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# THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS AND MORMON DOCTRINE PART 1 A COMMENTARY

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## INTRODUCTION

### THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON DEBATE

There were some who projected a "crisis of faith" when the Gospel of Judas was published. There were others who said "It adds little to our knowledge of early Christianity, and the fact it carries Judas's name is ultimately the only thing that distinguishes it." (Scham pp. 50-51) LDS scholar's did not probe into the substance of the new discovery. After a careful examination of the ancient document and questions raised by those attending lectures I was giving, it seemed that perhaps something was being ignored here that was well worth an effort to probe much more deeply. In an Introduction to The Gospel of Judas by Kasser, et. al., Marvin Meyer provides some information and summaries from which we quote several passages:

"During the formative period of the Christian Church, numerous gospels were composed in addition to the New Testament gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Among the other gospels that have survived....are the Gospel of Truth and the Gospels of Thomas, Peter, Philip, Mary, the Ebionites, the Nazoreans, the Hebrew, and the Egyptians...[that] demonstrate a rich diversity of perspectives within early Christianity...The gospel of Judas was yet another of the gospels written by early Christians as they attempted to articulate, in one way or another, who Jesus is, and how one should follow him." (Kasser, p. 5) Some of these gospels will be referred to below in this Commentary on The Gospel of Judas.

"We know the names of a few revered Gnostic teachers [and have some of their works] like Basilides, Isodore, Valentinus, Heracleon, Marcus, and possibly Concessus and Macarius." (Perkins p. 11) Some of these and others will be referred to below.

"At Rome the literary

criticism of Christian books began when the powerful dualist critic Marcion arrived from Pontus, south of the Black Sea, around the year 137 AD." (Grant p. 33) Marcion seemed to have "worked on his theology in Pontus, the church there was fairly old. It must have been founded before 90 [AD]." (Grant p. 34) Around 110 AD Pliny the Younger (62-113 AD), a Roman statesman and author, was interviewing Pontic Christians trying to recover the original teachings, because by then changes had crept into the doctrines that were widely being circulated. Throughout the second century changes, additions, fakes, forgeries, etc., proliferated. Sifting through all these documents today now that many of them are being rediscovered and published is a tedious but not a thankless task. But the various strands of Mormon doctrine provide a way through the labyrinth of ancient documents and their content. The Sixth Article of Faith espoused by the Mormons includes a statement to the effect that they believe "in the same organization that existed in the primitive church," including officials and doctrines. This would be the ancient teachings of Christ from the inception of His ministry in about 30 AD to the translation of John just before 100 AD; a seventy year period. A non-Mormon writer has written that "Mormon Church professors are looking for traces of first-century Christian rituals and concepts which they feel were abandoned by the church and restored when the Mormon Church was founded." (Dart p. xx) And it is so! It is of great interest and of considerable importance to recover the earliest teachings, ordinances, and doctrines of the Primitive Church before Marcion and Pliny began to detect changes in progress and themselves contribute to the ongoing changes.

The original Greek text of the Gospel of Judas is dated to about 110 AD. Its content may therefore contain vestiges of original doctrines, changed doctrines, and drastic additions and alterations. As will be shown below there is a great deal to be obtained from a detailed study of the Gospel of Judas. By carefully mining it we may come out with some high grade nuggets of gold.

## THE CODEX TCHACOS:

"The Gospel of Judas was apparently discovered, as the third text [of four] in a papyri codex (or book) now designated Codex Tchacos, [After Frieda Nussberger-Tchacos, the lady responsible for its final recovery] in the 1970's in Middle Egypt [Near where the codices of the Nag Hammadi were found]. It is preserved in Coptic [Sahidic] translation, though without a doubt it was [originally] composed in Greek..., [Since it is mentioned by] Irenaeus of Lyon, who referred to a Gospel of Judas in his work Against all Heresies, written around 180 AD." (Kasser p. 11) It seems to have had a prior history that would place it early in the second century. [Perhaps near 110 AD] "The entire text of Codex Tchacos is to be published in [a forth coming] critical edition...As far as we can tell, Codex Tchacos is a book sixty-six pages long with four tractates... Including a Letter of Peter

to Philip, a text entitled 'James', a version of the First Revelation of James found in the Nag Hammadi," the third text of some 25 pages is the Gospel of Judas, and the last is a text now being called Allogenes [Strange], previously unknown." (Kasser pp. 13-14) In the above and what follows, insertions for clarification purposes have been put in square brackets.

## THE DISCOVERY AND RECOVERY OF THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS

The best book on the discovery and recovery of The Gospel of Judas is the book by Krosney. Bart D. Ehrman states in his forward to the book: "All of us should be grateful for not only the superb efforts of the translator on this text—the Swiss Coptic scholar Rodolphe Kasser—and the work of the National Geographic Society for putting in the time and expense to make it widely available, but also to Herb Krosney, who has made the story of the Gospel's discovery and history now accessible to everyone." (Krosney p. xxiii) The book is exciting reading. But like all books there are critics.

"The codex was acquired by the Maecenas Foundation for Ancient Art in 2000 and shown to Rudolphe Kasser in the summer of 2001. In 2004 he reported on the documents at the Eighth Congress of the International Association for Coptic Studies in Paris." (Kasser p. 14) This generated considerable interest which has not abated. Some say that the lawyer for Tchacos persuaded her to donate the document to the Maecenas Foundation. (Scham p. 51) At any rate, that foundation brought in the National Geographic Society.

"Beginning in 2001, Professor Kasser undertook, with conservator Florence Darbre and (since 2004) Professor Wurst, the Herculean task of assembling and arranging the papyrus fragments, large and small, of a codex that required significant reconstruction. A consensus English translation of the recovered texts of the Gospel of Judas, with which all the translators are in essential agreement [was published by NGM in 2006]." (Kasser p. 12, National Geographic p. 93, May 2006) Also see [ngm.com/gospel](http://ngm.com/gospel).

## SUMMARY OF THE

## CONTENT OF THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS

"The Gospel of Judas represents an early form of spirituality [emerging out of Christianity] that emphasizes gnosis, or 'Knowledge'—mystical knowledge, knowledge of God and the essential oneness of the self with God...Such a direct approach to God as is to be found in Gnostic spirituality requires no intermediary...the priests and bishops [of the early church] were not pleased with these free thinking Gnostics...[the priests and bishops] ... frequently try to discredit their opponents by raising suspicions about their thought and life. The Gnostic Gospel of Judas returns the favor by accusing the leaders and members of the emerging Orthodox Church of all sorts of unsavory behavior. .. these rival Christian are simply lackeys of the God [Satan] who rules this world below, and their lives reflect his disgusting ways ... human beings with the knowledge of God belong to the generation of Seth." (Kasser p. 6) One should realize that more than 32 Gnostic Sects have been identified, some are close to Jewish ideas, others very close to Christian theologies, some are not Jewish or Christian in affiliation, others are in between; many of them are filled with weird and bizarre material. The problem is that "identical concepts often function in a totally different manner within the various systems." (Yarmauchi p. 178-179) A direct translation of Gnostic texts, such as the Nag Hammadi, makes for difficult reading. (Robinson Vols. 1-5) All of the Nag Hammadi texts are being published in a translation and commentary format, sometimes more than one such study is made for certain of these particular Gnostic texts. Some 51 such texts are projected as a goal; ultimately the number will be much greater.

Scholars have for some time recognized differences in the various Gnostic traditions. Some authors put Gnosticism into 'demiurgical' traditions. "I mean all those that ascribe the creation and management of the cosmos to some lower entity or entities [Satan], distinct from the highest God." (Williams p. 51) Among these are at least two competing Sethian groups. For purposes of this study, the most important and the one closest to LDS Doctrines and history, will be called the Great Seth, after the longest of the Nag Hammadi Texts called the "The Second Logos of the Great Seth." (Gibbons p. 242) The other will be referred to as the Lesser Seth. The Gospel of Judas belongs to the lesser Seth category. "To belong to the generation of Seth, then, according to the Gospel of Judas and similar Sethian books, is to be part of enlightened humanity...In the central part of this gospel, Jesus teaches Judas the mysteries of the universe...the fundamental problem in human life is not sin but ignorance, and the best way to address this problem is not through faith but through knowledge. In the Gospel of Judas, Jesus imparts to Judas—and to the readers of the gospel---the knowledge that can eradicate ignorance and lead to an awareness of oneself and God." (Kasser p. 7) Other details and a tentative historical sequence of the documents and ideas are, in part, discussed by Logan. (Logan pp. xvii-xx and Chapter I) Man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge. (Smith p. 217) The question now, as well as then, was what is correct knowledge?

## THE GOSPEL OF TRUTH

One of the early publications of Nag Hammadi texts with commentary and exegesis, is the one by Story on the 'Gospel of Truth', which was originally in Greek about 155 AD. It was about the "time when the apostolic writings were produced and the time when these writings were formed into a canon which became authoritative for the Church...Church fathers such as Clement (ca AD. 95) and Ignatius (ca. 110) stand at the beginning of the transition period while Irenaeus (fl.180), Tertullian (fl. 190), and an unknown writer (ca. 192-194) refuting Montanism, stand at the close." (Story p. xvii) By the time the Gospel of Truth was being circulated "Ideas such as ignorance, knowledge, lack, rest, error, forgetfulness, completeness, existence, occupy the writer's mind." (Story xvii)

"The Gospel of Truth does state many doctrines common to several schools of Gnosticism: (1) not-knowing, forgetfulness, oblivious of the Father as the real 'original sin'; (2) Jesus is set forth as a Saviour, but a Saviour by gnosis, not by vicarious suffering; (3) Man is saved by knowledge for 'whosoever has knowledge understands from whence he has come and whither he goes.'" (Helmbold p. 43) "This body is called the 'bond of forgetfulness'." (Helmbold p. 52) These quotes made by Helmbold from Gnostic texts imply man had a pre-existence. None of the modern Christian religions have any doctrines concerning man having a pre-existence. The LDS believe that everyone has a pre-existence (Widstoe pp. 191-193) filled with nurturing experiences of care and teachings of a Mother and Father in heaven, ( Sejourne p. 56) and that the advent here on earth requires one to undergo a "Forgetting" of all that went before. There are those that would relate this to Socrates as developed by Plato in Meno. "The theory says, simply, that the soul, being immortal, can remember all that it knew prior to its birth into the life that it now lives." (Story p. 46) This is a doctrine especially espoused by Mormons. "And the content of saving knowledge...requires: The Knowledge who we were, what we have become; where we were, wherein we have been thrown; whereto we speed, wherefrom we are redeemed; what is birth, and what [is] rebirth." (Jonas p. 271) This relates to Mormon doctrine of 'where did we come from, why are we here, and where are we going?' "Finally, it means that at the end, in the ideal state, in the Father's place, the Gnostics enter upon the meaning of true existence in the Father which once they possessed without knowing it." (Story p. 47)

The Valentinians are credited with originating the Gospel of Truth. "Gnostics know that they were originally spiritual beings who have come to live in souls and bodies, they once dwelt in the spiritual world above, but have been made to fall into this world of sense and sin. Now, thanks to their self-knowledge, they are hastening back above, having been redeemed from this world below. We were born into it, but now we are reborn into the spiritual world... he knows by revelation, who his true self is...Christ is to rescue those who are his from the world below." (Grant 1959 pp. 8-9)

that portion which deals with the mysteries of the universe will be examined for any parallels to the LDS understanding of the delirium of immensity called the universe, and, while apostate doctrines which place the text within the Lesser Sethian tradition will be noted, it will add affirmation of the presence in the first century of the doctrines of pre-existence and other unique aspects of the eternal universe known today only by informed Mormons..

"...the revelation that Jesus imparts to Judas...illustrates a theology and cosmology that are still quite sophisticated. [Is the cosmology mentioned correlate with Mormon cosmology in anyway?] The revelation itself contains few Christian elements...[but do they contain Mormon doctrinal elements?] the roots of these ideas may go back to the first century or even before."  
 (Kasser, p. 7) Are we going to find through a very close scrutiny of the Gospel of Judas elements that suggest the Primitive Church actually espoused doctrines now contained in the restored church? Doctrines eradicated by the growing pressure of an 'orthodox' church? Would this also illustrate an early sign or evidence that apostasy was in progress about 110 AD when the narrator prepared this document and the displacing Orthodox Church was hitting the carriers of the true doctrine on the head? The distortions of doctrines in the various Gnostic groups indicate that some of the groups were more damaged than others, eventually taking their apostasy to an extreme.

## NEBRO THE REBEL

Among the doctrines of the Lesser Sethians was: "The world below...is the domain of a lower ruler, a creator god named Nebro ("Rebel") or Yaldabaoth, who is malevolent and mean-spirited...For these believers, the most profound mystery of the universe is that within ...human beings is the spirit of the divine...If Jesus is the son of the divine, so also are all of us children of the divine. All we need to do is live out of that knowledge of the divine, and we shall be enlightened." (Kasser p. 9) Here we see both elements that are acceptable doctrines and others that have departed from great truths. Elements in this quote need to be discussed. The lesser Sethians tend to consider that the 'God of this world' namely Satan, actually created it and rules the cosmos. That he would be given the name Nebro, which reflects the actual pre-world history of Satan or Lucifer, needs also to be addressed, because most Christians today know little of the pre-world rebellion in Heaven this refers to. The Great Sethians know the differences. The longest of the Nag Hammadi Texts, of the Great Seth, (Gibbons p. 242) provides further confirmation of the rebellion. (Gibbons p. 247) Recall here the doctrine of who we are, what we are and from whence have we come. (Jonas p. 271)

"Lucifer and one-third of the hosts of heaven came out in open, organized rebellion in pre-existence." (McConkie p. 619; Rev 12:7) "The Lord redeemeth none such that rebel against him." (Mosiah 15:26) Lucifer, the Devil, Satan, "means lightbearer or shining one. It is thus intended to convey a realization of his high status of prominence and authority in pre-existence before his rebellion and fall." (McConkie p. 461; D&D 76:25-27; Isa 14:12:20; Luke 10:18; 2 Ne. 2:17-18)

In the Gnostic text of the Ascension of Isaiah, it lists Samael as God's adversary, i.e. Satan (vii.9, ii, cf. iii. 13). (Helmbold p. 224) In the Apocryphon of John (Giverson II, I: II, 15-18) we read, 'This weak archon had three names: the first is Yaldabaoth, the second is Saclas, the third is Samael'. In the Hypostasis of the Archons (Bullard II, 4: 88, 27-89, 5) we have 'But their great one is blind... "you have erred Samael", which means "The blind God." And the Treatise on the Origin of the Universe contains a similar reference. (Helmbold p. 224) Cerdo and Marcion knew from the Gnostic texts that there were two gods rather than one. "They could have said that the God of the Old Testament was Yahweh, while the Father of Jesus was Elohim....They ended up with two gods rather than one." (Grant p. 125) But Lucifer, or Satan, under all his designations, was being allowed to go just so far, even only to saying he was the God of this earth. But that is where his power ended.

## THE NEARER FRIEND

The narrator of the Gospel of Judas, person unknown, tries to make "The point of the gospel of the insight and loyalty of Judas as the paradigm of discipleship...he does exactly what Jesus wants...He does nothing Jesus himself does not ask him to do, and he listens to Jesus and remains faithful to him. In the Gospel of Judas, Judas Iscariot turns out to be Jesus' beloved disciple and dear friend. [Note this phrase, it appears in a quote given below from Joseph Smith]," (Kasser pp. 9-10) or so the narrator would have us believe. He is espousing a position of the Lesser Sethians. (For some of the positions and doctrines of the Great Sethians see Erickson 9 Aug 2004.) A future study on the Sethians is in preparation.

At times it will be necessary to access the four canonical New Testament gospels to get a background on Judas and what Christ thought of him that seems to have been neglected by the narrator of the Gospel of Judas, or if not ignored, perhaps not known. What was circulating at the time this Gospel was actually written and whether or not that narrator had access to the four gospels at that time is difficult to assess. But it is certain that he did

neglect or ignore some important events recorded in the New Testament gospels.

## MARK- THE EARLIEST GOSPEL

The Gospel of Mark is accepted as the earliest of the Gospels and some have claimed that fragments of it have been found in Cave 7 Q, one of the discovery caves of the Dead Sea Scrolls. (Estrada, p. 11) There were twenty eight years of debate about the discovery of Greek fragments in Cave 7 Q. (Thiede p. 170) Recent evidence reaches conclusions consistent with the work of Estrada and others. (Thiede Chapter VII pp. 152-181) "The Judeo-Christian fragments from Cave 7 re the visible, tangible background to a new understanding of the Jewish origins of Christianity." (Thiede p. 179) Thus one can conclude that there were many New Testament documents in circulation by 45 AD. That the Narrator of Judas would ignore these or not be familiar with them is quite a stretch, but evidently he did. There is a long ways to go before there is an acceptable understanding of the Christian Church doctrines from the time of Christ's death to the time the text of the Gospel of Judas was prepared around 110 AD. Nibley aptly discussed doctrines that did not find their way into the Orthodox Church, but did come forth in the Restoration, especially the teachings of Christ during his 40 day post resurrection presence with the disciples. (Nibley pp.33-54)

There is a passage early on in Mark 3:17-19 when Jesus selects the twelve apostles: "17. James, the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, whom he surnamed Boanerges, that is, sons of Thunder; 18. Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, 19. and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him." (Bratcher p. 115) If Mark had written his gospel after Herod had James, the brother of John, killed by the sword, (Newman Acts, p. 233) he surely would have mentioned the incident. The Dead Sea fragments suggest a date of about 44 AD, shortly before the time James was martyred (Acts 12:2). Jesus knew Judas would betray him from the beginning when He "contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth." (Anderson p. 30) But Judas did not know it. Contrary to what the Narrator would have us believe, and he did not go there, after the betrayal Judas committed a very gross sin of suicide by hanging himself in remorse. If he had done exactly what Jesus told him to do and it was necessary why the remorse, why the self murder? Because Judas did what he did do, he was exercising his free agency, he was not being told what to do, even though Jesus in his superior god derived knowledge, knew exactly what Judas would do and did do. Judas fulfilled prophecy in what he did and experienced, such as mentioned in Zechariah 9:9; 11:12; 12:10; 13:7. (Miller p. 837-838)

## A COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS

The text to be used is the one edited by Rodolphe Kasser, Marvin Meyer, and Gregor Wurst, and published in their book *The Gospel of Judas*. The numbers in black and in brackets {34} refers to the page number given in the original documentary text. For the purpose of this commentary, the actual text of the published Gospel of Judas is given in bold type. The portions of the initial commentary and explanation by Kasser are also given in bold type. However, not all of Kasser's commentary is provided. One may refer to the actual book for other details of Kasser's work. The new commentary is given in regular type. But because of new discoveries and sources yet to be evaluated, this commentary, while comprehensive, will not be exhaustive at this time. There will be, however, a deliberate effort to show the relationship of the text to Mormon doctrine, and details of apostasy reflected in the text. That is what this exercise is all about.

Two essential questions will guide this commentary: 1. Does *The Gospel of Judas* reflect an apostasy from a presumed pristine first Century Christian Doctrine at the time it was written, and 2. Since there is very little documentation available of the Christian Teachings of the first 70 years of the Christian Church, does the Gospel of Judas reflect doctrines that were deleted, expelled, or otherwise eliminated from the first 70 years of Christian History, and not found in the Orthodox Church that developed in the fourth century onward, but do show up in the present doctrines of what is claimed by the LDS Church to be Restored Doctrines of the First Century given to the Prophet Joseph Smith beginning in 1823, and before, now unique to the LDS Church?

It is important to mention here that "the name Nazarenes was at first applied to all Jewish followers of Jesus...the reference is not to a sect of Christianity but rather to the entire primitive Church." (Pritz p. 5) This was at least before 50 AD. The name Christian was not given until sometime later when it was "attached to the Antiochian non-Jews." (Pritz p. 15) Probably near 60 AD. Recall that "Jesus was the first to be called by the name Nazarene." (Pritz Note 17 p. 15)

"Since the end of the nineteenth century, numerous ancient Christian gospel writings have been discovered. "A rich literature of this genre is thus known today...little attention has been given to this literature...they are, however, extremely important for the study of early Christianity, and they may yet substantially alter our concepts of ancient Christian history [and doctrine]." (Cameron p. 10; Dart p. xx)

It may be useful to keep in mind a statement made by the Prophet Joseph Smith. "From apostates the faithful have received the severest persecution. Judas was rebuked and immediately betrayed his lord into the hands of His enemies, because Satan entered him...What nearer friend on earth, or in heaven, had Judas than the Savior? And his first object was to destroy him."  
(HC 2:23) The narrator of The Gospel of Judas is correct in that the destruction of Jesus was the objective of Judas, but he did not know nor understand the real relationship between the Savior and Judas, nor the details of the Mission of Christ, nor the role to be played by Judas. His proposal for a different relationship that could stand the test of time fails.

THE INCIPIT:

INTRODUCTION: INCIPIT (OPENING STATEMENT MADE BY AN

UNKNOWN NARRATOR)

THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS

The secret account of the revelation that Jesus spoke in conversation with Judas Iscariot during a week three days before he celebrated Passover.

COMMENTARY:

The secret account of the revelation that Jesus spoke

These opening words are common to many Gnostic texts. Kasser refers to one Nag Hammadi tractate that has Parallels to the Judas text, The Secret Book of John, (or the Apocryphon Johannis). There are more parallels than Kasser lists, as will be noted hereafter. The Secret Book of John starts off with an almost identical incipit: "I. The secret teachings which Jesus revealed." (Giversen p. 47) Secret teachings are a characteristic claim of the Gnostics. Some Mormons would have preferred translating the text as the sacred account or teachings that Jesus spoke. Kasser provides alternate translations to read: 'The secret revelatory word', or the 'secret explanatory word', 'discourse', or 'word'. (Kasser p. 19) 'Word' is often found in the Gospel of John, and in the Inspired Translation of the Gospel of John by Joseph Smith, the meaning of "the Word' can be 'the unique teachings of the Gospel'. In these texts and others it is all about what Jesus speaks, reveals, or teaches. The restoration of the LDS Gospel to Joseph Smith is all about what Jesus spoke, taught, revealed, showed, and gave to Joseph Smith.

Another text, from the Nag Hammadi library, is The Gospel According to Thomas, which also has as its incipit: "These are the secret words Spoken by the Living Jesus and recorded by Didymus Judas Thomas." (Iyer p. 17; Guillaumont p. 3) There are more examples, but these at least clarify and illustrate the concept.

Utterances by Jesus are considered to be revelations and important truths, so the word 'spoke' could have been 'revealed', as found in other Nag Hammadi texts. But the connotation of 'spoke' or and 'revealed' meant a great deal more to the Nag Hammadi Gnostics, or Great-Sethian Gnostics. "The soteriological function of knowledge, which is rooted in the general ontology of the [Gnostic] system, lead—in continuation of transcendent prehistory—to a conception of Human History as the growing ingression of knowledge in the generations of man, and this requires revelation as a necessary vehicle of its progress. The need for revelation is inherent in the paralyzed innercosmic condition of the captive spirit, and its occurrence alters that condition." (Jonas p. 270) My emphasis. Note that revelation is a well developed concept and need in certain of the early Gnostic groups. The Orthodox Church and eventually nearly all Churches reject the idea of continuing or modern revelation. Keep this in mind as we refer to the narrator's subtle references to knowledge, revelation, and the nature of the history in which the Narrator is trying to place Judas.

During a week [...] three days before he celebrated  
Passover.

This is an awkward translation mainly because of some missing text. Kasser concludes: "...three days before his passion. The Gospel of Judas chronicles events described as taking place over a short period of time leading up to the betrayal of Jesus by Judas." (Kasser Note. 4, page 19) The Narrator, however, does introduce episodes that have little directly to do with the Passover events and refer to events during the ministry of Christ, in a sense it is a Narrative near the time of the Last Supper, with flashbacks.

When Jesus appeared on earth, he performed miracles and great wonders for the salvation of humanity. And since some [walked] in the way of righteousness while others walked in their transgression, the twelve disciples were called.

1. When Jesus appeared on earth

2. He performed miracles and great wonders for the salvation of humanity.

3. And some [walked] in the way of righteousness while others walked in their transgression,

4. The twelve disciples were called.

The accepted four Gospels bear witness to all of the above. The assertion is that Jesus DID appear on earth, that his great wonders had to do with the salvation of Humanity, and his role as the Savior, and some heard and followed, others did not and then a time came when Jesus called the twelve. One of those chosen was Judas.

The Great-Sethian doctrine is that Christ was commissioned by the Heavenly Church, he descends into the Cosmos, making his "descent by taking on an earthly body." (Gibbons p. 247) "Willingly did I come forth to reveal the glory to my kindred and my fellow-spirits." (Gibbons p. 246) These thoughts are imbedded in bizarre ideas that often can be shown to have been added centuries or so later than the original Greek. Especially when they were copied and recopied in Sahidic Coptic.

On the calling of the twelve disciples see Mathew 10:1-4 where it states: "and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him;" Mark 3:13 and "Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him," and Luke 6:12-16 and "Judas Iscariot which was also the traitor." In John there are a number of references to the betrayal of Christ by J. Iscariot and Satan entering into him. "He was talking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. For Judas, even though he was one of the twelve disciples, was going to betray him." (John 6:71) When they went over across the Kidron Brook "Judas, the traitor, knew where it was, because many time Jesus had met there with his disciples." (John 18:2) There Judas betrayed the Christ with a Kiss. ( Luke 22:3, 22:48; Mark 14:43; John 18:3-7) For purposes he alone knew, the Narrator was not familiar with these gospels, or chose to ignore them. The objective to cast Judas in an entire different light fails as a consequence.

He

began to speak with them about the mysteries beyond the world and what would take place at the end. Often he did not appear to his disciples as himself, but he was found among them as a child.

This is a summary statement, but what are the mysteries beyond? [Is he referring to the pre-existence? The post mortal life? The end-time ideas?] They are not detailed. The Narrator skips over an excellent chance to insert a lot of explanatory doctrine. Often times the word translated 'mysteries' may also be translated as 'ordinances', which has more meaning in the LDS point of view.

Because Christ often prayed "Abba Father" which is the way a child would address God, it means 'Daddy', Christ often put himself into the position relative to the Father as a small child, engaged in fervent prayer to a paternal power. The use of this image suggests another, but related interpretation. In The Secret Book of John: "I was afraid and I saw in the light [and a child] stood in front of me;" (Giversen p. 49) John is asked why he doubts and fears, and is told not to be a stranger to the three forms in which Christ appears to him, one of which is as a child. The emphasis here is on the fact that Christ is the son.

The Father-Son image is preserved by the metaphor of Christ appearing as a child showing his subordinate relationship to the father as a real son. It portrays clearly the intimate relationship between Christ and the Father. Christ as the First Born in the Spirit World, and the Only Begotten in the Flesh. Twice he is begotten by the Father.

THE NARRATOR  
FLASHBACKS TO AN EARLIER EPISODE IN JUDEA

SCENE 1: Jesus dialogues with his disciples: The prayer of thanksgiving or the Eucharist.

Here Kasser calls the activity in which he finds the disciples engaged the 'Eucharist' or sacrament.

One day he was with his disciples in Judea, and he found them gathered together and seated in pious observance. When he [approached] his disciples, {34} gathered together and seated and offering a prayer of thanksgiving (or 'Eucharist', Kasser note, II, p. 21) over the bread, {he} laughed.

The disciples said to [him], "Master why are you laughing at {our} prayer of thanksgiving? We have done what is right {or have we not done what is right}. Kasser Note 12 p. 21]."

He answered and said to them, "I am not laughing at you. <You> are not doing this [engaging in some kind of Eucharistic observance] because of your own will but because it is through this that your god [will be] praised." Or [will receive] thanksgiving. (Kasser p. 21 note 13) Kasser states this could also be phrased as a question: "But is it through this that your god [will be] praised?" Kasser then points out in keeping with the Lesser Sethian Doctrine, "The God described as the god of the disciples is not the exalted deity above but rather the ruler of this world." (Kasser Note 13 p. 21) While he is known by various other names, some noted below, he is Lucifer. Students of Gnosticism have identified the essential patterns which is more complete in the Gnostic Text On the Origin of the World. "Only On the Origin

of the World contains all items in this pattern." (Layton pp. 694-695)

Is the sacrament ordinance they are engaged in being offered in the true sense of the sacrament as a remembrance and in 'similitude of the only Begotten'? The true order of the sacrament has been had in previous dispensations. (Hunter p. 329) In fact Melchizedek trained Abraham in the true order of the priesthood and duties of the Bread and Wine. (Graves p. 147) It seems that the knowledge of this ordinance had been transmitted down through time in all dispensations.

There were sufficient references in the Nag Hammadi as early as 1976, two years before The Gospel of Judas was first found to Christ Laughing at his disciples from time to time, that it became the topic of a well written book The Laughing Savior, by John Dart, (Dart) long before this new Gospel was translated which brings just such an episode into focus.

Mormon doctrine does hold that Lucifer, or Satan, is the God of this world, but with severe limitation, the Lesser Sethians eventually ascribed everything, from the creation to the control of this world to Saclas. "But the Great one is blind, [because of his] might and his ignorance [and his] arrogance he said in his [vanity] ... 'I am God'; there is none [beside me] When] he said this, he sinned against [the All.] And this speech reached up to Imperishability. But lo! A voice came forth from Imperishability, saying, 'You are wrong, Samael' which is, 'the god of the blind.' His thoughts were blind. He sent forth his might, which was the blasphemy that he had spoken." (Bullard pp. 19-21)

They said, "Master, you are [...] the son of our god."

As will be pointed out elsewhere, there is "The uniqueness of the Son, his likeness to but distinct from the Father" Christ the "son of Barbelo." (Logan p. 86; John 1:1-2) "This is the only-begotten of the Mother-Father." Logan p. 82) The Lower Sethians developed a complex of increasingly apostate ideas linked to a triad and trinity, a concept of triplicity, found in the Apocryphon of John and other texts. (Logan p. 98) "The heavenly Mother and Father came together again to create the pure 'seed.'" (Klijn p. 88) "Seth [is] ... the first of a particular generation of men originating from the Highest God or the Mother and

in continuous danger of being destroyed." (Klijn p. 90) The line of Seth is called the "immovable race." (Williams p. 103) Christ is the main figure in this line. "The Mother, also called Barbelo, and the Son came." (Klijn p. 100)

Kasser then points out in keeping with the Narrator's specific trend in doctrine: "Here, however, the disciples mistakenly confess that Jesus is the son of their own god." Kasser p. 21 note 14. This is a distortion of the understanding given by the Holy Ghost to Peter in Matthew 16:13-20. The narrator of the Gospel may not have had access to Matthew's gospel when he prepared his text, or he chose to ignore it entirely.

#### Jesus

said to them "how do you know me? Truly [I] say to you, no generation of the people that are among you will know me. The absence of the role the Holy Ghost plays as witness to Christ is interesting. The question can be asked of any Christian Church today: Do you really know who Christ is, was, or will be?

This is an interesting statement by the Narrator. Historically, we do not know what the generation immediately following Christ really understood or taught concerning him. Scholars are searching in depth to obtain a knowledge of what actually occurred, was taught, and believed during those first decades following Christ's crucifixion. The search for documents from this critical period is intense. But whatever is found will be judged by the standards of the Temple Doctrine and the revelatory doctrines of the Church. "Joseph taught that these [Temple] ordinances would serve as a standard by which the subcelestial impurities of surviving remnants of earlier gospel dispensations could be judged." (Ehat p. 24)

#### When

his disciples heard this, they started getting angry and infuriated and began blaspheming against him in their hearts.

The accepted canonical texts sometimes mention an angry response on the part of the disciples. So it is consistent with the canonical record that they would respond in this way. However this assertion serves the Narrator in a special way, conforming the idea of this type of reaction to be consistent with the Lesser Sethian approach he is making or representing.

When

Jesus observed their lack of [understanding, he said] to them, "Why has this agitation led you to anger? Your god who is within you and [...] {35} have provoked you to anger [within] your souls. [Let] any one of you who is [strong enough] among human beings bring out the perfect human and stand before my face." This is more of a challenge than it at first seems. In part the answer will require a knowledge of the origins of the individual, the origin of Christ, and the nature of eternal progress. The knowledge of much of this has been lost after the end of the first century.

Kasser comments on this in Note 18. page 22, "Jesus indicates that the anger rising within the hearts of the disciples is being provoked by their god within them, Jesus challenges them to allow the true person—the spiritual person come to expression and stand before him." What is this spiritual person?

The Narrator expounds on the doctrine that the disciples are in the grasp of the God of this world, who is Nebro, the rebel, and provokes them at times against the teachings of Jesus. Kasser discussed Nebro in more detail in his Notes No. III and 112. (Kasser p. 37)

The doctrine parallels Mormon ideas of Lucifer, who was one in authority in the presence of God who rebelled and was thrust down. (D&C 76:23-27) Parallels are also found in Ancient Buddhist doctrines about Mari (Boyd p. 73) and Zoroastrian beliefs about Ahriman the eternal antagonist, the evil one. (Zaehner pp. 18-20) In the Secret Book of John we read "But she [The Heavenly Mother] called his name: 'Italabaoth' [Lucifer]. This is the first archon [ruler], he who took a great strength from his Mother; and he went away from her and turned away from the regions where he was born." (Giverson p. 65) Here in plain words, Lucifer was born to the Mother in Heaven and turned away from the regions in rebellion where he was born. "He called himself 'God'. But he was not obedient to that place from which he came. (Giverson p. 69) Nothing like this is admissible in modern Christian Churches. Mormon doctrine has a great deal to say about Lucifer, his origins, tenure of service, and destiny. These ancient Great Sethian documents confirm Christ is the First Born in the Spirit World, and Lucifer (Satan, Saklas, etc.) is a brother to all born in that spirit world, making Christ the Elder brother of all. Lucifer rebelled, fell, and will reap Amenti, outer darkness, as his just deserts. (Mead p. 575) These are doctrines found in recently translated texts; Joseph Smith received this knowledge soon after 1823. These doctrines were taught in the first century and then cast out from the literature afterwards.

They said, "We have the strength." An assertion of bravado!

But

their spirits did not dare to stand before [him], except for Judas Iscariot. He was able to stand before him, but he could not look him in the eyes, and he turned his face away. [This act is a true traditional act of humility, and Judas is not to be faulted for averting his eyes]. Judas does have considerable audacity to stand and represent that he understand the nature of eternal being.

"Here and elsewhere in the text, 'spirit' apparently means 'living being'; cf. Gospel of Judas 43, 53." (Kasser, note 19, page 22) What did they understand by that expression? What is 'spirit' and what is a 'living being'?

## THE ETERNAL AND INDISTRUCTIBLE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT

Because of what is contained in other of the Nag Hammadi and kindred texts to this one, the narrator knows more about the nature of their spirits than the text indicates. Kasser probes deeper when he points out the 'living being' nature of their 'spirit'. Part of our commentary will be derived from the very texts Kasser himself refers to.

In the Gospel of Truth

one of the first of the Nag Hammadi Codices, "It is striking, however that he [the writer of the text] conceives of the Ecclesia [eternal spirit] as an eternal hypostasis, the Ecclesia of many men which existed before the aeons [eternities], which is rightly named the Aeon of aeons, the nature of the holy imperishable spirits'. [This is a considerable concession on the part of Quispel the translator] This theology of the eternal Ecclesia is most remarkable." (Quispel p. 15)

"This world is an image of a higher world and is so organized that the seeds of spirit, through their life in the world, are brought up, instructed and formed 'so the small becomes gradually greater as by the image in a

mirror." Quispel p. 15) The Gospel of Truth, (Grobel p. 32) is a Valentinian Meditation Gospel. Valentinus, a man defeated in a play to become Pope, turned to Gnostic circles for recognition. A number of Gnostics groups were named after their leaders. The Valentinian Gnostics are fairly well known.

The Mormon Church "does set up... the doctrine that there are found in the universe personal individual intelligences...the Church holds therefore that the contents of the universe may be divided into two classes, personal intelligences, and the contents of the universe upon which these intelligences act." (Widstoe p. 192) "The personal intelligences of the universe are also indestructible. They are eternal." (Widstoe p. 195) This is emphatically reiterated in D&C 93:21-29. They have no beginning, they have no end. They are forever. A concept that seems impossible for most Christians to consider.

Mormon doctrine asserts that man is comprised of an intelligence who has been clothed with a spirit body by birth, an earned step, into the spirit world. (Widstoe pp. 202-203) A recent prophet of the LDS Church stated: "God has taken these intelligences and given to them spirit bodies and given them instruction and training." (Kimball p. 32) Later, by birth again, man is clothed with a mortal body, the spirit, and intelligence combined now into one body. Christ is asking them to stand before his face reflecting the perfect [eternal] spirit that is in their mortal body. According to the Narrator only one of them dares to do so-Judas.

## IMMORTAL REALM OF BARBELO

Judas [said] to him. "I know who you are and where you have come from. You are from the immortal realm of Barbelo. And I am not worthy to utter the name of the one who has sent you. This declaration by Judas implies he knows something about the pre-existence of Christ and the nature of the region from which he came. Texts identified by Kasser will tell us what was known about all of this. In an account which comes close to explaining how and when the Mother in Heaven (Barbelo) was brought into an immortal and exalted relationship with the Father in the Beginning, Buckley develops a theme she found in the Apocryphon of Johannis. (Buckley p. 41) She goes on to provide more insights into Barbelo, about whom she states: "The Only-Begotten alone explicitly has two parents, the Father and Barbelo." (Buckley p. 42) Apparently Christ worked close with his heavenly Mother and consoled her when she and all eternity wept when Lucifer fell. (D&C 76:25-26; Giversen pp. 72-73) This episode is an absolutely stunning parallel.

In the Gospel of

Judas, it is Judas himself who provides the true confession of who Jesus is. To confess that Jesus is from the divine realm above and is the son of God. In Sethian texts, Barbelo is the divine Mother of all, who often is said to be the Forethought (pronia) 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 Note 22 p. 23) This explanation by Kasser needs to be clarified a little more. The etymology of Barbelo has as yet no consensus; it has to be sought in terms of the context and must cohere with all the rest. Barbelo comes "from the Hebrew baba' 'eloh, 'in the four is God'.

God is in the four letters of the tetragrammaton" for Jehovah, JHWH, with an abbreviated feminine 'o' added to make the name a female God or Goddess. (Logan p. 98) Also "from the Hebrew chaber baal, 'companion of the Lord'. (Logan p. 99) Barbelo is the 'companion', 'consort', or 'wife' of the Father.

For presentation of

Barbelo in Sethian literature, see Secret Book of John II:4-5); Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit (also known as the Egyptian Gospel [or Gospel of the Egyptians]; Nag Hammadi Codex 111, 43, 62-69); Zostrianoa 14, 124-120; Allogenes the Stranger 41, 53, 56; Three Forms of First Thought 38. (Kasser Note 22 p. 23) Thus Kasser lays the foundation for what follows.

Judas confessing that Jesus is from the divine realm is an assertion that Jesus is divine himself. He also asserts that God, whose name he is not worthy to utter, not that he does not know the name, but that he is restrained from uttering it, is the one who sent Christ.

Christ is therefore on a mission, sent from the divine realms above to an earthly assignment. That assignment includes the Atonement, which requires his death.

In his foot note Kasser refers to the Secret Book of John, and to the Gospel of the

Egyptians for presentations of Barbelo in 'Sethian Literature'. Another text is the Trimorphic Protennoia (Wilson in Krause p. 51) which a "Berlin group describes as 'clearly Sethian', a note affinity with the form of the Sethian system underlying the Nag Hammadi Gospel of the Egyptians" (Wilson in Krause p. 51),

which in another foot note Mlle Janseens makes reference to the Apocryphon of John [Secret Book of John] "In particular she finds links with the Apocryphon of John, the anonymous treatise in the Bruce Codex [Schmidt p. 213], and related documents like the anonymous treatise in Codex II. The sect of the Apocryphon she describes as 'probablement des Barlognotiques-sethians', but in her conclusions she speaks of the Protennoia as 'a veritable mine of knowledge of Gnosticism in general, and Barbelognosticism in particular.'" (Wilson in Krause p. 51) "To what extent were Sethians and Barlognotics distinct and separate groups, and how can we account for Barbelognostic material in a Sethian text or vice versa?" (Wilson in Krause p. 51) Often they appeared together, sometimes in an inconsistent manner having been processed through various hands and copyists. The second of two volumes of the papers of the International Conference on Gnosticism, held March 28-31, at Yale University, was devoted to Sethian Gnosticism. The included "themes were Valentinian Gnosticism and Sethian Gnosticism...the so called Sethian (ophite, Barbeloite, Gnostick, etc.,) movement...the most extensive and important traditions." (Layton Preface) Since then much more work has been done.

Wilson

goes on to raise the difficulties of how can the various Gnostic groups and their texts be distinguished from purely Gnostic origins? (Wilson in Krause p. 52) The distinguishing characteristics are the presence or absence of doctrines now found in the LDS restoration, and the extent to which they have been distorted.

## THE HEAVENLY MOTHER

The pure Sethian doctrines elucidate the true character of a Heavenly Mother. Later Gnostic groups embracing a heavenly mother would and did disguise their doctrines in various forms of Barbelognostic ideas. In some Gnostic systems "Femaleness belongs to the sphere of creation whereas Maleness stands for heavenly transcendent realities." (Fiorenza p. 271) This is what the Narrator of the Gospel of Judas does when Judas is voice for the doctrine that Jesus is "from the immortal realm of Barbelo." Or the Realm of the immortal heavenly Mother. Here the meaning is consistent with that of an Immortal female person, glorified and exalted. She is the mother of Jesus in the Spirit world. "She became the mother of the all for she existed before them all." (Giverson p. 55)

In the Secret Book of John many teachings about the mother in heaven are provided, along with later distortions that crept in during the third and fourth century. "And he looked at Barbelo in the pure light...she conceived...and brought forth a spark of light in the likeness of the blessed light...this was the only son...who was revealed as [his] only begotten, the only begotten son of the father of the pure light." (Giverson p. 57) "The eternal three: the father, the mother, the son, the perfect power.'... And he established his son Seth over the second aeon [realm] in the second light." (Giverson p. 63) In the Gospel of the Egyptians, Seth recognizes the devil's schemes, which "threaten the children of Seth, now it is made clear that the activity of the devil stands behind all of them...his 'mode of operation' 'his tricks', 'his many guises'..and speaks about the devil's entourage. ...the devil is an angel and a

ruler of angels (Mt. 25:41); the devil himself [acts] against itself...with strife as a typical characteristic of the demonic world." (Bohlig p. 189)

"...Barbelo is called 'Mother'. She is the female complement of the Father. However, we are dealing here with a higher form of existence which is difficult to grasp in terms of human concepts...Barbelo possesses precisely those characteristics which belong to the highest deity." (Bohlig pp. 40-41) To this Mormon's heartily agree. Barbelo ...

"refers to a mother deity...the most basic is her general character as 'mother of the holy, incorruptible ones.'" (Bowleg p. 176) Otherwise known as the people of Seth.

"Three powers came forth from him [the self-begotten God]; they are the Father [himself], [then] the Mother {and} the Son." (Bohlig p. 54) This 'triune' of the Father, the Mother and the son, runs through the Gospel of the Egyptians. In a sacred hymn, "Bohlig and Wisse [assert] under the ones addressed in the second part of the hymn to be first the primal God, the Mother, and finally Jesus." (Franzmann p. 41) Of unusual doctrine, confirming unique Mormon beliefs is that Jesus is the son of one father, but the son of two mothers [mother in Heaven and Mary]. (Franzmann p. 26) The data supporting this idea is developed in my CD on Jesus in the Nag Hammadi.

The Narrator asserts that the Mother in Heaven [Barbelo] is in an immortal realm. Prior to the resurrection of Christ the only immortals were the Father and the Mother. As Paul says of Jesus Christ, "The First Born of every creature." (Colossians 1:15-19; Hebrews 1:6; Romans 8:28) And as John says: "The faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." (Revelation 3:14). And as Christ says about himself, "I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the firstborn." (D&C 93:21) This establishes "His seniority as the oldest or firstborn." (Clark Vol. V, p. 35) Therefore he is "the Elder Brother of the rest of human kind." (Clark Vol. V, p. 35) A later verse makes plain the fact that all human beings were similarly existent in the spirit state prior to their embodiment in the Flesh. "Ye were also in the beginning with the Father." (D&C 93:23) Upon coming to this earth Christ obtained an earthy body, his immortality was obtained at his resurrection. These ideas of immortality and Christ's background are unique to the Mormon Church and the ancient documents. The doctrine that human beings can become exalted and deified is also a unique doctrinal concept, but it was held to be so anciently. (Norman p. 48) "This is the good end of those who have obtained knowledge, to become God. What then are you waiting for?" (Foerster pp. 333-334)

## EXALTATION

The LDS doctrine of exaltation differs from all other Christian Churches. "Celestial Marriage is the gate for exaltation, and exaltation consists in the continuation of the family unit in eternity. Exaltation is eternal life, the kind of life which God lives. Those who obtain it gain an inheritance in the highest of three heavens within the celestial kingdom." (McConkie p. 257; D&C 131:1-4) It means being glorified as a God and a Goddess. Gender is eternal. "Then they shall be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them." (D&C 132:16-26) A contemporary Dead Sea Scroll document states the doctrine more explicitly than Mormon sources do: "all who walk by it [the covenant] consists in healing and abundant peace during length of days, and to bear seed with all everlasting blessings, and eternal rejoicing in the victorious life of eternity, and [to get] a crown of glory, together with raiment of majesty [and dwell] in eternal light." (Brownlee pp. 14-16) "And people the face of the universe with their seed. He made known His Holy Spirit [Holy Ghost] unto them through His Anointed One." (Vermes p. 159) J. Ruben Clark, once in the First Presidency of the LDS Church, in a conference report, states that the Father himself declared to Moses: "For behold this is my work and my glory-to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39)

In the Gnostic The Letter of Eugnostus, a passage is in harmony with Mormon doctrine of those who become exalted: "Since they had the authority, each one of them created for himself great kingdoms in all the immortal heavens and their firmaments, thrones, and temples according to their greatness; some indeed dwelling-places and chariots unspeakable glorious, which cannot be described in any condition." (Forester p. 34)

## THE FATHER

And I am not worthy to utter the name of the one who has sent you.

Those who have lost the knowledge available during the First Century cannot provide the name of the Father or God who sent Jesus Christ. In addition to implying there is a sacred secret name for God, here the Narrator implies there are two heavenly beings, Jesus and the One who sent him. By implication, it was God the Father who sent Christ. But what is the name of the Father? See below. Does Mormon doctrine agree with the ancients?

To answer these questions we will refer to a little known discovery, but very important one. The actual name of the text is not known, but it is included as an Untitled Text in the recovered documents known as the Bruce Codex. "This Codex, which comprises Coptic, Arabic and Ethiopic manuscripts, is said to have been bought at Medinet Habu in Upper Egypt in about 1769 by the Scottish traveler, James Bruce" (Schmidt p. ix) Bruce, an intrepid explorer, brought the documents along with many others including First Enoch, back to England. C.G. Woide made the first copy of the Coptic Gnostic text contained in it. But a title was never given to the text. Woide also brought the texts to the public attention in an article on the Egyptian version of the Bible in 1778. After his death, Woide's copy of the texts was held by the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

"In 1848 the codex was acquired by the Bodleian Library, together with Woide's transcript of the Gnostic texts. The Gnostic manuscripts were catalogued under the number Bruce 96. (Schmidt p. ix) M.

G. Scharze transcribed the texts when he visited England in 1848, and corrected mistakes Woide had made, but he died before he could complete his comparisons. J.H. Petermann then obtained the texts, and when he died, A. Erman got the documents. In 1882 E. Amelineau worked on the texts, and two publications one in 1882 and the other in 1887 came from his work; an introduction to his work was prepared in 1890 and published in 1891.

Through the help of Erman and A. Harnack, a German Theologian, Carl Schmidt became involved in working with all of the documents in the Codex. He published his edition in 1892. In 1918

an English translation of the Untitled Text was published by F. Lamplugh mostly based on the French version by Amelineau. C.A. Baynes published a transcript in 1933. "It is due to the work by Schmidt that the codex now stands in its present form." ( Schmidt p. xi) Violet Macdermot translated the German text of Schmidt for the 1978 edition quoted herein.

This is an extremely important text but has largely been neglected.

In the opening paragraph of the Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex, we read: "And it is the house of the Father, and the garment of the Son, and the power of the Mother." (Schmidt p. 226) And "the mother established her first-born son." (Schmidt p. 275) We can dig a little deeper. The Trimorphic Protennoia, mentioned above, has posed extensive and difficult riddles for exegetes dealing with the prologue, or first eighteen verses, of the Gospel of John. The East Berlin Nag Hammadi team, above mentioned, has considered the parallels, the terms, such as Logos, and other aspects, in a never ending discussion of the two texts. (Robinson, in Goehring p. 37) But that goes beyond the objectives of this commentary. The intimate relationship between the Father and the Son is detailed in the first verse of John as translated in the Translators Handbook for John. This relationship is ignored by nearly all Christian Churches. The Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex contains many doctrines now found in the restored LDS Church, and also independently confirmed by the non-Mormon Translator's Handbook.

## A TRANSLATOR'S HANDBOOK ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

From John Chapter I, verse I we get: "1.1 Before the world was created, the Word [Logos] already existed; he was with God, and he was the same as God....John wants his readers to understand that at whatever point the creation began, the Word already existed...the one who was called the Word...the one known as the Word...Word is to be understood as a designation for a person...the Word was there where God was...in company with God...the logos [or Word] was divine...John is not saying that the Word was God the Father, but he is affirming that the same divine predication can be made of the Word as can be made of God the Father." (Newman pp. 6-8) From verse 2 we have: 1.2 "From the very beginning the Word was with God. The Word was with God, here he [John] is careful to affirm that the two existed simultaneously, that is, from the very beginning, the Word was with God." (Newman p. 9) These doctrines are prominent in the King Follett Discourse Joseph gave in 1844. They are not part of any other Christian Church dogma today. Most Christians adhere to a poorly translated text and as a result lost essential doctrines concerning the nature and character of the two divine beings: The Father, and the Son. It required revelation to Joseph Smith to reinstate this doctrine. "All people who come to this earth and are born in mortality, had a pre-existent, spiritual personality, as the sons and daughters of the Eternal Father...Jesus Christ was the firstborn." (Clark p. 264) Now the newly recovered documents confirm the restored Doctrines.

## THE NAME OF GOD

Mormons know that two of the names of God are, Man of Holiness, and Man of Counsel. (Moses 6:57; 7:35) that is, "God is a holy Man, a Man who is perfect in counsel." (McConkie p. 465) "Behold I am God; Man of Holiness is my name; Man of Counsel is my name." (Moses 7:35) "Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ." This establishes the relationship of the Father and the Son and their distinct individuality. (Moses 6:57) The Gnostic texts yield verification of this doctrine. "One is the identity or consubstantiality, of man's innermost self with the supreme and transmundane God, himself often called 'Man'." (Jonas p. 270) "Some positive attributes and metaphors do apply to him [God]: Light, Life, Spirit, Father, the Good—but not Creator, Ruler, Judge [Attributes of Christ]. Significantly, in some systems [Gnostic] one of his secret names is 'Man'." (Jonas p. 268) In The Letter of Eugnostus we have: "The first aeon is that of the immortal Man, [eternal unlimited God], the second aeon belongs to the Son of Man, whom they call 'Savior'." (Forester p. 33)

Kasser in his foot note 23, page 23, states: "The one who has sent Jesus is the ineffable God. The ineffability of the divine is also asserted in Gospel of Judas 47, and it is emphasized in such Sethian texts as

the Secret Book of John, et al."

The documents are clear; the ineffable God is the Father of Jesus and sent him. The secret name of Man identifies Father as an exalted glorified man.

JESUS SPEAKS TO JUDAS  
PRIVATELY:

Knowing that Judas was reflecting on something that was exalted, Jesus said to him, "Step away from the others and I shall tell you the mysteries of the kingdom.

Something exalted, related to being immortal, was discussed briefly above under

Exaltation.

It is possible for you to reach it, but you will grieve a great deal {36} for someone else will replace you, in order that the twelve [disciples] may again come to completion with their god." Judas was going to lose his position in the twelve.

Judas stood at a cross roads. For him Exaltation and immortality were within his grasp, but he blew it. His grieving was so great it lead to the existential despair of self-murder. The qualifications for Exaltation are many. The final requisite is a resurrection in a Celestial Body. Self-murder does not qualify one for Exaltation. The Narrator did not go there. We will never know how he would have dealt with that subject.

the selection of Matthias to replace Judas in the circle of the twelve in order to complete the twelve once again.

Is the Narrator here assuming Judas will not be recognized for his the service following the instructions Jesus is supposedly giving him? That he will be eliminated from the twelve and replaced! Perhaps he is aware of Luke's words in Acts. If he was aware that Judas killed himself he avoids mentioning it in his Narrative. It would not support his contention of a special dispensation of instructions to Judas. The Narrator also falsely assumes that in order for Jesus to die he must have the intervention of Judas. The death of Jesus was a prophetic certainty. Christ had publicly asserted the betraying role Judas would play.

Most students of the New Testament are familiar with the replacement of Judas by Matthias recounted in Acts 1:15-16. (Newman, Acts p. 30) If the Narrator knew about this he deliberately avoided mentioning it. There is a small mystery here, what did the Narrator really know? Didn't he realize that circulating extant documents would trip him up and nullify his thesis?

Judas said to him, "When will you tell me these things, and [when] will the great day of light dawn for the generation?" But when he said this, Jesus left him.

Jesus defers telling Judas certain things or even if or when he will tell him about them. In his question Judas reveals that he is less interested in certain things than he is about the anticipated immediate glory which he expects to experience and he is anticipating an important place for himself. It is a common attitude in which most people often find themselves; they lose sight of what could be profoundly important because of a falsely held expectation about things less certain.

The Great day of light was a premature expectation common among the early Christians that the Messiah would come and turn around the Political Environment and re-establish the Jews. "The great day of light is related to 'aharit hayyamin, or end of days...in the course of time, in future days.'" (Evans p. 75) This was something Judas desired, wanted, believed, and expected but when he realized it was not going to come, in great despair and disappointment he betrayed Christ. The

unrecognized great light was the resurrection recognized only by a few, and even fewer believe in it today. Judas was not around to witness the great revelation of the resurrection which defines everything. The Witness of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration with the many encounters by many with the Christ, attest to the original significance of the life and death of Christ and the final triumph he provides all mankind in the Atonement. By killing himself, Judas did not experience the resurrection or the 40 days of instruction by the Christ that followed.

Christ knew what was going to happen and that Judas would not be around. The preferred action here was for Christ to be silent.

Jesus knew Judas resisted the truth and had an inappropriate expectation, and lacked real understanding of the mission of Jesus at that time, and to try to dissuade him of that belief would not be productive, so Jesus departed.

Judas asks questions about the promised revelation from Jesus and the ultimate glorification of that generation, but Jesus abruptly leaves.

Judas asks more than one question, perhaps he already had the answers but was proving obdurate, totally absorbed in the supposed glory to come that a Messiah was supposed to bring and initiate. As a member of the Quorum of Twelve he felt his position of power and possibilities were secure. Jesus sees through Judas. Jesus knew him from the beginning.

The great, eternal and infinite thing that Christ was going to do, to effect the atonement, for all the worlds that kareen in space (McConkie p.66) was the promised revelation, the great truth, the great revelation and fulfillment, but was lost on most of his disciples, and certainly there was no promise of glorification of the generation that Judas belonged to, and others besides Judas were disappointed. Rather than provide an explanation, partially already given during his own ministry of what it was really all about and perhaps, do to the density of Judas's understanding, because he had become rigid with only one interpretation or one explanation or one expectation, none of which were realized, Christ abruptly leaves. The Narrator offers no explanation. He does not advance his interpretation of Judas in this Gospel by his silence here. The Narrator exhibits some deep ambivalence at

this point in his narration. Who was he trying to really convince?

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