

ARIE W. ZWIEP

Judas
and the Choice
of Matthias

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

187

Mohr Siebeck

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament · 2. Reihe

Herausgeber/Editor
Jörg Frey

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Arie W. Zwiep

Judas and the Choice of Matthias

A Study on Context and Concern of Acts 1:15–26

Mohr Siebeck

ARIE W. ZWIEP, born 1964; Ph.D. University of Durham; currently teaching New Testament at the Evangelische Theologische Hogeschool Ede (formerly Veenendaal) and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

ISBN 3-16-148452-5

ISSN 0340-9570 (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe)

978-3-16-157095-7 Unveränderte eBook-Ausgabe 2019

Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data is available in the Internet at <http://dnb.ddb.de>.

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The book was printed by Druckpartner Rübemann GmbH in Hemsbach on non-aging paper and bound by Buchbinderei Schaumann in Darmstadt.

Printed in Germany.

*In Honour of My Doktorvater, James D.G. Dunn,
Emeritus Professor of Divinity, University of Durham,
On the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*

Preface

In this book I seek to determine the place of Judas Iscariot and his death in the Lukan writings, especially in the episode of the choice of his successor, Acts 1:15–26. It is in a sense to be regarded as a sequel to my Durham doctoral dissertation, *The Ascension of the Messiah in Lukan Christology*, in which I focused primarily on the first half of the opening chapter of Acts.¹ For a number of years I have regarded the section now under investigation, the Judas–Matthias pericope, as one of the most tedious stories in the entire New Testament, an unhappy digression from the more spectacular events of Ascension and Pentecost. However, now that I have studied the pericope in more detail, I have to admit that this initial judgement turned out to be “somewhat premature”. As far as Luke is concerned, more is at stake than the dull election of a church official.

Thanks are due first of all to my colleagues and students of the Evangelische Theologische Hogeschool Veenendaal (now Ede) and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. They all have had to put up with my Judas fever for the past few years. Of all those who have contributed throughout the process in a more substantial way, especially my colleagues Dr. Henk Bakker, Drs. Marco Rotman and Dr. Eveline van Staalduine-Sulman (who likes to see Targumic parallels almost everywhere) have been of great help in checking the manuscript and preventing me from a number of errors and infelicities. They provided me with relevant titles and helpful suggestions even in the final stages of the manuscript and kept me exegetically and hermeneutically on the alert. Of course, where I have occasionally decided to ignore their critical comments, they are not to be blamed.

I also wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki and the editorial staff of Mohr Siebeck Publishing House and Professor Jörg Frey and his team for accepting this work for publication in the *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*.

The present volume is dedicated to Professor James D.G. Dunn, Emeritus

¹ A.W. Zwiep, *The Ascension of the Messiah in Lukan Christology* (NT.S 87; Leiden: Brill, 1997). See also idem, “*Assumptus est in caelum*. Rapture and Heavenly Exaltation in Early Judaism and Luke–Acts”, in: F. Avemarie, H. Lichtenberger (eds.), *Auferstehung–Resurrection* (WUNT 135; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001) 323–349; idem, *Jesus en het heil van Israëls God. Verkenningen in het Nieuwe Testament* (EvangTh; Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2003) 52–67.

Professor of Divinity, University of Durham, whose scholarship has been a source of inspiration for my own development. It is with deep gratitude that I offer him this book as a small token of appreciation.

Finally, I am grateful to my life companion Cisca and our two children, Elze and Joël, for their patience and encouragement. They have been supportive – *qui legat, intelligat* – each in their own way.

I have put the final touches on this work, appropriately, in the period of this book's topic, the period between Ascension and Pentecost.

Veenendaal, May 2004

Arie W. Zwiep

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Abbreviations

1. Bible and Apocrypha

Gen	Genesis	Prov	Proverbs
Ex	Exodus	Eccl	Ecclesiastes
Lev	Leviticus	Song	Song of Solomon
Num	Numbers	Wis	Wisdom of Solomon
Deut	Deuteronomy	Sir	Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)
Josh	Joshua	Isa	Isaiah
Judg	Judges	Jer	Jeremiah
Ruth	Ruth	Lam	Lamentations
1 Sam	1 Samuel	Bar	Baruch
2 Sam	2 Samuel	Ezek	Ezekiel
1 Kings	1 Kings	Dan	Daniel
2 Kings	2 Kings	Hos	Hosea
1 Chr	1 Chronicles	Joel	Joel
2 Chr	2 Chronicles	Am	Amos
Ezra	Ezra	Ob	Obadiah
Neh	Nehemiah	Jon	Jonah
Tob	Tobit	Mic	Michah
Jdt	Judith	Nah	Nahum
Esth	Esther	Hab	Habakkuk
1 Macc	1 Maccabees	Zeph	Zephaniah
2 Macc	2 Maccabees	Hag	Haggai
Job	Job	Zech	Zechariah
Ps	Psalms	Mal	Malachi
Mt	Matthew	1 Tim	1 Timothy
Mk	Mark	2 Tim	2 Timothy
Lk	Luke	Titus	Titus
Jn	John	Philem	Philemon
Acts	Acts of the Apostles	Heb	Hebrews
Rom	Romans	Jas	James
1 Cor	1 Corinthians	1 Pet	1 Peter
2 Cor	2 Corinthians	2 Pet	2 Peter
Gal	Galatians	1 Jn	1 John
Eph	Ephesians	2 Jn	2 John
Phil	Philippians	3 Jn	3 John
Col	Colossians	Jude	Jude
1 Thess	1 Thessalonians	Rev	Revelation
2 Thess	2 Thessalonians		

Where possible, Greek and Hebrew editions and translations of the Bible have been abbreviated according to the conventions of S.M. Schwertner, *Internationales Abkürzungsverzeichnis für Theologie und Grenzgebiete* (Berlin, New York: W. de Gruyter, ²1992) xxxiii (below).

BHS	Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia
ELB	Elberfelder Übersetzung
EÜ	Einheitsübersetzung
HF	The Greek New Testament, Z.C. Hodges, A.L. Farstad
KJV	King James Version
LXX	Septuaginta
MT	Masoretic Text
NBG	Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap (1951)
NA ²⁷	Novum Testamentum Graece, ed. E. Nestle, K. Aland, <i>et al.</i> , 27 th ed.
NBV	Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling
NEB	New English Bible (1970)
NIV	New International Version (² 1983)
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version. Catholic Edition (1993)
RLÜ	Revidierte Luther Übersetzung
SV	Statenvertaling
TR	Textus Receptus
UBS ⁴	The Greek New Testament, ed. B. Aland, <i>et al.</i> , fourth edition
Vg	Vulgata
Wettstein	J. Wettstein, Novum Testamentum Graecum
WH	The New Testament in the Original Greek, B.F. Westcott, F.J.A. Hort
WV	Willibrordvertaling (geheel herziene uitgave 1995)

2. Extra-Biblical Sources

OT pseudepigraphical writings are abbreviated according to J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983) 1:xliv–xlvii. Text from the Dead Sea Scrolls are abbreviated according to the standard conventions. For Rabbinic writings see Schwertner, *Abkürzungsverzeichnis* xl–xli (above); abbreviated titles of patristic and classical authors should be sufficiently clear to recognize.

The writings of Philo of Alexandria and Flavius Josephus are abbreviated as follows:

Philo of Alexandria:

Cher	<i>De Cherubim</i> (On the Cherubim)
DetPotIns	<i>Quod deterius potiori insidiari potest</i> (That the Worse is Wont to Attack the Better)
MutNom	<i>De mutatione nominum</i> (On the Change of Names)
SpecLeg	<i>De specialibus legibus</i> (The Special Laws)

Flavius Josephus:

Ant	<i>Antiquitates Judaicae</i> (Jewish Antiquities)
Ap	<i>Contra Apionem</i> (Against Apion)
BJ	<i>Bellum Judaicum</i> (Jewish War)

3. Journals, Series, etc.

Where possible, abbreviations have been those in Schwertner, *Internationales Abkürzungsverzeichnis*.

AAAp	Acta apostolorum apocrypha
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJT	American Journal of Theology. Chicago
AJTh	Asia Journal of Theology
AmUSt.TR	American University Studies. Theology and Religion
AnBib	Analecta biblica
AncB	Anchor Bible
AncBD	Anchor Bible Dictionary, ed. N. Freedman
AncBRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ANFa	Ante-Nicene Fathers
Ang.	Angelicum. Roma
ANNT	Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
ApF	The Apostolic Fathers, ed. J.B. Lightfoot
ApoNT	The Apocryphal New Testament, ed. J.K. Elliott
APOT	Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, ed. R.H. Charles
ARW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft
ASeign	Assemblées du Seigneur
ASTI	Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute (in Jerusalem)
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
AThR	Anglican Theological Review
AThR.SS	Anglican Theological Review. Supplementary Series
BAFCS	The Book of Acts in Its First-Century Setting, ed. B.W. Winter
BARR	Biblical Archaeology Review
BAAR	Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur, ed. K. and B. Aland
BAZ	Biblische Archäologie und Zeitgeschichte
BBB	Bonner Biblische Beiträge
BDR	Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch, ed. F. Blass, A. Debrunner, F. Rehkopf
Beg	The Beginnings of Christianity 1. The Acts of the Apostles, ed. F.J. Foakes-Jackson, K. Lake, 5 vols.
BeO	Bibbia e oriente
BENT	Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Neue Testament (A. Harnack)
BETHL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium
BEvTh	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BHTh	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie

Bihlmeyer	Die apostolischen Väter, ed. K. Bihlmeyer
Bijdr.	Bijdragen. Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie
BiJer	La Bible de Jérusalem
Bill.	Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, ed. H.L. Strack, P. Billerbeck
BiLi	Bibel und Liturgie
BiSe	Biblical Seminar
BiTod	Bible Today
BiTr	Bible Translator
BibRS	The Biblical Resource Series
BJSt	Brown Judaic Studies
BL	Bibel-Lexikon
BS	Bibliotheca Sacra
BThCL	Biblical and Theological Classics Library
BThZ	Berliner theologische Zeitschrift
BT(N)	Bibliothèque théologique. Neuchâtel
Burg.	Burgense
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	Biblische Zeitschrift
CBETH	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CB.NT	Coniectanea Biblica. New Testament Series
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CBrug	Collationes Brugenses
CDios	La Ciudad de Dios
CE	Catholic Encyclopedia
ChH	Church History
COQG	Christian Origins and the Question of God
ConJ	Concordia Journal
CoTh	Collectanea theologica
CR	Corpus reformatorum
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CuBi	Cultura biblica
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DAC	Dictionary of the Apostolic Church
DACL	Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie
DAW(S)	Dienst am Wort. Stuttgart
DB(H)	Dictionary of the Bible, ed. J. Hastings
DBS	Dictionnaire de la Bible. Supplément
DB(V)	Dictionnaire de la Bible, ed. F. Vigouroux
DCG	Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, ed. J. Hastings
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DJG	Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, eds. J. Green, S. McKnight, I.H. Marshall
DNTB	Dictionary of New Testament Background, eds. C.A. Evans, S.E. Porter
DSD	Dead Sea Discoveries
DSS.SE	The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition, eds. F. García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar
EB(C)	Encyclopaedia biblica, ed. T.K. Cheyne
EHS.T	Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe 23. Theologie
EJ(D)	Encyclopaedia Judaica (Berlin)
EKK	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament

EntOff	Entschluß, Offen
EpC	Epworth Commentary
Er.	Eranos. Uppsala
Erls	Eretz-Israel
ET	Expository Times
EtB	Études Bibliques
ETHL	Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses
ETHSt	Erfurter theologische Studien
ETR	Études théologiques et religieuses
EtRel	Études religieuses
Études	Études. Publ. par des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus
EvangTh	Evangelicale Theologie
EvQ	Evangelical Quarterly
EvTh	Evangelische Theologie
Exp.	Expositor. London
FGNK	Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altchristlichen Literatur
FilINT	Filología Neotestamentaria. Córdoba
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GBS.NTS	Guides to Biblical Scholarship. New Testament Series
GCS	Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
Gnomon	J.A. Bengel, <i>Gnomon</i> etc.
GRLH	Garland Reference Library of the Humanities
GTBS	Gütersloher Taschenbücher Siebenstern
GThT	Gereformeerde Theologisch Tijdschrift
GTL	Göttinger theologische Lehrbücher
HAHAT ^{17,18}	Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament (= Gesenius ^{17,18})
HALAT	Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament, 3. Aufl.
Hatch-Redpath	A Concordance to the Septuagint, ed. E. Hatch, H.A. Redpath
HC	Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament
HeB	Homiletica et biblica
HeTr	Helps for Translators (series)
HibJ	Hibbert Journal
HJP	The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, ed. E. Schürer, rev. ed. G. Vermes
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HSoed	Horae Soederblomianae
HThK	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HThR	Harvard Theological Review
HTS	Hervormde theologiese studies
IBP	Institut Biblique Pontifical (Roma)
IBR.BS	Institute for Biblical Research Bibliography Series
ICC	International Critical Commentary
ICCA	International Congress of Christian Archeology
IDB	The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
IniB	Initiations Bibliques
ISBE	International Standard Bible Encyclopedia
ISBL	Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature
ITS	Indian Theological Studies

IVP	Inter-Varsity Press
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JE	Jewish Encyclopedia
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JSJ.S	Supplements to Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSNT.S	Journal for the Study of the New Testament. Supplements
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JThS	Journal of Theological Studies
KBW	Katholisches Bibelwerk
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
KeTh	Kerk en theologie
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LeDiv	Lectio Divina
LKW	Lutherische Kirche in der Welt
LM	Lutherische Monatshefte
LSJM	A Greek-English Lexicon, ed. H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, H.S. Jones, R. McKenzie, <i>et al.</i>
LT	Literature and Theology
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche
LTP	Laval théologique et philosophique
LV(L)	Lumière et vie. Lyon
MethR	Methodist Review
MGM	<i>Moulton and Geden Concordance to the Greek Testament. Sixth Edition</i> , ed. I.H. Marshall (2002).
MGWJ	Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums
MM	J.H. Moulton, G. Milligan, <i>Vocabulary of the Greek Testament</i> (1930)
MoBi	Le Monde de la Bible
MQR	Methodist Quarterly Review
MSSNTS	Monograph Series. Society for New Testament Studies
NCeB	New Century Bible
NDIEC	New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity, ed. G.H.R. Horsley, <i>et al.</i>
Neotest.	Neotestamentica
NGTT	Nederduitse gereformeerde theologiese tydskrif
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDNT	New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, ed. C. Brown
NIDOTTE	New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis, ed. W.A. VanGemeren
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NT	Novum Testamentum. Leiden
NT.S	Novum Testamentum. Supplements
NTApo	Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung, ed. E. Hennecke, W. Schneemelcher
NTC	New Testament Commentary
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NThT	Nieuw Theologisch Tijdschrift
NTS	New Testament Studies
NTT	Norsk teologisk tidsskrift
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies

Numen.S	Numen. Supplements
OCP	Orientalia Christiana periodica, Roma
OTP	Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed. J.H. Charlesworth
ÖTBK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar
OUP	Oxford University Press
PaThSt	Paderborner theologische Studien
PEGLMBS	Proceedings. Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus. Accurante J.-P. Migne. Series Graeca
PGL	A Patristic Greek Lexicon, ed. G.W.H. Lampe
PL	Patrologiae cursus completus. Accurante J.-P. Migne. Series Latina
PreaLib	The Preacher's Library
PRSt	Perspectives in Religious Studies
PS	Patrologia Syriaca
PsychQ	Psychological Quarterly
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
QD	Quaestiones disputatae
QR	Quarterly Review
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RB	Revue biblique
RCatT	Revista catalana de teologia
RdQ	Revue de Qumran
RE	Realenzyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche
ReadNT	Reading the New Testament
RechBib	Recherches bibliques
RevBib	Revista biblica
RevSR	Revue des sciences religieuses
RGG	Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RHPhR	Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses
RHR	Revue de l'histoire des religions
RIDA	Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
RQ	Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde
RSR	Recherches de science religieuse
RevSR	Revue des sciences religieuses
RThPh	Revue de théologie et de philosophie
SAC	Studi di antichità cristiana. Roma
SBi	Sources bibliques
SBL.DS	Society of Biblical Literature. Dissertation Series
SBL.MS	Society of Biblical Literature. Monograph Series
SBL.SP	Society of Biblical Literature. Seminar Papers
SBL.SS	Society of Biblical Literature. Semeia Studies
SC	Sources chrétiennes
ScC	Scuola cattolica
ScEs	Science et esprit
SE	Sacris erudiri
SEÅ	Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok
SémBib	Sémiotique et bible
SHR	Studies in the History of Religions
SPg	Sacra Pagina
SPIB	Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici
SSEJC	Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity

SST	Studies in Sacred Theology
StAc	Studies in Antiquity and Christianity
StAIS	Studies in the Aramaic Interpretation of Scripture
StANT	Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
StNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
StTh	Studia theologica. Lund etc.
SVigChr	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
TB	Theologische Bücherei
TeDe	Teologia Deusto
ThA	Theologische Arbeiten
THAT	Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament
Thayer	A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, ed. J.H. Thayer
Theol.	Theology. London
Theol(A)	Theologia. Athenai
ThF	Theologische Forschung
ThG(B)	Theologie der Gegenwart (Bergen-Enkheim)
ThHK	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
ThJb(H)	Theologische Jahrbücher. Halle, Saale
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
ThQ	Theologische Quartalschrift. Tübingen
ThR	Theologische Rundschau
ThRv	Theologische Revue
ThStKr	Theologische Studien und Kritiken
ThWAT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament
ThWNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament
ThZ	Theologische Zeitschrift. Basel
TJT	Toronto Journal of Theology
TKTG	Texte zur Kirchen- und Theologiegeschichte
TLS	Times Literary Supplement
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TO	Texte occidentales, ed. Boismard-Lamouille
TPI	Trinity Press International
TRE	Theologische Real-Enzyklopädie
TS	Theological Studies
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TUVMG	Texte und Untersuchungen zur vormasoretischen Grammatik des Hebräischen
UBS	United Bible Societies
UCPMP	University of California Publications in Modern Philology
UTB.W	Uni-Taschenbücher (für Wissenschaft)
VD	Verbum Domini
VKGNT	Vollständige Konkordanz zum griechischen Neuen Testament, ed. K. Aland, <i>et al.</i>
VT	Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WBG	Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft
WdF	Wege der Forschung
WLQ	Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins
ZdZ	Die Zeichen der Zeit
ZKTh	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZThK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

4. General Abbreviations

ad loc.	ad locum, at the appropriate place
Anm.	Anmerkung
Apg	Apostelgeschichte
Aufl.	Auflage, edition
B.C.E.	before Common Era
C.E.	Common Era
cf.	confer, compare
coni.	conjecture
c.q.	casu quo
diss.	dissertation
ed(s).	edited by / editor(s)
e.g.	exempli gratia, for example
et al.	et alii, and other persons
etc.	et cetera
f(f).	following page(s)
FS	Festschrift
GA	Gesammelte Aufsätze
idem	same author
infra	below
lit.	literature
n.	note
n.d.	no date
Ns	Nouvelle série
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
pace	with due respect to, but differing from
passim	throughout, in various places
Q	Quelle
repr.	reprinted
S	(before Mt or Lk) Sondergut
supra	above
s.v.	sub voce, under the entry
SW	sämtliche Werke
transl.	translated by / translator(s)
v(v).	verse(s)
viz.	videlicet, namely
v.l.	varia lectio, variant reading

Introduction

Judas Iscariot is a captivating figure and the way he died in particular is most intriguing. For if we may give any credit to the many ages of Christian and Jewish tradition, he must have died a great many deaths and yet he seems to have survived as many times as that – mostly through failed suicide attempts – very much like the proverbial cat with nine lives. Whereas the NT writings provide us with only two versions of his death – according to the gospel of Matthew he committed suicide by hanging himself (Mt 27:3–10), according to the Acts of the Apostles he died by an unfortunate and dramatic fall (Acts 1:16–20) – in the early church and subsequent history a perplexing number of alternative versions of his death circulated, not seldom in conscious opposition to the biblical records.

To give but a few examples of this astonishing historical fact: according to the early-second-century witness of Papias of Hierapolis, after the betrayal and the unsuccessful attempt to hang himself, Judas' body swelled up to immense proportions ("so that where a wagon could easily pass through, he could not") and then exploded.¹ In an elaboration of this legend he swelled up and was *literally* crushed by a wagon, a pre-modern traffic accident thought to be a fit end for this biblical villain.² In the Syriac tradition of Aphrahat (third/fourth century C.E.), Judas died after he had hung a millstone around his neck and had thrown himself into the sea.³ In Islamic tradition, it is said on the basis of a spurious passage in the Qur'an that Judas had been crucified in the place of Jesus, a tradition which probably arose in gnostic circles.⁴ On the basis of an overly-literal exegesis of the words "going to his own place" in Acts 1:25, a number of modern scholars hold that Judas did not die immediately after his

¹ Papias of Hierapolis, fragment III, preserved by Apollinaris of Laodicea, in: J. Reuss (ed.), *Matthäus-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben* (TU 61; Berlin: Akademie, 1957) 47–48 (right column).

² Apollinaris of Laodicea, in: Reuss, *Matthäus-Kommentare* 47 (left column).

³ Aphrahat, *Demonstratio* XIV; *Exhortatoria* 10; Syriac text and Latin transl. *PS I/1:594: Et Judas qui Salvatorem tradidit, mola collo appensa in mare demersus est*. Cf. in general, A. Voöbus, "Aphrahat", *RAC* Suppl. 1 (2001) 498–506.

⁴ In Qur'an 4:156 it is said that a likeness of Jesus had been crucified. In the mediaeval gospel of Barnabas 217 (ed. Lonsdale and Laura Ragg), Judas is identified as the one really crucified. See B. Dieckmann, *Judas als Sündenbock. Eine verhängnisvolle Geschichte von Angst und Vergeltung* (Munich: Kösel, 1991) 128–132. On the gospel of Barnabas in general, see S. Abdul-Ahad, W.H.T. Gairdner, *The Gospel of Barnabas. An Essay and Enquiry* (Hyderabad: Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies, [1907] 1975).

betrayal but continued to live to an old age and died a natural death on his cherished estate.⁵

As far as Christian circles are concerned, most retellings of Judas' death indulge in dramatizing the grim details of the tortures of the final hour of what in general opinion was the most evil person in the world. Throughout the centuries Judas has been an object of fierce hatred. There can be no question that he was an enigma, not to say an outright source of embarrassment, to the early Christians and he still is to many of us today, Jews and Christians alike. The earliest sources are remarkably silent on his person and on what he did; later sources do everything to make his act look worse, more evil, more intelligible, sometimes more heroic, on any account less intolerable than the bare historical data seem to suggest.

Different from Matthew, the author of Acts relates the death of Judas in the opening chapter of his second volume, notably in the context of the election of a new apostle. In this brief interim-period between Ascension and Pentecost two absent *dramatis personae* set the agenda: Jesus and Judas. The fact that Jesus had gone off to heaven while the promised Spirit had not yet been given to the assembled believers gives the story a particular twist and gives it its own dynamic. It is a period without Jesus and without the Spirit. Is it a period in which some things went seriously wrong?

It is important to realize that on the level of the text it is the author, the omniscient and omnipresent narrator, who really sets the agenda.⁶ Although he does not figure in the events of the story, it is he who has structured the text as we now have it, collecting, selecting and passing over pieces of information, highlighting points of particular interest to him and his readers and moulding the story as he thought fit, in line with (often implied) current beliefs, common assumptions and literary conventions. Given the dubious role of Judas in the arrest of Jesus and the subsequent silence on Judas in the early Christian tradition, why is he concerned to tell the Judas story in the first place? And why does he and he alone bother to tell the story of the choice of his successor?

In the present investigation I am not so much concerned with the role of Judas in the later history of the church and of dogma, although I strongly

⁵ *Infra* chapter 6, at the discussion of Acts 1:25. This survival tradition forms the basis for various modern novels on Judas. See, e.g., K. Glimmerveen, *Judas* (Baarn: De Prom, 1991). This historical novel (in Dutch) is based on the ancient legend that Judas was crucified in Jesus' place, and having survived the crucifixion, wandered around the world. In 73 C.E. Judas had settled at the isle of Crete with Luke the Physician as his neighbour, and told him his version of the Jesus story. He turns out to be deeply critical of Paul's version of it.

⁶ Regardless of whether or not he is identified with Luke, the erstwhile travel companion of Paul, which I find an entirely acceptable position. My concern here is the *implied* author rather than the *actual* author.

realize that it is difficult if not impossible to ignore the role of Judas in later developments. Theologically, the figure of Judas takes a prominent place in debates on the Lord's Supper, individual election and predestination and church offices. I have always had a feeling that these attempts to drag in Judas wherever he fits are inappropriate and now that I have concluded this book I feel convinced of it more than ever.⁷ If I understand Luke correctly, the real issues are christological and theological in its strictest sense rather than soteriological or ecclesiological. I hope my work is an honest attempt to do justice to the real concerns of the author of Luke–Acts.

This focus on the context of the author and his first readership, to avoid misunderstanding, is not to say that later developments of the Judas story are irrelevant to the present study. On the contrary, I would say! The very dramatic and painful *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Judas Iscariot, especially the ever-increasing demonizing of his person and the unfortunate identification with the Jewish people, should make everyone of us acutely aware that neither the modern interpreters nor the biblical authors are doing exegesis in an ideological and historical vacuum but are predisposed by numerous factors. The figure of Judas has always been a matter of fierce controversy between Jews and Christians, and between Protestants and Catholics. The study of Judas, then, is a historical and theological minefield.

⁷ Pride of place for a theological overinterpretation of the Judas figure holds K. Barth, *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik II.2. Die Lehre von Gott* (Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1942) 498–563 (“Die Bestimmung des Verworfenen”), esp. 508–535. See on the Barthian approach P. McGlasson, *Jesus and Judas. Biblical Exegesis in Barth* (AAR.AS 72; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991); J.G. Marais, “Wat het uiteindelik van Judas geword? Die lot van Judas Iskariot as “toetsaak” in ‘n gesprek oor Karl Barth se standpunt ten opsigte van die alversoening (apokatástasis pantoon) in sy verkiesingsleer”, *NGTT* 39 (1998) 190–198; B. Aalbers, *Judas, één van de twaalf. Een exegetisch-hermeneutische studie over Judas Iskariot* (Proefschrift Theologische Universiteit Kampen, 2001) 1:241–248.

Chapter 1

Status Quaestionis

1. Introduction

In this first chapter an inventory will be made of the dominant themes and questions of critical Judas-*Forschung* with a special focus on the Judas-Matthias pericope in Acts 1:15–26.¹ This helps to determine the position of current scholarship on Judas and to situate the point of departure of the present study. A survey of the Judas-Matthias pericope in particular fills a gap in current biblical studies. Scattered references in commentaries and Lukan studies excepted, to date no such overview is available.

One of the older scholarly review studies of Judas is the investigation of Donatus Haugg from 1930, a work in German which has put its imprint upon subsequent scholarship by its breadth of information from a variety of historical sources.² Haugg provided a history of the scholarly study of Judas through the ages with particular attention to the various negative and positive roles that in due course had been attributed to him. He outlined four distinct approaches to Judas, viz. approaches that treat him subsequently as a sinner (20–44), as a scoundrel (44–46), as a hero (46–52) and as product of a saga (52–61). On the basis of this historical survey he then undertook his own meticulous exegesis of all the NT texts about Judas (63–189).

After a few decades Haugg's study was supplemented by an equally comprehensive historical overview in German, the research study by Kurt Lüthi, which focused especially on the interpretation of Judas in the Old Protestant period (Reformation and Orthodoxy, 7–48), in Pietism and the Enlightenment (49–68), in the period of what we now call the First Quest of the Historical Jesus (69–159), and the scholarly study of Judas in the author's present (up to 1955, 161–187), to conclude with some brief comments on contemporary Roman Catholic and Jewish approaches to Judas (189–197).³

¹ A bibliography of books and articles on the Judas-Matthias pericope is found in the bibliography of the present work. To reduce the number of footnotes in this chapter, page numbers of works under discussion usually are given in the body of the text (in parentheses).

² D. Haugg, *Judas Iskarioth in den neutestamentlichen Berichten* (Freiburg: Herder, 1930) 11–61. This study contains a useful bibliography of the older literature on Judas (11–16).

³ K. Lüthi, *Judas Iskarioth in der Geschichte der Auslegung von der Reformation bis zur*

Although both studies contain a mass of still valuable information, they are now both outdated, written as they were before the rise of redaction-criticism and other scholarly tools. They are moreover largely concerned with the Judas traditions in general; in these studies the Judas–Matthias pericope and its role in Luke’s theology receive only incidental treatment. This is also true for the more recent German monographs on Judas Iscariot by Werner Vogler and Hans-Josef Klauck, to which we will return in due course.⁴

In the English-speaking world, Hyam Maccoby, William Klassen and Kim Paffenroth have produced major studies on Judas from various perspectives, but, again, they are more focused on the Judas tradition in general than on what is said on his death and replacement.⁵

As for the French-speaking world, François Bovon has devoted a brief section in his survey of Lukan scholarship to the role of the apostolate in Luke’s theological perspective, with special reference to the Judas–Matthias pericope.⁶ Yet his brief survey covers only a limited period of time, the years 1950–1975, and, naturally, he does not interact with the most recent developments in the field.⁷

The most comprehensive scholarly study on Judas to date is the Dutch doctoral dissertation by Bert Aalbers, submitted at the end of 2001 to the Theological University of Kampen (Oudestraat).⁸ Aalbers spends no less than sixty rather verbose pages on the traditions of the death of Judas (1:323–382), but his survey is more substantial with regard to the Matthaean version of Judas’ death (Mt 27:3–10) than to the Lukan version in Acts 1. The latter, of

Gegenwart (Zurich: Zwingli, 1955) 59–60.149–153. See also his more recent treatment in idem, “Judas I. Das Judasbild vom Neuen Testament bis zur Gegenwart”, *TRE* 17 (1988) 296–304.

⁴ W. Vogler, *Judas Iskarioth. Untersuchungen zu Tradition und Redaktion von Texten des Neuen Testaments und außerkanonischer Schriften* (ThA 42; Berlin: Evangelischer Verlag, 1983, ²1985) 10–15; H.-J. Klauck, *Judas. Ein Jünger des Herrn* (QD 111; Freiburg: Herder, 1987) 17–32.

⁵ H. Maccoby, *Judas Iscariot and the Myth of Jewish Evil* (New York: Free Press; New York: Macmillan, 1992); W. Klassen, *Judas. Betrayer or Friend of Jesus?* (Minneapolis: Fortress; London: SCM, 1996); K. Paffenroth, *Judas. Images of the Lost Disciple* (Louisville, London: Westminster John Knox, 2001).

⁶ F. Bovon, *Luc le théologien. Vingt-cinq ans de recherches (1950–1975)* (MoBi; Neuchâtel, Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1978) 379–386.

⁷ In French scholarship of this period, especially the articles of P. Benoit, “La mort de Judas” in: J. Schmidt (ed.), *Synoptische Studien. Alfred Wikenhauser zum siebzigsten Geburtstag dargebracht* (Munich: Karl Zink, 1954) 1–19; repr. in: idem, *Exégèse et Théologie* (Paris: Cerf, 1961) 1:340–359, and P.-H. Menoud, “Les additions au groupe des douze apôtres d’après le livre des Actes. Hommage au Professeur Jean Héring”, *RHPPhR* 37 (1957) 71–81; repr. idem, *Jésus-Christ et la Foi. Recherches néotestamentaires* [BT(N); Neuchâtel, Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1975] 91–100, have been influential.

⁸ B. Aalbers, *Judas, één van de twaalf. Een exegetisch-hermeneutische studie over Judas Iskariot* (Proefschrift Theologische Universiteit Kampen, 2001) 2 vols.

course, embeds Judas and his cruel end in a much broader context than Matthew, for whom Judas plays only a role in the passion story.

In what follows the focus will be on some of the more recent developments in the study of Acts 1:15–26. This will help us to get a clearer picture of the progress and tendencies of contemporary biblical scholarship, which in turn will set the agenda for our further inquiry into the episode of the choice of a successor to Judas. Since this episode is part of a larger repertoire of early Christian traditions on Judas, the twelve apostles and the early church, these will have to be taken into consideration as well.

2. The Historical Judas Revisited

Whereas the historical existence of Judas Iscariot has been denied occasionally by critical scholars of earlier generations,⁹ most contemporary scholars take the historical existence of Judas for granted.¹⁰ He is, in the words of John Dominic Crossan, simply “too bad to be false”.¹¹ It is difficult to see why the early Christians would *invent* a Judas figure, as has sometimes been suggested, for his steady position as one of the Twelve and his infamous role in the arrest of Jesus create more problems, both historical and theological, than they solve. For if “Jesus knew from the first ... who was the one that would betray him”, as the Fourth Gospel says (Jn 6:64 NRSV), why did he choose him in the first place? If Jesus knew that Judas was “a devil” (Jn 6:70), why on earth did he send him out to cast out demons (Mk 6:7; cf. 3:22–27 par.)? And if he knew in advance that Judas would not be loyal to the end, was not Jesus himself in a sense the real betrayer?¹² If, on the other hand,

⁹ See Lüthi, *Judas* 121–127, referring to K. Weidel, G. Schläger, A. Drews, J.M. Robertson, S. Lublinski, W.B. Smith, G. Brandes, A. Kalthof, and K. Kautsky. See also Haugg, *Judas* 52–61. Historically, the debate on the historicity of Judas goes hand in hand with that on the historicity of Jesus. See the classic discussion in A. Schweitzer, *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (with an introduction/preface by J.M. Robinson; UTB.W 1302; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1906, ⁹1984) 500–560.

¹⁰ A recent exception is J.S. Spong, “Did Christians Invent Judas?”, *The Fourth R* (March/April 1994) 3–11.16; idem, *Liberating the Gospels. Reading the Bible With Jewish Eyes. Freeing Jesus from 2000 Years of Misunderstanding* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1996) 257–276.

¹¹ J.D. Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus? Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995) 71. Cf. the brief discussion in Aalbers, *Judas* 1:423–425 (“Judas onhistorisch?”).

¹² In his critique on F.D.E. Schleiermacher’s *Leben Jesu*, D.F. Strauss, *Der Christus des Glaubens und der Jesus der Geschichte. Eine Kritik des Schleiermacher’schen Lebens Jesu* (ed. H.-J. Geischer; TKTG 14; Gütersloh: G. Mohn [1865] 1971) 66, put the dilemma thus: “[E]ntweder hat er nicht gewußt, was in Judas war, oder, wenn er es wußte, so hat er den Judas selbst ins Verderben gezogen”. Strauss himself, needless to say, opted for the former.

Judas was divinely predestined to do what he did and had no other choice than to carry out divine orders, some intricate questions emerge on matters of divine providence, free will and human responsibility.¹³ Was the Judas affair no more than a divine trick at the unfortunate cost of a human individual?

3. Interpretative Types of Judas

Who, then, was Judas Iscariot? In his comprehensive study on the Judas traditions in the NT and the early church, Hans-Josef Klauck has outlined seven interpretative types of the Judas figure that give us a fair impression of the complex effective history of Judas.¹⁴

Historically, the most dominant and traditional type of Judas depicts him as an embodiment of wickedness, the incarnation of evil (17–19). Taking the NT statements about Judas as straightforward historical descriptions – that is, accurate descriptions of what actually happened as well as adequate assessments of who he really was – later Christian interpreters have increasingly embellished the historical figure of Judas with the most fantastic legendary details. This process begins already in the early days of the church. In its most outspoken form, however, it is found in the sermons of the seventeenth-century Augustinian court preacher at Vienna, Abraham a Sancta Clara (1644–1709).¹⁵ In a long series of sermons on Judas Iscariot for over a decade, inspired by the *Legenda aurea*, a once famous collection of mediaeval legends, he used to take telling episodes from the life of Judas as warning examples for his audience against all kinds of vices. His betrayal of Jesus was not a temporal backsliding, but it was in line with his wicked character from the start. Judas was born from the same tribe as the Antichrist.¹⁶ Like Oedipus,

¹³ See H. Wagner, “Judas. Das Geheimnis der Sünde, menschliche Freiheit und Gottes Heilsplan”, in: idem (ed.), *Judas Iskariot. Menschliches oder heilsgeschichtliches Drama?* (Frankfurt: Josef Knecht, 1985) 11–38.

¹⁴ For what follows see Klauck, *Judas* 17–32; partially resumed and updated in idem, “Judas der ‘Verräter’? Eine exegetische und wirkungsgeschichtliche Studie”, in: *ANRW* II, 26.1 (1992) 718–723. Another helpful overview of the reception history of Judas is found in B. Dieckmann, *Judas als Sündenbock. Eine verhängnisvolle Geschichte von Angst und Vergeltung* (Munich: Kösel, 1991). He is not so much interested in historical-critical issues as in the psychological mechanisms at work, esp. the scapegoat theory, in the history of art and literature from mediaeval times up to the present. On a popular level, see B.L. van der Woude, *Judas. Verrader of vriend? Over navolging tussen ideaal en werkelijkheid* (Toer-brochure; Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2004) 46–79.

¹⁵ Abraham a Sancta Clara (pseudonym of Hans-Ulrich Megerle), *Judas. Ertz-Schelm. Für ehrliche Leuth, etc.* (Salzburg: Melchior Haan, 1686–1695; Berlin, Stuttgart: W. Spemann, 1884) 4 vols. In this period, it enjoyed great popularity and was translated into several European languages.

¹⁶ This interpretation seems to go back to the times of Hippolytus († 235 C.E.), see W.

he was said to have murdered his father and married his own mother. He was vividly portrayed as a thief and a liar, extremely lazy and so on. Naturally, his remorse came too late, so that he was eternally damned with Lucifer in the deepest parts of hell. That this way of interpreting the Judas figure was not restricted to Roman Catholic theology is clear from the fact that a very similar line of approach was taken by the nineteenth-century Protestant theologian Carl Daub (19).

Second, another line of interpretation reviewed by Klauck regards Judas as a symbol of subversion (19–21). As the writings of Irenaeus of Lyons and Epiphanius of Salamis make clear, in some gnostic circles the figure of Judas was idealized as a truly enlightened mind. For instance, the Cainites, a splinter party within the gnostic movement, claimed the possession of a now lost book called *The Gospel of Judas*, in which Judas was not only excused for what he had done, but was treated as a hero, the *real* redeemer who had managed to prevent the false Saviour (Jesus) from his deceiving intent.¹⁷

Third, in some strands of Jewish tradition, especially in the mediaeval *Toledoth Jeshu* literature, Judas has grown into the role of a hero as well (21–23).¹⁸ Rabbi Jehuda 'ish Bartota, as he is called in one of these traditions, was a champion of Judaism against Jesus (Jeshu), who performed miracles because he had managed to get hold of the hidden Divine Name. Since Jehuda/Judas knew the Divine Name as well, he could catch Jesus by surprise, combat his sorceries and have him arrested. After Jesus' release from prison Judas played a key role in the later arrest of Jesus. He betrayed Jesus by a kiss. After Jesus was stoned to death (!) and hanged on a huge cabbage-stalk – in the absence of a tree or wooden post willing to bear his cursed body – Judas hid his corpse in an unknown place. When the tomb was found empty and the message of the resurrection was proclaimed, Judas triumphantly came up with the dead body of Jesus and thus refuted the Christian claim of his resurrection from the dead...¹⁹

Whatever the historical worth of these traditions may be, they are at least tangible evidence of the growing awareness of Jewish identity in confrontation with the relentless Christian accusation of deicide. The development of

Bauer, *Das Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der neutestamentlichen Apokryphen* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1909; repr. Darmstadt: WBG, 1967) 175; Haug, *Judas* 24.

¹⁷ See *NTApo* 1:309–310; Irenaeus, *AdvHaer* I xxxi,1; *PG* 9:704; *SC* 264:386–387; Epiphanius, *AdvHaer* I iii,38; *PG* 41:658; Theodoret, *CompHaer* I 15; *PG* 83:368, etc. See on the treatment of Judas in gnostic circles further the brief references in: Haug, *Judas* 47–48; Maccoby, *Judas* 92–96.

¹⁸ See G. Schlichting, *Ein jüdisches Leben Jesu. Die verschollene Toledot-Jeschu-Fassung Tam ū-mū'ad. Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar, Motivsynopse, Bibliographie* (WUNT 24; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1982).

¹⁹ A slightly different version of this legend is found in J. Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth. His Life, Times and Teaching* (transl. H. Danby; London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1925, ³1947) 47–54.

the Judas myth here takes the form of rewriting history as a manifestation of Jewish self-consciousness. Here Judas is treated, as Hans-Josef Klauck puts it, as “Exponent des Selbstbehauptungswillens” (21).²⁰ In a similar vein, Günter Schlichting calls this type of subversive exegesis “eine Äusserung des jüdischen Überlebungskampfes”.²¹ Ernst Bammel has argued in a recent article on the reception of Judas in later Jewish tradition: “Die Gestalt des Judas dient dazu, Einsatz und Eifer, Tüchtigkeit und Findigkeit dieses Mannes zu veranschaulichen, *um ihn als Vorbild des Judentums herauszustellen*”.²²

Fourth, since the Enlightenment in the seventeenth and eighteenth century a number of interpreters have come to see Judas as an innocent instrument, victim of a tragic concurrence of circumstances (24–26). In an attempt to penetrate into the historical plausibility and psychological motifs of Judas’ treachery, it was maintained, for example, that Judas had become disappointed in the course of events and wanted to enforce the arrival of the messianic kingdom by provoking Jesus or the Jewish leaders to take action. This theory was advanced, for instance, by Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694–1768) and Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724–1803),²³ and defended more recently by H. Stein-Schneider, who argued that Judas was chosen by Jesus to help him realize the prophetic words of Isaiah 53:12, “he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors” (NRSV).²⁴

Fifth, Judas has been regarded by some interpreters as the product of a saga (26–28). Inspired by the work of David Friedrich Strauss, in the early twentieth century scholars such as John Mackinnon Robertson and William Benjamin Smith had denied the historicity of Jesus by arguing that the Jesus of the gospels was the result of historicizing a timeless Christ-myth. Accordingly, they were more or less forced to make the same claim of unhistoricity for Judas. Other thinkers of a less radical persuasion only denied the historical fact of the betrayal. They did so by highlighting inner inconsistencies in the narratives themselves, by demonstrating the OT motifs that had allegedly produced such stories and by pointing out the paraenetic usefulness of a Judas figure.

²⁰ See further B. Heller, “Über Judas Ischariotes in der jüdischen Legende”, *MGWJ* 76 (1932) 33–43; H.L. Goldschmidt, “Judas II. Eine jüdische Stellungnahme”, *TRE* 17 (1988) 304–307; Dieckmann, *Judas* 122–128; E. Bammel, “Judas in der jüdischen Überlieferung”, in: idem, *Judaica et Paulina. Kleine Schriften II* (WUNT 91; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997) 23–33.

²¹ Schlichting, *Leben Jesu* iv (Vorwort).

²² Bammel, “Judas” 31 (italics mine). He also concludes: “Judas, der Gärtner [Bammel suspects a confusion with Joseph of Arimathea] ist aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach eine Kunstgestalt des antichristlichen Streits” (32).

²³ On the latter, see Dieckmann, *Judas* 145–148.

²⁴ H. Stein-Schneider, “À la recherche du Judas historique. Une enquête exégétique à la lumière des textes de l’Ancien Testament et des *Logia*”, *ETR* 60 (1985) 403–424.

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