

Report of Pontius Pilate

The Report of Pilate the Procurator Concerning Our Lord Jesus Christ. Sent to the August Cæsar in Rome.

(First Greek Form)

In those days, [our Lord Jesus Christ](#) having been crucified under [Pontius Pilate](#), [procurator](#) of Palestine and [Phœnicia](#), these records were made in Jerusalem as to what was done by the [Jews](#) against the Lord. [Pilate](#) therefore, along with his private report, sent them to the Cæsar in [Rome](#), writing thus:—

To the most mighty, venerable, most divine, and most terrible, the august Cæsar, [Pilate](#) the governor of the East *sends greeting*. I have, O most mighty, a narrative to give you, on account of which I am seized with [fear](#) and trembling. For in this government of mine, of which one of the cities is called Jerusalem, all the people of the [Jews](#) have delivered to me a man named Jesus, bringing many charges against him, which they were not able to convict him of by the consistency of their evidence. And one of the [heresies](#) they had against him was, that [Jesus](#) said that their [Sabbath](#) should not be a day of leisure, and should not be observed. For he performed many cures on that day: he made the blind receive their sight, the lame walk; he raised up the dead, he cleansed the [lepers](#); he healed paralytics that were not at all able to make any movement of their body, or to keep their nerves steady, but who had only speech and the modulation of their voice, and he gave them the power of walking and running, removing their illness by a single word. Another thing again, more powerful still, which is strange even with our gods: he raised up one that had been dead four days, summoning him by a single word, when the dead man had his blood corrupted, and when his body was destroyed by the worms produced in it, and when it had the stink of a dog. And seeing him lying in the tomb, he ordered him to run. Nor had he anything of a dead body about him at all; but as a bridegroom from the bridal chamber, so he came forth from the tomb filled with very great fragrance. And strangers that were manifestly [demoniac](#), and that had their dwelling in deserts, and ate their own flesh, living like beasts and creeping things, even these he made to be dwellers in cities, and by his word restored them to soundness of [mind](#), and rendered them wise and able and reputable, eating with all the enemies of the unclean spirits that dwelt in them for their destruction, which he cast down into the depths of the sea. And again there was another having a withered hand; and not the hand only, but rather the half of the body of the man, was petrified, so that he had not the form of a [man](#), or the power of moving his body. And him by a word he healed, and made sound. And a [woman](#) that had an issue of blood for many years, and whose joints and veins were drained by the flowing of the blood, so that she did not present the appearance of a [human](#) being, but was like a corpse, and was speechless every day, so that all the physicians of the district could not cure her. For there was not any hope of life left to her. And when Jesus passed by, she mysteriously received strength through his overshadowing her; and she took hold of his fringe behind, and immediately in the same hour power filled up what in her was empty,

so that, no longer suffering any pain, she began to run swiftly to her own city Kepharnaum, so as to accomplish the journey in six days.

And these are the things which I lately had in my mind to report, which Jesus accomplished on the [Sabbath](#). And other signs greater than these he did, so that I have perceived that the [wonderful works](#) done by him are greater than can be done by the gods whom we worship.

And him [Herod](#) and Archelaus and Philip, [Annas](#) and [Caiaphas](#), with all the people, delivered to me, making a great uproar against me that I should try him. I therefore ordered him to be crucified, having first scourged him, and having found against him no [cause](#) of [evil](#) accusations or [deeds](#).

And at the time he was crucified there was darkness over all the world, the sun being darkened at mid-day, and the stars appearing, but in them there appeared no lustre; and the moon, as if turned into blood, failed in her light. And the world was swallowed up by the lower regions, so that the very sanctuary of the temple, as they call it, could not be seen by the [Jews](#) in their fall; and they saw below them a chasm of the earth, with the roar of the thunders that fell upon it. And in that terror dead men were seen that had risen, as the [Jews](#) themselves testified; and they said that it was [Abraham](#), and Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, and [Moses](#) and Job, that had died, as they say, three thousand five hundred years before. And there were very many whom I also saw appearing in the body; and they were making a lamentation about the [Jews](#), on account of the [wickedness](#) that had come to pass through them, and the destruction of the [Jews](#) and of their law.

And the [fear](#) of the earthquake remained from the sixth hour of the preparation until the ninth hour. And on the evening of the first day of the week there was a sound out of the heaven, so that the heaven became enlightened sevenfold more than all the days. And at the [third hour](#) of the night also the sun was seen brighter than it had ever shone before, lighting up all the heaven. And as lightnings come suddenly in winter, so majestic men appeared in [glorious](#) robes, an innumerable multitude, whose voice was heard as that of a very great thunder, crying out: Jesus that was crucified is risen: come up out of Hades, you that have been enslaved in the underground regions of Hades. And the chasm of the earth was as if it had no bottom; but it was as if the very foundations of the earth appeared along with those that cried out in the heavens, and walked about in the body in the midst of the dead that had risen. And he that raised up all the dead, and bound Hades, said: Say to my [disciples](#), He goes before you into [Galilee](#); there shall you see him.

And all that night the light did not cease shining. And many of the [Jews](#) died, swallowed up in the chasm of the earth, so that on the following day most of those who had been against Jesus could not be found. Others saw the appearing of those that had risen, whom no one of us had ever seen. And only one [synagogue](#) of the [Jews](#) was left in this Jerusalem, since all disappeared in that fall.

With that terror, being in perplexity, and seized with a most frightful trembling, I have written what I saw at that time, and have reported to your majesty. Having set in order also what was done by the [Jews](#) against Jesus, I have sent it, my lord, to your divinity.

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 your 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 your 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](#) goodwill: come up out of Hades, you 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 aloud 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 your mightiness.

About this page

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