

The Death of Pilate

And when [Tiberius Cæsar](#), the emperor of the Romans, was labouring under a grievous disease, and understanding that there was at Jerusalem a certain physician, Jesus by name, who by a single word cured all infirmities, he, not [knowing](#) that the [Jews](#) and [Pilate](#) had put Him to death, ordered a certain friend of his named Volusianus: Go as quickly as possible across the seas; and you shall tell [Pilate](#), my servant and friend, to send me this physician, that he may restore me to my former health. And this Volusianus, having heard the emperor's command, immediately departed, and came to [Pilate](#), as he had been commanded. And he related to the same [Pilate](#) what had been entrusted to him by [Tiberius Cæsar](#), saying: [Tiberius Cæsar](#), the emperor of the Romans, your master, having heard that in this city there is a physician who by his word alone heals infirmities, begs you earnestly to send him to him for the curing of his infirmity. [Pilate](#), hearing this, was very much afraid, [knowing](#) that through [envy](#) he had caused Him to be [put to death](#). [Pilate](#) answered the same messenger thus, saying: This man was a malefactor, and a man who drew to himself all the people; so a council of the wise men of the city was held, and I caused him to be crucified. And this messenger returning to his inn, met a certain [woman](#) named Veronica, who had been a friend of Jesus; and he said: O [woman](#), a certain physician who was in this city, who cured the sick by a word alone, why have the [Jews](#) put him to death? And she began to weep, saying: Ah me! My lord, my God and my Lord, whom [Pilate](#) for [envy](#) delivered, condemned, and ordered to be crucified. Then he, being exceedingly grieved, said: I am vehemently grieved that I am unable to accomplish that for which my lord had sent me. And Veronica said to him: When my Lord was going about preaching, and I, much against my will, was deprived of His presence, I wished His picture to be painted for me, in order that, while I was deprived of His presence, the figure of His picture might at least afford me consolation. And when I was carrying the canvas to the painter to be painted, my Lord met me, and asked whither I was going. And when I had disclosed to Him the [cause](#) of my journey, He asked of me the cloth, and gave it back to me impressed with the image of His venerable face. Therefore, if your lord will devoutly gaze upon His face, he shall obtain immediately the benefit of health. And he said to her: Is a picture of such a sort procurable by gold or silver? She said to him: No; but by the [pious](#) influence of devotion. I shall therefore set out with you, and shall carry the picture to be seen by Cæsar, and shall come back again.

Volusianus therefore came with Veronica to [Rome](#), and said to [Tiberius the emperor](#): Jesus, whom you have been longing for, [Pilate](#) and the [Jews](#) have delivered to an [unjust](#) death, and have through [envy](#) affixed to the gibbet of the cross. There has therefore come with me a certain matron, bringing a picture of [Jesus](#) himself; and if you will devoutly look upon it, you shall immediately obtain the benefit of your health. Cæsar therefore ordered the way to be strewn with silk cloths, and the picture to be presented to him; and as soon as he had looked upon it, he regained his former health.

[Pontius Pilate](#), therefore, by the command of Cæsar, is taken and brought through to [Rome](#). Cæsar, hearing that [Pilate](#) had arrived at [Rome](#), was filled with exceeding fury against him, and caused him to be brought to him. But [Pilate](#) brought down with him the

seamless tunic of Jesus; and he wore it on him in presence of the emperor. And as soon as the emperor saw him, he laid aside all his [anger](#), and immediately rose up to meet him. Nor was he able to speak harshly to him in anything; and he who seemed so terrible and fierce in his absence, now in his presence is somehow found to be mild. And when he had sent him away, immediately he blazed out against him terribly, crying out that he was a wretch, inasmuch as he had not at all shown him the fury of his heart. And immediately he made him be called back, swearing and declaring that he was the son of death, and that it was [infamous](#) that he should live upon the earth. And as soon as he saw him, he immediately saluted him, and threw away all the ferocity of his [mind](#). All wondered; and he himself wondered that he should thus blaze out against [Pilate](#) when he was absent, and that while he was present he could say nothing to him roughly. Then, by a divine impulse, or perhaps by the advice of some [Christian](#), he caused him to be stripped of that tunic, and immediately resumed against him his former ferocity of mind. And when at this the emperor wondered very much, it was told him that that tunic had belonged to the [Lord Jesus](#). Then the emperor ordered him to be kept in [prison](#), until he should deliberate in a council of the wise men what ought to be done with him. And a few days after, sentence was therefore passed upon [Pilate](#), that he should be condemned to the most disgraceful death. [Pilate](#), hearing this, killed himself with his own knife, and by such a death ended his life.

When Cæsar [knew](#) of the death of [Pilate](#), he said: Truly he has died by a most disgraceful death, whom his own hand has not spared. He is therefore bound to a great mass, and sunk into the river Tiber. But malignant and filthy spirits in his malignant and filthy body, all rejoicing together, kept moving themselves in the waters, and in a terrible manner brought lightnings and tempests, thunders and hail-storms, in the air, so that all [men](#) were kept in horrible [fear](#). Wherefore the Romans, drawing him out of the river Tiber, in derision carried him down to Vienna, and sunk him in the river Rhone. For Vienna is called, as it were, *Via Gehennæ*, the way of Gehenna, because it was then a place of cursing. But there [evil spirits](#) were present, working the same things in the same place. Those men therefore, not enduring such a visitation of [demons](#), removed from themselves that vessel of malediction, and sent him to be buried in the territory of Losania. And they, seeing that they were troubled by the aforesaid visitations, removed him from themselves, and sunk him in a certain pit surrounded by mountains, where to this day, according to the account of some, certain diabolical machinations are said to bubble up.

About this page

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