

# Luke 23:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

## Analysis

**He released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison**—The guilty goes free. Barabbas, condemned for rebellion and murder (v. 19), receives amnesty while the innocent Lamb faces execution. The Greek construction emphasizes the contrast: *ton dia stasin kai phonon beblēmenon eis phylakēn* (the one thrown into prison because of insurrection and murder) versus Jesus, about whom Pilate thrice declared 'no fault.' The exchange is complete: the criminal receives the freedom Christ deserved; Christ receives the death Barabbas deserved.

**But he delivered Jesus to their will** (τὸν δὲ Ἰησοῦν παρέδωκεν τῷ θελήματι αὐτῶν, *ton de Iēsoun paredōken tō thelēmati autōn*)—Pilate 'handed over' (*paredōken*, the same word used of Judas's betrayal) Jesus to 'their will/desire' (*thelēmati*). Yet in surrendering to human *thelēma* (will), Jesus fulfilled divine *thelēma*—'not my will, but thine, be done' (22:42). This is substitutionary atonement's clearest historical picture: the guilty released, the innocent condemned, the sinner freed because the Savior died. 'For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him' (2 Corinthians 5:21).

## Historical Context

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Pilate's delivery of Jesus 'to their will' transferred responsibility while maintaining technical Roman authority—he issued the execution order, but framed it as yielding to Jewish demands. Crucifixion was distinctly Roman (Jews used stoning), so this remained a Roman execution, yet one performed at Jewish instigation. This dual responsibility (Gentile and Jewish) fulfilled prophetic Scripture and demonstrated universal human guilt in Christ's death.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does the exchange of Barabbas and Jesus illustrate the gospel truth that Christ took our place?
2. In what ways does Pilate's 'delivering Jesus to their will' paradoxically accomplish the Father's will for our redemption?

## Interlinear Text

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ἀπέλυσεν	δὲ	αὐτῶν	τὸν	διὰ	στάσιν	καὶ	φόνον
he released	And	to their	G3588	him that for	sedition	and	murder
G630	G1161	G846		G1223	G4714	G2532	G5408
βεβλημένον	εἰς	τὴν	φυλακὴν	ὃν	ἠτοῦντο	τὸν	δὲ
was cast	into	G3588	prison	whom	they had desired	G3588	And
G906	G1519		G5438	G3739	G154		G1161
Ἰησοῦν	παρέδωκεν	τῷ	θελήματι	αὐτῶν			
Jesus	he delivered	G3588	will	to their			
G2424	G3860		G2307	G846			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 3:14** (Parallel theme): But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

**Mark 15:15** (References Jesus): And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

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