

RESUME

This paper dwells on Saviour Christ's judgement, the event being seen from point of view of the evangelical texts and also from other points of view. After a brief, well-reasoned **introduction**, we realized a crestomathy of the christian and not christian documentary old manuscripts, in which tried to reflect God's trial, mirrored in historical, judicial or theological studies was done.

Among the Christian sources, the following ones are to be mentioned: "THE SAVIOUR'S TRIAL" by the lawyer John Fruma in co-operation with theology professor Grigore T. Marcu, "THE CAPTURE, THE TRIAL AND THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST" by magistrate Haim Cohn, the president of the Supreme Court of Israel, "JESUS"TRIAL" and "PONTIUS PILATE, JESUS JUDGE" by professor Mircea Dutu, "THE ILLEGAL TRIAL OF JESUS" by Earle L. Wingo, "THE SAVIOUR'S TRIAL IN THE LIGHT OF THE GREAT ARCHEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTS AND DISCOVERIES" by John Fruma, "THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS" by Shimon Gibson, "JERUSALEM, THE HISTORY OF A TOWN" by historian Simon Sebag Montefiore, "BIBLICAL ARCHEOLOGY" by Professor Doctor Dumitru Abrudan and Deacon Professor Doctor Emilian Cornitescu, Joseph and Augustin Lemann, "JEUS"TRIAL AND THE ANTICHRIST", Professor Doctor Vasile Gheorghiu, "THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW", and A.P. Lopuhin, "THE BIBLICAL HISTORY IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW RESEARCHES AND DISCOVERIES".

A modern vision of God's Christ's judgement is to be known from reference works such as: "JESUS-A BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE" by historian and theology professor Armand Puig, "JESUS CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR IN THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY GOSPELS", an ample Christ's monograph which is seconded by Natalie Manoilescu Dinu's comments or "EVERYDAY LIFE IN JESUS TIME" by professor doctor Mihai Valentin Vladimirescu.

Accredited editions of "THE NEW AND THE OLD TESTAMENT" were fundamental in our work and they helped us to study the events from a theological point of view. Both the canonical and not canonical gospels are very important to achieve a correct sequence of events which refers to the capture, the trial and the conviction of God. The evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and John gave us a valuable documentary work about this matter. On the other hand

"JACOB'S PROTO-GOSPEL", "THE GOSPEL OF TRUTH" offers us doubtless evidences about the facts which had happened.

Laconic references to the approached subject are present in not christian sources, which certify especially the historical existence of Jesus Christ. Josephus Flavius in his work "JEWS ANTIQUITIES", "THE RABINS'WRITINGS", the helenic and roman writings, "KORAN", the pagan authors (Tacit in "ANNALS" or Lucian from Samosata in "PEREGRINUS DEATH") remind us just the way in which Christ left this world, being crucified.

The presentation of **the general settings** of the events we speak about was done showing the historical, religious, social and political situation, showing the place and the time when Jesus was convicted. The saviour's trial took place during the 15th roman prefect of Iudeea province called Pontius Pilate, during the great priesthood of Caiapha's, Anna's son in law. At that time, many political and religious groups some of them adverse each others were known. Those who were hostile one to another, used to have controversial discussions, those polemics becoming later a real hatred for God Christ. The Scholars, the Pharisees, the Saducees, the Essenes, the Zealots were the performers on the social and political scene of the time.

The city where Jesus prayed in the temple from His childhood until His maturity, Jerusalem, where He celebrated the Feast Day of the Tents (John X, 22) or the Easter (John XII, 12) was to become the place of His unjust condemnation. Beyond Shedoron river, at Olives Mountain foot, in Ghetsemani garden, the roman soldiers and the members of the Sanhedrim had came and took Him under guard. He was escorted to the Upper Town and was brought first to the ex-bishop Anna, and second in front of the Sanhedrim leaded by Caiaphas. The magistrate prefect Pilate, will lead the official trial. Even though the opinions about the true date of the last events from Christ's earthly life are different, sometimes opposite one to another and other times complementary, having as a starting point the Rabin's tradition and the babylonian Talmud's text, we inter that God's capture and trial took place in the night of April the 7th. The day started at sunset, according to the jew's calendar.

A new chapter of the paper dwells on the **confronting between Jesus and the spiritual leaders of the jew people**. Our Saviour's altercations with the Pharisees and the Scholars are not based on the arguments of the Old Law, which Christ came to achieve, not to destroy: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I came not to abolish, but to enforce it" (Matthew V, 17).

The polemic is based on Jesus's reproaches for their fraud, cupidity, hypocrite acrulousness, rigidity, pride and obstinacy. Jesus is not a tipical person, as He dispels the rigid preconceived ideas, the hypocrisy of formal observing of some rules, without searching for any inner correspondence.

Jesus became a threatening, as He preached the Law of love. The harsh criticism of the narrow formalism, made angry the ones who used to put in into practice. The Pharisees are faced out many times by Christ. They themselves, the terrible "Domini canes" of their time, were appreciated the Law, not the spirit. The malicious, debauched people are criticised, admonished, ironised, blamed, contradicted. Even though they demand a sign from Jesus, they did not get it. But they heard some suggestive parables which admonished them, and they were answered in a symbolic mode, but in a severe one about their passions.

The abuses and the greed of the priests and of the old men are not tolerated at all. The harshness shown by these people contrasts with their moral, their character and their debased behavior. As Jesus chased the merchants from the temple, He clearly undermined the priests aristocracy's authority and made them vulnerable in people's presence. The Herodees and the Saducees try to tempt Christ and to make Him say wrong words (the money for the tax, the marriage custom in the Old Law). As they were angry and full of hatred, as they couldn't recognize their mistakes, the jews leaders had a council and they decided to catch and kill Jesus.

The council and the decision took by the social elite of that time, God's Christ's enemies is presented. The one who preached love and forgiveness, recovered blind, deaf or dumb persons, recovered legless persons, the one who made men raise from the dead, who spoke in the temple, was pursued by the leaders of the Sanhedrim who were to find the fulfillment of their diabolic thought in Juda.

Christ knew what was to happen to Him. He tells all these precisely for many times to His disciples and not only to them. The disciples do not want and cannot understand what their teacher said to them. Peter urges Him to have pity on Himself: "And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying: *God forbid it, Lord! This should never happen to You!*" (Matthew XVI, 22). Jesus's predictions will be useful for the apostles when they are without Him, when they are in danger to be misled: "I have said these things to you to keep you from stumbling. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, a time is coming, when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God and they will do this because they have not known the Father or Me. But I have said these things to you so that when their time comes, you may remember that I told you about them" (John XVI, 1-4). Christ anticipated also who is the one who will sell Him. In the 4th chapter of his paper, Juda was presented the traitor and God's seller. One of the 12th apostles called to follow Christ, he will sell Him because of his passion for money, because of his greed and miserly soul. As he cannot serve both God and Mamona, he sacrifices the essential eternal things for almost nothing, for some passing things. As he was caught in Satan's nets, he became the instrument of Jesus capture and death. His betraying is deliberate, that's why his guilt is even bigger. Mostly because he did not take into account Jesus' efforts to help him to

remain His apostle, sometimes warning him and sometimes calling him "friend". He is not capable to surpass his despair, which makes him commit suicide.

Jesus' capture in Ghetsemani Garden follows. The Scholars, the leaders of the temple, the old men, the elite of the Pharisees and also the Roman soldiers were present at this event. They came with lamps and weapons. As He was sold, being hypocritical kissed, Jesus does not try to urges the apostles to leave, emphasizing that the moment represents the darkness kingdom: "When I was with you, day after day, in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me. But this is your time, and the power of darkness" (Luke XXII, 53).

His first hearing, an illegal one, took place in front of the ex-bishop Anna. Anna was an old man, who had a great prestige and authority in the Sanhedrim. He was the leader in a honorary way, still being the leader of the bishop and Saducees after 15 years from the date the Roman dismissed him. His meeting with Jesus took place towards night, in secret, infringing the jew's law. He hit Christ, even though such an attitude was also illegal but he did not get any answer or come to any result, as he wished. During this hearing, Peter denies Christ for three times and then his eyes looked in Jesus's eyes.

A new chapter, the 5th one, shows the development of God's trail and the Sanhedrim council. The ones who accused Jesus were full of formalism and tried hard to find something to condamne Him to death. First, **the members of Sanhedrim** are presented. Some of the names of those members, who lived in Jesus's time are known. While Jesus was judged, the Great Sanhedrim had not the right to decide a persons's death. It will get only later this right. "Jus gladi" was the Roman's right at that time. The roman leader in Jerusalem was Pontius Pilate.

Christ's enemies in order to condemn Him, they invented incriminating questions, they used lousy tricks. The Pharisees, the Saducees, the Scholars, jew's aristocracy tried many times to make Jesus commit some mistakes, not observing the Roman law, so that to be condemned, but they did not succeed, anyway.

That's why they decided to have a meeting of **the jew's Supreme Court**. As they saw that any of their endeavour was in vain, they decided to discuss and to put their plans together in an ultimate decision, the final verdict to be successfully implemented. The Sanhedrim was convoked at the Great Priest's place while Jesus was in Bethania, after Lazarus raising from the dead. That meeting was leaded by Caiaphas and they searched a way to kill Christ. The Pharisees and the Herodees became friends to put in practice the awful crime.

We considered to be relevant to present Caiaphas as an exponent of those who hated Jesus the most. A great strategist and a competent diplomat, the leader of the religious aristocracy for 15 years at Jesus capture time, he used to bribe the Roman governors by giving them astronomical fortunes, so that not to be dismissed. He was not loved by people and that is why he was afraid

when Christ was adulated by crowds. He felt an imminent danger, hard to be avoided, which hanged over his authority and position. That is why he decided to kill Jesus.

The **Saviour's trail in front of the jews** took place at night, with a false interrogatory, with hypocritical questions, which had a political background. Caiaphas spoke about Christ's Person and wanted to accuse him of being king usurper. The witness depositions are not the same about the temple event, so that they tried to accuse Him for blasphemy. Christ, who had predicted all these, answers very rarely to any question. He confirms some words of those who accuse Him or stays quiet. He urges them to ask those who had heard His words or had seen His miracles. He asks, in a delicate way, for His right to have witnesses. The legless, blind, dumb persons, the paralytics, which were recovered by Him should come. The children whom He rose from the death and poor men full of hope should come. They were able to answer to any question of those who accused Christ. They can say if He was Messiah or not. At the end of this chapter are presented the events from the point of view of the four evangelists, with more or less information which is real, as they are the same.

The Saviour Jesus Christ's trail in front of Pontius Pilate is presented. His meeting with the Roman high official took place in the morning after the night when the jew's council had met. Jesus arrived in front of him with a final verdict signed by the Sanhedrim members. The death, the crucifixion could not be put into practice by other persons than the Roman Procurator and they wished it to be done immediately. The accusations of blasphemy because He wanted to pull down the temple are replaced with those of "lezmajeste", as He considered Himself a king. The jews show Christ as a political leader so that Pilate should condemn Him. The old men, the bishops, and the scholars took Jesus with His arms tied in praetorium, near Antonia fortress. The jews did not come inside so that not to make their bodies impure. They saw again only the letter and not the spirit of law. They killed an unguilty man, but they felt pure, as they did not go inside the praetorium.

It was very important for us to present Pilate's function rights. So, we made a description of the Roman prefect of Judea Province. Very proud when he became prefect, he put flags with emperor Tiberius bust in Jerusalem and he violated the jew's religious law. He wanted to show his authority and to gain respect this way. As he was provoking and intransigent, he was not loved by people, especially because he abused and took money from the temple. He will be dismissed after 11 years, at the beginning of Caligula's leadership, as the Samaria inhabitants demanded. When he was to judge Jesus, the jews trusted his lack of tact and diplomacy, as they knew his instincts hard to be mastered.

The first part of the Roman trial took place on Friday, April the 7th in the year 30 after Christ or on 14th Nisan, the day before jews' Easter, in the year 3790 before Christ. In this trial, the

questions were asked in latin, the official language of the Romans. Pilate expressed his conception against the jews and he said he did not find any reason to condemn Jesus to death. As He was guilty for many things, "As His enemies said, the ones who were from His people, God Christ was defended by the pagan, Roman leader, who said: I do not find any guilt for Him" (John XVIII, 38). The trial before Pilate and God's first interrogatory are very interestingly presented in uncanonical Gospels, as that one wrote by Nicodemus.

Christ is send to Herod Antipa by Pilate, so that the Roman procurator to rehabilitate his relationship with the jews leader. Herod Antipa and his companions were in the Hasmonee Palace. There he met Jesus, whom he had wanted to see for a long time so that to show him a miracle. Herod Antipa was called "fox" some time ago by Jesus and he did not find any answer or see any sign made by Christ. He had a debauched life, an existence full of extravagances, he took big taxes from people and he was an adulterine man, having his sister in law as wife. They were condemned by Saint John, the Baptistry. He wanted to get new estates from the emperor Tiberius, but he got the exile to Lugdunum, in Galia. Jesus used this time the same "silentium triumphale" about which Saint Ambrozie of Milan spoke and this wound Herod's vain glory and made him violent and ironical. The meanness of his soul cannot be expressed in other way than by humiliating gestures and words addressed to Christ. Instead of a final verdict, he sent Jesus back to Pilate in a white cloth, which means His innocence.

The dream of Claudia Procla, Pilate's wife, showed Jesus's innocence too. The Romans believed that especially in the dreams at the break of the day, the God's spoke to their chosen persons. That's why his wife's message frightened Pilate, who tried doing all his best to let Jesus free. But **the second interrogatory** in front of Pilate will be done under the influence of jews which were full of anger and angry, wounded in their satanic pride and in their pious mask over their faces. Even if Pilate tried to let Jesus free, the prefect was to be defeated by his own desire of power. As he was afraid not to be accused that he was not Cesar's friend, he condemned Jesus to be crucified. He washed his hands and put the entire guilt for the horrible crime on the shoulders of present jews and of their families.

As a conclusion, we see God, Jesus Christ's judgment as a real and painful happening, especially because the Jewish leaders desired it: "The high priests tore his clothes and said: *He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard His blasphemy. What is your verdict?* They answered: *He deserves death!* Then, they spat in His face and struck Him, and some slapped Him saying: *Prophecy to us, you, Messiah! Who is it that struck you?*" (Matthew XXVI, 65-68)

The Roman influent persons from Judea tried to convince the Jews not to kill Jesus. Pilate asked the priests about Jesus: "What evil has He done?" (Matthew XXVII, 23), and seeing that he

could not make them release Him, that "he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying: *I am innocent of this man blood; see to it yourselves!* Then the people, as a whole, answered: *May His blood be on us and on our children!* [...] and after flogging Jesus, he handed Him over to be crucified" (Matthew XXVII, 24-26)

The last chapter, the 7th, shows the end of the trial and **the inexorable sentence**, the awful murdering of God. This chapter starts with the presentation of the sentence and then it is shown how it was implemented. With the sentence written on a piece of wood hanger over His chest, or kept by another person in front of Him, Jesus walked on Golgotha. Some Roman soldiers together with the angry crowd, the jews, the guard of the temple, the members of the Sanhedrim, the bishop, the Scholars and the old men were there. Curious persons or the ones who were not afraid to weep for Him, mostly women, followed Him too. Jesus told the ones who were mourning for Him to mourn for themselves and for their children. He suffered more because of the wounds of His enemies then because of His own bloody wounds, more than for the unjust insults He received.

The only consolation He got from men was a sponge with vinegar. His cloth were drawn lots, as the prophets said, the members of the Sanhedrim looked at Him full of anger. A hurry anger, as the Saturday was to come and they had to be ready for the Easter. Jesus prayed, He called Father, to which He said about His thirst for our savior and asked Him not to let Him alone. On the foul Golgotha, with the spikes in His hands, mocked on and invited to come down the Cross by satanic voices, Christ heard a balmy word from a thief who was also crucified. A thief who reached the heaven this way. Jesus agony lasted until 3 o'clock P.M., then He entrusted Himself to Father's power: "Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: *Father, into Your hands, I commend My spirit!* Having said this, He breathed His last" (Luke XXIII, 46).

Joseph from Arimathea asked for God's Body to bury Him. He went to Pilate, became impure, as he went inside the Pretorium and as he buried Jesus. He gave up eating the Easter lamb. He was helped by Nicodemus. The two jews recognize they were Jesus's disciples. The guard near the tomb dug into the stone was present in vain. God's raise from the death, a fact that unlocked the hell was undoubtable. Christ joined with us, the human persons, and that's why Pilate said in the Pretorium: "Ecce homo!". The communion between God and man took place on the cross, so that human persons may become saints.

This things was made possible through Jesus' accepting the insults and the pain, the crown of thorns, the spit, the spikes, the reproaches of jews, the elite persons from the temple, the winners, who defended the Law and also the insults of the thief on His left side. If Jesus had not accepted willingly all these, our human nature could not have been sanctified, the hell would not have been defeated and the eternal death would have been our destiny.

Jesus Christ followed His Father's wish and offered Himself through patience and perfect love as a price for sinful human being. He also offered Himself as an earnest for God creation's reconciliation with its Creator.

Jesus Christ is aware of His salvation mission and that is why He went voluntarily to Golgotha, knowing exactly what was to happen and telling all these many times to His disciples. He hesitated as a man in Gethsemane Garden. But he also prayed His Father, as a Lord: "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me: yet, not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke XXII, 42).

He accepted freely to be humiliated; he accepted freely the pain and the sufferance: He was "obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Philippians II, 8).

This way, He redeemed the humanity from the slavery of sin: "He looked up to heaven and said: *"Father, the hour has come: glorify Your Son, so that the Son may glorify You, since You have given Him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I glorified You on earth by finishing the work that You gave Me to do. So, now, Father, glorify Me in Your own presence, with the glory that I had in Your presence before the world existed"*" (John XVII, 1-5).

Jesus' trial and the unjust death sentence show us God's love for the world He created: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him, may not perish, but may have eternal life" (John III, 16).

We know that the Son of Man "came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew XX, 28). Isaiah, the prophet, said that Messiah would redeem the humanity through His sacrifice: "yet it was the will of the Lord to crush Him with pain. When you make His life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days: through him, the will of the Lord shall prosper. Out of his anguish, he shall see light: he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah LXXXIV, 10-12).

Messiah suffered for us, offering us an example so that we should follow his steps. "He committed no sin and no deceit was found in His mouth. When He was abused, He did not return abuse. When He suffered, He did not threaten, but He entrusted Himself to the one who judges justly. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by His wounds, you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls" (I Peter II, 22-25).

Lord, Jesus Christ understood that His life and His sufferings are the only way of escaping the world from death. He told this to His disciples many times: "The Son of man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed and after three days rise again. [...] The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill Him, and three days after being killed, He will rise again. [...] The Son of man will be handed over the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn Him to death; than they will hand Him over the Gentiles, they will mock Him and spit upon Him, and flog Him, and kill Him. And after three days, He will rise again" (Mark VIII, 31; IX, 31; X, 33).

Jesus Christ's judgment was only a stage in the history of man's salvation, and His suffering was necessary for our resurrection: "The tombs also were opened and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After His resurrection, they come out of the tombs, and entered the holy city and appeared to many" (Matthew XXVII, 52-53).

All mockery, derision, meekness and shame that Jesus suffered, became the price paid for of our redemption. His unjust trial is only the way of our freedom. His unjust judgment was the beginning of our justice, the first step of our way to heaven. The Gospels offer us many pieces of information about His catching, His trial and His death. This narrations are many more than those about Jesus' childhood or youth.

All these are very important for our salvation. That is why it they spoke about Christ's life period of in many chapters of the *Bible*.

By reading and studying all these, we should conclude that our life is to resemble Jesus' life. We should suffer unjust blames many times, we should accept pain and humility from our fellows and we should endure all the difficulties we face with in our life. If we accept these happenings and keep praying and loving the one who hurt us, we will inherit God's kingdom in Heaven.