

## Barabbas or Jesus

[Neville Goddard 1963 Lecture Series]

Tonight's subject is "Barabbas or Jesus." This is the greatest trial that ever took place in eternity. You have read of trials in countries where billions are involved. It means nothing compared to this trial. This is the greatest of all trials. When we read the Scriptures, we find things like the raising of Lazarus, which is the most fantastic thing you can imagine. A man who was dead for four days and his sister said: "By this time there is an odor," and he raises Lazarus, and yet only one Evangelist records it – only John tells the story. Matthew, Mark, and Luke do not mention the story of Lazarus. How could you tell the story of a man in this world who could raise someone who had decayed and bring him back to life, as we understand life, and not tell it as part of his biography? I could take you through the many stories and show you that one story is told by two, and sometimes three, and only by one, but here, in this story of the trial, all mention it. It has tremendous significance. The story of the greatest trial that ever took place in eternity.

May I tell you: it is taking place here tonight and you are the witnesses. You are the ones who will either cry out for the release of one or the other. It is entirely up to you, for this is the story; it must take place in this manner. The supreme effort of God to reveal Himself in the present tense was the coming of Jesus. Jesus came to reveal God as the eternal contemporary. That is the trial. One believes it, or they disbelieve it. But here is this supreme effort to reveal Himself in the present tense – for the present tense is "I AM," – that is my name forever. I have no other name.

Let us turn to John 18:38-40. Here a man is on trial. He knows who he is, for he has had all the experiences to reveal the being he is – sent into the world to tell the world who he is and to tell them who they are, for they are one. He is brought to trial, and Pilate – the arm of Caesar – is trying him. And Pilate said to him: "What is truth?" but he does not reply – he does not answer. Pilate said to the crowd: "I find no crime in him. But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover; will you have me release for you the King of the Jews?" They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

"Barabbas was a robber." That is all it states. "Not this man, release Barabbas." Well, here is the trial. Who is Barabbas? He is only mentioned in one little statement in the four Gospels. It is very significant. To find out who Barabbas was, let us find out who the thief and the robber are in Scripture. We go back to John 10:1: "*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.*" They did not understand it. He said to them: "*I am the door of the sheep*" [John 10:7]. There is no other way into this sheepfold.

Now you present the case to the world. Will you believe it? Will you believe as you are seated here tonight, regardless of your present limitations, that the only door into your success, into your future as you would conceive it or desire it to be, there is only one door, and that door is "I AM"? There is no other door into that sheepfold? And if you go through that only door, the sheep will hear your voice, they will recognize your voice as the shepherd and will respond and come out? I would like to be healthy if I am unwell at the moment. I would like to be

gainfully employed if I am unemployed. I would like to be [inaudible] you name it – to be happily married. I name all the things that I think would constitute a lovely life in your world. Do I really believe there is only one door into that sheepfold where I could bring all these unseen things out into my world? And these things could only respond to the voice of the shepherd – and the shepherd is “I AM”?

And so, he asked the crowd, and they shouted out: “Release Barabbas.” They would not have Jesus released – they would have none of it. So, they chose the robber, and the robber rules over them to this very day. That is the world. I chose the robber. My senses rob me of all that I could be. I see my bank balance – and I know the world as my senses allow it. I know what reason dictates in my world, and yet I want to be other than what they dictate. Yet I can’t bring myself to believe the only way into that sheepfold is by the only door in the world, and the only door is “I AM.”

So, here Jesus comes to reveal God in the present tense, and man refuses it. They speak of God in the past – “He was” or “He will be,” but few people in the world can believe in the reality of “I AM,” and that is the great trial, and you are on trial tonight because you are asked the question: “Will you believe that your own wonderful I AM-ness is the one and only God?” Or: “Do you believe, because of your present social, intellectual, or financial position, that you are less than someone else?” and you allow your reason to dictate this as something that is final? Can you believe tonight in this trial and really believe that I am [inaudible] and you name it [inaudible] and dare to believe it?

I could tell you unnumbered stories where it has worked – if people would believe me. In this audience tonight, there sits a man – only a few weeks ago he was let out of a job. I told him it would make no difference to me if he was let out and they told him it was forever, that it was permanent – that I would hear good news for him, good news. So, I heard exactly what he would tell me, were it true, and tonight, just before I took the platform, he told me he has been transferred to a new job where his income is in excess of what it was before. All things being relative, when you make \$13,000 on a job, that is not hay. Yet, it could be \$100,000, and I am telling you right now I don’t care what he has ever done in the world today exceeding \$13,000; it could easily be, if that is what he wants.

There is only one door into the sheepfold and that door is “I AM.” The supreme effort that God ever made to reveal Himself to us in the present tense came through Jesus. Jesus comes affirming God as the eternal contemporary, forever and forever. If tomorrow you have a child or a grandchild, they are going to say, “I AM.” It is contemporary – forever contemporary, and eternally contemporary. It wasn’t that he was – it is always “I AM.” And so, for one to declare, “I am” – and simply name it and sleep as though it were true – there is no power in the world that could stop it.

Now, this is one level to this fantastic trial. There are numberless levels to this trial. First of all, the word “Barabbas” means “son of a father.” Jesus means “savior.” For every child born of a woman is the child of a father. “Bat” usually means “daughter” and “bar” means “son.” They are interchangeable depending on the context. Barabbas is now known as “son of a father.” And they chose the son and denied – it does not say the father, but I will show you how they

denied the father, for Jesus said in the same Gospel of John: *“When you see me you see the father. How could you say, show us the father? He who has seen me has seen the father.”* So, he declares *“I am the father”* [John 14:6-9]. *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.”*... Philip said to him, *‘Lord show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied.’* Jesus said to him, *‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father.’”*

Now they deny the father to fulfill a prophecy. [John 16:2-3] *“They will put you out of the synagogues; indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do this because they have not known the Father, nor me.”* For there is a prophecy that when a son destroys the enemy of Israel, the Lord will set his father free. They didn’t choose the father to set him free – they set the son free. The one that is robbing them morning, noon, and night, they set free. (This I am quoting from 1 Samuel 17:25.) *“And the men of Israel said, ‘Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely, he has come up to defy Israel and the man who kills him, the king will enrich with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father’s house free in Israel.’”* The father of one who destroys the enemy. His name is “I AM,” called “Jesse.” The word Jesse, the word Jehovah, the word Jesus – are identical in meaning. They mean simply “I AM.” I will set that being free – and his name is “I AM.”

Now, if tonight you could do what dozens or hundreds of you have done and believe this is not a little trick – it always works – and really believe in it, you would believe in God. When a lady sits in this audience and is in her seventies and has no money and dares to sleep in a home in need of repairs; and she looks at the unrepaired, unpainted house and she could smell paint and could see the whole thing as it would be seen were it true that things were exactly as she wants it to be, and she sleeps in that assumption – what is she actually saying? If I said to her: “Who is smelling anything?” she would say, “I am smelling paint.” “What are you seeing?” “I am seeing a repaired house.” “What else?” “I am seeing that the whole thing has been paid for.” She falls asleep in the assumption of seeing from her own wonderful center – I am seeing it – I am smelling the paint – all these things she is doing and in one month it was all repaired and painted and paid for, with a surplus of \$7,000 – a gift from one she had never seen in this world – only communicated with her two or three times in the course of a year. Here, she saw it.

Her story I told in my latest book. She may have even forgotten the name of God. Who did it? She may point across the water to a lady in England, 8,000 miles away, who died and left a certain will where she received \$7,500 in U.S. currency, which allowed her to do all these things with something left over. She might think the cause of it all was one who died – and I tell you the cause of it was: she called on the only name of God in this world. She went into a sheepfold through the only door in the world, and that door is “I am.” She fell asleep in her bed, but before she fell asleep, she saw and could smell paint and she saw the repaired areas all painted over and felt herself giving a check in full payment for all the work done. Because it was fun, she did it for nine or ten days and then came this wonderful draft from England and a letter from Lloyds Bank telling her of the story. She entered the sheepfold and they all heard her voice and they all came out. The sheep happened to be the money. Everything in the world responded to her voice. She was calling them out – she was calling out paint, calling out the

repair job, calling out everything. They only responded to the voice of the shepherd. Who is the shepherd? "I AM" the shepherd. There is no other shepherd. If you think he will shepherd you, and put your trust in our president (or our mayor, or our governor, or your father or mother or some uncle who is about to die, and you are now giving the most marvelous meal in the world because you think he is going to leave you in his will, so he is your shepherd, and all these you think are the shepherd) you are simply looking in vain. There is no other shepherd and no other door into eternity save the one door, and that one door is "I AM."

Here is the greatest trial that ever took place in eternity and you are called upon to scream out the one you want released; and the world invariably screams out (but not all, there is always that minority who will scream out, "Release Jesus") but the majority will scream out, "Release Barabbas!" Release the robber! And so, they chose the robber, and throughout the centuries the robber has ruled over them right down to this day. You and I will go to bed tonight and our senses will dictate what we ought to believe to be true in this world.

Read this morning's paper and ninety-nine percent, including the ads, were all paid for. And if it is something you like, you will buy it. It is perfectly all right. It has been paid for and you know it. But you don't know all the news items were paid for also. That has been concealed. They are all paid for. All the press agents all over the world – there is not one who is in the public eye that does not maintain some press relationship, daily columns – not press agents. They have been glamorized into some name other than "press agents." But still, they take your money month after month and put these little items in the story and you read it morning, noon, and night and you believe that to be true. I tell you: forget the entire vast world and ask yourself a simple, simple question: What would I like to be?

Look at the world. Forget Cuba, forget Russia, forget China, forget all this stuff that is going on in the world. What would I like to be? A decent, wonderful being that contributes to the good of the world? To be happily married? Yes – to be in this world and contribute to the good of the world – but really contribute, so that when I am gone and my children's children are gone, they will say: "He gave a thought to the world that has fed the world." The unborn tomorrow could be fed by what I have left behind me. Would I like to do that? At the same time not neglecting my obligations tonight, for I am married – there is a husband, a wife, a child, a father, a mother – all these things in the world, and I must, if I love them as I think I do, take care of them. And so, I want enough to leave them cushioned. Regardless of all things they did not need my cushioning, but maybe they didn't hear me, and I am selfish enough that if they did not hear me there is only one door in the world into the great kingdom – if I could still leave them a cushion so that they will be cushioned against tomorrow's blows. Then regardless of what the world tells me, I will assume tonight that I am what I desire to be and dare to fall asleep in the assumption as though it were true. I will actually believe in it. So, I will cast my vote: "Release Jesus" and hold on to Barabbas." Or else I will say: "Release Barabbas, and hold onto Jesus." And, so it is entirely up to us. I either believe it, or don't believe it. The one called Jesus – his name is "I AM."

Now let me quote from Galatians 4:13, 14: *"...and you know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus."* It is Paul

speaking. He says, when I came to you, I was a trial to you, yet you accepted me. And then one little phrase divides the thought. We will omit the phrase: "You did not scorn or despise me, but receive me as Christ Jesus." He is telling you who he is. You accepted him, now you are going to turn back like those in the desert who disbelieve. And then he said: "*You observe days, and months, and seasons, and years! I am afraid I have labored over you in vain.*" [Galatians 4:10].

Here we are in what is called "a season" – the Lenten Season – and then we have another season and another month. A few years ago, we had the Marian Year, and all this goes all the way back. "You observe days, and months, and seasons and years! I am afraid I have labored over you in vain." That man could turn outside of himself (and the whole thing has been revealed to him, who he really is) and believe in the sacredness of a certain day or a certain month, or season, or year! He is trying to tell the whole vast world who he is, and they received him as Jesus Christ.

There is only Christ; there is only Jesus. Jesus Christ is God, and so are you and so am I. If I believe it, I am it; even if I don't believe it, I am it. If I don't believe it then I go through all the fires of hell in this world. If I believe it, there is no being in this world that can stop me from sleeping this night in the assumption that I am the man that I would like to be, just as though it were true. I will bring it to pass in my world because I call all my sheep out and my sheep are the individual realities. No one sees them. They come right out and follow the voice of the shepherd whose voice they hear. They will not obey the voice of the stranger, only the voice of the shepherd. And the shepherd is "I AM."

So here is the greatest trial in the world and you are the one to judge. You sit as though you sat in a jury and you bring in your verdict. And he rises and asks those who hear the testimony – "It is customary" – and may I tell you there is no evidence as far back as man can go to support this claim. No scholar or historian can find any such custom where there was an amnesty at Passover, it is only attested to in scripture. So, you can see it is a play; it is a fantastic play, and here is the play and at every moment of time the play is taking place.

"It is your custom that I release to you one man. Would you have me release the King of the Jews?" – for he is the King of the Jews – and who is he? Jesus. Who is Jesus? "I AM." And so are you and so is every being in the world. That is Jesus and his name is "I AM." For the name is one with Jehovah. "I and my father are one," as told us in John 10:30: "I and the Father are one." I am one with him. What is his name? "I AM." There is no other way in, no other door – just one. And so, who will you have me release, the King of the Jews, whose name is "I AM," or release Barabbas, who is a robber? A man based purely on the sense of the body. "Release Barabbas!" So, they released the robber and he, to this day, rules them. For man cannot believe or is unwilling to believe, that something is real that his senses cannot confirm. He must have it confirmed by the senses. If reason allows it or my senses allow it, then I will accept it, but to sleep this night, when unemployed (and I know six million are unemployed and I am not as qualified, as I think they are looking for certain qualifications) and I dare to believe that I am gainfully employed, with more than I ever made before – and go to sleep as though it were true, in the conviction it is true – and then I am employed and it is beyond what I make?

When he told me tonight, I can't tell you my thrill. He will not be here because this takes him away a hundred-odd miles. I say to him: Good! Go and tell it. Tell it to those in your sphere. Tell it to everyone that you meet. If we never meet physically again, it does not really matter. I like him personally, he likes me personally, but the physical contact is not important. We are forever one in eternity, and so he can't get away from me and I can't get away from him. He heard the story and he knows it works. Now go and tell it.

So, here we are at every moment in time, called upon to pass judgment upon the eternal drama – the greatest trial that ever took place. God is on trial and he is presented to the world because the sense man is what he wears and so he presents it. Would you believe in me that you cannot see? For you can't see "I AM." You can see I am a man – that is the sense man. But man cannot believe in the reality of "I AM." Something entirely different.

So, here, this great trial will be presented this coming Sunday (called Palm Sunday) and they will all tell the story of how they placed the palms before him. If you have the Apocryphal Gospel, may I recommend that you read the Gospel of Nicodemus. It is called "Ulsa – one of the acts of Pilate." in fact the title is "Gospel of Nicodemus, or Acts of Pilate." What a fantastic story!

It is all about this trial. I think many of you have James' combination of all the apocryphal books. Why they delete them I will never know because they add so much to the thought. But here in this story of the great trial, when they placed the little piece of cloth before him as he came in to be tried, and all the standards and all the images bowed before him. They could not believe that this thing could happen. And they did it over and over and over again, every time he is brought in. Every inanimate object bowed before him as he came in the building on trial.

How true that is may I tell you? You will have the thrill of your life one day when suddenly the whole vast world is going to stand still before you and it will be dead – but really dead, and you will look at it and then you will release it and it will move on and you stop it to prove that you truly are life, and life itself. When you read these words: "I am the way, the Truth and the Life," you will know how true that statement is. When he said: "I am the Truth," can't you see what a marvelous thing he is telling us? A true judgment need not conform to the external fact to which it relates. Today I will say what is true concerning my world. Well, I pay so much rent and have an average income of so much, and I have obligations to life, and these seem to be the facts. That is true. I tell you: that is not true. A true judgment need not conform to the external facts to which it relates. Truth depends upon the intensity of imagining and not upon facts. So, I will imagine that I am and I name it, that which I want to be, and believing that I am that which I am assuming I am and remaining loyal to the assumption, I become it. I have done it, or I would not be here tonight.

I have actually done it, time and time again. But man will always slip back into Barabbas, the man of sense. He must ever remember the trial and always move out, in spite of all the facts that would deny it. Live in the dream just as though it were true, and no power in the world will stop you from becoming the fulfillment of your dream. But no power! You don't need any other

being, because God's name is not "he is," or "she is," or "they are." His name is "I AM." Before you say anything in this world you have to say: "I am." You don't pronounce it. But if I ask: "who are you?" you say: "John," but before you say John, you actually, in the depths of yourself, said: "I am John." Before you said anything you actually were aware of being, and that awareness of being was actually in the depths. I am. That is God. There is no other God.

So, God stands on trial and He will be tried in all the churches of Christendom this coming week, and they will all weep and carry on how God was tried. "And the crowds shouted out: 'Release the thief and the robber'" – one who was an insurrectionist, and they do not know who he is. They will make a mental picture of a horrible beast who was an awful, awful man. That is not the man at all. They are the man. For they are calling to release themselves of sense and make that the real being in the world, and hold on and deny Jesus. Listen to the words from Acts 16:31: "*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.*" The only Jesus that you could ever believe in that could save you, would be "I AM." That is His name. And He has only one name in this world. Jesus simply means, "I AM."

It is spelled yod he vau shin ayin. The root of the name Jehovah is Yod He Vau – the shin ayin put into the name of Jesus, which is Jeshua is for a definite purpose. Shin is made in three little prongs and it is called a consuming fire, a tooth that devours, that consumes. And ayin is an eye. Were it not for that in the name of Jesus I would have to accept as final everything that I see. But in the name of Jesus – which is called "Savior" – what I don't want I could consume. So, it is yod he vau shin ayin. So, the Yod He Vau is the root – that is Jehovah, that is God, that is what I am. But a shin is put into my name and so is an ayin. With a shin, I can just see the world. I don't like the way you look. Don't you feel well? No. Well, then I will consume it. I will see you as you ought to be seen by me and the world, and seen by yourself. Therefore, I actually see you differently. I am consuming what formerly you appeared to be.

And how do I do it? The ayin – it is an eye. So, what is his name when he comes into the world, and how does he operate? Listen to it carefully: When he comes into the world, "He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear." (Isaiah 11:3) So I see. I go to the hospital, you are dying. Go to see anyone else and you see him – it is fatal, regardless of the nature. They can't get [a] job – there are too many unemployed – this, that, and the other. There it is, the fact. I will not now judge "by what my eye sees, neither will I decide by what my ears hear." So, what will I do then? I will see what I want to see – then a shin is present. It consumes the former state; it completely consumes the past as it seems to be real, and I will put in its place what I want to see and what I want to hear.

So, they tried to quench the voice of Peter and John and they said what they would do to them if they continued to teach this story. And they said to the Sanhedrin, the great wise men of the day: "*Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge: for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard*" [Acts 4:19,20].

So, whether you think I should do what you tell me I should do – all right, you judge it. The wise men of the world – called the leaders in politics or religion – will tell you without vision what you should see and what you should preach. They had no vision – none whatsoever, never in eternity – but they are going to tell you how you should tell the story. So: "Whether it

is right in the eyes of God to listen to you, rather than to God, you must judge. We cannot preach other than what we have seen and heard.” I cannot preach other than what I have seen and heard.

And may I tell you: I have seen this story, and when you see it from afar – it is one man, just one man. As you approach it, it becomes unnumbered races and nations of people. I saw it as clearly one night when Blake asked me to fall backward and I did exactly what he told me to do to produce the vision. And here was one man, a glorious, radiant man. His heart was all like living rubies. I approached it and moved forward and I fell through space like a meteor. When I came to a standstill, here I saw one man, and then with Blake’s suggestion, I moved forward to this one man – a radiant being. As I came closer, I noticed the heart was like a ruby and there were unnumbered, innumerable beings making up the heart, and the whole body was made up of nations and races – the whole body. When I came close enough, I recognized myself. I was he, containing within myself the whole of humanity. I know from experience that when you see God, you will see yourself. At a distance, it is one man. As you approach it, it becomes unnumbered men composed of races and nations – all one.

And so, this whole vast thing is the most wonderful play, and the final drama leading up to that very exit from this sphere is this trial. I hope you will bring in your verdict tonight and your verdict will be: “Release Jesus.” But if your verdict is: No, I must accept my senses more than I will accept the invisible reality, then it is your choice. You are free to bring in your verdict. But your verdict will be brought by you. I can recommend the verdict, if you dare to believe in the reality of your own wonderful I Am-ness, believing that it is God and there is no other God. Listen to the words: *“For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I, I am the Lord, and besides me, there is no savior”* [Isaiah 43:3,11]. There is no other savior. I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel – thy savior – and besides me there is no savior. Believe that, and rather die than turn back, and you are moving toward being born from above.

Now let us go into the silence.

QUESTION: Is there a fixed guide?

ANSWER: Well, I believe all of us present here have a certain code of decency, and I would go along with it – but I would put into practice what I told you tonight. I would guide myself with my code of ethics. If you asked me tonight to join with you in knowing someone was dead for your good fortune, I could not. I would not deny you the right to want it, but I would say: go elsewhere. I could not actually dream with you that someone died because you were left in his will. But I would not deny you the right to want such a thing. I would leave it up to your judgment. We all have a certain code and I think anyone who would come to a meeting of this nature would have a code – a code of decency – that I would call a code of decency. I am always right if whenever I use my imagination, I use it lovingly on behalf of another. I am on the right track. So that, to me, would be the guide: is it a loving thing to do?

You have the wonderful statement in the Bible: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” It is the simplest code in the world – it is done in a positive manner. “Do” – not: “do not do.” (But it is written in the positive in the New Testament. In all other religions, it is written

in the negative.) “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” What would I like in this world? Something lovely, something wonderful? Well, do the same thing to anyone in the world and every time you use your imagination lovingly on behalf of another, you have done the right thing. Read Galatians 4:14 – that one little thought [in] which “as an angel,” is superfluous, because the next phrase is “as Christ Jesus.” But “as an angel” – it might stop right away. That is all inserted to cushion him because they actually saw him as the central being himself. He looked upon me as Christ Jesus, but if you put the little phrase before it, “as an angel,” that arrests the mind and you don’t associate Paul with Christ Jesus. I tell you: he was the one in whom the whole thing awoke. It was Paul. Everything has to come right out of the Jew. The world will not believe it. It is the most fantastic story in the world.

Now, Bishop Pike, who was born a Catholic and became a priest – he gave it up and became an agnostic; then became a most brilliant lawyer in New York City practicing corporate law. He then rejoined the church as a Protestant and rose in no time (he was only in his forties) to Bishop Pike of California. If you have ever heard him, he is an able speaker. He has a wonderful brilliant mind. Bishop Pike made the statement: “I am a Jew.” Remember, he was born and raised a Catholic, became a Catholic priest, gave it up then became an agnostic, became a lawyer, went back into the priesthood, this time a Protestant priest. Now he is the highest in the Protestant world. You can’t go beyond that. But he said: “I am a Jew because I am a Christian. I could be a Jew and not be a Christian, but I can’t be a Christian and not be a Jew.” You think about it. Meditate upon that thought. It is true. The whole thing comes out of Israel. It is a mystery, the most fantastic mystery in the world.

So, I am proud to say I am a Jew because I am a Christian. I have been born from above. I could not possibly be, unless I were a Jew. I know, when the veil is lifted and the whole thing is revealed – well, it is fantasy beyond the wildest dream!