

ACTS OF PILATE

LATIN FORM

Table of Contents

ACTS OF PILATE.....1
LATIN FORM.....1
CHAP. I. Annas and Caiaphas, Summas and Datam, Gamaliel, Judas, Levi, Neptalim, Alexander and Jairus,.....1
CHAP. 2. And Pilate seeing, fear seized him, and immediately he wished to rise from the tribunal. And while.....1
CHAP. 3. Pilate, filled with fury, went forth outside of the praetorium, and says to them: I take the sun to witness.....1
CHAP. 4. Pilate therefore, leaving Jesus within the praetorium, went out to the Jews, and says to them: I find.....1
CHAP. 5. But one Nicodemus, a Jew, stood before the governor, and said: I entreat, mercifully allow me to see.....1
CHAP. 6. And of the Jews a certain other one, starting up, asks the governor that he might say a word. The governor.....1
CHAP. 7. And also a certain woman, Veronica by name, from afar off cried out to the governor: I was flowing.....1
CHAP. 8. And certain others, a multitude of men and women, cried out, saying: That man is a prophet, and thou.....1
CHAP. 9. And Pilate, calling Nicodemus and the twelve men who said that He was not born of fornication, said.....1
CHAP. 10. And when Jesus was scourged, he delivered Him to the Jews to be crucified, and two robbers with.....1
CHAP. 11. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole earth; and the sun was obscured.....1
CHAP. 12. And the Jews, hearing that Joseph had begged the body of Jesus, sought for him; and those twelve.....1
CHAP. 13. And while they were sitting in the synagogue, and recriminating about Joseph, there came certain.....1
CHAP. 14. And Fineses a certain priest, and Addas a teacher, and Egias a Levite, coming down from Galilee.....1
CHAP. 7 (23). Then Hades, receiving Prince Satan, said to him, with vehement revilings: O prince of perdition.....1
CHAP. 8 (24). And the Lord stretched out His hand, and said: Come to me, all my saints, who have my image.....1
CHAP. 9 (25). And the Lord, holding the hand of Adam, delivered him to Michael the archangel: and all the.....1
CHAP. 10 (26). And while the saints Enoch and Elias were thus speaking, behold, there came up another man.....1
CHAP. 11 (27). These are the divine and sacred mysteries which we saw and heard, I Karinus, and Leucius.....1
CHAP. 12 (28). After this, Pilate going into the temple of the Jews, assembled all the chief priests, and learned.....1
CHAP. 13 (29). Pilate, hearing these words of Annas and Caiaphas, laid them all up in the acts of our Lord and.....1

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I AENEAS was at first a protector of the Hebrews, and follower of the law; then the grace of the Saviour and His great gift took possession of me. I recognised Christ Jesus in holy Scripture; I came to Him, and embraced His faith, so that I might become worthy of His holy baptism. First of all I searched for the memoirs written in those times about our Lord Jesus Christ, which the Jews published in the age of Pontius Pilate, and we found them in Hebrew writings, drawn up in the age of the Lord Jesus Christ; and I translated them into the language of the Gentiles, in the reign of the eminent Theodosius, who was fulfilling his seventeenth consulship, and of Valentinian, consul for the fifth time in the ninth indiction. Whosoever of you read this book, and transfer it to other copies, remember me, and pray for me, AENEAS, least of the servants of God, that He be merciful to me, and pardon my sins which I have committed against Him. Peace be to all who shall read these, and to all their house, for ever! Amen.

Now it came to pass, in the nineteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, emperor of the Romans, and of Herod, son of Herod king of Galilee, in the nineteenth year of his rule, on the eighth day before the kalends of April, which is the twenty-fifth day of the month of March, in the consulship of Rufinus and Rubellio, in the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad, under the rule of Joseph and Caiaphas, priests of the Jews: the things done by the chief priests and the rest of the Jews, which Nicodemus recorded after the cross and passion of the Lord, Nicodemus himself committed to Hebrew letters.

CHAP. I. Annas and Caiaphas, Summas and Datam, Gamaliel, Judas, Levi, Neptalim, Alexander and Jairus, and the rest of the Jews, came to Pilate, accusing the Lord Jesus Christ of many things, and saying: We know him to be the son of Joseph the carpenter, born of Mary; and he says that he is the Son of God, and a king. Not only so, but he also breaks the Sabbath, and wishes to do away with the law of our fathers. Pilate says: What is it that he does, and wishes to destroy the law? The Jews say: we have a law, not to heal any one on the Sabbath; but he, by evil arts, heals on the Sabbath the lame and the hunchbacked, the blind, the palsied, the lepers, and the demoniacs. Pilate says to them: By what evil arts? They say to him: He is a sorcerer; and by Beelzebub, prince of the demons, he casts out demons, and they are all subject to him. Pilate says to them: It is not in an unclean spirit to cast out demons, but in the god of Scolapius.

The Jews say: We pray thy majesty to set him before thy tribunal to be heard. Pilate, calling the Jews to him, says to them: How can I, seeing that I am a governor,(1) hear a king? They say to him: We do not say that he is a king, but he himself says he is. And Pilate, calling a runner, says to him: Let Jesus be brought in with kindness. And the runner, going out and recognising Him, adored Him, and spread on the ground the cloak

ACTS OF PILATE

which he carried in his hand, saying: My lord, walk upon this, and come in, because the governor calls thee. But the Jews, seeing what the runner did, cried out against Pilate, saying: Why didst not thou make him come in by the voice of a crier, but by a runner? for the runner, too, seeing him, has adored him, and has spread out before him on the ground the cloak which he held in his hand, and has said to him: My lord, the governor calls thee. And Pilate, calling the runner, says to him: Wherefore hast thou done this, and honoured Jesus, who is called Christ? The runner says to him: When thou didst send me into Jerusalem to Alexander, I saw him sitting upon an ass, and the children of the Hebrews breaking branches from the trees, strewing them in the way; and others held branches in their hands; and others spread their garments in the way, shouting and saying, Save, therefore, Thou who art in the highest; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!

The Jews cried out, saying against the runner: The children of the Hebrews indeed cried out in Hebrew. How canst thou, a Gentile, know this? The runner says to them: I asked one of the Jews, and said, What is it that they cry out in Hebrew? and he explained to me. Pilate says to them: And how did they cry out in Hebrew? The Jews said: Osanna in the highest! Pilate says to them: What is the meaning of Osanna in the highest? They say to him: Save us, Thou who art in the highest. Pilate says to them: If you yourselves bear witness to the terms and words in which the children cried out, in what has the runner sinned? And they were silent. The governor says to the runner: Go out, and lead him in, in whatever way thou wilt. And the runner, going forth, did after the same form as before, and says to Jesus: My lord, go in, because the governor calls thee.

As Jesus, then, was going in, and the standard-bearers bearing the standards, the heads of the standards were bowed of themselves, and adored Jesus. And the Jews, seeing the standards, how they bowed themselves and adored Jesus, cried out the more against the standard-bearers. And Pilate says to the Jews: Do you not wonder at the way in which the standards have bowed themselves and adored Jesus? The Jews say to Pilate: we saw bow the men carrying the standards bowed themselves and adored Jesus. And the governor, calling the standard-bearers, says to them: Why have you so done? They say to Pilate: We are Gentile men, and slaves of the temples: how had we(1) to adore him? for when we were holding the figures,(2) they themselves bowed and adored him.

Pilate says to the chiefs of the synagogue and the elders of the people: Choose ye men powerful and strong, and let them hold the standards, and let us see whether they will bow of themselves. And the elders of the Jews, taking twelve men very strong and powerful, made them hold the standards, six and six; and they stood before the governor's tribunal. Pilate says to the runner: Take out Jesus outside of the praetorium, and bring him in again, in whatever way thou wilt. And Jesus and the runner went outside of the praetorium. And Pilate, calling those who had formerly held the standards, said to them: By the health of Caesar, if the standards do not bow themselves when Jesus comes in, I will cut off your heads. And the governor ordered Jesus to come in a second time. And the runner did after the same form as before, and besought Jesus much that He would go up and walk upon his cloak. And He walked upon it, and went in. And as Jesus was going in, immediately the standards bowed themselves, and adored Jesus.

CHAP. 2. And Pilate seeing, fear seized him, and immediately he wished to rise from the tribunal. And while he was thinking of this, viz., to rise and go away, his wife sent to him, saying: Have nothing to do with that just man,(3) for I have suffered much on account of him this night. And Pilate, calling the Jews, said to them: Ye know that my wife is a worshipper of God, and in Judaism thinks rather with you. The Jews say to him: So it is, and we know. Pilate says to them: Lo, my wife has sent to me, saying: Have nothing to do with that just man,(3) for I have suffered much on account of him this night. And the Jews answering,

CHAP. 2. And Pilate seeing, fear seized him, and immediately he wished to rise from the tribunal. And while

said to Pilate: Did we not say to thee that he is a magician? Lo, he has sent a vision of dreams to thy wife.

Pilate called Jesus, and said to him: What is it that these witness against thee, and sayest thou nothing to them? And Jesus answered: If they had not the power, they would not speak. Every one has power over his own mouth to say good and evil; let them see(4) to it.

And the elders of the Jews answering, say to Jesus: What shall we see? First, that thou wast born of fornication; second, that at thy birth in Bethlehem there took place a massacre of infants; third, that thy father Joseph and thy mother Mary fled into Egypt, because they had no confidence in the people.

Some of the bystanders, kind men of the Jews, say: We say that he was not born of fornication; but we know that Mary, was espoused to Joseph, and that he was not born of fornication. Pilate says to the Jews who said that he was of fornication: This speech of yours is not true, seeing that the betrothal took place, as these of your nation say. Annas and Caiaphas say to Pilate: We with all the multitude say that he was born of fornication, and that he is a magician; but these are proselytes, and his disciples. And Pilate, calling Annas and Caiaphas, says to them: What are proselytes? They say to him: They have been born sons of the Gentiles, and then have become Jews. Then answered those who testified that Jesus was not born of fornication, Lazarus and Asterius, Antonius and James, Annes and Azaras, Samuel and Isaac, Finees and Crispus, Agrippa and Judas: We were not born proselytes, but are sons of the Jews, and we speak the truth; for we were present at the betrothal of Mary.

And Pilate, calling to him those twelve men who proved that Jesus had not been born of fornication, said to them: I adjure you by the health of Caesar, tell me if it be true that Jesus was not born of fornication. They say to Pilate We have a law not to swear, because it is a sin; but let them swear by the health of Caesar that it is not as we say, and we are worthy of death. Then said Pilate to Annas and Caiaphas: Answer you nothing to those things which these testify? Annas and Caiaphas say to Pilate: Those twelve are believed that he is not born of fornication; we all the people cry out that he was born of fornication, and is a magician, and says that he himself is the Son of God and a king, and we are not believed.

And Pilate ordered all the multitude to go outside, except the twelve men who said that He was not born of fornication, and ordered to separate Jesus from them. And Pilate says to them: For what reason do the Jews wish to put Jesus to death? And they say to him: They are angry because he heals on the Sabbath. Pilate said: For a good work do they wish to put him to death? They say to him: Yes, my lord.

CHAP. 3. Pilate, filled with fury, went forth outside of the praetorium, and says to them: I take the sun to witness that I find in this man not even one fault. The Jews answered and said to the governor: If he were not an evil-doer, we should never have delivered him to thee. Pilate says to them: Take him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews answered: It is not permitted to us to put any one to death. Pilate says to them: Has God said to you not to put any one to death? has He therefore said to me that I am to kill?

Pilate, having again gone into the praetorium, called Jesus to him privately, and said to Him: Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus answered Pilate: Speakest thou this of thyself, or have others said it to thee of me? Pilate answered: Am I a Jew? Thy nation and the chief priests have delivered thee to me. What hast thou done? Jesus answering, said: My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my

CHAP. 3. Pilate, filled with fury, went forth outside of the praetorium, and says to them: I take the sun to wi

ACTS OF PILATE

servants would assuredly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from hence. Pilate said to Him: Art thou then a king? Jesus said to him: Thou sayest that I am a king. For I for this was born, and for this have I come, that I should bear witness to the truth; and every one who is of the truth hears my voice. Pilate says to him: What is truth? Jesus says: Truth is from heaven. Pilate says: Is not there truth upon earth? Jesus says to Pilate: Notice now the truth-speaking are judged by those who have power upon earth.

CHAP. 4. Pilate therefore, leaving Jesus within the praetorium, went out to the Jews, and says to them: I find not even one fault in him. The Jews say to him: He said, I can destroy that temple, and in three days raise it again. Pilate said to them: What temple? The Jews say to him: The temple which Solomon built in forty and six years; and he says that he can destroy and build it in three days. Pilate says to them: I am innocent of the blood of this man; see ye to it. The Jews say to him: His blood be upon us, and upon our children.

And Pilate, calling the elders and priests and Levites, says to them privately: Do not do so; for in nothing, though you accuse him, do I find him deserving of death, not even about the healing and the breaking of the Sabbath. The priests and Levites and elders say: Tell us, if any one blaspheme Caesar, is he deserving of death or not? Pilate says to them: He deserves to die. The Jews answered him: How much more is he who has blasphemed God deserving to die!

And the governor ordered the Jews to go outside of the praetorium; and calling Jesus, said to Him: What am I to do to thee? Jesus says to Pilate: As it has been given thee. Pilate says: How has it been given? Jesus says: Moses and the prophets made proclamation of my death and resurrection. And the Jews, hearing this, say to Pilate: Why do you desire any more to hear blasphemy? And Pilate said: If this speech is blasphemous, do you take him, and lead him to your synagogue, and judge him according to your law. The Jews say to Pilate: Our law holds, If a man have sinned against a man, he is worthy to receive forty less one; but he who has blasphemed against God, to be stoned.

Pilate says to them: Then judge him according to your law. The Jews say to Pilate: we wish that he be crucified. Pilate says to them: He does not deserve to be crucified.

And the governor, looking upon the people of the Jews standing round, saw very many of the Jews weeping, and said: All the multitude does not wish him to die. The elders say to Pilate: And for this reason have we come the whole multitude that he should die. Pilate said to the Jews: What has he done that he should die? They say: Because he said that he was the Son of God, and a king.

CHAP. 5. But one Nicodemus, a Jew, stood before the governor, and said: I entreat, mercifully allow me to say a few words. Pilate says to him: Say on. Nicodemus says: I said to the elders and the priests and the Levites, and to all the multitude of the Jews, in the synagogue, What have you to do with this man? This man does many wonders and signs, which no one of men has done or can do, Let him go, and do not devise any evil against him: if the signs which he does are of God, they will stand; but if of men, they will come to nothing. For Moses also, being

CHAP. 4. Pilate therefore, leaving Jesus within the praetorium, went out to the Jews, and says to them: I find

sent by God into Egypt, did many signs, which God told him to do before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And the sorcerers Jamnes and Mambres were there healing, and they did, they also, the signs which Moses did, but not all; and the Egyptians deemed them as gods, Jamnes and Mambres. And since the signs which they did were not of God, they perished, both they and those who believed in them. And now let this man go, for he is not deserving of death.

The Jews say to Nicodemus: Thou hast become his disciple, and takest his part.(1) Nicodemus says to them: Has the governor also become his disciple, and does he take his part? Has not Caesar set him over that dignity? And the Jews were raging and gnashing with their teeth against Nicodemus. Pilate says to them: Why do you gnash with your teeth against him, when you are hearing the truth? The Jews say to Nicodemus: Mayst thou receive his truth, and a portion with him! Nicodemus says: Amen, amen, amen; may I receive it, as you have said!

CHAP. 6. And of the Jews a certain other one, starting up, asks the governor that he might say a word. The governor says: What thou wishest to say, say. And he said: For thirty–eight years I lay in infirmity in my bed in very grievous pain. And at the coming of Jesus, many demoniacs, and persons held down by divers infirmities, were healed by him. And some young men had pity on me; and carrying me in my bed, laid me before him. And Jesus, seeing, had pity on me, and said the word to me, Take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately I was made whole; I took up my bed, and walked. The Jews say to Pilate: Ask him what was the day on which he was healed. He said: The Sabbath. The Jews say: Have we not so informed thee, that on the Sabbath he heals, and drives out demons?

And a certain other Jew starting up, said: I was born blind; I heard a voice, and saw no man. And as Jesus was passing by, I cried out with a loud voice, Have pity upon me, thou son of David. And he had pity upon me, and laid his hands upon my eyes, and I saw immediately. And another Jew starting up, said: I was hunchbacked, and he straightened me with a word. And another said: I was leprous, and he healed me with a word.

CHAP. 7. And also a certain woman, Veronica by name, from afar off cried out to the governor: I was flowing with blood for twelve years; and I touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately the flowing of my blood stopped. The Jews say: We have a law, that a woman does not come to bear witness.

CHAP. 8. And certain others, a multitude of men and women, cried out, saying: That man is a prophet, and the demons are subject to him. Pilate says to those who said the demons are subject to him: And your

masters, why are they not subject to him? They say to Pilate: We do not know. And others said to Pilate: He raised up dead Lazarus from the tomb after four days. The governor, hearing this, said trembling to all the multitude of the Jews: Why do you wish to shed innocent blood?

CHAP. 9. And Pilate, calling Nicodemus and the twelve men who said that He was not born of fornication, says to them: What am I to do, seeing that there is a sedition among the people? They say to him: We do not know; let them see to it. Again Pilate, calling all the multitude of the Jews, said: You know that you have a custom during the day of unleavened bread, that I should release to you one that is bound. I have a notable one bound in the prison, a murderer who is called Barabbas, and Jesus who is called Christ, in whom I find no cause of death. Whom do you wish that I should release unto you? And they all cried out, saying: Release unto us Barabbas. Pilate says to them: What, then, am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ? They all say: Let him be crucified. Again the Jews said: Thou art no friend of Caesar's if thou release; this man, for he called himself the Son of God, and a king; unless, perhaps, thou wishest this man to be king, and not Caesar.

Then, filled with fury, Pilate said to them: Always has your nation been seditious, and always have you been opposed to those who were for you. The Jews answered: Who are for us? Pilate says to them: Your God, who rescued you from the hard slavery of the Egyptians, and led you forth out of Egypt through the sea as if through dry land, and fed you in the desert with manna and quail, and brought water to you out of the rock, and gave you to drink, and gave you a law; and in all these things you provoked your God, and sought for yourselves a god, a molten calf. And you exasperated your God, and He wished to slay you; and Moses made supplication for you, that ye should not die. And now you say that I hate the king.

And rising up from the tribunal, he wished to go outside. And the Jews cried out, and said to him: We know that Caesar is king, and not Jesus. For the Magi also presented gifts to him as to a king; and Herod, hearing from the Magi that a king was born, wished to slay him. But when this was known, his father Joseph took him and his mother, and fled into Egypt; and Herod hearing, destroyed the infants of the Jews which were born in Bethlehem.

Pilate, hearing those words, was afraid. And silence being made among the people, who were crying out, Pilate said: This, then, is he whom Herod sought? They say to him: It is he. And taking water, Pilate washed his hands in presence of the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man; see ye to it. Again the Jews cried out, saying: His blood be upon us, and upon our children.

Then Pilate ordered the veil to be loosened,(1) and said to Jesus: Thine own nation have brought charges against thee as a king; and therefore I have sentenced thee first to be scourged on account of the statutes of the emperors, and then to be crucified on a cross.

CHAP. 9. And Pilate, calling Nicodemus and the twelve men who said that He was not born of fornication,

CHAP. 10. And when Jesus was scourged, he delivered Him to the Jews to be crucified, and two robbers with Him; one by name Dismas, and the other by name Gestas. And when they came to the place, they stripped Him of His garments, and girt Him about with a linen cloth, and put a crown of thorns upon His head. Likewise also they hanged the two robbers with Him, Dismas on the right and Gestas on the left. And Jesus said: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And the soldiers parted His garments among them. And the people stood waiting; and their chief priests and judges mocked Him, saying among themselves: He saved others, now let him save himself; if he is the Son of God, let him come down from the cross. And the soldiers mocked Him, falling prostrate(2) before Him, and offering vinegar with gall, and saying: If thou art the King of the Jews, set thyself free.

And Pilate, after sentence, ordered a title to be written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin letters, according to what the Jews said: This is the King of the Jews.

And one of the robbers who were hanged, by name Gestas, said to Him: If thou art the Christ, free thyself and us. And Dismas answering, rebuked him, saying: Dost not even thou fear God, who art in this condemnation? for we justly and deservedly have received those things which we endure; but He has done no evil. And he kept saying to Jesus: Remember me, Lord, in Thy kingdom. And Jesus said to him: Verily I say unto thee, that to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

CHAP. 11. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole earth; and the sun was obscured, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And crying out with a loud voice, He said: Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. And thus saying, He gave up the ghost. And the centurion, seeing what was done, glorified God, saying: This was a just man. And all the people who were present at that spectacle, seeing what was done, beating their breasts, returned.

And the centurion reported to the governor what was done. And the governor and his wife hearing, were very sorrowful, and neither ate nor drank that day. And Pilate, calling together the Jews, said to them: Have you seen what has been done? And they said to the governor: There has been an eclipse of the sun, as is usual.

And his acquaintances also stood afar off, and the women who had followed Him from Galilee, seeing these things. And lo, a certain man, by name Joseph, holding office, a man good and just, who did not consent to their counsels nor their deeds, from Arimathaea,(3) a city of the Jews, waiting, he also, for the kingdom of God, went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. And taking Him down from the cross, he wrapped Him in clean linen, and laid Him in his own new tomb, in which no one had been laid.

CHAP. 12. And the Jews, hearing that Joseph had begged the body of Jesus, sought for him; and those twelve men who had said that He was not born of fornication, and Nicodemus, and many others, who had

stood before Pilate and declared His good works. And all of them being hid, Nicodemus alone appeared to them, because he was a chief man of the Jews; and he says to them: How have ye come into the synagogue?

The Jews say to him: And thou, how hast thou come into the synagogue, seeing that thou consentest with him? May his portion be with thee in the world to come! Nicodemus said: Amen, amen, amen. Likewise also Joseph, coming forth, said to them: Why are you enraged against me because I begged the body of Jesus? Lo, I have laid him in my own new tomb, wrapping him in clean linen; and I have rolled a stone to the door of the cave. And ye have not acted well against a just man, since you have not borne in mind how you crucified him, and pierced him with a lance. The Jews therefore, laying hold of Joseph, ordered him to be imprisoned because of the Sabbath-day; and they say to him: Know that the hour compels us not to do anything against thee, because the Sabbath is dawning. But understand that thou art worthy not even of burial, but we will give thy, flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth. Joseph says to them: That is the speech of proud Goliath, who reviled the living God against holy David. And God hath said, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. And Pilate, intercepted(1) in his heart, took water, and washed his hands before the sun, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man; see ye to it. And you answered and said to Pilate, His blood be upon us, and upon our children. And now I fear that some time or other the wrath of God will come upon you and your children, as you have said. And the Jews, hearing this, were embittered in heart; and taking Joseph, shut him up in a house where there was no window, and set guards at the gates, and sealed the gate where Joseph had been shut up.

And on the Sabbath morning they took counsel with the priests and the Levites, that they should all be assembled after the Sabbath-day. And awaking at dawn, all the multitude in the synagogue took counsel by what death they should slay him. And when the assembly was sitting, they ordered him to be brought with much indignity; and opening the gate, they found him not. All the people therefore were in terror, and wondered with exceeding astonishment, because they found the seals sealed, and because Caiaphas had the keys. And no longer did they dare to lay hand upon those who spoke before Pilate in Jesus' defence.

CHAP. 13. And while they were sitting in the synagogue, and recriminating about Joseph, there came certain of the guards whom they had asked from Pilate to guard the sepulchre of Jesus, lest His disciples coming should steal Him. And they reported, saying to the rulers of the synagogue, and the priests and the Levites, what had happened: how there had happened a great earthquake, and we saw how an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and rolled away the

stone from the door of the tomb, and sat upon it; and his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment like snow. And for fear. we became as dead. And we heard the voice of the angel speaking to the women who had come to the sepulchre, and saying, Be not ye afraid; for I know that ye seek Jesus who was crucified: He is not here; He has risen, as He said: come and see the place where the Lord was laid. And go immediately and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead, and will go before you into Galilee, as He said to you.

The Jews say: To what women was he speaking? The soldiers say: We do not know who the women were. The Jews say: At what hour was it? The guards say: At midnight. The Jews say: And why did you not detain them? The guards say: We became as dead from fear of the angel, not hoping now to see the light of day; and how could we detain them? The Jews says: As the Lord God liveth, we do not believe you. And the guards said to the Jews: You have seen so great signs in that man, and have not believed; and how can you believe us, that the Lord lives? For well have ye sworn that the Lord Jesus Christ lives. Again the guards say to the Jews: we have heard that you have shut up Joseph, who begged the body of Jesus, in the prison, and have sealed it with your rings; and on opening, that you have not found him. Give us Joseph, then, and we shall give you Jesus Christ. The Jews said: Joseph has gone to Arimathea, his own city. The guards say to the Jews: And Jesus, as we have heard from the angel, is in Galilee.

And the Jews, hearing these sayings, feared exceedingly, saying: Lest at some time or other this saying be heard, and all believe in Jesus. And the Jews, taking counsel among themselves, brought forth a sufficient number of silver pieces, and gave to the soldiers, saying: Say that, while we slept, his disciples came and stole him. And if this be heard by the governor, we shall persuade(2) him, and make you secure. And the soldiers, taking the money, said as they were advised by the Jews; and their saying was spread abroad among all.

CHAP. 14. And Finees a certain priest, and Addas a teacher, and Egias a Levite, coming down from Galilee to Jerusalem, reported to the rulers of the synagogue, and the priests and the Levites, how they had seen Jesus sitting, and his disciples with him, on tile Mount of Olivet, which is called Mambre or Malech. And he said to his disciples: Go into all the world, and declare to every creature the Gospel of the kingdom of God. He who believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he who believeth not shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them who believe: In my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak in new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they have drunk any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands upon the sick, and they shall be well. And as Jesus was thus speaking to his disciples, we saw him taken up into heaven.(1)

The priests and the Levites and the elders say to them: Give glory to the God of Israel, and give confession to Him, whether you have both heard and seen those things which you have related. Those who had made the report say: As the Lord God of our fathers liveth, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, we have heard and seen. The Jews say to them: Have you come for this to tell us? or have you come

ACTS OF PILATE

to give prayer to God? They said: We have come to give prayer to God. The elders and chief priests and Levites say to them: And if you have come to give prayer to God, why have you murmured before all the people about that foolish tale? Finees the priest, and Addas the teacher, and Egias the Levite, say to the rulers of the synagogue, and the priests and the Levites: If those words which we have spoken, which we have seen and heard, be sin, behold, we are in your presence; do unto us according to that which is good in your eyes. And they, taking the law, adjured them to report the words to no one thereafter. And they gave them to eat and drink, and put them outside of the city, giving them silver and pieces, and three men with them, who should conduct them as far as Galilee.

Then the Jews took counsel among themselves when those men had gone up into Galilee; and the rulers of the synagogue shut themselves in, and were cut up⁽²⁾ with great fury, saying: What sign is this which hath come to pass in Israel? And Annas and Caiaphas say: Why are your souls sorrowful? Are we to believe the soldiers, that an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb? No; but that his disciples have given much gold to those who were guarding the sepulchre, and have taken Jesus away, and have taught them thus to say: Say ye that an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb. Do you not know that it is unlawful for Jews to believe foreigners in a single word, knowing that these same who received sufficient gold from us have said as we taught them?

Chap. 15. And Nicodemus rising up, stood in the midst of the counsel, and said: You have said rightly. And are not the men who have come down from Galilee God-fearing, men of peace, hating a lie? And they recounted with an oath, how "we saw Jesus sitting on Mount Mambre with his disciples, and he taught them in our hearing," and that they saw him taken up into heaven. And no one asked them this: How he was taken up into heaven. And, as the writing of the holy book teaches us, holy Elias too was taken up into heaven, and Elisaeus cried out with a loud voice, and Elias threw his sheepskin over Elisaeus; and again Elisaeus threw that sheepskin over the Jordan, and went over and came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets met him, and said to Elisaeus, Where is thy master Elias? And he said, He has been taken up into heaven. And they said to Elisaeus, Has a spirit snatched him away, and thrown him upon one of the mountains? But rather let us take our boys⁽³⁾ with us and seek him. And they persuaded Elisaeus, and he went with them. And they sought him for three days and three nights, and found him not, because he was taken up. And now, men, hear me, and let us send into all Israel, and see lest Jesus can have been taken up somewhere or other, and thrown upon one of the mountains. And that saying pleased all. And they sent to all the mountains of Israel to seek Jesus, and they found Him not; but they found Joseph of Arimathaea, and no one dared to lay hold of him.

And they reported to the elders and priests and Levites: We have gone round all the mountains of Israel, and not found Jesus; but we have found Joseph in Arimathaea. And hearing of Joseph, they rejoiced, and gave glory to the God of Israel. And the rulers of the synagogue, and the priests and the Levites, taking counsel in what manner they should send to Joseph, took paper, and wrote to Joseph:

Peace to thee and all that is thine! We know that we have sinned against God, and against thee; and thou hast prayed to the God of Israel, and He has delivered thee out of our hands. And now deign to come to thy fathers and thy children, because we have been vehemently grieved. We have all sought for thee we who opened the door, and found thee not. We know that we counselled evil counsel against thee; but the Lord hath supplanted our counsel against thee. Thou art worthy to be honoured, father Joseph, by all the people.

And they chose out of all Israel seven men friendly to Joseph, whom also Joseph knew to be friendly; and the rulers of the synagogue and the priests and the Levites say to them: See, if he take the letter and read it, for certain he will come with you to us; but if he do not read it, you may know that he is ill-disposed toward us, and, saluting him in peace, return to us. And blessing them, they sent them away. And they came to Arimathaea to Joseph, and adored him on their face upon the ground, and said: Peace to thee and all thine! And Joseph said: Peace to you, and to all the people of Israel! And they gave him the roll of the letter. And

CHAP. 14. And Finees a certain priest, and Addas a teacher, and Egias a Levite, coming down from Galilee

ACTS OF PILATE

Joseph took and read it, and rolled up the letter, and blessed God, and said: Blessed be the Lord God, who hath delivered Israel from shedding innocent blood; and blessed be God, who sent His angel, and covered me under his wings. And he kissed them, and set a table for them; and they ate and drank, and slept there.

And they rose in the morning; and Joseph saddled his ass, and travelled with them, and they came into the holy city Jerusalem. And there met them all the people, crying out, and saying: Peace be in thy coming in, father Joseph! To whom he answered and said: The peace of the Lord be upon all the people! And they all kissed him. And they prayed with Joseph, and were terrified at the sight of him. And Nicodemus took him into his house, and made a great feast, and called Annas and Caiaphas, and the elders and chief priests and Levites, to his house. And making merry, and eating and drinking with Joseph, they blessed God, and went every one to his own house. And Joseph remained in the house of Nicodemus.

And on the next day, which is the preparation, the priests and the rulers of the synagogue and the Levites rose early, and came to the house of Nicodemus. And Nicodemus met them, and said to them: Peace to you! And they said to him: Peace to thee and Joseph, and to thy house and Joseph's house! And Nicodemus brought them into his house. And the council sat; and Joseph sat between Annas and Caiaphas, and no one dared to say a word. And Joseph said to them: Why have you called me? And they made signs with their eyes to Nicodemus, that he should speak with Joseph. And Nicodemus, opening his mouth, said: Father Joseph, thou knowest that the reverend teachers, priests, and Levites seek to hear a word from thee. And Joseph said: Ask. And Annas and Caiaphas, taking up the law, adjured Joseph, saying: Give glory to the God of Israel, and give confession to Him, that thou wilt not hide any word(1) from us. And they said to him: With grief were we grieved that thou didst beg the body of Jesus, and wrap it in clean linen, and lay it in a tomb. Therefore we shut thee up in a house where there was no window, and put a lock and a seal on the gate; and on the first day of the week we opened the gates, and found thee not. We were therefore exceedingly grieved, and astonishment came over all the people of God. And therefore hast thou been sent for; and now tell us what has happened.

Then said Joseph: On the day of the Preparation, about the tenth hour, you shut me in, and I remained there the whole Sabbath in full. And when midnight came, as I was standing and praying, the house where you shut me in was hung up by the four corners, and there was a flashing of light in mine eyes. And I fell to the ground trembling. Then some one lifted me up from the place where I had fallen, and poured over me an abundance of water from the head even to the feet, and put round my nostrils the odour of a wonderful ointment, and rubbed my face with the water itself, as if washing me, and kissed me, and said to me, Joseph, fear not; but open thine eyes, and see who it is that speaks to thee. And looking, I saw Jesus; and being terrified, I thought it was a phantom. And with prayer and the commandments I spoke to him, and he spoke with me. And I said to him: Art thou Rabbi Elias? And he said to me: I am not Elias. And I said: Who art thou, my lord? And he said to me: I am Jesus, whose body thou didst beg from Pilate, and wrap in clean linen; and thou didst lay a napkin on my face, and didst lay me in thy new tomb, and roll a stone to the door of the tomb. Then I said to him that was speaking to me: Show me, Lord, where I laid thee. And he led me, and showed me the place where I laid him, and the linen which I had put on him, and the napkin which I had wrapped upon his face; and I knew that it was Jesus. And he took hold of me with his hand, and put me in the midst of my house though the gates were shut, and put me in my bed, and said to me: Peace to thee! And he kissed me, and said to me: For forty days go not out of thy house; for, lo, I go to my brethren into Galilee.

Chap. 16. And the rulers of the synagogue, and the priests and the Levites, hearing these words from Joseph, became as it were dead, and fell to the ground, and fasted until the ninth hour. And Joseph and Nicodemus entreated them, saying: Arise and stand upon your feet, and taste bread, and comfort your souls, seeing that to-morrow is the Sabbath of the Lord. And they arose, and entreated the Lord, and ate and drank, and went every man to his own house.

And on the Sabbath the teachers and doctors sat questioning each other, and saying: What is this wrath that

CHAP. 14. And Finees a certain priest, and Addas a teacher, and Egias a Levite, coming down from Galilee

ACTS OF PILATE

has come upon us? because we know his father and mother. Levi the teacher said: I know that his parents fear God, and never depart from prayer, and give tithes thrice a-year. And when Jesus was born, his parents brought him up to this place, and gave to God sacrifices and burnt-offerings. And assuredly the great teacher Simeon took him into his arms, saying: Now Thou sendest away Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a light for the revealing of the nations, and the glory of Thy people Israel. And he blessed Mary his mother, and said, I make an announcement to thee concerning this child. And Mary said, Well, my lord.(1) And Simeon said, Well. And he said again, Lo, he has been set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against; and a sword shall pierce thine own soul, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

And the Jews said to Levi: And how knowest thou these things? Levi says: Do you not know that from him I learned the law? They of the council say: We wish to see thy father. And they searched out his father, and got information; for he said: Why did you not believe my son? The blessed and just Simeon taught him the law. The council says to Rabbi Levi: The saying which thou hast spoken is true. The chief priests and rulers of the synagogue, and Levites, said to each other: Come, let us send into Galilee to the three men who came hither and gave an account of his teaching and his being taken up, and let them tell us how they saw him taken up into heaven. And that saying pleased all. Then they sent three men into Galilee; and Go, said they, say to Rabbi Addas and Rabbi Finees and Rabbi Egias, Peace to you and yours! Many investigations have been made in the council concerning Jesus; therefore have we been instructed to call you to the holy place, to Jerusalem.

The men went to Galilee, and found them sitting, and meditating on the law. And they saluted them in peace. And they said: Why have you come? The messengers said: The council summon you to the holy city Jerusalem. And the men, hearing that they were sought for by the council, prayed to God, and reclined with the men, and ate and drank with them. And rising in the morning, they went to Jerusalem in peace.

And on the morrow the council sat; and they questioned them, saying: Did you plainly see Jesus sitting on Mount Mambre teaching his disciples, and taken up into heaven?

First Addas the teacher says: I really saw him sitting on Mount Mambre teaching his disciples; and a shining cloud overshadowed him and his disciples, and he went up into heaven; and his disciples prayed upon their faces on the ground. And calling Finees the priest, they questioned him also, saying: How didst thou see Jesus taken up? And he said the same as the other. And again they called the third, Rabbi Egias, and questioned him, and he said the same as the first and second. And those who were in the council said: The law of Moses holds that by the mouth of two or three every word should stand. Abudem, a teacher, one of the doctors, says: It is written in the law, Enoch walked with God, and was translated; for God took him. Jairus, a teacher, said: And we have heard of the death of holy Moses, and have not seen it; for it is written in the law of the Lord, And Moses died according to the word(2) of the Lord, and no man knoweth of his burying even to the present day. Rabbi Levi said: What is it that Rabbi Simeon said: Lo, he lies for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against? Rabbi Isaac said: It is written in the law, Lo, I send mine angel, who shall go before thy face to keep thee in every good way, because I have brought his(3) new name.

Then Annas and Caiaphas said: Rightly have ye said that these things are written in the law of Moses, that no one saw the death of Enoch, and no one has named the burying of holy Moses. And Jesus gave account to(4) Pilate, and we saw him scourged, and receiving spitting on his face; and the soldiers put a crown of thorns on him, and he received sentence from Pilate; and then he was crucified, and they gave him gall and vinegar to drink, and two robbers were crucified with him, and the soldier Longinus pierced his side with a lance; and our honourable father Joseph begged his body, and he has risen again, and, as they say, the three teachers have seen him taken up into heaven. And Rabbi Levi has borne witness to what was said by Simeon the

CHAP. 14. And Finees a certain priest, and Addas a teacher, and Egias a Levite, coming down from Galilee

ACTS OF PILATE

elder that he has been set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against.

Then Didas, a teacher, said to all the assembly: If all the things which these have borne witness to have come to pass in Jesus, they are from God, and let it not be wonderful in our eyes.(5) The chiefs of the synagogue, and the priests and the Levites, said to each other how our law holds, saying: His name shall be blessed for ever: His place endureth before the sun, and His seat before the moon: and all the tribes of earth shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall serve Him; and kings shall come from far, adoring and magnifying Him.(6) THE GOSPEL OF NICODEMUS

Part II. Christ's Descent into Hell

LATIN. FIRST VERSION

Chap. 1 (17). And Joseph rose up and said to Annas and Caiaphas: Truly and well do you wonder, since you have heard that Jesus has been seen alive from the dead, ascending up into heaven. But it is more to be wondered at that he is not the only one who has risen from the dead: but he has raised up alive out of their tombs many others of the dead, and they have been seen by many in Jerusalem. And hear me now, that we all know the blessed Simeon, the great priest, who took up with his hands Jesus, when an infant, in the temple. And Simeon himself had two sons, full brothers; and we all were at their filling asleep, and at their burial. Go, therefore, and see their tombs: for they are open, because they have risen; and, behold, they are in the city of Arimathea, living together in prayers. And, indeed, they are heard crying out, but speaking with nobody, and they are silent as the dead. But come, let us go to them; let us conduct them to us with all honour and respect. And if we adjure them, perhaps they will speak to us of the mystery of their resurrection.

At hearing this they all rejoiced. And Annas and Caiaphas, Nicodemus, and Joseph, and Gamaliel, went, and did not find them in their sepulchres; but, walking into the city of Arimathea, they found them there, on their bended knees, and spending their time in prayer. And kissing them, they conducted them to Jerusalem, into the synagogue, with all veneration and fear of God. And shutting the doors, and lifting up the law of the Lord, they put it in their hands, adjuring them by the God Adonai, and the God of Israel, who by the law and the prophets spoke to our fathers, saying: Do you believe that it was Jesus who raised you from the dead? Tell us how you have risen from the dead.

Karinus and Leucius, hearing this adjuration, trembled in their body, and groaned, being disturbed in heart. And together they looked towards heaven, and with their fingers made the sign of the cross on their tongues, and immediately they spoke together, saying: Give each of us sheets of paper, and let us write what we have seen and heard. And they gave it to them. And they sat down, and each of them wrote, saying:

Chap. 2 (18). O Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life of the dead, permit us to speak mysteries through the death of Thy cross, because we have been adjured by Thee. For Thou didst order Thy servants to relate to no one the secrets of Thy divine majesty which Thou didst in Hades. And when we were, along with all our fathers, lying in the deep, in the blackness of darkness, suddenly there appeared a golden heat(1) of the sun, and a purple royal light shining upon us. And immediately the father of all the human race, with all the patriarchs and prophets, exulted, saying: That light is the source of eternal light, which hath promised to transmit to us co-eternal light. And Esaias cried out, and said: This is the light of the Father, the Son of God, as I predicted when I was alive upon earth: The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim across Jordan, Galilee of the nations, the people who sat in darkness, have seen a great light; and light was shining among those who are in the region of the shadow of death. And now it has come and shone upon us sitting in death.

And when we were all exulting in the light which shone over us, there came up to us our father Simeon; and he said, exulting: Glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God; because I took Him up when born, an infant,

CHAP. 14. And Finees a certain priest, and Addas a teacher, and Egias a Levite, coming down from Galilee

ACTS OF PILATE

in my hands in the temple; and instigated by the Holy Spirit, I said to Him, confessing: Now mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared in the sight of all peoples, a light for the revealing of the nations, and the glory of Thy people Israel. When they heard this, all the multitude of the saints exulted more.

And after this there comes up, as it were, a dweller in the desert; and he is asked by all: Who art thou? To whom he says in answer: I am John, the voice and prophet of the Most High, going before the face of His coming to prepare His ways, to give the knowledge of salvation to His people for the remission of their sins. And seeing Him coming to me, instigated by the Holy Spirit, I said: Behold the Lamb of God! behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world! And I baptized Him in the river of Jordan, and I saw the Holy Spirit descending upon Him in the form of a dove; and I heard a voice from the heavens saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And now I have gone before His face, and have descended to announce to you that the rising Son of God is close at hand to visit us, coming from on high to us sitting in darkness and the shadow of death.

Chap. 3 (19). And when the first created, father Adam, had heard this, that Jesus was baptized in Jordan, he cried out to his son Seth: Tell thy sons, the patriarchs and the prophets, all that thou heardest from Michael the archangel when I sent thee to the gates of paradise to implore God that he might send thee His angel to give thee oil from the tree of mercy, with which to anoint my body when I was sick. Then Seth, coming near to the holy patriarchs and prophets, said: When I, Seth, was praying to the Lord at the gates of paradise, behold Michael, the angel of the Lord, appeared to me, saying, I have been sent to thee by the Lord. I am set over the human race.(1) And to thee, Seth, I say, do not labour with tears in prayers and supplications on account of the oil of the tree of mercy to anoint thy father Adam for the pain of his body, because in no wise shalt thou receive of it, except in the last days and times, except when five thousand and five hundred years have been fulfilled: then will come upon the earth the most beloved Son of God, to raise up again the body of Adam, and the bodies of the dead; and He, when He comes, will be baptized in Jordan. And when he shall have come out of the water of Jordan, then with the oil of His mercy shall He anoint all that believe on Him; and that oil of mercy shall be for the generation of those who shall be born out of water and the Holy Spirit into life eternal. Then, descending upon earth, Christ Jesus, the most beloved Son of God, will lead our father Adam into paradise to the tree of mercy.

And when they heard all these things from Seth, all the patriarchs and prophets exulted with great exultation.

Chap. 4 (20). And when all the saints were exulting, lo, Satan, the prince and leader of death, said to Hades: Make thyself ready to receive Jesus, who boasts himself to be the Son of God, and is a man fearing death, and saying, My soul is sorrowful, even unto death. And he has withstood me much, doing me evil; and many whom I made blind, lame, deaf, leprous, and demoniac, he has healed with a word; and those whom I have brought to thee dead, he has dragged away from thee.

Hades, answering, said to Prince Satan: Who is he that is so powerful, when he is a man in fear of death? For all the powerful of the earth are kept in subjection by my power, whom thou hast brought into subjection by thy power. If then, thou art powerful, what is that man Jesus like, who, though fearing death, withstands thy power? If he is so powerful in humanity, verily I say unto thee, he is all-powerful in divinity, and his power can no one resist. And when he says that he fears death, he wishes to lay hold on thee, and woe will be to thee to the ages of eternity. And Satan, prince of Tartarus, answered and said: Why hast thou doubted, and feared to receive this Jesus, thy adversary and mine? For I have tempted him, and I have roused up my ancient people the Jews with hatred and anger against him; I have sharpened a lance to strike him; I have mixed gall and vinegar to give him to drink; and I have prepared wood to crucify him, and nails to pierce him, and his death is near at hand, that I may bring him to thee, subject to thee and me.

Tartarus answered and said: Thou hast told me that it is he himself who has dragged away the dead from me. Now there are many who are here kept by me, who, while they lived on earth, took the dead from me, not by

CHAP. 14. And Finees a certain priest, and Addas a teacher, and Egias a Levite, coming down from Galilee

ACTS OF PILATE

their own powers, but by godly prayers, and their almighty God dragged them away from me. Who is that Jesus, who by his word has withdrawn the dead from me without prayers? Perhaps he is the same who, by the word of his command, brought alive Lazarus, after he had been four days in stench and corruption, whom I kept dead. Satan prince of death answered and said: That Jesus is the same. And when Hades heard this he said to him: I adjure thee by thy powers and mine, do not bring him to me. For I at that time, when I heard the command of his word, trembled with terror and dismay, and all my officers at the same time were confounded along with me. Nor could we keep that Lazarus; but, shaking himself like an eagle, he sprang out, and went forth from us with all activity and speed, and the same ground which held the dead body of Lazarus immediately gave him forth alive. So now, I know that that man who could do these things is God, strong in authority, powerful in humanity, and He is the Saviour of the human race. But if thou bring Him to me, all who are here shut up in the cruelty of the prison, and bound by their sins in chains that cannot be loosened, He will let loose, and will bring to the life of His divinity for ever.

Chap. 5 (21). And as Prince Satan and Hades were thus speaking to each other in turn, suddenly there was a voice as of thunders, and a shouting of spirits: Lift up your gates, ye princes; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting gates; and the King of glory shall come in.(1) Hades hearing this, said to Prince Satan: Retire from me, and go outside of my realms: if thou art a powerful warrior, fight against the King of glory. But what hast thou to do with Him? And Hades thrust Satan outside of his realms. And Hades said to his impious officers: Shut the cruel gates of brass, and put up the bars of iron, and resist bravely, that we, holding captive, may not take Him captive.(2)

And all the multitude of the saints, hearing this, said to Hades, with the voice of reproach: Open thy gates, that the King of glory may come in. And David cried out, saying: Did I not, when I was alive upon earth, prophesy to you: Let them confess to the Lord His tender mercies and His wonderful works to the children of men: for He has shattered the brazen gates, and burst the iron bars; He has taken them up out of the way of their iniquity?(3) And after this, in like manner, Esaias said: Did not I, when I was alive upon earth, prophesy to you: The dead shall rise up, and those who are in their tombs shall rise again, and those who are upon earth shall exult; because the dew, which is from the Lord, is their health?(4) And again I said, Where, O Death, is thy sting? where, O Hades, is thy victory?(5)

And when all the saints heard this from Esaias, they said to Hades: Open thy gates. Since thou art now conquered, thou wilt be weak and powerless. And there was a great voice, as of thunders, saying: Lift up your gates, ye princes; and be ye lifted up, ye infernal gates; and the King of glory shall come in. Hades, seeing that they had twice shouted out this, says, as if not knowing: Who is the king of glory? David says, in answer to Hades: I recognise those words of the shout, since I prophesied the same by His Spirit. And now, what I have said above I say to thee, The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle; He is the King of glory.(6) And the Lord Himself hath looked down from heaven upon earth, to hear the groans of the prisoners, and to release the sons of the slain.(7) And now, most filthy and most foul Hades, open thy gates, that the King of glory may come in. While David was thus speaking, there came to Hades, in the form of a man, the Lord of majesty, and lighted up the eternal darkness, and burst asunder the indissoluble chains; and the aid of unconquered power visited us, sitting in the profound darkness of transgressions, and in the shadow of death of sins.(8)

Chap. 6 (22). When this was seen by Hades and Death, and their impious officers, along with their cruel servants, they trembled at perceiving in their own dominions the clearness of so great a light, when they saw Christ suddenly in their abodes; and they cried out, saying: We have been overcome by thee. Who art thou, that to the Lord directest our confusion?(9) Who art thou, that, undestroyed by corruption, the uncorrupted proof of thy majesty, with fury condemnest our power? Who art thou, so great and little, lowly and exalted, soldier and commander, wonderful warrior in the form of a slave, and the king of glory dead and alive, whom slain the cross has carried? Thou, who didst lie dead in the sepulchre, hast come down to us alive; and in thy death every creature trembled, and the stars in a body were moved; and now thou hast been made free among

CHAP. 14. And Finees a certain priest, and Addas a teacher, and Egias a Levite, coming down from Galilee

ACTS OF PILATE

the dead, and disturbest our legions. Who art thou, that settest free those who art held captive, bound by original sin, and recallest them to their former liberty? Who art thou, who sheddest a divine, and splendid, and illuminating light upon those who have been blinded by the darkness of their sins?

In like manner, also, all the legions of the demons, terror-stricken with like fear from their fearful overthrow, cried out, saying: Whence art thou, O Jesus, a man so powerful and splendid in majesty, so excellent, without spot, and free from guilt? For that world of earth which has been subject to us always until now, which used to pay tribute for our uses, has never sent us such a dead man, has never destined such gifts for the powers below. Who therefore art thou, that hast so intrepidly entered our bounds, and who hast not only no fear of our punishments, but, moreover, attemptest to take all away from our chains? Perhaps thou art that Jesus of whom our prince Satan said, that by thy death of the cross thou wast destined to receive the dominion of the whole world.

Then the King of glory, trampling on death by His majesty, and seizing Prince Satan, delivered him to the power of Hades, and drew Adam to His brightness.

CHAP. 7 (23). Then Hades, receiving Prince Satan, said to him, with vehement revilings: O prince of perdition, and leader of extermination, Beelzebub, derision of angels, to be spit upon by the just, why didst thou wish to do this? Didst thou wish to crucify the King of glory, in whose death thou didst promise us so great spoils? Like a fool, thou didst not know what thou wast doing. For, behold, that Jesus by the splendour of His divinity is putting to flight all the darkness of death, and He has broken into the strong lowest depths of our dungeons, and has brought out the captives, and released those who were bound. And all who used to groan under our torments insult us, and by their prayers our dominions are taken by stem, and our realms conquered, and no race of men has now any respect for us. Moreover, also, we are grievously threatened by the dead, who have never been haughty to us, and who have not at any time been joyful as captives. O Prince Satan, father of all impious wretches and renegades, why didst thou wish to do this? Of those who from the beginning, even until now, have despaired of salvation and life, no bellowing after the usual fashion is now heard here; and no groaning of theirs resounds, nor in any of their faces is a trace of tears found. O Prince Satan, possessor of the keys of the lower regions, all thy riches which thou hadst acquired by the tree of transgression and the loss of paradise, thou hast now lost by the tree of the cross, and all thy joy has perished. When thou didst hang up that Christ Jesus the King of glory, thou wast acting against thyself and against me. Henceforth thou shall know what eternal torments and infinite punishments thou art to endure in my everlasting keeping. O Prince Satan, author of death, and source of all pride, thou oughtest first to have inquired into the bad cause of that Jesus. Him in whom thou

perceivedst no fault, why, without reason, didst thou dare unjustly to crucify? and why hast thou brought to our regions one innocent and just, and lost the guilty, the impious, and the unjust of the whole world?

And when Hades had thus spoken to Prince Satan, then the King of glory said to Hades: Satan the prince will be in thy power for ever, in place of Adam and his sons, my just ones.

CHAP. 8 (24). And the Lord stretched out His hand, and said: Come to me, all my saints, who have my image and likeness. Do you, who have been condemned through the tree and the devil and death, now see the devil and death condemned through the tree. Immediately all the saints were brought together under the hand of the Lord. And the Lord, holding Adam by the right hand, said to him: Peace be to thee, with all thy children, my righteous ones! And Adam fell down at the knees of the Lord, and with tearful entreaty praying, said with a loud voice: I will extol Thee, O Lord; for Thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord God, I cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed me. O Lord, Thou hast brought out my soul from the powers below; Thou hast saved me from them that go down into the pit. Sing praises to the Lord, all His saints, and confess to the memory of His holiness; since there is anger in His indignation, and life in His goodwill.[1] In like manner also all the saints of God, falling on their knees at the feet of the Lord, said with one voice: Thou hast come, O Redeemer of the world: as Thou hast foretold by the law and Thy prophets, so hast Thou fulfilled by Thy deeds. Thou hast redeemed the living by Thy cross; and by the death of the cross Thou hast come down to us, to rescue us from the powers below, and from death, by Thy majesty. O Lord, as Thou hast set the title of Thy glory in heaven, and hast erected as the title of redemption Thy cross upon earth, so, O Lord, set in Hades the sign of the victory of Thy cross, that death may no more have dominion.

And the Lord, stretching forth His hand, made the sign of the cross upon Adam and upon all His saints; and holding Adam by the right hand, went up from the powers below: and all the saints followed Him. Then holy David cried out aloud, saying: Sing unto the Lord a new song, for He hath done wonderful things; His right hand and His holy arm have brought salvation to Himself. The Lord hath made known His salvation; His righteousness hath He revealed in the sight of the heathen.[2] And all the multitude of the saints answered, saying: This is glory to all His saints. Amen, alleluia.

And after this the prophet Habacuc cried out, saying: Thou wentest forth for the salvation of Thy people, to deliver Thine elect.[3] And all the saints answered, saying: Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord; God is the Lord, and He hath shone upon us.[1] Amen, alleluia. In like manner after this the prophet Michaeas also cried out, saying: Who is a God like unto thee, O Lord, taking away iniquities and passing by sins? And now Thou dost withhold Thine anger for a testimony against us, because Thou delightest in mercy.

CHAP. 8 (24). And the Lord stretched out His hand, and said: Come to me, all my saints, who have¹⁷ my ima

And Thou turnest again, and hast compassion upon us, and pardonest all our iniquities; and all our sins hast Thou sunk in the multitude of death,[2] as Thou hast sworn unto our fathers in the days of old.[3] And all the saints answered, saying: This is our God to eternity, and for ever and ever; and He will direct us for evermore.[4] Amen, alleluia. So also all the prophets, quoting the sacred writings concerning His praises,[5] and all the saints crying, Amen, alleluia, followed the Lord.

CHAP. 9 (25). And the Lord, holding the hand of Adam, delivered him to Michael the archangel: and all the saints followed Michael the archangel, and he led them all into the glorious grace of paradise. And there met them two men, ancient of days. The saints asked them: Who are you, that have not yet been dead, along with us in the regions below, and have been placed in paradise in the body? One of them answered, and said: I am Enoch, who by the word of the Lord have been translated hither; and he who is with me is Elias the Thesbite, who was taken up by a fiery chariot. Here also even until now we have not tasted death, but have been reserved to the coming of Antichrist, by divine signs and wonders to do battle with him, and, being killed by him in Jerusalem, after three days and half a day to be taken up alive again in the clouds.[6]

CHAP. 10 (26). And while the saints Enoch and Elias were thus speaking, behold, there came up another man, most wretched, carrying on his shoulders the sign of the cross. And seeing him, all the saints said to him: Who art thou? because thy appearance is that of a robber. Anti what is the sign which thou carriest on thy shoulders? In answer to them, he said: Truly have you said that I was a robber, doing all sorts of evil upon the earth. And the Jews crucified me along with Jesus; and I saw the miracles in created things which were done through the cross of Jesus crucified, and I believed Him to be the Creator of all created things, and the King omnipotent; and I entreated Him, saying, Be mindful of me, Lord, when Thou shall have come into Thy kingdom. Immediately He accepted my entreaty, and said to me, Amen; I say to thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.[7] And He gave me this sign of the cross, saying, Walk into paradise carrying this; and if the guardian angel of paradise will not let thee go in, show him the sign of the cross, and thou shall say to him, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who has now been crucified, has sent me. Having done so, I said all this to the guardian angel of paradise. And when he heard this, he immediately opened, and led me in, and placed me at the right of paradise, saying, Lo, hold a little, and there will come in the father of the whole human race, Adam, with all his children, holy and just, after the triumph and

glory of the ascension of Christ the crucified Lord. Hearing all these words of the robber, all the holy patriarchs and prophets with one voice said: Blessed art Thou, O Lord Almighty, Father of everlasting benefits, and Father of mercies, who hast given such grace to Thy sinners, and hast brought them back into the grace of paradise, and into Thy rich pastures; for this is spiritual life most sure. Amen, amen.

CHAP. 11 (27). These are the divine and sacred mysteries which we saw and heard, I Karinus, and Leucius. More we are not allowed to tell of the other mysteries of God, as Michael the archangel adjured us, and said: You shall go into Jerusalem with your brethren, and continue in prayers, and you shall cry out, and glorify the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has raised you up again from the dead with Himself. And with none of men shall you speak; and you shall sit as if dumb, until the hour shall come when the Lord Himself shall permit you to relate the mysteries of His divinity. And Michael the archangel ordered us to walk across Jordan into a place rich and fertile, where there are many who rose again along with us for an evidence of the resurrection of Christ the Lord; because only three days were allowed to us who have risen from the dead to celebrate in Jerusalem the passover of the Lord, with our living relations, for an evidence of the resurrection of Christ the Lord: and we have been baptized in the holy river of Jordan, receiving each of us white robes. And after three days, when we had celebrated the passover of the Lord, all who rose again along with us were snatched up into the clouds. and taken across the Jordan, and were no longer seen by any one. But we were told to remain in the city of Arimathaea in prayers. These are the things which the Lord commanded us to relate to you. Give Him praise and confession, and be penitent, that He may have mercy upon you. Peace be to you from the same Lord Jesus Christ, and the Saviour of all of us! Amen.

And after they had finished all, writing on separate sheets of paper, they arose. And Karinus gave what he wrote into the hands of Annas and Caiaphas and Gamaliel; in like manner also Leucius gave what he wrote into the hands of Nicodemus and Joseph. And being suddenly transfigured, they became exceedingly white, and were seen no more. And their writings were found exactly the same, not one letter more or less.

All the synagogue of the Jews, hearing all these wonderful sayings of Karinus and Leucius, said to each other: Truly all these things have been done by the Lord, and blessed be the Lord for ever and ever. Amen. And they all went out with great anxiety, beating their breasts with fear and trembling; and they went away, each to his own house.

All these things which were said by the Jews in their synagogue Joseph and Nicodemus immediately reported to the proconsul. And Pilate himself wrote all which had been done and said concerning Jesus by the Jews,

CHAP. 11 (27). These are the divine and sacred mysteries which we saw and heard, I Karinus, and Leucius.

and he placed all the words in the public records of his praetorium.

CHAP. 12 (28). After this, Pilate going into the temple of the Jews, assembled all the chief priests, and learned men, and scribes, and teachers of the law, and went in with them into the sanctuary of the temple, and ordered that all the gates should be shut, and said to them: We have heard that you have a certain great collection of books in this temple: therefore I ask you that it be presented before us. And when four officers brought in that collection of books, adorned with gold and precious gems, Pilate said to all: I adjure you by the God of your fathers, who ordered you to build this temple in the place of his sanctuary, not to conceal the truth from me. You all know what is written in that collection of books; but now say whether you have found in the writings that Jesus, whom you have crucified, to be the Son of God that was to come for the salvation of the human race, and in how many revolutions of the seasons he ought to come. Declare to me whether you crucified him in ignorance of this, or knowing it.

Being thus adjured, Annas and Caiaphas ordered all the others who were with them to go out of the sanctuary; and themselves shut all the gates of the temple and the sanctuary, and said to Pilate: We have been adjured by thee, O good judge, by the building of this temple, to give thee the truth, and a clear account of this matter. After we had crucified Jesus, not knowing Him to be the Son of God, thinking that He did miracles by means of some charm, we made a great synagogue in this temple. And conferring with each other of the signs of the miracles which Jesus had done, we found many witnesses of our nation who said that they had seen Jesus alive after suffering death, and that He had penetrated into the height of heaven. And we have seen two witnesses, whom Jesus raised up again from the dead, who told us many wonderful things that Jesus did among the dead, which we have in our hands, written out. And our custom is, every year before our synagogue, to open that holy collection of books, and seek out the testimony of God. And we have found in the first book of the LXX., where the archangel Michael spoke to the third son of Adam, the first man, of five thousand and five hundred years, in which the Christ, the most beloved Son of God, was to come from the heavens; and upon this we have considered that perhaps He was the God of Israel who said to Moses,[1] Make to thee the ark of the covenant, two cubits and a half in length, one cubit and a half in breadth, one cubit and a half in height. In these five and a half cubits we have understood and recognised, from the structure of the ark of the old covenant, that in five and a half thousands of years, Jesus Christ was to come in the ark of the body; and we have found Him to be the God of Israel, the Son of God. Because after His passion, we, the chief priests, wondering at the signs which happened on account of Him, opened this collection of books, searching out all the generations, even to the generation of Joseph, and reckoning that Mary the mother of Christ was of the seed of David; and we have found that from the time that God made the heaven and the earth and the first man, to the deluge, are two thousand two hundred and twelve[2] years; and from the deluge to the building of the tower, five hundred and thirty-one[3] years; and from the building of the tower to Abraham, six hundred and six[4] years; and from Abraham to the arrival of the children of Israel from Egypt, four hundred and seventy years; from the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt to the building of the temple, five hundred and eleven years; and from the building of the temple to the destruction of the same temple, four hundred and sixty-four years. Thus far have we found in the book of Esdras. After searching, we find that from the burning of the temple to the advent of Christ, and His birth, there are six hundred and thirty-six[5] years, which together were five thousand five hundred years, as we have found written in the book that Michael the archangel foretold to Seth the third son of Adam, that in five and a half

CHAP. 12 (28). After this, Pilate going into the temple of the Jews, assembled all the chief priests and learned

ACTS OF PILATE

thousands of years Christ the Son of God would come. Even until now we have told no one, that there might be no dissension in our synagogues. And now thou hast adjured us, O good judge, by this holy book of the testimonies of God, and we make it manifest to thee. And now we adjure thee, by thy life and safety, to make manifest these words to no one in Jerusalem.

CHAP. 13 (29). Pilate, hearing these words of Annas and Caiaphas, laid them all up in the acts of our Lord and Saviour, in the public records of his praetorium, and wrote a letter to Claudius, king of the city of Rome,[2] saying:

Pontius Pilate to Claudius his king, greeting. It has lately happened, as I myself have also proved, that the Jews, through envy, have punished themselves and their posterity by a cruel condemnation. In short, when their fathers had a promise that their God would send them from heaven his holy one, who should deservedly be called their king, and promised that he would send him by a virgin upon the earth: when, therefore, while I was procurator, he had come into Judaea, and when they saw him enlightening the blind, cleansing the lepers, curing the paralytics, making demons flee from men, even raising the dead, commanding the winds, walking dryshod upon the waves of the sea, and doing many other signs of miracles; and when all the people of the Jews said that he was the Son of God, the chief priests felt envy against him, and seized him, and delivered him to me; and, telling me one lie after another, they said that he was a sorcerer, and was acting contrary to their law.

And I believed that it was so, and delivered him to be scourged, according to their will. And they crucified him, and set guards over him when buried. And he rose again on the third day, while my soldiers were keeping guard. But so flagrant was the iniquity of the Jews, that they gave money to my soldiers, saying, Say that his disciples have stolen his body. But after receiving the money they could not keep secret what had been done; for they bore witness both that he had risen again, that they had seen him,[3] and that they had received money from the Jews.

This accordingly I have done, lest any one should give a different and a false account of it, and lest thou shouldst think that the lies of the Jews are to be believed.