

# The Pilate Inscription

By Kathy Applebee

Content area: Archeology, ancient history, New Testament studies and proofs, Jesus death and burial

Recommended Ages/ target audience: Any

Ideal Group Size: 4 to 10

Suggested Time: 10 minutes introduction, 60 minutes playing time, additional time for debriefing activities

STORY: Apollyon, a not-so-secret organization dedicated to the destruction of belief in God has targeted the Pilate Inscription. Several nights ago they approached museum curator Artie Phact and offered an undisclosed sum of money if Professor Phact would smuggle the Pilate Inscription out of the museum and into their hands for destruction. Phact refused.

The following night, an attempted break in occurred at the museum but the burglars were thwarted by night watchman Justin Thyme. Professor Phact, fearing for the Pilate Inscription, switched out the real stone tablet fragment with a duplicate and brought the actual artifact home, hid it and locked it away.

Apollyon somehow discovered the switch, reported the "theft" and pointed the finger at Professor Phact. Phact is being interrogated by the police. His one phone call, to you (but monitored by agents of Apollyon that have infiltrated the PD), circumloquaciously revealed the following:

Apollyon plants in the PD will have a search warrant and be at his house in an hour. They plan to take the Pilate Inscription and destroy it.

He cannot tell you directly how to find and access the artifact. You must use clues in his study to figure out where the inscription is hidden and get it out of there before Apollyon arrives.

LOCKS, KEYS, BOXES, etc. NEEDED

4 regular type locks with keys

2 Break Outboxes and 1 other box or lockable drawer

1 or more NIV Bibles

1 UV flashlight finder

1 set of clues from the clues .PDF

LOCK COMBINATIONS: What codes will open the locks on the box?

**5 letter lock** Truth (common word in the five John scriptures on the "Johns" or Porta-potties)

**3 number combo** 2 1 0 (X II on the clock)

**4 number combo** 3 0 7 5 (30 from Matthew 27:9 and 75 from John 19:39)

**4 color lock** red (Scarlet circled in Matthew 27:28), green (circled in Luke 23:31) purple (Pilate's clothing in picture), Blue (Jesus clothing in picture)

REGULAR TYPE KEYS hidden in the following places

1. 4 keys hidden in the following passages in a Bible: Matthew 27 (the words "30" and "scarlet" are circled with ultraviolet pen), Mark 15, Luke 23 (the word "green" is circled with ultraviolet pen in verse 31), John 19 (the word "75" is circled in verse 39 with an ultraviolet pen)

## Setup Instructions:

1. Place either the picture of the Pilate Inscription (or a tile or flat rock you have plastered over and inscribed to match the photo) into the small breakout box. Lock with the 4 color lock.
2. Print and cut apart the clues in the .PDF, marking with ultraviolet pen as indicated on answer key portions
3. Place the small Breakout box in the large Breakout box and lock with the 6 lock hasp. Lock with the 4 letter lock, 4 number combo lock and the 4 regular locks that correspond with the keys hidden in the Bible.
4. Lock the UV flashlight finder in a lockable box or drawer (NOT a Breakout box) and lock with 3 number combo lock.
5. Hide and fasten the 4 keys to regular locks inside a Bible (or use multiple Bibles, one key per Bible) at following passages:
  - a. Matthew 27 (the words "30" and "scarlet" are circled with ultraviolet pen),
  - b. Mark 15,
  - c. Luke 23 (the word "green" is circled with ultraviolet pen in verse 31),
  - d. John 19 (the word 75 is circled with an ultraviolet pen)

## HINT

If players need a hint to start looking in the Bible(s) give them or have them find the "clue coordinate grid".

## OPTION:

For more advanced or larger groups, a 2 harder clue option is included.

## Reflection Questions:

1. How would the destruction of the Pilate Inscription affect the veracity of the Bible? People's opinions of the veracity of the Bible?
2. What would it take to convince you or a friend that the Bible is truly the inspired word of God?
3. What does Apollyon mean or signify in Revelation 19:11
4. The Pilate Inscription was found on a damaged block (82 cm x 65 cm) of carved limestone with a partially intact inscription attributed to, and mentioning, Pontius Pilate, a prefect of the Roman province of Judaea from AD 26-36. It was discovered at the archaeological site of Caesarea Maritima in 1961 and is currently housed in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Who might actually want to see this destroyed and why?
5. From the passages where the keys were found, what kind of man was Pilate?

Tags or Keywords: Bible, New Testament, Pilate, Jesus, Rome, archeology, ancient history, Jesus death and burial, Easter