



# Jesus The Righteous King – Part I

Luke 23



# Welcome!



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Welcome to Sunday service today at Life Church!

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Got Questions? If you took the time to visit us, you deserve to get answers! For today please hold questions to the end so all can hear and engage.

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## The Key Passage: Luke 23:1-12 (NIV)

**23** Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. <sup>2</sup> And they began to accuse him, saying, “We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king.”

<sup>3</sup> So Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?”  
“You have said so,” Jesus replied.

<sup>4</sup> Then Pilate announced to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no basis for a charge against this man.”



## The Key Passage: Luke 23:1-12 (NIV) cont.

<sup>5</sup> But they insisted, “He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here.”

<sup>6</sup> On hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean. <sup>7</sup> When he learned that Jesus was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

<sup>8</sup> When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see him.



## The Key Passage: Luke 23:1-12 (NIV) cont.

From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform a sign of some sort.

<sup>9</sup> He plied him with many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. <sup>10</sup> The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him. <sup>11</sup> Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. <sup>12</sup> That day Herod and Pilate became friends—before this they had been enemies.



So Pilate asked Jesus, “You are the king of the Jews?”

“You said it,” replied Jesus.  
(NTFE)



# Who are the people in the room?

- Who is Herod?
- Who is Pilate?



“You are the king of the  
Jews?”

This was a loaded question.





To see who Herod and Pilate were, and why this was a loaded question, let's look back at God's plan to rescue humanity. God made a promise to Abraham.



# Abraham

# Isaac

## Esau (Edom)

# Jacob (Israel)

# Edomites

# Twelve Tribes of Israel

# Idumeans

## Judah → Davidic Line → Messiah

**(forcibly converted to Judaism)**

# Antipater the Idumean

# Herod the Great

# Herodian Dynasty



# Client King

What is a client king?

A **client king** is a ruler who **governs a territory on behalf of a greater empire.**

They look like a king on the ground—but their power exists **only as long as the empire approves.**



# Herod the Great as a Client King

- Herod the Great was called "King of the Jews"
- Ruled Judea (37 – 4 BC)
- Rebuilt the Temple
- Ordered the killing of the children after Jesus's birth
- Appeared powerful, but his rule only existed because Rome allowed it



# How Herod the Great's territory was divided when he died:

## 1. Herod Archelaus

**Received:** Judea, Samaria, Idumea

**Title:** *Ethnarch* (lower than king)

Controlled **Jerusalem and the Temple**

So cruel that Jewish leaders appealed to Rome

**Deposed by Rome in AD 6**

His territory became a **Roman province** ruled by governors (this setup later brings in **Pontius Pilate**)



## 2. Herod Antipas

**Received:** Galilee and Perea

**Title:** *Tetrarch* (“ruler of a quarter”)

Ruled during **John the Baptist** and **Jesus’ ministry**

Ordered John’s execution

Jesus called him “*that fox*”

Reigned for decades (4 BC–AD 39)



## Luke 13:31 (NIV)

<sup>31</sup> At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, “Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you.”



### 3. Herod Philip

**Received:** Iturea, Trachonitis, Batanaea (northeast regions)

**Title:** *Tetrarch*

Generally considered a fair and stable ruler

Least controversial of Herod's sons

Built Caesarea Philippi





# The Charges Against Jesus

- Accused of misleading the nation
- Accused of opposing paying taxes to Caesar
- Accused of claiming kingship



## John 18: 33-37 (NIV)

<sup>33</sup> Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

<sup>34</sup> “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”

<sup>35</sup> “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”



## **John 18: 33-37 (NIV) cont.**

<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

<sup>37</sup> “You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”



## John 14:6-9 (NIV)



<sup>6</sup> Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.<sup>7</sup> If you really know me, you will know<sup>[a]</sup> my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” <sup>8</sup> Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?



# The Truth

- Jesus doesn't just speak the truth or know the truth or teach the truth. Jesus IS The Truth
- Jesus is making a claim about his identity
- Jesus reveals who God is. If you know Jesus, you know the Father as well.



# Why Pilate and Herod Were Enemies



- Ultimate power struggle
- Pilate ruled **Judea** directly for Rome
- Herod ruled **Galilee**, but **came to Jerusalem** for festivals
- Herod likely resented Pilate for killing Galileans (Herod's territory) during unrest in Jerusalem.
- Each man wanted to look good to Rome and look like they were in charge



# Why Pilate and Herod Became Friends

- Shared self-interest
- Jesus was a political risk: large crowds; volatile timing (Passover)
- By sending Jesus back and forth, each ruler:
  - Avoided sole responsibility
  - Publicly acknowledged each other's authority
  - Created political cover – neither condemns Jesus alone – Pilate sends Jesus to Herod – He's a Galilean – Herod's jurisdiction. Herod finds no guilt – sends Jesus back.



# Irony that Luke Highlights

- Pilot and Herod were two rulers that had been enemies – now friends - “frenemies”
- They were united:
  - Not by justice
  - Not by truth
  - But by convenience
- They reconciled while condemning an innocent man
- **People in power often unite against truth not for it**





## Questions for us to consider

- What kind of rulers do we have?
- What kind of rulers will we be?
- What kind of rulers will we support?
- How will we stand for truth?
- How will we stand in our identity as followers of Jesus (the one who is the Truth)?