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**The Crucifixion  
and the  
Place Jesus  
was  
Crucified**

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

# The Crucifixion and the Place Jesus was Crucified.

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## Topics.

- The judgment seat (bema seat), and the stone pavement.
- Gabbatha, the Praetorium and Herod's palace.
- Pilate's headquarters, and Herod's palace at Jerusalem.
- Pontius Pilate and Herod the Great.
- The story of Jesus crucifixion in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

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## THE JUDGEMENT SEAT, STONE PAVEMENT, AND HEROD'S PALACE

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In the book of John, we read:

- **John 19:3:** Pilate brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic (Hebrew in KJV) Gabbatha.

**The judgment seat (bema seat):** the words, 'judgment' and 'seat' come from the Greek word (*bema*) which can refer to a step, a rostrum, a tribunal a judgment-seat or a throne. The judgment-seat was a raised platform that was originally used by orators and law courts and later adopted by the Roman Empire as the place of pronouncing a sentence against a prisoner.

**The stone pavement:** comes from the Greek word (*lithos*) it literally refers to a stone and carries the idea of a stumbling stone. The Stone Pavement may refer to the following two areas in the Praetorium in Jerusalem:

1. A very large indoor area with walls of stone and a floor made of enormously large stones. (These stones have been preserved and can be seen today). This area was where Jesus was judged.
2. The outdoor steps adjoining this room under a porch with massive stone pillars and very large steps made of beautifully coloured marble tiles with the top step, (more correctly the top platform) being a large area where Pilate would sit in his royal robes before the people.

**Gabbatha:** comes from the Greek word (*gabbatha*) which was a vernacular term for the Roman tribunal in Jerusalem. In Hebrew it comes from the word (*gab*) which carries the idea of an eminent high place. It is not used anywhere else in Scripture, but is used here because it comes from a word signifying, 'to be elevated,' because the judge, being seated there would be exalted above those they were judging and easily seen and heard by others.

**The Praetorium:** originally Praetorium signified the general's tent in Roman camps, later it was applied to military councils sitting in the same tent in judgment, and then to the official residence (i.e., a palace or castle) of the provincial (superior) governor. At the time of Jesus crucifixion, the Praetorium was the residence of the Roman prefect of the province of Judea, who at that time was Pontius Pilate. This residence is believed to be the former palace of Herod the Great. It is located below the streets of the old city of Jerusalem (Matt. 17:27; Mark 15:16) where Jesus was condemned by Pontius Pilate.

**The Praetorium and Herod's palace:** King Herod built an enormously large and amazing fortified palace to provide protection for the Upper City of Jerusalem. The Palace consisted of two main buildings, each with its banquet halls, baths, and accommodation for hundreds of guests. It was surrounded with groves of trees, canals, and ponds studded with bronze fountains. The praetorium of the trial of Jesus was located at Herod's palace which was the official residence of the Roman governors when they came to Jerusalem during major Jewish festivals. At the time of Jesus crucifixion Pontius Pilate and Herod were residing there. Unfortunately, nothing remains of its construction.

**Herod's palace complex at Jerusalem:** (also known as the praetorium) included a palace with two wings divided by pools and gardens and was protected by three large towers on the north western corner of the area. It was not a single building, but an enormously large complex of multiple building which included military barracks and palatial buildings used for residential purposes which was ideal for Roman governors to stay when they visited Jerusalem. It is almost certain when Pilate stayed in Jerusalem during the Jewish festivities this was where he took up residence. The word praetorium may refer to a palace or a judicial military seat, but it is likely that in Jerusalem it referred to the entire palace complex.

**Pilate's headquarters, the Praetorium and Herod's palace:** these are different titles that refer to the amazing palace complex that Herod built near the coast. In John chapter nineteen we read: Pilate has Jesus beaten; then takes him out to the chief priests and the officers; they cry out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate then takes Jesus back into his headquarters; asks him some questions; brings him out again and sits down on the judgment seat at a place called, 'The Stone Pavement,' and in Aramaic Gabbatha and the Jews cried out, "crucify him." (John 19:1-15).

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From this we are safe to suppose Pilate's headquarters (the Praetorium) consisted of a very large indoor area with walls of stone and a floor made of enormously large stones. This area was where Jesus was judged. Adjoining this room was an outdoor porch with massive stone pillars and very large steps made of beautifully coloured marble tiles. The top step, (more correctly the top platform) was a large area where Pilate would sit in his royal robes before the people.

**Pontious Pilate and Herod the Great:** it seems that during Christ's crucifixion, Pontious Pilate was residing in some part or one of the wings of Herod's palace while Herod was dwelling there.

**NOTE:** The following sections of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John show that Jesus was tried and judged at Pilate's headquarters.

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## THE STORY OF JESUS CRUCIFIXION IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

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- **Matthew 27:27-32:** Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. <sup>28</sup>And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup>and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>30</sup>And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup>And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him. <sup>32</sup>As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.

Soldiers of Pilate the governor (Matt.27:1) took Jesus into the Pilates headquarters and after putting a crown and royal robe on him, beating him, and then putting his own clothes back on led him away to crucify him compelling Simon to carry his cross. In this scenario Jesus is being led out from Pilate's headquarters.

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### THE STORY OF JESUS CRUCIFIXION IN THE BOOK OF MARK

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- **Mark 15:16-20:** The soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. <sup>17</sup>And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. <sup>18</sup>And they began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup>And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. <sup>20</sup>And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

Soldiers take Jesus to Pilate the governor's headquarters, they cloth him in a purple cloak; a crown of thorns; strike his head and spit on him. Then strip him of the purple cloak, and put his own clothes on him and led him out to crucify him. In this scenario Jesus is being led out from Pilate's headquarters.

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### THE STORY OF JESUS CRUCIFIXION IN THE BOOK OF LUKE

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- **Luke 23:1-33:** Then the whole company of them arose and brought Jesus before Pilate - -- NOW GO TO VERSE SEVEN --- <sup>7</sup>And when Pilate learned that Jesus belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time --- NOW GO TO VERSE ELEVEN --- <sup>11</sup>And Herod with his soldiers treated Jesus with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate --- NOW GO TO VERSE THIRTEEN --- <sup>13</sup>Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people --- NOW GO TO VERSE TWENTY-FOUR --- <sup>24</sup>So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. <sup>25</sup>He released Barabbas who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will. <sup>26</sup>And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus --- NOW GO TO VERSE THIRTY-THREE --- <sup>33</sup>And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.

Jesus is brought before Pilate; Pilate sends him to Herod who was in Jerusalem; Herod and his soldiers mock Jesus; dress him in splendid clothing and send him back to Pilate. Pilate gathers the chief priests, the rulers and the people and releases Barabbas and delivers Jesus over to the people; they led him away compelling Simon to carry the cross to the place called, The Skull, where they crucified him. In this scenario Jesus is being led out from Pilate's headquarters.

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### THE STORY OF JESUS CRUCIFIXION IN THE BOOK OF JOHN

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- **John 19:1-42:** Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. <sup>2</sup>And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. <sup>3</sup>They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. --- NOW GO TO VERSE THIRTEEN --- <sup>13</sup>So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. <sup>14</sup>Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth

hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" <sup>15</sup>They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." <sup>16</sup>So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, <sup>17</sup>and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

Pilate has Jesus flogged; the soldiers put a crown of thorns on his head; dress him in a purple robe and strike with their hands. Pilate sits down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha; the people cry out, 'Crucify him.' Pilate delivers Jesus over to them; they take him out to the place called, "The place of a skull," which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. In this scenario Jesus is being led out from Pilate's headquarters.

**CONCLUSION:** in all four Gospels it is very clear Jesus is being led out from Pilate's headquarters to be crucified.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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