

FATE INDELIBLE

The *Gospel of Judas* and Horoscopic Astrology

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In a 1940 article, folklorist Wayland Hand showed that as late as the mid 1800s it was not uncommon for Europeans to speculate about the birthday of Judas. The date, most often given as April 1 or April 7, was of course generally inauspicious, and it was believed that whoever happened to be born on the same day as Judas would die as he did. Hand argues that such speculation was more than a matter of “mere idle curiosity.” Rather it “represents an attempt...to view the dire deed of Judas in terms of a predetermined fate, of which the birthday itself becomes, consciously or unconsciously, the outward symbol.” While doubting the attribution of his earliest source to the thirteenth-century Catholic sage Albertus Magnus, Hand is confident that the speculation goes back at least to the 1500s, arising “[o]ut of the great wealth of magic and superstition and out of the maze of religious, astrological, and hermetic lore that circulated in all levels of society from the time of the humanistic revival, orally as well as in divers almanacs, peasants’ weather forecasts, dream and fortune books, medical prescriptions, herbals, horoscopes, chiromantic handbooks, etc., etc.”¹ These same types of lore (if not much of the very lore itself that Hand mentions here) circulated in all levels of society and among all peoples throughout the Roman Empire, Hellenistic astrology being virtually inseparable from Hermetism and magic. So it should come as no surprise that the long lost *Gospel of Judas*, reportedly discovered in the 1970s and first published by the National Geographic Society in April (!) 2006, incorporates astrological teaching on nearly every page.

One of the most obvious astrological references in the *Gospel of Judas* is found on the penultimate page of the manuscript. After telling Judas that he will exceed all others in wickedness by sacrificing Jesus to Saklas, the Savior’s final words to his betrayer are as follows:²

¹ Hand 1940, 1–4.

² *Gos. Jud.* TC 57,15–20 (Kasser et al. 2007, 232–3); translation mine.

57,15	ΕΙΣ ΖΗΗΤΕ ΔΥΧΕ ΖΩ[Β] ΗΙΜ ΕΡΟΚ	Behold, everything has been told to you.
57,16	ϸΙ ΕΙΔΤΚ ΕΖΡΑΕΙ ΗΚ[Η]ΔΥ ΕΤΔΗ-	Look up and see the
57,17	ΠΙ ΔΥΩ ΠΟΥΟΙΗ ΕΤΗΖΗΤΕ	cloud and the light in it
57,18	ΔΥΩ ΠΙΣΙΟΥ ΕΤΚΩΤΕ ΕΡΟΣ	and the stars surrounding it.
57,19	ΔΥΩ ΠΙΣΙΟΥ ΕΤΟ ΠΠΡΟΗΓΟΥ-	The leading star
57,20	ΜΕΝΟΣ ΠΤΟϸ ΠΕ ΠΕΚΣΙΟΥ	is your star.

Featuring prominently on the cover of the original publication of the *Gospel of Judas*, these lines have been badly misinterpreted, along with those that come after them, in which it is said that Judas looked up and “he” entered the cloud.³ For scholars who see Judas in this second-century Sethian text as a positive figure, either wholly or in part, 57,15–26 is a key passage. In their view, it is the moment of his transfiguration, enlightenment, liberation, or redemption.⁴

A recently published example of this view appears in Seonyoung Kim’s article from the volume of proceedings of the 2006 Sorbonne conference. In the first section of the article, Kim rightly distinguishes “the negative function of the stars” in the *Gospel of Judas* from both the role of the young gods in the *Timaeus* and the system of beneficent and maleficent planets in Ptolemy’s *Tetrabiblos*.⁵ Yet, discussing 57,15–26 in the third section of the article, Kim seems to forget this distinction. In an attempt to deal with the apparent disconnect between the star that “leads the way” for Judas at the end of the text and the star in a previous passage that deceives Judas into thinking he could join the holy generation in the divine realm beyond the visible cosmos, Kim writes:

[T]he character of the Judas’s star [sic] is not the same as in an earlier part of the text. Clearly, while interpreting Judas’s own vision, Jesus said, ‘Your star has led you astray (45,13–14).’ Judas was deceived by his star and misunderstood his vision. However, in the latter part of the text, preceding the scene of Judas’s entering into the luminous cloud (57,22–23), Jesus said, ‘It is your star that leads the way (57,19–20). [Kim’s footnote here reads: Literally, he is his star.] A sudden change in the characteristic

³ *Gos. Jud.* TC 57,21–26.

⁴ Refer to Kasser et al. 2006a, 10, 44 n. 143, 100–1, 164–5, 169; Ehrman 2006b, 96, 180; Pagels-King 2007, 90, 98, 164; also Gathercole 2007a, 107–8, 111–13; and now the somewhat less assertive statements, that is, excepting Ehrman’s, in Kasser et al. 2008, 16, 52 n. 156, 87–88, 145, 154.

⁵ Kim 2008, 295–6.

of Judas's star stands out, and there is no bridge which explains or connects the two different characteristics.⁶

Kim offers two "possible explanations" for the apparent disconnect: first, that on the penultimate page of the manuscript Judas "is no longer led astray by stars. Rather, he himself is his star;" and second, that "it might be thought that he is freed from the evil one, and a more positive star takes its place." After some recapitulation, Kim concludes the article thus:

In our text, the stars are depicted as influencing Judas and the other disciples, and seeking to lead them astray. While Judas was also led astray by his star in the first part of the text, by the end, he seems to be freed from its influence. If we can identify salvation in the *Gospel of Judas* with liberation from the domination of the stars, it may be that in the end Judas is finally freed from his star, and so is redeemed.⁷

There are several problems with this interpretation, none of them minor. For one, Kim's first explanation of the apparent disconnect between the characteristics of Judas' star mistakes $\bar{\eta}\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ in the phrase $\bar{\eta}\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \pi\epsilon \pi\epsilon\kappa\sigma\iota\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ to be referring to Judas. And Kim apparently fails to recognize that $\pi\epsilon\kappa\sigma\iota\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ is not third person.⁸ The phrase cannot be understood to mean that Judas is his star. Moreover, it is far from clear how Judas would escape astral influence by becoming so. As for the second explanation, namely that Judas' star is "more positive" by the end of the text, this contradicts the valid distinction Kim makes in the first section of the article. Unlike in the *Timaeus* and the *Tetrabiblos*, with very few exceptions there are no positive stars in Sethian literature.⁹ Rather, the astral rulers of Sethian myth do such things as rape Eve and have Jesus killed in their efforts to prevent the transcendent Savior from accomplishing redemption during repeated descents to earth. If the leading star in 57, 19–20 were positive, it would be quite unusual. And the apparent disconnect between this allegedly beneficent star and all the other stars in the *Gospel of Judas*, including the one that distinctly deceives Judas into thinking he could escape his fate, would remain inexplicable.

⁶ Kim 2008, 308.

⁷ Kim 2008, 308–9.

⁸ The problem apparently stems from the pun on 57,19–20 in Kasser et al. 2006a, 44 n. 142: "Judas is literally the star of the text;" cf. Kim 2008, 308 n. 52.

⁹ For the exceptions, refer to the enthronement of Sabaoth in *Hyp. Arch.* NHC II,4 and *Orig. World* NHC II,5, and to the procosmism in *Marsanes* NHC X.

In short, Kim's explanations are not explanations at all but attempts to maintain the assumption that there is "a sudden change in the characteristic of Judas's star" marked by Jesus telling him it is the one that "leads the way," as if this were somehow a good thing. Kim is not alone in this assumption or in the corollary assumption that it is Judas who enters the cloud and is therein transfigured, liberated, redeemed, etc. Unfortunately, due to the poor condition of the Tchacos Codex, the question of who enters the cloud, Judas or the Savior, cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. This is no matter, I submit, since even a basic understanding of the astrological context of the *Gospel of Judas* is alone sufficient to establish that the only place Judas' star can lead is around the ecliptic. It does not lead him or anyone else to salvation.

HOROSCOPIC ASTROLOGY

During the opening centuries of the Common Era, astrologers across the Mediterranean region made prognostications based on the position of the stars both at the time of a person's birth and thereafter.¹⁰ These prognostications concerned all facets of life, ranging from such questions as what kind of disposition, vices, and physical characteristics the native would have, to whether he or she would marry, raise children, become wealthy, or not. One of the oldest extant handbooks of horoscopic astrology, though hardly the first or last, was written by Claudius Ptolemy in the second century, most likely within a few decades of the composition of the *Gospel of Judas*. In the *Tetrabiblos*, Ptolemy discusses, for instance, the quality of the soul (ποιότης ψυχῆς) and states that given the position of Saturn in relation to Mercury and the Moon at the time of birth, the astrologer can predict that the native will be treacherous. What Ptolemy literally says, among other things, is that the star of Kronos actually 'makes' people who devise plots against their friends, go about at night, lay ambushes, and are betrayers (ποιεῖ... ἐπιβουλευτικούς οἰκείων... νυκτερέμβους, ἐνεδρεύτας, προδότας).¹¹ Part of the rationale behind such prognostications was the division of the planets into subgroups of maleficent (κακοποιού:

¹⁰ A useful introduction is Barton 1994.

¹¹ *Tetrabiblos* 3.13 (Robbins 1956, 338–47); cf. Thomassen 2008, 167 n. 26, where the passage was first cited in connection with *Gos. Jud.*

Saturn, Mars), beneficent (ἀγαθοποιοί: Jupiter, Venus, Moon), and mixed or common (κοινοί: Mercury, Sun), according to whether they were understood to be predominantly cold and dry, hot and moist, or a combination of both.¹² In this case, the maleficent planet Saturn makes individuals with treacherous souls.

Besides the nature of the planets, it was also important for the astrologer to know where the planets were located against the backdrop of the fixed stars of the zodiac. These were said to be fixed (ἀπλανές), not because they stand still, but because they proceed consistently in their circular path around the earth, as opposed to the planets (πλανῆται), which seem to wander (πλανᾶσθαι) as they make their way through the sky. Technically five in number, the planets were each thought to have two of the twelve zodiacal signs as their own houses (οἶκοι), one solar the other lunar.¹³ Thus, it was held that the five planets and two luminaries exert more or less influence depending on the sign they happen to be in.

The stars of the zodiac were also thought to be influential in and of themselves. For instance, Ptolemy states that the stars “in the shoulders” and “in the left arm and the cloak” of Aquarius “exert an influence like that of Saturn and Mercury; those in the thighs, like that of Mercury in a greater degree and like that of Saturn in a lesser degree; those in the stream of water, like that of Saturn and, in some degree, like that of Jupiter.”¹⁴ Altogether, Ptolemy says that Aquarius is “cold and wintry,” and its aspect “disharmonious with beneficence (ἀσύμφωνον πρὸς ἀγαθοποιίαν)” because it opposes Leo, the house of the sun, on the zodiacal wheel.¹⁵ Diametrical aspect or opposition was one of the basic angular relationships of the zodiacal signs. It and quartile, namely, when the signs aspect each other in the shape of a square, were considered disharmonious (ἀσύμφωνοι); trine and sextile, that is, when the signs aspect each other in the shape of an equilateral triangle and hexagon respectively, were considered harmonious (σύμφωνοι).¹⁶ Because the planets appear to move through the signs when viewed from the earth, they were thought to aspect each other

¹² Refer to *Tetrabiblos* 1.4–5.

¹³ *Tetrabiblos* 1.17 (Robbins 1956, 78–79); cf. 1.12.

¹⁴ *Tetrabiblos* 1.9 (Robbins 1956, 53).

¹⁵ *Tetrabiblos* 1.17 (Robbins 1956, 81); translation slightly modified.

¹⁶ *Tetrabiblos* 1.13.

in the same way, which accordingly affected the influence they were believed to exercise.¹⁷

Some astrologers went even further in determining the location of the planets, wanting to know where they were against the backdrop of yet another group of stars called decans (δεκανοί). These were originally constellations marking ten day divisions within the Egyptian calendar, as seen, among other places, on star charts painted inside of sarcophagi. Later, they were incorporated into Hellenistic astrology. Circling the earth at or just beyond the sphere of the zodiac, the thirty six decans were apportioned to the zodiacal signs, three to a sign, just as each sign occupies thirty degrees in the wheel of the zodiac for a total of three hundred sixty degrees.¹⁸ The decans could also be halved, yielding six per sign, with five instead of ten degrees in each of the seventy two.¹⁹ It is precisely this type of elaborate zodiacal-decanal system that seems to underlie the *Gospel of Judas*, with its twelve aeons, seventy two heavens, and three hundred sixty firmaments.²⁰ The cosmological structure of a zodiacal-decanal system comprised of the usual thirty six decans can be seen on a set of astrological boards found in 1967 in the village of Grand, France, approximately two hundred miles north of Lyon.²¹ The boards are made of ivory and gold and date on archaeological grounds to no later than the last half of the second century CE. Carved inside a ring at the center of the boards are the busts of a man and woman representing the all powerful sun and moon. Around them in the next ring are depicted the figures of the zodiac. And standing in a circle above the zodiacal signs are the Egyptian decans in hieratic poses, many of them with theriomorphic features.²²

The astrological tablets from Grand and other boards like them were used in the actual practice of casting and interpreting horoscopes.²³ After learning where the stars were when the native was born, by

¹⁷ See Barton 1994, 99–102, with figures of the different aspects.

¹⁸ On the thirty six decans, see e.g. Firmicus Maternus, *Mathesis* 2.4, 4.22; Stobaeus, *Excerpt* 6.

¹⁹ On the seventy two pentads, i.e., thirty six ‘decans’ and thirty six ‘horoscopes,’ refer especially to P. Oxy. 465 in Grenfell-Hunt 1903, 126–37 and the sources cited there.

²⁰ *Gos. Jud.* TC 49,7–50,19. I intend to make a complete study of the Greco-Egyptian astrological system of *Gos. Jud.* in my dissertation.

²¹ See Evans 2004, 1–44.

²² There are color images of both boards in Abry 1993, plates 1–6.

²³ Sources and discussion in Evans 2004.

consulting reference works and through calculation rather than direct observation, the astrologer would then place eight small stone markers in the appropriate spots on the board to represent the five planets, two luminaries, and the horoscopic point (ὠροσκόπος) or ascendant.²⁴ The latter refers to the sign or more precisely the degree of the zodiac rising above the eastern horizon at any given moment, such as at a person's birth.²⁵ It was thought to be one of the single most influential positions that a star could occupy and served as the starting point for the entire birth chart.²⁶ Starting from the ascendant, the nativity was divided into four quadrants. Opposite the horoscopic point is the descendant, and perpendicular to them are midheaven above and the lower midheaven below. Also starting from the ascendant, the birth chart was further divided into eight or twelve equal places (τόποι), each pertaining to particular facets of life, from livelihood and property to death.²⁷

With all the information for the nativity plotted on a board in front of him, the astrologer could readily see where the planets had been in relation to each other, the zodiac, and decans, as well as which stars were in the ascendant, the other quadrants, and places. Such an apparatus allowed the astrologer to make prognostications more easily and efficiently without attempting to visualize the configuration of the stars solely from a list of coordinates or exhausting time and materials in order to draw the birth chart on a sheet of papyrus. It was no doubt also more impressive to clients to see their nativity displayed in semi-precious stones on a board of ivory and gold elaborately carved with the images and names of the astral deities determining their fate from above.

The foremost prognostication astrologers made was how long the native would live. As Ptolemy writes, “The consideration of the length of life (ὁ περὶ χρόνων ζωῆς λόγος) takes the leading place among inquiries about the events following birth, for, as the ancient says [Ptolemy is likely referring to Petosiris or Nechepso], it is ridiculous to attach particular predictions to one who, by the constitution of the years of his life, will never attain at all to the predicted events.”²⁸ There were

²⁴ Refer to *PGM CX* and *Historia Alexandri Magni* 1.4.5–6, both cited in Evans 2004, 4–5.

²⁵ See e.g. *Tetrabiblos* 1.12.

²⁶ See e.g. Dorotheus of Sidon, *Carmen astrologicum* 1.5.

²⁷ See e.g. Firmicus Maternus, *Mathesis* 2.19–20.

²⁸ *Tetrabiblos* 3.10 (Robbins 1956, 271).

different methods among astrologers for calculating the length of life, some more sophisticated than others. Ptolemy's preferred method, one of the most complex, has been summarized by Auguste Bouché-Leclercq as follows:

His theory rests essentially upon the likening of the zodiac to a wheel upon which the life of the individual is cast with a greater or lesser force from a certain place of departure (τόπος ἀφαιτικός) and finds itself arrested, or in danger of being arrested, by barriers or destructive places (τόποι ἀναιρετικοί), without being able in any case to go beyond a quarter of the circle. The number of degrees traversed, converted into degrees of right ascension, gives the number of the years of life.²⁹

The method described and demonstrated by Ptolemy's predecessor Dorotheus of Sidon, also known as Dorotheus the Egyptian, who incidentally was said to have addressed his handbook of horoscopic astrology to his son 'Hermes,' is also complex.³⁰ Whereas, writing in the fourth century, Firmicus Maternus has a much simpler approach.³¹ Whatever the method, astrologers believed that a person's lifespan was determined by the stars at birth and that the time of death, like all other facets of life, could be ascertained from the nativity, even down to the month and day, as in the *Book of Hermes Trismegistus, On the Thirty Six Decans*.³²

Not only did the astrologers occupy themselves with predicting when the native would die but also how, and cases of violent death were of special interest. Methods varied in complexity, following directly from the consideration of the length of life. Thus Ptolemy explains that a violent death can be predicted for the native "whenever both the evil planets dominate the destructive places (ὅταν ἢ ἀμφοτέρου κυριεύσωσιν οἱ κακωποιοὶ τῶν ἀναιρετικῶν τόπων), either in conjunction, or in quartile, or in opposition, or also if one of the two, or both seize upon the sun, or the moon, or both luminaries."³³ For instance,

²⁹ Bouché-Leclercq 1899, 411, as cited in Robbins 1956, 271 n. 4.

³⁰ Dorotheus of Sidon, *Carmen astrologicum* 3.1–2.

³¹ Firmicus Maternus, *Mathesis* 3.25.

³² *Liber Hermetis Trismegisti de triginta sex decanis* 8–9. As with many astrological handbooks, this is a conglomerate work. It is extant only in Latin, the Greek original of which may have been written in the seventh century CE or later, though it appears to contain material that is significantly earlier. See the introduction in Zoller 1998, i–iv, especially x–xi, which, however, is not entirely reliable (e.g. 82 n. 25, where it is wrongly stated that Dorotheus wrote in Arabic). The most recent edition of the Latin text of *Liber Hermetis* is that of Feraboli 1994, for whom "Difficile dire quando il florilegio fu composto" (xxi).

³³ *Tetrabiblos* 4.9 (Robbins 1956, 430–1).

if Saturn is in conjunction with the sun at midheaven, the astrologer can predict that the native will die by falling headlong from a height (ἀπὸ ὕψους κατακρημνιζομένου), and if Mars is in quartile or diametrical aspect to the sun or moon, the astrologer can predict that the native will kill himself (αὐτόχειρας ἑαυτῶν γινομένου).³⁴ Underlying this and all prognostications was the fundamental astrological doctrine that the stars are not just celestial indicators of mundane events but in fact the very cause of many if not all things that happen on the earth.³⁵

CASTING JUDAS' HOROSCOPE

Though he is not said to use a board like the ones found at Grand nor does he enter into the methodological details of prognostication, the Savior speaks as an astrologer in the *Gospel of Judas*, teaching astrological doctrine and employing technical astrological terms as he predicts the fate of the disciples from the stars. When he appears to the disciples for the first time in the text, Judas is the only one able to stand in his presence and correctly identify him as having come from the immortal aeon of Barbelo. So the Savior offers to disclose to Judas the mysteries of the kingdom of the stars and he begins to reveal to him his fate:³⁶

35,21	ἸΗΣΟΥ ΔΕ ΕΥΦΡΟΟΥΝΕ	And Jesus, knowing
35,22	ΧΕ ΦΙΛΕΟΥΕ ΕΠΙΚΕΣΕΕΠΕ ΕΤ-	that he was thinking about the rest
35,23	ΧΟΣΕ ΠΕΧΑΔ ΠΑΔ ΧΕ ΠΩΡΧ	that is exalted, said to him, 'Part
35,24	ΕΒΟΛ ΠΗΜΟΥ ΤΑΧΩ ΕΡΟΚ Π-	from them, and I shall tell you the
35,25	ΠΗΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΠΤΗΠΤΕΡΟ	mysteries of the kingdom (i.e. of the stars),
35,26	ΟΥΧ ΖΗΝΑ ΧΕ ΕΚΕΡΩΚ ΕΜΑΥ	not in order that you may go there (i.e. the
35,27	ΑΛΛΑ ΧΕ ΕΚΕΑΩ ΑΖΩΜ ΠΖΟΥΟ	aeon of Barbelo) but so that you will grieve
36,1	ΧΕ ΟΥΠΚΑΙΟΥ[Δ] ΓΑΡ [Η]ΔΩΠΠΕ	greatly. For someone else will take
36,2	ΕΠΕΚΜΑ ΖΗΝΑ ΧΕ Ε[ΡΕΠ]ΗΠΤ-	your place in order that
36,3	ΣΗΟΟΥΣ ΠΣ[ΡΟΥΤ] ΟΗ ΕΥΕ-	the twelve disciples again may
36,4	ΧΩΚ' ΕΒΟΛ ΖΠ ΠΕΥΗΟΥΤΕ	be completed by their god.'

³⁴ *Tetrabiblos* 4.9 (Robbins 1956, 432–4).

³⁵ See e.g. Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 1.1–3 and Firmicus Maternus, *Mathesis* 1.5–9.

³⁶ *Gos. Jud.* TC 35,21–36,4 (Kasser et al. 2007, 188–91); translation mine.

For readers and auditors of Luke-Acts, already implicit in this prognostication are Judas' betrayal of Jesus and his own violent death, whereupon he is replaced by Matthias, thereby becoming the thirteenth.³⁷ While the fate of the other disciples is also discussed in subsequent pages of the *Gospel of Judas* and is intertwined with his, the text is largely concerned with the fate of Judas. In that sense, it can, and I think should, be read as his horoscope more so than as his gospel. Each time the Savior refers to Judas and the number thirteen, among other things, he effectually reiterates his prediction of the betrayal and of the replacement of Judas after the ill-fated disciple's own death. The length of life is something Judas and the Savior twice discuss in fact.

Their first discussion of the length of life occurs on page 43 of the manuscript. Speaking of himself in the third person and referring to the act of salvation metaphorically as 'giving to drink' or 'watering,' the Savior says that he has come "to water the paradise of God and the [fruit] that will endure, because the conduct of that generation will not [be] corrupted."³⁸ Judas wonders "what kind of fruit this generation has."³⁹ And the Savior explains that "the souls of every human generation will die." As for members of the holy generation, however, after they have "completed the time of the kingdom," that is, after their lifespan determined by the archontic rulers comes to an end, their bodies will die but their souls will be resurrected.⁴⁰ Judas then asks, "What then will the rest of the human generations do?"⁴¹ And the Savior replies that their situation is "impossible (ἀττόν):" their souls cannot be resurrected any more than fruits can be harvested from seeds that have been sown on rock.⁴² Judas goes on, nonetheless, to ask the Savior to hear him recount a dream he has had. The Savior laughs, calls Judas the thirteenth daemon, in effect reiterating his previous prognostication of the betrayal and of Judas' death and replacement, and condescendingly agrees. Judas relates how in the dream he saw himself as "the twelve disciples," namely Matthias included,

³⁷ See Acts 1:15–26.

³⁸ *Gos. Jud.* TC 43,6–10 (Kasser et al. 2007, 204–5); translation mine, reading Π[ΚΑΡ]Π[Ο]C in 43,7 and Π[Ο]C[Ε]Ν[Δ] in 43,8, with Turner 2008, 232. Cf. John 4:7–15; 7:37–39.

³⁹ *Gos. Jud.* TC 43,13–14 (Kasser et al. 2007, 204–5); translation mine.

⁴⁰ *Gos. Jud.* TC 43,15–23 (Kasser et al. 2007, 204–5); translation mine.

⁴¹ *Gos. Jud.* TC 43,24–25 (Kasser et al. 2007, 204–5); translation mine.

⁴² *Gos. Jud.* TC 43,26–44,7 (Kasser et al. 2007, 204–7); reading ΟΥΔ[Α]Τ[Ο]C in 44,3 with Turner 2008, 232.

were stoning him. Fleeing from the twelve, Judas comes to a large house surrounded by great people and implores the Savior to let him in. But the Savior refuses, telling Judas that his star has deceived him (ΔΠΕΚΚΙΟΥ ΠΛΛ[ΝΑ] ΠΜΟΚ) into thinking he could escape his fate and join the holy generation. “I have told you the mysteries of the kingdom,” the Savior says, “and I have taught you about the deception of the stars (ΤΕΠΛ]ΔΗΗ ΠΠϞ[Ι]ΟΥ).”⁴³

Judas and the Savior discuss the length of life for a second time on page 53 of the manuscript after the Savior describes the creation of Adam and Eve. This time the Savior explains that although Adam with his generation received “his measured lifespan in the place where he received his measured kingdom and ruler,” that is, although the occasion of their death was determined by the stars, the true God “caused knowledge to be given to Adam and those with him, in order that the kings of Chaos and Hades might not rule over them.”⁴⁴ As before, Judas then asks what those who are not of the holy generation will do. And the Savior replies that they remain subject to the stars which cause them to commit all sorts of atrocities in his name, such as fornication and infanticide. In connection with them, he mentions Judas’ star again and the number thirteen, then laughs. Naturally, Judas wants to know why the Savior is laughing “[at us],” and the Savior’s suspiciously disingenuous reply is that he is laughing at “the deception of the stars (ΤΕΠΛΔΗΗ ΗΗϞ[Ι]ΟΥ),” not necessarily at those like Judas who are unfortunate enough to be controlled by them.⁴⁵

From their discussions about the length of life, it is clear that the Savior is not teaching Judas a form of astral determinism that is universally irrevocable or everywhere effective. Through knowledge (ΓΗΩΣΙϞ), members of the holy generation are free from the rule of the stars, except as it concerns their bodies.⁴⁶ They will still die under the circumstances determined by the stars. But in the meantime, their souls are not subject to the astral influences that cause the rest of the human generations to sin. This appears to have been a relatively common position on fate in antiquity, one with which Firmicus

⁴³ *Gos. Jud.* TC 44,15–46,2 (Kasser et al. 2007, 206–11); translation mine.

⁴⁴ *Gos. Jud.* TC 53,5–54,12 (Kasser et al. 2007, 224–7); translation mine. Cf. the astrally determined lifespan of Adam and Eve in *Orig. World* NHC II,5, 121,13–18.

⁴⁵ *Gos. Jud.* TC 54,13–55,17 (Kasser et al. 2007, 226–9); translation mine.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Ap. John* BG,2, 65,16–66,12.

Maternus takes issue. After cataloguing just a few of the horrors and injustices of the past, he writes:

All these events are caused by the movements of the stars (*stellarum cursibus*) and by these various patterns Fortune destroys us.... But there are some who agree with us to a certain extent and admit that Fate and Fortune have a certain power, which they call *himarmene*.... They claim that this thing which they call *himarmene* is connected to humankind and all living things by a certain relationship. We are so created that after a certain time, the course of our life is finished (*completo vitae cursu*). We are brought back to the divine spirit which sustains us (*ad divinum illum spiritum, qui nos sustentat*), after the dissolution of the body. They claim that we are subject to Fate, this is, to Chance, for attaining the end of life.... But all the things that pertain to our daily lives they say are in our power. What we do while we are alive belongs to us; only our death belongs to Chance or Fate.⁴⁷

This nuanced position, which Firmicus considers nonsensical, fits well with what the Savior teaches Judas about the limited influence of the stars over members of the holy generation. They are only ruled by fate when it comes to their death. This is why the man Jesus, a paradigmatic member of the holy generation, still ends up dying when and how he does. As for the rest of the human generations, they are subject to the stars in both body and soul, from birth to death and everything in between. Their situation is more in line with Firmicus' own position on astral determinism, which is that "nothing is placed in our power, but the whole is in the power of Fate. Whatever we do or suffer, the whole thing happens to us by this same judgment of Fortune."⁴⁸

The difference between the holy generation and the rest of the human generations amounts to more than just knowledge. As the Savior explains to Judas, there is a difference in their spirits and souls as well. Members of the kingless generation have their spirits and souls from the Great One through the divine angel Gabriel. All other people are animated by Saklas through the archontic angel Michael, and only temporarily at that, for the duration of their servitude to the chief astral ruler.⁴⁹ When disembodied, as the Savior tells Judas in their first discussion about the length of life, the souls of those who do not

⁴⁷ *Mathesis* 1.8.1–3 (ed. Monat 1992, 81–82; trans. Bram 1975, 26–27); translation slightly modified.

⁴⁸ *Mathesis* 1.9.3 (Bram 1975, 28).

⁴⁹ *Gos. Jud.* TC 53,18–25 (Kasser et al. 2007, 224–5). Cf. the role of the serpent/Michael as the source of spirit, soul, and all things worldly, in Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.30.5.

belong to the holy generation will die and cannot possibly be resurrected. Whether these different spirits and souls are received at birth or later in life through a process of initiation, the Savior repeatedly tells Judas that he cannot join the holy generation. After his dream, the Savior tells him that he has been deceived by his star into thinking that he could, a star to which, as April DeConick puts it, Judas “remains indelibly connected” throughout the text, despite the revelation he obtains from the Savior.⁵⁰

On the question of fate, not all astrologers were of the same opinion as Firmicus Maternus. Ptolemy’s claims, for instance, are not so broad.⁵¹ And according to other astrologers more inclined towards magic (or were they first and foremost Egyptian priests and theurgists?), a person’s fate could be changed and even erased through the proper rites and invocations. Of course, Christians, including Valentinians, held similar beliefs about the possibility of canceling fate and had their own rituals for escaping the rule of the stars. Thus, after the Savior rather unconvincingly assures Judas that he is not laughing directly at him and the rest of the human generations subject to astral influence in both body and soul, Judas asks the Savior about the efficacy of baptism: “What will those who have been baptized in your name do?”⁵² But the non-Christian rituals for escaping fate are also quite relevant for understanding what is going on in the *Gospel of Judas*. The most detailed account of such practices comes from the three versions of the *Eighth Book of Moses* preserved in *PLeid*. J 395, commonly known as *PGM XIII*. The papyrus was copied in the mid fourth century, but the practices described in *VIII Moses*, if not some form of the text itself, probably go back as far as the first.⁵³

Instead of consulting a fallible, mortal astrologer, the practitioner of *VIII Moses* would summon a deity to come down and cast his horoscope. If the rite was done correctly, the deity would appear, though not necessarily well disposed, and would tell the practitioner about such things as his native star, his accompanying daimon, and the circumstances of his death. If the practitioner behaved appropriately

⁵⁰ DeConick 2008, 264.

⁵¹ *Tetrabiblos* 1.1–3.

⁵² *Gos. Jud.* TC 55,21–23 (Kasser et al. 2007, 228–9).

⁵³ On the redaction history of the three versions, see Smith 1984, 683–93, who concludes that “*PLeid*. J 395 is at least the fifth generation of a literary family” (688 n. 1; original emphasis).

in the divine presence by not looking the deity in the face and not crying out or weeping while his horoscope was being cast, he could further succeed in getting the evils of his fate erased and perhaps even cheat death for a time. For example, in one of the versions of *VIII Moses*, the instructions for meeting with the deity are as follows:

Now when the god comes in do not stare at his face, but look at his feet (μη̄ ἐνατένιζε τῆ ὄψει, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ποσὶ βλέπε) while beseeching him, as written above, and giving thanks that he did not treat you contemptuously, but you were thought worthy of the things about to be said to you for correction of your life. You, then, ask, ‘Master, what is fated for me?’ And he will tell you even about your star, and what kind of daimon you have, and your horoscope and where you may live and where you will die (καὶ ἐρεῖ σοι καὶ περὶ ἄστρου καὶ ποιῶς ἐστὶν ὁ σὸς δαίμων καὶ ὁ ὄροσκοπος, καὶ ποῦ ζήση καὶ ποῦ ἀποθανεῖσαι). And if you hear something bad, do not cry out or weep, but ask that he may wash it off or circumvent it, for this god can do everything (ἐὰν δέ τι φαῦλον ἀκούσης, μὴ κρᾶξις, μὴ κλαύσης, ἀλλὰ ἐρώτα, ἵνα αὐτὸς ἀπαλείψῃ ἢ μεθοδεύσῃ. δύναται γὰρ πάντα ὁ θεὸς οὗτος). Therefore, when you begin questioning, thank him for having heard you and not overlooked you. Always sacrifice to this [god] in this way and offer your pious devotions, for thus he will hear you.⁵⁴

There is no explicit warning in any of the versions of *VIII Moses* as to what would happen if the practitioner were to look up at the deity or to cry out or weep over his impending misfortune. But it is said in two of the versions that without a knowledge of astrology, above all the ability to determine the rulers of the hour and day, “the god will not listen, but, thinking you uninitiated, will refuse to receive [you] (ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐπακούσεται, ἀλλ’ ὡς ἀμυστηρίαστον οὐ παραδέξεται).”⁵⁵

On several counts, the exchange between the Savior and his betrayer in the *Gospel of Judas* can be read as a meeting between the practitioner of *VIII Moses* and the deity he invokes to cast his horoscope and erase his foul fate. What is most instructive about reading the *Gospel of Judas* alongside *VIII Moses* is not the similarities between them but in fact the differences. Compared to the practitioner of *VIII Moses*, Judas is ultimately incompetent. When the Savior first appears during the disciples’ celebration of the Eucharist and challenges them to stand before him, Judas begins to behave appropriately in the divine

⁵⁴ PGM XIII. 704–18 (ed. Preisendanz 1972, 2:119; trans. Betz 1992, 189); translation slightly modified.

⁵⁵ PGM XIII. 427–8 (ed. Preisendanz 1972, 2:108; trans. Betz 1992, 184); see also PGM XIII. 56–57.

presence by not looking the Savior in the eyes, as the practitioner of *VIII Moses* is instructed to do:⁵⁶

- | | | |
|-------|---|------------------------------------|
| 35,2 | ΠΕΤ[Τ]Α[ΧΡ]ΗΥ ΠΖ[Η]ΤΤΗΥΤΠ ΠΠ- | Let he who is strong among you |
| 35,3 | ΡΩΜΕ ^{vac} ΗΔ[ΡΕΥΡ] ΠΑΡΑΓΕ ΠΠΡΩ- | bring forward the |
| 35,4 | [ΜΕ] ΗΤΕΛΕΙΟΣ ΑΥΩ ΝΩΩΖΕΡΑΤΥ | perfect man and stand |
| 35,5 | ΠΠΕΨΤΟ ΕΒΟΛ ΗΠΑΠΡΟΣΩ- | before my |
| 35,6 | ΠΟΗ ΑΥΩ ΑΥΧΡΟΣ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΧΕ | face. And they all said, |
| 35,7 | ΤΠΧΟΟΡ ΑΥΩ ΠΠΕΩ ΠΕΥΠΠΗΔ | ‘We are strong.’ But their spirits |
| 35,8 | ΤΟΛΗΔ ΕΩΖΕΡΑΤΥ Π[ΠΕΥ]Π- | could not find the courage to |
| | | stand |
| 35,9 | ΤΟ ΕΒΟΛ ΕΙΜΗ ΙΟΥΔΑΣ [ΠΙΣ]ΚΑ- | before him except Judas |
| 35,10 | ΡΙΩΤΗΣ ΔΥΩΜ ΚΟΜ ΜΕΝ [Ε]Ψ- | Iscariot. While he found the |
| | | strength to |
| 35,11 | ΖΕΡΑΥΥ ΠΠΕΥΠΤΟ ΕΒ[ΟΛ] Π- | stand before him, |
| 35,12 | ΠΕΥΩΜ ΚΟΜ ΔΕ ΕΩΩΨΥ [ΕΖ]ΩΥΗ | he could not look him |
| 35,13 | ΕΖΡΑΥ ΠΠΕΥΒΑΛ ΑΛ[ΛΑ Π]ΥΑΥ- | in the eyes but |
| 35,14 | ΚΤΕ ΖΡΑΥ ΕΠΑΖΩΥ | turned his face away. |

However, the Savior quickly informs Judas that he is going to tell him the mysteries of the kingdom, not in order that he may go to the aeon of Barbelo, but so that he will grieve greatly, something the Savior repeats later on in the manuscript. On page 46, Judas loudly objects when the Savior tells him that he has been deceived by his star into thinking he could join the holy generation. As he begins to realize that the things he is learning from the Savior about the mysteries of the kingdom and the deception of the stars will not enable him to escape his fate, Judas emphatically protests:⁵⁷

- | | | |
|-------|--|---------------------------------|
| 46,5 | ΠΕΧΑ[Υ] ΗΚΙ ΙΟΥΔΑΣ ΧΕ ΠΣΑΖ ΜΗ- | Judas said, ‘Teacher, |
| 46,6 | ΠΟΥΤΕ ΩΩ ΠΑΣΠΕΡΜΑ ΖΥΠΟΤΑΣ- | my seed will never (be) subject |
| 46,7 | Υ[Ε] ΜΗΑΡΧΩΝ ΔΥΟΥΨΩΒ ΠΚΙ | (to) the archons!’ Jesus |
| 46,8 | ΪΥ [ΠΕ]ΧΑΥ ΗΑΥ ΧΕ ΔΜΟΥ ΠΤΑ | answered and said to him, |
| | | ‘Come and |
| 46,9 | Ψ [± . . .] ΠΠΟΥ[Κ] Χ[Ε ±] | I will [...] you [...] |
| 46,10 | [±] | [...] |
| 46,11 | ΕΡ [. . . Δ] ΑΛΛ ΧΕ ΕΚΕΨΩΠΕ Ε- | [...] but so that you will |
| 46,12 | ΚΑΨ [ΔΖΟ]Η ΠΩΩΥΟ ΕΚΗΔΥ Ε- | grieve greatly when you see |
| 46,13 | ΤΗΗ[ΤΕ]ΡΟ ΗΠ ΤΕΣΓΕΝΕΔ | the (archontic) kingdom and |
| | | all its |
| 46,14 | ΤΗΡΩ | generation.’ |

⁵⁶ Gos. Jud. TC 35,2–14 (Kasser et al. 2007, 188–9); translation mine.
⁵⁷ Gos. Jud. TC 46,5–14 (Kasser et al. 2007, 210–11); translation mine. On 46,5–7, refer to DeConick 2007, 52–53; 2008 242–3; also Turner 2008, 188–9.

This behavior and the grieving that Judas will do are the exact opposite of the instruction for meeting the god in *VIII Moses*, where the practitioner is told not to cry out or weep if the god says anything undesirable during the casting of his horoscope.

Furthermore, unlike the practitioner of *VIII Moses*, Judas is completely ignorant of astrology. He is able to identify the Savior as having come from the immortal aeon of Barbelo; he knows the invocation, as it were. But he knows nothing of the stars, let alone which ones are ruling the hour and day. In this regard, it may seem that by telling Judas about the archons, where they come from, and how they determine human action, the Savior takes pity on Judas instead of ignoring him and refusing to receive him as uninitiated, as the god of *VIII Moses* would. Yet it is precisely so that he will grieve greatly that the Savior teaches Judas the mysteries of the kingdom.⁵⁸

THE ASCENDANCY OF JUDAS' STAR

Whether due to Judas' incompetence and misbehavior vis-a-vis the practitioner of *VIII Moses* or for other reasons more inborn, halfway through the *Gospel of Judas* he fails in calling upon the Savior to rescue him from his fate at the hands of the twelve disciples.⁵⁹ And towards end of the manuscript, the Savior makes it clear that Judas' baptism cannot erase the misfortune that awaits him.⁶⁰ The initial lines of the Savior's response to Judas' final question regarding the efficacy of baptism are for the most part missing. But it should be remembered that in response to his prior questions as to what the rest of the human generations will do, the Savior does not give Judas any hope.⁶¹ The way Judas asks the question, "What will those who have been baptized in your name do?" signals that this ritual, like the Eucharist and all other forms of worship practiced by Apostolic Christians in the name of Jesus, is actually service to Saklas rather than to the true God.⁶² When

⁵⁸ The purpose clause introduced by $\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ in *Gos. Jud.* TC 35,26 includes not only the verb in that line but also the one in 35,27, both being third future/optative. They should be translated accordingly, as both DeConick 2007, 68 and Turner 2008, 230 do. For the grammar, see Layton 2004 § 338.

⁵⁹ *Gos. Jud.* TC 45,11–14; discussed above.

⁶⁰ *Gos. Jud.* TC 55,21–56,20; refer to DeConick 2007, 121–4; 2008, 262–4.

⁶¹ *Gos. Jud.* TC 43,24–44,7; 54,14–55,11; discussed above.

⁶² Refer to *Gos. Jud.* TC 34,8–11; 39,18–22.

the text picks up again in the middle of page 56, this is in fact what the Savior is talking about.

After alluding to the betrayal with multiple references to Judas' replacement among the twelve, the Savior now openly informs Judas that he will exceed all others in wickedness by sacrificing Jesus to the chief astral ruler.⁶³ In support of this prognostication, the Savior tells Judas that his star has already passed by (ΠΕΚΚΙΟΥ ΔΙΧΩΒΕ).⁶⁴ As April DeConick observes, this "is astrological language indicating that Judas' actions are determined."⁶⁵ What Judas' star has passed by is the eastern horizon. The seven planets pass it by with varying frequency, while the twelve signs of the zodiac pass by the eastern horizon roughly once every twenty four hours. In ancient astrology, the degree of the zodiac found to be rising above the eastern horizon at any given moment was called the horoscopic point (ὠροσκόπος) or ascendant. And it was one of the single most influential positions that a planet or other star could occupy.⁶⁶ The immediate effect of the ascendancy of Judas' star is to incite him emotionally to betray Jesus. As his star appears, Judas' wrath flares (ΠΕΚΩΗΤ ΔΙΜΟΥΨ).⁶⁷ That is, Judas is not about to hand Jesus over out of any sense of loyalty or friendship.

Addressing his betrayer for the last time, in a fragmentary passage the Savior seems to mention once more the grief that Judas will soon experience.⁶⁸ He speaks of the eschaton, and says:

57,15	ΕΙΣ ΖΗΗΤΕ ΑΥΧΕ ΖΩ[Β] ΗΙΜ ΕΡΟΚ	Behold, everything has been told to you.
57,16	ΟΙ ΕΙΑΤΚ ΕΖΡΑΕΙ ΗΚ[Η]ΑΥ ΕΤΩΗ-	Look up and see the
57,17	ΠΙ ΑΥΩ ΠΟΥΟΗΝ ΕΤΠΖΗΤΩ	cloud and the light in it
57,18	ΑΥΩ ΠΙΟΙΟΥ ΕΤΚΩΤΕ ΕΡΟΚ	and the stars surrounding it.
57,19	ΑΥΩ ΠΙΟΙΟΥ ΕΤΟ ΠΠΡΟΗΓΟΥ-	The leading star
57,20	ΜΕΝΟΣ ΠΤΟΟ ΠΕ ΠΕΚΚΙΟΥ	is your star. ⁶⁹

It has been suggested by Bart Ehrman that "the soul of Judas is the guiding star for all those who will be saved once they transcend this

⁶³ *Gos. Jud.* TC 56, 17-2; refer to Painchaud 2008, 183-4; DeConick 2007, 57-59; 2008, 245-6.

⁶⁴ *Gos. Jud.* TC 56,23 (Kasser, et al. 2007, 230-1).

⁶⁵ DeConick 2007, 126.

⁶⁶ Refer to Barton 1994, 86-113; Neugebauer-van Hoesen 1959, 200; Jones 1999, 2:460; Dorotheus of Sidon, *Carmen astrologicum* 1.5.

⁶⁷ *Gos. Jud.* TC 56,22 (Kasser et al. 2007, 230-1).

⁶⁸ *Gos. Jud.* TC 57,6 (Kasser et al. 2007, 232-3).

⁶⁹ *Gos. Jud.* TC 57,15-20 (Kasser et al. 2007, 232-3); translation mine.

life;" by Elaine Pagels and Karen King that "Judas is but the first-fruits of those who follow Jesus. His star leads the way;" and by Simon Gathercole that whereas "[p]reviously, Judas was not complete..., [n]ow, however, he has the *gnōsis*, the true revelation about the generation of the cosmos and of the generation of Adamas and Seth. His personal star is ahead of all the rest, whether the others here are the rest of the disciples in particular or the whole of the human race in general."⁷⁰ Part and parcel of this interpretation of the Savior's final words to his betrayer is an understanding of the stars in the *Gospel of Judas* that is based on the *Timaeus*, a text of unquestionable importance in Sethian literature, but one that is parodied therein alongside the opening chapters of Genesis. The chief ruler of Sethian myth is almost as much a mockery of the *Timaeus*' demiurge as he is of the god of Hebrew scripture.⁷¹ And unlike the young gods and other stars in the *Timaeus*, his subordinates are not destinations of eternal bliss to which only righteous souls will be privileged to return. They are brigands, prison guards, kings of Chaos and Hades, from whom the spirit or soul must endeavor to escape. In Sethian texts such as the *Gospel of Judas*, it is to the aeons and transcendent luminaries (ΦΩΣΤΗΡ) of the divine realm that the righteous return, not to the stars (CΙΟΥΓ) within the visible cosmos.

Besides Sethian parody of the *Timaeus*, this interpretation also ignores the astrological context. In his *Tetrabiblos*, Ptolemy uses προηγείσθαι repeatedly in participial form. As F. E. Robbins notes in his edition, "Ptolemy characterizes three parts of each sign, leading, middle, and following... The 'leading' portion is so-called because it is the part which first rises above the horizon."⁷² For instance, Ptolemy writes of Aries that "its leading portion (τὰ μὲν προηγούμενα) is rainy and windy, its middle (τὰ δὲ μέσσα) temperate, and the following part (τὰ δ' ἐπόμενα) hot and pestilential."⁷³ The participle is also used of entire zodiacal signs, planets, etc. It is a technical term that refers to one or more astral phenomena leading another in their circuit through the sky. The term occurs repeatedly, not only in the *Tetrabiblos* but also in the works of other astrologers such as Vettius Valens and

⁷⁰ Ehrman 2006b, 96; Pagels-King 2007, 98; Gathercole 2007a, 107.

⁷¹ See e.g. Turner 2001, 49.

⁷² Robbins 1956, 201 n. 4.

⁷³ *Tetrabiblos* 2.11 (Robbins 1956, 200–1).

Hephaestio of Thebes.⁷⁴ Accordingly, when the Savior tells Judas that the leading star (ΠΙΣΙΟΥ ΕΤΟ ΠΙΡΟΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ) is his star, it is not going to lead him or anyone else to salvation. Rather, having passed the eastern horizon, it leads the other archontic stars, particularly those surrounding the cloud, in their perpetual circular path around the earth. If Judas is the one who then enters the cloud, he is in no way liberated from astral domination. Simply put, if he were finally freed from the influence of his star at the close of the text, Judas would not betray Jesus.

Thus the Savior speaks as an astrologer in the *Gospel of Judas*, predicting Judas' fate, teaching astrological doctrine and using technical astrological terms, including ΠΡΟΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ at 57,19.⁷⁵ If there is anyone asking for help to escape from the cosmic realm and its astral rulers, it is Judas who asks the Savior, not vice versa. Like the deity invoked in *VIII Moses*, the Savior surely has the power to cancel fate. But he does not do so for his betrayer or the rest of those who do not belong to the holy generation. The influence of Judas' native star, the same star that earlier in the text deceives him into thinking that he could join the holy generation, only intensifies as it passes by the eastern horizon and becomes visible on the eve of the betrayal. It now leads the other archontic stars in their circuit through the night sky, just as Judas leads (προήρχετο) those who arrest Jesus in Luke 22:47, as Birger Pearson has pointed out.⁷⁶ Reading the *Gospel of Judas* as a horoscope explains why Judas is the central figure in the text without being a 'gnostic hero.' He is indeed the recipient of a private revelation, but not all horoscopes are good news. Such a reading also explains why the text ends where it does, with the betrayal, that is, with the fulfillment of the first half of the Savior's initial prognostication that someone else would replace the deceased Judas among the twelve. As readers and auditors of Luke-Acts, the readers and auditors of the *Gospel of Judas* are left to understand that following the betrayal, Judas died violently

⁷⁴ Refer to the indices in Pingree 1973, 437; 1974, 464; 1986, 548.

⁷⁵ As for what the author of *Gos. Jud.* is doing, i.e., explaining the fate of an infamous person ex post facto, compare the horoscope of the Roman emperor Hadrian, written in the mid to late second century by Antigonus of Nicaea and cited by Hephaestio of Thebes, *Apotelesmatica* 2.18. The fact that Luke-Acts is rather amenable to astrological interpretation no doubt facilitated the composition of *Gos. Jud.*: note the man bearing the jar of water (cf. Aquarius), the house, and its ruler (οικοδεσπότης) in Luke 22:10–11; and the lot (κλήρος) that Judas is said to have received in Acts 1:17.

⁷⁶ See his contribution in this volume.

and, after the selection of Matthias, became the thirteenth. From the text itself, the readers and auditors of the *Gospel of Judas* are left to understand that Judas was stoned, presumably to death, by the twelve (cf. συγκρατεψηφίσθη at Acts 1:26), and that he eventually died in soul as well, like the rest of those temporarily animated by the chief astral ruler through Michael, never joining the holy generation.