



**The DAILY JESUS NEWS #314**  
**Friday... Day of Agony and Atonement**

**Jesus' Three-Phase Roman Trial**

**Phase II of the Roman Trial: Before Herod Antipas**  
**LK 23.6-12**

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6 Because he heard this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean. 7 When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

8 When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because he had been wanting to see him for a long time. From what he had heard about him, he hoped to see him perform some kind of sign.

9 He was asking him many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer. 10 The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him.

11 Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him. Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate. 12 That day Herod and Pilate became friends—they had been enemies toward each other before this.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = <sup>MT</sup>, Mark = <sup>M</sup>, Luke = <sup>L</sup>, John = <sup>J</sup>, Acts = <sup>A</sup>. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Jerusalem Palace of Herod Antipas
Timeline	Early April (Month 39)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VIII: Passion Week
	E. Friday: Day of Agony and Atonement
	Jesus' Three-Phase Roman Trial
Title	Phase II of the Roman Trial: Before Herod Antipas

Today's reading describes Phase II of Jesus' Roman trial, before Herod Antipas. It probably occurred about 7:00 AM on Friday. We will begin our comment with some key background information regarding the man Jesus faced in this scene.

Herod Antipas was one of the four sons of Herod the Great, who reigned over Judea when Jesus was born. Upon his death Herod's territory was divided into quarters, with each fourth ruled by one son

(hence the term "tetrarch, or "quarter-ruler). Herod Antipas was the tetrarch of the region of Galilee and Perea, where Jesus had spent most of his life, and much of his ministry. As soon as Pilate had learned that Jesus hailed from Galilee, he had sent him to Herod for judgement in a failed attempt to wash his hands of the matter.

The Herodian line was Jewish. Antipas was corrupted by his power, and lived in open rebellion against the Law and his religious heritage. John the Baptist confronted him for divorcing his first wife and marrying his brother Phillip's divorced wife, Herodias. Herod threw John in jail for this, and ultimately had his neck severed, and presented on a platter at a banquet (MK 6.14-29; DJN #105). At the end of his life Herod exiled for political intrigue against the Emperor Caligula, and died with Herodias somewhere in Gaul.

Herod Antipas had the nefarious distinction of direct responsibility for the death of the first prophet to appear in Israel in 400 years, and involvement in the death of the sinless Son of God. Like all of us, he was a sinful man. We can see his base nature in the way he conducted his legal examination of Jesus.

Antipas was motivated by a long-standing curiosity about Jesus' powers as a miracle worker. He had no interest in the truth of Jesus' guilt or innocence. When Jesus refused to entertain him with a quick miracle, or to answer his accusers, Herod quickly lost interest and sent Jesus back to Pilate, after mocking him mercilessly with his soldiers. Antipas was a frivolous ruler who lived for his own pleasure.

We have seen that Jesus never defended himself against the accusations of the Jewish leadership. However, he also chose not to respond in any way to Herod. This was different from his interaction with Pilate. Why was Jesus silent?

Our Lord knew Antipas's heart. He knew that there was no openness to the truth, or to God in the man. Until the King was willing to face his responsibility before his Creator and God as a sinful man, there was no hope for him. Jesus waited patiently for Antipas to sincerely seek to know the truth about him, but it never happened. So Jesus waited in silence.

Luke, the sole gospel writer to include information about this phase of the trial, commented that the relationship between Pilate and Herod was reconciled from enmity to friendship through Jesus on this day. That was what the death of Jesus was intended to accomplish--first reconcile us to God, and then one another. The unlikely friendship of Pilate and Herod became a tiny object lesson for the eternal reconciliation that God was actually achieving through Jesus' sufferings.

#### APPLICATION:

How easy it is to try to use Jesus for our own entertainment, or pleasure. This is what we are doing when we only seek for the benefits of knowing Jesus for ourselves, with no real desire to know him for his own sake. Such is fox-hole religion. So was Herod Antipas.

Jesus' first question to his first disciples, and Pilate, also searches us: **"What are you looking for?"** God's promise through Jeremiah still holds true today:

*"You will surely seek for me and find me, when you seek after me with all of your heart." (Jer. 29.13)*

*How desperate is your passion to know Jesus? How can focus your attention more fully on Jesus?*