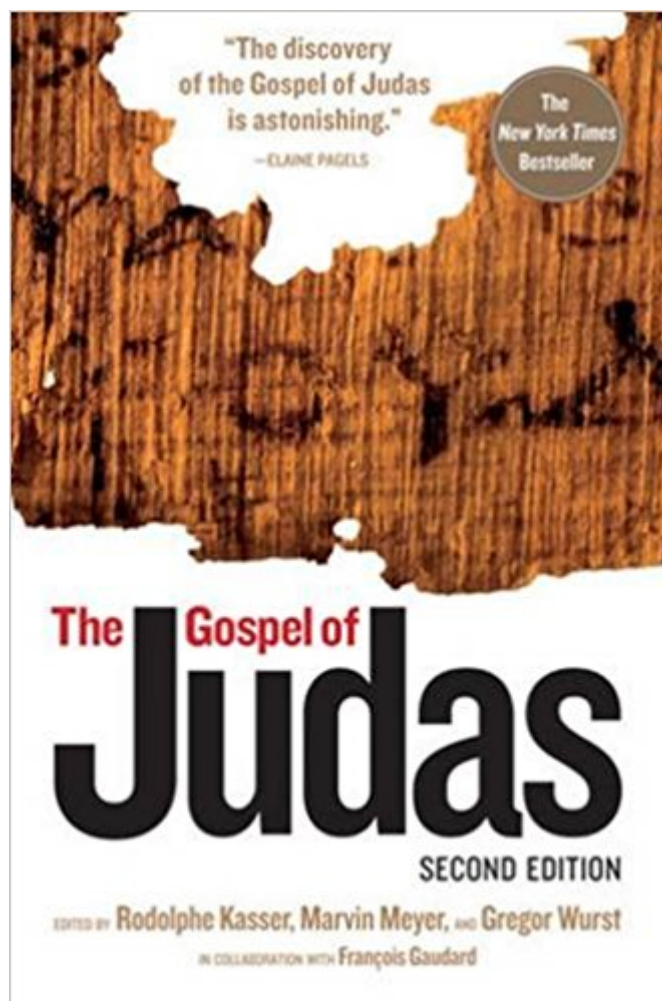


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The Gospel Of Judas, Second Edition



Synopsis

For 1,600 years its message lay hidden. When the bound papyrus pages of this lost gospel finally reached scholars who could unlock its meaning, they were astounded. Here was a gospel that had not been seen since the early days of Christianity, and which few experts had even thought existed— a gospel told from the perspective of Judas Iscariot, history's ultimate traitor. And far from being a villain, the Judas that emerges in its pages is a hero. In this radical reinterpretation, Jesus asks Judas to betray him. In contrast to the New Testament Gospels, Judas Iscariot is presented as a role model for all those who wish to be disciples of Jesus and is the one apostle who truly understands Jesus. Discovered by farmers in the 1970s in Middle Egypt, the codex containing the gospel was bought and sold by antiquities traders, secreted away, and carried across three continents, all the while suffering damage that reduced much of it to fragments. In 2001, it finally found its way into the hands of a team of experts who would painstakingly reassemble and restore it. The Gospel of Judas has been translated from its original Coptic to clear prose, and is accompanied by commentary that explains its fascinating history in the context of the early Church, offering a whole new way of understanding the message of Jesus Christ.

Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: National Geographic; 2nd ed. edition (June 17, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 142620048X

ISBN-13: 978-1426200489

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 156 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #247,366 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #48 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Gnosticism](#) #248 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Criticism & Interpretation > Exegesis & Hermeneutics](#) #679 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Worship & Devotion > Meditations](#)

Customer Reviews

"In one sense, this document is huge news...it provides a touchstone for what certain people believed 150 or 200 years after Christ's death." — Knight/Ridder Tribune News Service

Rodolphe Kasser, Ph.D., a professor emeritus on the Faculty of Arts at the University of Geneva, is one of the world's leading Coptologists. He has organized the restoration and prepared the editio princeps of codex Tchacos, containing the Gospel of Judas and three other Coptic Gnostic texts. Marvin Maeyer, Ph.D., Grisct Professor of Bible and Christian Studies at Chapman University Albert Schweitzer Institute, is one of the foremost scholars on Gnosticism, the Nag Hammadi Library and texts about Jesus outside the New Testament. Gregor Wurst, Ph.D., is professor of Ecclesiastical History and Patristics at the University of Augsburg, Germany. Bart D. Ehrman, Ph.D., is the James A. Gray Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of Religious Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and an expert on early Christianity.

Aside from the exciting events related to the discovery and final rescue of this codices, STOP A MINUTE, AND CONSIDER What if you have a friend, a very good Friend, who you love and respect. He asks you to do something for Him, you are the only one He can trust to do this for Him, and because He asked and you can not for see the future, the repercussions of what He wants you to do. You do it because He asked you to. He spoke of it in previous days, but no one really understood. Nothing good can come of it. BUT everything He has done in the past seemed to work out okay. YOU DO AS HE ASKED BECAUSE HE ASKED. Now you see the consequences. And you can not face the fact. You try to undo it (by giving back the money). That did not stop it. You can not live with it. You end your life. Faithful friend that you were. You are not there to see it all come out all right. Others write about you, and in a bad way, some are kind and say the devil made you do it.-----OR ---- you are a misguided person and sell your friend out-- and you see the consequences of your actions and deep in remorse you can not reverse it--and make it all go away--you end your life. EITHER SCENARIO-- Judas ended his life--and is someone I have pity for, my heart goes out to him. Unless he was good or evil and someone else ended his life for him--and not written about. I will consider the Gospel of Judas in light of the Nag Hammadi and Gospel of John.

Although none of the seven scholars contributing to this book is a gnostic, they have been asked to speculate on what was in the minds of two gnostics writing 2000 years ago. As Marvin Meyer wrote in his introduction, "At stake in the divergent interpretations of the Gospel of Judas is the very nature of the text. Who is Jesus in the text and who is Jesus? What is the purpose of the text? Is the gospel fundamentally evangelium or dysangelium. Good news or bad news? What does the Gospel of Judas really mean?" I agree with him that "The discussion of the meaning of the Gospel of Judas is exciting and dynamic, and it is certain to

continue into the future. Scholars will continue to scrutinize the reconstruction of the codex and the placement of fragments, and they will propose new textual restorations and new readings. Unplaced fragments may be placed: missing papyrus may be found. New suggestions for translation and interpretation will be presented and debated, and new theories will be advanced. In a way, the work on the Gospel of Judas has only begun. In the months and years ahead, more light will be shed on this fascinating gospel of light.

In response, I offer what may be some of the light he expected. Since scholars agree that gnostics existed, and that a Greek version of the Gospel of Judas was written prior to 180 CE, after the New Testament's four gospels and the Book of Acts were composed, it would not be illogical to conclude that the Greek version was written by a Christian who had become a gnostic after becoming aware of the mystical gnostic belief system circulating at the time he wrote. His message was for Christians who could read Greek. In like manner, the translator of the Greek version into a Coptic dialect spoken in Egypt in the fourth century CE was a member of the Sethian Coptic Orthodox Christian Church. This church believed it was established by Saint Mark and that Seth was the Christ. This translator also became a gnostic after becoming aware of the same gnostic texts. He was delivering a message to the Christians who read Coptic. The message in both versions was very simple, but to understand it a reader of the Gospel of Judas has to know that the word Christ is English for the Greek word Christos which, in turn, is Greek for the Hebrew word Mashiach which means the anointed one or messiah who was the flesh and blood deliverer expected by the Jews to be a descendent of King David. Seth was the flesh and blood son of Adam and Eve. Both Jesus the messiah and Seth the messiah were mortals who were unaware of who they were and where they came from. They were not gnostics! In short, both translators wanted the members of their respective churches to know that only mortals who had become gnostics would return to the preexistent "great and holy generation" that abides in the spirit world created by their Most High God.

This little book did not disappoint. If you are into what might be called the "off-Broadway" style of understanding the Bible, this book is for you. I had heard of this book from others and was curious as to its content. Based on fragments of ancient texts that were not included in the writing of the Bible, they open up a whole new line of thing about the relationship between the much aligned and accused Judas and Jesus. If you are curious, if you have questions, if you just want to read an ancient text, this book is a very good read. It is not technical as I had feared, that is written for people who were Bible scholars. The texts and the rest of the information explore a very important relationship in religion and history.

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