> *John 18:28 (NKJV):*
> “Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.”

1. What is the Praetorium?

The *Praetorium* was the official residence and courtroom of the Roman governor. In Jerusalem during the time of Jesus, this was where the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, conducted official business and judicial proceedings. Roman law granted provincial governors full authority to try capital cases—only they could issue the death sentence (John 19:10).

When Jesus was arrested by Jewish authorities, they brought Him to the Praetorium for trial before Pilate. They could not legally execute Him themselves because Israel was under Roman rule (John 18:31), and only the Roman government had the legal power to administer capital punishment.

2. Why Didn’t the Jews Enter the Praetorium?

According to Jewish ceremonial law, entering a Gentile residence—especially during a feast like Passover—risked ritual defilement. The fear was that the house might contain:

- Idolatrous symbols or statues (Exodus 20:3–5),
- Unclean foods or utensils (Leviticus 11),
- Or general impurity from Gentile practices (Acts 10:28).

Such defilement would make a Jew ceremonially unclean and unable to participate in sacred observances, such as the Passover meal (Numbers 9:6–13).

Ironically, the Jewish leaders were more concerned with ceremonial purity than the moral weight of conspiring to kill an innocent man. This reflects Jesus’ rebuke in

> *Matthew 23:27 (NKJV):*
> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.”

### 3. Was This Separation Commanded by God?

While the Old Testament taught Israel to remain holy and separate from pagan nations (Leviticus 20:26), the purpose was to protect them from spiritual corruption—not to promote racial or cultural superiority. Over time, this principle was misunderstood and exaggerated, resulting in hostility toward Gentiles. peter acknowledges this cultural devide in

> *Acts 10:28 (NKJV),*
> “Then he said to them, ‘You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.'”

The vision Peter received from God (Acts 10:9–16) marked a turning point in the church, showing that salvation through Jesus was for all people, not just Jews.

### 4. Christ Broke Down the Wall of Division

Through His death, Jesus fulfilled the ceremonial law and tore

down the barrier between Jews and Gentiles.

> *Ephesians 2:13–16 (NKJV):*
> “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation… that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross.”

Now, there is no longer Jew or Gentile in Christ.

> *Galatians 3:28 (NKJV):*
> “There is neither Jew nor Greek… for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

5. What Truly Defiles a Person?

Ceremonial laws were only a shadow of the true issue—sin. Jesus clarified that what defiles a person is not external contact, but what comes from within:

> *Matthew 15:18–20 (NKJV):*
> “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries... These are the things which defile a man.”

Therefore, the real impurity is sin—and the only cleansing comes through Jesus Christ.

6. Are You Cleansed by Christ?

Only by faith in Jesus Christ can anyone—Jew or Gentile—be made clean and righteous before God. Have you given your life to Him?

> *Revelation 22:12 (NKJV):*
> “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”

Today is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2). Don’t wait. Jesus is coming soon.

Maranatha – Come, Lord Jesus!

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