

SECRET JESUS

OFFICIAL RULES

5-13 Players | Age 13+ | ~30 Minutes

OVERVIEW

In Secret Jesus, players are split into two groups:

- **Christians:** Jesus, Peter, Judas, one or more Apostles, and Mary.
- **Romans:** Pilate and Procula.

Each role within a group wins if specific conditions are met:

- **Jesus** wins if Romans fail to kill him.
- **Apostles, Peter, and Mary** win if Jesus survives and they find Judas.
- **Judas** wins if Romans kill Jesus and the Christians fail to find Judas. Alternatively, Judas wins if Jesus is denied 3 times, i.e. 3 Chapters fail.
- **Pilate and Procula** win if Jesus dies.

Jesus, Apostles, Peter, and Mary play together and try to hide Jesus' identity from the Romans. Judas has to try to communicate Jesus' identity to the Romans while avoiding being discovered by the other Christians. Romans want to find Jesus.

The game unfolds in 3 phases:

1. **Setup**, when secret roles are dealt out.
2. **Gospel**, as players reenact Jesus' final days.
3. **Crucifixion**, where the Christians try to unmask Judas and Romans crucify one Christian.

SETUP

Prepare one bundle of cards for each player, putting the cards into separate piles face-down. Each bundle contains 6 cards: 1 role card and 5 Prodigies for the Christian roles, or 1 role card and 5 Chapters for the Roman roles.

The starting roles are Jesus, Judas, Peter, 1 Apostle, and Pilate. Other roles, and available Chapters, are added depending on the number of players as shown in the table below.

Players	Christians	Romans	Chapters
5	Jesus, Judas, Peter, Apostle	Pilate	Fish Catch, Baptism of Jesus, Walk on Water, Wedding at Cana, Resurrection of Lazarus, The Last Supper
6	+1 Apostle	—	—
7	+ Mary	—	Transfiguration, Feeding the Multitude, Sermon on the Mount
8	—	+ Procula	—
9+	+ extra Apostles	—	Passover Feast

Each bundle with a Roman role contains 5 random Chapters.

Each bundle with a Christian role has 5 Prodigies, used to participate in Chapters in the Gospel phase. Prodigies represent the power of the Christians. They include Boons, Banes, and Nulls.

Role	Boons	Banes	Nulls
Jesus	5	0	0
Peter	1	2	2
Judas	1	3	1
Mary	2	0	3
Apostle	1	0	4

Bundles are shuffled and dealt randomly, one to each player. Pilate and Procula then turn their role cards face-up for all to see. Afterwards, the game moves to Gospel.

GOSPEL

The Gospel is the heart of the game. It unfolds one Chapter at a time: the Romans choose one Chapter from the available ones and hand it to the Christians. The available Chapters depend on the number of players, as indicated on the Chapter itself.

Each Chapter represents a distinct moment from the Gospel and is defined by the following elements:

- **Participants:** Indicates how many Christians take part in the Chapter and play a Prodigy.
- **Difficulty:** The minimum value needed to complete the Chapter successfully.
- **Bad Things:** The negative consequences for not completing the Chapter successfully.

After the Romans play a Chapter, the Christians debate until a majority agrees on the participants. All non-participating Christians must discard one Prodigy card face-down. Then each participating Christian plays a Prodigy card face-down; these cards are shuffled and revealed: each Boon counts as +1, each Bane as -1, and each Null as 0. If the total is greater than or equal to the Difficulty, the Chapter succeeds; otherwise, the Chapter fails and Jesus is denied. In such a case, apply the Chapter's Bad Things.

If this is the third time Jesus has been denied, Judas reveals himself publicly: he has won and all other Christians have lost. Bad Things from the Chapter are still applied if relevant and Romans can then proceed

to select Jesus (like in the Crucifixion) to win as well. If both Jesus and Judas identities are already known (e.g. from Fish Catch and 3 denials), the Crucifixion is skipped entirely.

Mary has a unique ability: **The Tear**. Once per game, when a Chapter fails, Mary may reveal her role card to all players to prevent that failure from counting as a denial. The Chapter still fails and Bad Things still apply, but it does not count toward the 3 denials that trigger Judas's alternate win. Mary's identity is now known to everyone, including the Romans.

There are 3 kinds of Chapters: **Revelation**, **Miracles**, and **Passion**. The first Chapter must be a Revelation; the second, third, and fourth Chapters must be a Miracle; the fifth Chapter must be a Passion.

REVELATION

The Revelation marks the start of Jesus' teachings. Each Revelation is tied to a Bad Thing that strongly affects gameplay. When a Revelation is played, the Romans close their eyes and Jesus reveals himself to the Christians — regardless of whether the Chapter succeeded or failed — unless that Revelation's Bad Things state otherwise.

MIRACLES

Miracles represent divine action and follow the standard Chapter rules.

PASSION

The Passion is the last moment before the Crucifixion. Everyone has to participate. The Passion's Difficulty is equal to the number of Christians divided by two, rounded down.

After the Passion is completed, the game moves to Crucifixion.

CRUCIFIXION

This is the last part of the game and it plays out like this:

1. The Romans decide which player they will crucify, trying to find Jesus. They reveal their choice.
2. If the Romans found Jesus, the game ends immediately — Jesus dies.
3. If Jesus survives, the Christians select one of them after a public discussion, trying to find Judas.

Outcomes:

- **Jesus** wins if Romans failed to select him.
- **Apostles, Peter, and Mary** win if Jesus survives and they have unmasked Judas.
- **Judas** wins if the other Christians fail to find him, or if Jesus dies.
- **Pilate and Procula** win if Jesus dies.

CHAPTERS

Revelation	TRANSFIGURATION
4 / 7+ Diff. 1	Everyone closes their eyes, then Peter and Judas open their eyes. Peter switches sides: he wins with the same conditions as Judas. Other Christians can find either one to win.
Revelation	BAPTISM OF JESUS
3 / 5+ Diff. 1	Jesus does not reveal Himself to Christians, even when a Revelation is completed.
Miracle	FISH CATCH
2 / 5+ Diff. 0	Romans select one Christian. If the selected Christian is either Jesus, Mary, or Peter, they secretly reveal their role card to the Romans. If Jesus is selected, he now wins if both he and Judas live while Romans win if Judas dies. If Mary is selected, she also loses the Tear. If Peter is selected, he now wins if Judas wins.
Miracle	WALK ON WATER
3 / 5+ Diff. 0	Romans select two Christians (if Procula is in play, they select a third one). The selected Christians secretly reveal one Prodigy to the Romans and no one else.
Miracle	WEDDING AT CANA
3 / 5+ Diff. 1	Romans ask a single Yes or No question to a Christian. Jesus can't lie, other Christians can. That Christian can't participate in the next Chapter.
Miracle	RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS
4 / 5+ Diff. 2	Christians close their eyes; then any Christian may open their eyes, but those who do must reveal a Prodigy of their choice to every other player with eyes open (including Romans). Prodigies are revealed at the same time.
Miracle	FEEDING THE MULTITUDE
5 / 7+ Diff. 2	For the next Chapter, there is no majority vote. Instead, Romans choose one Christian; that Christian selects the participants and must be one of them.
Miracle	SERMON ON THE MOUNT
5 / 7+ Diff. 3	Participants to the next Chapter are chosen by the Romans.
Passion	THE LAST SUPPER
All / 5+ Special	Romans select one Christian, then all Christians close their eyes (Romans keep their eyes open). The selected Christian points their finger toward Jesus. Jesus must point to himself, others may lie.
Passion	PASSOVER FEAST
All / 9+ Special	Romans can crucify two Christians at the end of the game.

BOON

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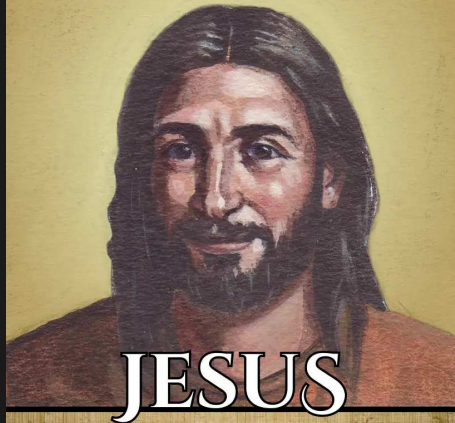
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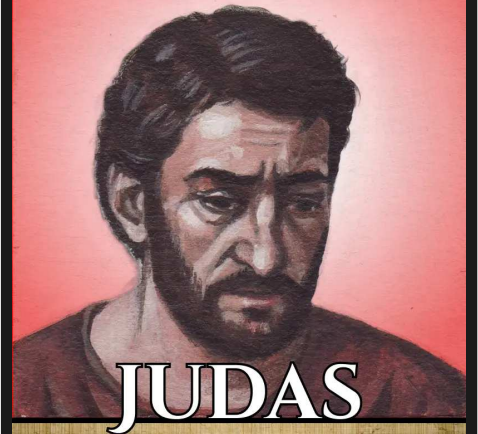
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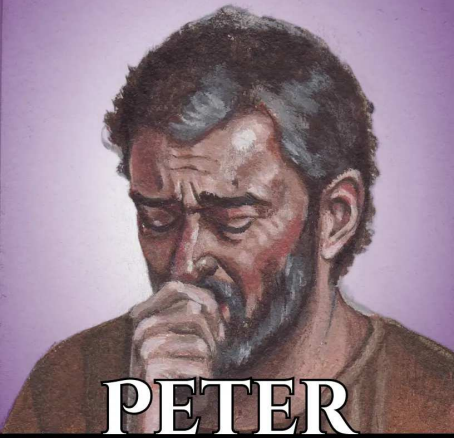
JESUS

YOU WIN
IF YOU SURVIVE



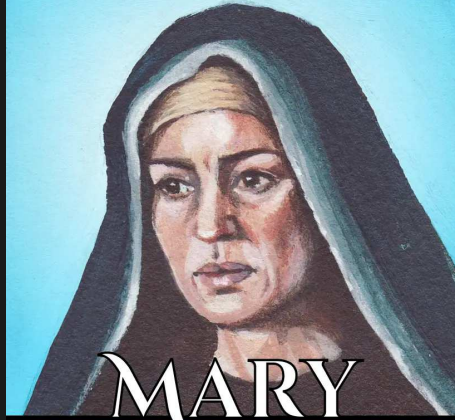
JUDAS

YOU WIN IF JESUS DIES
AND YOU ARE NOT UNMASKED
OR IF JESUS IS DENIED 3 TIMES



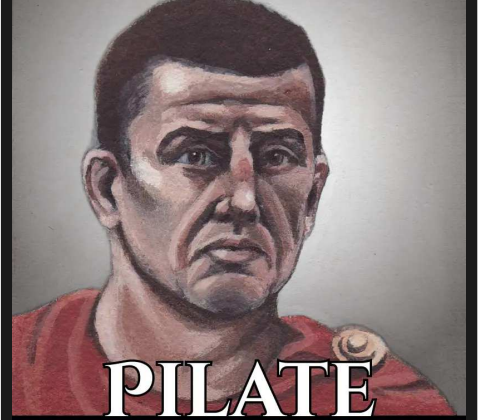
PETER

YOU WIN
IF JESUS SURVIVES



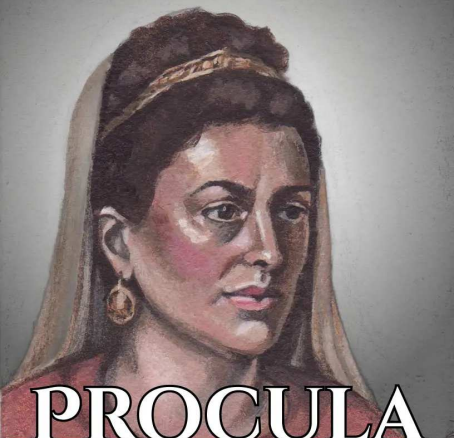
MARY

YOU WIN
IF JESUS SURVIVES



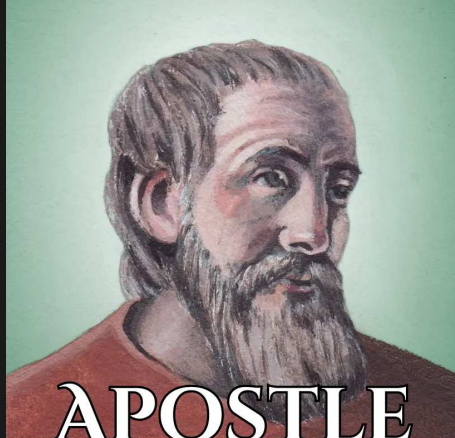
PILATE

YOU WIN
IF JESUS DIES



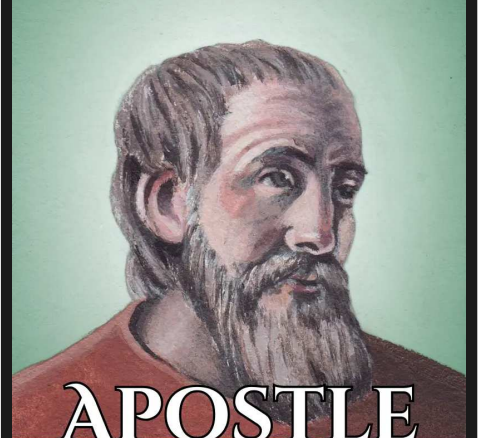
PROCULA

YOU WIN
IF JESUS DIES



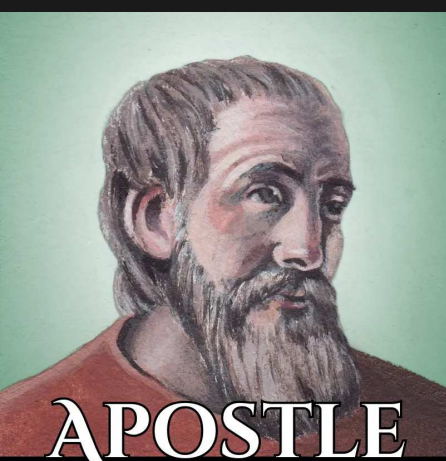
APOSTLE

YOU WIN
IF JESUS SURVIVES



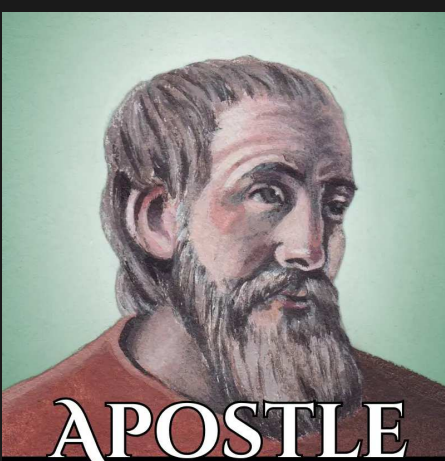
APOSTLE

YOU WIN
IF JESUS SURVIVES



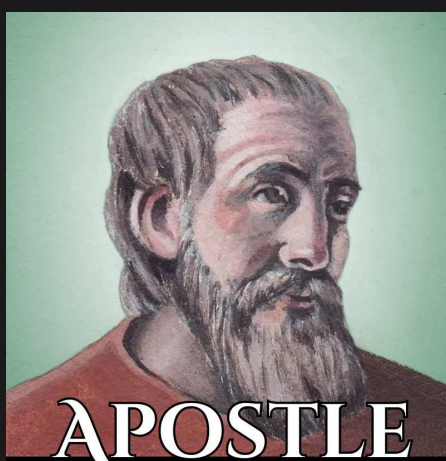
APOSTLE

YOU WIN
IF JESUS SURVIVES



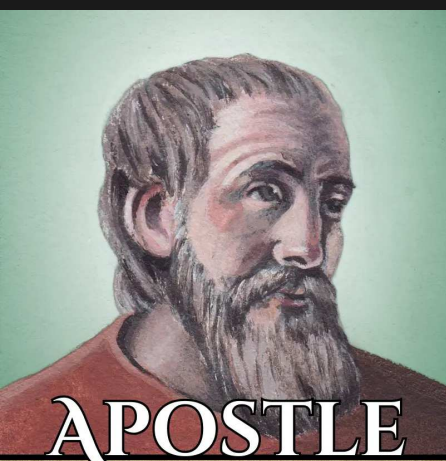
APOSTLE

YOU WIN
IF JESUS SURVIVES



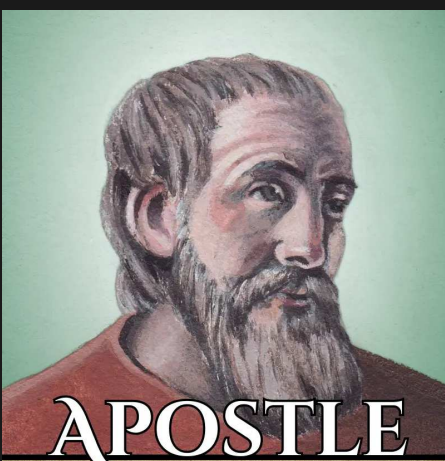
APOSTLE

YOU WIN
IF JESUS SURVIVES



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Revelation

TRANSFIGURATION

Everyone closes their eyes, then Peter and Judas open their eyes. Peter switches sides: he wins with the same conditions as Judas. Other Christians can find either one to win.

participants difficulty

4 7+ players **1**

Revelation

BAPTISM OF JESUS

Jesus does not reveal Himself to Christians, even when a Revelation is completed.

participants difficulty

3 5+ players **1**

Miracle

FISH CATCH

Romans select two Christians. Those two must swap one Prodigy card face-down (without looking at what they receive). They may discuss what they're giving, but may lie. Jesus cannot lie.

participants difficulty

2 5+ players **0**

Miracle

WALK ON WATER

For the next Chapter, there is no majority vote. Instead, Romans choose one Christian; that Christian selects the participants and must be one of them.

participants difficulty

3 5+ players **0**

Miracle

WEDDING AT CANA

Romans ask a single Yes or No question to a Christian. Jesus can't lie, other Christians can. That Christian can't participate in the next Chapter.

participants

3

5+ players

difficulty

1

Miracle

RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS

Christians close their eyes; then any Christian may open their eyes, but those who do must reveal a Prodigy of their choice to every other player with eyes open (including Romans). Prodigies are revealed at the same time.

participants

4

5+ players

difficulty

2

Miracle

FEEDING THE MULTITUDE

Romans say a Christian's name. That Christian must instantly point at someone and say "I trust them." The trusted person must then immediately point at someone else and say "I doubt them." The doubted person must reveal a Prodigy face-up (visible to all).

participants

5

6+ players

difficulty

2

Miracle

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Participants to the next Chapter are chosen by the Romans.

participants

5

7+ players

difficulty

3

Passion

THE LAST SUPPER

Romans select one Christian, then all Christians close their eyes (Romans keep their eyes open). The selected Christian points their finger toward Jesus. Jesus must point to himself, others may lie.

participants

All

5+ players

difficulty

Special

Passion

PASSOVER FEAST

Romans can crucify two Christians at the end of the game.

participants

All

9+ players

difficulty

Special