

# WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

## Culmination of the Ministry

### *The Trials (Continued)*

And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.

And Pilate asked him, Art thou King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.

And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?

And they cried out again, Crucify him.

---*Mark 15:1-13*

In the public festivals of Greece and Rome it was customary to release to the people one prisoner of their own choice. This custom was introduced into Jerusalem by the Romans. Barabbas had been a leader of an insurrection against the Romans, and was, therefore, considered a hero among the people. In the ancient Babylonian initiatory rites, a malefactor, representing the declining sun, was put to death after various cruelties had been perpetrated upon him, and another

malefactor was given his freedom. A version of this same custom was preserved among the Hebrews. In their rites the sacrificial victim was a goat which was slain upon the altar, while another was loaded by imprecation with the sins of the people and sent free into the desert.

Read *Matthew 27:24-26*.

At the equinoctial feast in spring, as celebrated in both Babylon and Persia, there was a triumphant processional led by a condemned prisoner dressed as a king. At the end of the processional the prisoner was shorn of his fine raiment, scourged and crucified. Philo, describing this ceremony as it was observed in Alexandria, gives the condemned criminal's name as Karobas.

Read *Matthew 27:27-31*.

This has been a mystic formula of Initiation throughout all ages, and it still is.

Read *John 19:13-16*.

Gabbatha means "a pavement laid with stones." Hiram Abiff was laying plans upon this same pavement when he was attacked by three ruffians and murdered. The three ruffians, in the life of Christ Jesus, are Annas, Caiaphas, and Judas.

The four different paths of Initiation are concealed within the trials of the Christ. Following are the correlations: Annas --- Earth; Caiaphas --- Fire; Pilate --- Water; Herod --- Air.

The preparatory steps for these Four Gates are concealed within the works of Peter (water) and Judas (fire), and the blending of these two by the Christ on the Cross.

*(Continued)*