

# The Elusive Kingdom

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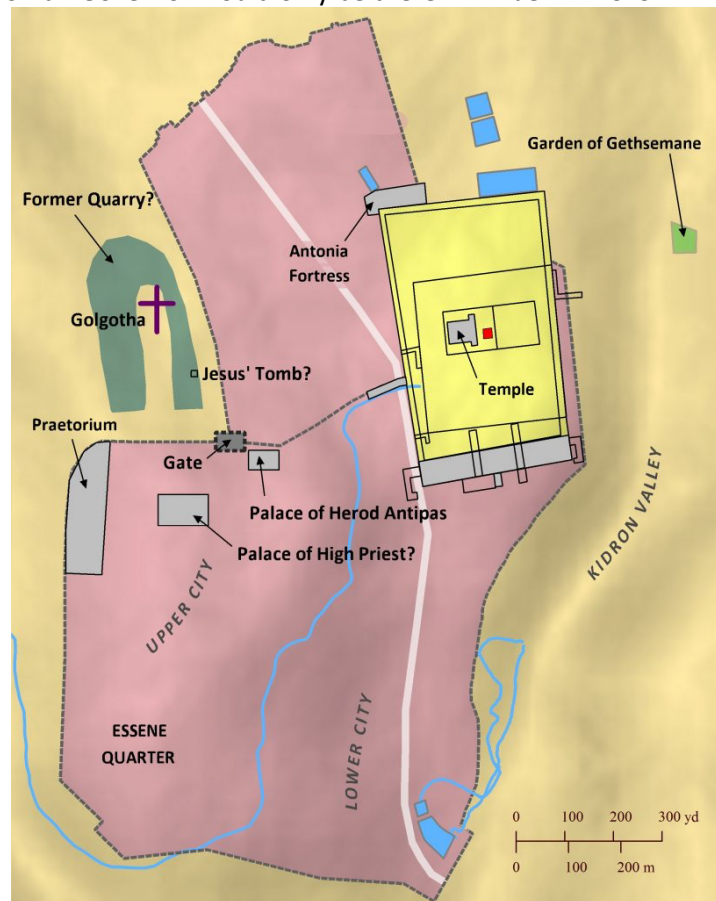
John 18:28-38

Jesus has endured a preliminary trial with Annas. And then an Illegal Trial in the middle of the night... and finally a meeting at the Sanhedrin at 6 AM. They decided to EXECUTE JESUS on the charge of BLASPHEMY.

- Luke 23:70 – [70] *So they all said, “Are you the Son of God, then?” And he said to them, “You say that I am.”* [71] *Then they said, “What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips.”*
- But there’s one PROBLEM: the JEWS under the ROMANS were not allowed to EXECUTE CAPITAL PUNISHMENT!

[28] *Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters. It was early morning.*

- The HQ was not the Fortress Antonia... Where the Via Dolorosa comes...
- It was the former PALACE of HEROD the GREAT (Praetorium)
  - The Roman Governor would only be there in MAJOR FEASTS.



*They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.*

- The hypocrisy of the JEWS is put on full display.
- They were concerned that if they entered Pilate's HQ's that somehow they would come into contact with something... that would make them ceremonially unclean for the PASSOVER FEAST (7 day-event).
- Jesus had warned them Matthew 23:27 – [27] *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. [28] So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*

WARNING: *True Religion is always a RELIGION of the HEART.*

[29] *So Pilate went outside to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this man?”*

- A Little EXCURSUS on PILATE... at this point everyone in the CHRISTIAN WORLD had heard about PILATE.
- Paul even had mentioned him in in 1 Timothy 6... *that Christ Jesus, in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession.*
  - Pilate was Self-Seeking; He was an Opportunist.
  - But he had to navigate JEWISH customs and people with care... something he didn't do well.
    - At one point, He had his legionaries bring banners with the emperor's image into the city...
    - He had used the Temple Treasury to pay for an aqueduct for the city.
    - There was a radical group of Samaritans in 36 A. D. who went to Mount Gerizim claiming to find Sacred Vessels... Pilate's calvary killed them.
  - For that reason he was called back to Rome to trial before Tiberius... Tiberius died before he could get there.
- PILATE knew that they had apprehended JESUS. Remember an entire Roman cohort had been loaned to them to arrest JESUS the night before.
- He probably thought the situation would end with that... and that the JEWS would deal with JESUS themselves.

[30] *They answered him, “If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.”*

- Basically, “take our word for it.”
- They CALL Jesus a “Kakos poieo” – Someone who BREAKS the LAW.
  - In reality they have broken the LAW by conducting a phony trial in the middle of the night.

[31] *Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.”*

*The Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.”*

- Now we've come full CIRCLE.
- The real reason why JESUS was brought to Pilate.
- Because Jesus was high-profile. And because He had so many followers, he must be dealt with through official, institutional justice.

[32] *This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.*

- Amazingly JESUS had predicted time and time again... that He would be crucified.
- To Nicodemus. John 3:14 – [14] *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so must the Son of Man be lifted up.*
- John 12:32 – [32] *And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.*
- Jesus told the disciples Matthew 16:24 – [24] *If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*

Now John doesn't tell us this... but at this POINT the JEWS must have put FORWARD this ACCUSATION against JESUS. That He claimed to be a KING... and thus a political threat to ROME.

- Luke 23:2 – [2] *And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king."*
- This was the ACCUSATION that they TWISTED. See John 19:12.

[33] *So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"*

[34] *Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?"*

- Is Jesus Christ being a KING his viewpoint or the viewpoint of another?

[35] *Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?"*

- Pilate admits this is the charge of the Jews.
- Is he a Jew, otherwise why would he be concerned with the fulfillment of Jewish prophecy.
- Point to NOTE: Clearly Pilate does not believe JESUS to be a POLITICAL THREAT.

[36] *Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."*

4 KINGDOM TRUTHS JESUS GIVES:

1) *Jesus is the KING of the JEWS "My Kingdom"*

- The word is KINGSHIP.
- It is in fulfillment to the promise given to DAVID.
- Daniel 7:14 – [14] *And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be destroyed.*

- Gabriel exclaimed this to Mary. Luke 1:33 – [33] *and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.*

2) The SOURCE of JESUS's KINGDOM AUTHORITY is HIMSELF. "Is not of this world"

- HIS SOURCE of AUTHORITY is HIS DEITY.
  - Jesus says, *"If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."*

3) Jesus's Kingdom in this Age is Spiritual

- In John 6 the JEWS had tried to make JESUS a political KING. John 6:15 – [15] *Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.*
- Christ's Kingdom is Already but not Yet.
- It is Already Inaugurated but not yet Consummated.
- The Consummation is the End of the Age when Christ Returns.
- *The Kingdom of God now is the Lordship of Christ expressed in the hearts of His people and the dynamic proclamation of the Gospel in the power of the Spirit.*
  - There is no one-to-one correspondence of the KINGDOM of GOD with anything now in this EARTH.
  - It is NOT enshrined in any GOVERNMENT. In any POLITICAL MOVEMENT. In any WORDLY INSTITUTION. Or any FAMILY.
  - NO GOVERNMENT will ever be the KINGDOM of GOD until Christ returns.
  - The degree that Governments reflect Christian virtue, ethics, and laws and are made up of Christians is the degree they will thrive.

4) The Kingdom Advances with Spiritual Means

[37] *Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth.*

- Jesus agrees with Pilate's Statement of Kingship.

JESUS pinpoints the ultimate METHOD of KINGDOM ADVANCEMENT.

- The PROCLAMATION of the TRUTH.
- By TRUTH He means ultimate TRUTH.
- John 14:6 – [6] *I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me.*
- John 8:45 – [45] *But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.*
- The KINGDOM only advances through the PROCLAMATION of the TRUTH.
- It only advances through SPIRIT-FILLED PREACHING. Spirit Filled-Personal EVANGELISM. And PRAYING.

Until CHRIST returns... the KINGDOM advances by people responding to the TRUTH. *Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."*

[38] *Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"*

- Pilate who grew up in Rome... with the different philosophers.
- He had heard so many mythologies...
- He simply discounts JESUS as another MYTHOLOGY.