

“In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar-when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea”—Luke 3:1 NIV

Pontius Pilate is mentioned in all four the the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and in Acts and 1 Timothy, as the Roman governor before whom Jesus was brought to trial, and who, under pressure, passed the death death sentence upon Jesus (**Matthew 27:1-26; Mark 15:1-15; Luke 22:66-23:25; John 18:28-19:16; Acts 4:27; 13:28; 1 Timothy 6:13**). Pilate was **“governor of Judea”** from 26 CE to 36 CE, and is mentioned by the writer Tacitus.

“There were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices”—Luke 13:1 NIV

“Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how’”—Matthew 27:65 NKJV

These terse responses by Pilate in response to the Jewish leaders who had wrung a death sentence out of him for the innocent man Jesus recorded in the gospels, are in keeping with his cruel and ruthless personality as described by historians.

This event is unknown outside Luke, but the account fits well with what we read about Pilate in the works of ancient Jewish writers Josephus and Philo who portrayed Pilate as cruel, ruthless, and corrupt. Josephus reported that Pilate had disrupted a religious gathering of Samaritans on Mount Gerizim with a slaughter of the participants, and that on another occasion Pilate had killed many Jews who had opposed him when he appropriated money from the temple treasury to build an aqueduct from south of Bethlehem to Jerusalem. Remnants of this structure can still be seen in Bethlehem today.

“Pilate answered, ‘What I have written, I have written’”—John 19:22 NIV

Until 1961 there were no extant artifacts that documented his existence, so many skeptics and critics claimed he was a fictional character. Quite surprisingly, to the dismay of some critics, in 1961, when a theater built by Herod the Great was being excavated, in a stairway that was repaired during a 4th century remodeling, workmen found an inscription on the underside of a stone step, that read in Latin, ***“Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea”***.

Pontius Pilate is just one of many people, places, things and events that the Bible recorded, but critics pooh-poohed, until artifacts proved the Bible right and the critics wrong.

**“God will always be true even if no human being can be relied on”—Romans 3:4
NJB**