

in the high priest's house. They were afraid of the favor of the populace towards Jesus. *Pilate*. See *Light from the East*.

Vs. 2-5. *Pilate asked him*. John tells that the Jews would not enter the palace, and that Pilate took his place outside on a judgment seat placed on a pavement (Gabbatha), John 18 : 28 ; 19 : 13. His first question is, "What accusation bring ye?" John 18 : 29. Their reply (John 18 : 30, 31), and the accusations of Luke 23 : 2, give rise to the scornful question, *Art thou the King of the Jews?* "Can it be that a man like you is *King of the Jews?*" *Thou sayest*. Jesus claimed to be a King, though not in a sense hostile to the Roman power, as is shown by the conversation of John 18 : 34-38. At its close Pilate declares that he finds no fault worthy of death in Jesus, a testimony repeated by him three times (see v. 14 ; Luke 23 : 14). *Accused him of many things*. Besides His claiming to be a King, they charged Him with forbidding to pay tribute to Caesar, and stirring up the people. For the truth on these points see ch. 12 : 17 ; John 6 : 15. *He answered nothing*. He had explained in what sense He claimed to be King. As to the other charges, He was silent, because the facts of His life, of which Pilate was aware, were a sufficient answer. *Pilate marvelled*. This was a new kind of prisoner, and he must proceed carefully. At this point Jesus was sent to Herod, Luke 23 : 4-12.

II. The Demand of the Multitude, 6-11.

Vs. 6, 7. *Now at the feast* (Rev. Ver.). Evidently the Passover is meant. *He used to release* (Rev. Ver.) ; a custom not mentioned elsewhere and perhaps introduced by Pilate himself to win popular favor. *Whomsoever they asked of him* (Rev. Ver.) ; a poor method of justice. *Barabbas* ; not an uncommon name. It means either "son of a (distinguished) father," or "son of a Rabbi." *That had made insurrection*. The Jews would regard as a patriot one who had revolted against Rome. The insincerity of Jesus' accusers is shown by their demand for the release of one guilty of the very charges made against Jesus.

Vs. 8-11. *The multitude*. The people so far had made no attack on Jesus. *To do as he*

was wont to do (Rev. Ver.). They were asking for their privilege. *Pilate answered* ; hoping thus to find a way out of the difficulty, increased by hearing of his wife's dream, Matt. 27 : 19. *King of the Jews*. This shows how harmless he thought Jesus was. Whom better could they want? (Compare ch. 11 : 9, 10). *Chief priests . . . for envy*. Jealousy of the popularity of Jesus was the real motive of the high priests. *The chief priests stirred up the people* (Rev. Ver.). Thus the priesthood were His murderers. They may have been helped by the people's disappointment at what seemed to them Jesus' laying aside of the Kingship assumed at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

III. The Consent of Pilate, 12-15.

Vs. 12-15. *Pilate answered*. He wished to get at the real feeling of the people, for he was more afraid of a riot than anything else. *What then shall I do* (Rev. Ver.)? for He is guiltless. *Whom ye call* ; reminding them of their recent enthusiasm for Jesus, and hoping to awaken their pity. *Crucify him* ; mob-rule demanding the death of the Prisoner without reasons, without proof. Still the Roman judge hesitates. *Cried out the more exceedingly*. Mob passions are aflame. Jesus is their victim. John 19 : 1-12, gives a fuller record of what happened next. *Willing to content the people*. This is the injustice of the trial. Pilate allowed envious priests and a clamorous mob to wring from him the condemnation of an innocent man. *Released Barabbas . . . delivered Jesus*. What a melancholy climax! *Scourged* ; with the loaded thongs of the Roman scourge, a customary preliminary to crucifixion.

Light from the East

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PILATE.—Archelaus, tetrarch of Judæa, Samaria and Idumæa, was deposed for tyranny in A.D. 6 and his territory made an imperial province under procurators, of whom Pontius Pilate was fifth. His term began in A.D. 26, about the time of the ministry of John the Baptist, and continued for ten years, that is, through the ministry of Jesus and the establishment of Christianity in Judæa. His official residence was in