO, “find, discover, ascertain, etc.,” with the Cardinal Numeral OUDEIS, “no, not one, none, nothing, etc.,” and the Noun AITON that means, “cause or reason,” in a legal sense.

Prior to this, Pilate asks the question, “**why, what,**” which use the Interrogative Pronoun TIS, “who, what, why, etc.,” with GAR, “for,” and the Adjective KAKOS, “evil, bad, wickedness, etc.,” and the Verb POIEO in the Aorist, Active, Indicative for simple past tense, “**done,** committed, performed, etc.,” and the Demonstrative Pronoun HOUTOS, “this, **this one,** he, etc.” Literally it reads, “For what evil has this one done.”

Notice that Pilate now refers to Jesus as “this one,” rendering him an inanimate object. At least prior, he referred to Him as a “this Man,” using ANTHROPOS. Now, Jesus is just an object to him.

Then we have the statement of Jesus’ innocence for the third time, “**I have found in Him no guilt demanding death.**” In the Greek it reads, OUDEIS AITIOS, “no cause or reason,” as noted above, with Genitive of the Noun THANATOS, “death,” with the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb HEURISKO, “found, discovered, ascertained, etc.,” with the Preposition EN, “in,” and the Personal Pronoun AUTOS, “Him.” Pilate found nothing in Jesus and no evidence provided by the Sanhedrin that would call for a capital punishment sentencing.

As we noted **vs. 16,** this is Pilate’s last-ditch effort to appease the crowd without condemning Jesus to death by having Him scourged, when he states once again, “**Therefore, I will punish Him and release Him,**” which in the Greek is the Aorist, Active, Participle, Nominative, Singular of the Verb PAIDEUO, “train, teach, correct, chastise,” as we noted in **vs. 16.** This Aorist Tense views the entirety of the action of having Jesus scourged. With this is the Participle OUN, “then, now, therefore, etc.,” and the Personal Pronoun AUTOS, “Him,” with the Future, Active, Indicative of the Verb APOLUO that means, “will release, let go, dismiss, etc.”

As he did in **vs. 16,** Pilate states once again that he will have Jesus punished, “scourged,” and then will release Him to go free. Having found Jesus innocent of their false charges, stating three times there was no guilt in Him, and even after stating that Herod found no guilt in Him, Pilate did not want to condemn Jesus to death. Therefore, Pilate in fact notes four times that Jesus was innocent of their charges and accusations, one more than needed for Divine Completeness. Four being the number of “material things,” tells us Jesus was innocent of all the material

charges they brought against Him. Yet, this would not be enough to appease the rabid insatiable crowd that wanted to destroy Jesus Christ.

### Vs. 23

**Luke 23:23, “But they were insistent, with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices *began* to prevail.”**

“**But they were insistent,**” DE HO with the Imperfect, Middle Deponent, Indicative, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Plural of the Verb EPIKEIMAI that means, “lie upon, press around, press upon, be urgent.” It is used seven times in the NT. The first use was **Luke 5:1**, regarding the eager crowd in Galilee pressing against Jesus to hear Him teach. This second use in our verse, now shows the angry mob pressing Pilate to condemn Jesus. The other usages are in **John 11:38; 21:9; Acts 27:20; 1 Cor 9:16; Heb 9:10.**

They pressed upon Pilate “**with loud voices,**” the Dative of the Noun PHONE, “sound, voice, calls, etc.,” with the Adjective MEGAS, “large, great,” thereby related to voices as “loud.” In other words, they were screaming loudly “**asking,**” AITEO, “ask, request, or demand”, Pilate to “crucify,” the Aorist, Passive, Infinitive of the Verb STRAUROO, as in **vs. 21**. As the crowd was calling out over and over again for Jesus to be crucified in **vs. 21**, they continue their boisterous vehement chant after Pilate’s judgment was pronounced.

Next, we see that “**their voices began to prevail,**” HO PHONE AUTOS and the Ingressive Imperfect, Active, Indicative of the Verb KATISCHUO that means, “be strong, prevail against, conquer, overpower, etc.” It is used three times in the NT, **Mat 16:18; Luke 21:36; 23:23**. The number three once again showing Divine completeness of these trials.

*“In Josephus’ writings (ca. A.D. 90), and works from the Second Century, the term is employed in a sense similar to Matthew: “to conquer a superior force” (Josephus Wars of the Jews 2.18.2), “to win a victory over” (Dio Chrysostom 12.4; cf. Bauer).” (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary.)*

KATISCHUO is a compound word from the Preposition KATA, “down, against, or toward,” and the root Verb ISCHUO, “to be strong, able, powerful, mighty, prevail, etc.” It comes to mean, “to be strong against” and includes the connotations of “being superior to or master over” someone. The Ingressive Imperfect is used to stress the beginning of the action of their demands of Pilate and that they were winning the day, with the implication that it continued for some time.

Some have interpreted the use of this word here as prevailing over the other potential voices in the crowd that wanted to see Jesus freed. But there is no mention of that portion of the crowd at this trial in Scripture. Instead, it conveys the power and effect of the angry mob’s demand to Pilate that Jesus be crucified. Their cries were “strong, compelling, and prevailing” so that Pilate granted their demand. In other words, the one they were overpowering was Pilate himself. He wanted to have Jesus released. But, because of the angry mob’s illegitimate command to Pilate to crucify, crucify Jesus in **vs. 21**, and here, they were winning the day, conquering Pilate’s authority and judgment, with the result of having Jesus put to death.

### Vs. 24

**Luke 23:24, “And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand be granted.”**

Here, we see the defeat and cowardice of Pontius Pilate.

“**Pilate,**” PILATOS, “**pronounced sentence,**” EPIKRINO in the Aorist, Active, Indicative that means, “decided, determined, gave sentence.” EPIKRINO is only used here in the NT.

In his sentencing of Jesus, he “**granted their demand,**” GINOMAI in the Aorist, Middle Deponent, Infinitive of Result, that means, “made, done, brought into being, etc.,” HO, “the,” AITEMA, “request, thing asked for, petition, etc.,” AUTOS, “of them.” In other words, he caved in to their demands. AITEMA is also only used three

times in the NT, **Luke 23:24; Phil 4:6; 1 John 5:15**. It is used to give attention to the content of the request; the demand by the mob to have Jesus crucified.

Rather than having the fortitude and integrity as a righteous judge to release Jesus, Pilate was played to be a fool, and in cowardice falsely sentenced our Lord to death. There was not one shred of evidence against Him, nor witnesses to corroborate the accusations against Him. There was nothing that called for or allowed a guilty verdict. Yet, Pilate caved in to their demand and sentenced Jesus to death.

Matthew provides two more important aspects of the conclusion of this Sixth Trial in **Mat 27:24-25**.

**1) Mat 27:24, “When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this Man’s blood; see to that yourselves.””**

Here, Pilate washes his hands of condemning Jesus to death, attempting to redeem himself of Jesus death, much like Judas’ act of returning the money and professing his sin as an act to redeem himself from his guilt of betraying Jesus. Either, accomplished their desired goal.

“**Washing of the hands**,” used the Aorist, Middle Deponent, Indicative of the Verb APONIPTO that is only used here in the NT, showing the significance of this act. It is a compound word from APO, “from,” and NIPTO, “to wash.” The prefix gives the emphatic sense “to wash or wash off.” In the Septuagint, it is used for the Jewish custom of washing hands as a symbol of innocence, cf. **Deut 21:6; Psa 26:6; 73:13**.

**Deut 21:1, 6-9, “If a slain person is found lying in the open country in the land which the LORD your God gives you to possess, and it is not known who has struck him.” ... “All the elders of that city which is nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley; <sup>7</sup>and they shall answer and say, ‘Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it. <sup>8</sup>Forgive Your people Israel whom You have redeemed, O LORD, and do not place the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of Your people Israel.’ And the bloodguiltiness shall be forgiven them. <sup>9</sup>So you shall remove the guilt of innocent blood from your midst, when you do what is right in the eyes of the LORD.”**

**Psa 26:6, “I shall wash my hands in innocence, And I will go about Your altar, O LORD.”**

**Psa 73:13, “Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure And washed my hands in innocence.”**

Apparently, there was a similar custom for the Romans. As a result, Pilate was trying to absolve himself from his false guilty verdict of Jesus, which in the eyes of God is useless, just as Judas’ attempt of Human Good works to absolve himself was too, in “Operation Return the Blood Money.” Therefore, the guilt of Pilate’s false verdict would remain with him.

He tried to pronounce, “**I am innocent of this Man’s blood**,” EIMI ATHOOS APO HO HAIMA HOUTOS. Here, we have the Nominative Adjective ATHOOS that means, “innocent, unpunishable, etc.” It is only used here and in **Mat 27:4**, for Judas’ self-proclamation of sinning because he betrayed Jesus’ “innocent” blood.

By washing his hands, Pilate was indicating that he would not be liable for whatever happened to Jesus, so he thought. His act, however, does not absolve him of his guilt. “*It was Pilate’s job to investigate the charges, try the accused, render a verdict, and ensure that justice was accomplished. He was grossly irresponsible and therefore, guilty, cf. Acts 4:27.*” (The Moody Bible Commentary.)

“*How little he realized that for all time to come his name was destined to be linked with that of the patient sufferer whom he weakly surrendered to His prejudiced accusers. Untold millions yet unborn were to intone in all the centuries to come, “I believe in God... and in His Son Jesus Christ... crucified under Pontius Pilate.” No water could ever wash away the stain of the blood of the Son of God!*” (H.A. Ironside Expository Commentary)

As the Westminster Confession of Faith VIII states; “The office of Mediator the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake; which that he might discharge, he was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfill it, was prosecuted by Pontius Pilate, endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body, was crucified, and died, was buried, and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption.”

As the Apostle’s creed states: “Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried and the third day he rose again.”

Then, notice the last phrase in **Mat 27:24**, “**see to that yourself.**” In the same way as Pilate, what the chief priests and elders said to Judas when he confessed his sin to them and tried to return the money. They too were washing their hands of Judas’ sin.

*“The reason for Pilate's failure in the area of justice parallels his nation’s failure to carry out justice. The substance of justice is righteousness. Righteousness devoid of God becomes centered in the character of the judge. Not only this, but even the rules of the game are composed and arranged for the benefits of the composers. God is an impartial lawgiver; therefore, His laws are just and right. Pilate was governed by the rules drawn up by his own nation for the benefit of his nation. Besides this, Pilate interpreted the law for his own selfish ends. Therefore, Pilate failed in the area of justice though he professed to be a just judge.”* (Complete Biblical Library Commentary.)