

Pilate's Report to Tiberius Exalts Christ

By Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi

Pontius Pilate was the Roman Governor of Judea when Christ was crucified. He sent a report to the Roman Emperor Tiberius Caesar of the events that took place regarding Jesus Christ. This report is contained in the non-condemned apocryphal *Acts of Peter and Paul*, not to be confused with the condemned apocryphal *Acts of Peter* which contains the Gnostic heresy and was condemned and banned by Pope Gelasius I in 495 AD in his *Decretum de recipiendis et non recipiendis libris* (Epistle 42).

In his report Pontius Pilate tells Tiberius Caesar that Jesus performed many miracles; that Jews delivered up Jesus to be tried and killed; that he crucified Jesus to prevent an insurrection by the Jews; that a worldwide supernatural darkness occurred when Jesus was crucified; and that the Old Testament elect were resurrected in their bodies on Sunday night at 9:00 pm (the third hour of the night according to the Roman day), which was accompanied by a supernatural light from the sun, angels appearing in the heavens, mountains and hills shaking, a great chasm revealing hell and Abraham's Bosom, Christ-denying Jews falling into the hell of the damned, and the destruction of all the synagogues in Jerusalem that opposed Jesus excepting the one that did not. The authenticity of Pilate's report to Tiberius Caesar is attested to by a Catholic commentary, the apostate Justin Martyr, the heretic Eusebius of Cesarea, and the heretic Tertullian:

Apostate Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, Chapter 35, 2nd century: "And the expression, 'They pierced my hands and my feet,' was used in reference to the nails of the cross which were fixed in his hands and feet. And after he was crucified they cast lots upon his vesture, and they that crucified him parted it among them. And that these things did happen, you can ascertain from the Acts of Pontius Pilate."

Note that Justin was writing to an officeholder within the roman legislative. If the Acts of Pilate were really a fraud then why would Justin make reference to it in a letter to an authority, where many lives were on the line since at that time Catholics were persecuted just for being Catholic.

The heretic Eusebius, *Church History*, Book 2, Chapter 2, How Tiberius was affected when informed by Pilate concerning Christ: "When the wonderful resurrection and ascension of our Saviour were already noised abroad, in accordance with an ancient custom which prevailed among the rulers of the provinces, of reporting to the emperor the novel occurrences which took place in them, in order that nothing might escape him, Pontius Pilate informed Tiberius of the reports which were noised abroad through all Palestine concerning the resurrection of our Saviour Jesus from the dead. He gave an account also of other wonders which he had learned of him, and how, after his death, having risen from the dead, he was now believed by many to be a God. They say that Tiberius referred the matter to the Senate, but that they rejected it ostensibly because they had not first examined into the matter, but in reality because the saving teaching of the divine Gospel did not need the confirmation and recommendation of men. But although the Senate of the Romans rejected the proposition made in regard to our Saviour, Tiberius still retained the opinion which he had held at first and contrived no hostile measures against Christ... Tiberius, therefore, under whom the name of Christ made its entry into the world, when this doctrine was reported to him from Palestine, where it first began, communicated with the Senate, making it clear to them that he was pleased with the doctrine. But the Senate, since it had not itself proved the matter, rejected it. But Tiberius continued to hold his own opinion, and threatened death to

the accusers of the Christians. Heavenly providence had wisely instilled this into his mind in order that the doctrine of the Gospel, unhindered at its beginning, might spread in all directions throughout the world.”

Catholic commentary on Luke 3: “Ver. 2. ... This Tiberius (Caesar), having heard wonderful things through Pilate of the miracles and the sanctity of Christ, wished to place Him among the gods, but the senate opposed him, because he had attempted to do it without consulting them (see Commentary on S. Matt. xxvii. 24).”

The heretic Tertullian, *The Apology*, Chapter 5, early 2nd century: “To say a word about the origin of laws of the kind to which we now refer, there was an old decree that no god should be consecrated by the emperor till first approved by the senate. Marcus Aemilius had experience of this in reference to his god Alburnus. And this, too, makes for our case, that among you divinity is allotted at the judgment of human beings. Unless gods give satisfaction to men, there will be no deification for them: the god will have to propitiate the man. Tiberius accordingly, in whose days the Christian name made its entry into the world, having himself received intelligence [Pilate’s report to Tiberius] from Palestine of events which had clearly shown the truth of Christ’s divinity, brought the matter before the senate, with his own decision in favour of Christ. The senate, because it had not given the approval itself, rejected his proposal. Caesar held to his opinion, threatening wrath against all accusers of the Christians.”

Here is Pilate’s report to Tiberius Caesar regarding Jesus Christ:

Pontius Pilate, “The Report of Pilate the Procurator concerning our Lord Jesus Christ sent to Tiberius Caesar in Rome,” Second Greek Form: “To the most mighty, venerable, awful, most divine, the august,—Pilatus Pontius, the governor of the East: I have to report to thy reverence, through this writing of mine, being seized with great trembling and fear, O most mighty emperor, the conjuncture of the present times, as the end of these things has shown. For while I, my lord, according to the commandment of thy clemency, was discharging the duties of my government, which is one of the cities of the East, Jerusalem by name, in which is built the temple of the Jewish nation, all the multitude of the Jews came together, and delivered to me a certain man named Jesus, bringing against him many and groundless charges; and they were not able to convict him in anything. And one heresy of theirs against him was that he said that the Sabbath was not their right rest. And that man wrought many cures, in addition to good works. He made the blind see; he cleansed lepers; he raised the dead; he healed paralytics who could not move at all, except that they only had their voice, and the joining of their bones; and he gave them the power of walking about and running, commanding them by a single word. And another mightier work he did, which was strange even with our gods: he raised up a dead man, Lazarus, who had been dead four days, by a single word ordering the dead man to be raised, although his body was already corrupted by the worms that grow in wounds; and that ill-smelling body lying in the tomb he ordered to run; and as a bridegroom from the bridal chamber, so he came forth out of the tomb, filled with exceeding fragrance. And some that were cruelly vexed by demons, and had their dwellings in deserts, and ate the flesh of their own limbs, and lived along with reptiles and wild beasts, he made to be dwellers in cities in their own houses, and by a word he rendered them sound-minded; and he made those that were troubled by unclean spirits to be intelligent and reputable; and sending away the demons in them into a herd of swine, he suffocated them in the sea. Another man, again, who had a withered hand, and lived in sorrow, and had not even the half of his body sound, he rendered sound by a single word. And a woman that had a flow of blood for many years, so that, in consequence of the flowing of her blood, all the joinings of her bones appeared, and were transparent like glass; and assuredly all the physicians had left her without hope, and had not cleansed her, for there was not in her a single hope of health: once, then, as Jesus was passing by, she took hold of the fringe of his clothes behind, and that same hour the power of her body was completely restored, and she became whole, as if nothing were the matter with her, and she began to run swiftly to her own city Paneas. And these things indeed were so. And the Jews gave information that Jesus did these things on the Sabbath. And I also ascertained that the miracles done by him were

greater than any which the gods whom we worship could do. Him then Herod and Archelaus and Philip, and Annas and Caiaphas, with all the people, delivered to me to try him. And as many were exciting an insurrection against me, I ordered him to be crucified. And when he had been crucified, there was darkness over the whole earth, the sun having been completely hidden, and the heaven appearing dark though it was day, so that the stars appeared, but had at the same time their brightness darkened, as I suppose your reverence is not ignorant of, because in all the world they lighted lamps from the sixth hour until evening. And the moon, being like blood, did not shine the whole night, and yet she happened to be at the full. And the stars also, and Orion, made a lament about the Jews, on account of the wickedness that had been done by them. And on the first of the week, about the third hour of the night, the sun was seen such as it had never at any time shone, and all the heaven was lighted up. And as lightnings come on in winter, so majestic men of indescribable splendour of dress and of glory appeared in the air, and an innumerable multitude of angels crying out, and saying: Glory in the highest to God, and on earth peace among men of goodwill: come up out of Hades, ye who have been kept in slavery in the underground regions of Hades. And at their voice all the mountains and hills were shaken, and the rocks were burst asunder; and great chasms were made in the earth, so that also what was in the abyss appeared. And there were seen in that terror dead men raised up, as the Jews that saw them said: We have seen Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, that died two thousand five hundred years ago; and we have seen Noah manifestly in the body. And all the multitude walked about, and sang praises to God with a loud voice, saying: The Lord our God that has risen from the dead has brought to life all the dead, and has plundered Hades, and put him to death. All that night therefore, my lord, O king, the light ceased not. And many of the Jews died, and were engulfed and swallowed up in the chasms in that night, so that not even their bodies appeared. Those, I say, of the Jews suffered that had spoken against Jesus. And one synagogue was left in Jerusalem, since all those synagogues that had been against Jesus were engulfed. From that fear, then, being in perplexity, and seized with much trembling, at that same hour I ordered what had been done by them all to be written; and I have reported it to thy mightiness.”

Pilate, then, reports that the Old Testament Elect were resurrected with their bodies at the third hour of the night on the first day of the week—Sunday night at 9:00 pm according to a Roman day:

Pilate’s Report to Tiberius: “And on the first of the week, about the third hour of the night... dead men raised up, as the Jews that saw them said: We have seen Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, that died two thousand five hundred years ago; and we have seen Noah manifestly in the body.”

According to a Roman day, the third hour of the night is 9:00 pm. Acts 23:23 records a Roman tribune commanding Roman soldiers to go to St. Paul at the third hour of the night to take him to Felix the governor:

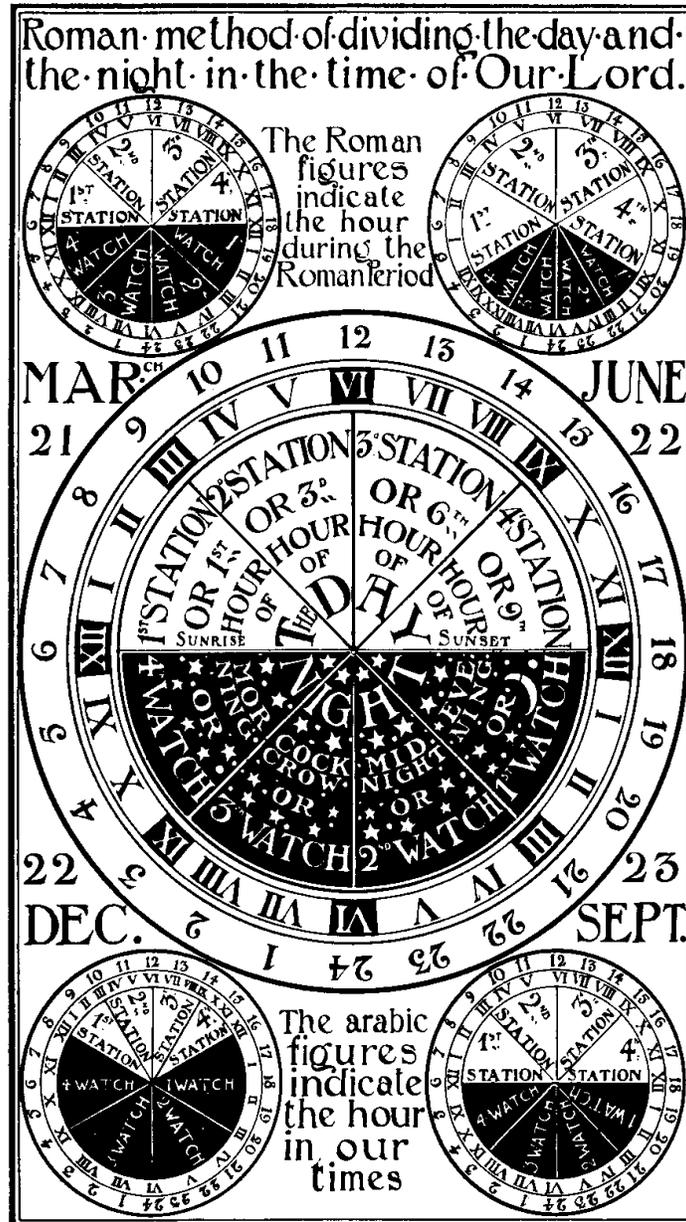
“Then having called two centurions, he said to them: Make ready two hundred soldiers to go as far as Caesarea, and seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen for the third hour of the night.” (Acts 23:23)

A Catholic commentary on this verse says that the third hour of the night is 9:00 pm:

Catholic Commentary on Acts 23: “Ver. 23. From the third hour of the night. If the tribune spoke with a regard to the twelve hours of the night, the third hour was three hours after sunset, and was about our nine o’clock at night...”

A chart in the *St. Andrew Daily Missal*, Septuagesima Sunday, page 183, shows the Roman method of dividing the day and night hours in the time of Jesus Christ.

Chart: Roman Method of Dividing Day and Night



Among the Romans, the day like the night was divided into four parts of three hours each. They were called stations or watches because they were the moments when the soldiers relieved one another. These hours varied in length with the different seasons, for the official day began at sunrise and finished at sunset. The sixth hour of the day and night corresponded with our midday and midnight respectively.

Pilate said that “dead men [were] raised up...on the first of the week and the third hour of the night.” The first day of the week was Sunday for both Hebrews and Romans. However, the Hebrew day begins and ends at different times than the Roman day. Pilate’s 9:00 pm Sunday night was 9:00 pm Monday night according to a Hebrew day. Unlike the Hebrew day that began and ended at sunset, the Roman day began and ended either at midnight or sunrise. Some sources say midnight and others sunrise. And some say that the Roman civil day started at midnight but for other purposes it started at sunrise. Whether the Roman day began at midnight or sunrise, it did not begin at sunset as does the Hebrew day. Hence whether the Roman day began at midnight or sunrise, the third hour of the night of the first day of the week, Sunday, as mentioned by Pontius Pilate, occurred Sunday night at 9:00 pm, which was after Sunday morning when Christ rose from the dead. However, according to the Hebrew day, the third hour of the night mentioned by Pilate was Monday, the second day of the week, and not Sunday, the first day of the week, because the Hebrew day ends at sunset whereas the Roman day ends at either midnight or sunrise.

Pontius Pilate, then, reports that this supernatural light that lit up the heavens when the Old Testament elect were being resurrected in their bodies occurred on Sunday, the first day of the week, at 9:00 pm, several hours after Jesus had resurrected early Sunday morning, just as Matthew said in Matthew 27:52:

“And the graves were opened: and many bodies of the saints that had slept arose, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, came into the holy city, and appeared to many.” (Mt. 27:52-53)

Not until Jesus had resurrected first, early in the morning on Sunday, and then revealed Himself to the apostles did the Old Testament elect resurrect at 9:00 pm on Sunday night. In Luke, Chapter 24, we read of all the following events that took place on Sunday, the resurrection day of Jesus:

1. Jesus resurrected early in the morning.
2. Jesus appeared to the women.
3. The women told the apostles, and the apostles did not believe.
4. Jesus revealed Himself to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.
5. The two disciples returned to Jerusalem near evening time and told the apostles.
6. Jesus appeared to the apostles in the evening when they were eating dinner, which was 3 or 4 hours before 9:00 pm when the Old Testament elect were resurrected.

“And on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled back from the sepulchre. And going in they found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were astonished in their mind at this, behold, two men stood by them, in shining apparel. And as they were afraid, and bowed down their countenance towards the ground, they said unto them: Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how he spoke unto you, when he was yet in Galilee, saying: The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words. And going back from the sepulchre, they told all these things to the eleven, and to all the rest. And it was Mary Magdalen, and Joanna, and Mary of James, and the other women that were with them, who told these things to the apostles. And these words seemed to them as idle tales; and they did not believe them. But Peter rising up,

ran to the sepulchre, and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths laid by themselves; and went away wondering in himself at that which was come to pass. And behold, two of them went, the same day, to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that while they talked and reasoned with themselves, Jesus himself also drawing near, went with them. But their eyes were held, that they should not know him. And he said to them: What are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said to him: Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days? To whom he said: What things? And they said: Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people; and how our chief priests and princes delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we hoped that it was he that should have redeemed Israel: and now besides all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. Yea and certain women also of our company affrighted us, who before it was light, were at the sepulchre, and not finding his body, came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that he is alive. And some of our people went to the sepulchre, and found it so as the women had said, but him they found not. Then he said to them: O foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures, the things that were concerning him. And they drew nigh to the town, whither they were going: and he made as though he would go farther. But they constrained him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in with them. And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them, he took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to the other: Was not our heart burning within us, whilst he spoke in the way, and opened to us the scriptures? And rising up, the same hour, they went back to Jerusalem: and they found the eleven gathered together, and those that were with them, saying: The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way; and how they knew him in the breaking of bread. Now whilst they were speaking these things, Jesus stood in the midst of them, and saith to them: Peace be to you; it is I, fear not. But they being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and feet, that it is I myself; handle, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have. And when he had said this, he shewed them his hands and feet. But while they yet believed not, and wondered for joy, he said: Have you here any thing to eat? And they offered him a piece of a broiled fish, and a honeycomb. And when he had eaten before them, taking the remains, he gave to them.” (Lk. 24:1-43)

We read that Christ met the two disciples on the third day after He died, the resurrection day. The disciples were on the road to Emmaus, which was 60 furlongs or 7.5 miles from Jerusalem:

“And behold, two of them went, the same day, to a town which was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, named Emmaus.” (Lk. 24:13)

Catholic Commentary on Mk. 11: “Ver. 1. ...eight furlongs or a mile.”

If the disciples were halfway to Emmaus, then they were 3.75 miles from Jerusalem, a short distance that can be traveled quickly in less than one hour. On the road to Emmaus, the two disciples said to Jesus, *“Our chief priests and princes delivered him to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we hoped that it was he that should have redeemed Israel: and now besides all this, to day is **the third day** since these things were done.”* They then turned aside with Jesus to eat when it was toward evening: *“But they constrained him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent.”* Hence it was not yet evening when they turned aside to eat. While they were eating, Jesus vanished from their sight. They then immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell the apostles: *“And rising up, the same hour, they went*

*back to Jerusalem: and they found the eleven gathered together, and those that were with them, saying: The Lord is risen indeed.” When they arrived at Jerusalem, it was evening and the apostles were eating—probably between 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm, before or shortly after sunset. And Jesus appeared to the apostles while they were eating or had just finished their supper, as they gave Jesus some of the food to eat: “But while they yet believed not, and wondered for joy, he said: Have you here any thing to eat? And they offered him a piece of a broiled fish, and a honeycomb. And when he had eaten before them, taking the remains, he gave to them.” And several hours later, at 9:00 pm, the Old Testament Elect were resurrected. (See my book *Baptism Controversy: Baptism of the Old Testament Elect*.)*

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