

JUDAS ISCARIOT AS A DEUTERAGONIST CHARACTER:
A NARRATIVE-CRITICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE *GOSPEL OF JUDAS*

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ABSTRACT

Judas Iscariot as a Deuteragonist Character: A Narrative-Critical Interpretation of the *Gospel of Judas*

Lindsey Sandul

The *Gospel of Judas* was found in the 1970s in Al Minya, Egypt. After a series of bizarre events, this long-lost gospel was restored, translated, and published in April, 2006. The National Geographic Society financially supported the project, which resulted in an English translation, a commentary on the gospel, and a televised documentary. This gospel tells the story of Jesus and his disciples in the days leading up to the crucifixion. More specifically, the narrative is focused on the dialogue between Jesus and Judas Iscariot. Although the initial reactions to the *GosJud* sought to redeem Judas from his malevolent reputation, further analysis has revealed a negative depiction of his character.

Indeed, characterization utilizing a narrative-critical approach in the interpretation of this gospel clearly supports the idea that the figure of Judas Iscariot is characterized as a devil. Jesus is the central character, and as such is the protagonist of the story. It is Jesus who is the divine revealer of the mysteries of the kingdom and the end days. Judas plays a significant role in the plot, but because the implied reader develops a negative relationship with him, he cannot be a protagonist. Judas, instead, plays the role of the deuteragonist. He is the second most important character in the plot and acts as Jesus' subordinate. The *GosJud* is a valuable document, as it reveals aspects of second and third century Christianity. Much of the content of this gospel is shrouded in mystery. A narrative critical approach focusing on characterization will elicit layers of meaning within the Judas gospel.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABRREVIATIONS.....	vi
TEXTUAL SIGNS.....	vii
INTRODUCTION: JUDAS AND HIS INFAMOUS GOSPEL	
Statement of the Question.....	1
Status Quaestionis.....	5
Judas in the New Testament.....	6
Judas in Early Christianity.....	8
Hero versus Antihero: Judas in the Gospel of Judas.....	10
Issues Which Need to Be Addressed.....	18
Epistemology and Methodology	
Epistemology	
Epistemological Considerations.....	20
Methodology	
Methodological Considerations.....	21
Translation and Philology.....	21
Narrative Criticism.....	22
Characterization of Judas Iscariot.....	22
CHAPTER ONE: THE SECRET WORD OF THE DENIAL	
1.1 The Incipit (33.1-21).....	28
CHAPTER TWO: JUDAS' CONFESSION	
2.1 The Perfect Man (33.22- 36.10).....	41
CHAPTER THREE: JUDAS THE DEMON	
3.1 Judas's Fate as the Thirteenth (43.1- 47.5).....	60
CHAPTER FOUR: JUDAS, YOU WILL EXCEED ALL OF THEM	
4.1 Sacrifices to Saklas (55.21- 58.28).....	84
4.2 Understanding Salvation and Sacrifice in the Judas Gospel.....	98
4.2.1 Each of you has His Star.....	99
4.2.2 The Spirit and the Soul.....	106
CHAPTER FIVE: JUDAS THE DEUTERAGONIST	
5.1 Conclusions Concerning Judas' Character.....	110
5.2 The Plot of the Gospel of Judas.....	114
CONCLUSION.....	118
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	124
APPENDIX	
The <i>Gospel of Judas</i> (English translation).....	131
Chart: Salvation and Sacrifice in the <i>Gospel of Judas</i>	157

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Ap. John</i>	Apocryphon of John
<i>Apoc. Adam</i>	Apocalypse of Adam
Bauer	W. Bauer, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> / traduit de l'allemand par W.F. Arndt et F.W. Danker. Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1979
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BCNH	Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi
BG	Papyrus Berolinensis 8502
Crum	W. E. Crum, <i>Coptic Dictionary</i> . Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1939
<i>GosJud</i>	Gospel of Judas
<i>JCS</i>	<i>Journal of Coptic Studies</i>
<i>LTP</i>	<i>Laval théologique et philosophique</i>
<i>NAAL</i>	<i>North American Academy of Liturgy</i>
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codex
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies
<i>TDNT</i>	G. Kittel et G. Friedrich (éds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> / traduit par G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1964-1976
<i>Treat. Res.</i>	Treatise on the Resurrection
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
<i>ZAC</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum</i>

TEXTUAL SIGNS

- a? A dot placed beneath a letter indicates that the reading of the letter is very uncertain.
- .
- A dot on the line indicates illegible traces of a letter.
- [] Square brackets indicate a lacuna in the manuscript. Coptic letters within the square brackets indicate a plausible restoration.
- [...]
- Square brackets containing dots indicate the approximate number of letters missing in a lacuna.
- []
- Empty square brackets indicate larger lacunae.
- ()
- Text added in parentheses is to add clarification to the translation.
- < >
- Pointed brackets indicate a correction or plausible scribal omission or error suggested by the editors of the Critical Edition of the *Gospel of Judas*.
- >>>
- Decorative designs which appear on the manuscript which were added by the scribe.

INTRODUCTION:
JUDAS AND HIS INFAMOUS GOSPEL

Statement of the Question

Judas Iscariot, a disciple of Jesus, has been portrayed as the epitome of deceit and evil through art, poetry, and perhaps even more strongly, through the interpretation of religious texts. Judas is responsible for the betrayal of Jesus, and in large part responsible for his crucifixion and death. Judas, therefore, plays a pivotal role in the necessary sequence of events leading to the resurrection of Jesus. The indications for these events are contained within the New Testament Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.¹ The canonical Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles provide some of the earliest narratives concerning Judas. This information has then been interpreted and reinterpreted over the centuries. The demonic depiction of Judas continued and even gained momentum through the medieval period, the European Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, and into the twenty-first century.

The discovery of the *Gospel of Judas* has confirmed the idea of the existence of diverse early Christian groups in the first three centuries of the Common Era. The Nag Hammadi library and texts such as the *GosJud* are valuable tools for forming a clearer understanding of Christianity. More specifically, scholars have tried to uncover the history behind the formative years of Christianity. In order to accomplish this, the primary sources must be closely examined. The primary sources are the key to comprehending the complexity of this early period in Christianity.

¹ Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23, and John 13:21-30.

Research has shown that several “Gnostic”² sects considered themselves to be “Christian.”³ These Christians expressed their faith in Jesus by using various literary genres including apocalypses, epistles, poetry, and gospels. Many of these documents have been lost over time. This is partly due to the changing political and religious atmosphere of the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries CE. Proto-orthodox Christianity⁴ was flourishing in the Roman Empire, and heresy-hunters were seeking to discredit any person or written document that challenged their understanding of Christianity. The Early Church Fathers considered Gnostic-Christians to be heretics and their writings were ridiculed and suppressed.⁵

In 1945, a fascinating discovery would change the academic study of Early Christianity. Scholars unearthed a collection of ancient writings which came to be known as the Nag

² The adjective “Gnostic” comes from the Greek *gnōstikōs* and refers to “being knowledgeable.” There were groups of people and individuals in antiquity that called themselves “Gnostics,” (Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon, describes these people in his work, *Against Heresies* 1.25.6) and claimed to possess special knowledge, or *gnosis*. (*Gnosis* means “knowledge” [gnw/sij].) This special knowledge is an understanding of the divine realm, the cosmos, and the fate of humanity. “Gnostic” can be applied to written documents which contain references to this special knowledge. An example of a Gnostic text which would contain such features is the *Apocryphon of John* (NHC II, I, III, I, IV, I, and BG 8502, 2). “Gnosticism” tends to refer to the beliefs and practices of “Gnostics”. It is a term that was not used in ancient times. Scholars continue to be in disagreement concerning the proper definition and validity of the term “gnosticism.” According to A. Marjanen’s basic typology, a text can be understood as “Gnostic” if it refers to an “evil or ignorant world creator(s) separate from the highest divinity”, and also to the idea that “the human soul or spirit originates from a transcendental world and, having become aware of that, has the potential of returning there after life in this world.” (A. Marjanen, “Gnosticism”, in *Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* [ed. S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008], 210-11). For further details concerning the scholarly debates surrounding the use of Gnosticism, see K. King, *What is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

³ This is now evident from some of the Nag Hammadi tractates which can be called Gnostic-Christian. This type of text is Gnostic (usually containing the Gnostic myth most closely associated with Sethianism), but also speaks of Jesus and his divine mission. For example, *The Testimony of Truth* (IX, 3) can be considered a Gnostic-Christian text since it has Gnostic themes and holds Jesus to be the divine saviour.

⁴ Proto-orthodox Christianity is an early form of Christian orthodoxy. This term refers to the formative years of what would eventually become the Catholic Church. According to Mark Edwards, “Orthodoxy is defined as the religion of divine love mediated by the suffering of Christ and hence the religion of the material sacrament, corporate salvation and the vindication of God in the mundane.” M. Edwards, *Catholicity and Heresy in the Early Church* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 12.

⁵ Early Church Fathers who held these views include: Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon, Tertullian, and Epiphanius.

Hammadi codices.⁶ This also marked a new beginning in the study of Gnosticism. No longer would scholars have to rely exclusively on the testimonies of the Church Fathers; now, the Gnostics had regained their own voice. In the 1970s another important discovery was made in an area of Egypt called Al Minya.⁷ This small collection of ancient writings, now known as Codex Tchacos,⁸ contained the *Gospel of Judas* (*GosJud*). This gospel is written on twenty-six pages of papyrus. The dialect used is Sahidic Coptic, yet there are some possible Bohairic and Subachmimic influences within the text.⁹ This type of interpenetration of Coptic dialects may be a result of the area of Egypt that the Codex Tchacos was found. Up until the late twentieth century, it was thought that the *GosJud* was lost forever. Prior to this discovery, our only knowledge of the existence of the Judas gospel came from a short reference by Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon in his work entitled *Against Heresies*, written around 180 CE.

There has been nearly two-thousand years of scholarship done without anyone knowing much about the *GosJud*, not even knowing with certainty if it even existed. Following a series of trading on the antiquities market, some of which were illegal, the National Geographic Society (NGS) gathered a team of experts to work on the preservation and restoration of Codex Tchacos. These scholars produced an English translation and offered their interpretation of the *GosJud* on

⁶ J. M. Robinson, "From the Cliff to Cairo. The Story of the Discoverers and the Middlemen of the Nag Hammadi Codices," in B. Barc (ed.), *Colloque international sur les textes de Nag Hammadi. Québec, 22-25 août 1978* (BCNH, section études 1). (Québec; Louvain, Les Presses de l'Université Laval; Peeters, 1981), 21-58.

⁷ Details of the discovery of the Codex Tchacos are to be found in R. Kasser et al., eds. *The Gospel of Judas: Second Edition* (Washington: National Geographic, 2006).

⁸ This is the book's modern designation. Codex Tchacos' namesake is Frieda Nussberger-Tchacos. She is the current owner of the codex. The Codex Tchacos consists of four tractates: pages 1-9, the *Letter of Peter to Philip*, pages 11-32, *James*, pages 33-58, the *Gospel of Judas*, pages 59-66, the *Book of Allogenes*.

⁹ For details concerning the language of the Codex Tchacos see R. Kasser, "Étude dialectale portant globalement sur les quatre textes coptes du codex Tchacos," in *The Gospel of Judas Together with the Letter of Peter to Philip, James, and a Book of Allogenes from Codex Tchacos. Critical Edition* (ed. R. Kasser et al.; Washington: National Geographic, 2007), 35-78. According to Lambdin, Subachmimic was used extensively for Gnostic literature; see T. O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic* (Marcon: Mercer University Press, 1983), ix.

April 6, 2006.¹⁰ This important archaeological find was at last made public by the NGS, with the release of a Television documentary¹¹ and a critical edition of an English translation.¹²

The *GosJud* has been available for scholarly research and to the public at large for only four years. During this time, scholars have been debating whether or not Judas Iscariot is the hero of this gospel. A consensus is yet to be reached. Some scholars argue that Judas is rehabilitated, while others see a more demonic Judas than ever before. What is clear, however, is that the *GosJud* is a polemical text which fights against proto-orthodox Christianity and other Gnostic sects of the third century. The Judas gospel may not reveal new information concerning the historical Jesus and the historical events leading up to the crucifixion, but it may help to illuminate the complex diversity of early Christianity at that time period.

In my M.A. thesis, I will focus on the characterization of Judas Iscariot in the *GosJud*. One of my goals is to uncover what salvation means in the *GosJud* since I believe this to be closely intertwined with the representation of Judas in this gospel. For Gnostics, salvation was closely linked to special knowledge and insight. In the Judas gospel, however, salvation seems to be a far more complex issue. Sacrifice is another theme which will be under investigation. I will endeavour to provide a clear definition of this cultic practice in the context of the Judas gospel. In order to do this, I will seek to uncover how the implied author and reader(s) of the *GosJud* establish a link between “sacrifice” and the crucifixion of Jesus. In order for this Gnostic-

¹⁰ R. Kasser et al., eds. *The Gospel of Judas* (Washington: National Geographic, 2006). There was also a second edition of this text published in 2008: R. Kasser et al., eds. *The Gospel of Judas: Second Edition*. (Washington: National Geographic, 2008).

¹¹ Televised documentary, “The Gospel of Judas,” aired April 9, 2006 on the National Geographic Channel.

¹² R. Kasser et al., eds. *The Gospel of Judas Together with the Letter of Peter to Philip, James, and a Book of Allogenes from Codex Tchacos*. Critical Edition (Washington: National Geographic, 2007).

Christian sect to denounce the sacrificial and saving nature of the death of Jesus, they evidently had to polemicize against the proto-orthodox understanding of the cross.¹³

First, I will begin my analysis of the *GosJud* from a synchronic perspective. The gospel is filled with Christological, soteriological and cosmological references which shed light on the implied author's theology. By starting with a synchronic approach, I can more accurately study the Judas gospel, and draw conclusions from the text itself. In this section of my thesis, I will be using my own translation of the *GosJud* which will be found in the appendix.

This will then lead me to my final point: to formulate a hypothesis as to why Judas Iscariot was given such a prominent role and to give some general reasons for the Gnostic interest in his character. By evaluating the characterization of Judas, my intent is to offer an explanation of his moral character as either good or evil. The theological value of such an inquiry is to bring attention to the diversity of Early Christianity in the first three centuries of the Common Era.

Status Quaestionis

Although the *GosJud* has intrigued imaginations since the release of its publication and the sensational NGS documentary, serious scholarship has only just begun. On a global scale, only a few scholars have the necessary experience with the Coptic language combined with New Testament Studies, Gnosticism, and the history of Early Christianity. In response to the reviews of the 2006 release of the *GosJud*, the National Geographic Society published a revised, second edition in attempts to amend the original. This edition contains commentaries by top scholars, including Rodolphe Kasser, Bart D. Ehrman, Craig A. Evans, Marvin Meyer, Gesine Schenke

¹³ This is also closely associated to a condemnation of martyrdom.

Robinson, and Gregor Wurst. Alterations were made to the English translation of the text, which also includes footnotes that acknowledge the opinion of other scholars and discrepancies concerning the Coptic transcription of certain sections of the gospel.¹⁴ I will compare my translation of the *GosJud* to this second edition translation.

Judas in the New Testament

Promptly following the release of the *GosJud* in 2006, scholars tended to focus much of their attention on the figure of Judas Iscariot in the New Testament. This is of course a key step in tradition history. The problem has been that this focus leaves out an in-depth analysis of the contents of the *GosJud*. In addition to this, methodological issues arise when comparing the *GosJud* to the New Testament because access to the sources supposedly used by the implied author of the *GosJud* is not possible.¹⁵ It is therefore difficult to assess the dependence of the *GosJud* on the New Testament. Here is some of the work done by scholars on this text since its release in 2006.

¹⁴ Kasser, *Judas: Second Edition*, 2008.

¹⁵ For example, this can be compared to the methodological problems of scholars who study the Q source and its relationship to the Synoptic Gospels. D. C. Parker addresses this issue and explains that, “Unfortunately, much of modern debate on the Synoptic Problem seems to have become so enamoured of the critical text that it believes not only that it presents the text as it was written by Matthew, Mark and Luke but also that it contains Mark’s text as it was known to Matthew and to Luke, and so on. In fact, unless we had grounds for arguing that Matthew and Luke had access to the same copy of Mark, one sure statement is that the version of Mark known to Matthew was not identical to that known to Luke. What we do not know is how much these copies differed from each other. It is even more remarkable that attempts to reconstruct the supposed document ‘Q’ (the lost collection used by both Matthew and Luke postulated by those who argue that Matthew and Luke are independent) use text-critical terminology to describe their activities. However, since all they are doing is making selections from a twentieth-century printed text, which does not even presume to confidently provide the text of the four Gospel collection, never mind that of the independent first-century texts, this use of language must be dismissed as illusory.” (D. C. Parker, *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008], 314).

Simon Gathercole dedicates the first chapter of a short volume to the retelling of the exciting discovery and trading of the Codex Tchacos.¹⁶ He then provides an overview of Judas in the New Testament. Some scholars have felt the need to go back to the first sources of information concerning Judas Iscariot, perhaps in hopes that this will help them in their study of the *GosJud*. I think that a narrative-critical analysis of the character of Judas found in the *GosJud* can be studied separately from the Judas found in the New Testament. By applying modern literary techniques and Aristotle's understanding of character types, the character of Judas examined independently from the Judas of the New Testament.

The second chapter of Gathercole's book raises important questions such as: Is Judas' role historical? Do the gospel writers distort Judas' original intention? Is Judas the stereotype of the evil Jew? Do the gospel writers progressively blacken Judas' character? Gathercole only briefly answers these questions and others, but does nonetheless have interesting insights. These questions are intriguing, but they do not give any information concerning the figure Judas in the gospel attributed to his name. This book can be used as a reference tool for easily locating information concerning the Church Fathers and Judas in the New Testament.

Bart D. Ehrman was involved in the original project of working with the *GosJud* put forth by the NGS. His work is extremely relevant to the study of the *GosJud* since he has focused on various primary sources from early Christianity. In his book dedicated to the Judas gospel,¹⁷ Ehrman arrives at some conclusions concerning the historical Jesus and the historical Judas. Ehrman discusses how Judas is presented in the canonical gospels. The most obvious flaw in his book, however, is that Ehrman neglected the *GosJud*. He only briefly addresses character

¹⁶ S. Gathercole, *The Gospel of Judas: Rewriting Early Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁷ B. D. Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot: A New Look at Betrayer and Betrayed* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

depictions and major plot themes. At first, many scholars focused too much on the history of Judas in their study of this gospel. They omitted the analysis of specific themes within the gospel itself. This is demonstrative of the need to work from a synchronic perspective on this newly found text.

James M. Robinson's book on the figure of Judas Iscariot is dedicated to the history of the Codex Tchacos, including details concerning its discovery, trade, and preservation.¹⁸ This is again typical of the first publications concerning the *GosJud*. It also reflects an attempt by scholars to make their work accessible to a more general audience. After three chapters, Robinson then moves on to describe the Judas of the New Testament and the historical Judas. Robinson is interested in establishing parallels between the *GosJud* and the New Testament. Although this historical background is a necessary step in scholarship, it exemplifies the lack of exegesis conducted on the text itself. Robinson only briefly discusses the contents of the *GosJud* in the final chapter of this book. The first two hundred pages are dedicated to tradition history, and not to the text in question.

Judas in Early Christianity

Judas in the Christian tradition has been a topic of study for centuries. Since the testimonies of the Church Fathers were essentially the only sources of information concerning a text called the *Gospel of Judas*, their writings dominated the discussion. Scholars have gone back to re-examine the Patristic writings in order to better understand the *GosJud* found in Codex Tchacos. It is important to take a look at the assessment made by scholars because of the

¹⁸ J. M. Robinson, *The Secrets of Judas: The Story of the Misunderstood Disciple and His Lost Gospel* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007).

postulations it has fostered. Part of their investigation has been to determine the link between the ancient Christian sources and this newly discovered gospel.

Gregor Wurst was among the first to edit the original Coptic text of the *GosJud*. He wrote an important essay in the first edition of the *GosJud* published by the NGS.¹⁹ Wurst compares the Judas gospel with the text that bears the same name in Irenaeus of Lyon's treatise *Against Heresies*. He argues that this newly found gospel may indeed be the same text which Irenaeus spoke of because it describes Judas as being "acquainted with the truth as no others were" and also stating that, "by him all things, both earthly and heavenly, were thrown into dissolution." Judas is the recipient of special knowledge from Jesus.²⁰ Wurst says that the *GosJud* describes the destruction of earthly and heavenly creation because of the act of the betrayal of Judas Iscariot.²¹ His conclusion is that Irenaeus was talking about the same text that we now have. This helps scholars date the Judas gospel more accurately. Since Irenaeus wrote his treatise around 180 CE, the original Greek text of the *GosJud* must have been written before this time. This could possibly mean that the type of Gnostic cosmology contained in this gospel predates 180 CE. This is significantly earlier than some scholars would like to assign to Sethian Gnosticism.²²

Studying the Patristic testimonies can be a fruitful endeavour when the dating of the text is the

¹⁹ G. Wurst, "Irenaeus of Lyon and the Gospel of Judas," in *The Gospel of Judas: Second Edition* (ed. R. Kasser et al.; Washinton: National Geographic, 2008), 169-79.

²⁰ Judas appears in the *Gospel of Judas* starting on page 35 of the Codex Tchacos, where he declares that he knows who Jesus is and where he has come from. Judas is then taken aside by Jesus.

²¹ Wurst. "Irenaeus of Lyon," 176.

²² Sethian Gnosticism is a subcategory originally developed by Hans-Martin Schenke. The following set of elements is common to texts which can be classified as Sethian: (1) The Sethians understand themselves to be "the seed of Seth"; (2) Seth is the Gnostic saviour, or alternatively, Adam is the saviour of his son Seth; both may have a heavenly and / or an earthly aspect; (3) the heavenly place of rest for Adam, Seth, and the seed of Seth is the four aeons and illuminators of Autogenes: Harmozel, Oroiael, Daveithe, and Eleleth; (4) Autogenes is a member of the divine triad, as the Son of the Father (Invisible Spirit) and the Mother (Barbelo); (5) this divine triad is specifically Sethian; (6) "Man" (or Adam) in his primal form is connected with this heavenly triad; (7) beneath the four illuminators is the realm of the Demiurge, often referred to as Yaldabaoth; (8) the appearance of the divine "Man" is a result of the arrogance of Yaldabaoth and the punishment for his hubris; and finally, (9) Sethian mythology contains a distinctive periodization of history, including: the age of Adam, the age of Seth, the age of the original Sethians, and the present time; see King, *Gnosticism*, 156-7.

priority, but in this particular case, one must assume that Irenaeus is speaking of the same *GosJud* as contained in the Codex Tchacos.

Hero versus Antihero: Judas in the Gospel of Judas

When the NGS released the *GosJud* on April 6, 2006 the headline read: “Lost Gospel Revealed; Says Jesus Asked Judas to Betray Him.” This sensationalizing title of the newly found gospel was further amplified by the NGS team of scholars who worked on the Codex Tchacos. They claimed that the *GosJud* presented Judas as a hero, and the closest friend of Jesus. Scholars, such as Marvin Meyer, are adamant that the Judas in this gospel is indeed a heroic figure who acted in accordance to his master’s wishes.²³ This impacted other scholars as well, such as Stanley E. Porter, Gordon Heath, Elaine Pagels, and Karen L. King, who recognize that Judas Iscariot is portrayed in a positive manner in this gospel.

Marvin Meyer was a part of the original team put together by the NGS. Consequently, he has worked closely with highly respected scholars such as, Rodolphe Kasser and Gregor Wurst on the *GosJud* project. Meyer suggests that this text shows Judas to be the best friend and most faithful disciple of Jesus because he is the chief recipient of the revelatory knowledge.²⁴ For Meyer, the *GosJud* is a prime example of a rehabilitation story. This story, according to Meyer, redeems the figure of Judas Iscariot. This is the exact interpretation of the *GosJud* that Louis Painchaud, April DeConick and André Gagné argue against. I presume that a closer analysis of the content within the *GosJud* will reveal the weaknesses of Meyer’s interpretation.

²³ It must be noted that, although Meyer suggested Judas was Jesus soul-mate and the hero of the *GosJud*, he has now altered his interpretation to view Judas as intermediary figure. He envisions Judas as being something between a hero and villain. He is unwilling to support evidence of a totally evil Judas.

²⁴ M. Meyer, *Judas: The Definitive Collection of Gospels and Legends about this Infamous Apostle of Jesus* (New York: HaperCollins Publishers, 2007).

Stanley E. Porter and Gordon Heath collaborated to produce a book on the Judas gospel.²⁵ Porter and Heath express their opinion that the *GosJud* is an example of rehabilitation literature. They believe that the Gnostics felt marginalized. As a result, these Gnostics identified themselves with Biblical figures that were also marginalized in proto-orthodox Christianity. Porter and Heath suppose that the Gnostic gospels, attributed to figures such as Thomas, Mary, and Philip, represent marginalized disciples and that now, Judas can be included in this group. Porter and Heath neglect to acknowledge that the canonical gospels are solely focused on Jesus; his life, ministry, death and resurrection. The disciples and other characters are not central to the story of Jesus in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. The Gnostic-Christians who wrote the Judas gospel may have chosen the character of Judas for other reasons besides his marginalized status in proto-orthodox Christianity. I suspect that the selection of Judas for a gospel narrative was made because of his close association to the death of Jesus. The death of Jesus is closely related to the resurrection and to the concept of salvation in Christianity. The *GosJud* deals extensively with salvation and sacrifice, making Judas an important figure in this text. Ultimately, this rehabilitation hypothesis understands Judas to be seen in a positive light by the Gnostics, which may not be accurate upon further investigation of the text.

Porter and Heath strongly argue for a positive depiction of Judas in this gospel. This is difficult to support when the text is examined closely. Judas first appears as an active actor in the gospel on page 35 of the Codex Tchacos²⁶. In my translation of this gospel, this scene reads:

²⁵ S. Porter and G. Heath, *The Lost Gospel of Judas: Separating Fact from Fiction* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007).

²⁶ R. Kasser et al., eds. *The Gospel of Judas Together with the Letter of Peter to Philip, James, and a Book of Allogenes from Codex Tchacos*. Critical Edition (Washington: National Geographic, 2007), 189.

: [peJa]‡ naF | NGi loudas Je? Tso[o]Vne Je | Ntk nim auw Ntak[e] ebol : | HNn aS Mma : Ntakef ebol HN | paiwn N!b!atr!b!h!!!w paqa | natos auw pentaFtaouok | paí ete NTMpSa an Ntaouo | MpeFran : ^{vac} !l!hs de eFsooune | Je Fmeoue epkeseepe et | Jose peJaF naF : Je pwr\J | ebol Mmoou : taJw erok N | Mmustrion NtmNtero | oux? Hln?a? Je ekebwk emau | alla Je? e?keaS a!Hom NHouo

Judas said to him, “I know who you are and where you come from. You come from the immortal aeon of Barbelo, and the one who sent you, this one, I am not worthy to speak his name.” Jesus knowing that he pondered on something that is exalted said to him, “Separate from them, I shall tell you the mysteries of the kingdom, not so that you will go there, but you will grieve greatly” (35,14-27).

Jesus tells Judas in a rather direct manner that he will not be going to the kingdom. This is a condemnation of Judas and not redemption of his soul. Some scholars such as Porter and Heath have missed this negative portrayal of Judas. They instead see Judas as being rescued by Jesus. In their book, Porter and Heath state:

Jesus here is giving instructions to Judas explicitly to help him in his crucifixion. Here the crucifixion is seen, not as the betrayal of the son of man into the hands of sinners, but as the well thought out and orchestrated act of one who is being rescued and released from the inhibitions and constraints of earthly existence for a nobler heavenly calling. Judas is called upon to play an important role in this process. Rather than being the cursed betrayer of Jesus, Judas is here seen as the necessary functionary in the grand plan.²⁷

In my thesis I will be arguing against such interpretations. Recent scholarship has shown the flaws of this positive image of Judas. Since this book was published in 2007, it reflects a preliminary understanding of Judas’s role.

Karen L. King and Elaine Pagels present an interesting take on the *GosJud*.²⁸ They explain that it is important to place the implied reader and author in history:

Some scholars have tried to do this by categorizing the *Gospel of Judas* as a “Gnostic” gospel, placing it on the losing side of battles waged among early Christians with diverse interpretations, beliefs, and practices, each group claiming to be the only one with the truth (the “orthodox”). And indeed the *Gospel of Judas*

²⁷ Porter and Heath, *Lost Gospel*, 89.

²⁸ K. King and E. Pagels, *Reading Judas* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2007).

in some respects resembles other early Christian works that have been discovered in Egypt over the last century and that scholars label “Gnostic,” especially those from the remarkable find near the village of Nag Hammadi in Egypt in 1945. Many of those texts, too, let us hear voices that have been lost for over fifteen hundred years, silenced by those who won the name of orthodoxy for themselves.²⁹

According to King and Pagels, this gospel shows Judas as Jesus’ favourite disciple, to whom he shares the mysteries of the universe and entrusts with the task of handing him over. It is their understanding that, “For thousands of years, Christians have pictured Judas as the incarnation of evil. Motivated by greed and inspired by Satan, he is the betrayer whom Dante placed in the lowest circle of hell. But the *Gospel of Judas* shows Judas instead as Jesus’ closest and most trusted confidant.”³⁰ While King and Pagels do attempt to interpret sections of this gospel, they primarily focus, as the title of their book suggests, on the history of early Christianity. Unfortunately, many of the conclusions reached by King and Pagels were influenced by the initial interpretation of the *GosJud* presented by the NGS’s editorial team.³¹

King and Pagels believe that the true message of the *GosJud* is one against Christian martyrdom. They explain that,

Some Christians, like Irenaeus, when faced with the reality of persecution and death, advocated that people should be martyred, arguing that God wills all this suffering for people’s own good. For Irenaeus, suffering and even death are meant to teach people about the greatness and goodness of God in granting eternal life to a sinful humanity. But the author of the *Gospel of Judas* not only denies that God desires such sacrifice, he also suggests that the practical effect of such views is hideous: It makes people complicit in murder. By teaching that Jesus dies in agony “for the sins of the world” and encouraging his followers to die as he did, certain leaders send them on a path toward destruction – while encouraging them with the false promise that they will be resurrected from death to eternal life in the flesh. But the *Gospel of Judas* rejects the resurrection of the body. What meaning, then, can be found in Jesus’s death? The author offers a radical answer. When

²⁹ Ibid., xiv.

³⁰ Ibid., 3.

³¹ Kasser, *Judas*, 2006.

Jesus tells Judas to “sacrifice the human being who bears me,” he is asking Judas to help him demonstrate to his followers how, when they step beyond the limits of earthly existence, they, like Jesus, may step into the infinite – into God.³²

While I do agree the *GosJud* speaks against sacrifice, never does Jesus tell Judas to sacrifice his body. Jesus, instead, predicts that Judas will hand him over and that in doing so his body will be sacrificed. The *GosJud* never implies that Jesus needs Judas’s help. King and Pagel’s book also includes a translation of the text by Karen King. At points, this translation differs from that of the NGS. I will be consulting King’s translation and compare it to my own translation.

This favourable portrayal of Judas Iscariot is an initial interpretation, and is undoubtedly misleading when evidence from the text is examined. New translations have propelled the development of Judas as the antihero. One of the first scholars to oppose the original interpretation of the *GosJud* was Louis Painchaud from l’Université Laval. Gesine Schenke Robinson also follows the same understanding as Painchaud, sharing the opinion that Judas is not an ideal disciple. This view has been made widely public by the American scholar April De Conick.

Louis Painchaud published a significant paper in the proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas, held in Paris in 2006.³³ In this paper, Painchaud’s primary focus is on the polemical aspects found within the *GosJud*. According to him, the *GosJud* can be grouped along with the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, or the *Testimony of Truth*, that is, with the most aggressive Christian Gnostic writings of Early Christianity. Painchaud begins his examination of the *GosJud* by

³² King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, 74-5.

³³ L. Painchaud, “Polemical Aspects of the *Gospel of Judas*,” in *The Gospel of Judas in Context: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas* (ed. M. Scopello; Leiden&Boston: Brill, 2008), 171-86.

adopting a synchronic approach. I will follow a similar exegetical approach in my thesis. First, he performs a brief exegetical analysis of the polemical aspects of the identity of the God of the Scriptures, Christology, the interpretation of the Eucharist, and sacrifice. The majority of his paper is devoted to an assessment of the function of the figure of Judas. Painchaud sees Judas' role in this gospel as being negative. To conclude these introductory hypotheses, Painchaud proposes two different directions in which research should go in the future. First, he believes that it would be beneficial to analyze the links between the *GosJud* and the wider development of Christian sacrificial theology in the second century. This first point has yet to be explored by scholars. Secondly, he encourages research on the parallels between Judas Iscariot and Judah, the fourth son of Jacob (Genesis 37:26). Since most scholars have devoted much attention to Judas in the New Testament, Painchaud's second proposed direction has yet to be analyzed. Painchaud's paper is a valuable resource because it highlights the crucial need for future research on the *GosJud*.

Gesine Schenke Robinson has been involved in the study of the *GosJud* since before its release in April of 2006. Even though she has worked closely with scholars such as Meyer and Ehrman, she does not see Judas as being a positive figure in this newly discovered text. In her opinion, the passages which the original team of interpreters understood to support the heroic view of Judas should in contrast be seen as irony, and are therefore insincere statements made by Jesus. Recently, much of Robinson's work has been devoted to understanding the chronology of this gospel story. The *incipit* indicates that "Jesus spoke with Judas Iscariot, during eight days, three days before he did Passover."³⁴ Appended to her article is her own translation of the Judas gospel. In her version of the text, the *incipit* reads, "The secret declaration of judgement that

³⁴ *GosJud* 33,2-6.

Jesus communicated to Judas Iscariot on eight days, (ending) three days before he (allegedly) suffered.”³⁵ The mention of judgement certainly does not communicate ideas of friendship between Judas and Jesus. In a more recent article, Robinson explains that:

The understanding of the term *R pasxa* as “before he celebrated the Passover” (instead of “to suffer”) became common after the first edition of the text, but this translation is a fallacy both linguistically and as an assertoric statement; this interpretation was obviously again due to the New Testament lenses of the editors. By nature, Gnosis does not concern itself with orthodox Jewish or orthodox Christian celebrations that it rather loathes and derides, as the *Gospel of Judas* also makes clear enough right in the next scene, and more elsewhere in the text.³⁶

Although Robinson’s translation is valuable to the continuing research being conducted on the *GosJud*, I am not convinced by her translation of *pasxa*. In my translation, I have instead chosen to understand this Greco-Coptic term as being an adaptation of the Hebrew word *פסח*, which means “Passover.”³⁷ It seems as though Robinson understands the term *pasxa* to derive from the Greek word *πάσχω*, which means “to suffer” or “to endure.” Robinson’s translation of the *GosJud* predates the release of the Ohio Fragments. Gregor Wurst and Marvin Meyer have been working on the Codex Tchacos, and in November 2009 they released restored fragments. In my own translation, I have used these new fragments.

April DeConick labels the *GosJud* as a form of ancient Gnosticism known as Sethianism.

She explains that,

The Gospel of Judas was written by Christians who identified themselves outside and even against the apostolic Christianity of the second century CE. These peculiar Christians were esoterically minded. For them, God was not something to

³⁵ G. S. Robinson, “The Relationship of the Gospel of Judas to the New Testament and to Sethianism.” *JCS* 10 (2008): 85.

³⁶ G. S. Robinson, “The Gospel of Judas in light of the New Testament and early Christianity.” *ZAC* 13.1 (2009): 101.

³⁷ A. Joaquim ed., *A Simplified Coptic Dictionary (Sahidic Dialect)* (Cachoeira: Centro de Pesquisa de Literatura Biblica, 2001), 71.

be intellectually comprehended by thinking about him. Rather, God is something to be experienced, directly apprehended by the believer. This form of “knowing” is what they called “gnosis.” This gnosis is not an intellectual knowledge, but knowledge by acquaintance – as in “getting to know” someone through an interpersonal relationship. This relationship is what changes us, they thought. It transforms us, they argued, and transfigures us. The God-Self relationship – gnosis – was an experience of transcendence, moving us from a state of separation, from the sinful mortal condition, to an eternal spiritual body and lie united with God.³⁸

Although this definition of *gnosis* does appear to be similar to what is found in the *GosJud*, the implied author takes this concept one step further by insisting predeterminism. Salvation in the *GosJud* means having *gnosis* (knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom and what will take place in the end) combined with being part of the holy generation.

On various occasions, DeConick has directly challenged the NGS’s translation and interpretation of the *GosJud*. In her book she claims that Judas is more demonic in the *GosJud* than any other depiction of this character.³⁹ She states that, “In my opinion, the text is unambiguous, preserving (and mocking) Judas’ epithet “*daimon*,” a common word in early Christian literature, used to identify maleficent beings, evil spirits, fallen angels, and the demonic host.”⁴⁰ In this book, she includes her own translation of the text and commentary, as well as what she calls “corrected translations” of the NGS’s Critical Edition. This book is geared toward the general public, but still raises interesting questions and offers a different interpretation of the *GosJud*. DeConick explains that,

Judas’ identity is tied up with the thirteenth realm. This realm belongs to the Archon who rules over the twelve heavens and the earth, Ialdabaoth. So Judas, with the nickname “Thirteenth Demon,” is linked to Ialdabaoth and his realm. Judas is either a man operating under the influence of the demon Ialdabaoth, or

³⁸ A. DeConick, *The Thirteenth Apostle: What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*, Revised Edition (New York: Continuum, 2009), 26.

³⁹ DeConick, *Thirteenth Apostle*, 52-66.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 117.

Ialdabaoth's equivalent, perhaps understood to replace him or even merge with him one day. These expressions certainly do not indicate that he is a blessed Gnostic, a colossal overstatement if ever there was one on the part of the National Geographic team.⁴¹

DeConick sees Judas Iscariot in this gospel story as being more evil than his other various depictions in the New Testament or other examples found in Early Christian literature. For DeConick the message contained within the *GosJud* is clear: Judas is no hero.

Issues Which Need to Be Addressed

The *GosJud* has been available for scholarly research since 2006. During this short time period, many scholars have focused on the portrayals of Judas Iscariot found within the New Testament. Although there is a need to define Judas in the New Testament, it must be done in conjunction with an extensive analysis of the *GosJud*. As well, there has been a focus on what the *GosJud* may reveal concerning the historical Jesus. As Craig A. Evans explains, "Not only will the *GosJud* have no impact on serious scholarship concerned with the historical Jesus and his disciples but the newly published text will also have no impact on Christian theology or on Christian understanding of the gospel story, as Father Donald Senior, a Roman Catholic priest and NT scholar, stated during the press conference. I have no doubt that he is correct."⁴² Since many scholars have already defined the role of Judas in the New Testament, it will be a relatively new endeavour to specifically focus on the characterization of Judas in the *GosJud*. The primary arguments have been preoccupied by the positive versus negative depiction of Judas Iscariot in this gospel. Although this is an important debate, it has only been addressed on a surface level.

⁴¹ DeConick, *Thirteenth Apostle*, 121.

⁴² C. A. Evans, "Understanding the Gospel of Judas," *BBR* 20.4 (2010): 567.

The issue that has true academic merit concerns the meaning of the *GosJud*. A vital aspect that needs to be explored is characterization of personages in the *GosJud*. This aspect of narrative criticism has been largely ignored in relation to the *GosJud* and other apocryphal texts in general. What is the message of this unique gospel and how does it truly understand Jesus and the notorious disciple? M. A. Powell defines characterization as, “the actors in a story, the ones who carry out the various activities that comprise the plot.”⁴³ *In order to fully understand Judas’ role as the hero or antihero of the plot, it is essential to conduct a narrative-critical analysis of the text. Since Judas is closely connected to sacrifice and salvation, identifying his character traits and his role in this gospel may shed light on these two important themes. It is my understanding that a close examination of Judas’ role will help to better define salvation and sacrifice in the GosJud.* There is very little research on major themes within this gospel. Not enough attention has been paid in previous studies to the relationship that exists between salvation and sacrifice and how this relates to the character of Judas.

Epistemology and Methodology

EPISTEMOLOGY

Epistemological Considerations

At this stage of my thesis, I must say a few words concerning the various approaches I will be using in my exegesis of the Judas gospel. In my research, I will primarily work from a

⁴³ M. A. Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* Guides to Biblical Scholarship, New Testament Series, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 51.

synchronic perspective. At times, it is necessary for this study to combine synchronic and diachronic methods. This means that the methods I will use have different epistemologies which might seem incompatible with one another. For literary methods – which are usually synchronic in nature – texts have all the necessary keys to their own interpretation, and no external reference is needed to decipher their meaning. Diachronic approaches, such as the historical-critical method, often call upon external material to shed light on the meaning of a text. Synchronic approaches are more interested in meaning, while diachronic tools of interpretation search for clues into the history behind the text. An important epistemological question is whether or not texts reflect any degree of historical reliability (or reality).⁴⁴ Most literary approaches would say no, whereas diachronic approaches would favour a positive answer to that question. My perspective is that texts should first of all be understood on their own terms. This is why I begin my research with synchronic observations. But this perspective does not give full justice to the *GosJud*. It is difficult to bypass the fact that such texts address issues and concerns of early Christian and Gnostic communities. Even if the history of such communities is interpreted history, and thus a literary construction, we can still have a sense of what the “implied author” attempted to communicate to his “implied audience” through careful historical-critical exegesis. This being said, I am quite aware that scholars are inseparably linked to their object of study and that interpretation is not without presuppositions.

METHODOLOGY

Methodological Considerations

⁴⁴ For more on the issue of texts and reality, see B. Lategan and W. Vorster, *Text and Reality: Aspects of Reference in Biblical Texts* (SBLSS), (Philadelphia, Fortress, Press, 1985).

As mentioned previously, no single approach to reading a text can do justice, especially for Biblical texts which have complex histories of compilation and content. Here is a list of the various steps of my inquiry and the interpretative tools I will use in my study of the *GosJud*.

Translation and Philology

My first initiative will be to translate the necessary texts from their known original language. I will begin by translating the *GosJud* from Coptic into English. Although it is suspected that this gospel was originally written in Greek, the only surviving copy exists in Coptic. Since there is only one copy of the *GosJud*, textual criticism is not applicable. I will be consulting English translations conducted by April DeConick,⁴⁵ André Gagné,⁴⁶ Karen L. King,⁴⁷ the Ohio Fragments,⁴⁸ and the Critical Edition⁴⁹ of the *GosJud*. For my translation, I will be using the Ohio Fragments and relying on the transcriptions by Rodolphe Kasser and Gregor Wurst found in the Critical Edition, as well as the edited text by Pierre Cherix.⁵⁰

Philological analysis will be crucial in determining the meaning of the nouns “salvation”⁵¹ and “sacrifice”⁵² in the *GosJud*. We will see how these substantives differ in

⁴⁵ DeConick, *Thirteenth Apostle*, 71-96.

⁴⁶ André Gagné, “A Critical Note on the Meaning of *apofasis* in *Gospel of Judas* 33:1.” *LTP* 63/2 (2007): 377-83.

⁴⁷ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas*, 109-22.

⁴⁸ The newly restored Ohio Fragments can be accessed through M. Mayer’s website: <http://www.chapman.edu/wilkinson/religion/faculty/meyer/NewFragments.asp>

⁴⁹ Kasser, *Codex Tchacos: Critical Edition*, 184-235.

⁵⁰ P. Cherix’s edited text of the *GosJud* can be found at: <http://www.coptica.ch/223222/index.html>

⁵¹ Greek: *swthri*, a; Coptic: *oudai*

⁵² Greek: *qu, w, qusi*, a; Coptic: *qusiase*

meaning depending on the context where they are found. The *TDNT*⁵³ and Crum's Coptic dictionary⁵⁴ will be valuable tools for this type of detailed study.

Narrative Criticism

The synchronic methods of interpretation which will be used in this study will begin with a narrative approach. In contrast to historical approaches, narrative criticism is interested in the world of the text and its rhetorical effect on the reader. This method will be part of my synchronic analysis of the *GosJud*. Few scholars have adopted such an approach in their interpretation of the Judas gospel. I would like to let the text speak for itself. In my thesis, I will examine the various elements such as: the implied author, implied reader, narrative voice, plot, setting, characterization, point of view, narrative time, and various literary techniques.⁵⁵ Some of the other literary techniques which I will be using belong to the world of rhetorical criticism. It is my understanding that rhetorical devices can be used in conjunction with narrative criticism.⁵⁶

Characterization of Judas Iscariot:

In my narrative analysis, I will dedicate more time to better understanding the character of Judas Iscariot. I suspect that a character analysis of Judas will further reveal the connections between salvation and sacrifice, and will help to better define these two concepts within the narrative. In this approach there is an interest in how the characters impact the implied reader,

⁵³ G. W. Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985).

⁵⁴ W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1939).

⁵⁵ I. Boxall, *New Testament Interpretation* (Norwich: SCM Press, 2007), 116-18.

⁵⁶ In chapter three I use a chiasmic structure, which is a rhetorical device.

creating a sense of empathy, sympathy, or antipathy.⁵⁷ Judas is an enigmatic figure and a certain amount of ambiguity and vagueness surround his identity. According to P. Merenlahti, “characters in the gospels are only in the process of becoming what they are. Rather than being static elements of design picked by a master author to fill a distinct literary or rhetorical purpose, they are constantly being reshaped by distinct ideological dynamics.”⁵⁸ I will also give special attention to the plot of the *GosJud*. The plot⁵⁹ includes an analysis of the gospel’s beginning, the sequence of events that build to the climax, and the ending. The arrangement and ordering of actions and events can be very important in understanding the overall message of the Judas gospel.

Scholars studying the *GosJud* have polarized themselves as either viewing the character⁶⁰ of Judas Iscariot as heroic or as demonic within this gospel.⁶¹ When these sources are examined, however, it becomes evident that a narrative-critical analysis of the *GosJud* using a synchronic approach has yet to be done. This type of analysis will allow for an assessment of the character of Judas, determining if he is presented positively or negatively.⁶² The writer of the Judas gospel

⁵⁷ The implied reader is the one which would have read this copy of the *GosJud* in the third century. This study does not address the reader response of the modern reader.

⁵⁸ P. Merenlahti, “Characters in the Making,” in *Poetics for the Gospels: Rethinking Narrative Criticism*. (Studies of the New Testament and its World; London: T&T Clark, 2003), 77.

⁵⁹ Cuddon and Preston define the plot as: “The plan, design, scheme or pattern of events in a play, poem or work of fiction; and further, the organization of incident and character in such a way as to induce curiosity and suspense in the spectator or reader. In the space / time continuum of plot the continual question operates in three tenses: Why did this happen? Why is this happening? What is going to happen next-and why? (To which may be added: And is anything going to happen?)”; (J. A. Cuddon and C. E. Preston, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* [Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998], 676).

⁶⁰ “Character is an individual or collective figure in the narrative, assuming a role in the plot.” D. Marguerat and Y. Bourquin, “The Characters,” in *How to Read Bible Stories. An Introduction to Narrative Criticism* (trans. J. Bowden; London: SCM Press, 1999), 201.

⁶¹ See for examples: DeConick, *Thirteenth Apostle*, 117-33.

⁶² Scholars such as A. DeConick and M. Meyer have made conclusions concerning Judas’ character without using narrative criticism to analyze his characterization. Recently, A. Marjanen has written an article which attempts to assess to what degree the *GosJud* rehabilitates Judas Iscariot; see A. Marjanen, “Does the Gospel of Judas Rehabilitate Judas Iscariot?” in *Gelitten - Gestorben - Auferstanden. Passions- und Ostertraditionen im antiken*

used the method of characterization to develop characters within the narrative.⁶³ The text of the *GosJud* being a gospel narrative lends itself easily to this type of approach. The characters are the actors in the story, who carry out the activities that comprise the narrative. Therefore, in addition to characterization, it is necessary for this literary analysis to include an inspection of the plot, setting, point of view, shape of the narrative, literary techniques, and narrative time.

Aristotle is one of the most important ancient figures in Western thought. It is therefore most logical to begin with his work entitled *Poetics*. His profound influence on philosophical and theological thinking facilitates the necessity to discuss his understanding of plot and character.⁶⁴ In addition to this, it is reasonable to assume that the implied author of the *GosJud* would have been exposed to Hellenistic Egypt.⁶⁵ According to Aristotle, “Since the objects of imitation are men in action, and these men must be either of a higher or lower type (for moral character mainly answers to these divisions, goodness and badness being the distinguishing marks of moral differences), it follows that we must represent men either as better than in real life, or as worse, or as they are.”⁶⁶ It is in this sense that the implied author of the *GosJud* has a hand in developing the characters of the gospel, adjusting the form accordingly. Aristotle is precise in

Christentum, ed. by Tobias Nicklas, Andreas Merkt and Joseph Verheyden (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 209-24.

⁶³ R. A. Culpepper explains that, “Given the predilection of people to be interested in people, it is not surprising that the success of a literary work depends heavily on whether its characters are convincing, in some general sense “life-like,” and interesting.” R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 101.

⁶⁴ Culpepper frequently states the importance of *Poetics*. He says, “Aristotle’s influence has been so profound that the formal analysis of literature is described as ‘poetics,’ and it is possible to speak of some contemporary literary critics as Neo-Aristotelians.” Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 81.

⁶⁵ Most likely this specific copy of the *GosJud* from Codex Tchacos can be dated from the end of the third century to the beginning of the fourth century. C. A. Evans explains that, “The National Geographic Society wisely commissioned a series of tests to be undertaken, including carbon 14, analysis of the ink, and various forms of imaging, to ascertain the age and authenticity of the codex. Carbon 14 dates the codex to A.D. 220–340.” (C. A. Evans, “Understanding the Gospel of Judas,” 562). The carbon 14 testing was undertaken by Timothy Jull of the Department of Physics, University of Arizona.

⁶⁶ Aristotle, *Poetics*, (trans. S.H. Butcher; New York: Forgotten Books, 2007), 3. *Poetics* 1448^a.

describing his understanding of character, stating that, “By character I mean that in virtue of which we ascribe certain qualities to the agents.”⁶⁷ This makes it possible to label Judas as either a positive or negative moral character in the *GosJud*.

For Aristotle, “the plot is the imitation of the action: for by plot I here mean the arrangement of the incidents.”⁶⁸ He continues to stress the importance of plot, and that it must function as a whole. He explains that:

A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but nothing following it. A middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard, but conform to these principles.⁶⁹

The *GosJud* conforms to this model; therefore, it is possible to discuss its plot in this Aristotelian manner. According to M. H. Abrams, “The plot in a dramatic or narrative work is the structure of its actions, as these are ordered and rendered toward achieving particular emotional and artistic effects.”⁷⁰ Since this is a concise synthesis of the primary elements of plot, it will be used in conjunction with Aristotle’s *Poetics*.⁷¹

Contemporary concepts of narrative criticism will be used in addition to Aristotle. Characterization is “the process through which the implied author provides the implied reader with what is necessary to reconstruct a character from the narrative.”⁷² As a result of this process,

⁶⁷ Ibid., 12.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 12.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 15. *Poetics* 1450^b 25-35.

⁷⁰ M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1971), 127.

⁷¹ Culpepper concludes that the primary elements of “plot” “are the sequence, causality, unity, and affective power of a narrative. It is no surprise that these four constitutive features closely resemble Aristotle’s “essential characteristics of a plot”: order, amplitude, unit, and probable and necessary connection.” (Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 80).

⁷² Powell, “Characters,” 52.

hypotheses concerning the implied author and the implied reader will be presented. It is not possible to speak of the actual author of the *GosJud*, but the text implies a certain type of author. The implied reader is one who is an ideal audience for the specific text, one “who always understands and responds to the text in the way that it seems to imply an attentive reader should.”⁷³ In this particular case, it is a Gnostic Christian community who is the most probable intended addressees.⁷⁴ The implied author reveals characters to the reader by using two techniques: (1) *showing*, and (2) *telling*. Through speech and actions, an implied author is able to *show* the reader what the character is like. The implied author can also use the voice of the narrator to directly *tell* the reader specific attributes of a character.⁷⁵ The narrator is a rhetorical device used by the implied reader, so that “narrators vary with respect to how much they know, how much they tell, and when they tell the reader what must be known in order to understand the narrative world and its character.”⁷⁶ Through close examination of specific pericopae from the *GosJud*, the character of Judas will be illuminated. I am interested not only in the meaning of texts, but also with their production *milieu*. I believe that it is possible to make conclusions concerning the historical community by using narrative criticism.

The characterization of Judas Iscariot in the *GosJud* will be assessed by examining four micro-narratives. They will be treated under four headings: The Incipit (33.1-21); The Perfect Man (33.22-36.10); Judas’ Fate as the Thirteenth Demon (43.1-47.5); Sacrifices to Saklas (55.21-58.28). It is now time to focus on the opening words of the *GosJud*. The first chapter is dedicated to the *incipit* of the *GosJud*. It is here that I argue that the *incipit* serves as the

⁷³ Boxall, *New Testament Interpretation*, 116.

⁷⁴ Gnostics can only be called Christians when they perceive Jesus Christ as being the divine revealer or bearer of saving *gnosis*. Birger A. Pearson refers to this as a “variety of Christianity, which emphasizes self-knowledge.” (B. A. Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007], 4).

⁷⁵ Powell, “Characters,” 52.

⁷⁶ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 18.

hermeneutical key for understanding the macro-narrative. The first page of the Judas gospel introduces the three primary characters: Jesus, Judas, and the disciples.⁷⁷ The narrator gives a retrospective account of Jesus' ministry and the calling of the disciples. Most importantly, the implied reader is told that the *GosJud* is "The secret word of the denial by which Jesus spoke with Judas Iscariot, during eight days, three days before he did Passover" (33.1-6). This theme of *denial* will be present throughout the rest of the gospel. The *incipit* provides the implied reader with the necessary tools for interpreting the gospel's central message concerning salvation.

CHAPTER ONE: THE SECRET WORD OF THE DENIAL

1.1 *The Incipit* (33.1-21)

⁷⁷ The first page of the *GosJud* is page 33 of the Codex Tchacos.

The introduction of a text is of the utmost importance, for it must captivate the attention of its audience. In addition to this, it establishes the premises of the content to follow and forms a connection with the addressees. The *incipit* of the *GosJud* spans nearly the entire first page of the tractate.⁷⁸ It provides the necessary background information for the reader that will be essential for the interpretation of the macro-narrative.⁷⁹ Currently, there is only one known copy of the *GosJud*. This text is from the late third century, and will therefore be studied in this form.⁸⁰ It may be hypothesized that the *incipit* is part of a later edition to the *GosJud* that Irenaeus claims to know of, but this cannot be known with certainty. The *incipit* is undoubtedly an essential aspect of this gospel story.

The narrator takes the lead role in the *incipit*, announcing that the narrative to follow is “The secret word of the denial” (33.1-2), and presenting the main characters who will occupy the discourse. The choice and characterization of interlocutors for a dialogue must be important to the implied author, for it is intimately related to the development of the argument, and so to the precise thought expressed. In this way, “The secret word of the denial” (33.1-2), functions as the hermeneutical key, meaning that it is the *denial* of true salvation for Judas and the human generation that he is part of. This elucidates the relationship between Jesus and Judas, and the role that the betrayer will play. This text is not simply a “declaration” or “account.”⁸¹ The *GosJud* reveals the mysteries of the kingdom, and separates those who will not be part of it.

⁷⁸ An *incipit* is often the first few words or the first sentence of the beginning of a text. I argue that the *incipit* of the *GosJud* extends beyond the opening line to form an introduction to the macro-narrative.

⁷⁹ It is here that the reader becomes informed of the “who” (Jesus, Judas, and the disciples), “what” (secret word of denial), “where” (Judea), “when” (during eight days, three days before the Passover), and “how” (Jesus came to earth performing miracles and wonders for the salvation of humanity) of the narrative which is to follow.

⁸⁰ Carbon-14 dating confirms a mean date of 280 CE to this copy of the *GosJud*. If Irenaeus is speaking of the same Judas gospel, then the original was likely written in 150 CE. Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot*, 8.

⁸¹ Kasser, *Judas: Second Edition*, 29.

Text:

[33] plogo[s] etHh?p/ Ntapofa | s?is N[ta Í]h?s SaJe mN Íoudas | [pi]s?k?ariwt[hs] NHhtF% ^{vac} N | [S]moun nHooou Haqh NSo | [m]nÍt nHooou empateFR | p?asxa NtareFouwn\H e | bol HiJM pkaH aFei@e? nHN | maÍn mN HNnoG NS[p]h?re | epeuJ?a?Í N?t?m?Nt@É[m]e? : | auw !HoÍne men eu[moo]S?e? | HN teHih ntdikaíos[u]n?h : | Hnkooue eumooSe? [H]n? teu | parabasis : | aumou[te] de : | epmN?t?s?n?o?o?us m?[ma]qh | t?hs a?FarJ?[ei] nSa[J]e nM | mau eMmês?thri[o]n? etHi | JN pkosmos auw netna | S?w?p?e? S?abol ouhpe de | [n]sop/ ma?FouonHF eneF | maqhths alla NIHrot >-- | Sak!He eroF HN teumhte

Translation:

[33] The secret word of the denial by which Jesus spoke with Judas Iscariot, during eight days, three days before he did Passover. When he appeared on the earth, he performed signs and great miracles for the salvation of humanity. And some walked in the way of righteousness while some walked in their sin, the twelve disciples were called. He began to speak with them about the mysteries which are beyond the cosmos and those things which will happen in the end. A number of times he did not appear to his disciples but as an apparition they would find him in their midst.

NARRATOR:

The design of the *GosJud* is *in medias res*, meaning that the story is in the middle of the plot. This gospel story begins with the omniscient, extradiegetic narrator⁸² employing the narrative device *telling*. In this way, the narrator introduces the characters and describes the preliminary situation. The narrator informs the reader that this narrative is plogo[s] etHh?p/ Ntapofas?is N[ta Í]h?s SaJe mN Íoudas [pi]s?k?ariwt[hs] NHhtF% N [S]moun nHooou Ha qh NSo [m]nÍt nHooou empateFRp?asxa, which I translate: “The secret word of the denial by which Jesus spoke with Judas Iscariot, during eight days, three days before he did Passover.”⁸³ This phrase suggests a triad of meaning on three separate planes, what I call: *ideological*, *personage*, and *temporal*.⁸⁴

⁸² An extradiegetic narrator is one who exists outside of the fictional world of the narrative, and is therefore, not an active character in the story.

⁸³ *GosJud* 33,1-6.

⁸⁴ B. Uspensky, *A Poetics of Composition*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 6.

Compare B. Uspensky’s five “planes” of point of view: the ideological (evaluative norms), the phraseological (speech patterns), the spatial (location of the narrator), the temporal (the time of the narrator), and the psychological (internal and external to the character).

It is by way of the *ideological* plane that the narrator communicates to the reader that the macro-narrative is the secret (or hidden) word of the *denial* of the human generation. The implied author will later explain that the human generation includes Judas and the other disciples. The narrator relays a specific comprehensive worldview which will be contained within the text. The first section of this opening phrase, plogo[s] etHh?p/,⁸⁵ is unambiguous since it can literally be translated as, “the word which is secret.” The next portion of the phrase, Ntapofas?is, is more challenging to translate. The Greco-Coptic feminine noun, apofasis, appears to be polysemic. The NGS team of Coptic specialists translate this feminine noun as “declaration,” explaining in the Second Edition that this is synonymous with “account” and “treatise.”⁸⁶ According to the NGS, this interpretation of apofasis follows pseudo-Hippolytus’ term in *Refutatio omnium haeresium* 6.9.4-18.7 in relation to a work by Simon Magus. On the other hand, Gensine Schenke Robinson understands the meaning of apofasis to be “judgement.” She explains that judgement is “exactly what Jesus is about to convey, namely a final eschatological verdict over the Orthodox Church along with the entire world and its archontic ruler.”⁸⁷ Robinson’s definition does emphasize the significance of this opening phrase; however, I have chosen an alternative interpretation.

It is my understanding that the most plausible rendition of apofasis is *denial*.⁸⁸ As a *denial*, the narrator is indicating the type of narrative which is about to unfold before the reader. When

⁸⁵ p: *the*, definite article (masculine, singular); logo[s]: *word*, Greco-Coptic noun (masculine, singular); et: *which*, relative pronoun; Hhp/: *secret*, Qualitative verb.

⁸⁶ Kasser, *Judas: Second Edition*, 29.

⁸⁷ Robinson, “The Relationship of the Gospel of Judas to the New Testament and to Sethianism,” 85.

⁸⁸ I will not repeat the philological analysis already conducted by A. Gagné; for more details see, Gagné, “Meaning of apofasis,” 380. Gagné explains that apofasis may derive from the word α0πο/φhmi. In this sense it would mean “denial”, “negation” or “exclusion”.

the overall viewpoint of the macro-narrative is considered, *denial* fits well into what the narrator is communicating by use of the *ideological* plane.

Immediately following this sequence, the narrator employs the *personage* plane in order to introduce the two main characters; Jesus and Judas. The narrator informs the implied reader that Jesus spoke with Judas the Iscariot by using the phrase: [!h?s SaJe mN loudas [pi]s?k?ariwt[hs]. This seemingly simple proposition is loaded with implications for the subsequent reading of the narrative. The “secret word of the denial” will be revealed through dialogue between Jesus and Judas. The implied reader is now better able to understand how the text will proceed since it is clear that Jesus spoke in conversation with Judas by the secret word. At this point, one already knows that these two characters will play an important role in the development of the plot. If the implied reader had previous knowledge of Judas and his role in the arrest and subsequent crucifixion of Jesus, then the narrator is using the *personage* plane in order to captivate the attention of the audience.

According to the narrator’s specific use of the *personage* plane, it is possible that the implied reader was previously acquainted with the figures of Jesus and Judas. The *nomina sacra* [!h?s is not used again within the *incipit*. Instead, the narrator employs ellipsis⁸⁹ as a rhetorical device, and uses the personal suffix in the third person, masculine, singular form to speak of an implicit “he”. The narrator must be assuming that the reader would understand that the “he” is none other than Jesus, mentioned as [!h?s earlier in the text. The implied reader must be able to make this connection without confusing the “he” as being loudas piskariwths. The implied reader, therefore, must already believe Jesus to be a divine revealer and miracle worker.

⁸⁹ Ellipsis is a rhetorical device, whereby a word is omitted since it is implied by a previous clause.

The *temporal* plane is the narrative time or story space which the story will cover. The narrator explicitly describes the period of time of the *GosJud* as being: "during eight days, three days before he did Passover". The *GosJud* is not concerned with the entire earthly ministry of Jesus since it does not discuss the various details of his birth, miracles, travels, or healings. This is not to say that the implied audience was not interested in this information. If the implied readers are attracted to the figure of Jesus, it is most likely that they were well aware of the other reports of his life and ministry.

It is Frank Williams's opinion that the time frame given in the *incipit* serves the narrative in three ways. He says,

The apparent purposes of this dating are three: to place the supper at which Jesus forbade the Eucharist well before Passover, thus making it clear that he did not institute the Eucharistic rite; to replace the unedifying narrative of his visit to the Temple with something better in keeping with his dignity; and to allow Jesus opportunity during his earthly ministry to make the revelations which complete the mysteries "he began to speak" with all twelve disciples (33.15-16).⁹⁰

The implied author does appear to capitalize on having the narrative take place in the days leading up to the crucifixion.

The reliable⁹¹ narrator does go on to explain that the Jesus mentioned previously is in fact a miracle worker, saying that "When he appeared on the earth, he performed signs and great miracles for the salvation of humanity". This is a brief overview of Jesus' life. It is the *temporal* plane indicated by the narrator that restricts the narrative. Since the

⁹⁰ F. Williams, "The Gospel of Judas: Its Polemic, Its Exegesis, and Its Place in Church History," *VC* 62 (2008), 384.

⁹¹ "The process of storytelling, however, may involve an implicit contract between author and reader in which the latter agrees to trust the narrator." (Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 25).

readers know that the story to be told is taking place during the week before Passover, and even more specifically as three days before the passion, they can presuppose the exclusion of certain details of the earthly ministry. Readers must therefore be well familiar with the figure of Jesus.

In two recent articles, Gesine Schenke Robinson's work has been devoted to understanding the chronology of this gospel story.⁹² In an appendix to her 2008 article is her English translation of the Judas gospel. In her version of the text, the *incipit* reads, "The secret declaration of judgement that Jesus communicated to Judas Iscariot on eight days, (ending) three days before he (allegedly) suffered."⁹³ Her translation differs from my own in various ways, most obviously affecting the *ideological* plane.⁹⁴ However, it is her understanding of the story space which I am interested in since this has a direct influence on the *temporal* plane of the narrative. According to Robinson, the *GosJud* can be divided into eight distinctive and consecutive days.⁹⁵ Robinson is convinced that because the *incipit* indicates that the conversation between Jesus and Judas occurred during eight days, then the text must span over the course of eight days. Her hypothesis is logical, yet her analysis is problematic when the text is examined.

The anonymous narrator has left three separate temporal markers in the narrative. The first day immediately follows the *incipit*, beginning at 33.23-24. The narrator indicates that one day Jesus was with his disciples. The second day comes a few pages later and introduces the next scene. This occurs at 36.11-12 when Jesus returns in the morning after his abrupt departure subsequent to Judas' first sequence of questions. The implied reader is informed by the narrator

⁹² See G. S. Robinson, "The Relationship of the Gospel of Judas to the New Testament and to Sethianism," 63-98 and G. S. Robinson, "The Gospel of Judas in Light of the New Testament and Early Christianity," 98-107.

⁹³ Robinson, "The Relationship of the Gospel of Judas to the New Testament and to Sethianism," 85. Parentheses indicate material added by Robinson that is not found in the original manuscript. It is her opinion that by supplying "ending" and "allegedly" the meaning of the *incipit* is clarified.

⁹⁴ The variances between my translation and that of Robinson's is due to our differing understandings of *plogos* and *apofasis*.

⁹⁵ Day one: 33.22-36.11; Day two: 36.11-37.20; Day three: 37.20-42; Day four: 42-44.14; Day five: 44.15-47.1; Day six: 47.1-53.4; Day seven: 53.5-54.2; Day eight: 54.3-58.26.

that, “When morning came, Jesus appeared to his disciples.”⁹⁶ During this second day Jesus again greatly troubles his disciples. The third day follows these events. This time the implied reader is not told that Jesus left his disciples, but is only informed that once again, “another day, Jesus came to them.”⁹⁷ This is the last of the temporal markers left as clues for the audience. Jesus departs from the presence of his disciples two more times later in the narrative; however, claiming these incidents as a sign of a new day is speculative.⁹⁸ It is possible that some of this information is lost in lacunae. Yet, with the new Ohio Fragments,⁹⁹ this is a less likely assumption because no new indications of days have surfaced from what has been restored. The *temporal* plane of the *GosJud* may in fact occur over the eight days leading up to the three days before Jesus’ crucifixion, and it is unnecessary to repeat this since the narrator has already indicated this information within the *incipit*. Or, perhaps the *temporal* plane of the narrative has been misinterpreted, and takes place over the course of three days. At this point in time, with the sole manuscript of the *GosJud* in possession, there are three distinct temporal references. The meaning of this remains unclear.

CHARACTERS:

This opening statement introduces the characters who will have a place within the *GosJud*. Namely, in order of appearance this includes: Jesus, Judas, and the disciples. As an example of this, Culpepper says of the Gospel according to John that, “The evangelist is not a novelist whose great concern is full-blown development of his characters. Most of the characters

⁹⁶ *GosJud* 36.11-12.

⁹⁷ *GosJud* 37.20-21.

⁹⁸ 42.22-24 (provided by the Ohio Fragments); 44.13-14.

⁹⁹ As previously mentioned, the newly restored Ohio Fragments can be accessed through Marvin Mayer’s website: <http://www.chapman.edu/wilkinson/religion/faculty/meyer/NewFragments.asp>

appear on the literary stage only long enough to fulfill their role in the evangelist's representation of Jesus and the responses to him. As a result, one is almost forced to consider the characters in terms of their commissions, plot functions, and representational value."¹⁰⁰ The *GosJud* differs from this New Testament approach because it does not have the numerous minor characters that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John have. The author of the *GosJud* specifically chose only three characters to act out the plot. No additional characters are present or introduced until the high priests and scribes come into play in the final scene of the gospel (58.10-13).

Jesus:

Jesus is the first character to be mentioned and as such quickly establishes his importance within the narrative. Immediately, Jesus is morphed into a round character. The *incipit* provides the information needed to understand the implied author and the implied reader. Through the act of *telling* the narrator describes Jesus as a: (1) miracle worker, (2) saviour of humanity,¹⁰¹ (3) revealer of divine mysteries,¹⁰² (4) eschatological preacher, and (5) divine figure who

¹⁰⁰ Culpeper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 102.

¹⁰¹ The *incipit* tells the reader that: When he appeared on the earth, he performed signs and great miracles for the salvation of humanity. The acts of Jesus are what enable salvation for humanity. This does not appear to be sarcasm or intended to mock and ridicule what would become the orthodox scriptures (i.e. the four gospels of the New Testament). The heresiologists, such as Irenaeus, Epiphanius, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Tertullian, and Pseudo-Tertullian, described the Gnostics in ways that do not always directly correspond to what is found in the Nag Hammadi Codices. The Church fathers were polemicizing against the Gnostics, and until the discovery of the Nag Hammadi library in 1945, this was the only information that scholars had concerning the issue of the identity of Gnostics and their place in the history of Early Christianity. Jesus is presented in a positive light throughout the narrative, therefore making it unlikely that the implied author would be offering a harsh criticism of him. The *GosJud* is a polemical text, but in this instance the implied author may have been genuine in the presentation of this statement. Although, this may seem peculiar considering the elitism presented in the Judas gospel, many of the questions asked by Judas are directly related to the fate of the human generation. Clearly this was a concern for the community. The present study is focused on the *GosJud* which is only one of the four texts contained within the Codex Tchacos. A comprehensive study of the Codex Tchacos may reveal a unified soteriology.

¹⁰² According to the Sethian narrative there is tension between Sophia (wisdom) and Ialdabaoth (the evil creator god). "Ialdabaoth works to keep human beings distracted and ignorant of the supreme God and their true nature so that the spirit will not know about the supreme God, nor be able to find its way home. Sophia works along with an Illuminator sent down from the Father [the supreme God] to redeem the spirit and return it to the supreme God, to

transfigures into an apparition. Already at this early point, it is implied that Jesus consists of two distinct entities within a singular person on a *temporal* plane. Jesus is simultaneously spirit (heavenly) and flesh (earthly). The meaning of N!Hrot has been under scholarly investigation since the release of the *GosJud*, but unfortunately no agreement has been reached. The Critical Edition of the *GosJud* explains in a footnote that the meaning of N!Hrot is unclear. Potentially it is a form of the Bohairic Coptic word CroT meaning “child”. However, Jesus is never said to be a child in the dialogue of the narrative. Nor is he described as transfiguring himself into other forms, making the translation “child” unfitting. This obscure word may be a form of the Bohairic Coptic word HorF% or Hort, meaning “apparition” or “phantom”. There is also the possibility that it is an unknown word, yet to be determined by Coptic specialists.¹⁰³ In my translation, I have chosen to translate N!Hrot as “apparition” because it seems to best explain Jesus’ continual acts of appearing and disappearing in the *GosJud*.

Judas Iscariot:

Judas is the next character to be named by the narrator. The full name of Judas is provided, and it may be postulated that this is intentionally done to avoid confusion. The Judas of this text is the infamous Judas Iscariot, not to be mistaken for any other.¹⁰⁴ Nothing is said concerning his specific character traits. The narrator does not tell or show the implied reader who or what Judas is like. Evidently, the mere utterance of his name is enough to captivate the attention of the implied reader; nothing more needs to be said at this point. Unlike the canonical

repair the rupture, to assist God in saving himself.” (DeConick, *Thirteenth Apostle*, 43). In the *GosJud*, Jesus is established as this Illuminator; he is the redeemer.

¹⁰³ Kasser, *Codex Tchacos: Critical Edition*, 185.

¹⁰⁴ Perhaps Didymus Judas Thomas (didumos loudas qwmas) from the Gospel According to Thomas.

gospels, Judas is not initially described as the one who handed over Jesus.¹⁰⁵ This should not be construed as implying that in this text Judas is deprived of this villainous title. By means of the *ideological* plane, the narrator has already indicated the inevitable fate which Judas will encounter. The implied reader already knows that Judas will be *denied*, and hence will continue reading the narrative with this interpretative lens. The *GosJud* does not present a new positive image of Judas. One is not informed in the same canonical style, but the message appears to be similar.

The Disciples:

The twelve disciples arrive on the scene in a manner which is familiar with the canonical story. They are described as being called.¹⁰⁶ Yet, unlike the synoptic gospels, the twelve disciples remain nameless. The sole exception to this is the naming of Judas Iscariot. The narrator explains at 33.10-15 that, “And some walked in the way of righteousness while some walked in their sin, the twelve disciples were called.” It appears as though the twelve were called as a result of the nature of humanity. This could possibly imply that in some way the disciples bring aid to humanity. Harsh criticism of the disciples has not yet occurred in the narrative, as they are at the

¹⁰⁵ Compare the canonical texts where Judas is introduced as the one who betrayed Jesus: Mark 3:19; Matthew 10:4; Luke: 6:16; John 6:71. For example, Mark 3:19 states: *kai. vIou, dan vIskariw, q o[j kai. pare, dwken auvto, n.* I translate this as: and Judas Iscariot who handed him over. This difference of introduction may have also contributed in part to the NGS interpretation of Judas as the hero of this narrative. As the gospel story progresses, the negative depiction of Judas becomes more clear. The *GosJud* does not begin by saying that Judas is the betrayer, but instead, the focus is on Judas’ *denial*.

¹⁰⁶ For Jesus calling the disciples in the New Testament see: Mark 3:13-19; Matthew 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16. The Gospel according to John presents the calling of disciples in a different manner. Jesus calls the first disciples in 1:37-51. Jesus is said to have twelve disciples, such as mentioned at 6:67. The first time John’s audience becomes acquainted with Judas is at 6:71.

outset presented in a neutral light. Perhaps this is another example of how the narrator sets up the implied reader for more emphasis when the disciples enter the next scene.

It is crucial to note that the narrator, through *telling*, informs the implied reader that: “He began to speak with them about the mysteries which are beyond the world and those things which will happen in the end” (33.15-18). The pronoun “them”¹⁰⁷ refers to the disciples, not to those called righteous or sinful. The disciples do receive revelations from Jesus, but to what extent is left unknown to the implied reader. The most significant aspect of this statement is that the disciples are deemed worthy by Jesus to obtain guidance concerning divine matters. Even if the disciples are condemned by Jesus later in the text, they still acquire a degree of *gnosis*. Also of special interest in this section, is that here Judas is a part of the twelve disciples. He was called as the other disciples were, and shares in the knowledge of the mysteries and the eschaton. Judas will continue to be one of the twelve until he is told by Jesus to separate from the group. Williams proposes that, “(Jesus only) *began* to speak with them about the mysteries beyond the world (33.15-18), is meant to suggest that he told the Twelve some of the truth but not much of it. For Gnostics, then, the four gospels are useful but insufficient.”¹⁰⁸ Williams is correct in saying that the text clearly indicates that the disciples did receive some teachings from Jesus. As Jesus’ disciples, this should be expected regardless of the harsh treatment they undergo in the narrative. However, this statement does not seem to be in relation to the New Testament gospels and their inadequacies, but instead to Jesus’ earthly ministry as an eschatological preacher.

PLOT:

¹⁰⁷ Written as nMmau in the text.

¹⁰⁸ Williams, “The Gospel of Judas: Its Polemic, Its Exegesis, and Its Place in Church History,” 385.

It is early in the narrative to discuss “the plot”; however, the *incipit* plays a principal role in the *GosJud* and therefore must be addressed. The essential features of plot are “the sequence, causality, unity, and affective power of a narrative.”¹⁰⁹ The *incipit* serves as the hermeneutical key to understanding the plot of the Judas gospel. Since the *incipit* begins the narrative *in medias res*,¹¹⁰ it is here that the implied author is able to equip the audience with the necessary tools for decoding the gospel message by giving a retrospective account of Jesus’ ministry and mission. It is in this way that the implied author is making use of the narrative pattern known as *preparation*.¹¹¹ Important information is relayed to the audience in order to bring clarity to the future events presented later in the narrative. The *ideological* plane serves to identify the set of beliefs which the narrator indicates as being the order of reality. The main characters are introduced by way of the *personage* plane. The implied reader is certainly aware that the main intent is to present the dialogue between Jesus and Judas; this is the basis to the plot of the narrative. The other significant yet more abstract characters are also introduced; this includes the narrator, humanity, and the disciples. The story space is also established here. It is because of the *temporal* plane, that the implied reader is informed that the events presented happened just before the Passover.

In the next micro-narrative (33.22-36.11), Jesus, Judas, and the disciples become active actors in the story. It is the narrator who first establishes the setting of the scene but the characters quickly take over as they interact with one another. Jesus first engages with his disciples over a meal of thanksgiving. Jesus calls upon his disciples to declare who he is. The

¹⁰⁹ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 80.

¹¹⁰ As stated previously, *in medias res* refers to a story which begins in the middle of a plot, therefore making it necessary for the narrator or characters to explain earlier events.

¹¹¹ “*Preparation* refers to the inclusion of material in one part of the narrative that serves primarily to prepare the reader for what is still to come.” (Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 33).

only disciple who is bold enough to do so is Judas Iscariot. It is important to note that it is not Judas' *gnosis* but his boldness which provides him the ability to stand before Jesus. This micro-narrative is essential for understanding the relationships between the characters because they will remain consistent for the duration of the story.

CHAPTER TWO: THE CONFESSION OF JUDAS

2.1 *The Perfect Man* (33.22- 36.10)

The *incipit* defined the perimeters of the narrative, which in effect prepared the implied reader for the first scene. This is the principal opportunity to witness the interactions between Jesus and his disciples. These initial character introductions are essential for understanding their function within the narrative as a whole; therefore, one must be especially attentive. In this opening scene, Jesus is with his disciples in Judea. The disciples are engaging in a Eucharistic meal of thanksgiving over bread. Jesus laughs at the disciples and condemns their act as being

against his teachings. In doing so, Jesus makes a clear distinction between the god of the disciples and the one of whom he preaches. This creates tension in the narrative. The first scene of the gospel begins the implied author's attack on sacrificial theology. The implied reader is conscious that the narrative is around the Passover festival, so it appears appropriate that the opening scene has the disciples giving thanks over bread.

After judging the pious act of the disciples, Jesus demands that they bring forward the perfect human. Judas Iscariot is the only one able to do so. Then, Jesus separates Judas from the other disciples once he demonstrates his boldness to proclaim who sent the divine revealer. Is Judas separated because he is better or worse than the true followers of Jesus? Judas is *denied* salvation before (34.15.17) and after (35.23-27) he is separated from the other disciples. This significant act establishes the dynamics between: Jesus and Judas; Jesus and his disciples; and Judas and the disciples.

Text:

[33.22] auw aFSwpe HN Toudaia | Sa neFmaqhts nou!Ho | [o]u aFHe eroou euHmoos | eusoou\H eu'r gumnaze | etmNtnoute ntereF | t[wm]t enefmaqhts > | [34] eusoouH euHmoos [e]u'r euxa | risti eJn partos [aF]swbe | Mmaqhts[de] peJaunaF [Je] | ps!aH etbe ou kswbe nsa t[en] | euxaristia h ntanr ou p[al] | petesSe : aFouwS\F p[e] | JaF nau eewisbe NswtN | an [ou]de ete tneire Mpaei an | HN[pe]tNouws alla HN paí | e[Fna]Ji smou NGi petNnou | te[:] peJau Je p!s!aH ntok' | ... [...] . pe pShre M penou | te [:] peJaF nau nGi íhs | Je e[te]nsooune mmoei | HN ou [H]amhn [T]Jw mmos nh | tN J[e]mn lao[u]e ngenea na | souwn't HN Nrwme etnHht | thutN Nterouswtm [d]e: | epaí NGi neFmaqhts a[u] | arJei naganaktei: auw e [...] | orgh auw eJi oua eroF HN | peuHht: !!hs de NtereF | nau eteumnt' aqht [peJaF] | nau Je etbe ou apStortR | N pGwnt petNnoute etN | HhtthutN auw n[eF ...] | [35] auagan[ak]ti mn netnTuxh | pet[t]aJrhu NH[h]tthutN N N | rwme ma[reFR]parage Mprw | [me] ntelios auw nFwHerat\F | MpeMto ebol mpaprosw | pon auw auJoos throu Je | tNJoos auw MpeS peu!p!na | tolma ew!Herat\F M[peF]M: | to ebol eimh íoudas [pis]ka | riwths: aFGm Gom men [e]w | Herat\F MpeFMto eb[ol]: M | peFGm Gom de eGwS't [eH]oun | e!HraF N neFbal: al[iaN]taF | kte!HraF epa!Hou: [peJa]F naF | NGi íoudas Je Tso[o]une Je | Ntk nim auw Ntak[e] ebol: | HN naS Mma: Ntakei ebol HN | paiwn Nt!b!a!r\!!!b!h!!w paqa | natos auw pentaFtaouok | paí ete NTMpSa an Ntaouo | MpeFran íhs de eFsooune | Je Fmeoue epkeseepe et | Jose peJaF naF: Je pwr\J | ebol Mmoou: taJw erok N | Mmustrion NtmNtero | oux Hina Je ekebwk emau | alla Je ekeaS a!Hom NHou | [36] Je ouN kaiou[a] gar [n]aSwpe | epekma !Hina Je e[rep]m!nt | snoous Ns[bou] on eue | Jwk' ebol HN peunoute [:] | auw peJaF naF NGi í!o!u!d!as | Je ekaJe naí eroí naS N | !Hou auw nFSae NGi pno[G] | NH[oo]u aFlo HathF nGi íhs

Translation:

[33.22] He was in Judea with his disciples one day, he found them sitting, gathered and practicing that which is godly. When he saw his disciples [34] sitting, gathered and offering a prayer of thanksgiving (Eucharist) over the bread, he laughed. The disciples said to him, “Master, why do you laugh at our Eucharist? Or what did we do? This is what is right. He answered, saying to them, “I am not laughing at you, nor are you doing this of your own will but through this your god will receive praise. They said, “Master, you are [---] the son of our god.” Jesus said to them, “In what way do you know me? Truly I say to you, that no generation of men that are among you will know me.” But when they heard this his disciples began to be infuriated and [...] angry and blasphemed against him in their heart.¹¹² When Jesus saw that they were without heart, he said to them, “Why has your god who is within you and his [...] been agitated and angered? [35] They have become infuriated together with your souls. Whoever is strongest among men, let him bring forth the perfect man and let him stand before my face.” And they all said, “We are strong.” But their spirit¹¹³ did not dare to stand before him except Judas Iscariot. He was able to stand before him, but he was not able to look into his face or his eyes, but he turned his face away from him. Judas said to him, “I know who you are and where you come from. You come from the immortal aeon of Barbelo, and the one who sent you, this one, I am not worthy to speak his name.” Jesus knowing that he pondered on something that is exalted, said to him, “Separate from them, I shall tell you the mysteries of the kingdom not so that you will go there but you will grieve greatly, [36] for there is another who will be destined for your place, in order that the twelve disciples again shall be complete in their god.” And Judas said to him, “When will you tell me these things and when will the great days of light dawn for the generation? [...] But when he said this, Jesus ceased to be with him.

NARRATOR:

The reliable narrator introduces the next passage, which effectively closes the *incipit*. The implied reader is immediately transported into the story-space of the first scene.¹¹⁴ The *temporal* plane is described as being “one day” (33.23-24). This so-called “one day” is the first day of the story-space. It is here that the initial *temporal* plane given in the *incipit* should be re-evaluated. The narrator previously informed the reader that this gospel consists of a conversation between Jesus and Judas occurring during eight days (33.1-5). If this is the first of those eight days

¹¹² The possessive pronoun *peu* implies that the disciples are acting in unison.

¹¹³ The word *spirit* (*ṭṭna*) appears frequently in the *GosJud*: 35.7; 37.19; 43.19; 47.9; 49.16; 53.17; 53.20; 53.23; 53.25; 54.5.

¹¹⁴ The scene in this context refers to a dramatic sequence that takes place within a single locale.

previously mentioned, shall one expect to find seven more consecutive days? Unfortunately at this point in time, considering the fragmented state of the Judas gospel, this cannot be determined with accuracy.¹¹⁵

Along with the *temporal* plane of this first scene, the narrator also provides a localized setting. It is here that one learns that Jesus is with his disciples in Judea. This may provide a clue as to who the implied author and reader could have been. The location which the narrative indicates is Judea, and as trivial as this factoid may appear, is potentially helpful to understanding some aspects of the *GosJud*. This location is not as specific as could be expected from an evangelist or an eye-witness. The implied author, writing retrospectively, does not say that Jesus and his disciples are in Jerusalem.¹¹⁶ An implied reader familiar with the story of Jesus' life as presented in the canonical gospels¹¹⁷ may assume for themselves that Jesus is in Jerusalem because the *temporal* plane has already indicated that the Judas gospel occurs during the week before Passover.

Jerusalem may be the implied story space. Theoretically, this means that the exact location was trifling for both the implied reader and author. Potentially, a Gnostic-Christian audience would not have been concerned with the earthly location of Jesus' ministry and crucifixion, because that would be the domain of the lower creator god, Yaldabaoth.¹¹⁸ Such

¹¹⁵ Future studies may focus on the number of days and their subsequent meaning; however, at this point in time such a study could only yield a hypothetical theory. The present state of the *GosJud* seems to name only three days. The relevancy of the days is currently undetermined. In this study, the three days will be examined in the overall plot and structure of the Judas gospel section.

¹¹⁶ Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem: Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19:28; John 12:12.

¹¹⁷ It must be noted that the New Testament canon was not formed at the time of the writing of the *GosJud*. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are presently a part of the New Testament, were written in the first century CE, and therefore potentially available to the writer of the *GosJud*.

¹¹⁸ "The Gnostic saw evil as something inherent in the material creation itself. Therefore the created order cannot be the product of the transcendent God but must have been created by a lower divine being." (Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 106).

worldly matters would not have been the focus for a Gnostic, but instead the impartation of *gnosis* would be placed as the most vital endeavour. It is possible that an audience who was far removed from the Judean countryside would have minute concern for such geographical details. It is most likely that the *GosJud* endured numerous reduplications. As scribes copied and recopied the *GosJud* they may have had the opportunity to edit the text as well. If Judea was an overly equivocal location, then hypothetically, this would have been altered in order to assist the implied reader. The use of Judea (33.22) places the disciples in a relationship with Judaism.

The spatial point of view of this narrator is omnipresent. A narrator's omnipresence can be described as "the narrator's capacity to report from vantage-points not accessible to characters, or to jump from one to another, or to be in two places at once."¹¹⁹ The narrator is not one of the disciples, but is in the position of observing their interactions with Jesus. This is intended to make the narrator reliable. The narrator of the *GosJud* is "present" for private conversation between Jesus and his twelve disciples, as well as those between Jesus and Judas.¹²⁰ Although the narrator demonstrates omnipresence, his fluidity is limited by the implied author. The knowledge of the narrator is questionable, since it is unlikely, from a historical perspective, that he was present for these conversations.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure and Function in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 103, cf. 212.

¹²⁰ In addition to this, the narrator is also present for the interactions between Judas and the scribes in the final scene of the gospel.

¹²¹ Although for the majority of the gospel the narrator remains extradiegetic, the reader may be implied to deduce that the narrator either was present for the situations being transmitted or received the information from someone who was there and witnessed it first-hand. "By telling us what no historical person could know (e.g., conversations where only two persons were present), the narrator exposes the story to the question of how anyone could know these things. On the other hand, the authority of the narrator is elevated by the fact that he knows everything relevant for the story, and the story's verisimilitude is recovered by other means, one of which (as we have just seen) is the limitation of inside views to brief, shallow plunges which can generally be explained as retrospective insight." (Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 27).

The psychological point of view is an important aspect of the *GosJud*'s narrator. A narrator's "psychological point of view is determined by whether or not he or she is able to provide inside views of what a character is thinking, feeling, or intending."¹²² This first scene indicates that the narrator of the *GosJud* does have insight into the characters, which then must be told to the implied reader. The narrator knows that the disciples are feeling infuriated, angry, and blaspheme against Jesus in their heart (34.20-22). The implied reader would not know this information if it were not for the intuitive perception of the narrator. Following this, the narrator says that Jesus saw their lack of heart, referring to the disciples' misunderstanding. This means that the narrator has knowledge into the mind of Jesus, and is then able to tell the reader this hidden information. The narrator must therefore be omniscient.

CHARACTERS:

Characters are created by the implied author in order to fulfill a particular role in the story.¹²³ The implied author specifically chooses the characters; however, the underlying reasoning for such choices may not be immediately apparent to the implied reader. It is up to him to decode the narrative clues. Through characterization the implied author provides the implied reader with what is necessary to reconstruct a character from the narrative. The characters in this

¹²² Ibid., 21. Culpepper further explains that, "It is pointless to speculate about what the narrator does not know or knows but does not tell us. The extent of the narrator's knowledge can only be assessed from what the reader is told."

¹²³ "With regard to most literature even remotely related to the time of the Gospels, it is argued generally that characters were types rather than individuals in any sense, and that they seldom diverged from traits that were initially given to them in the narrative." (F. W. Burnett, "Characterization and Reader Construction of Characters in the Gospels," in *Characterization in Biblical Literature* [Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 1993], 6).

micro-narrative consist of Jesus, his disciples, and Judas Iscariot.¹²⁴ As previously mentioned, in the *GosJud*, the implied author employs two techniques: (1) *showing*, and (2) *telling*, in order to develop the characters.

Jesus:

Beginning in this scene, Jesus in the *GosJud* is very different from the traditional Jesus of proto-orthodox Christianity. The way in which Jesus was described in the *incipit* is similar to the canonical depiction, however, in this scene Jesus laughs at his disciples.¹²⁵ This is a peculiar behaviour compared to what is found in the canonical Gospels. April DeConick retells of her first encounter with the *GosJud*, saying, “When I first read the *Gospel of Judas* in English translation, I didn’t like it. Jesus was rude. He laughed inappropriately. He treated his twelve disciples as enemies.”¹²⁶ This “laughing Jesus”¹²⁷ can be one of the most striking features attributed to the character of Jesus in the *GosJud*. He appears to be rude to his disciples, and even mocks them with his laughter. This is further supported by the Coptic translation. The original Coptic manuscript reads *afswbe* which literally means “he laughed, mocked, or ridiculed.”¹²⁸ This laughter is directed at the twelve disciples who are gathered together and offering a prayer of thanksgiving over the bread (34.1-2).¹²⁹ The disciples are confused by Jesus’ laughter, and ask him, “Master, why are you laughing at our prayer of thanksgiving? Or what did we do? This is

¹²⁴ Jesus, Judas, and the disciples continue to be the only concrete characters within the *GosJud*, if one is to exclude the abstract characters. The high priests and scribes appear on the final page of the gospel story, and their role will be examined later when this section is analyzed.

¹²⁵ By canonical I refer to the four gospels of the NT, although in this time period (late third-century) the canon is still somewhat fluid as a concept. Similar to the NT gospels, the *GosJud* presents Jesus as appearing on earth in order to reveal the true nature of the universe and the end time.

¹²⁶ DeConick, *The Thirteenth Apostle*, 3.

¹²⁷ See Irenaeus’s *Adversus haereses* 1.24.4. For further examples of Jesus laughing also see: the *Apocryphon of John*, the *Wisdom of Jesus Christ*, the *Second Discourse of Great Seth*, and the *Revelation of Peter*.

¹²⁸ W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, 320b.

¹²⁹ This setting seems reminiscent of the last supper and the Christian celebration of the Eucharist.

what is right” (34.4-6). The disciples are not even sure if Jesus is laughing at their prayer of thanksgiving or if it is something else that they have done or said. This may be a rhetorical device used by the implied author in order to draw attention to Jesus’ reaction to the disciples’ intended act of worship.

Jesus answers the disciples by saying to them, “I am not laughing at you. You are not doing this because of your own will but because it is through this that your god will receive thanksgiving” (34.7-11). Jesus at this point in the text makes it clear to the disciples that there is a difference between the god whom they worship and the god who has sent him.¹³⁰ The disciples, then reply to Jesus by saying, “Master, you [...] are the son of our God” (34.11-12).¹³¹ The disciples do not understand what Jesus has just said to them. Jesus then *denies* the disciples salvation by saying, “Truly [I] say to you, no generation of the people that are among you will know me” (34.15-17).¹³² To know Jesus is to be saved. It is possible from this information to speculate that this group of Gnostic-Christians, who would be the implied audience, did not celebrate the Eucharist. Or, if this group did celebrate the Eucharist, they want to separate their understanding of this act from that being taught by the proto-orthodox Christian church, and perhaps even other Gnostic sects.¹³³ Gnosticism, like Christianity, would have to clearly define their understanding of the Eucharist.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ In many “gnostic” texts there is division between the Demiurge who created the material world, and the Almighty God. Yaldabaoth is the evil creator god from Jewish tradition, see for example: *Apocryphon of John*, *Hypostasis of the Archons* (86,27-31; 94,19-23), *On the Origins of the World* (II 103,8-13), *Gospel of the Egyptians* (III 58,23-29), and Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* (1.29.4; 1.30.6).

¹³¹ John 1: 49; Matthew 14:33.

¹³² This group of disciples does include Judas.

¹³³ As King and Pagels explain, “Yet the *Gospel of Judas* and other newly discovered works show that some Christian argued instead that people are gravely mistaken in worshipping such a limited, angry – even cruel – “God.” As we saw, when Jesus mocks his disciples’ Eucharist, the author of the *Gospel of Judas* says they do not realize that they worship in error – not the true God but, as Jesus tells them, “your ‘God’.” Astonished, the disciples protest that “you are the Son of our God,” but they are wrong. Jesus is the son of the true God. The *Gospel of Judas*

Frank Williams insists that, “besides documenting the catholic-gnostic dispute from the gnostic viewpoint, the *Gospel of Judas* is the earliest work we know to mount an attack on the Eucharist as such, not an attack which disputes its meaning or the manner of its celebration, but one which insists that it should not be celebrated at all.”¹³⁵ It is not clear from the *GosJud* if this group totally abandoned this ritual. However, it seems most likely that this Gnostic group would not have participated in such a ritual because it would be perpetuating the sacrificial interpretation of Jesus’ death.

Jesus advances the plot by giving the disciples instructions. As well, by being Jesus the miracle worker, saviour of humanity, and the revealer of divine mysteries, the implied reader will inevitably assume Jesus to be the hero of the story.¹³⁶ Jesus is presented in various ways, including: the displaying of his actions (33.22-34.3; 36.9-11), revealing his thoughts (34.22-23; 35.21-23), letting him speak (34.7-11, 14-17, 24-35.5; 35.23-36.4), and getting the reactions of other characters (34.4-6, 18-22; 35.6-14). His point of view is superior to other characters because he knows their inner thoughts and feelings (34.22-23; 35.21-23). Jesus only begins to laugh at the disciples when they offer a prayer of thanksgiving over the bread. Before this, Jesus is not ridiculing his disciples but instead he is with them in Judea while they are practicing that which is godly.¹³⁷

pictures such worship as a nightmare – one that distorts Jesus’s teaching, mistakes the meaning of his death, and gives a false picture of God.” (King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, 67).

¹³⁴ A. DeConick says that “The Valentinian Gnostics called themselves ‘Christians’...Valentinians held their rituals (baptism, anointing, Eucharist) in common with the apostolic churches, although their interpretation of the effects of those rituals was unique to them. All rituals, they believed, had an esoteric purpose unknown to ordinary Christians.” (A. DeConick, *The Thirteenth Apostle*, 21).

¹³⁵ Williams, “The Gospel of Judas: Its Polemic, Its Exegesis, and Its Place in Church History,” 372.

¹³⁶ Jesus is clearly presented in a positive light.

¹³⁷ 33.22-27.

The Disciples:

The disciples are engaging in a Passover meal where it would be proper to pray over their food. The *incipit* indicates that the narrative occurs during eight days, three days before the Passover (33.3-6). Exodus 12:14-20 explains the precise details as to how the Passover festival must be observed. For seven days only unleavened bread must be eaten. It should therefore not be surprising that the *GosJud* opens with a meal of thanksgiving. This does have connections with Judaism because of the Passover meal which Jesus celebrated in accordance with his Jewish traditions (Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:15-20). Yet, because this copy of the *GosJud* is from the late third century, it is likely that this community is most concerned with the Christian Church than with combating Judaism. The Passover meal may have been a Jewish festival, but Christianity had adopted this ritualistic meal as its own. For example, Paul speaks to the church in Corinth (circa 54 CE) of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Paul tells the church in Corinth that,

The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.¹³⁸

This understanding of Jesus' death was not supported by the implied reader of the *GosJud*. In addition to this, Cyprian of Carthage describes the Passover meal and Jesus' crucifixion as a blood sacrifice. Cyprian explains that,

For if Christ Jesus, our Lord and God, is Himself the great High priest of God the Father, and if he offered Himself as a sacrifice to the Father and directed that this should be done in remembrance of him, then without doubt that priest truly serves

¹³⁸ 1 Cor 11:23-26 (NRSV).

in Christ's place who imitates what Christ did; and he offers up a true and complete sacrifice to God the Father in the Church when he proceeds to offer it just as he sees Christ Himself to have offered it.¹³⁹

In the *GosJud*, Jesus laughs at this type of understanding. The disciples engage in a Eucharistic meal of thanksgiving without the instruction of their master. Jesus has not taught his disciples to participate in this ritualistic meal offering. Why would the disciples believe this to be the correct way to praise God? He then *denies* the disciples salvation by claiming that none of them will ever know him, after they declare him to be the son of God. Meyer says that, "When Jesus disagrees with the profession of faith of most of the disciples ("Master, you [...] are the son of our god," 34.11-12), they grow hostile."¹⁴⁰ When Meyer makes this distinction, "most" of the disciples, he is not including Judas in this group. Meyer continues saying that, "Jesus invites them to stand before him, but the only one who can do so is Judas Iscariot, who stands in front of Jesus but averts his gaze out of deference and modesty."¹⁴¹ The text does not indicate that it was only "some" or "most" of the disciples who make the profession of faith. Judas must be included in this group.

Jesus condemns two pinnacle acts of the proto-orthodox Christian Church by disapproving the acts of the disciples; first, the Eucharist, and secondly, the proclamation that Jesus is the Son of God. This then raises the question, are the disciples in the *GosJud* really the twelve disciples of the New Testament? Birger Pearson says that, "in the *Gospel of Judas*, 'the

¹³⁹ Cyprian, *Ep.* 63:14.4, ed. G. F. Diercks, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina [= CCSL] 3A (1996), 410-11. As translated in Gerald Bonner, "The Doctrine of Sacrifice: Augustine and the Latin Patristic Tradition" in *Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology*, ed. S. W. Sykes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 109.

¹⁴⁰ Meyer, *Interpreting Judas: Ten passages in the Gospel of Judas*, 43.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 43. Meyer also uses *logion* 46 from the *Gospel according to Thomas* to confirm that the act of averting or lowering the eyes is a positive action which demonstrates Judas's modesty and humility.

twelve' are clearly representative symbolically of the growing ecclesiastical establishment."¹⁴² This intuitive statement by Pearson reflects my own hypothesis that the twelve disciples represent apostolic Christianity, and do not reflect hostility towards the original disciples. What is being fought against is the proto-orthodox Christian church.

None of the disciples, except for Judas, are named in this gospel account. This detail is very important. The author of the *GosJud* does not single out any of the other disciples, such as Peter, Philip, Matthew, or James, as acting in defiance against Jesus' teachings. The disciples always act as a group, and Jesus addresses them as a group. The disciples function as a single character in order to serve a solitary role.¹⁴³ This is not an unusual literary technique. The disciples represent a unified entity, speaking, feeling, and acting in unison. The implied author has intentionally chosen not to specifically name the disciples. This is evident from the other tractates contained within the Codex Tchacos.¹⁴⁴

A trait is a personal quality of a character which persists over whole or part of a story. The twelve disciples display the following character traits: (1) they are pious, practicing their piety (literally that which is godly) (33.25-26-34.1-3); (2) they are irate, displaying emotions of anger and infuriation, which then leads to blaspheme (34.19-22); (3) their souls are connected to the Demiurge (34.25-35.2). In addition to those traits, the twelve are unable to understand the words of Jesus (34.4; 22-23), are not part of the holy generation and those who know Jesus (34.15-17), and lack knowledge of the holy generation (35.24-26). Overall, they must be

¹⁴² B. A. Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 97.

¹⁴³ An example of this is found in the canonical gospels, as Powell states, "we should not limit our conception of characters to individuals, since it is possible for a group to function as a single character. In our Gospels, this is true not only of the crowds that follow Jesus but also of his disciples and the religious leaders. When the narrative reports that the disciples do something or say something, the reader does not imagine that these 12 individuals actually move or speak in unison. Such stereotyping is a conventional literary device by which a number of characters are made to serve a single role." (M. A. Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism*, 51).

¹⁴⁴ *The Letter of Peter to Philip and James*.

considered a “flat” character since they only display a few consistent traits which are generally predictable.¹⁴⁵ The disciples play a subordinate role, they are “agents” and “their function is limited to helping the plot along.”¹⁴⁶ This characterization will continue through the gospel. The disciples will not develop new traits, but only have their negative characterization confirmed again when Jesus interprets their vision and accuses them of horrific sins (38.1-42.22).

Judas:

Since the narrator most probably caught the attention of the implied reader by mentioning the Iscariot in the *incipit*, the character of Judas is ready to make a memorable entrance onto the scene. Judas makes his first appearance after Jesus asks his disciples to bring forth the perfect man, although it seems as if he was always present but was included in the group which is called “the disciples.” Judas is presented through his actions, speech, and the reactions of other characters. The disciples say that they are strong enough, but then are unable to stand before Jesus and declare who he is. All fail, except Judas. The Iscariot separates himself from the other disciples and stands before Jesus, but looks away from his eyes, and says that Jesus has come from the immortal aeon of Barbelo.¹⁴⁷ Judas is then told that he will be taken aside by Jesus and be given secret teachings (35.21-27).

¹⁴⁵ Culpepper describes “flat” characters as “types or caricatures which embody a single idea or quality.” (Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 102).

¹⁴⁶ D. Marguerat and Y. Bourquin, “The Characters,” 60.

¹⁴⁷ Judas is not worthy to pronounce the name of the one who sent Jesus, therefore, whoever this being is; it cannot be Barbelo, 35.19-21. Barbelo is a deity in Sethian Gnosticism (cf. *Apocryphon of John* [NHC II] 4.36, 5.13; *Zostrianos* [NHC VIII] 14.6, 36.14; *Allogenes* [NHC XI] 51.13, 53.28; *Trimorphic Protennoia* [NHC XIII] 38.9), sometimes likened to the Mother of all (*Gospel of the Egyptians* [NHC III] 42.4, 62.1, 69.2–3). According to the NGS team, “Barbelo is the divine Mother of all, who often is said to be the Forethought (*pronoia*) of the Father, the infinite One. The name of Barbelo seems to be based on a form of the tetragrammaton, the holy four-letter name of God within Judaism, and it apparently comes from Hebrew—perhaps ‘God (compare *El*) in (*b-*) four (*arb(a)*).” (Kasser, *The Gospel of Judas* [2006], 23 n. 22).

As a character, Judas does serve as an important means of setting the stage for the narrative plot of the gospel. He is inferior to Jesus because he does not understand why Jesus has asked for the perfect man to be brought forth, and he does not have the divine knowledge which Jesus possesses. Jesus *denies* Judas by telling him in a rather direct manner that he will not be going to the kingdom. This is a condemnation of Judas, and not redemption of his soul. Some scholars initially missed the negative portrayal of Judas, and instead interpreted Judas as being rescued by Jesus.¹⁴⁸ Birger A. Pearson states:

In the *Gospel of Judas*, the twelve disciples as a group are ridiculed as servants of Saklas, whereas Judas is distinguished from them as “the thirteenth.” The text includes a vision that Judas reports to Jesus in which it is prophesied that Judas will be persecuted by “the twelve.” Jesus assures him that he will prevail in the end (44-47). Following the lengthy revelation by Jesus, Judas asks Jesus about “those who have been baptized in your name.” Jesus replies that they are really offering sacrifices to Saklas. “But you will exceed all of them. For you will sacrifice the man that clothes me” (56). Judas is told that he will help Jesus’ soul escape from his mortal body by handing him over to the authorities, who will crucify the mortal body.¹⁴⁹

The above statement by Pearson is a prime example of how some scholars found a redeeming quality within the character of Judas, but after further studying the text, they retracted these statements. Pearson recently adjusted his understanding of Judas, and now agrees on this with scholars such as April DeConick and Louis Painchaud. Later on in the text, however, the implied reader is again told that Judas is not a part of the holy generation and therefore will not go to the kingdom (46.18-25).

Confusion may be caused by the narrator’s comment concerning Jesus knowing that Judas was reflecting upon that which is exalted. This appears to be a positive affirmation of

¹⁴⁸ For such an example see Porter and Heath, *The Lost Gospel of Judas*, 89.

¹⁴⁹ Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature*, 96-97.

Judas's previous action. Jesus then tells Judas to step aside from the other disciples. This again seems to be a good thing. Judas is then told, however, that he will not go to the kingdom, which cannot be interpreted as "a good thing." These series of events are an *antanagoge*, meaning that the implied author has intentionally placed desirable and undesirable points together. John D. Turner explains that, "Meyer and Ehrman have assumed that, because Jesus has singled him out for private revelation, Judas must belong to the "holy generation." That is, by ignoring plain statements the text does make about Judas, they have converted Judas into a Sethian."¹⁵⁰ If Judas does not ascend to the holy generation, he cannot be the perfect Sethian.¹⁵¹

In addition to this, revelations are not exclusive to Judas. Although he is taken aside by Jesus and given secret knowledge, this is not the only teaching that Jesus gave. The implied reader is informed in the beginning of this gospel that Jesus revealed special teachings to all of his disciples.¹⁵² Jesus has engaged with all of his disciples, discoursing cosmological and eschatological themes. The extent of these conversations is unknown; but the narrative does leave clues concerning what the disciples do not know. Though the disciples and Judas encounter Jesus in different ways, they do both enter into dialogue with him concerning the mysteries beyond the cosmos and the eschaton (33.15-18). Both share a master-student relationship with Jesus. The disciples have some sort of *gnosis* which is revealed to them by Jesus, but they also are not worthy to be a part of the holy generation. It is unclear from the text the exact details of

¹⁵⁰ J. D. Turner, "The Place of the Gospel of Judas in Sethian Tradition," 188.

¹⁵¹ Meyer, *Interpreting Judas: Ten passages in the Gospel of Judas*, 44. Meyer is correct in saying that Judas' confession "is articulated in terms well known from Sethian Gnostic sources." Although using Sethian is a debatable subcategory of Gnosticism, many elements of the *GosJud* coincide with the various texts from Nag Hammadi which have been dubbed as Sethian. This includes mention of Barbelo, and a distinctive separation of the Father and the lower creator god, which is present in this section of the Judas gospel. The Gnostic myth appears later (47-52) and seems to be similar to the myth found in the *Apocryphon of John*.

¹⁵² 33.15-18, "He began to speak with them about the mysteries of beyond the world and what would take place at the end." The pronoun "them" refers to the disciples, since this sentence depends on the one which comes before it: "the twelve disciples were called."

the revelations given to the twelve, but it must be different from the information given to Judas upon his separation from the disciples.

The text contains vital clues for decoding this scene in order to be able to interpret it as a Christian-Gnostic audience would have. Attention must be paid to what the disciples say about themselves and what the narrator reveals about the disciples' true character. The disciples claim that they are strong (35.8), having the strength to bring forth the perfect man as Jesus had demanded. One quickly learns that there is conflict between what the disciples want to do, and what they actually are capable of accomplishing. The narrator explains that their spirit was not able to stand before Jesus. The word used to describe what the disciples lack is *tolma*. This verb comes from the Greek $\tau\omicron\lambda\mu\alpha/\omega$,¹⁵³ meaning to be bold, to dare to do something, or to have audacity. It can also take on the meaning of being courageous, which has a more positive connotation to it, indicating some degree of bravery. The narrator says that Judas is the only one of the disciples with enough *tolma* to be able to stand before Jesus. Most importantly, the implied author does not use the word *gnosis* such as what is found at 54.9. Judas stands before Jesus because he alone out of the twelve has the audacity, courage, and is bold and daring enough to do so. It is not because he has knowledge. The text indicates that Judas has strength, but does not clearly state that he has knowledge.

The evaluative point of view created by the implied reader is clear in this pericope:¹⁵⁴ he will have empathy for Jesus, who is the divine revealer, holding the answers to the mysteries of

¹⁵³ R. W. Funk *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. A revision of F. Blass and A. Debrunner, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), 1010. $\tau\omicron\lambda\mu\alpha/\omega$ "to show boldness or resolution in the face of danger, opposition, or a problem, dare, bring oneself to (do something)."

¹⁵⁴ D. Marguerat and Y. Bourquin, "The Characters," 68. The evaluative point of view is how "the narrator tries to influence for his own ends this interaction which will not fail to take place between the reader and the network of characters. To this end the narrator counts on a permanent mechanism of reading which is partly unconscious: the evaluation of the characters."

the kingdom and the end times. The implied reader identifies himself with Jesus, striving for divine *gnosis* and wanting to be a part of the holy generation. Contrary to the example set by Jesus, the disciples show weakness of character by becoming angry and infuriated (34.20-22). They then commit the appalling act of blaspheming against Jesus. The twelve disciples evoke antipathy within the implied reader. Judas is no better than the other disciples. True, he does exemplify desirable behaviour by announcing that Jesus is from the immortal aeon of Barbelo (35.16-19). This being said, Judas is still *denied* access to the kingdom, and therefore the implied reader would not feel compassion for him, but rather antipathy for him.

PLOT:

The *GosJud* is a revelatory conversation between Jesus and his disciples, and primarily between Jesus and Judas. This scene serves to align the characters in order to drive the plot in accordance with a revelation discourse. Although the *GosJud* is given the title “gospel”¹⁵⁵ in its titular subscript, the literary genre may be categorized as *erotapokriseis*. This type of question-and-answer style runs consistently through the narrative. The disciples, Jesus, and Judas ask questions, but Jesus is the only character who is able to impart divine knowledge.

This first scene is essential for understanding the relationship dynamics between the characters.¹⁵⁶ A key element of a character’s function is his relationship to the narrative plot. The character named Judas Iscariot performs a valuable action in the plot development of the Judas gospel. By stepping forth and declaring Jesus to be from the immortal aeon of Barbelo, Judas

¹⁵⁵ It is important to note that the postscript of this text indicates that it is the gospel of Judas, *peuaggelion N̄oudas*, meaning that it is about Judas and not written by him.

¹⁵⁶ This includes the relationship between Jesus and Judas, Jesus and the disciples, and Judas and the disciples (specifically his place amongst the twelve). This also includes the abstract characters outside of the narrative, including the relationship between this Christian-Gnostic sect and the proto-orthodox Church.

sets the plot in motion which will continue through the rest of the gospel. Jesus is the one who commands the disciples to bring forth the perfect man, and in this way he controls the plot. The main focus of the *GosJud* appears to be the interactions between Jesus and Judas; therefore, consideration of these relations should illuminate the gospel's message.

In this micro-narrative, Judas asks Jesus two questions (36.5-9): "When will you tell me these things and when will the great days of light dawn for the generation?" Jesus does not answer these questions but instead he abruptly leaves the scene. Here Jesus again demonstrates his control over the actions of the plot and his superiority to the other characters. These questions are the first of the series of inquiries proposed by Judas, and they are left unanswered. The text is ambiguous concerning why Jesus leaves after Judas asks him those two questions. In terms of character analysis, this is unusual behaviour, even giving the impression that Jesus is rude or that he was offended by the questions. Or, Jesus knew that it was not yet time for the answers to be given. Whatever the reason is, from a narrative perspective, Jesus' act serves a specific purpose of setting-up the following scene.

The narrator informs the reader that the initial situation locates Jesus together with his disciples in Judea, before the crucifixion (33.22). After Jesus criticizes the disciples for practicing the Eucharist, they blaspheme against him; consequently, he saw that they were without heart (34.24-35.5). Jesus then challenges the disciples to bring forth the perfect man. In response to Jesus' command, Judas declares that Jesus is from the immortal aeon of Barbelo (35.14-21). As a result, Judas is separated from the twelve disciples, and he will be told about the mysteries of the kingdom but he shall not go there (35.21-27). This brings resolution to the scene, since the reader is intrigued by Judas' declaration, yet reassured that despite his apparent knowledge Judas will not ascend to the holy generation and instead will grieve greatly. The

conclusion ends the scene. Judas questions Jesus, resulting in Jesus exiting the scene without answering him (36.5-10).

In the third chapter, Judas' demonic characterization comes to life. Chapter three is dedicated to the micro-narrative found in 43.1-47.5. This scene strengthens the theme of *denial* which is present throughout the macro-narrative. Judas is called a *daimwn* and therefore cannot be part of the holy generation. There is a micro-narrative which precedes this, however, it is not concerned with the characterization of Judas. For this reason, section 36.11-42.24 will be analyzed in chapter four in relation to salvation and sacrifice in the *GosJud*.

CHAPTER THREE:
JUDAS THE DEMON

3.1 *Judas' Fate as the Thirteenth Demon (43.1- 47.5)*

The fate of the human soul is the primary focus of this scene. Jesus and Judas are for the first time alone, separated from the other disciples. This makes this pericope unique from the previous scenes of the gospel, and a revelation discourse is anticipated. The end of page 42 and the beginning of page 43 are fragmented, leaving important details in lacunae; however, thanks to the continuing efforts of Wurst and Meyer, the general context may be deduced. Their work to transcribe and translate has revealed that Jesus speaks of water¹⁵⁷ and a mountain¹⁵⁸ that is exalted.¹⁵⁹ This imagery continues onto page 43 of the codex, where Jesus refers to a tree and to a certain “he” who has come to water God’s paradise.¹⁶⁰

This leads Judas to ask about the fruit which this generation produces. Jesus will then make a clear distinction between the human generation and the holy generation. Significant aspects of Judas’ character are revealed in this scene. It is here that Judas is called a demon

¹⁵⁷ pmoou; 42.25.

¹⁵⁸ ptoou; 42.26.

¹⁵⁹ etJose; 42.26.

¹⁶⁰ pShn at 43.3 is a tree, and God’s paradise is mentioned at 43.6-7. Perhaps it is possible that this imagery alludes to Genesis 2:4b-3:24. Reconstruction of this section would reveal if such a connection is feasible.

(daimwn) by his master; an act which substantially facilitates an enhanced understanding of Judas in this gospel. Judas is a demon and consequently cannot be part of the holy generation. This reiterates the theme of *denial*. It is interesting that as Jesus' character plateaus, Judas' character is still developing. Judas asks Jesus four separate questions in this section. This scene ends before Jesus reveals to Judas the ordering of the cosmos and the creation myth.¹⁶¹

Text:

[43.1] HN t[...] . [...] anaT [...] . NtaF | ei an et[---p]h?g?h? m?p? | Shn N [...] . o? . [...]ĭ | ros mpeeaiwn [. mN]N | sa ouoe????ĭS?? [...] > | alla NtaFei ets?o? Mppa[ra]dei | sos Mpnoute auw p?[ge]n?os | etnamoun eb?[o]l Je [NFn]a > | JwHm an ntG?ĭn?m?[ooSe N]T?g?e? | nea e?tMmau al[la] | pe Jn eneH nSa e?[neH : pe] | JaF NGi loudas na?[F Je Hrabb]ei : | Je aS Nkarpos pe?[te] o?VntasF | NGi teeigenea : p[e] JaF NGi | ĩh~s Je genea nim n@wme se | namou NGi neuTu[x]h na?ĭ d?e? | Ntoou Hotan euSanJwk | e?b?o?i? mpeouoeiS Ntmnte | ro auw Ntepe!p!na pwrJ e | bol Mmoou : neuswma men | senamou neuTuxh de se | natan!Hoou auw NseFitou | e?Hraĭ : peJaF NGi loudas | Je eunar ou Ge NGi pkes?ee | pe Ngenea NNrwme : peJaF | NGi ĩhs Je ouatGom p?e [44] etJo eJN ou[p]et[ra] NseJi | neu[kar]pos [ta]ĭ o?n te qe | oun [...] . n . [...] mppenos | [etJoH]m mN tsofia Nfqarth | [...] t?GiJ Ntatamie rwme | [N]q?nhtos NteneuTuxh | [b]w?k e!Hrai enaiwn et!Hi pSwĭ | H[amh]n Tjw Mmos nhtN | J[e mN arxh] o?u[de] m?[N? ag]g?elos? | [oude mN d]unamis : naS nau | [eMma et]m?m?a?V : n?a?ĭ e?t?e?@e? | t?[einoG] ngenea etouaab | n?[anau e]roou : nal !ntere[F] | Joou [NG]ĭ ĩhs aFbwk | peJaF [N]G?i loudas Je ps!aH N | qe Nt[a]kswtM eroou thro[u] | s?wtM Hwt on eroĭ : aeinau | gar eunoG N!Horoma : ĩhs de | NtereFswtM aFswbe pe | JaF naF Je a!Hrok' kRgumna | ze _w pm!eHmn!tig daimwn | alla SaJe !Hwwk' taanexe | Mmok' peJaF naF NGi ĩou | das Je aĭnau eroĭ HM foro | m?a? ere pmntsnoous mma | qhths Hi% wne eroe?ĭ se : [45] pht [nswĭ MpSa] a?V?w? ae?[ĭ]ei on | epma e [] N? s!wk | aeinau e?[ouhei] s? au | w peFS?i? nabal naS? [Sit~F] an | nere HN noG de Nrwm k?[w]te | eroF pe auw neou<Nt~F ou>stegh *nou | ote* pe NGi phei etMm[au] au | w HN tmhte Mphĭ er[e ou]mh | [hSe] . [] k' [] Se [] Je Je | ps!aH Sopt%' Hw eHo[un m]n nirw | me : aFouwSB NGi [is%] peJaF | Je apeksiou pla[na] Mmok/ | _w louda: auw Je NFMpSa | an NGi peJpo Nrwm]e nim | Nqnhton : ebwk eHoun e | phei Ntaknau eroF Je pto | pos gar etMmau NtoF pe | touareH eroF Nnetouaab | pma ete Mp!rh : mN poo~H : | naR ero Mmau an oude pe!Ho | ou : alla eunaw!Heratou N | ouoeiS nim HM paiwn mN : | Nnaggelos etouaab : eis | !Hhhte aeiJw erok Nmmu > | sthriou NtmNtero >>-- [46] auw a?ĭtsabok? [etep]lanh | NNs?[ĭ]o?V? [] a?u[w] tnoous | N . [...] t?e eJN >> | pm?[Nts]noous nnaiwn >>>- | peJa?[F] n?Gi loudas Je ps!aH mh | po?t?e !Hw pasperma Hupotas | s?[e] nnarxwn aFouwSB NGi | Is% [pe]JaF naF Je amou Nta | S?[...] M?m?o?[k] J?[e.....] | *I line missing* | er [...]!?la J?e ekeSwpe e | kaS[aHo]m N!Houo eknau e | tmn[te]ro mN tesgenea | thrs% [] nal NtereFswtM | eroo?[u] NGi loudas peJaF | naF Je? ou pe pe!Houo Nta | eiJitF% Je akporJt% etge | nea etMmau : aFouwSB | NGi ĩhs peJaF Je knaSw | pe Mm!eHmN!tig auw >> | knaSwpe eks!Houort% !Hi | tN pkesepe Ngenea au | w knaSwpe ekarJi eJw | ou NHaeou nne!Hoou se | <na > nak' auw nekb?w?k? epSwl | >>>>> >>>>> >>>>>>> [47] etge?[nea et]o?uaab : [p]e?J?a?F | NGi ĩhs J[e amo]ju N?ta?[ts]a?bok | etbe n? [.....e]t?na? | nau e?[r]o[u] n?G?i? l?a?o? [ue] N?r?w? | me

¹⁶¹ Myth does not necessarily refer to a simply poetic or symbolic story. As G. S. Kirk explains, “For the Greek *muthos* just meant a tale, or something one uttered, in a wide range of senses: a statement, a story, or the plot of a play.” (G. S. Kirk, *Myth: It's Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures*, [Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973], 8.). The Gnostic creation myth found in the *GosJud* (47-52) is an important aspect for understanding the overall meaning of the text and identifying the implied community. Such a study is significant in breadth and goes beyond the scope of the present thesis.

Translation:

[43.1] in [...] he has not come [...] spring for the tree [...] of this aeon [...] after time [...] but he has come to water God's paradise, and the race that will last because [he will] not defile the walk of that generation but [...] for all eternity. Judas said to him, "[Rabbi], what kind of fruit does this generation produce?" Jesus said, "The souls of every human generation will die. When those (people),¹⁶² however, complete the time of the kingdom and their spirit separates from them, their bodies will die but their souls will be alive, and they will be taken up." Judas said, "What will the rest of the human generations do?" Jesus said, "It is impossible [44] to sow upon a rock and take its fruit. This is also the way [...] of the [defiled] race and corruptible Sophia [...] the hand which has created mortal humans and their souls go up to the aeons on high. [Truly] I say to you, [no authority] or angel or power will be able to see those places that this great, holy generation [will see]. After Jesus said these things, he left. Judas said, "Master, in the way you listened to all of them, listen now also to me. For, I saw a great vision." But, when Jesus heard, he laughed and he said to him, "Why do you try so hard O thirteenth demon? But, you too speak and I will bear with you." Judas said to him, "I saw in a vision the twelve disciples stoning me, [45] [pursuing me]. And I also came to the place where [---] after you. I saw [a house ---] and my eyes could not measure its size. Great people were surrounding it, and that house <had> a roof of greenery and in the middle of the house was [a crowd] ---lines 9 and 10 are missing--- "Master, take me in along with these people." [Jesus] answered and said, "Your star has led you astray O Judas. No person of mortal birth is worthy to enter the house you have seen, for that place is reserved for the holy. The sun and the moon will not rule there, nor the day, but they¹⁶³ will stand always in the aeon and with the holy angels. Behold, I have told you the mysteries of the kingdom [46] and I have taught you the error of the stars and [---] send [---] on the twelve aeons. Judas said, "Master, can it suffice that my seed be under the control of the archons?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Come, that I [---] [---] ---line 10 is missing--- but will grieve greatly when you see the kingdom and all its generation." When Judas heard this, he said to him, "What is the advantage that I have received, for you separated me from that generation?" Jesus answered and said, "You will become the thirteenth and you will be cursed by the other generation, and you will come to rule over them in the last days they <will ---> to you and you will not ascend on high [47] to the holy generation." Jesus said, "[Come], that I may teach you about the [---]

NARRATOR:

In this micro-narrative, the narrator fades into the background and is hardly present.

Aside from introducing the speakers, and occasionally indicating a reaction by one of the

¹⁶² That is, the people who belong to the holy generation.

¹⁶³ That is, the holy generation.

characters, the narrator is not an active part of this scene.¹⁶⁴ The implied reader is dependent upon Jesus and Judas to drive the plot forward by their interactions. Since the narrator does not tell the implied reader about the characters, special attention must be paid to the dialogue between Jesus and Judas in order to decode meaning.

On one occasion, the narrator employs the device of *telling*. At 44.13-14, the narrator announces that *nal Ntere[F] Joou [NG]l lls aFbwk*: “After Jesus said these things, he left.” In isolation, this sentence appears unambiguous, clear and concise, however, in the context of this pericope, this statement is abstruse, perplexing, and presents the possibility of a scribal error. Jesus departing after his previous statement does not pose an issue for the text, but it is the fact that Judas continues to speak with Jesus which is problematic. Judas and Jesus carry on with the dialogue as if line 14 did not exist. How could Jesus leave and yet still continue his conversation with Judas uninterrupted?¹⁶⁵ Scholars have attempted to address this issue.

As noted in the critical edition of the *GosJud*, *aFbwk* “is probably a scribal error for *a<u>bwk*, “<they> departed” (that is, the disciples).”¹⁶⁶ This definitely brings a resolution to the problem, but is this suggestion possible considering the fragmented state of the text? In the Critical Edition, page 42 is missing approximately 17 lines. The translators, editors, and commentators of the text had no choice but to hypothesize. In their opinion, a scribal error has the potential to coincide with the flow of the narrative because after this point, the disciples are

¹⁶⁴ An example of this is 46.14-16: The narrator informs the reader that Judas has a reaction to what Jesus has just told him. Judas is told that he will grieve when he sees the kingdom and its generation. The question which Judas subsequently asks is in direct response to what Jesus says in the lines above.

¹⁶⁵ A similar situation occurs in the Gospel according to John. In 14:31, the narrator says that Jesus commands his disciples to rise, and they will depart together, yet in 15:1, Jesus continues to talk. This may be the work of a redactor. It is possible that at one time chapter 18 followed chapter 14 and that 15-17 are later additions. This similarity between John and the *GosJud* in no way indicates dependence or a possible source for the writer of the Judas gospel, but it does show this type of textual inconsistency is not a novelty. If there were more copies of the *GosJud* available, then textual criticism would be applied, however this unfortunately is not the case.

¹⁶⁶ Kasser, *Codex Tchacos: Critical Edition*, 207.

no longer active characters. They just seem to disappear, since they remain silent for the duration of the Judas gospel. Therefore, if the F was originally intended to be a u then it would be logical from a narrative critical perspective.

This theory no longer stands because the Ohio Fragments have revealed that at the end of page 42 of the codex, Jesus leaves and brings Judas with him. On page 43 of the manuscript, and continuing to the end, it must be assumed that Jesus and Judas are alone and therefore dialoguing in private. Page 42.22-24 has been restored to read: *auw nal Nt?e?re[FJo]ou NGi lhs aFbwk aF[JiNlou]das nMmaF p?i?s?kariw?t?[hs]*, which may be translated as: “And when Jesus had [said] these things, he left and [took(?)] Judas Iscariot with him”. The first five lines of page 43 are extremely fragmented, making the context of the conversation difficult to render. Yet regardless of this, it is clear that Judas and Jesus are separated from the disciples.

CHARACTERS:

The principal characters in this micro-narrative are Jesus and Judas. Jesus was speaking to the disciples in the previous scene, but the narrator tells the reader that he left and took Judas with him.¹⁶⁷ This is the first time in the narrative that Judas is physically separated from the other disciples. Judas was told to step away from the other disciples (35.24-25) but this does not effectively take place until 42.24-25.

Jesus:

¹⁶⁷ The previous scene comes to completion near the end of page 42 of the manuscript. This is when Jesus interprets a dream (*rasou*) for the disciples. The disciples always act in unison, even sharing the same vision (*ounau*).

It is at this point in the gospel that Jesus' character development comes to completion. The *incipit* gave the implied reader the necessary tools for comprehending who Jesus is.¹⁶⁸ In this pericope, Jesus again proves his knowledge of the fate of the human soul. In this context he is responding to Judas' question about the fruit of "this generation" (43.12-14).¹⁶⁹ Jesus then replies by saying: "The souls of every human generation will die. When they complete the time of the kingdom and their spirit separates from them, their bodies will die but their souls will be alive, and they will be taken up."¹⁷⁰ This passage appears to deny a bodily resurrection, and is a continuation of Jesus' explanation of the two races. King and Pagels say that, "The *Gospel of Judas* understands human nature to be essentially spiritual, believing that the physical body decomposes at death while the spirit-filled soul lives forever with God in a heavenly world above."¹⁷¹ For King and Pagels, the "fruit" (*karpos*) that Judas asks about is "presumably the fruit of the tree of knowledge or the tree of life, from the *Genesis* story of the trees of paradise, which Jesus had been discussing"¹⁷² at the top of page 43. Although 43.6-7 does mention God's paradise (*ppa[ra]deisos Mpnoute*), Judas' question may be more in relation to asking what kind of people Jesus is talking about. Jesus answers by again talking about the two races of human souls.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ As mentioned previously, the *incipit* proves itself to be the hermeneutical key to understanding the text. It is in the *incipit* that the narrator tells the implied reader that Jesus performed great wonders and miracles for the salvation of humanity, he has knowledge concerning the mysteries beyond the world, and he is an eschatological preacher (33.6-18).

¹⁶⁹ The books of the New Testament have numerous references to the fruit of a tree. These images appear to be intricately connected; consider Mt 7:16-20 and Lk 6:43-44. In addition to this, the book of Revelation contains an intriguing passage concerning a fig tree which casts off its fruit (6:13).

¹⁷⁰ 43.14-23. This statement does not illuminate new character traits, but it does exhibit Jesus's knowledge of the generations and the fate of the soul after death.

¹⁷¹ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, xiv.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 138.

¹⁷³ Due to the space restriction of this thesis it is not possible to further elaborate on the image of the tree. There may be connections to other Gnostic texts (i.e. *Hypostasis of the Archons*, *Origins of the World* and the *Testimony of*

The imagery of the fruit *foreshadows*¹⁷⁴ Judas' next question and Jesus' response. The implied author uses the literary technique *foreshadowing* as a method to organize the information and prepare the implied reader for future events. Jesus gives an abbreviated version of the parable of the sower, explaining that it is impossible to sow seed on rock and harvest its fruit.¹⁷⁵ The fruit, therefore, must refer to the soul's ability to be lifted up to eternal life. It is impossible (atGom pe) for the people of the human generation to ascend. Jesus reveals in this section that possessing *gnosis* is not enough for obtaining salvation. Just as a sower may scatter an infinite amount of seed on a rock, but may never harvest its fruit, a person may have the knowledge of the divine mysteries but may not ascend on high unless he is a part of the holy generation.

Once again, Jesus takes on the role of dream interpreter. He demystifies the vision which Judas recounts to him. In the preceding scene, Jesus asserted himself as having the ability to interpret visions (or dreams). He offered an allegorical interpretation of the disciples' vision of the Temple (39-42.23). In 44.19, he laughs at Judas when the betrayer requests to be listened to as the disciples had already had their turn. Jesus again demonstrates his mocking attitude when he tells Judas, "Why do you try so hard O thirteenth demon? But, you too speak and I will bear with you."¹⁷⁶ This validates that Jesus' mocking attitude is a character trait and this is how he should be understood by the implied reader.

Truth) which heavily rely on the Enochian theodicy where one finds the tree of knowledge, the evil archons (or fallen angels) and the human race intricately linked.

¹⁷⁴ Foreshadowing is "the technique of arranging events and information in a narrative in such a way that later events are prepared for or shadowed forth before hand. A well-constructed novel, for instance, will suggest at the very beginning what the outcome may be; the end is constructed in the beginning and this gives structure and thematic unity." *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (ed. J. A. Cuddon, rev. C. E. Preston; London: Penguin Books, 1998), 326.

¹⁷⁵ Compare *GosJud* 43.26-44.2 with Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15; and *Gospel according to Thomas* 9.

¹⁷⁶ 44.20-23.

Judas:

Judas' demonic persona comes to life in this scene. It is here that the reader is explicitly told that Judas is a demon. The number thirteen appears twice in this passage; both times it is Jesus who calls Judas the thirteenth. First, Judas is called the thirteenth demon (44.21), and then he is told that he will become the thirteenth (46.20). Section 44.20-22 is essential for understanding Judas' character. The NGS team had translated *daimwn* as "spirit" in their first publication. The translators chose this interpretation because it gives Jesus' statement a more positive, benevolent tone, and supports their understanding of the relationship between Jesus and Judas. They were able to justify their use of *daimwn* by referring to Plato's *Symposium* 202e-203a.¹⁷⁷ The implied author specifically, however, uses *daimwn* and not *!p!na* which indicates that "spirit" was not the intended meaning of the word. Since *!p!na* occurs frequently in the *GosJud* it only makes sense that the implied author would use this word here again if spirit was the proposed understanding.¹⁷⁸

Williams does not see Jesus' use of *daimwn* as being consistent with the text's thesis, and must therefore be read as a misunderstanding or a falsehood. In his opinion, *GosJud* 44.18-23 deals with John 6:70. In the Gospel according to John, Judas is called a devil: *ou`k evgw . u,ma/j tou.j dw,deka evxelxa,mhn kai. evx u`mw/n ei-j dia,bolo,j evstin*. Here is what he says to support his argument:

In our document this verse is understood to mean, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and aside from you there is one demon." Since the fact that Jesus said "demon" of Judas cannot be evaded, the solution is to take it as a quasi-humorous remark which is applied to all the disciples. The precedent for it might be Matt 16:23 where, after being given the keys to the kingdom of heaven, Peter is called Satan for saying something inappropriate. Just as the Twelve at Matt 24:3 challenged

¹⁷⁷ Kasser, *The Gospel of Judas*, 31; cf. 163-166.

¹⁷⁸ *!p!na* : 35.7; 37.19; 43.19; 47.9; 53.17,20,23,25; 54.5 .

Jesus to reveal the future, so Judas has challenged him here—a demonic thing to do. There is, then, not one demon but, since Matthias is to be included among the Twelve, thirteen. Judas need not be singled out as a demon; he is merely one of a group.¹⁷⁹

First, the relationship between the *GosJud* and Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John is unknown. Secondly, when Jesus laughs in the *GosJud* it is done so to mock and ridicule. The implied reader should associate this laughter with that found in 34.2-5, and recognize that Judas has misunderstood Jesus. King and Pagels also misinterpret the negativity of this scene by translating *daimwn* as “god.”¹⁸⁰ This translation does not stay true to the Coptic or its Greek precedent. If the implied author intended *daimwn* to be god, he would have most certainly used *noute* as he does in other passages.¹⁸¹

King and Pagels do explain that Christians will *later* understand *daimwn* “as a negative entity (“demon”). In Greek thought, however, the term *daimon* was used to indicate gods of lower rank, or sometimes an individual’s lot or fortune.”¹⁸² By the end of the third-century or the beginning of the fourth-century, to which this text is dated, would the implied reader associate *daimwn* to a Greek or Christian understanding? Overall, the *GosJud* appears to be highly influenced by proto-orthodox Christianity.¹⁸³ That is not to say that this particular community was not influenced by Greek culture. Indeed, many Gnostic texts incorporate Greek and Christian understandings of such terms. The *GosJud*, however, is a polemical text written to combat sacrificial theology of the church, so the implied reader would use *daimwn* in accordance

¹⁷⁹ Williams, “The Gospel of Judas: Its Polemic, Its Exegesis, and Its Place in Church History,” 394.

¹⁸⁰ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, 115.

¹⁸¹ *noute*: 34.10,12,25; 36.4; 40.20; 43.7; 47.20; 48.26; 53.19; 54.8.

¹⁸² King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, 140.

¹⁸³ Future work needs to address the intertextual connections between the *GosJud* and the New Testament gospels. This type of comparative analysis could be a fruitful endeavour.

with its Christian interpretation. In addition to this, “demon” fits the overarching theme of *denial* (apofasis) which was given as the hermeneutical key to the macro-narrative (33.1-2).

April DeConick explains that within Sethian mythology there is a strong presence of daimwn as Satan along with the fallen angels from apocalyptic mythology. This reasoning may be applied to the *GosJud*. According to DeConick, it is common in Sethian mythology that,

the heavens surrounding the earth are populated by evil archons who created and rule this world. The beings that live in these lower realms are those who war against the Father and trick and enslave human beings. So to call Judas “the thirteenth *daimon*” is to locate him in the thirteenth cosmic realm and identify him with Ialdabaoth, the chief demonic archon who resides in this particular realm.¹⁸⁴

This interpretation is more suitable than “spirit” or “god.” Judas’ fate is predetermined by his star. In correlation with this, 45.11-46.4 reads:

Master, take me in along with these people.” [Jesus] answered and said, “Your star has led you astray O Judas. No mortal man is worthy to enter the house you have seen, for that place is reserved for the holy. The sun and the moon will not rule there, nor the day but they¹⁸⁵ will stand always in the aeon and with the holy angels. Behold, I have told you the mysteries of the kingdom [46] and I have taught you the error of the stars and [---] send [---] on the twelve aeons.

The fate of the soul is predetermined, and it is not possible to be part of the human generation and also ascend on high.

Craig A. Evans aligns his interpretation of daimwn with that of DeConick’s. He does not find the NGS team’s translation to be convincing. He says,

In the second edition, Kasser, Meyer, and Wurst revise their translation to read: “You thirteenth daimon, why do you try so hard?” Clearly, they have heard the criticism. But they still try to maintain the ambiguity, leaving readers who have little or no expertise with the impression that, here in the Gospel of Judas, “daimon” is not necessarily negative. This is seen not only in the translation

¹⁸⁴ DeConick, “The Mystery of the Betrayal,” in *The Gospel of Judas in Context: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas*, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 242.

¹⁸⁵ The holy generation.

“daimon,” instead of the more familiar “demon” (as in DeConick’s translation) but in a footnote (where, by the way, the translation possibility “demon” is acknowledged), where they say the “word daimon can mean ‘demon’ in a thoroughly negative sense of the term, as in Jewish and Christian literature,” but it “can also be used in a more neutral, or even positive sense, in Platonic, Middle Platonic, Neoplatonic, Hermetic, and magical texts.” This is true enough, but in the context of the Gospel of Judas, which the translators regard as Christian in a very broad sense, the word *dai, mwn* is surely not positive. It never is in Jewish, Christian, and (semi-Christian) Gnostic texts.¹⁸⁶

As stated previously, since the *GosJud* is most similar to Christian writings, it is probable that a Jewish and Christian understanding is implied.

The number thirteen is significant in relation to understanding who Judas is. At 44.21 Judas is called “the thirteenth demon,” and at 46.20 Jesus prophesizes that Judas will become “the thirteenth.” For Meyer, Jesus as the thirteenth may be interpreted as hopeful for a Gnostic-Christian community. He explains that:

Even if the thirteenth aeon is the realm of the demiurge in the *Gospel of Judas*, it is emphasized in the text...that Judas...will ultimately rule over it. In that case, perhaps the text means to proclaim that, in the end, Judas – like Sophia elsewhere – will overcome the demiurge and all his megalomaniacal forces, and through Judas the power of “that generation” will be triumphant and will be extended over the world.¹⁸⁷

The text, however, never says that the holy generation will be triumphant because of Judas. This positive assessment is contradicted by other sections of the gospel, and is therefore problematic.

King and Pagels understand the number thirteen to be significant since “it signals that Judas is beyond or outside the group of ‘the twelve’.”¹⁸⁸ Indeed, Judas has been separated from the twelve disciples; the text makes this clear. Does this make Judas better than “the twelve”? According to King and Pagels, Judas is better than the other disciples and being called the

¹⁸⁶ Evans, “Understanding the Gospel of Judas,” 569-70.

¹⁸⁷ Meyer, “Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the Gospel of Judas,” 47.

¹⁸⁸ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, 141.

thirteenth signifies his superiority. To their knowledge, “the number twelve belongs to the rulers of the lower world, whom the twelve disciples worship. Thus the number thirteen also expresses that Judas has surpassed the twelfth ruler of the world, implying that he is no longer under the dominion of the twelve rulers of the lower world.”¹⁸⁹ Judas as the thirteenth can be seen in the proto-orthodox Christian tradition with the selection of another disciple as replacement for Judas found in Acts 1:21-26. His placement outside of the twelve is not unique to the *GosJud*. In the context of page 46 of the manuscript, after Jesus tells Judas that he will become the thirteenth, he informs Judas that he will not ascend on high to the holy generation. As 46.19-25-47.1 reads: knaSw pe Mm!eHmNtlig auw >> knaSwpe eks!Houor!t H!itN pkesepe Ngenea auw knaSwpe ekarJi eJwou NHaeou nne!Hou senak/ auw nekb?w?k? epSwl [47.1] etge?[nea et]o?uaab: Jesus answered and said, “You will become the thirteenth and you will be cursed by the other generation, and you will come to rule over them in the last days they <will ---> to you and you will not ascend on high to the holy generation.” This affirms that being “the thirteenth” cannot be a positive assessment of Judas’s fate. Indeed, he is worse than the twelve disciples.

Judas is told that he is not part of the generation that will see the kingdom (46.11-14). Judas has the knowledge but he does not have salvation. This in turn makes him wonder why he has been told the mysteries of the kingdom, yet has been separated from the holy generation. The NGS team has translated 46.16-18 as “What is the advantage that I have received? For you have set me apart for that generation?”¹⁹⁰ This seems to say that Judas is part of the holy generation. Evans, again, does not agree with the NGS team’s translation and interpretation of the Coptic. He specifically questions whether the text should read “set apart for” or “separated from.” Evans says,

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Kasser, *Critical Edition*, 211.

On p. 46 of the Coptic text, Judas asks Jesus, according to the 2006 translation by Meyer and colleagues: “What is the advantage that I have received? For you have set me apart for that generation.” The impression is that Judas has been destined for the holy generation, which is a good thing. (We know that it is the “holy” generation because of the wider context; see the bottom of p. 46 and top of p. 47.) However, once again, this is not what the Coptic text actually says. What is rendered “set me apart for,” implying access to the holy generation, should be rendered “separated me from that generation,” clearly implying *failure to gain access* to the holy generation. The true sense of the Coptic text is the exact opposite of what Meyer and colleagues have translated. Judas Iscariot has recognized that he has gained no advantage (“What is the advantage that I have received?”), but has been separated from the holy generation.¹⁹¹

In correlation to this, Schenke Robinson explains that, “the ‘thirteenth’ designates the highest place above the twelve aeons in the Archonic kingdom under the rule of Saklas. Jesus uses this play on words mockingly pointing to Judas’ eschatological fate: Judas as the *thirteenth* disciple will only be able to reach the *thirteenth* aeon, not the place on high to which he aspires.”¹⁹² Judas is presented as a dualistic figure; one that is both earthly and cosmic. He has strong concerns for the fate of the human generation, which is evident from the questions he poses to Jesus. As the thirteenth, taking his place amongst the Archons, he fulfils his cosmic purpose.¹⁹³

Similarly, DeConick says, “According to Sethian numerology and cosmology, thirteen is the most unlucky number one can be linked with, because it is the number associated with the

¹⁹¹ Evans, “Understanding the Gospel of Judas,” 570. Gagné explains *GosJud* 46.16-18 in a footnote: “The Coptic reads: akporJt etgenea etmmau. For *GosJud* 46.16-18, M. Meyer and F. Gaudard translate : “[...] you have set me apart for that generation” (*The Gospel of Judas. Critical Edition*, p.211). Cherix’s French is clearly more precise and corresponds to the Coptic reading : “[...] que tu m’aies écarté de cette génération-là?” (<http://www.coptica.ch/EvJudas-tra.pdf>). Kasser’s French translation in the Critical Edition corrects the English with the following : “[...] que tu m’aies séparé de cette génération-là?” (*The Gospel of Judas. Critical Edition*, p. 245). There is, however, a discrete note in the English translation of the Critical Edition recognizing the meaning of “[...] from that generation”. The correct translation of pwrJ e- is clearly “separate from” and not “separate for” ; see W. E. Crum, *Coptic Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), 271b. Painchaud had also noticed this problem, “A propos de la (re)découverte de l’évangile de Judas”, p. 561.” (Gagné, “Critical Note on apofasis,” 382).

¹⁹² G. S. Robinson, “The Relationship of the Gospel of Judas to the New Testament,” 70-1.

¹⁹³ This image of Judas develops as the narrative progresses, and will therefore be addressed later.

demon Demiurge, Ialdabaoth, his assistant Archons, and his particular cosmic realm.”¹⁹⁴ Being called “the thirteenth” cannot be positive in the Gnostic-Christian context of the *GosJud*. DeConick continues by saying, “Judas’ best fate appears to be a final ascent to the thirteenth heaven, where he will replace or merge with Ialdabaoth and rule over the twelve disciples and the generations of apostolic Christians who have cursed Judas.”¹⁹⁵ Judas does not want this fate, but since he is controlled by his star his destiny cannot be altered.

EVALUATIVE POINT OF VIEW:

The evaluative point of view is an important aspect for understanding the story. As described by Powell, the evaluative point of view is “the general perspective that an implied author establishes as normative for a work. We can also speak of the evaluative point of view of any given character... In this sense, the term refers to the norms, values, and general worldview that govern the way a character looks at things and renders judgements upon them.”¹⁹⁶ This literary device of evaluating the characters may be applied to the *GosJud*. There are two basic points of view, the “true” and the “false.” Jesus has a true evaluative point of view, whereas Judas always espouses a point of view which is inconsistent with that of Jesus and therefore is false. After Judas tells Jesus the details of his dream, Jesus summarizes the true order of the kingdom and the fate of all generations. Section 45.11-26 reads: “Master, take me in along with these people.” [Jesus] answered and said, “Your star has led you astray O Judas. No person of mortal birth is worthy to enter the house you have seen, for that place is reserved for the holy.

¹⁹⁴ DeConick, *Thirteenth Apostle*, 118.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 124-5.

¹⁹⁶ M. A. Powell, “Characters,” 53.

The sun and the moon will not rule there, nor the day but they¹⁹⁷ will stand always in the aeon and with the holy angels. Behold, I have told you the mysteries of the kingdom...” Judas, because of his star, is not able to be part of the holy generation who dwells in an elevated realm. Jesus clearly indicates that it is the mortal (qnhon) aspect of the human generation which prevents them from entering the house (phl).

The implied reader would align with the holy generation; striving for *gnosis*. A sentiment of *empathy* would be experienced by the implied reader for Jesus and the holy generation. *Empathy* is felt by the implied reader “for those who are like them, who move them or represent an ideal for them.”¹⁹⁸ It is in this sense that Jesus and the holy generation represent an *idealistic empathy*, since they are “characters who represent what they would like to be.”¹⁹⁹ Even if the implied reader is not capable of being part of the holy generation because of his star, nonetheless, he would strive for this ideal. The evaluative point of view must be *antipathy* for Judas and those of the human generation since their mortality binds them to the material world and the Demiurge. The implied reader would have “feelings of alienation from or disdain for”²⁰⁰ Judas and the human generation. *Antipathy* is felt by the implied reader “when a character contradicts the value system of the reader (or of the narrative approved by the reader) or when this character opposes the beneficiary of the empathy of the reader.”²⁰¹

STRUCTURE OF THE UNIT:

¹⁹⁷ That is, the holy generation.

¹⁹⁸ D. Marguerat and Y Bourquin, “The Characters,” 68.

¹⁹⁹ Powell, “Characters,” 56.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 57.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

This scene (43.1- 47.5) is the pinnacle of Judas’s character development, but in terms of plot, it leads up to the climax. The climax is the Gnostic myth found on pages 47-53. This section spans a large portion of the gospel, and encompasses their ideology of theogony, cosmogony, anthropogony, soteriology, and eschatology. Leaving this aside, the present scene has its own importance, because it seals the fate of Judas and the human generation.

Following what resembles the parable of the sower²⁰² Jesus speaks of Sophia (wisdom). There is a lacuna in the passage that mentions Sophia (42.2-4): “This is also the way [...] of the [defiled] race and corruptible Sophia [...] the hand which has created mortal humans and their souls go up to the aeons on high.” This is the only time wisdom is mentioned in the text.²⁰³ If the *GosJud* is a Sethian text, Sophia should play an active role in the cosmology and anthropology of the text. Should *sofia* appear more than once? As Meyer notes,

In many Sethian texts, including the text commonly judged to be a Sethian classic, the *Secret Book of John*, the figure of Sophia, divine Wisdom, is prominent in the mythic story of the fall of the divine light into this world of darkness. Sophia functions as the personified character whose lapse leads to the production of the demiurge (called Yaldabaoth, Sakla, and Samael in the *Secret Book of John*) and eventually the entire fallen world of mortality here below.²⁰⁴

It is curious that the implied author made Jesus speak of *sofia* only once, and is not included in the Gnostic myth which occurs later in the discourse (47-52).

In the dream that Judas recounts, he describes a house which his eyes could not comprehend or measure (45.4-5). Judas is attempting to explain the inexpressibility of the house.

²⁰² Compare *GosJud* 43.26-44.2 (Judas said, “What will the rest of the human generations do?” Jesus said, “It is impossible [44] to sow upon a rock and take its fruit) to Mt 13:1-23; Mk 4:1-9; Lk 8:4-15.

²⁰³ There are many lacunae in the section concerning the Gnostic myth (47-52), yet it does not appear as though Sophia should fit (but of course it cannot be ruled out).

²⁰⁴ Meyer, “Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the *Gospel of Judas*”, 44.

In this way, the implied author employs the literary device *adynaton*.²⁰⁵ Judas then pleads with Jesus, saying to him: “Master, take me in along with these people.” [Jesus] answered and said, “Your star has led you astray O Judas. No person of mortal birth is worthy to enter the house you have seen, for that place is reserved for the holy...Behold, I have told you the mysteries of the kingdom [46] and I have taught you the error of the stars and [---] send [---] on the twelve aeons.”²⁰⁶ By the end of page 45 and the beginning of page 46, Jesus says that he has already explained to Judas the mysteries of the kingdom and taught him about the error of the stars. Consequently, this means that the “mysteries of the kingdom and the error of the stars” appear before page 45 and is separate from the Gnostic myth which occurs on pages 47-52. The “error of the stars” must then refer to human fate. To this point, Jesus has explained the two separate races, which implies that the “mysteries” are the differences of souls (the holy and the human). The central message is determinism. One may state with confidence that the “error of the stars” is both polysemic and multivocal. This passage may be alluding to the events and repercussions thereof described in 1Enoch 6-14, but see also: 1Enoch 21; 1Enoch 86 as well as Jude 1:6-7 in the NT.²⁰⁷

There appears to be significance in the use of Houo in the *GosJud*. The first occurrence of Houo in the *GosJud* is at 35.27. At the end of page 35, Jesus tells Judas: pwrW ebol Mmoou: taJw erok N Mmustrion NtmNtero oux? H?În?a? Je ekebwk emau alla Je? e?keaS a!Hom NHouo: “Separate from them, I shall tell you the mysteries of the kingdom not so that you will go there but you will grieve

²⁰⁵ *Adynaton* is, “A figure of speech related to hyperbole that emphasizes the inexpressibility of some feeling, thing, or idea, either by stating that words cannot describe it, or by comparing it with something (e.g. the heavens, the ocean) the dimensions of which cannot be grasped.” (C. Baldick, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008], 4).

²⁰⁶ 45.11-46.4.

²⁰⁷ Much to my regret, this in-depth comparative analysis cannot be done here. Various references from Nag Hammadi may be added to such a study (such as the *Testimony of Truth*).

greatly.” This statement of *denial* happens after Judas declares that Jesus is from the immortal aeon of Barbelo (35.18). The word Houo is not negative, but the context certainly is. As previously mentioned in chapter two, this gospel is a prime example of *erotapokriseis* since the plot consists of questions and answers. Judas is continually questioning Jesus in order for the plot to unfold. It is especially significant that Judas poses the same question twice to Jesus. At 46.16 and 53.8-9, Judas asks ou pe peHouo: what is the advantage? First, Judas is troubled about his own fate, and then he expresses his concern for human life. Scholars have focused more attention on the meaning of Houo in 53.8-10. This passage is more challenging to render a proper translation, since the context is unclear.

In relation to 46.16, Painchaud and Cazalais say that “the meaning of the phrase here is unambiguous and it has been rendered similarly by all the translators.”²⁰⁸ Painchaud and Cazalais are most interested in the Greek precedent, proposing parallels in Matthew 5:47 and Romans 3:1. Uncovering the textual allusions found in the *GosJud* is a fruitful endeavour; however, it is equally important to analyze the meaning of Houo in this specific context. In this pericope, Houo occurs twice: 46.12 and 46.16.

[46.11] er [...a]!?la J?e ekeSwpe e
kaS[aHo]m N!Houo eknau e
tmn[te]ro mN tesgenea
thrs% [:] nal NtereFswtM
eroo?[u] NGi loudas peJaF
naF Je? ou pe pe!Houo Nta
eiJitF% Je akporJt% etge
nea etMmau : aFouwSB
NGi !!hs peJaF Je knaSw
pe Mm!eHmNtlig auw >>
knaSwpe eks!Houort% !Hi
tN pkesepe Ngenea au
w knaSwpe ekarJi eJw
ou NHaeou nne!Houo se
<na > nak' auw nekb?w?k? epSwl

²⁰⁸ L. Painchaud and S. Cazalais, “What is the Advantage? (Gos. Jud. 46.16): Text, Context, Intertext,” 439 in *The Codex Judas Papers: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Tchacos Codex Held at Rice University, Houston Texas, March 13-16, 2008*. (Edited by A. DeConick. Leiden: Brill, 2009).

>>>>> >>>> >>>>>>>>
[47] etge?[nea et]o?uaab :

[46.11] [...] but will grieve greatly when you see the kingdom and all its generation.” When Judas heard this, he said to him, “What is the advantage that I have received, for you separated me from that generation?” Jesus answered and said, “You will become the thirteenth and you will be cursed by the other generation, and you will come to rule over them in the last days they <will ---> to you and you will not ascend on high [47] to the holy generation.”

I have translated N!Houo (46.12) as “greatly,” whereas, in 46.16, I chose to express pe!Houo as “the advantage.” The Coptic word Houo may be used as a masculine noun, adverb, or an adjective, which explains the fluidity of my choice of diction.²⁰⁹ Painchaud and Cazalais explain that, “The ambiguity of the Coptic Houo is shared by its Greek equivalents *perisso, n* and *perissei, a*, which refer to that which exceeds, and thus potentially either profit or that which is superfluous or useless.”²¹⁰ It is in 46.16 that Judas is directly responding to the previous statement made by Jesus at 46.12, but also, an allusion is made to 35.23-27. In both accounts (35.23-27 and 46.11-14), Jesus is telling Judas that he will not be going to the kingdom. How does Judas respond? Judas repeats the same word Houo but with a differing sense. This is an example of *antanaclasis*.²¹¹ The implied author uses this figurative device as a play on words.²¹² Judas demands to know what advantage he has received since he has the *gnosis* but not salvation, and this is accentuated by the duplication of Houo. The implied author continues in this manner by using two more similar words: siHouoꝛt (46.21) and ne!Houo (46.24). *Alliteration*²¹³ is a figure of speech in which a consonant sound is repeated in sequence. This stylistic effect serves to reinforce the meaning and link related words. This repetition of the same sounds emphasizes

²⁰⁹ W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, 735-37.

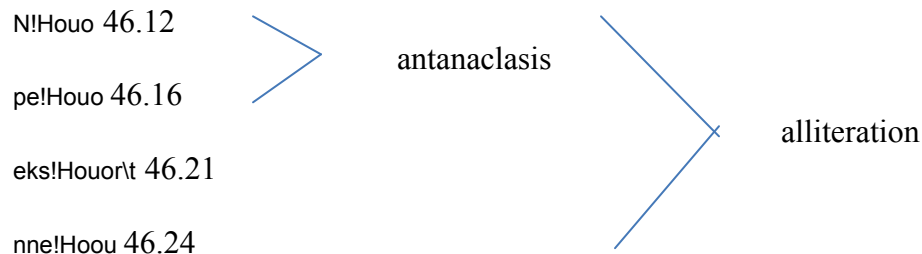
²¹⁰ L. Painchaud and S. Cazalais, “What is the Advantage? (Gos. Jud. 46.16): Text, Context, Intertext,” 438.

²¹¹ C. Baldick, *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 15.

²¹² The pattern is lost in the English translation, but is quite clear in the Coptic.

²¹³ C. Baldick, *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 8.

Judas' destiny, as he will grieve *greatly*, be *cursed* by the other generation, and come to rule over them in the last *days*.



Over the duration of this scene, Judas poses four questions to Jesus. Each question is strategically placed and significant to the development of the plot. These questions are an example of *pysma*²¹⁴ since they each require a complex response. There are clearly common thematic parallels which connect these questions. The four questions form a chiasmic structure which is aesthetically attractive to the implied reader.²¹⁵ This chiasmic structure (A/B/B'/A') is used to contrast concepts A and B, which are simultaneously linked yet distinct concepts.

A [43.12-23] Judas said to him, “[Rabbi], what kind of fruit does this generation produce?” Jesus said, “The souls of every human generation will die. When those (people),²¹⁶ however, have complete the time of the kingdom and their spirit separates from them, their bodies will die but their souls will be alive, and they will be taken up.”

B [43.23-44.13] Judas said, “What will the rest of the human generations do?” Jesus said, “It is impossible [44] *to sow upon a rock and take its fruit*. This is also the way [...] of the [defiled] race and corruptible Sophia [...] the hand which has created mortal humans and their souls go up to the aeons on high. [Truly] I say to you, [no authority] or angel or power will be able to see those places that this great, holy generation [will see].”

²¹⁴ J. A. Cuddon ed., *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, (rev. C. E. Preston; London: Penguin Books, 1998), 717. “*Pysma* is a Greek term denoting a question which requires an answer and not merely ‘yes’ or ‘no’. A rhetorical device by which a speaker or writer asks a series of questions which require various forms of answer.”

²¹⁵ A chiasmic structure or a chiasmus is named after the Greek letter σ indicating a ‘criss-cross’ arrangement of terms. It is a “reversal of grammatical structures in successive phrases or clauses.” J. A. Cuddon ed., *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 128.

²¹⁶ That is, the people who belong to the holy race.

B' [46.5-14] Judas said, "Master, can it suffice that *my seed* be under the control of the archons?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Come, that I [---] [---] ---line 10 is missing--- but will grieve much when you see the kingdom and all its generation."

A' [46.14-47.1] When Judas heard this he said to him, "What is the advantage that I have received, for you separated me from that generation?" Jesus answered and said, "You will become the thirteenth and you will be cursed by the other generation, and you will come to rule over them in the last days they <will ---> to you and you will not ascend on high [47] to the holy generation."

The corresponding [A//A'] and [B//B'] share common themes. This special symmetric order is used to emphasize the fate of the human soul in relation to determinism and *denial*. The inclusion (A//A') speak of separation and of ascending on high. In [A], the separation refers to the spirit leaving the body at death. This is the fate of the holy generation. The souls of the holy generation are taken up on high after the body dies. In [A'] Judas questions his advantage since he has been separated from the holy generation. To be separated from that generation means that Judas will not have salvation. As a contrast to [A], Judas is told that he will not ascend on high. Jesus' reply in [A//A'] is unyielding, as he firmly asserts that neither Judas nor the human generation will ascend on high.

[B//B'] share the same imagery of regeneration. As the fruit has seed, so does man. Just a sower may never harvest fruit from a rock; Judas' seed cannot be harvested since it is under the control of the archons. In both cases, Jesus responds by speaking of sight (*nau*). Jesus tells Judas that there are realms reserved for the holy generation and that others, not even angels, authorities, or powers, will be able to see those realms [B]. The parallel to this is when Jesus tells Judas that he will grieve greatly when he sees the kingdom and its generation because, evidently, Judas will not be part of that holy race [B']. This symbolic language is polysemic in nature because it conveys multiple levels of meaning.

PLOT:

The initial situation which includes the setting, characters, and circumstance of the action, begins with Judas being alone with Jesus. This aspect is essential to the plot, since this is the first time that Judas and Jesus are together apart from the disciples. A complication occurs when Judas tells Jesus to listen to his dream (44.15-18). Jesus' response to this request serves to build the tension of the scene. This tension will capture the interest of the implied reader. Jesus, true to form, laughs at Judas and calls him the thirteenth demon. The stars are synonymous with fate. Judas is told that his star has led him astray. Jesus then continues to explain that no person of mortal birth is worthy to enter into the kingdom, which is represented by the great house in Judas' vision. Leading up to this point, Judas has been longing to be part of the holy generation. Jesus has now explicitly told him that because of his star (his fate) he cannot enter the kingdom. The mysteries of the kingdom are the ordering of human beings, the separation between the human generation and the great, holy generation.

Judas demands to know the advantage he has received, since he has the *gnosis* but not salvation. Jesus tells him that he will become the thirteenth, be cursed, and will rule over the human generation in the last days. Jesus concludes by saying that Judas will not ascend on high to the holy generation. This is intended to lead to restoration and resolution. The final situation is the end of the scene. It is here that the effect of the previous incidents may be questioned and analyzed. By the end of this scene, Judas has been repeatedly told that he will not be part of the holy generation. Judas has been told the mysteries of the kingdom by the end of page 45. At the beginning of page 47, however, Jesus says that he will continue to teach Judas. This will then lead to the next scene, which is the Gnostic myth (47-53).

The Gnostic myth (47.5-53.7) occupies a large portion of the *GosJud*. John D. Turner analyzed the myth in the Judas gospel by comparing it to tractates from the NHC. He concludes that,

The *Gospel of Judas* clearly exhibits Sethian features... Among the Sethian treatises adduced for comparison, it appears that the *Gospel of Judas* sustains the closest affinity with portions of the *Apocalypse of Adam* and especially the theogonical and cosmogonical sections of the *Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit*, and the *Apocryphon of John*, and even the *Trimorphic Protennoia*. But it is an affinity mostly limited to a narrative outline of the main figures in the theogonical and cosmogonical sections of those treatises, with little attention to the means by which the members of the divine world are deployed from the supreme diety. As such it is more interested in inventory and sequence rather than in the process of the generation of the highest beings.²¹⁷

Unfortunately at this time such a study is beyond what could be addressed here. In addition, analyzing the *GosJud*'s connection to Sethianism is not directly related to the characterization of Judas. For these reasons this section of the Judas gospel has been excluded.

In chapter four, I will address the final micro-narrative of the *GosJud* (55.21-58.28). Prior to this scene, Judas interrupts Jesus' long monologue concerning the details of the Gnostic myth by questioning him about the advantage of human life (53.8-10) and if the human spirit dies (53.16-17). This micro-narrative continues to 55.20 and will be examined near the end of chapter in relation to the fate of the human soul. Although this is a significant portion of the gospel, it does not contribute to the characterization of Judas, and therefore, has been excluded from the main focus of the present study. As we will see in chapter four, the *GosJud* supports determinism, whereby, the destiny of the soul is determined in the cosmos and is not necessarily related to human will.

²¹⁷ J. D. Turner, "The Place of the *Gospel of Judas* in Sethian Tradition," in *The Gospel of Judas in Context. Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas*: NHMS 62 (ed. M. Scopello; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 223-224.

CHAPTER FOUR:
JUDAS, YOU WILL EXCEED ALL OF THEM

4.1 *Sacrifices to Saklas* (55.21- 58.28)

This final micro-narrative begins when Judas directs the discourse to baptism and the fate of those who practice this ritual in the name of Jesus (55.21-23). Once more, the implied author uses *pysma* as a rhetorical device in order to have Judas question the validity of Christian baptism. Even with the addition of the Ohio Fragments, the top of page 56 which contains Jesus' reply is severely fragmented. For now it remains indefinite, but the general undertone is negative since Jesus speaks of those who offer sacrifices to Saklas²¹⁸ (56.12-14). The Ohio Fragments have revealed that prior to this final scene, Jesus associates Israel and the twelve tribes with those who serve Saklas (55.6-9). Those who serve Saklas also sin in Jesus' name. This is a reference to Christian sacrificial theology, as well as Christianity's relationship to Judaism. The

²¹⁸ Saklas is the name for the God of the Hebrew Scriptures found in some Gnostic literature (such as the *Ap. John*). In the Sethian or Classic Gnosticism myth "Sophia, the youngest of the aeons, desires to bring forth a likeness of herself without the consent of the invisible Spirit and without a consort, and the result is an ugly being called Yaldabaoth. He is the first of the lower archons (rulers), and from him come twelve other archons and seven rulers over the seven heavens (that is, planetary spheres). The chief archon has two other names, Saklas (from Aramaic "fool") and Samael (Hebrew "blind god"). In his foolish arrogance he says, "I am God and there is no other God beside me" (11:19-21; compare Isaiah 45:5; 46:9)." Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 65.

implied author interprets proto-orthodox Christianity as a continuation of the Jewish Temple practices.

In this scene (55.21- 58.28) Judas is told that he will exceed all of them, for he will sacrifice the man who bears the spiritual Jesus (56.17-20). Is sacrificing “the man who bears” Jesus a noble act reserved for a true Gnostic? As Meyer says, “Elsewhere in the *GosJud*, Jesus is made to be very critical of sacrifice, and that criticism may be directed at celebrations of the Christian Eucharist, sacrificial interpretations of the crucifixion story, and, as Karen King and Elaine H. Pagels propose, the sacrifices that take place in acts of martyrdom.”²¹⁹ When the overall context of the gospel is considered, sacrifice must always be understood as negative. Those who offer sacrifices are said to be worshipping and serving Saklas. When Judas sacrifices Jesus, he is serving Saklas by instituting Christian sacrificial theology. Proto-orthodox Christianity believes in the sacrificial death of Jesus for salvation. The implied author of the *GosJud* is revealing the irony that Judas is responsible for Jesus’ death. Judas, therefore, cannot be the perfect Gnostic.

The ascension scene is found in this final micro-narrative. The ascension demonstrates the spiritual aspect of Jesus (57.16-58.6) and supports the hypothesis that N!Hrot (33.20) should be translated as “apparition.” The “man who bears” Jesus will be crucified, but the divine being has already returned to his home in another aeon. This means that Jesus does not need Judas to free him from his earthly body. Judas is always inferior to Jesus in this narrative. The gospel comes to a conclusion just as Judas hands over (aFparadidou) Jesus to the Jewish authorities. There is no crucifixion or post-resurrection scene. These events are not needed to proclaim this gospel’s

²¹⁹ Meyer, “Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the *Gospel of Judas*,” 52.

message. Judas receives a monetary reward for answering the scribes (negrammateus) as they wished. The last words read: the Gospel of Judas.

Text:

[55.21] loudas de peJaF N l!hs Je !Hi eu | nar ou NGi neNtauJwkM > | H?M pekran : | pe?JaF NGi !l!hs Je alhqws T | Jw mmo?[s nak] Je peeiJwkM [56] Nt? [HN] paran | \H []mh >> | e? [] M? [...] | t. [] . [] F?na | Fw?[t]e? ebol Ntgenea thr!s | nad?[a]M prmmklaH petR : | fo[rei] Mmol raste senaR | ba?[san]i??se MmoF : Ha?m?h?n | T [Jw M]mos nhtN Je !mn | !?a?oV?[e N]GiJ n?[r]w?me e?S?[a]F | mou [naR n]o?b?e erol : | alhqws? [T]Jw Mmos nak' lou | da Je n?[ett]ale qusia e?H?!ral? | nsakla?[s] ou throu | Je nH [] . H!i | JN p [] . th | rou . [.] . [] . e . | Hwb n?im e?[u]Houo ntok? | de knar Houo eroou th | rou prwme gar etr fo | rei Mmoei knar qusiase | MmoF hdh apektap Jise | auw pekGwn't aFmo!uH | auw peksiou aFJwbe au | w pekHh't a?[FamaH]t?e >>>>> [57] alhq[ws T]Jw MMos nak Je] n?e?k | !Hao[u au]w | p [.] . [] S]w?pe | k . [] o | nos mpaiwn au . . [. . au]w | nerwou auR Gwb au[w] nge | nea Nnaggelos auaS [a]Hom > | auw mpeqoou nt . [.] oou | [] . [. . .] . [.] . [] par | [xwn]e?FFwte ebol : [au]w to | t?e FnaJise NGi p?t?[u]pos | ntnoG ngenea N?[a]dam Je | !Ha te!Hh Ntpe mN? [p]k?aH mN n | a?ggelos !sSoo[p N]Gi tgene | a? etMmau ebol Hit?N? naiwn | e?i?s Hhhte auJe Hw?[b] n?i?m erok | Fi eiatk eHraei n!k[n]au etGh | pi auw pouoln etN?Hht!s : auw Nsiou etkw?e eros | auw psiou eto Mprohgou : | menos NtoF pe pek?siou >--- | loudas de aFFiat!F e!Hraei >--- | aFnau etGhpe Nouoln au | w aFFwk e!Houn eros ne | taHeratou Hi pesht : au | swtm eusmh esnhu ebol | HN tGhpe e?[s]J?w Mmos >--- [58] J[e t]noG n | ge?[nea Hij]k?wn N | Gi . [] . [.] a?u | w a? [.] do [.] tHral | N? [. . .] auw aloudas lo eF | nau [e] !?l!hs : /nteunou de as | Sw?[p]e NGi oukatastasia | HN [Nlo]Vd?a?i e?Ho?V?e? e? . [. . . .] | N? [] auk?@?MrM [de] | nG?i? n?[e]Va?rJiereus Je Nta[.] | bwk/ [eHo]un? e?pkataluma n? | teFp?[ro]s?euxh? neoun Ho? | eine d[e M]mau Nnegramma? | teus e?[u]parathrei Je eue? | amaHt?[e] mmoF !Hral HN te > | prose[u]xh neuR !Hote gar | Hht!F m?plaos pe Je neFN | tootou throu !Hws pro | fhth?s auw auT peuou | ol elo?udas peJau naF : | Je ekr ou Ntok Mpeeima | Ntok pe pmaqhts N!s | NtoF de aFouwSB nau | kata peuouwSe loudas | de aFJi NHNHomnt aFpa | radidou m?[mo]F? n?au >>>>>--- | >>>>> >> >> >>>>> | peuaggelion | NI?oudas

Translation:

[55.21] And Judas said to Jesus, “What will those do who have been baptized in your name?” Jesus said, “Truly I say [to you], this baptism [56] [...] in my name [...] [...] [...] will destroy the entire generation of the earthly man Adam. Tomorrow they will torture the one who bears me. Truly I [say] to you (pl.), no hand of a man will sin against me. Truly [I] say to you Judas, those [who] offer sacrifices to Saklas [will (?)] all [...] ²²⁰ since [...] upon the [...] all of them [...] everything that is evil. But you will exceed all of them, for you will sacrifice the man who bears me. Already your horn has been raised, and your wrath has been kindled, and your star has passed by, and your heart has [become strong]. [57] Truly [I say to you (sg.)], your last [...] (pl.) and] the [...] become [...] the (pl.)...] of the aeon have [...] and] the kings have become weak, and the generations of the angels have grieved, and those who are evil [.] . [. . . .] . [.] . [] the archon since he is destroyed. And then the image of the great generation of Adam will be exalted for prior to heaven and earth and angels, that generation which is from the aeons exists. Truly you have been told everything. Lift up your eyes and look at the cloud and the light within it, and the stars surrounding it, and the star that guides the way is your star.” Judas lifted up his eyes and

²²⁰ G. Wurst and M. Meyer suggest in the Ohio Fragments that this lacuna may be restored to read [senam]ou, “will die”.

saw the luminous cloud and he entered it. Those standing on the ground heard a voice coming from the cloud, saying, [58] “[...the] great generation [...] image [...] and [...].” And Judas stopped looking [at] Jesus. And at once there was a disturbance among [the] Jews, more than [...] [...And] their high priests murmured because [he] had gone into the guest room for prayer. Some of the scribes were there watching carefully in order to arrest him during the prayer, for they were afraid of the people, since he was regarded by all as a prophet. And they approached Judas, they said to him, “What are you doing in this place? You are the disciple of Jesus. He answered them as they wished. Judas received some coins; he handed him over to them.

The Gospel
Of Judas

NARRATOR:

The omnipresent narrator returns in the final pages of the gospel. The majority of the story was discourse, which in effect left the narrator with a minor role. The implied author, however, uses the narrator in this scene (55.21-58.28) in order to more clearly describe the actions and motivations of the characters. The narrator uses the literary device *telling* to describe the ascension scene in 57.21-26: “Judas lifted up his eyes and saw the luminous cloud and he entered it. Those standing on the ground heard a voice coming from the cloud, saying.” What the voice says is currently lost in a lacuna. This scene is more similar to an ascension scene than a transfiguration.²²¹ Debates concerning the identity of the one who enters the luminous cloud (“he”) were prevalent at the First International Conference on the *Gospel of Judas*.²²² The ambiguity of the third person masculine singular pronoun (F) made both Judas and Jesus possible antecedents. The Ohio Fragments have now revealed that the antecedent of aFFwk must be Jesus,

²²¹ Compare *GosJud* 57.21-26 with Jesus’ transfiguration in the canonical Gospels: Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-10; Luke 9:28-36. Also, compare the cloud that lifts Jesus up and carries him into heaven: Luke 24:5; Acts 1:9.

²²² The First International Conference on the *Gospel of Judas* was held October 26-27, 2006 at the University of Sorbonne and at the Institut National d’Histoire de l’Art, Paris. The purpose of this conference was to “give an opportunity to scholars specialising in the field of Gnosticism to exchange their ideas and discuss this new apocryphal text.” (M. Scopello, “Preface,” in *The Gospel of Judas in Context. Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas*. NHMS vol. 62 [ed. Madeleine Scopello; Leiden: Brill, 2008], xi).

since the narrator informs the implied reader in 58.5-6 that, “Judas stopped looking [at] Jesus.” This verifies that the one who enters the luminous cloud (57.21-23) can only be Jesus.

The narrator occupies much of page 58 (lines 5-20, 23-28) in order to effectively bring the gospel to completion. The top of this page is missing the majority of lines one to four, which includes dialogue from the luminous cloud and potentially some information from the narrator.

In 58.5-20, one reads:

And Judas stopped looking [at] Jesus. And at once there was a disturbance among [the] Jews, more than [...] [...] And] their high priests murmured because [he] had gone into the guest room for prayer. Some of the scribes were there watching carefully in order to arrest him during the prayer, for they were afraid of the people, since he was regarded by all as a prophet. And they approached Judas.

The narrator is briefly interrupted by the scribes who demand to know why Jesus is there, and declare that Judas is a disciple of Jesus.

The narrator quickly returns from reporting how the scribes question Judas. The narrator says, “He answered them as they wished. Judas received some coins; he handed him over to them. The Gospel of Judas” (58.23-28). No further explanation is given. The implied audience has been given the necessary tools to unlock the meaning of the gospel. The narrator of the Judas gospel has proven itself to be reliable. W. J. Harvey describes a reliable narrator as one who is the “trustworthy spokesman of the particular reality presented in the world of any novel; their view of the world, although it may not be precisely our own, is still reckoned by us to be sane, decent, candid, mature.”²²³ The implied audience would view this narrator as dependable and truthful. The story does not imply that one should find the narrator to be unreliable.

²²³ Harvey contrasts reliable and unreliable narrator. An unreliable narrator is a fool, or a liar, or profoundly self-deceived; see W. J. Harvey, “Character and Narration,” in *Character and Novel* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1965), 74.

CHARACTERS:

The principal characters in this micro-narrative are Jesus and Judas. It is here that these two main personages will have their final interactions, which inevitably result in the earthly man Jesus being handed over to the Jewish scribes (58.9-26). New characters appear only briefly in this scene: the high priests (arJiereus; 58.10) and the scribes (grammateus; 58.13-14). The implied author uses the high priests and scribes as *walk-on* characters, so that they may fulfil a passive, simple role. Lines 8-10 of page 58 are missing key sections, which limits the role of the high priests. The narrator tells the implied reader that “the high priests murmured (krMrM) because [---] had gone into the guest room (kataluma) for his prayer.”²²⁴ This forms a tension in the narrative, but no more is said about the high priests.

On the other hand, the scribes play a slightly more developed role. The scribes have action: they watch carefully outside the guest room in order to arrest Jesus during his prayer (58.12-16). The scribes are said to have feelings. They are afraid of the people since they regard Jesus as a prophet. The “people” (taos) are likely the crowds who followed Jesus during his ministry and listened to his preaching; however, this is not part of the *GosJud*. In addition to this, and perhaps most importantly, the scribes have dialogue. They question Judas as to why he is there and they also confirm that he is, indeed, a disciple of Jesus (58.20-22). The high priests and the scribes are *flat* characters because they possess a single trait. As the Jewish authorities, they strive to arrest Jesus and bring him to his end.

Jesus:

²²⁴ 58.9-12.

Jesus is the protagonist of the gospel because he plays an active role in the plot and is constantly in the foreground. He is a *round* character because he is constructed by means of several traits. In a sense, Jesus in the *GosJud* is similar to how Culpepper describes Jesus in the Gospel according to John, saying that, “the character of Jesus is static; it does not change. He only emerges more clearly as what he is from the beginning.”²²⁵ The *incipit* provided the implied reader with an accurate characterization of Jesus which continues through the gospel.

In this final scene (55.21-58.28), Jesus does not display new character traits. Jesus does activate his ability to be an apparition (NHCrot; 33.20). In the *incipit* the narrator described Jesus as having the ability to appear as an apparition. As mentioned in chapter one, not all scholars are in agreement. Jesus demonstrates his ability to travel to and from different aeons, which is best described as behaviour of an apparition. When Jesus enters the luminous cloud (57.21-23), he is acting similar to an apparition as he has the ability to transcend this earthly realm and ascend to a higher aeon. Jesus does so autonomously. He does not need the assistance of other characters to help him ascend. As the divine revealer from the immortal aeon of Barbelo (35.18), Jesus needs people to act as receivers of the *gnosis* which he divulges, but he does not need another character to free him from his earthly body. Gnostics possess a different interpretation of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.²²⁶ For example, because of their particular understanding of soteriology they see the divine revealer leaving the earthly Jesus on the cross. Jesus, therefore, does not need Judas to sacrifice him. In the end, Judas will hand Jesus over but Jesus’ liberation is not dependent on this act.

Judas:

²²⁵ Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*, 103.

²²⁶ For examples, see: *Treat. Res.* (NHC I, 4) and *Ap. John* (NHC II, I, III, I, IV, I, and BG 8502, 2).

Judas opens this scene (55.21-23) by asking Jesus about those who have been baptized as Christians. The text does not say that Judas has been baptized, but he is concerned about the fate of those who have been baptized. He essentially wants to know if the people who are baptized in Jesus' name are saved. Judas' question reiterates a pattern in the *GosJud*, which reveals that the implied author and reader are primarily concerned with salvation. Baptism in the *GosJud* is treated differently than in the New Testament.²²⁷ The practice of baptism was an important aspect of early Christianity, both proto-orthodox and Gnostic, so it should therefore not be surprising that the implied author of the *GosJud* addresses this sacred ritual. This Gnostic-Christian community needed to define itself within the context of "Christianity." Likely, they were aware that Jesus had been baptized by John the Baptist, and that it was one of the initiation rituals of the proto-orthodox Christian church. In addition to this, baptism seems to have been an integral aspect of Sethian Gnosticism. Evidence of baptismal rituals can be found in such Nag Hammadi Codices as, *Trimorphic Protennoia*, the *Apocalypse of Adam*, *On Baptism A*, *On Baptism B*, and the *Apocryphon of John*.²²⁸

Unfortunately, this section (55.21-56.16) of the gospel is very fragmented. Some of the puzzle pieces are missing, but the tone of Jesus' response seems to be negative. Jesus ridicules the baptism of the proto-orthodox Christian church when he defines them as "sacrifices to

²²⁷ The New Testament gospels speak of John the baptizer and his preaching of repentance. Furthermore, Jesus' baptism in the synoptics is of central importance, and his disciples continue this ritual even after the crucifixion. For example, Acts 2:38 retells of Peter addressing a crowd of people in Jerusalem. It is here that Peter says to the crowd, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." Acts 2:38 in NRSV.

²²⁸ For example: Pearson explains the evidence for a baptismal ritual in the *Apoc. Adam* (NHC V, 5), saying that "Toward the end of the text, reference is made to three beings 'Micheu and Michar and Mnesimous, who are over the holy baptism and the living water' (84.5-7). These angelic beings appear in other Sethian texts in association with baptism. Three others, also found in other Sethian texts, occur at the very end of the text: 'The imperishable illuminators, who came from the holy seed: Yesseus, Mazareus, Yessedekus, the Living Water.' (85. 30-31). Reflected here is a baptismal ritual presumably practiced by Gnostics of a Sethian orientation." (Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 73-74).

Saklas.” Again, the implied author of the *GosJud* has Jesus separate what the community understands of the “true God” from the “god” whom the church promotes.²²⁹

This leads to the question: did this group of Christian-Gnostics practice baptism? It is unclear from this fragmented section of the gospel if this community practiced baptism or not. Many scholars, including April DeConick, Birger Pearson, and Marvin Meyer, have categorized the *GosJud* as being Sethian. If their assumptions are correct, then it is more than likely that this community practiced baptism. It is probable that this community would practice a baptismal ritual similar to that found in *Trimorphic Protennoia*, the *Apocalypse of Adam*, and the *Apocryphon of John*. They would, however, use texts such as the *GosJud* to define and separate their idea of baptism from that of the proto-orthodox Christian church.²³⁰ It must be clarified that Sethianism is a category of Gnosticism developed by scholars based on similarities between texts and formal elements in a text. In this sense it is possible to speak of a text type called Sethian Gnosticism, but it cannot be confirmed with certainty that this translates into a specific historical Gnostic group. Further study of the Gnostic myth within the *GosJud* can reveal its relationship to texts which have been classified as Sethian. John D. Turner has attempted to do so, and he finds the *GosJud* to be similar to Sethian texts, but also deviating from the norms at key points.²³¹

DeConick hypothesizes that the *GosJud* “hints at the importance of Gnostic baptism in overcoming fate.”²³² She proposes that the missing section of page 55 “included a discussion of the ineffectiveness of mainstream baptism in overcoming fate, while Gnostic baptism the

²²⁹ For example, Jesus makes a distinction between the god whom the disciples worship and that who Jesus serves (33.24-35.10).

²³⁰ Further research needs to be conducted in order to state confidently that this community was indeed Sethian, which must entail an in-depth analysis of the Gnostic myth within the *GosJud* combined with a comparative analysis of this with other Sethian texts.

²³¹ Turner, “The Place of the Gospel of Judas in Sethian Tradition,” 187-237.

²³² DeConick, “The Mystery of the Betrayal,” 262.

opposite.”²³³ The Ohio Fragments confirm that DeConick’s proposal is incorrect. The missing portion of page 55 speaks of offering sacrifices to Saklas and how this is a continuation of Jewish Temple practices. Saklas is the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, therefore by offering sacrifice to him through Christian baptism, Israel and the twelve tribes are reinstated. It does not appear as though the *GosJud* promotes a Gnostic baptism or a Christian baptism. Classifying the *GosJud* as a Sethian text may be an erroneous assumption. It is unclear what type of relationship the *GosJud* has with texts from Nag Hammadi which have been categorized as Sethian by some scholars.

Meyer says, “In the *Gospel of Judas*, the days leading up to the time of the crucifixion of Jesus are not overshadowed by Judas performing an act of disloyalty or betrayal, as in the New Testament gospels. In the *Gospel of Judas*, the last days of Jesus with Judas are days of conversation and revelation.”²³⁴ In order to address this statement made by Meyer, Judas’ final question and Jesus’ response to it must be examined. Judas is continually concerned with the fate of the human generations. In section 55.21-23, he asks Jesus, “What will those who have been baptized in your name do?” The answer Jesus provides is not clear because of the fragmented state of the page. However, Jesus does discuss those who offer sacrifices to Saklas. Jesus then says, “[...] everything that is evil. But you will exceed all of them for you will sacrifice the man who bears me” (56.17-21). In Meyer’s opinion, this is a positive statement made by Jesus. It is his view that Judas’ act of handing over will free the true inner person trapped within the earthly man Jesus. This would indicate that Jesus needs Judas in order to complete his mission.

²³³ Ibid., 264. DeConick also firmly asserts that Judas could not have undergone Gnostic baptism because he is still strongly connected to his star, and has therefore not been able to alter his fate. Baptizing of Judas or any of the other disciples occurs outside of this narrative, therefore it can only be speculated that as Jesus’ closest followers they would have been baptized.

²³⁴ M. Meyer, “Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the Gospel of Judas,” 42.

Yet, throughout the narrative Jesus is put in a superior position to Judas, to say that Jesus needs Judas to liberate his soul is therefore in direct opposition to the hitherto depiction of their master-student relationship. In addition to this, the ascension of the spiritual Jesus has already taken place when Judas hands over the earthly man Jesus (57.15-23). Judas' role is passive in this scene. The man who is crucified is the man who bears Jesus. In no way is the spiritual Jesus freed at the crucifixion. In accordance with this view, Turner writes, "Nowhere does the text make any statement about the salvific benefit of enabling Jesus' ascent by freeing him from his mortal coil. Elsewhere in the text, Jesus freely ascends to the divine realm whenever he wishes."²³⁵ As previously mentioned, Jesus is said to appear as an apparition (33.20).

As King and Pagels understand, the author of the *GosJud* may be dependent on the Gospel according to John. They propose that the author of the *GosJud* read John 6:61-63 and,

thought that Judas alone understood what Jesus really meant here, and that was why he handed Jesus over, following Jesus's command at the last supper (*John* 13:27). Other Christians misunderstood when they thought Judas was possessed by Satan. What exactly did they misunderstand? In the *Gospel of Judas*, as well as the *Gospel of John*, Jesus taught that "the spirit gives life, but the flesh is useless" But many of Jesus's followers would come to believe that suffering was required for salvation, and these understood their own suffering as a sacrifice to God, an imitation of the sacrificial death of Jesus.²³⁶

While it is not certain that the *GosJud* is dependent on the Gospel according to John, the textual evidence does support a negative interpretation of the sacrificial death of Jesus. Judas' act perpetuates the sacrificial understanding of Jesus' death. The implied author sees this as an evil sacrifice to Saklas.

²³⁵ Turner, "The Place of the Gospel of Judas in Sethian Tradition," 190. Turner continues by saying, "No matter how much we may esteem such liberation to be a chief tenet of Gnostic soteriology, this claim remains a mere inference, logical as it might be, on the part of the editors."

²³⁶ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, 52-3.

DeConick asserts that, “As for Judas’ part, the Sethians who wrote this gospel insist that it was more than a simple kiss on the cheek. What Judas did was the most evil thing he could do. He sacrificed the body of Jesus to Saklas (*Gospel of Judas* 56.17-21), taking on an instrumental part in the archonic war.”²³⁷ When Judas is told that he will exceed all of them, it is in evil which Jesus speaks of. The same word Houo is used to describe how Judas will do much more than those who offer sacrifices to Saklas. Jesus says to Judas in 56.12-24:

alhqw? [TJ]w Mmos nak/ louda Je n?[ett]ale qusia e?H?!@a ?i? nsakla?[s] ou throu Je nH [] . H\iJN p [] . throu . [.] . [] . e . Hwb n?im e?[u]Houu ntok? de knar Houo eroou throu prwme gar etr forei Mmoei knar qusiase MmoF hdh apektap Jise auw pekGwn\t aFmo!uH auw peksiou aFJwbe auw pekHht a?[FamaH]t?e >>>>>

Truly [I] say to you Judas, those [who] offer sacrifices to Saklas [will (?)] all [...] ²³⁸ since [...] upon the [...] all of them [...] everything that is evil. But you will exceed all of them, for you will sacrifice the man who bears me. Already your horn has been raised, and your wrath has been kindled, and your star has passed by, and your heart has [become strong].

The Coptic word for evil (Houo; 56.17) is similar to the word used by the implied reader to describe how Judas will do more (Houo; 56.18) than the others. Lines 17 and 18 may serve as a possible alliteration, since there is a repetition of the same consonants. The use of Houo alludes to page 35 and 46 of the manuscript. Each time that Jesus uses Houo it is in a negative context. In 56.17-18, Jesus is telling Judas that he will exceed those who worship Saklas by offering sacrifices because he will be responsible for the sacrificial interpretation of Jesus’ death.

This final scene (55.21-58.28) is the climax of Judas’ evil portrayal. Judas’ role in this micro-narrative is a central part of understanding the message of the Judas gospel. Judas has undergone a metamorphosis, a process of transformation from a state of non-knowledge to

²³⁷ DeConick, “The Mystery of the Betrayal,” 257.

²³⁸ As previously mentioned, Gregor Wurst and Marvin Meyer suggest in the Ohio Fragments that this lacuna may be restored to read [senam]ou, “will die”.

obtaining *gnosis*. In this scene, Judas experiences *anagnorisis*²³⁹ when he is told that he will sacrifice the man who bears Jesus. Judas was told that he will learn the mysteries of the kingdom but will not go there (35.24-26). Judas was told that he is controlled by his star, he is a devil, and will rule over the thirteenth aeon, but the reasons are not explicit. Judas experiences a moment of recognition when he is told that his *denial* is tied to his future act of handing Jesus over. According to the Gnostic interpretation of the implied author, Judas is the root of Christian sacrificial theology. Judas is a tragic figure. He has been taught personally by Jesus the cosmic mysteries, but this is not enough to alter his destiny. He was separated from the everlasting generation because his soul was connected to the evil archons which rule the lower world. The fate of his star is unchangeable. Judas does not belong to the holy generation and no amount of divine *gnosis* can change that he is *denied* salvation.

PLOT:

Although the *GosJud* does present Jesus and Judas in conversation, and indeed divine revelations occur, Jesus does speak of Judas' act of "handing over." The NGS team interpreted Judas' sacrificial act as positive, saying, "what Judas will do is the best gift of all. Jesus says to Judas, 'But you will exceed all of them. For you will sacrifice the man that clothes me' (56). Judas could do no less for his friend and soul mate, and he betrays him. That is the good news of the *Gospel of Judas*."²⁴⁰ This idea of a rehabilitated Judas does not coincide with the context surrounding Jesus' statement that Judas will "exceed all of them." Judas, in fact, exceeds all of

²³⁹ J. A. Cuddon, ed. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 35.

²⁴⁰ Kasser, *The Gospel of Judas*, 167.

them in *evil* by perpetuating the tradition of Jewish Temple sacrifices through the sacrificial interpretation of Jesus' death. In addition, Jesus continually *denies* Judas salvation.

King and Pagels believe that the author of the *GosJud* strives to draw attention to “a stunning contraction: that while Christians refuse to practice sacrifice, many of them bring sacrifice right back into the center of Christian worship – by claiming that Jesus' death is a sacrifice for human sin, and then by insisting that Christians who die as martyrs are sacrifices pleasing to God.”²⁴¹ They continue by saying, “According to the *Gospel of Judas*, then, the fundamental problem is that “the twelve” – here, stand-ins for church leaders – do not know who Jesus is and do not understand who God is, either. They wrongly think that God requires suffering and sacrifice.”²⁴² The *GosJud* does speak against sacrifices, and would view the proto-orthodox Christians as practicing sacrifices in the way that King and Pagels have articulated. King and Pagels, however, believe that the author of the *GosJud* would want Jesus' death and the deaths of his fellow Christians to be understood as sacrifices. According to King and Pagels, the author is not arguing against sacrifices, but is arguing against the god whom the Christians worship and their belief that the physical body will be raised to eternal life. I disagree with this interpretation of the *GosJud*, although I do agree that the implied author does associate the proto-orthodox God (from the Hebrew Scriptures) with Saklas (the evil Demiurge) and also that he would have no use for a physical resurrection. The implied author must be against all sacrifices since these acts preserve and perpetuate the Jewish Temple sacrifices and traditions. These acts traditionally come from the Law of Moses and therefore offer worship and devotion to Saklas.

²⁴¹ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, 59.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 66.

Together with the *incipit* this closing scene forms a framework around the gospel. Just as the narrator opened the gospel, he also brings to the story to its conclusion.

4.2 *Understanding Salvation and Sacrifice in the Judas Gospel*

Salvation and sacrifice are two key themes within this gospel. The implied author uses salvific and sacrificial language frequently in order to firmly establish a position against the proto-orthodox Christian church, and more specifically against sacrificial theology. The implied author uses Jesus and Judas to explain that there are two different types of human souls. Salvation and sacrifice have largely been addressed in relation to the characterization of Judas. Missing from this evaluation are two significant micro-narratives: 37.20-42.24 and 52.25-54.3. These scenes do not directly relate to Judas and how he is depicted within the macro-narrative and therefore must be examined separately.

As mentioned in chapter one, the *incipit* informed the implied reader that Jesus came for the salvation of humanity (33.9). This appears to contradict the determinism and *denial* motif found throughout the macro-narrative. Yet, upon further inspection, the *incipit* provides a clue to interpreting how Jesus brings salvation. The narrator *tells* the implied reader that Jesus performed miracles (or signs) and great wonders (33.7-8) *for* the salvation of humanity. This may be understood as the divine, cosmological revelations that Jesus provides to the implied reader. Determinism is a key component of the soteriological concepts put forth in this gospel, but there is a need for Jesus to impart esoteric information concerning the cosmos, the end times, and the fate of the human soul.

4.2.1. *Each of you has His Star:*

The micro-narrative (37.20-42.24) is the third scene of the macro-narrative. It begins on the third day, initiation by the temporal marker “another day.” In this scene, the disciples report to Jesus a collective dream that they had the previous night. The dream and Jesus’ interpretation of it are imperative to understanding salvation and sacrifice in the Judas gospel. Painchaud recognizes the significance of sacrificial language in the *GosJud*, saying, “The concentration of sacrificial vocabulary in the relation of the apostles’ dream (37.21-38.3) and its interpretation by Jesus indicate that the *GosJud* is specifically directed against the notion of sacrifice, and particularly the sacrificial interpretation of Christianity.”²⁴³ One of the most significant aspects of the dream is that the horrific acts of sin are all done in the name of Jesus. The disciples are the twelve priests (ouhnb) who call upon Jesus’ name. After Jesus interprets the dream he leaves with Judas. This scene is distinctive because it is the last time that Jesus teaches the twelve disciples in the narrative.

Text: (37.20-42.24)

[37.20] aFei Sarou N | kaiHouu NGi !l!hs peJau naF Je | ps!aH annau erok/ HN ourasou | [Nteei]ouSh Ntaoue[n[e: >>] | [peJaF J]e etbe ou Nta[tetN-] | [.....] atNHap/ thut?[N >>] [38] Ntoou de? p?[eJa]u? [Je an]n?a?[u] | eunoG nh?[i] e?[re oun]o?G? nqu[si] | asth?r[ion NHhtF au]w? m?n?t?[s] | noous Nrwm e[nJw? Mmo?[s] | Je Nouhnb ne : auw o?uran? [...] | oun oumhSe de proskar | tere?i {epeq?usiasthri} epe | qu[sia]sth?[ri]on e?tMmau >>>> | S[antouJwk eb]o?! nGi Nouhnb | n[se]Ji eHoun N]n?SMSe anon | de [ne]nhro[ska]rteri p?e>>> | peJ[a]F NGi l[hs] Je HNas Mmi | ne ne [.....] Ntoou de | peJau [Je Hoei]n?e men eu | nhst [eue NHe]b?domassNte | HNko[oue] d?e eur qusiase N | neuShre Mmin mmoou HN | kooue NneuHiome eusmou | auw euqbbihu Nneuerhu >> | HNkooue euNkotke mn nHo | out HNkooue eur Hwb efw | tB HNkekooue eueire nou | mhhSe Nnobe Hi anomia >> [39] a?uw e?u[H]N n[e]Hbhoue throu | MpeuSw?w?t? [e]S[a]FmouH nGi | p?eque [iasthri]on et]M?mau | auw naI NterouJoou a?[u]ka | rwou euStrwr peJaF | nau NGi !l!hs Je etbe ou ate | tNStort Hamh?n TJw | Mmos nhtN Je? Nouh?[hb] th | rou e?t?w!Heratou eJ[n pe] qu | siasthri? etmmau e?[ur] epi | kale?[i] Mparan auw o[n] TJw | mmos nhtn Je n?taus[H]al | Mparan epe | Nn?genea | Nnsiou ebol H[i]tN n?genea | nnrwme [au]w [a]utaGe | Hm paran NHNs[h]n n?a?tkar | pos auw HN ouSip?e? | peJaF nau NGi His Je NtwtN | NntJi eHoune NNSMSe | epequsiasthri]on Ntate | tNnau eroF petMmau | pe !pnT etetNSMSe naF | auw pmNtsnoous Nrwm | Ntatetnau eroou ntwtN | pe auw Ntbnooue etou eine mmoou eHoun nqusia | Ntatetnau eroou ne e | te pmhhSe pe etetNpla?na [40] MmoF eJN p[e]qu[sija?s?thri] | o?n? etm?[ma]u [Fn]a?[w] HeratF | N?G[l] p] p?os auw | q[e]t?e? ta?e?i? etFnar xrasqai | Mparan auw senar pros | karterei eroF NGi Ngenea > | N[N]e?usebhs mnNsa pal > | ou[n] kairwme neparista N | n?[....]p]o?[r]n?e?[ue] auw kaioua | F[na]parHista NNreFHatb | S[hr]e? kaioua de? nreFnko | kte mN Hoo[ut] mN netnh | steu[e] a[u]w pkesepe na | kaqar[sija] H[i] a?no?mia Hi pla | nh auw n?[e]t]Jw MMos Je | anon

²⁴³ L. Painchaud, “Polemical Aspects of the *Gospel of Judas*”, 175.

HnHisos naggelos >> | auw Ntoou ne Nsiou etJwk | ebol NHwb nim auJoos gar | NNgenea NNrwme Je eis | Hhhte apnoute Sep te | tNqusia Ntootou nouh | hb ete paei pe pdiakonos | Nte?planh pJoeis de e | toueH saHne pal eto N!Js | eJN pthrF Hral HN fae N | Hoou senaJpioou >>>> | >>> [41] p?eJa?F [nauN]Gi !hs Je !Hw erw | tN Nqu[siase] n?HN[t]e?[bno]ou | e? Ntate?[tNtaloo eHr]al | !Hi JN pequsiasth[ri]on [e]uHi | JN netNsiou mn net[na]gge | los eauSrp Jwk ebol [M]mau | marouSwpe Ge? euSo[ue]it/ | naHrhtN auw n?seS [. .] eu | ouonH ebol [nhtN peJau N] | Gi neFmaq[ths Je p]s t]ou | bon [e]bol Hh n . . . [.] n? > | tanaau Hn tepla[nh] NNag | gelos peJaF nau [N]Gi ihs | Je m?N> SGom . . . [.]erwou | [..... o]jude mN | S[Gom etr]e? oukrhnh wSm | Mp[ekrwm]ntoikoumenh | th[rs oud]e ouphgh HN | ou[polis m]n SGom Mmos e et[si]o[n?ngene]a throu ei | mh?tiernoG etthS au | w? m?n ouHhbs nouwt na | [r o]uo?i?n? enaiwn throu ei | [mh]ti etmeHsNte Ngenea | [o]jude mN SGom nouartoko | [p]os er trefe Ntekthis [42] t?h?rs eqaro[s Ntpe] auw | n[al Nterouswt]M eroou | N[Gi Mmaqhts pe]Jau n?a?[F] | J[e p]Js b?ohqi eron auw | N[kt]ouJo?n peJaF nau > | n[Gi] !hs Je alwtn tetnSw | J[e] n?M?mal ounte pous poua [Mm]wtN [p]eFsiou Mmau | a[uw] o?u [.....] nnsiou na | J? [.....] pete pwF pe | a . [...] . ntau? t?noo?ut an | Sa t[ge]nea Mfqarth alla | t?g?[e]n?ea etJoor auw? | nafq[a]r?ton Je tgenea | gar etmmau Mpe laoue | mpol?[e]mios er rr[o e]Jws | o?ud?e oua Hn Ns?i?o?u? : Hamh% | TJw Mmos n[ht]n? Je Fna | He HN ouGeph n?[Gi] p?estul | los nkrwm auw ntgenea | etMmau nakim an ... [] | siou : auw nal Nt?e?re[FJo] | ou NGi His aFbwk aF[Ji N]lou | das nMmaF p?i?s?kariw?t?[hs] |

Translation:

[37.20] Another day, Jesus came to them. They said to him, “Master, we have seen you in a vision. For, we have seen great visions during the night that has passed.” He said, “Why have you become angry and hidden yourselves?” [38] Then they said, “We have seen a great house with a great altar in it and twelve men whom we say are the priests and a name [...] There is a crowd persevering at that altar until, the priests finished presenting the offerings. We are persevering.” Jesus said, “What kind of [...]?” They said, “On the one hand, some fast for two weeks; while on the other hand, others sacrifice their own children, others their wives in praise and in humility with one another; others sleep with men; others commit murder; others commit a multitude of sins and lawlessness. And the men who stand upon the altar call out your name. [39] And while they are involved in all the deeds of their slaughter, the altar is full.” And after they said these things they remained silent, for they were troubled. Jesus said to them, “Why are you troubled? Truly I say to you, all the priests who stand upon that altar call out my name. And also I say my name has been written on this house of the generations of the stars by the human generations. And they plant in my name trees without fruit, in a shameful manner.” Jesus said to them, “You are the ones who present the offerings on the altar you have seen. That one is the god that you serve and you are the twelve men that you have seen. And the cattle that are brought in are the sacrifices you have seen, that is the multitude you lead astray [40] upon the altar. He will stand [...] and in this way he will make use of my name. And the generations of the pious will be faithful to him. After this one there is another man who will stand up from the fornicators, and another will stand up from the slayers of children and another from those who sleep with men, and those who fast, and the rest of uncleanness and lawlessness and error and those who say, “we are equal to angels.” And they are the stars which fulfill everything, for they say to the human generations, “Behold, God received your sacrifices from the hands of priests, that is to say, the minister of error.” But the Lord who commands, this is the Lord over all creation; in the last days

they²⁴⁴ will be shamed. [41] Jesus said to them, “Stop sacrificing the animals that you offered up over the altar. They²⁴⁵ are over your stars with your angels where they have already come to their completion. Therefore, let them²⁴⁶ be vain in your presence and let them [...] to reveal [to you].” His disciples [said], “Lord, purify us from the [...] that we have done through the error of the angels. Jesus said to them, “There is no power [...] kingdom [...] nor does a fountain have the power to quench the fire of the whole world, nor a spring in a city has not the power to satisfy all the generations, except the great one, which is (its) destiny and a lamp will not illumine all the aeons except for the second generation nor a baker cannot feed all of the world [42] under heaven.” And [when the disciples heard] these [things], they said to [him], “Lord, help us and save us.” Jesus said to them, “Stop struggling with me, each of you has his star. And a [...] of the stars will [...] what is his [...] I was not sent to the corrupt generation but to the generation that is strong and incorrupt. For that generation has no king [over it] nor any stars. Truly, I say to you (pl.) the pillar of fire will fall quickly, and the generation will not move [...] star.” And when Jesus had said these things, he left and took Judas Iscariot with him.

Jesus’ interpretation of the dream is disturbing to the disciples because they are the priests who are leading people to sin. The dream that the disciples have is an example of a specific type of *anachrony*, called *internal analepsis*.²⁴⁷ An *anachrony* is a discrepancy between the chronological order of events and the order in which they appear in a plot. An *analepsis* is a flashback, which is what the disciples engage in when they recount their dream for Jesus to interpret. The dream provides the opportune medium for Jesus to condemn sacrificial practices. The implied author is always working through the characters, and it is in this way that he is able to manipulate the dialogue to reflect conflicts within his community. Jesus tells the disciples that what they are doing is worse than the animal sacrifices of the Jews since the twelve sacrifice humans (their wives and children). All this is done in Jesus’ name. The implied author uses the character of Jesus to condemn the proto-orthodox Christian faith in the sacrificial death of Jesus

²⁴⁴ The antecedent seems to be the priests.

²⁴⁵ This seems to refer to the animals being sacrificed.

²⁴⁶ The sacrifices being offered on the altar are done in vain.

²⁴⁷ Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 37.

and also the second-century practice of martyrdom.²⁴⁸ This severe critique reflects the teachings proclaimed by apostolic Christian leaders.

King and Pagels believe the *GosJud* to be a strong polemic against Christian martyrdom. According to their understanding, in early Christianity there was an incitement to martyrdom by church leaders. King and Pagels explain that, “Since Christians were famous – or notorious – for rejecting sacrifice, and some even chose to die rather than perform it, the author of the *Gospel of Judas* surely intends to shock his readers when he pictures “the twelve” not only offering animals in sacrifice to God but offering him even human sacrifice!”²⁴⁹ I question whether the implied reader would be shocked by such an interpretation? Or would it be in alignment with their views of proto-orthodox Christianity? This micro-narrative is saturated with vivid sacrificial language which directly corresponds to the implied reader’s fight against proto-orthodox Christianity.

The *GosJud* is specifically directed against the notion of sacrifice, and particularly the sacrificial interpretation of Christianity. According to King and Pagels,

The *Gospel of Judas* shows us that the God they worshipped – and the religion they were ready to die for – was different. Jesus taught about the mysteries of the kingdom, about the realm of the luminous God beyond this world of chaos and death, the God who had prepared an eternal home in a great house made of living greenery and light above. As the age of martyrdom closed with the conversion of Constantine, stories glorifying the martyrs came to dominate the history of Christian origins, providing spiritual heroes for the new imperial church. The *Gospel of Judas* restores to us one voice of dissent, a call for religion to renounce violence as God’s will and purpose for humanity.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ *Rom.* 4.2; cf. *Rom.* 2.2 and *Eus. Hist. eccl.* V 1.51.

²⁴⁹ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, 71.

²⁵⁰ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, xxiii.

The implied author and reader of the *GosJud* would not support any doctrine which demanded sacrifices, either by Eucharist, baptism, martyrdom, or atonement. An alternative to King and Pagel's martyrdom hypothesis is the sacramental hypothesis suggested by Bas Van Os. It is Van Os' opinion that martyrdom would not have been a concern for the Gnostic Christian community of the *GosJud*. He is correct in saying that there are no direct references to Roman persecution in this gospel. His sacramental hypothesis is based on the concept that "the *Gospel of Judas* opposes apostolic sacramental practices as sacrifices to a lower god. The textual basis for this interpretation is strong. From the New Testament writings onward, the eucharist (and even baptism...) has been described as the re-enactment of the sacrifice of Jesus."²⁵¹ His research reveals that the cases of Christian persecution are too few to be a prominent concern of the implied author.

In addition, he has found that Romans rarely persecuted children; therefore, the image of children sacrifices in the dream must refer to something else. Van Os suggests that the priests from the disciples' dream are the church leaders who "encouraged their followers to enlist for baptism and thus be admitted to the Eucharist. The multitude of believers followed their advice. Some of them even had their families baptized, including children."²⁵² In the sacramental hypothesis, human sacrifice is a metaphor for baptism. In order to support this view, Van Os uses numerous examples from early Christian literature. Most convincing of his examples are Romans 6:3-5 and Colossians 2:12. Baptism in the *GosJud* is an area which requires further research. The *GosJud* is rich with metaphors, and it is possible that the sacrificial acts of the priests refer to baptism and the Eucharist and not martyrdom.

²⁵¹ B. Van Os, "Stop Sacrificing! The Metaphor of Sacrifice in the *Gospel of Judas*," in *The Codex Judas Papers: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Tchacos Codex held at Rice University, Houston Texas, March 13-16, 2008* (ed. A. DeConick; Leiden&Boston: Brill, 2009), 378.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 378.

DeConick thinks that “It is quite likely (given the criticism of the sacramental practices of mainstream Christianity throughout the gospel as well as the immediate context which aligns each disciple with a star) that the seventeen missing lines on page 42 addressed the ineffectiveness of ordinary Christian baptism in overcoming fate and one’s connection with one’s star.”²⁵³ It is her opinion that the importance of Gnostic baptism in overcoming fate is the essential message presented in this gospel. She proposes that the top of page 43 would include “a discussion of the everlasting generation which is not defiled because it has been baptized in a spring that waters God’s paradise (43.1-11).”²⁵⁴ The Ohio Fragments have revealed that DeConick’s hypotheses concerning the content of page 42 are inaccurate. There is no direct reference to baptism in this micro-narrative.

Sacrificial language is a significant aspect of this micro-narrative, and each reference is pejorative in nature.²⁵⁵ This differs greatly from how sacrifice is treated in the NT. In the *GosJud* the disciples are seen conducting sacrifices (quasiase) of children and women. quasiase is a Greco-Coptic word from ¹ quS...a. This can be used both literally and figuratively in the NT.²⁵⁶ For example; the death of Christ is referred to figuratively in Eph. 5:2 as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. The implied author of the *GosJud* does not support this interpretation of Jesus’ death. To invoke the name of Jesus is an important feature of the ritual sacrifices that the disciples (disguised as the twelve priests) partake in during the dream. It is clear from Jesus’ interpretation of the dream that the priests who participate in the sinful acts falsely call

²⁵³ DeConick, “The Mystery of the Betrayal,” 263.

²⁵⁴ DeConick, “The Mystery of the Betrayal,” 262. DeConick continues by saying that same discussion appears on page 55-6, however, with the Ohio Fragments it is clear now that this is not the “same discussion.”

²⁵⁵ Altar quasiasthron; Present offerings nSMSe; Sacrifice (children and women) quasiase; Murder efwtB; Slaughter Swwt.

²⁵⁶ See: TDNT, Vol. III, 181-182.

themselves Christians and believe that what they are doing is the correct way to follow his teachings. Peter Jeffery takes note of this feature. It is his understanding that:

Notable is the emphasis on using the holy name of Jesus in the prayer—a feature that indeed occurs in most but not all ancient Eucharistic prayers. The banquet of the apostles seated around a table has been replaced by a more ritualized sacrifice at an altar, celebrated by clergy who see themselves as heirs to the apostles and priests. The polemic against sacrificing to the evil creator god makes the most sense if the Christian opponents were praying in the tradition of the Strasbourg or Barcelona papyrus prayers, emphasizing thanksgiving for creation. All this suggests a state of theological development consistent with the third century and an Egyptian provenance for the lost original Greek text of the Gospel of Judas.²⁵⁷

Through apostolic succession, the twelve disciples represent the priests of proto-orthodox Christianity. Although this micro-narrative is inundated with sacrificial language that is related to Judaism, the exact object of criticism is the Christian church. Painchaud comments on the polemical nature of the *GosJud*, saying “the target of the *Gospel of Judas*’ criticism is neither traditional Greco-Roman cultic sacrifice, nor the sacrificial liturgy of the Jerusalem temple, but rather the sacrificial interpretation of Christianity, what one might call the theology or ideology of sacrifice seen as the perpetuation of the temple cult.”²⁵⁸ Jesus tells the disciples that he has come for the strong and incorruptible generation (42.13-14). This means that there is a strong contrast between descendants of the holy generation and the human generation. This dream scene also serves as clarifying Judas’ separation from the twelve disciples. Judas is not part of the disciples’ collective vision. Later, Judas will present his own vision to Jesus and request for an interpretation of what he saw.

4.2.2. *The Spirit and the Soul:*

²⁵⁷ P. Jeffery, “The Eucharistic Sacrifices of the Great Church: Questions about the Gospel of Judas,” (*NAAL*, 2010), 117. Presented at meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Jan. 7-10, 2010.

²⁵⁸ Painchaud, “Polemical Aspects of the *Gospel of Judas*,” 177.

The following section to be assessed (52.25-54.3) is essential for understanding salvation in the *GosJud* and demonstrates Judas' concern for the human generation. Jesus refers to "stars" and their role in guiding fate, but the implied author now adds two specific figures, Michael and Gabriel, to the equation. Immediately following Jesus' recount of the Gnostic myth (47.5-53.7), Judas alters the direction of the dialogue by inquiring what the advantage of human life is and if the human spirit dies. Jesus' monologue spanned six pages of the manuscript, until Judas stepped in to ask yet another question. Prior to this, Jesus speaks of a great and boundless aeon (47.5-8) in which is the great invisible Spirit (47.8-9). He also retells the creation of Adam and Eve by Saklas and his angels (52.14-19). This is followed by a reflection on Eve's name (52.20-25). The first four lines of page 53 are severely damaged, leaving the conclusion to Jesus' lengthy revelatory monologue slightly ambiguous.

Fortunately, the last sentence of the discourse is nearly completely intact. It is here that Jesus tells of the prediction of the angel with regard to the span of time allotted to Adam and his children (53.5-7). After Judas inquires if the human spirit dies, Jesus speaks of determinism as he explains how not all human souls are created equal (53.16-25). A certain mountain (*toou*) is mentioned again at 54.1. The previous occurrence of the mountain is at 42.26. Both sections are poorly preserved, making the identification of this mountain quite mysterious. In the sections which have been restored, knowledge (*gnwsis*) only appears once. Jesus says that God (*pnoute*) caused *gnosis* to be given to Adam (54.8-9). Once more, Judas' fate is bound to the number thirteen, as Jesus tells him about the connection between the twelve tribes of Israel and Saklas, and that Judas will rule over the thirteenth aeon (55.10-20).

Text: (52.25-54.3)

[52.25] [sa]kla de Mp\F [53] oueH [saHne] | eimh?[ti] | Ng?en[ea] | taei . . [....] . [] | auw peJaF naF NGi p?[arxwn] | Je ere pekwn\H Swp[e...] | NouoeiS mN nekSh?[re : >>>] | lo?ud?as de peJaF N\ls [Je ou] | pe p?eHouo etFnawn[H >-] | NGi? [p]rwm?[e] : peJaF [NGi] l?h?s? | Je a!Hrok' kr? [S]phre [J]e adam | mN teFgenea Nt?[a]F?Ji peF | ouoeiS HN ouhp?[e] HM pma | NtaFJi NteFmn[te]ro N >- | Hht\ls {HN ouhpe} m?n? peFar | x?wn : peJaF nGi l[o]udas N\is | [J]e Sa!p!na Nrwrme mou : pe | Ja?F? n?G?i? !\hs Je qe te taei | Ntapnoute oueH saHne | Mm!ix!a!hl eT Nne!p!na nn | rwme nau euSMSe epeu | Sap : pnoG de NtaFouleH | saHne <e>gabrihl eT Nne!p!na | NtnoG Ngenea natRro >- | pe!p!na mN teyuxh etbe | paei ere pk?[es]e?pe nneyuxh [54] n [] toou | N [] ouoln | e

Translation:

[52.25] Saklas did not [53] com[mand...] produced, except [...] among the gene[rations ...] which this [...]. And the [angel] said to him, “Your life will be for a number of time with your children.” And Judas said to Jesus, “What is the advantage of human life?” Jesus said, “Why are you amazed that Adam with his generation has received his time in a number in the place where he received his kingdom in a number with his archon?” Judas said to Jesus, “Does the human spirit die?” Jesus said, “In this way God ordered Michael to give the spirits of the humans to them on loan, while they serve. But the Great One ordered Gabriel to give the spirits of the great generation without king the spirit and the soul therefore the [rest] of the souls [54] [...] mountain [...] light

This passage is an important component in understanding salvation in the *GosJud*, and perhaps even more specifically, who is saved. Spirits are given to some people by Michael but only for their duration on earth. This is their only purpose, and they may never ascend on high. It is God (noute) who instructs Michael to do so. Since Judas was told that he will not ascend on high, he must be part of this first group. There is another category (the great generation) of people who have been given a soul and a spirit by the angel Gabriel. This fate is controlled by the Great One (pnoG), who is clearly distinguished from the God who is connected to the human generation. The implied reader would associate himself with this second group.

God//Michael

The Great One//Gabriel

The top of page 54 contains more details of the explanation; however, the current state of the manuscript has left this section illegible. There are various passages from the Judas gospel which deals with salvation. Each page of the tractate is concerned with the fate of the soul. This passage was selected because it directly addresses the origin of the two generations. Seonyoung Kim explains that, “The division of humanity into several categories is a common feature in Gnostic thought. Even if the number of categories differs from tractate to tractate, an identical idea stands behind. According to Gnosticism, humanity is divided into two groups: the elects who possess a divine sparkle of Light within them and therefore have hope for salvation, and the others.”²⁵⁹ The macro-narrative is primarily concerned with the fate of the human soul. Judas is the recipient of a cosmological revelation from Jesus, but because of the corrupt nature of his soul he is not saved. The *GosJud* is an aggressive writing with a strong anti-sacrificial and soteriological message. Early in his study of this text, Painchaud recognized that, “[t]he polemical aspects of the *Gospel of Judas* mainly have to do with the identity of the god of the scriptures, Christology, the interpretation of the Eucharist, and especially sacrifice.”²⁶⁰ The implied author and reader of the *GosJud* understand Christian sacrificial theology to be the perpetuation of Jewish cultic practice. Instead, this gospel proclaims that Jesus saves not by dying for the sins of humanity but rather by revealing his true identity, the divine mysteries of the cosmos, and the fate of the soul. Fate is determined before a person is born to the world, and it cannot be changed.

²⁵⁹ S. Kim, “The *Gospel of Judas* and the Stars,” in *The Gospel of Judas in Context: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas* (ed. M. Scopello; Leiden&Boston: Brill, 2008), 305.

²⁶⁰ Painchaud, “Polemical Aspects of the *Gospel of Judas*,” 172.

CHAPTER FIVE
JUDAS THE DEUTERAGONIST

5.1 *Conclusions Concerning the Character of Judas*

The sensationalism surrounding the April 2006 release of the *GosJud* was no doubt fuelled by the “hero interpretation”. As Einar Thomassen eloquently summarizes:

According to one interpretation, Judas Iscariot is the hero of the gospel. He alone of all the disciples understands who Jesus really is and where he has come from. He is favoured by Jesus with a special revelation about the divine realm and about the origins and structure of the cosmos. Finally, he is entrusted with the painful but necessary task of handing Jesus over to the authorities, in order that the Saviour may be liberated from the prison of his earthly body.²⁶¹

Yet, in light of *GosJud* 35.21-27; 44.19-23; 45.12-19; 46.25; 56.17-24, can Judas be understood as Jesus’ most trusted confidant and the model disciple for the implied reader? From these passages it appears as though the implied author did not intend to rehabilitate the figure of Judas Iscariot.

²⁶¹ E. Thomassen, “Is Judas Really the hero of the *Gospel of Judas*?” 157.

There are limitations to the implied author's design of Judas' character, because of the historical time period in which this story was developed. It is not always possible to apply modern understandings of characterization to a character from antiquity; therefore, the postmodern scholar must be sensitive to these issues.²⁶² The concept of characters has been continuously developing in the West. As Merenlahti explains, "Psychological interest in the individual as a personality is a relatively new phenomenon in Western art (just as the individualist idea of identity as selfhood has only emerged with modernity). In antiquity, characters had not so much 'personality' in the modern sense, as *ethos* – a static, unchanging set of virtues and vice."²⁶³ The *GosJud* inscribes itself into the pre-existing literary tradition of the Greco-Roman world of Late Antiquity. A combination of knowledge of modern literary techniques and ancient character types can allow for conclusions to be made concerning Judas' character.

The Judas gospel characters teach something deeper than what is written *ad literam* in the text. From the opening line of the *incipit*, Judas is established as the disciple who will engage in discussion with Jesus. One of the most essential features of Gnosticism is that saving *gnosis* comes through revelation from a transcendent realm. This revelation must be mediated by a revealer who has come from the Pleroma in order to awaken people to knowledge of God and knowledge of the true nature of the human self. Gnostics can only be called Christians when they perceive Jesus Christ as being the divine revealer or bearer of saving *gnosis*. Judas serves as an

²⁶² "Literature is a political concept. Viewed in this light, a 'cultural history of ancient Greek literature' carries with it real risks: not just the intellectual risk of anachronism (a charge that could be levelled in varying degrees at all historical projects), but more urgently the 'imperial' risk of treating our own categories of analysis (with all their flaws) as universal. Does the concept of 'literature' have any useful purchase on ancient culture? Are we condemned to misread ancient texts if we view them as 'literature' according to our own conceptions?" T. Whitmarsh, *Ancient Greek Literature*, [Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004], 3).

²⁶³ Merenlahti, *Poetics for the Gospels*, 78.

important means of developing the plot of the gospel. Furthermore, by inquiring the answers to specific questions concerning the human generations, he guides the implied reader toward the message of the community found in this gospel.²⁶⁴ In order to accomplish this, the implied author uses *pysma*²⁶⁵ as a rhetorical device. The questions which Judas asked in the narrative require a complex answer and explanation.

Judas appears to be the primary focus of attention. Does this make Judas the protagonist of this gospel? Meyer says, “The central place of Judas in the text is confirmed by the titular subscript, *peuag?g?elion Nĭoudas*, “The Gospel of Judas” (58.27-28)...this is the good news of Judas, perhaps about Judas or even for Judas.”²⁶⁶ Meyer concludes that Judas must therefore be the protagonist. The central character, however, does not have to be a protagonist since playing the main role is not enough to earn this title. In order to be a protagonist, the audience must have empathy for the character. This means that the implied reader will innately have responsiveness to the character. In the case of this gospel, the audience does not have empathy for Judas, because he is not part of the holy generation, he is called a demon, and is *denied* salvation. Judas, therefore, cannot be the protagonist.

The protagonist is Jesus, because he plays a central role and the audience does have empathy with him. The audience must have identification with the focal character in order to be considered a protagonist; this is the definitive distinction. If not the protagonist, then what place does Judas have within this revelation dialogue? Aristototele explains in *Poetics* that, “[In this way:] on the one hand Aeschylus first increased the company of actors from one to two, reduced

²⁶⁴ The community or intended audience of the *GosJud* will be discussed in the final conclusion.

²⁶⁵ For the definition of *pysma*, see page 78, note 213.

²⁶⁶ Meyer, “Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the *Gospel of Judas*,” 42.

the choric element, and assigned the leading function to dialogue.”²⁶⁷ Ancient Greek drama involved only three actors: the protagonist, deuteragonist, and tritagonist. As the second most prominent character, Judas serves as the deuteragonist. This role also makes him an antagonist because he is in constant tension with the protagonist (Jesus). Judas Iscariot as deuteragonist is a nuanced understanding of role in the *GosJud*. The tritagonist are the disciples, who act as a collective character.

There is a dualism which represents the relationship between the two generations of people. There is an immense difference between both characters that is to be noted; Jesus is the embodiment of virtue and represents the holy generation, whereas Judas is the personification of vice, representing the human generation. Judas and the disciples can never hope to join the holy generation. The extradiegetic narrator uses Judas as a foil in order to highlight the positive attributes of Jesus’ character as well as the implied reader’s own understanding of him or herself.²⁶⁸ By examining “character-markers, including character-indicating speeches and actions by the relevant figures and significant statements about them by the narrator or other figures,”²⁶⁹ it has been possible to assess Judas’ character. Meyer says that, “...it is possible that Judas is enlightened and exalted, and it seems most likely that Judas becomes, for readers of the gospel, a Gnostic paradigm of discipleship.”²⁷⁰ The textual evidence proves contrary to Meyer’s interpretation. The implied reader’s natural response can only then be antipathy for Judas and the other disciples. These characters represent apostolic Christianity, and in this way defy the worldview of the implied reader. The implied reader rejects all of the disciples, including Judas,

²⁶⁷ *Poetics* 1449^a 15. See: George Whalley trans., *Aristotle’s Poetics* (eds. J. Baxter and P. Atherton; Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 61.

²⁶⁸ Gnostic interest in Judas seems to be for both entertainment and edification purposes.

²⁶⁹ C. Gill, “The Character-Personality Distinction,” in *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 7.

²⁷⁰ Meyer, “*Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the Gospel of Judas*”, 54.

just as Jesus *denies* them of salvation. The implied reader, instead, has empathy for Jesus and those of the holy immortal generation.²⁷¹

In conclusion, despite being selected as the privileged recipient of superior *gnosis*, Judas' fate has been predetermined. He therefore cannot ascend on high to the holy generation, and it is in this sense that Judas is the anti-disciple. The NGS team of scholars concluded that, "Judas is the perfect Gnostic, worthy to be in a sense 'transfigured' by ascending into a luminous cloud where he will receive his vision of the divine."²⁷² A narrative-critical approach to this text has revealed opposing results, indicating that Judas is not the perfect Gnostic and is not the one who ascends into a luminous cloud. Judas has the information, the divine *gnosis*, but he has not obtained salvation.

5.2 *The Plot of the Judas Gospel*

The plot of the *GosJud* is more easily rendered once the characters are understood. Now that it has been established that Judas is a deuteragonist, who acts as an antagonist, the plot of the macro-narrative can be analyzed. The question and answer style of this narrative is not simply a prosaic device. Gill explains that, "The question of 'what is significant for characterization' is closely related to the question of 'what is significant for plot or theme' and it is understandable, therefore, that the semiotic study of character has developed out of structuralist attempts to

²⁷¹ E.Thomassen highlights the unusual characteristics of the *GosJud*, saying "Normally in revelation dialogues, the recipient, or recipients, of the revelation are models of identification for the readers. The reader, by identifying with the recipient disciple, himself becomes the recipient of the revelation divulged by the written text. That cannot be the situation here. As I have said already, there clearly are figures with whom the reader is expected to identify in the text: they are the holy immortal race." Thomassen, "Is Judas Really the Hero of the *Gospel of Judas*?" in *The Gospel of Judas in Context* (ed. M. Scopello; Leiden&Boston: Brill, 2008), 169.

²⁷² Kasser, *The Gospel of Judas*, 129.

analyse character as a function of plot-types or as part of the ‘grammar’ of narrative.”²⁷³ The questions posed by Judas to Jesus present a narrative pattern of multiple-singular narration.²⁷⁴ Revelation is given to Judas by way of revelatory conversation and not through visions or cosmic journey like in most apocalyptic literature. There are clear divisions of the text by means of the questions posed to Jesus by Judas. In total, Judas asks Jesus ten questions as the plot progresses. The main concern of this dialogue is the fate of the human generation which relates back to the salvation of humanity in the *incipit*. The questions asked by Judas reflect a need within the community; the need for the answers to these questions. Otherwise, the text would not be read, copied, or circulated. The answers to these questions are what give value to the *GosJud*. The implied reader of this text is most interested in understanding salvation. There is a need to know what happens to the soul and what the fate is for the human generation.

The narrative program of the macro-narrative is guided by the assumption that every story presents a “subject” chasing after a valuable “object.”²⁷⁵ In the *GosJud*, the subject is Jesus. He is the protagonist of the story, and as such, must be the subject. The object of desire is divine revelation. Jesus, the illuminator, has come to earth in order to impart *gnosis* through divine revelations of the mysteries. Jesus must reveal the mysteries of the kingdom and the cosmos in order to have a successful earthly mission. If Jesus fails to reveal the divine *gnosis* then in effect, the narrative program also fails.

Narrative Program:

²⁷³ Gill, “The Character-Personality Distinction,” 7.

²⁷⁴ “Multiple-singular narration reports repeatedly an event that happens repeatedly. An example can be found in Matthew, where there are two accounts of religious leaders asking Jesus for a sign (12:38-45; 16:1-4). The reader realizes that these are two separate, albeit similar occurrences.” (Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 39).

²⁷⁵ Marguerat and Bouquin, “The Characters,” 62.

S u O → S n O

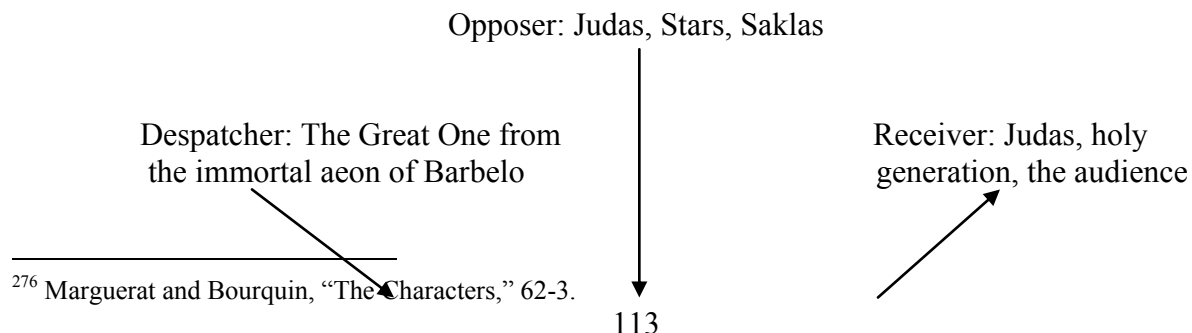
Subject = Jesus

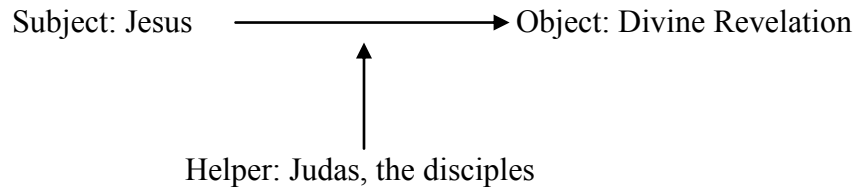
Object = Divine Revelation

Jesus is able to teach Judas, and it is because of this transference of knowledge that the narrative program is successful. Even though Judas will hand Jesus over, Jesus has not failed. Jesus is able to return to his rightful aeon because he has revealed the mysteries.

It is possible to understand the plot of the *GosJud* according to the actantial scheme. The actantial scheme is based on six typical roles. Marguerat and Bourquin summarize the actantial scheme, explaining that, “The Despatcher mobilizes the Subject for the quest of the Object, which he must give to the Receiver (explicitly or implicitly) by contract. In the realization of the question the Subject can be helped (the Helper) or encounter obstacles (the Opposer).”²⁷⁶ The actantial scheme is important for understanding the plot of the narrative. This scheme isolates the central action and conflict of the story. In addition, by properly identifying the central conflict the roles of the characters become clearer. The actantial scheme categorizes each character according to their specific function in the narrative. It is possible for a character to fall under multiply categories.

Actantial Scheme in the Gospel of Judas:





In the *GosJud*, the “Despatcher” is the Almighty God (the Great One, also called the Great Invisible Spirit). Judas declares that Jesus is from the immortal aeon of Barbelo (35.15-20), and this helps the implied audience to understand that Jesus has been sent by the Great One. The primary aspect of the plot concerns Jesus and his teachings. Jesus is the “Subject” since he plays the role of the protagonist. The “Object” which Jesus desires is to impart the divine revelations and mysteries of the kingdom. The cosmological Gnostic myth (47.5-53.6) is an essential aspect of Jesus’ teachings. The *incipit* announces that Jesus spoke about the mysteries beyond the cosmos and the eschaton (33.15-18), and this continues through the story. Judas and the disciples act as the “Helpers” since they enable Jesus to fulfil his purpose. Judas receives the majority of the revelations in private, and to a lesser degree the disciples are taught. The “Opposers” are Judas, the stars of fate, and Saklas (the evil Demiurge). Even though Judas is also a “Helper”, he is an “Opposer”. Judas directly opposes Jesus’ teachings when he sacrifices the man who bears Jesus. The “Receivers” are the holy generation, since they will receive Jesus’ message and ascend on high after death. The implied audience, who align themselves with the holy generation, are also the “Receivers”. In a sense, Judas is also a “Receiver” because he does learn the divine mysteries. Although Judas will not ascend on high, he does receive teachings from Jesus.

CONCLUSION:

The *GosJud* is a complex story concerning Jesus and his relationship with his disciples. This discourse becomes even more complex when the religious atmosphere of the second and third-centuries are taken into consideration. In this sense, the gospel occurs on two planes: (1) the earthly ministry of Jesus during the days leading to his crucifixion, (2) the *mêlées* of second and third century Christianity. The group of Gnostic-Christians who are responsible for this text, struggled to define themselves within the contexts of Christianity and Gnosticism. They used sacred rituals, such as the Eucharist and baptism, to polemicize against the proto-orthodox Christian church and other Gnostic sects. It was also crucial for them to make a distinction between the God who sent Jesus and the one whom the disciples worshipped. Comprehension of this gospel's message and the wealth of knowledge it has to share concerning the early history of Christianity are only just beginning. It must not be forgotten that although this gospel differs from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, these people were followers of Jesus. In some way,

different as it may be from proto-orthodox Christianity, Jesus' message spoke to them. Although this lost gospel may not reveal the historical Jesus or the "true" events leading up to the crucifixion, it has much to say about early Christianity and is therefore a valuable piece of history.

The *GosJud* exemplifies a Gnostic interest in the figure of Judas. Why Judas Iscariot? Judas is responsible for the betrayal, therefore responsible for the crucifixion and the death, which led to the resurrection of Jesus. The foundation of orthodox Christianity is the resurrection and the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. By using Judas in this gospel narrative, could this text be the ultimate polemic against proto-orthodox Christianity? Painchaud adheres to this interpretation of the *GosJud*, saying, "In making Judas the person who sacrifices the man who bears Jesus, our text also makes him the source of the sacrificial interpretation of the death of Jesus and of all the aspects of Christian life by which the archontic domination is perpetuated."²⁷⁷ It is very clear in the *GosJud* that Judas is *denied* salvation; he has knowledge, but is not part of the holy generation. The theme of apofasis is repeated several times throughout the *GosJud*.

Why would the implied author use Judas? What "good news" could Judas possibly have? This text is the most aggressive polemic against proto-orthodox Christianity. According to these Gnostics, the church does not even realize that they should be praising Judas. It is Frank Williams opinion that, "In the selection of Judas as special disciple there may be an element of defiance. Persons who rejected a fellowship which all agreed had been founded by the twelve disciples might well find satisfaction in claiming the authority of a thirteenth, a disciple

²⁷⁷ Painchaud, "Polemical Aspects of the *Gospel of Judas*," 178.

disapproved by the twelve and not subject to them.”²⁷⁸ Williams’ interpretation does not seem to properly correspond to the Gnostic interest in the figure of Judas Iscariot found within the *GosJud*. Painchaud’s understanding of the figure of Judas is more fitting to the message found in the *GosJud*. Painchaud explains that,

Our gospel makes him, to a certain degree, the father of proto-orthodox Christianity and its sacrificial theology. Neither beloved disciple nor model of the perfect Gnostic, more the victim of astral fatality, than moved by his own free will as Origen claims, through his action Judas becomes simultaneously the initiator and the “archon” of the sacrificial Christianity opposed in our text. This “thirteenth demon,” deceived by his “star in the ascendant” (57.19-20), fits well in the context of the increasing demonization of Judas, begun in the Gospel of Luke (22:33), and continued in the Gospel of John (13:27).²⁷⁹

The *GosJud* is a relevant text for understanding Christian sacrificial theology in the second and third century, and the Gnostic Christian response to such interpretations of Jesus’ death.

The twelve disciples are representative of a specific group of Christians who misunderstand Jesus’ mission and true identity. These specific Christians may be from proto-orthodox or Gnostic groups; however, it appears as though the proto-orthodox Christian church is the main target of criticism. It is possible that the Gnostic-Christian group responsible for the *GosJud* did not despise the historical disciples. This Gnostic Christian group employed such a gospel to affirm devotional and catechetical purposes. The purpose of the *GosJud* is to resolve interpretation problems of scripture and solidify the faith by bringing clarity to the community.

The *GosJud* reveals how this community of Gnostic-Christians understood the Eucharist, baptism, martyrs, the creation of the world, Jesus’ earthly mission, the purpose of the human soul, and life after death. King and Pagels explain that:

²⁷⁸ Williams, “The Gospel of Judas: Its Polemic, Its Exegesis, and Its Place in Church History,” 400-1.

²⁷⁹ Painchaud, “Polemical Aspects of the *Gospel of Judas*,” 184-85.

Yet the *Gospel of Judas*, even in its fragmentary state, shows us far more than a glimpse into one particular dispute. It also offers a window onto the complex world of the early Christian movement and shows us that what later historians depicted as an unbroken procession of a uniform faith was nothing of the kind. As we said, the traditional history of Christianity is written almost solely from the viewpoint of the side that won, which was remarkably successful in silencing or distorting other voices, destroying their writings, and suppressing any who disagreed with them as dangerous and obstinate “heretics.” In place of the intense controversies and startling innovations from which the movement was born, they pictured Jesus teaching his simple gospel to “the twelve,” who, in turn, handed down the same exact message – which they called the “deposit of faith,” like money deposited in a bank. With fixed creed and canon, the disciples’ followers then supposedly delivered the message intact to the next generations of proper guardians of divine truth – to bishops and other ordained clergy all over the world.²⁸⁰

This gospel is not concerned with the miracles of Jesus or other aspects of his ministry in a New Testament sense (*GosJud* 33). This is clear from the content of the narrative. The implied reader will not find miracle stories or recounts of Jesus’ healings, nor exorcisms. The *incipit* firmly states that Jesus did perform signs and great miracles while he was on earth, but no further explanation is given. The text instead reflects polemics of the time (third and early fourth century) concerning sacrifices (martyrdom) (*GosJud* 40), celebration of the Eucharist (*GosJud* 34), and baptismal rituals (*GosJud* 56). As Evans explains,

When the *Gospel of Judas* is properly translated and interpreted, we do not find in it Judas Iscariot a hero, the wisest of the disciples who assists Jesus and then enters glory. On the contrary, Judas is a tragic figure in a dramatic retelling and reinterpretation of the Passion of Jesus, a retelling that is marked by anti-Semitism and a mockery of the apostolic Church. The disciples have failed to understand who Jesus really is. Even the one who came closest to this truth—Judas Iscariot—in the end was the worst of a bad lot, sacrificing a human being to the rulers of this fallen earth. He, like the other disciples, will not escape the corrupt world of darkness that eventually will be destroyed.²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ King and Pagels, *Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*, xviii.

²⁸¹ Evans, “Understanding the Gospel of Judas,” 574.

This appears to be the true message of the gospel. The fate of every human is predetermined and destined by the stars. Judas is not the model of perfect discipleship; instead, he is the representation of the sacrificial tradition of proto-orthodox Christianity.

Judas is given *gnosis* through the revelations delivered by Jesus; however this knowledge alone does not offer salvation. Judas is *denied* the holy generation (denied salvation!). This text explains how the community understood Judas Iscariot and his role in the crucifixion of Jesus. The handing-over of Jesus is an integral aspect of the Jesus story, and clearly this community sought to elucidate and interpret the mystery of the betrayal. The Judas gospel is a Gnostic-Christian text, and was intended for this type of audience. There are various similarities between the *GosJud* and some other Nag Hammadi tractates, such as the *Apocryphon of John*; the Judas gospel does appear to have evidence of Christianization of an original Gnostic writing. The *Ap. John* through editorial additions and revisions has been Christianized. Birger Pearson explains that, “The Christianization of *Ap. John* can be seen from its literary structure: When we remove the apocalyptic framework at the beginning and the end, together with the dialogue features involving ten questions put to Christ by his interlocutor John, we are left with material in which nothing identifiably Christian remains, except for some easily removed glosses.”²⁸² The Gnostic myth²⁸³ which comprises pages 47 to 52 of the Judas gospel is not Christian in and of itself. If this was the only preserved portion of the *GosJud*, there would be no way of telling that it had any Christian associations.

Meyer says that, “Although the revelation given to Judas is put on the lips of Jesus in the *Gospel of Judas*, it is remarkable to notice that, except for one brief aside in the text, there is

²⁸² Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 63.

²⁸³ This Gnostic myth is most often categorized as Sethian or Classic Gnosticism.

nothing whatsoever that is specifically Christian in the revelation... the entirety of the revelation is a Hellenistic Jewish cosmogonic account, reflective of Jewish mysticism or Jewish Sethian spirituality, regarding the origin of the cosmos and the coming of the light.”²⁸⁴ However, it should not be remarkable that the revelation given to Judas by Jesus is not Christian in the same sense as known through the tradition of the Catholic Church. This does not make the implied readers of the *GosJud* any less Christian, since in their understanding they were the true followers of Jesus, knowing the mysteries of the kingdom.

Areas in the *GosJud* which need further exploration are considerable in number. The *GosJud* is an understudied text, and ample work is still left to be done. Much has been said concerning this fascinating gospel, but the in-depth analyses are lacking severely. Using narrative criticism, the present study has illuminated aspects of the character of Judas. Themes and motifs which need more attention include: (1) the stars; their relationship to human destiny, *Judas*-Gnostic cosmology, and salvation; (2) fire; what role does this imagery play in this Gospel?²⁸⁵ (3) Judas as the thirteenth demon and his place in the aeons; (4) Judas as one of the twelve disciples, and when he is separated from the twelve.

The Codex Tchacos and Nag Hammadi discoveries provide scholars with the opportunity to redefine the role and identity of Gnostics in the first centuries of Christianity. Defining “Gnostic” and “Gnosticism” is a difficult task considering the complex history of their etymology. Yet, it is only by examining the primary sources, such as the *GosJud*, that a more profound comprehension of early Christianity may be grasped. The Gnostic texts must be carefully scrutinized, because they are the primary sources containing the most relevant

²⁸⁴ Meyer, *Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the Gospel of Judas*, 49.

²⁸⁵ For examples of wrath and fire see Nag Hammadi tractate *Concept of Our Great Power* (VI,4) 41,1-30. This may have a possible connection to the *GosJud*.

information concerning these people. Finally there is the opportunity for less ambiguity to surround those whom Epiphanius claimed to have “invented myriad ways of evil”.²⁸⁶

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²⁸⁶ The Gnostics According to St. Epiphanius, “Against the Gnostics also known as Borborites, 25.2.1” in B. Layton's *The Gnostic Scriptures: A New Translation with Annotations and Introductions*. The Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday Press, 1995) 202.

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APPENDIX A:

THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS

!lg		33	
plogo[s] etHh?p' Ntapofa	1		The secret word of the denial
s?is N[tai] !h?s SaJe mN loudas	2		by which Jesus spoke with Judas
[pi]s?k?apiwt[hs] NHht\F N	3		Iscaiot, during
[S]moun nHouu Haqh NSo	4		eight days, three days
[m]n\t nHouu empateF\r	5		before he did
p?asxa NtareFouwnH e	6		Passover. When he appeared
Bol HiJM pkaH aFei@e? nHN	7		on the earth he performed
Main mN HNnoG NS[p]h?re	8		signs and great miracles
epeuJ? ?a ?I ? N?t?m?Nt@w?[m]e? :	9		for the salvation of humanity.
auw !Holne men eu[moo]Se ?	10		And some walked
HN teHih ntdikaio[s]u]n?h :	11		in the way of righteousness
Hnkooue eumooSe? [H]n? teu	12		while some walked in their
parabasis : aumoV[te] de :	13		sin, the twelve
epmN?t?s?n?o?o?us m?[ma]qh	14		disciples were called.
t?hs a?FarJ?[ei] nSa[J]e nM	15		He began to speak with

Mau eMmus?thri[o]n? etHi	16	them about the mysteries
JN pkosmos auw netna	17	which are beyond the cosmos and
S ?w?p?e ? S?abol ouhpe de	18	those things which will happen in the end.
[n]sop' ma?FouonH\F eneF	19	A number of times he did not appear to his
Maqhths alla N !Hr\ot >----	20	disciples but as an apparition
Sak!!He eroF HN teumhte	21	they would find him in their midst
auw aFSwpe HN Toudaia	22	He was in Judea
Sa neFmaqhts nou!Ho	23	with his disciples,
[o]V a?F?H?e eroou e?VHmoos	24	one day, he found them sitting,
eusooou\H eu\rgumnaze	25	gathered and practicing
etmN ?tnoute ntereF?	26	that which is godly. When he
G?[wS]t? e?neFmaqhts >	27	saw his disciples

!ld

34

eusooouH euHm?oos [e]V\ r euxa	1	sitting, gathered and offering a prayer of
risti eJn pa ?@to ?s? [aF]swb?e?	2	thanksgiving over the bread, he laughed.
Mmaqht[s de] peJau n?a?F [Je]	3	The disciples said to him,
ps !aH etbe ou kswbe n ?s ?a t? [en]	4	“Master, why do you laugh at our
euxaristia h ? ntanr ou p[al]	5	Eucharist? Or what did we do? This
petesSe : aFouwS\F p[e]	6	is what is right. He answered,
JaF nau eewisbe NswtN	7	saying to them, “I am not laughing at you,
an [ou]de etetne?ire Mpaei an	8	nor are you doing this
HN [pe]t?N ouw?S a?!?!?a? HN pal	9	of your own will but through this
e?[FnaJ]Î smou NHi petNnou	10	your god will receive praise.
t?e? [:] peJaF Je pls? !a?H ntok'	11	They said, “Master, you are
..[...]. p?e? pShre Mpenno?V	12	[---] the son of our god.”
te? [:] peJ?a?F na?V n?G?Î ïh?s?	13	Jesus said to them,
Je? e?[tet] nso?o?une? m?m?oei	14	“In what way do you know me?
HN? ou [H]amhn [T]Jw mm?os n?h?	15	Truly I say to you,
t?N? J [e] mn lao?[u]e ngenea na?	16	that no generation
souwnt HN nrwme e?t?n?Hh?t?	17	of men that are among you will know me.”
thutNNtero?Vs?w?t?m? [d]e? :	18	But when they heard
epal NGi neFmaqhts a?[u]	19	this his disciples
a?rJei naganakte?Î : auw? e? [...]	20	began to be infuriated and [...]
o@g?h? aVw? e?J?Î oua eroF HN	21	angry and blasphemed against him in
peuHht : !l!hs de NtereF	22	their heart. When Jesus
nau eteVmn t?' a?q?h?t ? [peJaF]	23	saw that they were without heart, he said
nau Je etbe ou ap ?tortr	24	to them, “Why has your god who is within

n pHwnt petnnoute etn
HhtthutN auw n ?[eF ...]

25 you and his [...]
26 been agitated and angered?

!le

35

a?uaga?n?[ak]ti m?n? netnyuxh 1
p?et[t]a?[Jr]hu NH[h]ttutN NN 2
@wme? m?a?[reF\]r] p?a?@a?g?e? Mprw 3
[me] n?telios auw nF?wHerat\F 4
MpeMto ebol mpaprosw 5
pon auw auJo?os throu Je 6
tNJoos auw MpeS peu!p!na 7
tolma ew!Herat\F M[peF]M 8
t?o ebol eimh loudas [pis]ka 9
riwths : aFGm Gom men? [e]w? 10
Herat\F MpeFMto eb[oi] : M 11
peFGw Gom de eGwS\t [eH]\oun 12
e!HraF NneFb?al : a?!?[!aN]t?aF 13
Kte !HraF epa!Hou:[peJa]F? naF 14
NGi loudas Je Tso[o]une Je 15
Ntknim auw Ntak[e]Î ebol : 16
HNn aS Mma : NtakeÎ ebol HN 17
paiwn Nt!b!atr!b!h!lw paqa 18
natos auw pentaFtaouok 19
pal ete NTMpSa an Ntaouo 20
MpeFran I !hs de eFsooune 21
Je Fmeoue epkeseepe et 22
Jose peJaF naF : Je pwr\J 23
ebol Mmoou : taJw erok N 24
Mmusthrion NtmNtero 25
oux? HÎn?a? Je ekebwk emau 26
alla Je? e?keaS a!Hom NHou 27

They have become infuriated
together with your souls. Whoever
is strongest among men,
let him bring forth the perfect man
and let him stand before my face.”
And they all said,
“We are strong.” But their spirit
was not able to stand before him
except Judas Iscariot.
He was able to
stand before him,
but he was not able to look into
his face or his eyes but he
turned his face away from him.
Judas said to him, “I know
who you are and where
you come from. You come from
the immortal aeon of Barbelo,
and the one who sent you,
this one, I am not worthy to speak
his name.” Jesus knowing
that he pondered on something that
is exalted. He said to him, “Separate
from them, I shall tell you
the mysteries of the kingdom
not so that you will go there
but you will grieve greatly.

Je ouN kaioV[a] ga@ [n]a?Swpe?
 epekma \Hi\na? Je e?[re p]mNt?
 snoous Ns[boul] o?n? e?ue
 Jwk? ebol HN peunoute [:]
 auw peJaF naF NGi l!o!u!d!as
 Je ekaJe na ?I erol naS N
 !H!oo?V auw nFSae NGi pno?[G]
 NH[oo]u MpouoIn Ntgene?
 a [...]:...: n?a?i de nteref
 Jo[o]u aFlo HathF nGi !!hs
 Sw?[r]p' de nterefSwpe
 aF[ouw]n ?H e?b?o?! NneFmaq
 th?s ?[: au]w?peJau naF Je ps?a[H]
 Nta[kb]wk ? e?t?w?n? ek ?r ou e
 aklo H[a]ron : peJaF nau nG[i]
 !!hs Je Ntaeibwk Sa kainoG?
 Ngenea esouaab : peJau
 NaF NGi neFmaqhts Je:
 pJols aS te tnoG Ngenea
 etJose eron auw etouaab
 en!sHn nelaiwn an : tenou
 auw nterefswtm enal NGi
 !!hs aFswbe : peJaF nau Je
 aHrwTn t?etNmeoue HN pe
 tNHht etbe tgenea et
 Joor auw etouaa?b >>>>

1 For there is another who will be destined
 2 for your place, in order that the
 3 twelve disciples again
 4 shall be complete in their god.”
 5 And Judas said to him,
 6 “When will you tell me these things?
 7 When will the great
 8 days of light dawn for the generation?”
 9 [...] But when he
 10 said this, Jesus ceased to be with him.
 11 When morning came,
 12 he appeared to his disciples.
 13 They said to him, “Master,
 14 Where did you go? What did you
 15 do when you left us?” Jesus said
 16 to them, “I went to another great
 17 generation which is holy.”
 18 His disciples said to him,
 19 “Lord, what is the great generation
 20 which is superior to us and holy,
 21 which is not now in these aeons?
 22 And when Jesus heard these things,
 23 he laughed. He said to them,
 24 “Why do you think in
 25 your heart about the
 26 strong and holy generation?”

[H]a?m?hn? [T]J[w] m?mos nhtN Je	1	Truly I say to you,
[J]po n?îm? [Nte p]ee?iaiwn Nse	2	whoever is born of this aeon
N?a?n?a?V a?[n etgenea] e?t?M?mau	3	will not see that [generation],
[o]ude m?n laoue n?s?tratia nag	4	and no host of angels
gelos NNsiou na ?r ero eJN tge	5	of the stars will rule over
n?ea etmmau : oude mN la?oue	6	that generation, and no person
nJpo nrwme n?qnh?to?s naS	7	of mortal birth will
ei nMmas Je [tg]ene[a et]mmau	8	accompany it because that generation
nouebol a?n? [...].[...t]e? N	9	does not come from [...]
taFSwpe a? [lla..]s .[...t]?ge	10	That has come into being [...] The
nea n?n?rwm[e et]n?Hht [ou] alla	11	generation of the men who are among
ouebol HN t[ge]n?ea N?[tmNt]	12	them, but it is from the generation of
rw?me te : e .[.....]e necou	13	these great men [...] The powerful
s?i?a? N?Gom et [.....]oude la	14	authorities [...] nor any
oue Ndunam?[is....] wn nal	15	powers [...] those
etetNo Nrro Hr[aei] n?!Hhtou	16	by which you rule over.
NterouswtM enai NGi neF	17	When his disciples heard these
maqhts auStort\ r !Hm peu	18	things, they were troubled in their
!p!na oua oua MpouGN euna	19	spirit. One by one they did not find
Joos Je ou : aFei Sarouu N	20	a word to say. Another day,
kaiHouu NGi !!hs peJau naF Je	21	Jesus came to them. They said to him,
ps!aH annau erok' HN ourasou	22	“Master, we have seen you in a vision.
annau gar eHNnoG N@a[sou]	23	For, we have seen great visions
[Nteei] ouSh Ntaouein[e :	24	during this night that has passed.”
[peJaF J]eetbeou Nta[tetNGwn	25	He said, “Why have you become angry
\t auw] atNHap'thut?[N >>]	26	and hidden yourselves?”

Ntoou de? p?[eJa]u? [Je an]n?a?[u]	1	Then they said, “We have seen
eunoG nh? [I] e?[re oun]o?G? nqu[si]	2	a great house with a great
asth?r[ion NHhtF au]w? m?n?t[s]	3	altar in it and
noous Nrwme enJw? Mmo[s]	4	twelve men whom we say
Je Nouhhb ne : auw o?uran? < >	5	are the priests and a name [...]
oun oumhSe de proskar	6	There is a crowd persevering
tere?i {epeq?usiasthri} epe	7	at that altar
qu[sia]sth?[ri]on e?tMmau >>>>	8	until,
S[antouJwk eb]o?! nGi Nouhhb	9	the priests finished presenting
n[seJi eHoun N]n?SMSe anon	10	the offerings. We are
de [ne]nhro[skar]teri p?e>>>	11	persevering.
peJ[a]F NGi l[hs] Je HNaS Mmi	12	Jesus said,
ne ne [.....] Ntoou de	13	“What kind of [...]?”
peJau [Je Hoei]n?e men eu	14	They said, “On the one hand,
nhst[eue NHe]b?domassNte	15	some fast for two weeks;
HNko[oue] d?e eur qusiase N	16	while on the other hand, others sacrifice
neuShre Mmin mmoou HN	17	their own children,
kooue NneuHiome eusmou	18	others their wives in praise
auw euqbbihu Nneuerhu >>	19	and in humility with one another;
HNkooue euNkotke mn nHo	20	others sleep with men;
out HNkooue eur Hwb efw	21	others commit murder,
tB HNkekooue eueire nou	22	others commit a multitude
mhhSe Nnobe Hi anomia >>	23	of sins and lawlessness.
[au]w nrwme etw !Her[atou]	24	And the men who stand
[eJ]N pequsiathrio[n euR]	25	upon the altar
[e]p?ikalei epek?r[an >>>]	26	call out your name.

a?uw e?u[H]N n[e]Hbhoue throu	1	And while they are involved in all
MpeuSw?w?t? [e]S[a]FmouH nGi	2	the deeds of their slaughter,
p?equs[iasthrion et]M?mau	3	the altar is full.
auw nal NterouJoou a[u]ka	4	And after they said these things they
rwou euStrwr peJaF	5	remained silent, for they were troubled.
nau NGi !!hs Je etbe ou ate	6	Jesus said to them, “Why are
tNStotr Hamh?n TJw	7	you troubled? Truly I say to you,
Mmos nhtN Je? Nouh? [hb] th	8	all the priests
rou e?t?w!Heratou eJ[n pe] qu	9	who stand upon
siasthrion? etmmau e? [ur] epi	10	that altar
kale[i] Mparan auw o[n] TJw	11	call out my name. And also I say
mmos nhtn Je n?taus[H]al	12	my name has been written
Mparan epe I Nn?genea	13	on this house of the generations
Nnsiou ebol H[i]tN n?genea	14	of the stars by the human
nnrwme [au]w [a]utaGe	15	generations. And they plant
Hm paran NHNs[h]n n?a?tkar	16	in my name tree without fruit,
pos auw HN ouSip?e?	17	in a shameful manner.”
peJaF nau NGi His Je NtwtN	18	Jesus said to them, “You are
NntJi eHoune NNSMSe	19	the ones who present the offerings
epequasiasthrion Ntate	20	on the altar
tNnau eroF petMmau	21	you have seen. That one
pe !pnT etetNSMSe naF	22	is the god that you serve
auw pmNtsnoous Nrwme	23	and you are the twelve men
Ntatetnau eroou ntwtN	24	that you have seen.
pe auw Ntbnooue etou	25	And the cattle that are brought
eine mmoou eHoun nqusia	26	in are the sacrifices
Ntatetnau eroou ne e	27	you have seen, that is
te pmhhSe pe etetNpla?na	28	the multitude you lead astray

MmoF eJN p[e]qu[si]a?s?thri?	1	upon the altar.
o?n? etm? [ma]u [Fn]a? [w] HeratF	2	He will stand
N?G[i p] p?os auw	3	[...] and
q[e]t?e? ta?e?i? etFnar xrasqai	4	in this way he will make use of
Mparan auw senar pros	5	my name. And the
karterei eroF NGi Ngenea >	6	generations of the pious
N[N]e?usebhs mnNsa pal >	7	will be faithful to him. After this
ou[n] kairwme naporista N	8	one there is another man who will stand up
n? [...p]o[r]n?e? [ue] auw kaioua	9	from the fornicators, and another
F[na]parHista NNreFHatb	10	will stand up from the slayers of
S[hr]e? kaioua de? nnreFnko	11	children, and another from those
kte mN Hoo[ut] mN netnh	12	who sleep with men, and those who
steu[e] a[u]w pkesepe na	13	fast, and the rest of
kaqar[si]a H[i] a?no?mia Hi pla	14	uncleanness and lawlessness and error,
nh auw n? [e]tJw MMos Je	15	and those who say,
anon HnHisos naggelos >> ²⁸⁷	16	“we are equal to angels.”
auw Ntoou ne Nsiou etJwk	17	and they are the stars which fulfill
ebol NHwb nim auJoos gar	18	everything, for it has been said
NNgenea NNrwme Je eis	19	to the human generations, “Behold,
Hhhte apnoute Sep te	20	God receives your
tNqusia Ntootou nouh	21	sacrifice from the hands of
hb ete paei pe pdiakonos	22	priests, that is to say, the minister
Nte?planh pJoeis de e	23	of error.” But the Lord
toueH saHne pal eto NIJs	24	who commands, this is the Lord
eJN pthrF Hral HN fae N	25	over all creation, in the last
Hooou senaJpioou >>>>>	26	days they will be shamed.
>>> ---	27	>>> ---

²⁸⁷ I understand this scribal design to be a division in the text, effectively ending the sentence.

p?eJa?F [nauN]Gi !hs Je !Hw erw	1	Jesus said to them, “Stop
tN Nqu[siase] n?HN[t]e?[bno]ou	2	sacrificing the animals that
e? Ntate? [tNtaloo eHr]al	3	you offered up
!Hi JN pequsiasth[ri]on [e]uHi	4	over the altar. They are
JN netNsiou mn net[na]gge	5	over your stars with your angels where
los eauSrp Jwk ebol [M]mau	6	they have already come their completion.
marouSwpe Ge? euSo[ue]it/	7	Therefore, let them be vain
naHrhtN auw n?seS [. .] eu	8	in your presence and let them[...]
ouonH ebol [nhtN peJau N]	9	to reveal [to you].
Gi neFmaq[ths Je pJs t]ou	10	His disciples [said], “Lord, purify
bon [e]bol Hh n . . . [. .] n? >	11	us from the[...]
tanaau Hn tepla[nh] NNag	12	that we have done through the error of the
gelos peJaF nau [N]Gi ihs	13	angels. Jesus said to them,
Je m?N> SGom . . . [. .]erwou	14	“There is no power [...] kingdom
[..... o]ude mN	15	[...] nor
S[Gom etr]e? oukrnh wSm	16	does a fountain have the power to quench
Mp[ekrwm]ntoikoumenh	17	the fire of the whole world,
th[rs oud]e ouphgh HN	18	nor a spring in
ou[polis m]n SGom Mmos e et	19	a city has not the power to
[sio]n?ngenea throu ei	20	satisfy all the generations,
mh?tietnoG etthS au	21	except the great one, which is its destiny
w? m?n ouHhbs nouwt na	22	and a lamp will not
[r o]uo?i?n? enaiwn throu ei	23	illumine all the aeons
[mh]ti etmeHsNte Ngenea	24	except for the second generation
[o]ude mN SGom nouartoko	25	nor a baker cannot
[p]os er trefe Ntekthisis	26	feed all of the world

!mb

42

t?h?@s eqaro[s @ntpe] auw	1	under heaven.” And
N[al nterouswt]m eroou	2	when the disciples heard these
n!@@~-[Gi mmaqhts pe]Jau na[F]	3	things they said to

J[e p]!Js bohqi eron auw	4	him, “Lord, help us and
n[kt]ouJon : peJaF nau >	5	save us.” Jesus said
n[Gi] I lhs Je alwtn tetnSw	6	to them, “Stop, you are struggling
J[e] nmmal ounte poua pou	7	with me, each one of
a [mm]wtn [p]eFsiou mmau	8	you has his star.
a[uw] ou [.....] nnsiou na	9	And a [...] of the stars will
J [.....] pete pwF pe	10	[...] what is his
a . [...] . ntaV jnoout an	11	[...] I was not sent
!@Sa t[ge]nea Mfqarth ²⁸⁸ alla	12	to the corrupt generation but
Sa jg[e]nea etJoor auw	13	to the generation that is strong and
nafq[a]rton Je tgenea	14	incorrupt. For the generation
gar etmmau mpe aloue	15	has no ruler
mpol[e]mios er rr[o e]Jws]	16	[over it]
oude oua Hn nsiou : Hamh	17	nor any stars. Truly
TJw Mmos n[ht]n Je fna	18	I say to you (pl.),
He HN ouGeph n[Gi] pestul	19	the pillar of fire will
los nkrwm auw ntgenea	20	fall quickly, and the generation
etMmau nakim an... []	21	will not move [...]
siou : auw nal Ntere[FJo]	22	star.” And when
ou NGi lhs aFbwk aF[Ji N]lou]	23	Jesus had said these things, he left
das nMmaF piskariwt[hs]	24	And took Judas Iscariot with him.
peJaF NaF Je pmoo e [...]	25	He said to him, “The water [...]
mptoou etJose pebo[!>-]	26	of the lofty mountain from

!mg

43

H\n t [...] . [...] ana ?T [.] . ntaF	1	in [...] he has
ei an et [--- p]h ?g?h? m?p?	2	not come [...] spring for the
Shn \n [.....] . o? . [.....] i	3	tree [...]
ros mpeeiaiwn[. m\n] \n	4	of this aeon [...]
sa ouoe?iS[...] >	5	after time [...]
alla \ntaFei ets??o? \mppa[ra]dei	6	but he has come to water God’s
sos \mnpoute auw p?gen?os	7	paradise, and the race
etnamoun eb?[o]! Je [\nFn]a >	8	that will last because [he will]
JwHm an ntGinm[ooSe \n]Tge	9	not defile the walk of that

²⁸⁸ Greco-Coptic word: fqeī, rw

nea e?t\mmau al[la ---]	10	generation but [...]
pe Jn eneH nSa e[neH : pe	11	for all eternity.”
JaF \nGi loudas na?[F JeHrabb]ei :	12	Judas said to him, “[Rabbi],
Je aS Nkarpos pe[te] o?VntasF	13	what kind of fruit does this generation
NGi teeigenea : p[e] JaF NGi	14	produce?” Jesus said,
ĩh~s Je genea nim nrwme se	15	“The souls of every human generation
namou NGi neuTu[x]h na?ı d?e?	16	will die. When those (people), ²⁸⁹
Ntoou Hotan euSanJwk	17	however, complete the
e?b?o?ı? mpeouoıS Ntmnte	18	time of the kingdom
ro auw Ntepe!p!na pwrJ e	19	and their spirit separates
bol Mmoou : neuswma men	20	from them, their bodies
senamou neuTuxh de se	21	will die but their souls will be alive,
natan!Hooou auw NseFitou	22	and they will be taken
e?Hraı : peJaF NGi loudas	23	up.” Judas said,
Je eunar ou Ge NGi pkesee	24	“What will the rest
pe Ngenea NNrwme : peJaF	25	of the human generations do?”
NGi !ıhs Je ouatGom pe	26	Jesus said, “It is impossible

!md

44

etJo eJN ou[p]et[ra] NseJi	1	to sow upon a rock and
neu[kar]pos [ta]ı o?n te qe	2	take its fruit. This is also the way
oVn? [...] . n? . [...] mpenos	3	[...] of the [defiled]
[etJoH]m mN tsofia Nfqarth	4	race and corruptible Sophia
[...] t?GiJ Ntatamie rwme	5	[...] the hand which has created
[N]q?nhtos NteneuTuxh	6	Mortal humans and their souls
[b]wk e!Hraı enaiwn et!Hi pSwı	7	go up to the aeons on high.
H[amh]n TJw Mmos nhtN	8	[Truly] I say to you,
J[e mN arxh] ou[de]m[N ag]gelos	9	[no authority] or angel
[oude mN d]unamis : naS nau	10	or power will be able to see
[eMma et]m?m?a?V n?a?ı e?t?e?@e?	11	those places that
t[einoG] ngenea etouaab	12	this great, holy generation

²⁸⁹ That is, the people who belong to the holy generation.

n?[anau e]@oou : nal Intere[F]	13	[will see]. After Jesus
Joou [NG]î Í!hs aFbwk	14	said these things, he left.
peJaF [N]G?i íoudas Je ps!aH N	15	Judas said, “Master,
qe Nt[a]kswtM eroou thro[u]	16	in the way you listened to all of them,
S?wtM Hwt on eroí : aeinaV	17	listen now also to me. For, I saw
gar eunoG N!Horoma : Í!hs de	18	a great vision.” But, when Jesus
NtereFswtM aFswbe pe	19	heard, he laughed
JaF naF Je a!Hrok/ kRGumna	20	and he said to him, “Why do you
ze _w pmleHmn!lig daimwn	21	try so hard O Thirteenth demon?
alla SaJe !Hwwk/ taanexe	22	But, you too speak and I will bear
Mmok/ peJaF naF NGi Íou	23	with you.” Judas
das Je alnau eroí HM foro	24	said to him, “I saw in a vision
M?a? ere pmntsnoous mma	25	the twelve disciples
qhths Hi% wne eroe?Í se :	26	stoning me,

!me

45

pht [nswí MpSa] a?V?w? ae?[i]ei on	1	[pursuing me]. And I also
epma e? [] N? slwk	2	came to the place where [---] after you.
aeinau e?[ouhei] s? au	3	I saw [a house ---] and
w peFS?i? nabal naS? [Sit~F] an	4	my eyes could not measure its
nere HN noG de Nrwm k?[w]te	5	size. Great people were surrounding
eroFpeauwneou<Nt~Fou>stegh<nou	6	it, and that house <had>
o?te> pe NGi phei etMm?[au] au	7	a roof of greenery and
w HN tmhte Mphí er[e ou]mh	8	in the middle of the house was [a crowd]
[hSe] . [] k’	9	<i>---lines 9 and 10 are missing---</i>
[] Se [] e Je	10	
ps!aH Sopt%’ Hw eHo[un m]n n?irw	11	“Master, take me in along with these
me : aFouwSB NGî [Ís] peJaF	12	people.” [Jesus] answered and said,
Je apeksiou pla[na] Mmok/	13	“Your star has led you astray
w íouda: auw Je NF?M?pSa	14	O Judas. No person
an NGi peJpo Nrw[m]e nim	15	of mortal birth is worthy
Nqnhton : ebwk eHoun e	16	to enter the house
phei Ntaknau eroF Je pto	17	you have seen, for that

pos gar etMmau NtoF pe	18	place is reserved
touareH eroF Nnetouaab	19	for the holy.
pma ete Mp!rh : mN poo~H :	20	The sun and the moon
naR ero Mmau an oude pe!Ho	21	will not rule there, nor
ou : alla eunaw!Heratou N	22	the day but they ²⁹⁰ will stand
ouoeiS nim HM paiwn mN :	23	always in the aeon and
Nnaggelos etouaab : eis	24	with the holy angels. Behold,
!Hhhte a?eiJw erok Nmmu >	25	I have told you the mysteries
sthriou NtmNtero >>--	26	of the kingdom

!ms

46

auw a?itsabok? [etep]anh	1	and I have taught you the error
NNs? [i]o?u? [:] a?u[w] tnoous	2	of the stars and [---] send
N . [.....] t?e eJN >>	3	[---] on
pm? [Nts]noous nnaiwn >>>--	4	the twelve aeons.
peJa? [F] n?Gi loudas Je ps!aH mh	5	Judas said, "Master,
po?t?e !Hw pasperma Hupotas	6	can it suffice that my seed be under the
s? [e] nnarxwn aFouwSB NGi	7	control of the archons?" Jesus
ls% [pe]JaF naF Je amou Nta	8	answered and said to him, "Come, that I
S[...] M?m?o?[k] J[e.....]	9	[---]
	10	<i>---line 10 is missing---</i>
er [...a]!?la J?e ekeSwpe e	11	but you will
kaS[aHo]m N!Houo eknau e	12	grieve greatly when you see
tmn[te]ro mN tesgenea	13	the kingdom and all its generation."
thrs% [:] naI NtereFswtM	14	When Judas heard this,
eroo[u] NGi loudas peJaF	15	he said to him,
naF Je? ou pe pe!Houo Nta	16	"What is the advantage that
eiJitF% Je akporJt% etge	17	I have received, for you separated me
nea etMmau : aFouwSB	18	from that generation?" Jesus answered
NGi !!hs peJaF Je knaSw	19	and said, "You will become
pe Mm!eHmNt!ig auw >>	20	the thirteenth and

²⁹⁰ That is, the holy generation.

knaSwpe eks!Houort% !Hi	21	you will be cursed by
tN pkesepe Ngenea au	22	the other generation,
w knaSwpe ekarJi eJw	23	and you will come to rule over them
ou NHaeou nne!Hoo se	24	in the last days they <will ---> to you
<na > nak/ auw nekb?w?k? epSwl	25	and you will not ascend on high
>>>>> >>>> >>>>>>>	26	>>>>> >>>> >>>>>>>

!mz

47

etge?[nea et]o?uaab : [p]e?J?a?F	1	to the holy generation.” Jesus
NGi !l!hs J[e amo]u N?ta?[ts]a?bok	2	said, “[Come], that I may teach you
etbe n? [.....e]t?na?	3	about the [---] that
nau e?r[o]ou n?G?i? l?a?o? [ue] N?r?w	4	no human will see.
Me FSoop/ gar NGi o [un]o?G nai	5	For there exists a great
wn auw ouatarhJF% pa?[i] e?te	6	and boundless aeon, whose
Mpes laoue Ngenea N[ag]g?e	7	extent no generation of
Los nau epeFSi ere p[?n]o?G	8	angels could see, in which
Mp?[na] n?a?!Ho?@a?[t]o?n? [NHht]F%	9	is the great invisible spirit
pal e?[t]e Mpebal na[ggelo]s? >	10	that no eye of an angel
N?a?V e?@oF : oude Mp[em]e?ue	11	has seen, no thought
NHht SapF% oude m?poumou	12	of the heart has comprehended, and it was
te eroF Nlaoue? [N]ran >>>	13	never called by any name.
auw asouwnH% ebo?[i] mpma e	14	A luminous cloud
tMmau NGi ouk?lo[o]le Nouo	15	appeared there.
In auw peJaF Je? {Je} mareF	16	And he said, “Let
Swpe NGi ouaggelos eta	17	an angel come into being as my
parastasis : auw aFei ebol	18	assistant.” And a great angel,
HN tekloole NGi ounoG nag	19	the self-generated, the god
g?elos pautogenhs pnou	20	of the light, emerged from
te MpouoIn auw auSw	21	the cloud. And because of him
pe etbhtF% NGi kaiFtoou	22	four other angels came into being
Naggelos : ebol Hitn kai	23	from another cloud,

Ghpe : auw auSwpe etpa	24	and they became assistants
Rastasis Mpautogenhs :	25	for the angelic self
Naggelos : auw peJaF :	26	-generated. And

!mh

48

NG?Î p?[a]uto[genhs Je] m?areF	1	The self-generated said, “Let
Swp?[e]NGÎ a?[damas] auw asSw	2	[Adamas] come into being,” and [the]
pe [NGi teprood]os auw :	3	[emanation] occurred. And,
aFt?[amio]MpSor%p’ m?fwsthr	4	he [created] the first luminary
et@[eF] r% ero eHral eJwF : au	5	to rule over it. And,
W? p?eJ aFJe marouSwpe :	6	he said, “Let
N[Gi H]n aggelos euSMSe :	7	angels come into being to worship
N[aF : au]w auSwpe NGi HN?	8	him,” and there came into being myriads
t?[ba N]athp?e : auw [pe]JaF	9	without number. And he said,
Je [mar]eFSwpe NG[I oua]i	10	“[Let] a luminous aeon come into being,”
Wn No?uoIn auw aFSwpe	11	and it came into being.
aFtaH[o]M?pmeHsnau Nfw	12	He created the second luminary
sthr : [er% e]ro eHral eJwF >	13	[to] rule over it,
mN HNtba naggelos nath	14	together with myriads of angels without
pe euSMSe auw qe te taei	15	number, to worship. In this way,
NtaFtamio Mpkeseepe >	16	he created the rest
Nnaiwn MpouIn auw aF	17	of the luminary aeons. And he
tour% ero eHral e?Jw?ou au	18	made them rule over them.
W aFtamio nau NHNtba nag	19	He created for them myriads
gelos nathpe eteuHuph	20	of angels without number to
resia : auw neFSoop NGi	21	Assist them. Adamas
!a!d!a!m!a@s HN tSorp% NGhpe	22	was the first cloud
Nte pouIn taei ete Mpes	23	of light that
Laoue naggelos nau eros	24	no angel could see
HN nal etoumoute eroou	25	among all those
throu Je route : auw aF	26	called god. And he

auw [e]	1	And [...]
tMmau[]	2	That [...]
qikwn []	3	The image [...]
auw k?a?t?a pine n?p?[eeiag]	4	And after the likeness of [this]
gelos : aFouonH% t?[genea]	5	angel. He made the incorruptible
nafqartos Ns!hq? [.....]	6	Generation of Seth appear [...]
Mpmntsnoous [.....]	7	The twelve [...]
N?J?out?[a]F?t?e? . . [.....]	8	The twenty-four [...]
aFouonH% SFesno[ous]	9	He made seventy-two
Nfw?sth@ HN tgen[ea n]a >	10	Luminaries appear in the incorruptible
fqa?rtos? HM pou[w]S Mpe	11	Generation, in accordance with the will
!p!na peSFesn[ou]s de Hw	12	of the Spirit. The seventy-two
ou Mfw[s]thr a[uo]uonH%	13	Luminaries themselves made
!tz ebol Nfwsth?@ Hn tge	14	three hundred and sixty Luminaries
nea nafqarton [H]m? pou	15	Appear in the incorruptible Generation,
w?S Mpe!p!na Je eueSw	16	in accordance with the will of the
pe NGi teuhpe NTou epoua	17	Spirit, so that their number is five for
auw peueiwt pe pmNt	18	each. And their Father consists of the
snoous naiwn MpmNt	19	twelve aeons and the
snoous Mfwsthr auw	20	twelve Luminaries. And
kata aiwn nim soou nou	21	for each aeon is six
ranos Je eueSwpe NGi	22	heavens so that there are
SFe?snoous nouranos :	23	seventy-two heavens for
M?p?e?SF?esnoous Mfwsthr	24	the seventy-two Luminaries.
auw kata poua poua >> :	25	And for each one

[Mmoou Tou Nst]e?r?ewma	1	[of them five] firmaments
[Je eueSwpe] nGi !tc :	2	[so that there are] three hundred and sixty
[Nsterewma : Nto]o?V a?V?T	3	[firmaments. They] were given
[nau ou]e?cousia mN oumnt	4	authority and a great
[noG n]s?tratia naggelos n	5	host of angels
[athp]e eueoou mN ouSM	6	[without number] for glory and
[Se eti] d?e HNparqenos >>	7	worship and [also] virgin
[on Mp] !na eue[o]ou mN ou?	8	spirits, for glory and
[SMS]e? nna?i?wn throu mN	9	[worship] of all the aeons and
n?[o]uranos mN neu[s]t?ere	10	the heavens and their firmaments.
wma [:] pmhhSe de Nnatmou	11	The multitude of those
etMm?[a]u : eSaVmoute e	12	immortals is called
roou [J]e? kosmo?s Je te >	13	Cosmos that is
fqora? [e]bol Hitn piwt	14	perdition by the Father
mN peSFesnoous Nfw	15	and his seventy-two Luminaries
Sthr e?t?nemaF : Mpaut?o?	16	who are with the self-
genhs? mN peFSFesno?	17	generated and his seventy-two
ous? Nnaiwn : pm?[a] ntaF	18	aeons. In that place
ouwnH ebol NHht~F nGî	19	the first human
pSrp Nrwme : mN neF	20	appeared with his
dunamis nafqarton :	21	incorruptible powers.
paiwn de NtaFouwn~H e	22	In the aeon that appeared
bol mN teFgenea pal e	23	with his generation is
teretGhpe Ntegn?[w]?sis	24	the cloud of gnosis
N !Hht~F mN pagge?los	25	and the angel
eSaumoute eroF Je	26	who is called

!hl . []	1	EI[]
mn [ai]	2	with [...]
wn [Mn]	3	Aeon [...]
Ns a nal peJaF NG?[i....]	4	After that [...] said,
Je marouSwpe N?[Gi mNt]	5	‘Let twelve angels come into being
sn oous naggelos :[eu~r e]	6	[to] rule
ro eJN pexaos mN a[mNte]	7	over chaos and [Hades].’
a?Vw? eis HhhteaFo?[uwnH e]	8	And behold,
bol NtGhpe NGi oua[ggelos]	9	from a cloud, an [angel] appeared,
ere?[p]e?F!Ho Souo kr?[wm] ebol	10	whose face flashed with fire.
peFein?e de e[F]Jo?[H]m? NsnoF	11	His appearance was corrupted with
eouNtaF MmaV n?[our]an Je ne	12	blood. His name was Nebro
Brw ete paei pe [Nt]auHermh	13	which means,
neue MmoF Je ap?[os]taths	14	‘Rebel’
HNkooue de Je I[al]dabawq	15	others call him ‘Ialdabaoth.’
auw on akaiaggel[o]s ei ebol	16	Another angel also came from
[H]N? tGhpe Je sakla?s? nebrw	17	the cloud, ‘Saklas.’ So Nebro
G?[e]aFtamio Nsoou naggelo?s?	18	created six angels, as well as Saklas,
auw Saklas etparastasis	19	to be assistants.
auw nal auJpo Mmntsno	20	And these generated twelve
ous naggelos Hn mphoue	21	angels in the heavens,
auw auJi noumeros epoua	22	with each one receiving a portion
HN Mphoue : auw peJau N	23	in the heavens. And the
Gi pmNtsnoous narxwn	24	twelve rulers spoke
mN pmntsnoous naggelos	25	with the twelve angels:
Je mare poua poua MmwtN	26	‘Let each of you
>>>>- >[>>>]>- >>>>-	27	>>>>- >[>>>]>- >>>>-

[	]	. Nse	1	[...] and let them
[	ge]	nea	2	[...] generation
[		] e? N :	3	[...]
[Tou N]	a?ggelos :	pSo rp/	4	[five] angels.’ The first
[pe s]	h?q	peteSaum ou	5	is [...] ²⁹¹ , who is
[te e]	roF	Je pe!xs :	6	called Christ. The
[sna]	V pe	!H!a!r!m!a!q!!w!q e te	7	[second] is Harmathoth, who
[.....]	.. [.]	.. e : pme? H? :	8	is [---]. The
[SomN]	t pe	!g!a!!i!la :	9	[third] is Galila.
Fto?	[o]	u pe !!w!b!hl :	10	The fourth is Yobel. The
Tou	[p]	e? !a?!d!w!n!a!i!los :	11	fifth is Adonaiois. These
ne	pT?	[o]V Ntaur ero eJN	12	are the five who ruled over
amnt	[e :]	auw NSorp eJN	13	Hades, and first of all over chaos.
pexao?	[s]	: tote peJaF nGî	14	Then Saklas
sakla?	[s]	NneFaggelos Je :	15	said to his angels,
mar?	n	tamio nourwme? [ka]	16	‘Let us create a human being
ta	pine	auw ka?ta qikw?[n]	17	after the likeness and after the image.’
Ntoou	de	auplassa n!a!d!am	18	And they fashioned Adam
auw	teFs!	Hime !e!u!Ha eSau	19	and his wife Eve. But
moute	de	eros HN tGhpe	20	she is called, in the cloud,
Je	!z!w~h	!Hraei gar HM peei	21	‘Zoe.’ For by this
ran	ere	Ngenea throu Si	22	name all the generations seek
ne	NswF :	auw poua poua	23	him, and each
Mmoou	semout?	e eros	24	of them calls her
Nneur	an :	[sa]kla de Mp~F	25	by these names. Now, Saklas did not

!ng

53

oueH	[saHne	]	1	com[mand...] produced,
eimh?	[ti	]	2	except [...] among
Ng?en	[ea	]	3	the gene[rations ...]
tai	.. [....]	. []	4	which this [...].

²⁹¹ The translation of 52.5 ([s]hq) has been debated by scholars. The NGS team argue for “Seth”, whereas April DeConick suggests “Athoth.” I have decided to leave the translation blank until further evidence is available.

auw peJaF naF NGi p?[arxwn]	5	And the [angel] said to him,
Je ere pekwn\H Swp[...]	6	“Your life will be for a number of
NouoeiS mN nekSh?[re : >>>]	7	time with your children.”
lo?ud?as de peJaF NIIs [Je ou]	8	And Judas said to Jesus,
pe p?eHouo etFnawn[H >-]	9	“What is the advantage of human life?”
NGi? [p]rwm?[e] : peJaF [NGi] I?h?s?	10	Jesus said, “Why are you amazed
Je a!Hrok’ kr? [S]phre [J]e adam	11	that Adam with his generation,
mN teFgenea Nt?[a]F?Ji peF	12	has received his time
ouoeiS HN ouhp?[e] HM pma	13	in a number in the place
NtaFJi NteFmn[te]ro N >-	14	where he received his kingdom
Hht\Is {HN ouhpe} m?n? peFar	15	in a number with his
x?wn : peJaF nGi I[o]udas NIIs	16	archon?” Judas said to Jesus,
[J]e Sa!p!na Nrwme mou : pe	17	“Does the human spirit die?”
Ja?F? n?G?i? I!hs Je qe te taei	18	Jesus said, “In this way
Ntapnoute oueH saHne	19	God ordered Michael to give
Mm!ix!a!hl eT Nne!p!na nn	20	the spirits of the humans to them
rwme nau euSMSe epeu	21	on loan, while they serve. But
Sap : pnoG de NtaFouleH	22	the Great One ordered
saHne <e>gabrihl eT Nne!p!na	23	Gabriel to give the spirits
NtnoG Ngenea natRro >-	24	of the great generation without king
pe!p!na mN teyuxh etbe	25	the spirit and the soul therefore
paei ere pk?[es]e?pe nneyuxh	26	the [rest] of the souls

Ind

54

n [] toou	1	[...] mountain
N [] ouoIn	2	[...] light
e [] . [] os	3	[...]
H [] . e? ... eJ[...] ek?wte	4	[...] seek
N[sa p]e? !p!na n!HhtthutN :	5	[after the] spirit within you (pl.),
Nt[a] tNtreFoulwH Hn teei	6	[which] you have let dwell in this
sarc : HN Ngenea NNagge	7	flesh among the generations

I[os :] pnout?e? d?e? a?F?t? [r]e?u	8	of the angels. But God gave
N [t]egnwsis na?da?m m[n] ne	9	<i>gnosis</i> to Adam and those
t? [ne]m?a?F \HIn[a J]e? neuR Joeis?	10	with him so that the kings
eroo[u] NGi n? [e]rwou Mpe	11	of chaos and Hades
xaos m[n] amNte :	12	might not lord over them.”
loudas[de] p?eJaF n{ij} ²⁹² l!hs Je	13	And Judas said to Jesus,
eunar [o]u Ge NGi Nge<ne>a etM	14	“What will those generations
mau peJaF NGi l!hs	15	do?” Jesus said,
Je alhqw?s TJw Mmos nh?	16	“Truly I say to you (pl.),
tN Je n?siou e?uJwk ebo[i]	17	the stars fulfil these
eJN naei throu Hotan d?e?	18	all. But when Saklas fulfils
eFSanJwk ebol NneFou	19	the time assigned to him,
oeiS NtautoSou naF N	20	their leading star will come
Gi saklas Fnhu NGi peuHou	21	with the generations,
eit Nsiou mN Ngenea :	22	and they will accomplish
auw nentauJoou Nse	23	what has been said.
Jokou ebol : tote sena	24	Then they will
porneue HN paran auw	25	fornicate in my name and
NsemouoV[t] n?neuShre	26	slay their children

!ne

55

auw n?[se]q?oou | | | |	1	and [they will...] evil,
auw n? [] . ou	2	and [...]
[.] . h?V []ous	3	[...]
n?k? . []n?ai	4	[...] the aeons
wn eueine neugen? [ea e]upa	5	that bring their generations which
rista mmoou Nsakla[s au]w :	6	represent them to Saklas. [And]
mNNsws Fnhu NGi p [..]@?ahl	7	after that [..]rael will come
eFeine Ntmntsnoo[us] Mfu	8	bringing the twelve tribes

²⁹² According to the Critical Edition, this appears to be a scribal error.

lh m!p!!![!ih!] e?bo[! H]n . [...] N	9	of [Israel] from [...], and
seR[H]MHaiNsaklas[NGiNg(en)]ea?	10	[the generations] will all serve
t?h?rou e?ur n?o?be [onH]n? paran	11	Saklas, sinning in my name.
auw auw Fnar e[ro NGi] p?eksiou	12	And {and} ²⁹³ your star will ru[le]
eJN pm!eHmNt[Som]te naiw	13	over the [thir]teenth aeon.”
m?N?nsws de aF? [swb]e NGi !!hs	14	After that Jesus laughed.
peJaF N[Gi loudas] Je p!slaH	15	Judas said, “Master,
etb[e ou kswbe Nswn :]aFouw	16	why [are you laughing at us]?”
S\F n[Gi !!hs peJaF J]e eesw	17	[Jesus] answered [and said], “I am
beN[swt]n?a? [n:ai]!a[N]s?a? t?ep?!?a	18	not laughing [at] you (pl.) but
nh? n?n?s?i?o?u J? [e] p?eeisooou N	19	at the error of the
siou plana mN peeiTou Mpo	20	stars, that these six
lemisths auw nal throu se	21	stars lead astray with these five warriors,
natako mN neuktisma :	22	and they all will perish with their
loudas de peJaF N !!hs Je !Hi eu	23	creatures.” And Judas said to Jesus, “What
nar ou NGi neNtauJwKM >	24	will those do who have been baptized
H?M pekran :	25	in your name?”
pe?JaF NGi !!hs Je alhqws T	26	Jesus said, “Truly I
Jw mmo? [s nak] Je peeiJwKM	27	say [to you], this baptism

!ns

56

Nt? [HN] paran	1	[...in] my name
!H []mh >>	2	[...]
e? [] M? [...]	3	[...]
t . [] . []F?na	4	[...] will
Fw? [t]e? ebol Ntgenea thr\’s	5	destroy the entire generation
nad[a]M prmmklaH petR :	6	of the earthly man Adam.
fo[rei] Mmol raste senaR	7	Tomorrow they will torture
ba? [san]i??se MmoF : Ha?m?h?n	8	the one who bears me. Truly
T [Jw M]mos nhtN Je !mn	9	I [say] to you (pl.), no
!?a?ou[e N]GiJ n[r]w?me e?S? [a]F	10	hand of a man will
mou[naR n]o?b?e erol :	11	sin against me.

²⁹³ 55.12 the text repeats auw auw

alhqws? [TJ]w Mmos nak' lou	12	Truly [I] say to you Judas,
da Je n? [ett]ale qusia e?H?!ral	13	those [who] offer sacrifices to
nsakla? [s] ou throu	14	Saklas [will (?)] all [...] ²⁹⁴
Je nH [] . Hli	15	since [...]
JN p [] . th	16	upon the [...] all
rou . [.] . [] . e .	17	of them [...]
Hwb n?im e? [u]Hooou ntok?	18	everything that is evil. But
de knar Houo eroou th	19	you will exceed all of them,
rou prwme gar etr fo	20	for you will sacrifice
rei Mmoei knar qusiase	21	the man who bears me.
MmoF hdh apektap Jise	22	Already your horn has been raised,
auw pekGwn\t aFmoluH	23	and your wrath has been kindled,
auw peksiou aFJwbe au	24	and your star has passed by,
w pekHh\t a?[FamaH]t?e >>>>>>	25	and your heart has [become strong].

N[z]

57

alhq[wsTJw MMos nak Je] n?e?k	1	[57] Truly [I say to you (sg.)], your
!Haeo[u au]w	2	last [...(pl.) and]
p [.] . [S]w?pe	3	the [...] become
k . [] o	4	[...the (pl.)...]
nos mpaiwn au . . [. . au]w	5	of the aeon have [... and]
nerwou auR Gwb au[w] nge	6	the kings have become weak, and the
nea Nnaggelos auaS [a]Hom >	7	generations of the angels have grieved,
auw mpeqoou nt . [..] oou	8	and those who are evil [...]
[] . [....] . [.] . [] par	9	[...] the
[xwn]e?FFwte ebol : [au]w to	10	archon, since he is destroyed. And then
t?e FnaJise NGi p?t? [u]pos	11	the image of the great generation
ntnoG ngenea N[a]dam Je	12	of Adam will be exalted for
!Ha te!Hh Ntpe mN? [p]k?aH mN n	13	prior to heaven and earth and

²⁹⁴ Gregor Wurst and Marvin Meyer suggest in the Ohio Fragments that this lacuna may be restored to read [senam]ou, “will die”.

a?ggelos \sSoo[p N]Gi tgene	14	angels, that generation which is
a? etMmau ebol Hit?N? naiwn	15	from the aeons exists.
e?i?s Hhhte auJe Hw? [b] n?i?m erok	16	Truly you have been told everything.
Fi eiatk eHraei n\k[n]au etGh	17	Lift up your eyes and look at the
pi auw pouoln etN?Hht\ts:	18	cloud and the light within it,
auw Nsiou etkwt?e eros	19	and the stars surrounding it,
auw psiou eto Mprohgou :	20	and the star that guides the
menos NtoF pe pek?siou >---	21	way is your star.”
loudas de aFFiat\F e!Hraei >---	22	Judas lifted up his eyes
aFnau etGhpe Nouoln au	23	and saw the luminous cloud
w aFFwk e!Houn eros ne	24	and he entered it. Those
taHeratou Hi pesht : au	25	standing on the ground
swtm eusmh esnhu ebol	26	heard a voice coming from
HN tGhpe e? [s]J?w Mmos >---	27	the cloud, saying,

Inh

58

J[e t]noG n	1	“[...the] great
ge?[nea Hi]k?wn N	2	generation [...] image
Gi . [] . [] a?u	3	[...] and
w a? [.....] do [..] tHral	4	[...] in
N? [...] auw aloudas lo eF	5	[...]”And Judas stopped
nau [e] l?!hs : /nteunou de as	6	looking [at] Jesus. And at once
Sw?[p]e NGi oukatasasia	7	there was a disturbance
HN [Nlo]udal e?Ho?u?e? e? . [.....]	8	among [the] Jews, more than [...]
N? [] auk?r?MrM [de]	9	[...And] their high priests
nG?i? n?[e]ua?rJiereus Je Nta[.]	10	murmured because [he] had
bwk' [eHo]un? e?pkataluma n?	11	gone into the guest room
teFp?[ro]s?euxh? neoun Ho?	12	for prayer. Some of the
eine d[e M]mau Nnegramma?	13	scribes were there
teus e?[u]parathrei Je eue	14	watching carefully in order to
amaHt?[e] mmoF !Hral HN te >	15	arrest him during the

prose[u]xh neuR !Hote gar	16	prayer, for they were afraid
Hht\F m?plaos pe Je neFN	17	of the people, since he was regarded
tootou throu !Hws pro	18	by all as a prophet.
fhth?s auw auT peuou	19	And they approached
ol elo?udas peJau naF :	20	Judas, they said to him,
Je ekr ou Ntok Mpeeima	21	“What are you doing in this place?
Ntok pe pmaqhts Nlls	22	You are the disciple of Jesus.
NtoF de aFouwSB nau	23	He answered them
kata peuouwSe loudas	24	as they wished. Judas
de aFJi NHNHomnt aFpa	25	received some coins;
radidou m?[mo]F? n?au >>>>>---	26	he handed him over to them.
>>>>> >>> >>> >>>>>		>>>>> >>> >>> >>>>>
peuaggelion	27	The Gospel
NI?oudas	28	of Judas

APPENDIX B:

SALVATION AND SACRIFICE IN THE JUDAS GOSPEL

Reference	Salvation	Sacrifice
33.1-6		The secret word of the denial by which Jesus spoke with Judas Iscariot, during eight days, three days before he did Passover .
33.6-14	When he appeared on earth he performed signs and great wonders for the salvation of humanity. And some walked in the way of righteousness while some walked in their sin, the twelve disciples were called.	

34.15-17	Truly [I] say to you, no generation of the people that are among you will know me.	
35.21-27	Jesus said to him, “Step away from the others and I shall tell you the mysteries of the kingdom, not so that you will go there, but you will grieve a great deal.	
38.1-11		Then they said, “We have seen a great house with a great altar in it and twelve men whom we say are the priests and a name [...] There is a crowd persevering at that altar until, the priests finished presenting the offerings. We are persevering.”
38.16-19		Others sacrifice their own children, others their wives, in praise and in humility with each other.
39.1-3		And while they are involved in all the deeds of their slaughter, the altar is full.
39.25-28		And the cattle that are brought in are the sacrifices you have seen, that is the many people you lead astray before that altar.
40.20-23		Look, God has received your sacrifice from the hands of priests, that is, a minister of error.
41.1-6		Jesus said to them, “Stop sacrificing animals. On the altar you [lifted them up], and they are over your stars with your angels, where they have already come to their end.

42.4-5	Lord, help us and save us.	
42.6-8	<p>Stop struggling with me, each of you has his own star.</p> <p><i>Comparison:</i></p> <p>And [when the disciples heard] th[ese (words)], they said to him, “Lord, help us and save us.” (42.1-5) Jesus said to them, “Stop struggling with me. Each of you has his own star,” (42.5-8). <i>This is interesting when compared to:</i> “he appeared on earth, he performed miracles and great wonders for the salvation of humanity.” (33.6-14)</p>	
42.11-14	I was not sent to the corruptible generation but to the generation that is strong and incorruptible.	
43.15-23	“The souls of every human generation will die. When they complete the time of the kingdom and their spirit separates from them, their bodies will die but their souls will be alive, and they will be taken up.”	
43.26-44.2	It is impossible to sow seed on a rock and receive its fruit.	
45.14-19	No person of mortal birth is worthy to enter the house you have seen, for that place is reserved for the holy.	
46.18-47.1		Jesus answered and said, “You will become the thirteenth, and you will be cursed by the other generations, and you will come to rule over them. In the last days they <will...> to you, and you will not

		ascend on high to the holy generation.
53.18-25	In this way, God ordered Michael to give spirits of people to them as a loan, so that they might offer service. But the Great One ordered Gabriel to grant spirits to the great generation without king, the spirit and the soul.	
54.24-26		Then they will fornicate in my name and slay their children.
56.12-14		Truly [I] say to you, Judas, those [who] offer sacrifices to Saklas [...]
56.17-20		You will exceed all of them, for you will sacrifice the man who bears me.