
1. Explain the Gnosticism contained in the gospel of Judas, placing it in the context of when it was produced.

From the gospel of Judas, Gnosticism is defined as an esoteric religious movement that was founded around the 2nd and 3rd centuries. The Gospel contained some of the most important aspects of Gnosticism. When experts first translated the texts in the year 2000, they found some discrepancies or inaccuracies, and thus thought it was a fake. Then in 2008, a second translation was done and the experts concluded decisively that it was not written by Judas himself, but by people in Gnostic circles sometime in the late 2nd century. The significance of this discovery is that it is the first account that describes the relationship between Jesus and Judas. What was revealed was a secret knowledge that has a mysterious flavor to it and tries to explain what exactly happened during the betrayal of Jesus by Judas. It also gives explanation of why Judas betrayed his Master, or if he really did betray him. The conflict between the Gnostics and the original orthodox Christians (like Justin Martyr) is also mentioned and it explains the theory that God generated other divine beings. The accident that occurred when the feminine deity Sophia separated from the rest of the divine beings and spontaneously generated another being outside the divine realm which was evil, and the 'evil world' was created by this being. It also tells us that many humans (but not all) still have a spark of divinity inside them, and that if humans want to attain salvation, they can do so if that divine spark escapes by learning through knowledge. So the gospel of Judas really tells us that the fundamental problem is not sin but ignorance.

In the gospel of Judas, Jesus is portrayed as a Gnostic figure, not like Jesus we know, but someone of esoteric knowledge of spiritual matters. He was not the supreme God but a messenger who brought a special secret knowledge to the world about the spark of divinity. The 12 disciples were clearly confused by this message, but Judas seemed to have a better comprehension of the message and what Jesus required of him. From what we know from the New Testament, Judas betrays Jesus, but according to the Gospel of Judas, he betrays him after Jesus imparted knowledge onto him. This gospel tells us that the act of betrayal is really an act of obedience, and conforms to current Gnostic views

that the body is a prison that holds the spirit. Judas by obeying orders really sets Jesus free, and this allows his spirit to break free from the world.

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