

governor's residence during the crowded Feast time when tumults were likely; either Herod's palace in the west, or the citadel of Antonia, in the north of the city. Pilate's stated residence was in the new coast-city of Caesarea. "*It was early.*" The expression may mean any time between three and six o'clock. A Roman court might be held directly after sunrise. "*Let . . . defiled.*" It was a defilement during the Passover season to enter a house not purified of leaven, Deut. 16: 4. These super-righteous men would scruple to enter a Gentile house at any time. "*That they might eat the passover.*" According to the other Gospels it would seem that the Passover had been eaten the night before. Perhaps John uses the phrase "to eat the Passover" in a wide sense, referring to the whole paschal festival.

V. 29. "*Pilate then went out:*" into the open air in front of the building. This was a concession to their religious scruples. They would not go in; He came out. "*What accusation?*" He was not ignorant of the situation—Jerusalem was ringing with it—but as judge he must have a formal charge.

V. 30. "*If he were not a malefactor.*" What an air of outraged innocence! They expected Pilate simply to ratify their death sentence with out opening the case. Their answer shows irritation at his unexpected attitude.

Vs. 31, 32. "*Take ye him.*" Pilate feels the sting of the implied insult of their reply, and sarcastically replies that, if they are going to be the judges, they must be content with the punishment their law allows. It did not conform to Roman ideas of justice, Pilate reminds them, to pronounce sentence without accusation made and proved. We shall see how far and how swiftly Pilate drifts away from this anchorage. "*That the saying of Jesus.*" See Matt. 20: 18, 19. If Jesus had been put to death by Jewish law, He would have been stoned, not crucified. Crucifixion was not a Jewish, but a Roman, method of execution.

They bring in here the political charges of Luke 23: 2. Two of these charges were false. The third, that He claimed to be a king, was dishonest.

## II. Revealing himself to Pilate, 28-30 (a).

V. 33. "*Then Pilate entered into the judg-*

*ment hall.*" John's narrative alternates between the outside and the inside of the judgment hall. *Outside:* vs. 28-32; 38-40; 19: 4-7, 12-16. *Inside:* vs. 33-37; 19: 1-3, 8-11. "*And called Jesus*"; to the judgment seat, that he might investigate the charges for himself, free from the clamor of the Jews. "*Art thou the King of the Jews?*" (See Luke 23: 2.) The emphasis is on "Thou." "Thou—Thou, so humbled, so despised, handed over to me as a malefactor—art THOU the King of the Jews?" (Schaff.) Little wonder that Pilate wondered.

V. 34. "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself?*" "Are you asking with any serious personal interest in Me or My work; or, are you merely echoing the formal charge brought against Me by my enemies?" (Dods.)

V. 35. "*Am I a Jew?*" There is hot contempt in the question. "Am I a Jew? How can you suppose that I (a very big 'I') can have any personal interest in such a matter?" "*What hast thou done?*" "For what crime have your own people delivered you up to me?"

V. 36. "*My kingdom.*" Jesus, now explains the true nature of His kingdom. "*Not of this world,*" has not its origin here (8: 23); nor is it of a worldly nature, nor to be established by worldly means,—"*If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight.*"

V. 37. "*Art thou a king then?*" See above on v. 33. Here, as one would judge from the Lord's reply, there is less of contempt. "*Thou sayest that I am a king*"; an affirmative answer. "*To this end was I born*"; that He might be, as He says, a royal witness to the truth. "*He that is of the truth*", having conscience, affections, and will regulated by the truth (John 3: 21; 7: 17). "*Heareth my voice*"; recognizes that I am the Truth and the revealer of the truth.

V. 38. "*What is truth?*" Words of impatient scorn. "'Tush, what is Truth?' It was a kingdom which could not injure the empire. 'What have I to do with provinces that can yield no tribute, and which threaten no armed rebellion?'" (Dods.)

## III. Found Guiltless and yet Condemned, 38 (b) - 40.

V. 38. "*When he had said this.*" He is satisfied that Christ is not a political agitator, so he breaks off the interview. "*I find in him no*