

Shortly after six o'clock on this Friday morning, April 7, A.D. 30, Jesus was brought before Pilate, the Roman procurator who governed Judea, Samaria, and Idumea under the immediate supervision of the legatus of Syria. The Master was taken into the presence of the Roman governor by the temple guards, bound, and was accompanied by about fifty of his accusers, including the Sanhedrist court (principally Sadduceans), Judas Iscariot, and the high priest, Caiaphas, and by the Apostle John. Annas did not appear before Pilate.

Pilate was up and ready to receive this group of early morning callers, having been informed by those who had secured his consent, the previous evening, to employ the Roman soldiers in arresting the Son of Man, that Jesus would be early brought before him. This trial was arranged to take place in front of the praetorium, an addition to the fortress of Antonia, where Pilate and his wife made their headquarters when stopping in Jerusalem.

Though Pilate conducted much of Jesus' examination within the praetorium halls, the public trial was held outside on the steps leading up to the main entrance. This was a concession to the Jews, who refused to enter any gentile building where leaven might be used on this day of preparation for the Passover. Such conduct would not only render them ceremonially unclean and thereby debar them from partaking of the afternoon feast of thanksgiving but would also necessitate their subjection to purification ceremonies after sundown, before they would be eligible to partake of the Passover supper.

Although these Jews were not at all bothered in conscience as they intrigued to effect the judicial murder of Jesus, they were nonetheless scrupulous regarding all these matters of ceremonial cleanness and traditional regularity. And these Jews have not been the only ones to fail in the recognition of high and holy obligations of a divine nature while giving meticulous attention to things of trifling importance to human welfare in both time and eternity.

1. PONTIUS PILATE

If Pontius Pilate had not been a reasonably good governor of the minor provinces, Tiberius would hardly have suffered him to remain as procurator of Judea for ten years. Although he was a fairly good administrator, he was a moral coward. He was not a big enough man to comprehend the nature of his task as governor of the Jews. He failed to grasp the fact that these Hebrews had a real religion, a faith for which they were willing to die, and that millions upon millions of them, scattered here and there throughout the empire, looked to Jerusalem as the shrine of their faith and held the Sanhedrin in respect as the highest tribunal on earth.

Nedugo poslije šest ujutro, u petak sedmoga travnja 30. godine P.K., Isus iziđe pred Pilata, rimskog prokuratora i vladara Judeje, Samarije i Idumeje koji je djelovao pod neposrednim nadzorom sirijskog namjesnika. Kad stražari iz hrama izvedoše svezanog Učitelja pred rimskog upravitelja, njima se pridruži otprilike pedeset optuženika među kojima su bili i pripadnici Velikog vijeća (prvenstveno saduceji), te Juda Iskariotski, veliki svećenik Kaifa i apostol Ivan. Ana ne iziđe pred Pilata.

Pilat već bijaše na nogama i spreman primiti ovu grupu ranih jutarnjih uzvanika, kako doznade o predstojećem Isusovom suđenju od onih koji tražiše njegovo odobrenje prethodne večeri u pogledu uposlenja rimskih vojnika pri uhićenju Sina Čovječjeg. Ovaj se sudski postupak trebao održati u pretoriju, novoizgrađenom krilu palače Antonije koji je pružao dom Pilatu i njegovoj ženi pri njihovim povremenim boravcima u Jeruzelemu.

Premda je Pilat najvećim dijelom podvrgao Isusa istrazi u privatnim odajama pretorija, javni se sudski postupak trebao održati na vanjskim stepenicama koje su vodile do glavnog ulaza u pretorij. Ovo bijaše ustupak Židovima koji u pripremi za pashalnu večeru ne htjedoše ući u kuću gdje se služio kvasac. Na taj bi način postali ceremonijalno onečišćeni, što bi ih ne samo spriječilo od sudjelovanja u blagdanu zahvalnice, već bi štoviše zahtijevalo podvrgavanje ceremonijama očišćenja predhodno sudjelovanju u pashalnoj večeri.

Premda ovi Židovi nisu osjećali griznju savjesti što su ovom prilikom radili na sprovedbi Isusovog službenog smaknuća, skrupulozno su štovali sva pitanja ceremonijalnog očišćenja i djelovanja u skladu s propisanim tradicijama. I ovi Židovi nisu bili jedini koji nisu uspjeli spoznati visoke i svete obveze božanske prirode, dok su se istovremeno doslovce pridržavali sitnih i nebitnih pitanja ljudske blagodati u vremenu i vječnosti.

1. PONCIJE PILAT

Da Poncije Pilat nije bio prilično dobar upravitelj manjih oblasti, Tiberije bi mu teško bio dopustio da ostane na dužnosti judejskog prokuratora punih deset godina. Dok je Pilat bio dosta dobar administrativni upravitelj, on je istodobno bio moralna kukavica. Nije bio dorastao spoznaji veličine i prirode uloge koju je igrao kao upravitelj Židova. Nije shvaćao da su ovi Židovi imali pravu religiju, vjeru za koju su bili spremni položiti život i da su milijuni nad milijunima Židova, razasuti širom cijele imperije, smatrali Jeruzalem hramom svoje vjere i Veliko vijeće najvišim zemaljskim sudom.

Pilate did not love the Jews, and this deep-seated hatred early began to manifest itself. Of all the Roman provinces, none was more difficult to govern than Judea. Pilate never really understood the problems involved in the management of the Jews and, therefore, very early in his experience as governor, made a series of almost fatal and well-nigh suicidal blunders. And it was these blunders that gave the Jews such power over him. When they wanted to influence his decisions, all they had to do was to threaten an uprising, and Pilate would speedily capitulate. And this apparent vacillation, or lack of moral courage, of the procurator was chiefly due to the memory of a number of controversies he had had with the Jews and because in each instance they had worsted him. The Jews knew that Pilate was afraid of them, that he feared for his position before Tiberius, and they employed this knowledge to the great disadvantage of the governor on numerous occasions.

Pilate's disfavor with the Jews came about as a result of a number of unfortunate encounters. First, he failed to take seriously their deep-seated prejudice against all images as symbols of idol worship. Therefore he permitted his soldiers to enter Jerusalem without removing the images of Caesar from their banners, as had been the practice of the Roman soldiers under his predecessor. A large deputation of Jews waited upon Pilate for five days, imploring him to have these images removed from the military standards. He flatly refused to grant their petition and threatened them with instant death. Pilate, himself being a skeptic, did not understand that men of strong religious feelings will not hesitate to die for their religious convictions; and therefore was he dismayed when these Jews drew themselves up defiantly before his palace, bowed their faces to the ground, and sent word that they were ready to die. Pilate then realized that he had made a threat which he was unwilling to carry out. He surrendered, ordered the images removed from the standards of his soldiers in Jerusalem, and found himself from that day on to a large extent subject to the whims of the Jewish leaders, who had in this way discovered his weakness in making threats which he feared to execute.

Pilate subsequently determined to regain this lost prestige and accordingly had the shields of the emperor, such as were commonly used in Caesar worship, put up on the walls of Herod's palace in Jerusalem. When the Jews protested, he was adamant. When he refused to listen to their protests, they promptly appealed to Rome, and the emperor as promptly ordered the offending shields removed. And then was Pilate held in even lower esteem than before.

Another thing which brought him into great disfavor with the Jews was that he dared to take money from the temple treasury to pay for the construction of a new aqueduct to provide increased water supply for the millions of visitors to Jerusalem at the times of the great religious feasts. The Jews held that only the Sanhedrin could disburse the temple funds, and they never ceased to inveigh against Pilate for this presumptuous ruling.

Pilat nije volio Židove i ova se duboko uvriježena mržnja rano počela ispoljavati. Od svih rimskih provincija, Judeja bijaše najteže upravno područje. Pilat nikada nije istinski shvatio probleme vezane uz upravu nad Židovima, te je stoga već u ranom stadiju svoje upravne vlasti povukao više fatalnih i govoto samoubojstvenih poteza. I ove rane greške predstavljaju adute iz kojih Židovi izvukoše ovoliko vlast nad upraviteljem. Svakom prilikom kad htjedoše ispoljiti utjecaj na njegove odluke, Židovi zaprijetiše pobunom i Pilat spremno podliježe njihovim zahtjevima. I ova očigledna neodlučnost, ovaj nedostatak moralne hrabrosti judejskog prokuratora prvenstveno vuče porijeklo iz sjećanja na više nesuglasica s Židovima u kojima podnese poraz. Kako su Židovi znali da ih se Pilat bojao i da se bojao za svoju poziciju pred Tiberijem, koristili su ovo znanje kako bi u velikom broju slučajeva ostvarili bitnu prednost nad svojim upraviteljem.

Pilatova nepopularnost među Židovima predstavlja rezultat višebrojnih sukoba. On prije svega nije obratio pažnju na njihovu duboko uvriježenu mržnju prema svim simbolima idolopoklonstva. Pilat tako dopusti svojim vojnicima da uđu u Jeruzalem noseći Cezarovo obličje na svojim zastavama, upravo kao što to učiniše pod njegovim prethodnikom. Mnogobrojno židovsko poslanstvo provede pet dana čekajući na priliku da se nađe s Pilatom, moleći ga da odstrani ove kumire s vojničkih stijegova. Pilat odriješito odbi odobriti njihov zahtjev, prijeteci im smrtnom kaznom. Kako je sam pripadao redu skeptika, Pilat nije mogao shvatiti da su ovi ljudi imali snažne religiozne osjećaje i da su stoga bili spremni položiti život radi svojih religioznih uvjerenja; i tako se naljuti kad se ovi Židovi s prkosom okupiše oko njegovog pretorija, te mu pognutih glava poslaše riječ da su bili spremni umrijeti. Pilat ovom prilikom spozna da je izrekao prijetnju koju nije bio spreman sprovesti u djelo. On se stoga predade, naredi da se odstrane kumiri sa zastava njegovih vojnika u Jeruzalemu, te se tako nađe na milosti židovskih vođa koji na taj način otkriše njegovu slabost u izricanju prijetnji koje nije bio spreman sprovesti u djelo.

Pilat nakon ovog događaja odluči povratiti izgubljeni prestiž, te naredi da se podignu štitovi na zidovima Herodove palate u Jeruzalemu s imperatorovim obličjem kakvi su normalno korišteni pri obožavanju Cezara. Kad Židovi izraziše protest, on ostade odlučan. Kako Pilat ne htjede čuti njihove prosvjede, Židovi smjesta uputiše tužbu Rimu, na što imperator spremno naredi smaknuće ovih uvredljivih štitova. I Pilat na taj način još više izgubi poštovanje.

Drugo pitanje koje naruši Pilatovu naklonost među Židovima potječe odatle što se Pilat usudi uzeti novce iz hrama kako bi platio izgradnju novog akvadukta koji je trebao obezbijediti vodu milijunima posjetitelja koji su dolazili u Jeruzalem prilikom velikih religioznih blagdana. Kako su Židovi smatrali da je jedino Veliko vijeće imalo pravo raspolagati novcima iz hrama, oni počеше napadati Pilata radi ovog

No less than a score of riots and much bloodshed resulted from this decision. The last of these serious outbreaks had to do with the slaughter of a large company of Galileans even as they worshiped at the altar.

It is significant that, while this vacillating Roman ruler sacrificed Jesus to his fear of the Jews and to safeguard his personal position, he finally was deposed as a result of the needless slaughter of Samaritans in connection with the pretensions of a false Messiah who led troops to Mount Gerizim, where he claimed the temple vessels were buried; and fierce riots broke out when he failed to reveal the hiding place of the sacred vessels, as he had promised. As a result of this episode, the legatus of Syria ordered Pilate to Rome. Tiberius died while Pilate was on the way to Rome, and he was not reappointed as procurator of Judea. He never fully recovered from the regretful condemnation of having consented to the crucifixion of Jesus. Finding no favor in the eyes of the new emperor, he retired to the province of Lausanne, where he subsequently committed suicide.

Claudia Procula, Pilate's wife, had heard much of Jesus through the word of her maid-in-waiting, who was a Phoenician believer in the gospel of the kingdom. After the death of Pilate, Claudia became prominently identified with the spread of the good news.

And all this explains much that transpired on this tragic Friday forenoon. It is easy to understand why the Jews presumed to dictate to Pilate -- to get him up at six o'clock to try Jesus -- and also why they did not hesitate to threaten to charge him with treason before the emperor if he dared to refuse their demands for Jesus' death.

A worthy Roman governor who had not become disadvantageously involved with the rulers of the Jews would never have permitted these bloodthirsty religious fanatics to bring about the death of a man whom he himself had declared to be innocent of their false charges and without fault. Rome made a great blunder, a far-reaching error in earthly affairs, when she sent the second-rate Pilate to govern Palestine. Tiberius had better have sent to the Jews the best provincial administrator in the empire.

2. JESUS APPEARS BEFORE PILATE

When Jesus and his accusers had gathered in front of Pilate's judgment hall, the Roman governor came out and, addressing the company assembled, asked, "What accusation do you bring against this fellow?" The Sadducees and councilors who had taken it upon themselves to put Jesus out of the way had determined to go before Pilate and ask for confirmation of the death sentence pronounced upon Jesus, without volunteering any definite charge. Therefore did the spokesman for the Sanhedrist court answer Pilate: "If this man were not an evildoer, we should not have delivered him up to you."

preuzetnog rješenja. Iz ove odluke proizlazi više od dvadeset izgreda kao i mnogo prolivene krvi. Posljednji ozbiljan događaj koji nastade od ove situacije počiva u pokolju velikog broja Galilejaca prilikom molitve na oltaru.

Bitno je napomenuti da je ovaj neodlučni rimski upravitelj koji je žrtvovao Isusa zbog straha od Židova i u cilju očuvanja osobne pozicije, na koncu svrgnut s vlasti radi besmislenog pokolja Samaritanaca u vezi s pretencioznim učenjima lažnog Mesije koji je vodio vojsku do gore Gerizime gdje su navodno zakopane ceremonijalne posude iz hrama; narod se ljuto pobuni kad im Pilat ne htjede ispuniti obećanje i obznanimi skrovište ovih posuda. Kao rezultat ovog događaja, sirijski namjesnik naredi Pilatu da se vrati u Rim. Kako je Tiberije preminuo dok je Pilat bio na putu za Rim, Pilat nije ponovo postavljen na poziciju judejskog prokuratora. On se nikada nije u cjelosti oporavio od svoje žalosne odluke da odobri Isusovo raspeće. Kako nije našao naklonosti u očima novog imperatora, Pilat se povukao u provinciju Lausane, gdje je nakon nekog vremena počinio samoubojstvo.

Klaudija Prokula, Pilatova žena, dosta čuše o Isusu od svoje dvorske sluškinje, feničke vjernice u evanđelje kraljevstva. Nakon Pilatove smrti, Klaudija se prvenstveno posveti promicanju radosne vijesti.

I sve ovo objašnjava većinu događaja koji se odigraše ovog tragičnog petka poslije podne. S ovim u vezi lako je shvatiti kako se Židovi usudiše davati naredbe Pilatu – probuditi ga u šest ujutro kako bi sudio Isusu – i zašto su bili spremni da ga optuže za izdaju ako se usudi odbiti njihove zahtjeve i osuditi Isusa na smrt.

Dostojanstveni rimski upravitelj koji nije stvorio tako nepovoljne odnose s židovskim vladarima, nikada ne bi dopustio ovim krvožednim religioznim fanaticima da sprovedu smaknuće čovjeka kojeg je sam proglasio bezazlenim i bez krivlje od njihovih lažnih svedodžbi. Rim počini veliku grešku, dalekosežnu zabludu pri vođenju svojih zemaljskih poslova, kad postavi drugorazrednog upravitelja Pilata na poziciju vladara Palestine. Tiberije je Židovima trebao poslati najboljeg provincijskog upravitelja cijele imperije.

2. ISUS PRED PILATOM

Kad se Isus i njegovi optužitelji okupiše pred vratima Pilatove sudačke odaje, rimski upravitelj iziđe pred pred njih te se obrati okupljenoj svjetini govoreći: "Kakvu optužbu iznosite protiv ovoga čovjeka?" Saduceji i savjetnici koji si dadoše zadaću da sprovedu Isusovu smrt odlučuše stati pred Pilata i tražiti odobrenje Isusove smrtne kazne ne navodeći nikakvih jasnih optužbi. Stoga glasnogovornik suda Velikog vijeća uzvratu Pilatu: "Kad ovaj ne bi bio zločinac, ne bi smo ga tebi predali."

When Pilate observed that they were reluctant to state their charges against Jesus, although he knew they had been all night engaged in deliberations regarding his guilt, he answered them: "Since you have not agreed on any definite charges, why do you not take this man and pass judgment on him in accordance with your own laws?"

Then spoke the clerk of the Sanhedrin court to Pilate: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death, and this disturber of our nation is worthy to die for the things which he has said and done. Therefore have we come before you for confirmation of this decree."

To come before the Roman governor with this attempt at evasion discloses both the ill-will and the ill-humor of the Sanhedrists toward Jesus as well as their lack of respect for the fairness, honor, and dignity of Pilate. What effrontery for these subject citizens to appear before their provincial governor asking for a decree of execution against a man before affording him a fair trial and without even preferring definite criminal charges against him!

Pilate knew something of Jesus' work among the Jews, and he surmised that the charges which might be brought against him had to do with infringements of the Jewish ecclesiastical laws; therefore he sought to refer the case back to their own tribunal. Again, Pilate took delight in making them publicly confess that they were powerless to pronounce and execute the death sentence upon even one of their own race whom they had come to despise with a bitter and envious hatred.

It was a few hours previously, shortly before midnight and after he had granted permission to use Roman soldiers in effecting the secret arrest of Jesus, that Pilate had heard further concerning Jesus and his teaching from his wife, Claudia, who was a partial convert to Judaism, and who later on became a full-fledged believer in Jesus' gospel.

Pilate would have liked to postpone this hearing, but he saw the Jewish leaders were determined to proceed with the case. He knew that this was not only the forenoon of preparation for the Passover, but that this day, being Friday, was also the preparation day for the Jewish Sabbath of rest and worship.

Pilate, being keenly sensitive to the disrespectful manner of the approach of these Jews, was not willing to comply with their demands that Jesus be sentenced to death without a trial. When, therefore, he had waited a few moments for them to present their charges against the prisoner, he turned to them and said: "I will not sentence this man to death without a trial; neither will I consent to examine him until you have presented your charges against him in writing."

When the high priest and the others heard Pilate say this, they signaled to the clerk of the court, who then handed to Pilate the written charges against Jesus. And these charges were:

Kad Pilat uvidje njihovu nespremnost da iznesu jasne optužbe protiv Isusa unatoč tome što su proveli cijelu noć raspravljajući o Isusovoj krivnji, on se obrati okupljenima govoreći: "Kako se sami niste uspjeli složiti u pogledu jasnih optužbi protiv ovoga čovjeka, zašto ga vi ne uzmete te mu sudite po svojim zakonima?"

Zatim progovori pisar suda Velikog vijeća uzvraćajući Pilatu: "Nama nije dopušteno nikoga ubiti, a ovaj čovjek uznemiruje našu naciju i zaslužuje smrt zbog svojih riječi i djela. Stoga dodosmo tražiti od tebe da odobriš ovu odluku."

To što pripadnici Velikog vijeća dodoše pred rimskog upravitelja pokušavajući izbjeći otvorene optužbe ukazuje ne samo na njihovo neraspoloženje i ljutnju prema Isusu, već i na nedostatak poštovanja prema Pilatovom poštenju, časti i dostojanstvu. Bila je to velika drskost ovih potlačenih građana prema upravitelju njihove provincije, doći pred Pilata tražeći smrtnu kaznu bez poštenog sudskog procesa i bez otvorenih kriminalnih optužbi protiv Isusa!

Pilat već imade prilike čuti ponešto o Isusovom radu među Židovima, te zaključí da se ove optužbe moraju odnositi na kršenje židovskih vjerskih zakona; on stoga nastojaše prenijeti ovu odgovornost na židovski sud. Pilat se još jednom poradova što je imao priliku posvjedočiti njihovo javno priznanje bespomoćnosti u pogledu donošenja osude i sprovedbe smrtno kazne nad svim ljudima, uključujući i same njihove omražene i prezrene građane.

Nedugo prije ovih događaja, kratko prije ponoći i nakon što odobri sudjelovanje rimskih vojnika pri Isusovom potajnom uhićenju, Pilat još jednom imade priliku čuti o Isusu i njegovim učenjima od svoje žene Klaudije koja u ovo vrijeme djelomično prihvati judaizam i koja kasnije postade svesrdna vjernica u Isusovo evanđelje.

Pilat htjede odložiti cijeli slučaj za neku drugu priliku, ali vidje kako su židovski vladari bili odlučni nastaviti s procesom. Znao je da ovo jutro nije bilo samo vrijeme priprave za pashu, nego da je ovaj petak štoviše bio i dan pripreme za židovsku subotu, dan koji je bio posvećen odmoru i iskazanju obožavanja.

Pilat, koji je bio duboko svjestan nepoštovanja u načinu prilaza ovih Židova, nije bio voljan prihvatiti njihove zahtjeve da osudi Isusa na smrt bez sudskog postupka. Nakon što je, stoga, sačekao nekoliko trenutaka kako bi im dao priliku da predoče svoje optužbe, okrenu se okupljenima govoreći: "Neću osuditi ovoga čovjeka na smrt bez sudskog postupka; niti ću ga pristati ispitati dok mi napisмено ne predočíte svoje optužbe."

Kad visoki svećenik i drugi čuše Pilatove riječi, dadoše znak sudskom pisaru koji pristupi Pilatu pružajući mu pisane optužbe protiv Isusa. I ove su optužbe počivale u sljedećem:

"We find in the Sanhedrist tribunal that this man is an evildoer and a disturber of our nation in that he is guilty of:

"1. Perverting our nation and stirring up our people to rebellion.

"2. Forbidding the people to pay tribute to Caesar.

"3. Calling himself the king of the Jews and teaching the founding of a new kingdom."

Jesus had not been regularly tried nor legally convicted on any of these charges. He did not even hear these charges when first stated, but Pilate had him brought from the praetorium, where he was in the keeping of the guards, and he insisted that these charges be repeated in Jesus' hearing.

When Jesus heard these accusations, he well knew that he had not been heard on these matters before the Jewish court, and so did John Zebedee and his accusers, but he made no reply to their false charges. Even when Pilate bade him answer his accusers, he opened not his mouth. Pilate was so astonished at the unfairness of the whole proceeding and so impressed by Jesus' silent and masterly bearing that he decided to take the prisoner inside the hall and examine him privately.

Pilate was confused in mind, fearful of the Jews in his heart, and mightily stirred in his spirit by the spectacle of Jesus' standing there in majesty before his bloodthirsty accusers and gazing down on them, not in silent contempt, but with an expression of genuine pity and sorrowful affection.

3. THE PRIVATE EXAMINATION BY PILATE

Pilate took Jesus and John Zebedee into a private chamber, leaving the guards outside in the hall, and requesting the prisoner to sit down, he sat down by his side and asked several questions. Pilate began his talk with Jesus by assuring him that he did not believe the first count against him: that he was a perverter of the nation and an inciter to rebellion. Then he asked, "Did you ever teach that tribute should be refused Caesar?" Jesus, pointing to John, said, "Ask him or any other man who has heard my teaching." Then Pilate questioned John about this matter of tribute, and John testified concerning his Master's teaching and explained that Jesus and his apostles paid taxes both to Caesar and to the temple. When Pilate had questioned John, he said, "See that you tell no man that I talked with you." And John never did reveal this matter.

Pilate then turned around to question Jesus further, saying: "And now about the third accusation against you, are you the king of the Jews?" Since there was a tone of possibly sincere inquiry in Pilate's voice, Jesus smiled on the procurator and said: "Pilate, do you ask this for yourself, or do you take this question from these others, my accusers?" Whereupon, in a tone of

"Sud Velikog vijeća ustanovljuje da je ovaj čovjek zločinac koji uznemiruje našu naciju i koji nosi krivnju u tome što:

"1. Izopačuje našu naciju i potiče narod na odmetanje.

"2. Zabranjuje narodu plaćanje poreza Cezaru.

"3. Sebe naziva kraljem Židova i promiče učenje o utemeljenju novog kraljevstva."

Isus nije bio prošao bilo procesom redovne sudske istrage ili zakonskog postupka u cilju utvrđenja istinitosti njegovih tobožnjih krivnji. On štoviše isprva nije mogao čuti ove optužbe, ali Pilat naredi da ga dovedu iz pretorija gdje je bio pod prismotrom stražara i da mu pročitaju njegove optužbe.

Kad je Isus čuo ove optužbe, on dobro znade da su ga prvo trebali izvesti pred židovski sud u cilju istrage ovih pitanja, kao što su to znali Ivan Zebedejev i Isusovi optužitelji, ali on ne odgovori na njihove lažne optužbe. Kad ga Pilat počeo poticati da odgovori svojim optužiteljima, Isus ne progovori ni riječi. Pilat bijaše tako zapanjen nepoštenjem cijelog procesa i toliko impresioniran Isusovim tihim i dostojanstvenim držanjem da odluči uvesti zatočenika u sudnicu i tu ga nasamo ispitati.

Pilat bijaše zbunjen, u srcu bojažljiv pred Židovima, a u duhu duboko dirnut prizorom Isusovog dostojanstvenog stava i pogleda kojim je promatrao svoje krvožedne optužitelje, pogleda koji nije odisao tihim prezirom nego iskrenim sažaljenjem i bolnom ljubavlju.

3. PILAT NASAMO ISPITUJE ISUSA

Pilat povede Isusa i Ivana Zebedejevog u svoje privatne odaje te ostavljajući stražare u predvorju zatraži od Isusa da se sjedne, te se sam sjede pored njega i počeo mu postavljati pitanja. Pilat započe svoj razgovor s Isusom uvjeravajući ga da i sam nije vjerovao u prvu optužbu koju donesoše protiv njega: da izopačuje naciju i potiče narod na odmetanje. Zatim ga upita, "Jesi li ikada zabranjivao narodu plaćanje poreza Cezaru?" Pokazujući na Ivana, Isus uzvrat: "Pitaj njega ili bilo kojeg drugog čovjeka koji čuje moja učenja." Pilat zatim upita Ivana u pogledu poreza i Ivan navede Učiteljeve upute u ovom pogledu, te objasni kako su Isus i njegovi apostoli plaćali porez kako Cezaru tako i hramu. Nakon što ispita Ivana, Pilat reče: "Nikome ne kazuj da s tobom progovorih." I Ivan nikad ne obznani ovu činjenicu.

Pilat se zatim obrati Isusu sa slijedećim riječima: "A sada što se tiče treće optužbe, jesi li ti kralj židovski?" Kako se u Pilatovom glasu mogao razabrati ton možebitno iskrene radoznalosti, Isus uputi smiješak svome prokuratoru govoreći: "Pilate, kažeš li to sam od sebe, ili to pitaš u ime drugih, mojih optužitelja?" Našto, s tonom djelomičnog ogorčenja,

partial indignation, the governor answered: "Am I a Jew? Your own people and the chief priests delivered you up and asked me to sentence you to death. I question the validity of their charges and am only trying to find out for myself what you have done. Tell me, have you said that you are the king of the Jews, and have you sought to found a new kingdom?"

Then said Jesus to Pilate: "Do you not perceive that my kingdom is not of this world? If my kingdom were of this world, surely would my disciples fight that I should not be delivered into the hands of the Jews. My presence here before you in these bonds is sufficient to show all men that my kingdom is a spiritual dominion, even the brotherhood of men who, through faith and by love, have become the sons of God. And this salvation is for the gentile as well as for the Jew."

"Then you are a king after all?" said Pilate. And Jesus answered: "Yes, I am such a king, and my kingdom is the family of the faith sons of my Father who is in heaven. For this purpose was I born into this world, even that I should show my Father to all men and bear witness to the truth of God. And even now do I declare to you that every one who loves the truth hears my voice."

Then said Pilate, half in ridicule and half in sincerity, "Truth, what is truth -- who knows?"

Pilate was not able to fathom Jesus' words, nor was he able to understand the nature of his spiritual kingdom, but he was now certain that the prisoner had done nothing worthy of death. One look at Jesus, face to face, was enough to convince even Pilate that this gentle and weary, but majestic and upright, man was no wild and dangerous revolutionary who aspired to establish himself on the temporal throne of Israel. Pilate thought he understood something of what Jesus meant when he called himself a king, for he was familiar with the teachings of the Stoics, who declared that "the wise man is king." Pilate was thoroughly convinced that, instead of being a dangerous seditionmonger, Jesus was nothing more or less than a harmless visionary, an innocent fanatic.

After questioning the Master, Pilate went back to the chief priests and the accusers of Jesus and said: "I have examined this man, and I find no fault in him. I do not think he is guilty of the charges you have made against him; I think he ought to be set free." And when the Jews heard this, they were moved with great anger, so much so that they wildly shouted that Jesus should die; and one of the Sanhedrists boldly stepped up by the side of Pilate, saying: "This man stirs up the people, beginning in Galilee and continuing throughout all Judea. He is a mischief-maker and an evildoer. You will long regret it if you let this wicked man go free."

Pilate was hard pressed to know what to do with Jesus; therefore, when he heard them say that he

upravitelj odgovori: "Zar sam ja Židov? Tvoj narod i glavari svećenički meni su te predali tražeći da te optužim na smrt. Ja ispitujem valjanost njihovih optužbi i jedino za sebe pokušavam utvrditi što si učinio. Reci mi, jesi li rekao da si kralj Židova i jesi li nastojao utemeljiti novo kraljevstvo."

Isus zatim odgovori Pilatu: "Ne shvaćas li da moje kraljevstvo ne pripada ovom svijetu? Kad bi moje kraljevstvo pripadalo ovom svijetu, moji bi se dvorani borili da ne budem predan Židovima. Sama moja nazočnost pred tobom u ovim sponama predstavlja dovoljan dokaz da je moje kraljevstvo duhovna domena, bratstvo ljudi koji putem vjere i ljubavi postaju Božji sinovi. I ovo spasenje pripada nežidovima kao i Židovima."

"Dakle, ti si kralj," upita Pilat. A Isus odgovori: "Dobro veliš, ja sam kralj, a moje kraljevstvo počiva u obitelji sinova vjere moga Oca koji je na nebu. Ja sam se zato rodio i zato došao na svijet da pokažem svoga Oca svim ljudima i da posvjedočim Božjoj istini. I ovom prilikom izjavljujem da svaki koji voli istinu čuje moj glas."

Pilat zatim, napola se izrugujući a napola iskreno, reče: "Istina, što je istina – tko zna?"

Dok Pilat ne bijaše u stanju bilo shvatiti Isusove riječi ili spoznati prirodu njegovog duhovnog kraljevstva, ovom se prilikom duboko uvjeri da zatočenik ne učini ništa što bi bilo vrijedno smrtno kazne. Sam pogled na Isusa, licem u lice, bijaše dovoljan da uvjeri i samog Pilata da ovaj nježni i izmučeni, ali veličanstveni i dostojanstveni čovjek, nije bio neobuzdani i opasni revolucionarni buntovnik koji je težio vlastitom utemeljenju na zemaljskom prijestolju Palestine. Pilat pomisli da je uspio spoznati zašto se Isus nazivao kraljem, kako je bio upoznat sa stoičkim učenjem da je mudar čovjek kralj. Pilat bijaše posve uvjeren da Isus nije bio opasni buntovnik, već ni manje ni više nego bezopasni vizionar, bezazleni fanatik.

Nakon što ispita Učitelja, Pilat ponovo izađe k glavnim svećenicima i Isusovim optužiteljima govoreći: "Ja sam ispitao ovoga čovjeka i ne nalazim na njemu nikakve krivnje. Ne vjerujem u optužbe koje protiv njega iznosite; mislim da ga trebamo osloboditi." A Židovi kad čuše ove riječi, jako se naljutiše, te počеше ljutito navaljivati tražeći Isusovu smrt; a jedan pripadnik Velikog vijeća hrabro istupi pred Pilata govoreći: "Ovaj čovjek buni narod učeći počev od Galileje pa po svoj Judeji. On je smutljivac i zločinac. Jako ćeš se pokajati ako oslobodiš ovog zlotvora."

Pilat ne znade što će učiniti s Isusom; stoga, kad ču da Isus započe s djelovanjem u Galileji, odluči

began his work in Galilee, he thought to avoid the responsibility of deciding the case, at least to gain time for thought, by sending Jesus to appear before Herod, who was then in the city attending the Passover. Pilate also thought that this gesture would help to antidote some of the bitter feeling which had existed for some time between himself and Herod, due to numerous misunderstandings over matters of jurisdiction.

Pilate, calling the guards, said: "This man is a Galilean. Take him forthwith to Herod, and when he has examined him, report his findings to me." And they took Jesus to Herod.

4. JESUS BEFORE HEROD

When Herod Antipas stopped in Jerusalem, he dwelt in the old Maccabean palace of Herod the Great, and it was to this home of the former king that Jesus was now taken by the temple guards, and he was followed by his accusers and an increasing multitude. Herod had long heard of Jesus, and he was very curious about him. When the Son of Man stood before him, on this Friday morning, the wicked Idumean never for one moment recalled the lad of former years who had appeared before him in Sepphoris pleading for a just decision regarding the money due his father, who had been accidentally killed while at work on one of the public buildings. As far as Herod knew, he had never seen Jesus, although he had worried a great deal about him when his work had been centered in Galilee. Now that he was in custody of Pilate and the Judeans, Herod was desirous of seeing him, feeling secure against any trouble from him in the future. Herod had heard much about the miracles wrought by Jesus, and he really hoped to see him do some wonder.

When they brought Jesus before Herod, the tetrarch was startled by his stately appearance and the calm composure of his countenance. For some fifteen minutes Herod asked Jesus questions, but the Master would not answer. Herod taunted and dared him to perform a miracle, but Jesus would not reply to his many inquiries or respond to his taunts.

Then Herod turned to the chief priests and the Sadducees and, giving ear to their accusations, heard all and more than Pilate had listened to regarding the alleged evil doings of the Son of Man. Finally, being convinced that Jesus would neither talk nor perform a wonder for him, Herod, after making fun of him for a time, arrayed him in an old purple royal robe and sent him back to Pilate. Herod knew he had no jurisdiction over Jesus in Judea. Though he was glad to believe that he was finally to be rid of Jesus in Galilee, he was thankful that it was Pilate who had the responsibility of putting him to death. Herod never had fully recovered from the fear that cursed him as a result of killing John the Baptist. Herod had at certain times even feared that Jesus was John risen from the dead. Now he was relieved of that fear since he observed that Jesus was a very different sort of person from the outspoken and

izbjeći odgovornost vezanu uz donošenje odluke ili ako ništa drugo ono steći vremena kako bi razmislio o cijelom slučaju, te tako posla Isusa Herodu koji bijaše u Jeruzalemu uoči blagdana pashe. Pilat ovim činom štoviše nastojao ublažiti dugotrajno neprijateljstvo u svom odnosu s Herodom koje predstavljalo rezultat mnogobrojnih nesporazuma u upravnim pitanjima.

Pozivajući stražare, Pilat reče: "Ovaj je čovjek Galilejac. Stoga ga odvedite Herodu te mi javite njegovu odluku nakon što ga ovaj ispita." I Isusa tako odvedoše k Herodu.

4. ISUS PRED HERODOM

Kako je prilikom boravka u Jeruzalemu Herod Antipa obično boravio u starom makabejskom dvoru Heroda Velikog, stražari tako odvedoše Isusa k ovom domu negdašnjeg kralja, dok za njima pođoše Isusovi optužitelji kao i sve veća masa naroda. Herod već dugo bijaše slušao o Isusu, te ga je odavna želio upoznati. Kad u petak ujutro Sin Čovječji stade pred Heroda, ovaj zli Idumejac ni na tranutak ne prepozna mladića koji je nekoć stajao pred njim u Seforisu tražeći pravednu odluku pri isplati Herodovog duga Isusovom ocu koji je nesrećnim slučajem poginuo radeći na Herodovom novom javnom projektu. Herod nije bio svjestan da je ikada imao priliku vidjeti Isusa, premda mu je Isusovo učenje zadalo dosta brige u razdoblju kad se najvećim dijelom odvijalo u Galileji. Ovom prilikom, dok se Isus nalazio u zatočeništvu Pilata i Judejaca, Herod je želio da ga vidi kako se osjećao zaštićenim od bilo kakvih budućih problema. Herod je mnogo čuo o Isusovim čudima, te se nadao da će vidjeti gdje čini koje čudo.

Kad stražari izvedoše Isusa pred Heroda, tetrarh se zaprepasti ugledavši Isusovo dostojanstvo kao i smireni spokoj njegovog lica. Herod nastavi ispitivati Isusa petnaestak minuta, ali mu Učitelj ništa ne odgovori. Herod ga zatim počeo vrijeđati kako bi ga naveo da učini čudo, ali Isus ne odgovori bilo na njegova pitanja ili na njegove uvrede.

Herod se zatim okrenu k visokim svećenicima i saducejima i saslušao njihove optužbe, sve što već rekoše Pilatu o takozvanom zlotvorstvu Sina Čovječjeg, kao i neke nove optužbe. Konačno, kad se uvjeri da Isus neće bilo progovoriti ili učiniti čuda, Herod, nakon što mu se prvo naruga, obuče ga u grimiznu kraljevsku haljinu te ga posla natrag k Pilatu. Herod je znao da nije imao sudske vlasti nad Isusom u Judeji. Premda se radovao što se konačno uspio riješiti Isusa u Galileji, bilo mu je drago što je Pilat snosio odgovornost za odluku o njegovoj smrti. Herod se nikad nije u cjelosti oporavio od straha koji ga počeo mučiti nakon ubojstva Ivana Krstitelja. Herod u određeno vrijeme štoviše strahovao je da Isus bio uskrsnuti Ivan. Ovom se prilikom oslobodio ovog straha kako je imao priliku posvjedočiti da je Isus bio posve drugačija vrsta osobe od otvorenog i ljutog proroka koji se jednom prilikom

fiery prophet who dared to expose and denounce his private life.

5. JESUS RETURNS TO PILATE

When the guards had brought Jesus back to Pilate, he went out on the front steps of the praetorium, where his judgment seat had been placed, and calling together the chief priests and Sanhedrists, said to them: "You brought this man before me with charges that he perverts the people, forbids the payment of taxes, and claims to be king of the Jews. I have examined him and fail to find him guilty of these charges. In fact, I find no fault in him. Then I sent him to Herod, and the tetrarch must have reached the same conclusion since he has sent him back to us. Certainly, nothing worthy of death has been done by this man. If you still think he needs to be disciplined, I am willing to chastise him before I release him."

Just as the Jews were about to engage in shouting their protests against the release of Jesus, a vast crowd came marching up to the praetorium for the purpose of asking Pilate for the release of a prisoner in honor of the Passover feast. For some time it had been the custom of the Roman governors to allow the populace to choose some imprisoned or condemned man for pardon at the time of the Passover. And now that this crowd had come before him to ask for the release of a prisoner, and since Jesus had so recently been in great favor with the multitudes, it occurred to Pilate that he might possibly extricate himself from his predicament by proposing to this group that, since Jesus was now a prisoner before his judgment seat, he release to them this man of Galilee as the token of Passover good will.

As the crowd surged up on the steps of the building, Pilate heard them calling out the name of one Barabbas. Barabbas was a noted political agitator and murderous robber, the son of a priest, who had recently been apprehended in the act of robbery and murder on the Jericho road. This man was under sentence to die as soon as the Passover festivities were over.

Pilate stood up and explained to the crowd that Jesus had been brought to him by the chief priests, who sought to have him put to death on certain charges, and that he did not think the man was worthy of death. Said Pilate: "Which, therefore, would you prefer that I release to you, this Barabbas, the murderer, or this Jesus of Galilee?" And when Pilate had thus spoken, the chief priests and the Sanhedrin councilors all shouted at the top of their voices, "Barabbas, Barabbas!" And when the people saw that the chief priests were minded to have Jesus put to death, they quickly joined in the clamor for his life while they loudly shouted for the release of Barabbas.

A few days before this the multitude had stood in awe of Jesus, but the mob did not look up to one who, having claimed to be the Son of God, now found

usudio raskrinkati i osuditi Herodov osobni život.

5. ISUS JOŠ JEDNOM IDE PRED PILATA

Kad stražari ponovo dovedoše Isusa k Pilatu, ovaj ode do prednjih stepenica pretorija gdje mu bijaše postavili sudačku stolicu, te sazivajući visoke svećenike i pripadnike Velikog vijeća, reče: "Doveli ste mi ovoga čovjeka pod optužbom da potiče narod na odmetanje, da zabranjuje davati porez caru, a o sebi tvrdi da je kralj Židova. Evo, ja ga ispitah i ne nađoh ga krivim. Štoviše, ja ne nađoh na njemu nikakve krivnje. Zatim ga poslah k tetrarhu Herodu koji morade donijeti istu odluku jer ga vrati k nama. I nije ovaj ništa učinio što zaslužuje smrt. Ako još uvijek smatrate da zaslužuje kaznu, ja sam ga voljan išibati i pustiti."

Upravo kako se Židovi spremiše ljutito vikati protiv Isusovog oslobođenja, velika se masa ljudi poče primicati pretoriju tražeći od Pilata da oslobodi jednog zatočenika u čast blagdana pashe. Već neko vrijeme rimski upravitelji imadoše običaj oslobađati jednog odabranog zatočenika ili optuženika uoči pashe. I ovom prilikom kad ugleda svjetinu koja mu pride tražeći oslobođenje zatočenika, kako znade da je Isus već dugo uživao naklonost naroda, Pilat se ponada da će se tako uspjati izvući iz ove nezgodne pozicije predlažući okupljenoj svjetini da im podari oslobođenje ovog Galilejca u znak blagdanske dobronamjernosti, kako je Isus bio zatočenik pred njegovom sudačkom stolicom.

Kako se svjetina poče penjati stepenicama pretorija, Pilat mogaše razabrati ime određenog Barabe. Baraba je bio poznati politički agitator i grabežni ubojica, svećenički sin koji je nedavno uhvaćen pri razbojstvu i umorstvu na putu za Jerihon. Ovaj je čovjek bio osuđen na smrtnu kaznu koja se trebala sprovesti neposredno po svršetku pashalnih svečanosti.

Pilat ustade i objasni svjetini da Isusa optužiše visoki svećenici koji ga izvedoše na sud tražeći smrtnu kaznu radi određenih krivnji, te da on, Pilat, ne nalazi na njemu krivnje koja zaslužuje smrtnu kaznu. Pilat reče: "Hoćete li da vam pustim ovog Barabu, ubojicu, ili ovog Isusa iz Galileje?" I nakon što Pilat tako reče, glavni svećenici i savjetnici Velikog vijeća svi povikaše iz sveg glasa, "Barabu, Barabu!" I kad narod vidje kako glavni svećenici traže Isusovu smrtnu kaznu, spremno im se pridružiše zagovarajući njegovu smrt i Barabino oslobođenje.

Dok je prije nekoliko dana ista ova svjetina s poštovanjem slušala Isusove riječi, Isus se tada nazivao Božjim Sinom, dok je ovom prilikom bio zatočenik

himself in the custody of the chief priests and the rulers and on trial before Pilate for his life. Jesus could be a hero in the eyes of the populace when he was driving the money-changers and the traders out of the temple, but not when he was a nonresisting prisoner in the hands of his enemies and on trial for his life.

Pilate was angered at the sight of the chief priests clamoring for the pardon of a notorious murderer while they shouted for the blood of Jesus. He saw their malice and hatred and perceived their prejudice and envy. Therefore he said to them: "How could you choose the life of a murderer in preference to this man's whose worst crime is that he figuratively calls himself the king of the Jews?" But this was not a wise statement for Pilate to make. The Jews were a proud people, now subject to the Roman political yoke but hoping for the coming of a Messiah who would deliver them from gentile bondage with a great show of power and glory. They resented, more than Pilate could know, the intimation that this meek-mannered teacher of strange doctrines, now under arrest and charged with crimes worthy of death, should be referred to as "the king of the Jews." They looked upon such a remark as an insult to everything which they held sacred and honorable in their national existence, and therefore did they all let loose their mighty shouts for Barabbas's release and Jesus' death.

Pilate knew Jesus was innocent of the charges brought against him, and had he been a just and courageous judge, he would have acquitted him and turned him loose. But he was afraid to defy these angry Jews, and while he hesitated to do his duty, a messenger came up and presented him with a sealed message from his wife, Claudia.

Pilate indicated to those assembled before him that he wished to read the communication which he had just received before he proceeded further with the matter before him. When Pilate opened this letter from his wife, he read: "I pray you have nothing to do with this innocent and just man whom they call Jesus. I have suffered many things in a dream this night because of him." This note from Claudia not only greatly upset Pilate and thereby delayed the adjudication of this matter, but it unfortunately also provided considerable time in which the Jewish rulers freely circulated among the crowd and urged the people to call for the release of Barabbas and to clamor for the crucifixion of Jesus.

Finally, Pilate addressed himself once more to the solution of the problem which confronted him, by asking the mixed assembly of Jewish rulers and the pardon-seeking crowd, "What shall I do with him who is called the king of the Jews?" And they all shouted with one accord, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" The unanimity of this demand from the mixed multitude startled and alarmed Pilate, the unjust and fear-ridden judge.

glavnih svećenika koji je očekivao Pilatovu presudu. Isus je mogao igrati ulogu heroja u očima svjetine dok je izgonio trgovce i mjenjače novca iz hrama, ali to nije mogao biti dok je bez otpora bio u rukama svojih neprijatelja sudjelujući u sudskom postupku koji je trebao odlučiti o njegovom životu i smrti.

Pilat se naljuti kad vidje kako glavni svećenici traže oslobodenje zloglasnog ubojice istovremeno tražeći Isusovu smrt. Opažao je njihovu zlobu i mržnju, spoznavajući da su bili puni zavisti i predrasuda. Stoga im reče: "Kako možete tražiti život ubojice i smrt ovog čovjeka čiji se jedini zločin sastoji u tome što sebe figurativno naziva kraljem Židova?" Ali Pilatu nije bilo mudro tako govoriti. Židovi su bili ponosan narod koji se trenutno nalazio pod rimskom političkom vlašću, ali koji se nadao dolasku Mesije koji ih je trebao osloboditi od nežidovske uprave s velikim prikazom moći i slave. Oni mu jako zamjeriše, više nego što je Pilat mogao i zamisliti, što se usudio aludirati da je ovaj krotki i ponizni učitelj čudnih doktrina koji se trenutno nalazio pod njihovom vlašću pod prijetnjom smrtno kazne, mogao biti "kralj Židova." Oni smatraše ove riječi uvredom svemu što držaše svetim i časnim u okvirima svoje nacionalne egzistencije, te stoga još glasnije počеше zagovarati Barabino oslobodenje i Isusovu smrt.

Pilat je znao da Isus nije bio kriv od njihovih optužbi, i da je bio pravedan i hrabar sudac, proglasio bi Isusa nevinim i pustio ga na slobodu. Ali Pilat nije imao hrabrosti da se usprotivi ovim razljućenim Židovima i dok je još oklijevao izvršiti svoju dužnost, do njega dođe glasnik koji mu dade zapečaćenu poruku od njegove žene Klaudije.

Pilat dade znak okupljenima da je želio pročitati poruku prije nego što donese odluku o ovim pitanjima. Kad zatim Pilat otvori pismo od svoje žene i ugleda slijedeće riječi: "Nemoj se nikako mijašati u stvar toga nedužnog pravednika po imenu Isus. Sinoć sam u snu mnogo pretrpjela zbog njega." Ova Klaudijina poruka ne samo što jako uznemi Pilata na taj način odgađajući donošenje odluke, već štoviše dade prilično mnogo vremena židovskim vladarima da se rašire među svjetinom i da potaknu narod da traži da pusti Barabu i da razapne Isusa.

Konačno, Pilat se još jednom obrati narodu tražeći rješenje problema s kojim se suočio, govoreći pred miješanom skupinom koja se sastojala od židovskih vladara i svjetine koja je došla tražiti da im pusti jednog zatočenika, "Što da onda učinim s onim koga zovete kraljem židovskim?" I svi jednim glasom zavikaše, "Razapni ga! Razapni ga!" Jednoglasnog zahtjeva ove miješane grupe istovremeno iznenadi i uznemiri Pilata, ovog nepoštenog i bojažljivog suca.

Then once more Pilate said: "Why would you crucify this man? What evil has he done? Who will come forward to testify against him?" But when they heard Pilate speak in defense of Jesus, they only cried out all the more, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Then again Pilate appealed to them regarding the release of the Passover prisoner, saying: "Once more I ask you, which of these prisoners shall I release to you at this, your Passover time?" And again the crowd shouted, "Give us Barabbas!"

Then said Pilate: "If I release the murderer, Barabbas, what shall I do with Jesus?" And once more the multitude shouted in unison, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Pilate was terrorized by the insistent clamor of the mob, acting under the direct leadership of the chief priests and the councilors of the Sanhedrin; nevertheless, he decided upon at least one more attempt to appease the crowd and save Jesus.

6. PILATE'S LAST APPEAL

In all that is transpiring early this Friday morning before Pilate, only the enemies of Jesus are participating. His many friends either do not yet know of his night arrest and early morning trial or are in hiding lest they also be apprehended and adjudged worthy of death because they believe Jesus' teachings. In the multitude which now clamors for the Master's death are to be found only his sworn enemies and the easily led and unthinking populace.

Pilate would make one last appeal to their pity. Being afraid to defy the clamor of this misled mob who cried for the blood of Jesus, he ordered the Jewish guards and the Roman soldiers to take Jesus and scourge him. This was in itself an unjust and illegal procedure since the Roman law provided that only those condemned to die by crucifixion should be thus subjected to scourging. The guards took Jesus into the open courtyard of the praetorium for this ordeal. Though his enemies did not witness this scourging, Pilate did, and before they had finished this wicked abuse, he directed the scourgers to desist and indicated that Jesus should be brought to him. Before the scourgers laid their knotted whips upon Jesus as he was bound to the whipping post, they again put upon him the purple robe, and plaiting a crown of thorns, they placed it upon his brow. And when they had put a reed in his hand as a mock scepter, they knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews!" And they spit upon him and struck him in the face with their hands. And one of them, before they returned him to Pilate, took the reed from his hand and struck him upon the head.

Then Pilate led forth this bleeding and lacerated prisoner and, presenting him before the mixed multitude, said: "Behold the man! Again I declare to

Pilat još jednom upita: "Zašto hoćete da razapnem ovog čovjeka? Kakvo je zlo učinio? Koji će od vas izaći da posvjedoči protiv njega?" Ali kad okupljeni čuše kako Pilat brani Isusa, još jače povikaše: "Razapni ga! Razapni ga!"

Pilat se ponovo pozva na običaj svakog pashalnog blagdana da pusti jednog sužnja, govoreći: "Ponovo vas pitam, koga od ove dvojice hoćete da vam pustim prilikom ovog pashe?" I svjetina ponovo povika, "Pusti Barabu!"

Pilat reče: "Ako oslobodim ubojicu, Baranu, što da onda učinim s Isusom?" Svjetina ponovo povika jednim glasom, "Razapni ga! Razapni ga!"

Pilat je bio užasnut ustrajnim povcima svjetine pod upravom visokih svećenika i savjetnika Velikog vijeća; unatoč tome odlučio se posljednji put obratiti narodu kako bi umirio njihovu reakciju i spasio Isusa.

6. PILATOV POGLAVNI OBRAČUN

Pri svemu što se ovog petka odigra pred Pilatom sudjelovao je jedino Isusovi neprijatelj. Mnogi njegovi prijatelji bilo ne doznahu o njegovom uhićenju prošle noći i ranom jutarnjem suđenju, ili provedoše ove sate u skrovištima kako i sami ne bi bili uhvaćeni i podvrgnuti smrti kao Isusovi učenici. Među svjetinom koja ovog časa traži Učiteljevu smrt jedino se mogu naći njegovi zakleti neprijatelji i lakovjeran i lakomislen narod.

Pilat po posljednji put pokušao apelirati na njihovo sažaljenje. Kako se bojao prkositi povcima svjetine iskaše Isusovu krv, on naredi židovskim stražarima i rimskim vojnicima da odvedu Isusa u stranu i da ga bičuju. Ovo je sam po sebi bio nepravedan i nezakonit čin, kako je rimski zakon dopuštao jedino bičevanje osoba koje su bile osuđene na smrt razapinjanjem. Stražari odvedoše Isusa u otvoreno dvorište pretorija gdje ga izložiše ovoj teškoj kušnji. Njegovi neprijatelji tako nemadoše priliku posvjedočiti bičevanje. Pilat je, međutim, bio prisutan pri ovom događaju, te je po svršetku ovog zlog čina naredio mučiteljima da mu dovedu Isusa i da se nakon toga povuku. Prije nego što položiše svoje čvoraste bičeve na Isusovo tijelo pričvršćeno za sramni stub, mučitelji ga ponovo ognuše skrletnom kabanicom, pa opletoše trnovu krunu i njome ga okruniše. I nakon što mu uguraše trsku u desnicu kao tobožnje žezlo, pregibahu koljena i klanjahu mu se govoreći: "Zdravo, kralju židovski!" I oni ga pljuvahu i udaraše rukama po licu. A jedan od njih, prije nego što se vrati k Pilatu, uze trsku iz Isusove ruke te ga počeo udarati trskom po glavi.

Pilat zatim povede ovog okrvavljenog i napaćenog sužnja te ga izvede pred miješanu svjetinu govoreći: "Evo čovjeka! Ponovo vam kažem da ja na

you that I find no crime in him, and having scourged him, I would release him."

There stood Jesus of Nazareth, clothed in an old purple royal robe with a crown of thorns piercing his kindly brow. His face was bloodstained and his form bowed down with suffering and grief. But nothing can appeal to the unfeeling hearts of those who are victims of intense emotional hatred and slaves to religious prejudice. This sight sent a mighty shudder through the realms of a vast universe, but it did not touch the hearts of those who had set their minds to effect the destruction of Jesus.

When they had recovered from the first shock of seeing the Master's plight, they only shouted the louder and the longer, "Crucify him! Crucify him! Crucify him!"

And now did Pilate comprehend that it was futile to appeal to their supposed feelings of pity. He stepped forward and said: "I perceive that you are determined this man shall die, but what has he done to deserve death? Who will declare his crime?"

Then the high priest himself stepped forward and, going up to Pilate, angrily declared: "We have a sacred law, and by that law this man ought to die because he made himself out to be the Son of God." When Pilate heard this, he was all the more afraid, not only of the Jews, but recalling his wife's note and the Greek mythology of the gods coming down on earth, he now trembled at the thought of Jesus possibly being a divine personage. He waved to the crowd to hold its peace while he took Jesus by the arm and again led him inside the building that he might further examine him. Pilate was now confused by fear, bewildered by superstition, and harassed by the stubborn attitude of the mob.

7. PILATE'S LAST INTERVIEW

As Pilate, trembling with fearful emotion, sat down by the side of Jesus, he inquired: "Where do you come from? Really, who are you? What is this they say, that you are the Son of God?"

But Jesus could hardly answer such questions when asked by a man-fearing, weak, and vacillating judge who was so unjust as to subject him to flogging even when he had declared him innocent of all crime, and before he had been duly sentenced to die. Jesus looked Pilate straight in the face, but he did not answer him. Then said Pilate: "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not realize that I still have power to release you or to crucify you?" Then said Jesus: "You could have no power over me except it were permitted from above. You could exercise no authority over the Son of Man unless the Father in heaven allowed it. But you are not so guilty since you are ignorant of the gospel. He who betrayed me and he who delivered me to you, they have the greater sin.

njemu ne nalazim nikakve krivnje i da ga želim pustiti nakon što dadoh da ga išibaju."

Tako stajao Isus Nazarećanin ogrnut skrletnom kabanicom, okrunjen trnovom krunom usječenom u njegovo ljubezno čelo. Lice mu bijaše obliveno krvlju, a tijelo pognuto od muke i bola. Ali ništa ne mogaše dirnuti bezosjećajna srca ovih žrtava snažne emocionalne mržnje, ovih ljudi koji postadoše robovima religiozne predrasude. Dok ovaj prizor izazva veliku jezu u bićima prostranog svemira, on ne dirnu srca onih koji tako čvrsto usmjeriše svoje umove i srca na ideju Isusovog uništenja.

Kako se oporaviše od izvornog šoka izazvanog prizorom Učiteljeve tegobe, nastaviše vikati iz sveg glasa, "Razapni ga! Razapni ga! Razapni ga!"

Pilate tada uvidje da ništa ne uspiješe postići apelom na njihov tobožnji osjećaj sažaljenja. On istupi pred narod i reče: "Vidim da ste čvrsto odlučili uništiti ovog čovjeka, ali što je učinio kako bi zaslužio smrt? Tko će mu naći krivnje?"

Tada istupi sam veliki svećenik i idući prema Pilatu ljutito reče: "Mi imamo sveti zakon i po tome zakonu ovaj čovjek mora umrijeti, jer se pravio Sinom Božjim." Kad Pilat ču tu riječ, još se više poboja ne samo od Židova, već od sjećanja na poruku koji primi od svoje žene kao i od pomisli na grčku mitologiju koja govori o dolasku bogova na zemlju, sada se poboja od pomisli da je Isus uistinu mogao biti božanska osoba. Dajući znak svjetini da se stiša, Pilat uze Isusa pod ruku te ga povede u nutrinu preatorija kako bi ga dalje ispitaio. Pilat se ovom prilikom nađe zbunjen strahom, zaveden sujevjerjem i prognan nepopustljivim stavom svjetine.

7. PILATOVA POSLJEDNJA ISTRAGA

Dršćući od straha i snažnih emocija, Pilat sjede pored Isusa te ga upita: "Odakle si? Uistinu, tko si? Što to govore da si ti Sin Božji?"

Ali Isus teško mogaše odgovoriti na ovo pitanje slabog i neodlučnog suca kojim je vladao strah od drugih ljudi, koji ga prvo proglasi nedužnim te ga zatim nepošteno izloži bičevanju bez doličnog sudskog procesa i osude na smrt. Isus pogleda Pilata u oči, ali mu ne dade odgovora. Zatim mu Pilat reče: "Meni ne odgovaraš? Ne znaš li da imam vlast osloboditi te i da imam vlast razapeti te?" Isus zatim odgovori: "Ne bi imao nikakve vlasti nada mnoom kad ti ne bi bilo dano odozgo. Ne bi mogao ispoljiti vlast nad Sinom Čovječjim da ti Otac na nebu ne dade vlast. Ali nije na tebi tolika krivnja kako ti ne poznaješ evađelje kraljevstva. Zato je onomu koji me tebi predade veći grijeh."

This last talk with Jesus thoroughly frightened Pilate. This moral coward and judicial weakling now labored under the double weight of the superstitious fear of Jesus and mortal dread of the Jewish leaders.

Again Pilate appeared before the crowd, saying: "I am certain this man is only a religious offender. You should take him and judge him by your law. Why should you expect that I would consent to his death because he has clashed with your traditions?"

Pilate was just about ready to release Jesus when Caiaphas, the high priest, approached the cowardly Roman judge and, shaking an avenging finger in Pilate's face, said with angry words which the entire multitude could hear: "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend, and I will see that the emperor knows all." This public threat was too much for Pilate. Fear for his personal fortunes now eclipsed all other considerations, and the cowardly governor ordered Jesus brought out before the judgment seat. As the Master stood there before them, he pointed to him and tauntingly said, "Behold your king." And the Jews answered, "Away with him. Crucify him!" And then Pilate said, with much irony and sarcasm, "Shall I crucify your king?" And the Jews answered, "Yes, crucify him! We have no king but Caesar." And then did Pilate realize that there was no hope of saving Jesus since he was unwilling to defy the Jews.

8. PILATE'S TRAGIC SURRENDER

Here stood the Son of God incarnate as the Son of Man. He was arrested without indictment; accused without evidence; adjudged without witnesses; punished without a verdict; and now was soon to be condemned to die by an unjust judge who confessed that he could find no fault in him. If Pilate had thought to appeal to their patriotism by referring to Jesus as the "king of the Jews," he utterly failed. The Jews were not expecting any such a king. The declaration of the chief priests and the Sadducees, "We have no king but Caesar," was a shock even to the unthinking populace, but it was too late now to save Jesus even had the mob dared to espouse the Master's cause.

Pilate was afraid of a tumult or a riot. He dared not risk having such a disturbance during Passover time in Jerusalem. He had recently received a reprimand from Caesar, and he would not risk another. The mob cheered when he ordered the release of Barabbas. Then he ordered a basin and some water, and there before the multitude he washed his hands, saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this man. You are determined that he shall die, but I have found no guilt in him. See you to it. The soldiers will lead him forth." And then the mob cheered and replied, "His blood be on us and on our children."

Ovaj posljednji razgovor s Isusom jako uplašio Pilata. Ovaj moralni slabić i sudski plašljivac ovom prilikom podliježe dvostrukom teretu od sujevjerne bojazni od Isusa i smrtnog straha od židovskih vladara.

Pilat se ponovo obrati svjetini: "Uvjeren sam da je ovaj čovjek jedino mogao uvrijediti vašu religioznu učenja. Uzmite ga vi te mu sudite po svom zakonu. Zašto očekujete od mene da pristanem na njegovu smrt zato što se sukobio s vašim tradicijama?"

Pilat se upravo spremao osloboditi Isusa kad Kaifa, visoki svećenik, pristupi plašljivom rimskom sucu i dok je osvetoljubivo prijetio prstom u Pilatovo lice na sav glas ljutito reče: "Ako oslobodiš ovog čovjeka, nisi prijatelj Cezaru i ja ću se osobno pobrinuti da informiram imperatora." Ova je javna prijetnja bila više nego što je Pilat bio u stanju podnijeti. Strah od gubitka osobnog bogatstva ovom prilikom zasjeni sve druge bojazni i plašljivi upravitelj naredi da izvedu Isusa pred njegovu sudačku stolicu. Dok je Učitelj stajao pred njim, Pilat pokaza na Isusa podrugljivo govoreći, "Evo vam vašeg kralja." A Židovi uzvrišu, "Smakni ga. Razapni ga!" I s puno ironije i sarkazma Pilat odgovori, "Vašega kralja da razapnem?" A Židovi rekoše, "Razapni ga! Mi nemamo drugoga kralja osim Cezara." I Pilat ovom prilikom uvidje da više nije bilo nade u Isusovo spasenje kako se nije bio spreman usprotiviti Židovima.

8. PILATOVA TRAGIČNA PREDAJA

Tu stajao Sin Božji utjeljen kao Sin Čovječji. Uhvaćen bez osude, optužen bez dokaza, osuđen bez svjedoka, kažnjen bez presude, stajao je pred smrtnom kaznom zahvaljujući odluci nepoštenog suca koji ga sam nađe bez krivnje. Ako je Pilat pokušao apelirati na njihov osjećaj patriotizma nazivajući Isusa "kraljem Židova," doslovce je doživio poraz pri ovoj namjeri. Židovi nisu očekivali ovakvog kralja. Kad glavni svećenici i saduceji rekoše, "Mi nemamo drugoga kralja osim Cezara," njihove riječi iznenadiše lakomislenu svjetinu, ali ovom je prilikom bilo kasno pokušati spasiti Isusa čak i da je svjetina bila spremna da se prikloni Učiteljevom evanđelju.

Pilat se bojao narodne bude i nemira. Nije bio spreman prihvatiti ovu prijetnju tijekom blagdana pashe u Jeruzalemu. Nedavno je primio opomenu od Cezara i nije se bio spreman izložiti opasnosti od nove bune. Svjetina se burno poradova kad Pilat naredi da puste Barabu. Zatim naredi da mu donesu zdjelicu s vodom, uze vodu te opru ruke pred svjetinom, govoreći: "Nevin sam od krvi ovog pravednika. Vi ste odlučili da treba umrijeti, ali ja u njemu ne nađoh nikakve krivnje. To je vaša stvar. Neka ga odvedu vojnici." Nato sva svjetina radosno povika, "Krv njegova neka padne na nas i na našu djecu."