



Reading Judas: The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity

Elaine Pagels, Karen L. King

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The two leading, bestselling experts on the Gnostic Gospels weigh in on the meaning of the controversial newly discovered *Gospel of Judas*

When the *Gospel of Judas* was published by the National Geographic Society in April 2006, it received extraordinary media attention and was immediately heralded as a major biblical discovery that rocked the world of scholars and laypeople alike. Elaine Pagels and Karen King are the first to reflect on this newfound text and its ramifications for telling the story of early Christianity. In *Reading Judas*, the two celebrated scholars illustrate how the newly discovered text provides a window onto understanding how Jesus' followers understood his death, why Judas betrayed Jesus, and why God allowed it.

Most contemporary readers will find passages in the ancient *Gospel of Judas* difficult to comprehend outside of its context in the ancient world. *Reading Judas* illuminates the intellectual assumptions behind Jesus' teaching to Judas and shows how conflict among the disciples was a tool frequently used by early Christian authors to explore matters of doubt and disagreement. Presented with the elegance, insight, and accessibility that has made Pagels and King the leading voices in this field, this is a book for academics and popular audience both. Pagels' five previous books, including *The New York Times* bestseller *Beyond Belief*, and King's *The Gospel of Mary of Magdala* prove that there is a considerable audience eager for this kind of informed and engaging writing.

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