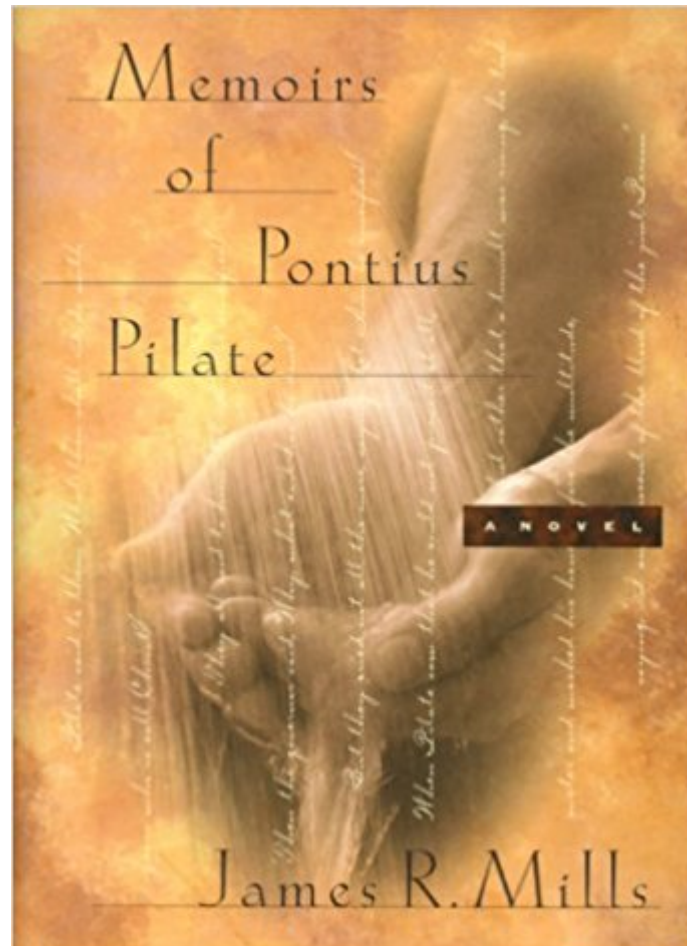




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# Memoirs Of Pontius Pilate



## Synopsis

It's been thirty years since he sentenced the troublemaker to die, but Pontius Pilate can't get Jesus out of his mind. . . . Forced to live out his life in exile, Pontius Pilate, the former governor of Judea, is now haunted by the executions that were carried out on his orders. The life and death of a particular carpenter from Nazareth lay heavily on his mind. With years of solitude stretched out before him, Pilate sets out to uncover all he can about Jesus—his birth, boyhood, ministry, and the struggles that led to his crucifixion. With unexpected wit and candor, Pilate reveals a unique, compelling picture of Jesus that only one of his enemies could give. In a vibrant, inventive, completely engaging novel that places Jesus and his teachings in a wonderfully accurate historical setting, James R. Mills has created nothing less than a new gospel that illuminates the beginnings of Christianity from an astonishing and unexpected point of view. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Thirty years after the death of Jesus of Nazareth, an exiled Pontius Pilate compiles his memoirs into a history of the Jewish faith and the rise of Christianity. He contemplates his role in sentencing Jesus to death by crucifixion and puzzles at the rapid spread of the teachings of that simple man. A true politician, he denies any blame for his part in Jesus' final hours. Instead, he lays the blame at the feet of the crowd who cried for Barabbas to be released and at the feet of the temple officials who called for his trial. Subtly, Pilate's fascination with Jesus and his teachings gives life to his recital, and glimpses of Pilate's own thoughts and feelings surface. Mills's (Gospel According to Pontius Pilate) expertise with his subject provides unexpected depth to this intriguing glimpse at a

man vilified for his place in history. Recommended for all collections. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

(For James Mills's previous historical fiction) A major achievement in the field of historical explanation -- The Church News(For James Mills's previous historical fiction) An exceptionally interesting book, its conclusions applicable today, though rooted in events which happened 2,000 years ago -- The Star-News(For James Mills's previous historical fiction) Has the quality of real experience, subtly conveyed. It is well worth your attention -- Los Angeles TimesThirty years after ordering Jesus' crucifixion, Pontius Pilate presents his version of the story. He narrates many of the events found in the Gospels but contextualizes them in contemporary Jewish and Roman politics. Pilate reveals his skepticism as well as his grudging admiration for the "King of the Jews." The former Roman governor relates his power struggles with the Jewish citizens under his control, his reluctance to be manipulated into crucifying Jesus, and his attempts to throw the responsibility back onto the Jewish leaders. He agonizes over the political problems of simply releasing Jesus and tells of his ultimate decision to order the death. The novel's strength is its historical detail. -- CBA Marketplace, January 2000

This has to be the dulllest book I have ever read. Nothing more than a rehashing of the New Testament. Very little to do with Pilate. Very little story and what there is, isn't told well. How did this get published?

This book is a great read and very clever. Its history told from the perspective of Pontius Pilate and it reflects upon what he thought would be important for those in the future to understand. I happen to have known Jim Mills when he was a Senator, so this book was even more enjoyable. Jim is a person of intelligence and good character and it was great imagining his voice telling the story.

After reading the scathing review from the New York contributor - - I really wanted to like this book. Particularly after reading the heartfelt origin(s) of the book that the author shared in the review he had submitted. I couldn't bring myself to it once I began reading it. Within a dozen pages I had lost interest and was appalled that I had bought this book. I felt that the narrative was both inaccurate and semantically anachronistic. The significance of events were presented with more "importance" than they had at the time; Christ's arrival in Jerusalem, and the subsequent chain of events at that Passover, was not the defining moment of the time. It was not the "JFK assassination" like event

that was burned into everyone's mind. This is implied. Further - word/concepts are presented - by Pontius Pilate- that appear to be coming, conceptually, at least a 1000 - 1500 years too early. It would be like reading a novel about Abraham Lincoln - and having him say , " that's a cool idea." This was very distracting. In general this was not successfully written from the perspective of a powerful 1st century Roman citizen/official -but from that of a devout 20th century Christian - who had excellent idea and good intent- but who didn't know how to get into the head and heart of his intended subject. (For a wonderful example of a successful attempt to step back in time a millennium or two see *Memoirs Of Hadrian* by M. Yourcenar. Different subject; roughly the same era.) All-and-all, very disappointing. Awful.

Historical novels are, by definition, not historically accurate, and James R. Mills's "Memoirs of Pontius Pilate" goes a long way toward proving that fact. This is an awful historical novel, one of the worst I've read. To begin with, Pilate is painted as a modern man, and not a citizen of Rome in the first century C.E. This Pilate sounds like a contemporary bible scholar, not a professional soldier and governor. His knowledge of Jewish history is remarkable. Beginning with Moses, Pilate writes with some authority about David, the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles, Israel's commissioning as a Holy nation, and Jewish laws regarding ritual cleanliness and food purity. He knows the history of the Greek occupation, the atrocities committed by Antiochus Epiphanes, and the Maccabean revolt. He knows several arcane rites of Judaism, as well as prayers and prophecies. He knows the writings of Hillel, and he doubts the existence of his own gods more than he doubts the existence of YHWH, the God of Israel. This Pilate also knows about the Christ from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, and undertakes great pains to document it. He begins by "reproducing" a letter he received from Caiaphas recounting Jesus' birth. He quotes Hebrew Scripture, recounting and reconciling many of the prophecies regarding Messiah. This is a complex and thoroughly modern man. But his knowledge of things Jewish is not the only aspect of this Pilate that doesn't seem quite right. His personality is off as well. Here, Pilate is depicted as being a compassionate and benevolent governor, rather than the cruel and rigid man history knows him to have been. His insistence in the innocence of Jesus is overstated, as if Mills himself, much like the author of the Gospel according to John, an obvious source for this book, were worried that the wrath of Rome would somehow come down upon his head. And while recollecting the trial of Christ, Pilate shows his own prophetic nature in addition to his compassion. When one member of the assembled mob calling for crucifixion yells out "May his blood be on us, and on our children!" Pilate muses that "[I]f Christianity should somehow endure, I am afraid that shout may result in grief for a lot of Jews." Prophecy, as well as

concern. This, coming from the man who hosted gladiatorial "games", ordered the slaughter of Samaritans, and authorized the crucifixion of unknown numbers of prisoners just somehow does not ring true. Finally, Pilate's proximity to events in the story seems strained and false. From his sending spies to Galilee, to his walking behind Christ on the way to Golgotha, to his personal witness of the crucifixion, this Pilate's actions just don't jive with those of the man history tells us he was. If you are interested in a realistic portrait of Pilate, I heartily recommend that you skip this book, and instead, read Ann Wroe's well-written and thought-provoking biography, "Pontius Pilate." In it, she explores the personality of the man as he was, and as he has been portrayed through the past 2,000 years. Wroe does a much better job of synthesizing history, myth and legend than Mills does of creating an historic anomaly who is not recognizable as the Pilate of history, myth, or legend. Better still, read the Gospel of John as it is written, rather than through the filter of a fictionalized, modernized, and thoroughly unbelievable Pilate.

After reading the scathing review from the New York contributor - - I really wanted to like this book. Particularly after reading the heartfelt origin(s) of the book that the author shared in the review he had submitted. I couldn't bring myself to it once I began reading it. Within a dozen pages I had lost interest and was appalled that I had bought this book. I felt that the narrative was both inaccurate and semantically anachronistic. The significance of events were presented with more "importance" than they had at the time; Christ's arrival in Jerusalem, and the subsequent chain of events at that Passover, was not the defining moment of the time. It was not the "JFK assassination" like event that was burned into everyone's mind. This is implied. Further - word/concepts are presented - by Pontius Pilate- that appear to be coming, conceptually, at least a 1000 - 1500 years too early. It would be like reading a novel about Abraham Lincoln - and having him say , " that's a cool idea." This was very distracting. In general this was not successfully written from the perspective of a powerful 1st century Roman citizen/official -but from that of a devout 20th century Christian - who had excellent idea and good intent- but who didn't know how to get into the head and heart of his intended subject. (For a wonderful example of a successful attempt to step back in time a millennium or two see *Memoirs Of Hadrian* by M. Yourcenar. Different subject; roughly the same era.) All-and-all, very disappointing. Dreadfull.

Great Read. If you are a christian, this book gives you a different perspective of the account of Jesus Death. I think you will enjoy the book.

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