



NORWEGIAN  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

# Coping with Judas

---

A Narrative Analysis of the Portrayal of Judas Iscariot  
in the New Testament

**Christine Henriksen Aarflot**

**Supervisor**

Karl Olav Sandnes, Professor of New Testament Studies

*This dissertation is carried out as a part of the education at  
MF Norwegian School of Theology and is therefore approved as a part of this education.*

MF Norwegian School of Theology, autumn 2012

AVH504 - Spesialavhandling med metode / "Thesis and Method" (30 ECTS)

Profesjonsstudiet i teologi / "Professional Degree in Theology"

## Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction.....	3
1.1 Thesis and Motivation .....	3
1.2 Material .....	6
1.3 Method.....	7
1.3.1 Narrative Criticism.....	7
1.3.2 Plot.....	9
1.3.3 Characters and Characterization.....	10
1.4 Structure.....	12
2.0 Judas in the Gospel of Mark.....	13
2.1 Judas' Twofold Relation to the Plot.....	13
2.2 The Markan Passion Narrative (14-16).....	16
2.2.1 The Last Supper (14:17-25) .....	17
2.2.2 Gethsemane (14:43-52).....	19
2.2.3 A Return to Context: The Disciples' Failure.....	20
2.3 Concluding Observations.....	22
3.0 Judas in the Gospel of Matthew.....	23
3.1 Plotting Judas within the Plot.....	23
3.2 The Matthean Passion Narrative (26-28) .....	26
3.2.1 The Last Supper (26:20-29) .....	27
3.2.2 Gethsemane (26:47-56).....	30
3.2.3 Judas' Suicide (27:3-5).....	33
3.4 Concluding Observations.....	35
4.0 Judas in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles.....	36
4.1 Judas and the Plot in the Gospel of Luke .....	36
4.2 The Lukan Passion Narrative (22-24).....	39
4.2.1 The Last Supper (22:14-38) .....	40
4.2.2 On the Mount of Olives (22:47-53) .....	42
4.3 Death, Replacement and Fulfilment in Acts (1:15-26) .....	45
4.4 Concluding Observations.....	48
5.0 Judas in the Gospel of John .....	49
5.1 Plot Relation and Introduction .....	49
5.2 Judas the Thief (12:1-8).....	52
5.3 Judas on Jesus' Path to Glorification .....	54

5.3.1 The Meal and Footwashing (13:1-32).....	54
5.3.2 In the Garden (18:1-11).....	59
5.4 Concluding Observations.....	60
6.0 The Four Portrayals of Judas .....	61
6.1 The Problem and Its Solutions.....	61
6.1.1 Regret .....	61
6.1.2 Necessity, Foreknowledge and Fulfilment .....	62
6.1.3 A Darkening Image .....	64
6.2 Conclusion and Outlook .....	66
7.0 Bibliography.....	69
7.1 Tools .....	69
7.2 Sources .....	69
7.3 Literature.....	69

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Thesis and Motivation

Why does the encounter with Judas Iscariot in the New Testament present such a challenge? Judas' character has been debated ever since the time of the early Christian church. Was he a thief and betrayer, a victim of God's predestination, or vilified by the early church? The following dissertation will attempt to add a voice to the debate about Judas by offering a narrative perspective on his character by asking: *How is Judas Iscariot portrayed in the New Testament narratives? What do these portrayals reveal about the different narratives' understanding of his character?*

The fact that Judas is presented differently in all four gospels and Acts reveals that the early church attempted to understand and explain his character: Judas is offered money for handing Jesus over (Mark 14:10-11), or asks for the money (Matt 26:14-15); he goes to the high priests on his own accord (Mark 14:10; Matt 26:14), or is possessed or ensnared by Satan (Luke 22:3; John 13:27); he hangs himself (Matt 27:5), or bursts open after falling headlong into a field (Acts 1:18). These are only some of the most obvious disparities in the accounts of Judas' character which will be brought to light and examined in their appropriate contexts later on. It is noteworthy, however, that the versions of the Gospels and Acts that we have before us today are testament to increasingly negative portrayals of Judas. Yet in spite of their divergences, it would appear that none of these narratives have been able to offer a fully satisfying answer about how and why Judas handed Jesus over. Thus

the New Testament represents the beginnings of and initiates the debates about Judas throughout the following centuries.

This continued debate can be illustrated by examples reaching back as early as to the first half of the second century, where the third fragment of Papias describes Judas in the following manner:

Judas walked about in this world a great example of impiety, his flesh so swollen that he found it impossible to pass through a place where a wagon easily passes; indeed, this was true of the mass of his head alone. For his eyelids, they say, were so swollen up that he did not see light at all, and his eyes could not be detected even with the help of a physician's optical instrument; that is how deep they were embedded below the surface. His genitals appeared more loathesome and larger than the private parts of any other; and even when he relieved himself, there passed through them, to his shame, pus and worms which flowed together from every part of his body. After many agonies and punishments, they say, he died in his own place, which to the present day is desolate and uninhabited from the ill odor; nor can anyone to this day pass that spot without holding his nose. Even on the ground the flow which spread from his flesh was so great!<sup>1</sup>

This description, which appears to be physiognomic in its attempt to reveal something about Judas' character on the basis of his body,<sup>2</sup> is clearly critical of Judas. The Gnostic *Gospel of Judas*, also dating from the second century, presents a slightly different picture of Judas by setting him apart from the other disciples and making him privy to Jesus' special teachings: while it is contended whether Judas can be said to be a hero of this "gospel",<sup>3</sup> Judas is told by Jesus that he is going to "sacrifice the man that clothes me"<sup>4</sup> [i.e. Jesus], and thus given more knowledge than the other disciples.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Polycarp, Martyrdom of Polycarp, Fragments of Papias*, trans. William R. Schoedel, vol. 5, *Patres Apostolici* (New York: T. Nelson, 1967), pp. 111-112. This book also makes note of the existence of a shorter version of this description of Judas, and explains that the more extensive details are sometimes attributed to Appolinarius. Regardless of who has written this text however, the account is testament to a fascination with Judas. For the shorter version, see *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenæus*, The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Karl Olav Sandnes, *Belly and Body in the Pauline Epistles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 24-26.

<sup>3</sup> It is an ongoing debate whether Judas is a hero or a villain in *The Gospel of Judas*, cf. Glenn Wehus, "Judasevangeliet: En presentasjon av en nylig gjenfunnet antikk tekst," *Klassisk Forum* 2(2009). 91-93. For a discussion and negative conclusion about whether the *Gospel of Judas* can be defined as a gospel, see N. T. Wright, *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus: Have We Missed the Truth About Christianity?* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> *The Gospel of Judas: From Codex Tchacos* trans. Rodolphe Kasser, Marvin W. Meyer, and Gregor Wurst (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2006), p. 43.

Remarks about Judas were not only made by Christians, however. In *Contra Celsum*, Origen's apologetic rebuttal against Celsus reveals the affront perceived by non-Christians in the disciple's betrayal. The arguments seem to centre on the fact that Judas was close to Jesus but nevertheless apostatized,<sup>5</sup> and on the thought that "No good general who led many thousands was ever betrayed".<sup>6</sup> In response to Celsus, Origen uses Judas as an example to show how even one of the worst could not remain unaffected by Jesus' teachings: "[...] it is clear that the teachings of Jesus had been able to put into him some capacity for repentance, and were not utterly despised or abominated by the traitor."<sup>7</sup> He also emphasizes that Judas passed judgment upon himself by committing suicide.<sup>8</sup> There are several interesting things about Origen's reply, not least that he does not find Judas wholly evil. But just as important is the way *Contra Celsum* leads to the question of why and how someone claimed to be the Son of God can be deserted by his own, and thus connects Judas to Christology and consequently the validity of the Christian message. In this way, the Judas figure can be seen to pave the way for theological questions high on the agenda.

The above is only one of several reasons why Judas presents a challenge. The possible implications of his handing Jesus over touch upon both theological and existential concerns: How could someone, who had preached the gospel, healed, and cast out demons on Jesus' behalf, suddenly turn against his teacher? Where could someone so close to Jesus have gone so wrong? Moreover, Judas' participation at the Last Supper raises the question of this meal as a meal of forgiveness: Judas was there, but was he forgiven for handing Jesus over? Last but not least, the canonical gospels portray Judas' betrayal as inevitable to the divine drama: what does this do to the concept of free will? Judas may have handed Jesus over, but was not God behind it all, pulling the strings?

Scholars of the last two centuries have remained attentive to these questions. However, the majority of Judas scholars have, until now, been either theologians concerned with Judas' place in the doctrine of redemption,<sup>9</sup> or biblical scholars rooted in the historical critical tradition, searching for clues in the history in or behind the New Testament in order to discover and/or explain Judas' motives.<sup>10</sup> In this regard, it is interesting to note that the "literary turn" in biblical studies posits that

---

<sup>5</sup> Origen: *Contra Celsum*, ed. Henry Chadwick, trans. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), pp. 76-77 (ch. 11).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77, see also p. 78 (ch. 12).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. Anthony Cane (Anthony Cane, *The Place of Judas Iscariot in Christology* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005), Harald Wagner, Helmut Gollwitzer, Karl Barth, Bernhard Dieckmann, the latter four of whom are referred to in William Klassen, *Judas: Betrayer or Friend of Jesus?* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), pp. 177-193.

<sup>10</sup> Examples of such theories about Judas' motives include Klassen's argument that "Judas did his God-given duty and contributed to the realization of Jesus' mission by handing him over", cf. Klassen, *Judas*, p. 203; that

history is a gap that has pulled the historical Judas out of our reach.<sup>11</sup> Because it is as part of story that Judas is presented to us, narrative criticism becomes a natural way of approaching his character. Judas lives on as a literary character in the Four Gospels and Acts. Even if the Judas “behind the text” may be lost, the Judas “in the text” is there, and may be discovered in the interaction between the text and the reader.<sup>12</sup> Through their presentation of Judas, each narrative invites an understanding of the former disciple. As such, they each in their own way attempt to make sense of the man who handed Jesus over. These attempts, then, will be the object of my study.

## 1.2 Material

The primary sources of my investigation will be the gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John, and the Acts of the Apostles. These all offer narrative frameworks within which different portrayals of Judas might be discerned. I will be reading Luke-Acts as a unity, even though the shift in plot, time, space, and protagonists make a strong case for reading them as two separate *stories*, and it is contended among scholars on what terms such a unity may or may not exist.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that even though the stories, that is, the events related, are different, they are nevertheless intimately connected. The founding of the early church in Acts is a result of the story about Jesus in Luke. Not only are these two books thus connected in terms of plot,<sup>14</sup> but both are addressed to the same audience.<sup>15</sup> I would therefore argue that the understanding of Judas’ character in Acts relies upon the one presented in Luke, and so the portrayal of Judas given in Luke and Acts should be read as one, even though tensions between them are not excluded from the outset. However, the scope

---

Judas found Jesus’ messianic claims to be too radical and therefore delivered him up, cf. Kay Ehling, "Warum lieferte Judas Jesus aus?" *Biblische Notizen: Aktuelle Beiträge zur Exegese der Bibel und ihrer Welt* 139 (2008); or that Judas by handing Jesus over would make Jesus act as the triumphant Messiah, cf. Moncure D. Conway, "Judas the Iscariot," *The North American Review* 146, no. 376 (1888).

<sup>11</sup> Kim Paffenroth’s study of Judas stands in this tradition, which claims that the different presentations of Judas are reductionist in the sense that they will never be able to capture the complex identity of the Judas of history. See Kim Paffenroth, *Judas: Images of the Lost Disciple* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), pp. xi-xii.

<sup>12</sup> How the text and reader interact – and who the reader is - are significant methodological questions, which will be explored further in ch. 1.3.

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of the unity of Luke-Acts, see Mikeal C. Parsons and Richard I. Pervo, who are some of the most notable proponents against the unity of Luke-Acts, cf. Mikeal C. Parsons and Richard I. Pervo, *Rethinking the unity of Luke and Acts* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), and Geir Otto Holmås and Richard Tannehill, who present arguments in favour of their unity, cf. Geir Otto Holmås, *Prayer and Vindication in Luke-Acts: The Theme of Prayer within the Context of the Legitimizing and Edifying Objective of the Lukan Narrative*, Library of New Testament Studies (London: T&T Clark, 2011) and Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, 2 vols., vol. 1 *The Gospel According to Luke* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986).

<sup>14</sup> See my plot definition in ch. 1.3.2 below.

<sup>15</sup> Both are addressed to *Theophilus*, cf. Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1.

of this dissertation does not allow for equal attention to be paid to both narratives, and the greater focus will therefore be on the Gospel of Luke.<sup>16</sup>

The Gospels and Acts can all be defined as narratives in that they are stories which are being told in a certain way: "Narratives have two aspects: story and discourse. *Story* refers to the content of the narrative, what it is about. [...] *Discourse* refers to the rhetoric of the narrative, how the story is told."<sup>17</sup> These two aspects, the "what and how" of narrative will be important to my investigation of the presentation of Judas' character, and I will expand upon this in a moment. The Gospels are narratives in that they tell the story of Jesus life, death, and resurrection, whereas Acts may be defined as a story of the founding of the early church. The Gospels and Acts each contain shorter stories, however, such as miracle stories and parables, and so it is helpful that they in their entirety be classified as "macro-narratives".

As macro-narratives, the Gospels and Acts each have their own specific way of recounting a story. Differences in author, style, vocabulary and metaphors are only a few of the things that distinguish the narratives from each other and create their special rhetoric.<sup>18</sup> In order to understand the portrayal of Judas' character, it is necessary to understand the unique dynamics of the narratives in which he is presented. However, I believe it to be crucial to analyze his character not only on the basis of the macro-narratives, but on the basis of the smaller sections in which he features and how these interact with the macro-narratives. I will do this by first relating Judas' character and the way he is introduced to the plot of each narrative, before I in the appropriate chapters give special attention to the Johannine account of the anointing at Bethany (John 12:1-8), the stories of the Last Supper (Mark 14:17-25, Matthew 26:20-29, Luke 22:14-38), the footwashing and meal (John 13:1-32) the arrest in Gethsemane (Mark 14:43-52, Matthew 26:47-56, Luke 22:47-53, John 18:1-11), Matthew's and Acts' retellings of Judas' death (Matt 27:3-5; Acts 1:15-26), and how all of these relate to the macro-narratives.

## 1.3 Method

### 1.3.1 Narrative Criticism

I have already mentioned that my choice of narrative criticism as an interpretative tool stems from a desire to understand Judas better on the terms he is presented to us: as a character in the New Testament narratives. As a methodological approach, narrative criticism is relatively young: it was

---

<sup>16</sup> See ch. 4.0.

<sup>17</sup> Mark Allan Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?: A New Approach to the Bible* (London: SPCK, 1993), p. 23.

<sup>18</sup> "Rhetoric" is here used widely of the way in which a story is composed, not of any specific rules of composition or persuasion.

introduced to biblical studies in the 1970-80s. By reading the Bible as literature, the focus remains on the finished text and the ways in which it invites certain interpretations.<sup>19</sup> The finished text will here be defined as the one available in Nestle-Aland's *Novum Testamentum Graece*,<sup>20</sup> but any major divergences in the sources significant to the portrayal of Judas will be discussed so as to establish a more accurate textual basis. Quotations from the Bible will be my own translations of the original Greek.

For a narrative critic, knowledge of the time and context in which the texts in question were written may prove vital. Failing to understand for instance important symbolism or social conventions may lead to a complete misunderstanding of the text, and so this dissertation will draw upon insights from historical criticism in order to come as close to an "implied reading" of the text as possible.

While it is impossible to discover the historical author of the text, narrative criticism holds that "the choices of writing that are identified in the text"<sup>21</sup> allow us to form a picture of the *implied author*. These choices, which include everything from style, presentation of characters, and values of the text,<sup>22</sup> are made so that they can be understood by the *implied reader*.<sup>23</sup> In my reading of the Gospels and Acts, I will attempt to approach the narratives from the place of the implied reader. It should be noted that this is not a real reader, but a construct, the "one who actualizes the potential for meaning in a text, who responds to it in ways consistent with the expectations that we may ascribe to its implied author."<sup>24</sup> In order for this potential to be actualized, it is necessary for the reader to assume the system of beliefs, assumptions, and values which are found in the text. All this is not to say that I as a reader do not approach the narratives from a specific context. I am a Lutheran, a student of theology, a woman, a Norwegian etc. I therefore have no illusions that my approach to the narratives will not be coloured by the context in which I find myself, but an awareness of this may hopefully help me a little along the way towards giving a more critical reading of the text.

Seymour Chatman's diagram (see below)<sup>25</sup> illustrates his theory of how a narrative is communicated. The helpfulness of this diagram lies chiefly in its illustration of where the real author and real reader are located in relation to the text, and how the implied author/reader, narrator/narratee are part of

---

<sup>19</sup> Mark Allan Powell, "Narrative Criticism," in *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*, ed. Joel B. Green (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), p. 242.

<sup>20</sup> Eberhard Nestle et al., *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001).

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Marguerat and Yvan Bourquin, *How to Read Bible stories: An Introduction to Narrative Criticism* (London: SCM Press, 1999), p. 13.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

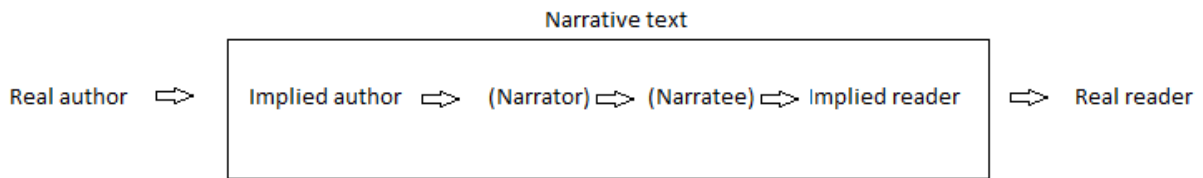
<sup>23</sup> Whether the Gospels and Acts were originally intended to be *listened* to rather than read is a debate I cannot go into here, but in this dissertation I obviously approach them as written texts.

<sup>24</sup> Powell, "Narrative Criticism", p. 243.

<sup>25</sup> Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 151.



the narrative text. It is, however, recognized by scholars today<sup>26</sup> that the arrows should also be pointing from the real reader to the text: the reader brings his or her questions to the text, and meaning is generated in the encounter between them.<sup>27</sup>



While the implied author is the “subject of the narrative strategy”, the text also has a narrator, who is “the voice which guides the reader in the narrative”.<sup>28</sup> In the Gospels and Acts, the narrators are trustworthy, and therefore express (at least part of) the point of view of the implied authors. I will therefore sometimes use “Matthew”, “Mark”, “Luke”, and “John” more generically about both the implied author and narrator, but will maintain a distinction between these when it is called for in my analysis.

At times a *narratee* also appears: “a character inside the narrative to which the narrative is told”.<sup>29</sup> The implied author/reader, narrator/narratee are all constructions *in* the narrative, which is illustrated by the diagram above. In the Gospels and Acts, the narrator is omnipresent and omniscient. (S)he can be everywhere at the same time, and knows everything. Because the narrator is trustworthy, “the reader sticks to the narrator’s story, to his system of values.”<sup>30</sup> This is significant to the understanding of the characters in the Gospels and Acts, and I will return to this after a few words about plot.

### 1.3.2 Plot

Narrative critics use literary categories in order to understand and explain how the rhetoric opens up for a certain reading of the story.<sup>31</sup> One of the most significant of these categories is the “plot”:

The plot in a dramatic or narrative work is constituted by its events and actions, as these are rendered and ordered towards achieving particular emotional and artistic effects.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>26</sup> See Stephen H. Smith, *A Lion with Wings: A Narrative-Critical Approach to Mark's Gospel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), p. 24.

<sup>27</sup> John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), p. 17.

<sup>28</sup> Marguerat and Bourquin, *How To Read Bible Stories*, p. 13.

<sup>29</sup> Kristin Moen Saxegaard, *Character Complexity in the Book of Ruth* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), p. 11; Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, p. 151. Theophilus in Luke-Acts is such a narratee.

<sup>30</sup> Marguerat and Bourquin, *How To Read Bible Stories*, p. 11.

<sup>31</sup> These categories include such elements as the plot (the ordering and sequence of events), conflict, empathy, point of view, setting, symbolism, structural patterns, irony, intertextuality, and more.

The definition above reveals that a plot is more than an event being related: it is *the way* these events are told by the implied author and connected to each other, and *how* the way they are recounted initiates a response from the reader.<sup>33</sup> This is of special importance to the current thesis, because “Each of the evangelists tells essentially the same story, but the plots and emphases of the gospels differ greatly.”<sup>34</sup> The sequence of the events, the conflicts around which they are organized,<sup>35</sup> how the events and themes are presented – these all contribute to the formation of the plot. Moreover, through the ordering and presentation of events, causality is revealed, tension created, and emphases made. The plots of the different Gospels and Acts thus express their individuality, and present different frameworks in which Judas must be understood. He must be “plotted within the plot”, so to speak, for his character to be made sense of.

### 1.3.3 Characters and Characterization

The focal point of my narrative analysis is Judas as a *character*. According to Mark A. Powell, “Characters are the actors in a story, the ones who carry out the various activities that comprise the plot.”<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, the plot and characters are intimately connected. Through their actions and presence, the characters add colour to, and move the story forward.

Narrative critics often adopt E.M. Forster’s (*Aspects of the Novel*, 1927) division of characters into *round* and *flat* ones. The round character is complex: (s)he is *dynamic* in the sense that (s)he may develop throughout the course of the story, represent many or conflicting traits, and “is capable of surprising us.”<sup>37</sup> The flat character, or *type*, is *static* and remains the same throughout the story, and usually represents one single trait. Nevertheless, a character may remain the same throughout the story, yet appear more clearly as the story progresses.<sup>38</sup> In addition to round and flat characters, Adele Berlin sees another character type: the functionaries, or agents, of the plot, who “are there for the effect that they have on the plot or its characters”.<sup>39</sup> Accordingly, the character definition may be divided into three sub-definitions:

---

<sup>32</sup> Meyer Howard Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 6th ed. (Fort Worth, Tex.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993), 159. First found in R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 80.

<sup>33</sup> The reader is here meant to refer to both the *real* and *implied* reader.

<sup>34</sup> Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 85.

<sup>35</sup> Yairah Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2001), pp. 46-47.

<sup>36</sup> Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, p. 51.

<sup>37</sup> Abrams, *Glossary*, p. 24.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 103.

<sup>39</sup> Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), p. 32.

[...] the agents, who are subordinate to the plot; the types, who have a limited and stereotypical range of traits; and the characters, who have a broader range of traits and whose development we can observe [...].<sup>40</sup>

These categories, in spite of being the constructs of literary critics, may help understand the way Judas is presented better. To give an example: If Judas is interpreted only as an agent of the plot, it is easier to see him as an instrument of God's plan which led to Jesus' death and resurrection. Perceived as a full-fledged character, however, it becomes easier to see Judas as a disciple who develops, from good to bad. While I will not make any assumptions about which character type Judas is at this point, I will be using these categories later in order to better explain how he is portrayed.

A character is *characterized* in different ways, either directly or indirectly. A character is described *directly* when the reader is given information about him or her by the narrator, "while indirect characterization is the product of an analysis of the persona's discourse and his/her actions and conduct."<sup>41</sup> These modes of characterization are often referred to as "tell" (direct characterization) and "show" (indirect characterization). In the Gospels and Acts, the narrator is, as we have seen, reliable. What the reader is *shown* about a character can therefore be interpreted in light of what is *told* by the narrator.

I will be interpreting Judas' character through an approach to characterization inspired by parts of John A. Darr's book *On Character Building*.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, in addition to the aspects mentioned above, my analysis will focus on Judas' character in relation to plot, setting, and other characters. A character's function in the plot helps see how or if (s)he develops throughout the story, or if this character can be "identified with a specific plot function".<sup>43</sup> The setting – which can be everything from a geographical, to cultural or social setting<sup>44</sup> - "are the adverbs of literary structure: they designate when, where, and how the action occurs."<sup>45</sup> Later on, we will see that such elements as the setting of the last meal and Jesus' arrest bring Judas' character further into relief.

Judas' character will also be interpreted in its relation to other characters. In the narratives treated in this dissertation, the narrators' values cohere with those presented by God and Jesus in the story. Jesus is the focus of the good news, the protagonist around whom the stories are centred. Judas must therefore also be understood from the way in which his character responds to Jesus, and the

---

<sup>40</sup> Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives*, p. 72.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>42</sup> Darr, *On Character Building*, p. 37-45.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Marguerat and Bourquin, *How To Read Bible Stories*, p. 77-84.

<sup>45</sup> Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, p. 69.

general values of the story.<sup>46</sup> But Judas can also be characterized through contrast, and how his actions are different from or similar to those of other characters.<sup>47</sup>

Attention will also be paid to how Judas is presented in the narrative sequence: whether he develops or stays the same, and how his character is revealed along the way. Another question that will be touched upon is how much of the narrated time (the time of the story – inside the text) is focused around Judas, compared to how much time is devoted to him in the time of narration (the time it takes to read or tell the story – outside the text). An understanding of how Judas features in relation to these categories of time reveals some of his importance to the story. Together with the above, these aspects will help understand Judas within the dynamics of the Gospels and Acts as a whole, for it is within and in relation to the features of their story worlds that the portrayals of him emerge.

## 1.4 Structure

The use of narrative criticism presents this dissertation with certain challenges and limitations: large amounts of text must be covered, at the same time as the focus must be limited to the main elements that serve to illuminate the portrayal of Judas. This means that in order to keep this dissertation within its limits and for the attention to remain on Judas, not every detail can be elaborated upon and issues of less importance will be referred to only briefly. Moreover, my position in some scholarly discussions, which provide a backdrop for some of the arguments to be presented, will be declared but not discussed at length.

The dissertation will be divided into six main sections. Following this introduction, the first four chapters will be devoted to analyzing the portrayal of Judas in Mark, Matthew, Luke-Acts, and John. These sections will begin with a preliminary presentation of Judas' character within the context of each of these macro-narratives. The separate and smaller narrative units in which Judas appears<sup>48</sup> will then be analyzed and interpreted in light of the macro-narratives. By doing this, I hope the literary dynamics of each narrative will provide some insight into what is unique, if anything, about their presentation of Judas' character.

Finally, I will compare and contrast the images of Judas that have emerged. This will also be the concluding chapter, and its main focus will be to review the discoveries made in this dissertation about how the Gospels and Acts can be seen to “cope” with Judas.

---

<sup>46</sup> Cf. the approach to characterization through “Standards of judgment” in David M. Rhoads, Donald Michie, and Joanna Dewey, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2012), p. 102.

<sup>47</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 102-103, for characterization through “Comparison and contrast”.

<sup>48</sup> See ch. 1.2.

It is my hope that by approaching Judas through narrative analysis, this dissertation will be able to shed some light on how the gospels perceive of Judas and, as a result, say something about the theological significance the differing depictions of Judas might divulge. As the debates throughout the centuries have shown, Judas is not an easy character to come to terms with, and the following is an attempt to see how the gospel narratives reconcile themselves with his presence.

## 2.0 Judas in the Gospel of Mark

This chapter seeks to discover how Judas is portrayed in the Gospel according to Mark. In order to do so, I will first take a look at how Judas is introduced (Mark 3:13-19), and how this introduction relates him to the plot. The discoveries made here will serve as a background for my analysis of Judas' portrayal in the passion narrative (chs. 14-16). Here, I will first make some initial remarks about Judas' offer to hand Jesus over to the chief priests and scribes (14:10-11), before I give a more in-depth analysis of what the Last Supper (14:17-25) and Gethsemane (14:43-52) add to Judas' portrayal. While Judas is not mentioned specifically as a partaker at the supper, the Twelve among whom Judas is included are present. Moreover, Jesus' prediction that someone will hand him over (Mark 14:18) clearly points to Judas and makes him central to the meal scene. In Gethsemane, Judas becomes the main instigator of the action from 14:43ff, when he points Jesus out to the authorities<sup>49</sup> and tells them to arrest him. Finally, I will briefly take a look at Judas' act of handing Jesus over in the context of the other disciples' failure to remain by Jesus' side.

### 2.1 Judas' Twofold Relation to the Plot

Judas' relation to the plot in Mark is dependent upon how this plot is defined. R. Alan Culpepper suggests that in the endeavour to find the plot of a narrative, "The beginning, ending, repeated material, tasks of the characters, and nature of the conflicts all provide clues."<sup>50</sup> Gathering these clues, then, leads me to the following definition of the plot in Mark's Gospel:

The Gospel of Marks depicts the protagonist, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, struggling to initiate the coming of God's kingdom in the face of conflicts with non-human forces, the authorities, and his own disciples about the true meaning of God's kingdom and Jesus' identity. This venture results in Jesus' execution on the cross, but those who seek his grave find it empty and are told of his resurrection.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> "Authorities" is here used generically about the chief priests, elders, scribes, Sadducees, and Pharisees.

<sup>50</sup> Culpepper, *Anatomy*, p. 87.

<sup>51</sup> The definition is my own, made in conversation with Rhoads, Michie, and Dewey, *Mark as Story* (see especially pp. 73-74); William Telford, *Mark* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), pp. 112-113; Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman, *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1993),

Judas' relation to the plot can be discerned from the way he is introduced to the story in the calling of the apostles in 3:13-19. The narrator introduces him last of the twelve apostles<sup>52</sup> as "Judas Iscariot, who also handed him over" (3:19). This presentation connects Judas to the plot in two ways: first, as one of Jesus' chosen disciples and the ways they as a character group further and oppose Jesus' initiation of the kingdom of God.<sup>53</sup> Second, Judas' character has an impact on how the plot unfolds through the act of handing Jesus over. Foreshadowed in his introduction, it singles Judas out from the other disciples, and alerts the reader to the role he will be playing in the story.

Some readers will note that my translation of παραδίδωμι in 3:19 differs from the way most bible translations<sup>54</sup> render the word: they read it as "betray", rather than "hand over." This translation, however, has been vigorously contested by William Klassen, who, upon having reviewed several Greek sources finds no linguistic basis for translating παραδίδωμι with "betray".<sup>55</sup> Klassen makes a convincing argument, which is why I in the following mainly will translate this verb with "to hand over". This translation does not exclude the possible interpretation of Judas' act of handing Jesus over as a betrayal in the narrative context, however. I will say more about this later. At the moment it must suffice to note that the passion predictions<sup>56</sup> make it clear that the word is meant to be interpreted negatively by the implied reader, and that παραδίδωμι may contain negative connotations from the first time it is mentioned – if only for the experienced reader.<sup>57</sup> The reason is that this reader will be able to interpret Judas' epithet in light of the authorities' plans to kill Jesus in 3:6. This verse initiates the authorities' conflict with Jesus to the death and thus suggests who the

---

p. 387. This plot definition favours the shorter, and oldest attested, ending of Mark (16:8). Irrespective of what ending is preferred, however, it does not have much bearing on the main conflict.

<sup>52</sup> Although the oldest handwritings vary as to whether the Twelve are called "apostles" in Mark 3:14, they are called apostles in Mark 6:30, which is why I use this designation here.

<sup>53</sup> Like J.D. Kingsbury, I treat the disciples as one, complex (or "full-fledged") character with conflicting traits. Cf. Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1989), 14-21. I also use the term "disciples" about the apostles, as this "overlap among the designations [in Mark] has permitted the use of the generic reference to disciples in contexts that explicitly reference only δώδεκα and ἀπόστολοι." Paul L. Danove, *The Rhetoric of Characterization of God, Jesus, and Jesus' Disciples in the Gospel of Mark*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 2005), p. 102. That is not to say that the disciples and apostles should not at times be treated differently, the most obvious example being that only the apostles are sent out to preach, heal, and cast out demons. Whether and if so, how, the disciples and apostles should be seen to differ in their overall characterization, however, is a debate beyond the scope of this dissertation. For the sake of the present argument, it must suffice to note that Judas is presented as both a disciple and an apostle, and must be considered in relation to the plot in his capacity as both.

<sup>54</sup> παραδίδωμι is translated as "betray" in 3:19 in e.g. the Norwegian *Bibelen* (Oslo: Bibelselskapet, 2011); *The Holy Bible*, New Revised Standard Version ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); *The Holy Bible*, New American Standard Bible ed. (Nashville, Tennessee: Nelson Bibles, 1995).

<sup>55</sup> See Klassen, *Judas*, pp. 47-58.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. the third paragraph down.

<sup>57</sup> I.e. the reader re-reading the Markan text.

recipients of Judas' "handing over" will be. It could therefore be worth noting that Judas is not presented before the plans to kill Jesus have been introduced to the story.

The fact that Judas is listed together with the other apostles serves to link his identity to that of the Twelve as a group. The reverse is also true, however: the identity of the Twelve is defined by their inclusion of someone who later hands Jesus over. Thus Judas' connection to the other disciples offers the implied reader a standard by which to judge him: how does he fulfil his role as a disciple, and how does he compare to the other disciples that Jesus has chosen? Moreover, because the introduction of Judas as the one who will hand Jesus over foreshadows what is to come, Mark 3:13-19 creates a tension between Jesus and the disciples; between Jesus' calling of each of them specifically, and the fact that the Twelve harbour a traitor among them.<sup>58</sup> Why would Jesus choose someone to be with him who would later hand him over?<sup>59</sup> And why did Judas turn his cloak? The tension created here opens up for a possibility of later conflict between Jesus and the disciples.

Together with the other apostles, Judas is called to be with Jesus and to be sent out with authority to preach and cast out demons (3:14-15). Both the mountain setting, which in "Mark's story world connotes nearness to God and is therefore a place of divine-human communication and encounter",<sup>60</sup> and the associations created by their number to the twelve original tribes of Israel, emphasize the importance of the calling and the Twelve as a part of Jesus' ministry. Nevertheless, Judas' relation to the plot through the apostles' mission is only implicit. After the initial scene introducing him in 3:19, Judas is for a while "swallowed up" by the Twelve/disciples' character. He is not mentioned again for a long time, but it must be assumed that he acts together with the Twelve.

Judas' character is not forgotten, however, but is alluded to in the Markan passion predictions: Jesus' passion predictions in Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34 present Jesus as The Son of Man who must suffer, die, and be resurrected. Their repetition signal the importance of the events to which they point, and the necessity of these events is underlined in the first prediction through the Greek word δεῖ ("it is necessary", Mark 8:31). The last two passion predictions provide both a foreshadowing and a glimpse backwards to Judas in the apostle list (3:19) by introducing passive versions of παραδίδωμι ("to hand over"). Because the verb is in the passive, the agent(s) who hand Jesus over are not revealed. The

---

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Danove, *The Rhetoric of Characterization*, p. 124: "The initial indication of negative elements of the disciples' portrayal appears in the evocation of preexisting beliefs that recognize that Judas handed over (παραδίδωμι) Jesus (3:19) [...]."

<sup>59</sup> This question touches upon the Christological issue of Jesus' foreknowledge: if Jesus knew what would happen to him, why did he not prevent it? Was he really able to foresee the future? These questions reveal some of the problems connected with the choice of Judas as a disciple, and are purportedly asked by Celsus. See *Origen: Contra Celsum*, pp. 78-87.

<sup>60</sup> Kingsbury, *Conflict*, p. 93.

passive form could suggest that God is in fact the one who acts,<sup>61</sup> but I would assert that the associations created by the verb within the narrative are not in favour of this reading: For the reader, the verb “to hand over” initially points backwards to Judas (3:19) and the imprisonment of John the Baptist (1:14), and as the story progresses, the verb also comes to refer to the actions of the chief priest, elders, scribes and council when they surrender Jesus to Pilate (15:1), and Pilate hands Jesus over to be crucified (15:15). In this way, παραδίδωμι negatively aligns all these people to Jesus, including Judas.<sup>62</sup>

## 2.2 The Markan Passion Narrative (14-16)

Judas appears as an acting individual for the first time in the Markan passion narrative. The chief priests and scribes’ plans to seize and kill Jesus (14:1-2) and Jesus’ anointment at Bethany (14:3-9) foreshadow Jesus’ approaching death, and provide the backdrop for Judas’ reintroduction to the story. Judas is presented in much the same way as he was in the apostle list: the narrator reminds the reader that Judas is “one of the Twelve” (14:10), recalling the group to which he belongs. But while the reader was previously only “told” that Judas would hand Jesus over, he is now “shown” to initiate the deed: he goes to the chief priests “in order to hand him [Jesus] over to them” (Mark 14:10) and thus actively moves the story towards the turning point from Jesus’ ministry to Jesus’ passion. The reader is not told how Judas knew that the chief priests wanted to seize Jesus, or what his motives are. This allows his action rather than his person to be highlighted, and indicates what later seems to be confirmed, that the purpose of his character is only to fulfil the passion predictions in 9:31 and 10:33-34, and to give a face to the (first) person to hand Jesus over.

Judas’ deal with the chief priests is sealed in 14:11 when they, delighted, offer Judas money. His actions make it clear that Judas takes their side in their opposition against Jesus: from now on, he acts on their behalf, and seeks the right moment to hand Jesus over. From this point onwards, Judas is no longer only associated with the plotline that concerns Jesus and his disciples, but also comes to represent the authorities’ conflict with Jesus.<sup>63</sup> It is in the light of this context that the account of the Last Supper must be read.

---

<sup>61</sup> The passive is sometimes used when God is to be understood as the agent of the action, cf. §126d4 in Ragnar Leivestad and Bjørn Helge Sandvei, *Nytestamentlig gresk grammatikk*, 3rd ed. (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1996), p. 228.

<sup>62</sup> Danove, *The Rhetoric of Characterization*, p. 71.

<sup>63</sup> The authorities have been presented as opposed to Jesus ever since ch. 2:6-7. For discussions about what this conflict involves and how the authorities are characterized, see e.g. Smith, *A Lion with Wings*; Rhoads, Michie, and Dewey, *Mark as Story*, or Danove, *The Rhetoric of Characterization*.



### 2.2.1 The Last Supper (14:17-25)

It is evening when Jesus takes place at the table together with the Twelve (14:17-18). The last time the words “the Twelve” were used was in 14:10, when Judas, “one of the Twelve”, went to the chief priests. The fact that all twelve are present in the room therefore reminds the reader that Judas is also there, even though his name is not mentioned. This implication is strengthened when Jesus’ words focus the first part of the scene (14:17-21) around Judas’ deception, foretelling that one of his disciples will hand him over (14:18).

Jesus’ words make concrete what the last two passion predictions (9:31; 10:33-34) only hinted at: Jesus will be handed over. But for the first time, it is made clear to the disciples that one of them will perform the deed.<sup>64</sup> Consequently, the foretelling creates a division between Jesus and his disciples because the act will be committed by one of them. However, the disciples are sorrowful and uncomprehending, and act as one body in asking “It is not I?” (Mark 14:19). The interrogative particle used here (μήτι) signals that they all expect a negative answer. The apostles ask the question one by one (εἷς κατὰ εἷς), which allows the reader to understand that Judas, so often referred to as *one* of the Twelve, must be among them, lying even as the words leave his lips.

Accordingly, even though the most obvious division is between Jesus and his disciples, an even subtler division is created between Judas and the Twelve: in telling about the disciples’ distress, the narrator creates a sympathetic impression of the disciples who are shocked at the prospect of handing Jesus over, but the (implied and real) reader knows that Judas cannot be among the truly regretful. The setting of the meal, a gathering of community and fellowship, underlines the contrast between the fellowship that Jesus invites his disciples to take part in, and the impending breakup of this fellowship in Gethsemane.

In response to the disciples’ question, Jesus reasserts his declaration. He concretizes that “one of you” (v. 18) refers to “one of the Twelve” (v. 20),<sup>65</sup> indeed, it is one who is dipping in the same bowl as he (v. 20). It is unlikely that the “dipping” is meant to single Judas out: the middle participle most likely refers to the ongoing meal, and the same bowl was probably used by both Jesus and all the

<sup>64</sup> John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 2002), p. 394.

<sup>65</sup> Craig A. Evans suggests that the apostles may not have been the only ones present, and that Jesus’ reassertion is therefore a specification of the original declaration, which would have included any of the disciples present. This may be the case, and if so, he is right that it “would only heighten the shock of the betrayal”, Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 2001), p. 377. As Mark so often shifts between writing “disciples” and “the Twelve”, however, this observation lacks certainty – and more importantly to the present argument, the consequence is the same: a division is created between Jesus and his followers.

apostles.<sup>66</sup> Thus Judas' identity remains hidden, but the destructive consequences of his act to his fellowship with the other disciples and Jesus are emphasized by the repeated focus on the perpetrator as being one of Jesus' closest followers. The effect of the division that is underlined here through the contrast between the fellowship setting and the reader's knowledge of Judas' intention, is a possible shift in how παραδίδομι may be understood. Even though the word still translates "to hand over", it now invokes an understanding of Judas' deed as a betrayal of fellowship or discipleship.

Jesus' foretelling is followed by a "Son of Man" saying, which connects the Last Supper to the passion predictions and their stress upon the "divine necessity of suffering".<sup>67</sup> The saying is divided into two: the first part underlines the necessity of Jesus' death, and the second is a cry of woe. The origins of the woe cry can be traced back to the prophetic judgment oracles, and should therefore not be interpreted as a cry of compassion,<sup>68</sup> but as a denunciation of Judas' impending action. This is underlined when Jesus concludes that it would be better for the person who hands him over never to have been born (Mark 14:21). It has been speculated whether the woe cry should also be seen as a call to repentance: Just as Israel's prophets gave judgment so that people might mend their ways, Jesus' cry might have been meant as an encouragement for Judas to repent.<sup>69</sup> While such a reading is not excluded by the text, the narrative has so firmly fixed Judas' betrayal as a part of the way events must unfold that it becomes difficult to see how the woe cry can have this function. Instead, it should be seen to underline Jesus' foreknowledge of what is about to happen, and to condemn Judas' action.

The focus is moved from Judas to Jesus' approaching death in 14:22-25. These verses are replete with symbolism that foreshadow Jesus' suffering and death, but only one thing will be noted here: By offering his disciples to eat from the bread as his body and drink the wine (implied by the cup) as his blood, Jesus offers them a covenantal fellowship through his death.<sup>70</sup> This contrasts heavily with the implied dissolution of fellowship in the first part of the meal, and may thus be said to offer some kind of restoration of the disciples, with the exception of the woe-denounced Judas, to the implied reader.

In sum, the Last Supper foreshadows and condemns Judas' action of handing over of Jesus. Jesus and the disciples are initially presented on opposing sides because the disciples harbour a traitor among

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Joachim Gnllka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus: Mk 8,27-16,20*, 2 vols., vol. 2:2, Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (Zürich: Benziger, 1979), p. 237.

<sup>67</sup> Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, p. 394.

<sup>68</sup> Pace Klassen, *Judas*, p. 83.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, p. 396.

them. By describing their sorrow, however, the narrator separates the disciples from Judas' hypocrisy, and their fellowship with Jesus is reaffirmed through the covenant that is established. This reaffirmation cannot be said to include Judas, whose actions are condemned in the woe cry in v. 21.

### 2.2.2 Gethsemane (14:43-52)

Mark 14:41-42 marks the transition from Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane to the arrival of Judas and the time of Jesus' arrest. Here Jesus heralds "the hour" that signals the commencement of his passion,<sup>71</sup> and foretells what is about to happen: "The hour is come; look, the Son of Man is handed over into the hands of sinners" (14:41). The verb παραδίδοται ("is handed over") echoes back to Jesus' prediction at the Last Supper (14:18, 21), and links the action to Judas. He is "the one handing me over" whose arrival is announced by Jesus in 14:42. Thus the hour of Jesus' passion is connected to Judas' action, and it is the arrest of Jesus and its immediate consequences that make up the focus of the following verses (43-52).

The narrator reveals what unfolds through actions and direct speech ("show"). These increase the time of narration, which underline the importance of the unfolding event. Judas' character emerges based on what he says and does. He enters the garden, still described as "one of the Twelve". But at this point, it becomes clear that Judas has separated from the other Twelve: it is not in their company, but together with the armed crowd (ὄχλος)<sup>72</sup> that represents the chief priests, scribes, and elders that he arrives (v. 43). The spatial division implies that Judas' place is no longer with the Twelve, but in league with Jesus' detainers.<sup>73</sup> As such, he now represents those that wish to see Judas dead. Whether Judas is aware of their intention to kill Jesus or not, the reader is not told. Yet the passion predictions and Jesus' foretelling at the Last Supper have irrevocably placed Judas at the side of Jesus' executioners, and the action about to unfold only confirms Judas' place in it.

Judas' name is omitted when he is next described as "the one handing him over" in v. 44, and the reader is told of the sign by which he has arranged to identify Jesus. Thus his action, not his person, is in focus. Judas' order, "The one whom I shall kiss is he; seize him, and lead him away safely" (v. 44),

---

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Mark 14:35, where Jesus prays that he will not have to face "the hour", which refers to his suffering and death.

<sup>72</sup> The crowd is mentioned so often in Mark, it may be defined as a minor character on its own. Like the disciples, the crowd is presented with conflicting traits – often negative ones. In taking the side of Jesus' opponents in Gethsemane, the crowd, like Judas, chooses a side and become accomplices in bringing about Jesus' passion (see also Mark 15:11-15).

<sup>73</sup> It is not rare for Mark to use space to underline people's closeness to or distance from Jesus, compare i.e. Mark 3:31-34. For a treatment of Mark's use of space, see e.g. Eric Clark Stewart, *Gathered Around Jesus: An Alternative Spatial Practice in the Gospel of Mark* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2009).

presents a man in charge of the situation.<sup>74</sup> This is underlined by v. 45: Judas *arrives*, immediately *walks over* to Jesus, *says* “Rabbi”, and *kisses* him. The four verbs emphasize the swiftness of the action and Judas’ determination, and are succeeded by Jesus’ immediate arrest (v. 45).

Judas’ salutation of Jesus is deceptively polite; “Rabbi” appears to have been a common form of greeting, and is in Mark also used with respect by Peter in 9:5 and 11:21. The kiss is also a sign of friendly greeting, the verb *καταφιλέω* itself stemming from friendship terminology. Thus the “compound Greek verb *katephilēsen* seems to heighten the intensity conveyed by *philēsō* in 14:44 and further emphasizes Judas’ hypocrisy.”<sup>75</sup> Together with greeting and deed, the kiss masks the actual intent of Judas’ sign, whose real end is the detention of Jesus. Judas is thus portrayed as a false friend, his deception having been implied from the first time he was named as the one “who also handed him over”, hinted at when the disciples one by one asked “It is not me?” during the Last Supper, and finally confirmed in Gethsemane.

Violence ensues (v. 47), but is halted when Jesus addresses his captors. He speaks to them in the second person plural, with the result that focus is removed from Judas to the armed crowd. Judas’ deed being done, he seems to no longer be of any importance, and is not mentioned again by Mark. Jesus, however, states that he is being arrested “so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled” (v. 49). Although it is difficult to say exactly what Scriptural passage is referred to here, the reference places Judas’ deed and Jesus’ arrest in a framework of divine necessity: what has come to pass has come to pass because it must, because the Scriptures, and by implication God, has ordained it so. In this way, Judas unknowingly aids God’s plan.<sup>76</sup> Having spoken, Jesus’ disciples (the referents of “everyone”, v. 50) all flee as Jesus foretold they would in 14:27. Even the man dressed in no more than a linen cloth escapes the scene, naked: “The complete collapse of Jesus’ following is seen in the flight of the naked young man.”<sup>77</sup> Jesus’ abandonment and separation from his own is thus absolute.

### 2.2.3 A Return to Context: The Disciples’ Failure

The investigation of how Judas is portrayed in Gethsemane is not complete without a look at the context enshrining his betrayal. Judas’ actions in Gethsemane are framed by the failures of other

<sup>74</sup> Joachim Gnilka (Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus: Mk 8,27-16,20*, 2:2, p. 269) suggests that Judas’ cowardice can be discerned in the order to lead Jesus away *safely*, but no such cowardice is indicated by Judas’ following action.

<sup>75</sup> Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, p. 415.

<sup>76</sup> This paradox is revealed particularly well through the Mark W.G. Stibbe’s use of Greimas’ actantial analysis. According to this, Judas can be seen both as a *helper* and *opponent* in relation to the plot: he is a helper in terms of aiding Jesus to fulfil his task, and an *opponent* in terms of attempting to hinder him from doing so. Mark W. G. Stibbe, *John’s Gospel*, ed. John Court, New Testament Readings (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 39-46.

<sup>77</sup> Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, p. 427.

disciples immediately preceding (14:26-31; 14:32-42) and succeeding (14:66-72) Jesus' arrest. These, I will argue, put Judas' betrayal into context and perspective.

### **2.2.3.1 Mark 14:32-42**

Jesus enters Gethsemane with his disciples in 14:32. Together with Peter, James, and John, he retreats from the others, and asks the three apostles to keep watch while he prays. They fall asleep, however, and not only once: thrice their sleeps separates them from Jesus and his express wish. Jesus admonishes them, but gives an interpretation of their weakness in 14:38, when he affirms that "the spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh weak". In this way, an explanation, but no excuse, is given for the disciples' failure.

The disciples' sleep prefigures their complete abandonment of Jesus in 14:50. Just as important, however, is the way this scene reminds the reader of all the other times the disciples have failed. Throughout the Gospel, Jesus has often said something which the disciples either fail to understand,<sup>78</sup> misunderstand,<sup>79</sup> or respond to with too little faith.<sup>80</sup> The disciples' failure to stay awake at Jesus' bidding is therefore only the last in a long line of things that place the disciples in opposition to Jesus, and consequently creates a buildup to Judas' betrayal by reminding the reader that he is one among many flawed disciples. Judas is, after all, "one of the twelve", as the narrator reminds the reader upon his arrival (14:43).

However, the disciples' actions in Gethsemane offer more contrasts to Judas than similarities. One important clue is given in 14:38: the disciples' sleep is understood to be the fault of their weak bodies, not their willing spirits. Just as the disciples continue to both aid Jesus and hinder him throughout the Gospel,<sup>81</sup> and can therefore neither be stereotyped as either good or bad, so does this verse remind the reader that their opposition against Jesus is not completely unredeemable. Their abandonment of Jesus is passive, whereas Judas actively seeks Jesus' arrest. In this way, these disciples contrast with Judas, whose actions are committed with a determination that the other disciples are not revealed to possess in their abandonment of Jesus in 14:50.

### **2.2.3.2 Mark 14:26-31; 14:66-72**

A second comparison may be made between Judas and Peter. While they are walking out to the Mount of Olives, Peter promises Jesus that he will never turn away from him (Mark 14:26-31). He belies his words in 14:66-72, where he denies Jesus thrice. The contrast between Judas and Peter can

<sup>78</sup> E.g. 4:10-13; 5:31, 6:51-52; 7:17-18; 8:16-21.

<sup>79</sup> E.g. 8:16.

<sup>80</sup> E.g. 4:40-41.

<sup>81</sup> The disciples, it must be remembered, are not only negatively portrayed: they immediately follow Jesus when he calls them (1:18; 2:14), are given the secret of the kingdom of God (4:11), the apostles heal people, preach the gospel, and exorcise demons (6:12-13), etc.

therefore be considered a contrast between actions and words. Judas and Peter both deny Jesus, Judas with his actions, and Peter with his words. But whereas Judas' greeting of Jesus is seemingly friendly ("rabbi", 14:45) and Peter's denial (14:68, 70, 71) appears to separate him from Jesus, their actions contradict their words: Judas hands Jesus over to his death, but Peter has in fact followed Jesus after initially abandoning him, and cries when he realizes that he has done what Jesus predicted he would do (14:72). The reader is therefore invited to feel sympathy for Peter, but no such sentiment is encouraged on Judas' behalf.

Throughout Mark, Judas is continuously referred to as "one of the Twelve". Rather than creating a positive expectation that he will not fail, however, Judas' identity as one of Jesus' chosen disciples also links him to their failures. Just like Judas' action is foreseen by Jesus in the passion predictions, so is the other disciples' abandonment of Jesus a fulfilment of his foretelling in 14:27. Thus Judas' betrayal of Jesus can be seen as the peak of the disciples' failure of Jesus in this Gospel. Yet even so, Judas' action contrasts with the other disciples' failures by being void of redemptive traits. At no time does the implied author or narrator invite a reconciling interpretation of his betrayal. In this way, even though Judas is one of the Twelve, he goes beyond them, and is finally separated from them by taking the side of the authorities.

### **2.3 Concluding Observations**

Judas' character is portrayed as an *agent* of the plot in Mark: his sole function is to bring about the shift from Jesus' public ministry to his passion by handing Jesus over to the chief priests. All his actions as an individual are an expansion of his initial presentation in the apostle list as "the one who also handed him over" (3:19). In other words, the reader is first told of Judas' function, and then shown it through his words and deeds in the passion narrative.

There is a subtle irony in Judas' role as an agent. In handing Jesus over, Judas comes to serve the double task of aiding God's plan through the fulfilment of Scripture, *at the same time* as he aids Jesus' opponents. Judas' actions are thus encompassed by God's divine plan, but are nevertheless not excused.

The potential richness in Judas' portrayal stems from the narrator's repeated recognition of him as "one of the Twelve" and the ways in which this allows for contrast and comparison to the rest of the disciples. Judas' failure can be seen as one of their many failures, but is nevertheless different from these: His conspiracy with the authorities and surrender of Jesus place him in opposition to the rest

of the apostles and separate him from their group.<sup>82</sup> Thus, while Judas enters the story as a disciple, he cannot be said to exit it as one. Consequently, even though Judas only has one function in the plot, he is not a static character: he goes from being one of Jesus' disciples, to abandoning his master.

### 3.0 Judas in the Gospel of Matthew

In this chapter, I will be looking at how Judas is portrayed in the Gospel of Matthew. After having made some observations about Judas' initial presentation (9:35-10:42) and his connection to the plot, I will move on to the Matthean passion narrative (chs. 26-28). Here, Judas' part in the conspiracy against Jesus will provide a backdrop for a careful analysis of how his character appears on the basis of the Last Supper (26:20-29), his role in Gethsemane (26:47-56), and ultimately, his suicide (27:3-5).

Much of Matthew's characterization of Judas is similar to Mark's.<sup>83</sup> Where this is the case, I will not repeat the discoveries of the previous chapter, except by way of summary or cross-reference. Instead, I will focus on what makes Matthew's presentation unique, and use Mark as a foil where this is warranted. We shall see that the narrative context in Matthew and its account of Judas' suicide place his character in a visible tension and make this Gospel's characterization of Judas distinct.

#### 3.1 Plotting Judas within the Plot

The plot in Matthew may be defined in the following manner:

The Gospel of Matthew depicts Jesus Christ, the Son of God, fulfilling Scripture through his life, words, and deeds, as he endeavours to make known to Israel the imminence and presence of the kingdom of heaven. In this venture, Jesus is faced with the impediments presented by his disciples, the people, and non-human forces, and he is brought into increasing conflict with the religious leaders over the nature of his authority. Their rejection of Jesus leads to his execution, but his subsequent resurrection is followed by the universalization of his mission.<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>82</sup> This interpretation is also made in one of Mark's longer endings, where "the Eleven" rather than "the Twelve" are referred to (16:14).

<sup>83</sup> Comparisons to Mark are here made as comparisons between two *narratives*, not between sources.

<sup>84</sup> My own definition, written in conversation with Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988) and Ryken and Longman, *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible*, pp. 383-384.

Judas' double connection to the plot is made clear in Matt 10:1-4, where he is called to be an apostle together with eleven other disciples. His first role is thus as a one of the Twelve apostles<sup>85</sup> and the ways in which they further and hinder Jesus' message; his second is revealed through his epithet as the one "who also handed him [Jesus] over". What this action will entail is not elaborated upon, but it should be noted that παραδίδωμι has already gained negative connotations through its use in 4:12 and 5:25 and is therefore potentially ominous.

Except for a few different names and the pairing of the apostles, the apostle list in Matthew 10:2-4 characterizes Judas in much the same way as in Mark: He is listed last of the twelve apostles, as "Judas Iscariot, who also handed him over" (Matt 10:4). Matthew here has Ἰσκαριώτης, whereas Mark had Ἰσκαριώθ, but the meaning of either version of the name is, in spite of much debate, lost to the reader.<sup>86</sup> In Matthew, however, Judas' place as *last* in the list of apostles is made somewhat clearer to the reader, as an implication of the fact that Peter is listed and specifically mentioned as the *first* of the apostles (10:2). Why Judas is mentioned last, however, is not yet revealed; his epithet provides a clue that will only be solved later.

As one of the Twelve, Judas is called by Jesus to cast out unclean spirits and heal (10:1), to wake up dead, and preach the imminence of the kingdom of heaven (10:7). These tasks resemble Jesus' previous actions,<sup>87</sup> with the result that "The clearest analogy between Jesus and the disciples in Matthew's Gospel is that of their respective ministries."<sup>88</sup> The apostles' work becomes an extension of Jesus', and throughout the missionary discourse that follows in chapter 10, Jesus emphasizes their common identity with him several times. This is perhaps done most strongly in 10:40a: "He who receives you, receives me".<sup>89</sup> Although Judas is not mentioned specifically, he is nevertheless one of the addressees of Jesus' discourse. The text therefore also creates a potential for a positive impression of Judas, because he as one of the Twelve is so strongly connected to Jesus, both in

---

<sup>85</sup> After Jesus has called the apostles in ch. 10, "disciples" and "apostles" are used more or less interchangeably in Matthew, except where the context reveals a distinction.

<sup>86</sup> Suggestions include, but are not limited to, "Man from Kerioth", cf. Rudolph Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium: Einleitung und Kommentar zu Kap. 1,1 - 8,26*, vol. 2:1, Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 1976), p. 207; "dyer", cf. Albert Ehrman, "Judas Iscariot and Abba Saqqara," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97, no. 4 (1978); "liar," "hypocrite", cf. Charles Cutler Torrey, "The Name 'Iscariot'," *Harvard Theological Review* 36, no. 1 (1943); "chokiness"/"constriction", cf. Joan E. Taylor, "The Name 'Iskarioth' (Iscariot)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129, no. 2 (2010).

<sup>87</sup> Cf. e.g. 4:23-24; 9:24.

<sup>88</sup> David R. Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), p. 57.

<sup>89</sup> Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, *Sacra Pagina Series* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1991), p. 154.



mission and in suffering.<sup>90</sup> Even though Judas is not mentioned again for a while after 10:4, “the reader is to assume that Judas is present when “the disciples” or “the twelve” appear in the story.”<sup>91</sup>

The introduction of Judas’ character, which includes both potentially ominous (he is going to hand over Jesus) and potentially positive (he is an apostle) elements, locates Judas within a tension between promise and failure in Matthew. This tension persists throughout the Gospel: While the missionary discourse makes it possible to see Judas’ identity as firmly grounded in his role as an apostle, there are also indications that Judas is not completely tied to this group. This may be further illustrated by the discrepancy between the passion predictions on the one hand, and in Jesus’ promise to the disciples in 19:28 on the other: The Pharisees’ plot to kill Jesus is introduced in 12:14, and his passion predictions in 16:21, 17:22-23, and 20:17-19 all alert the reader to Jesus’ fate.<sup>92</sup> Just as in Mark, the first of these predictions signals the *necessity* (δεῖ) of Jesus’ death. This prediction contains one of eight uses of δεῖ in Matthew,<sup>93</sup> four of which point to a necessity of the things that will come to pass as part of divine stipulation (16:21; 17:10; 24:6; 26:54). The first and last of these locate Jesus’ passion in God’s plan, and 17:10 also links the coming of Elijah to Jesus’ passion (17:10-12). In this way, Matthew makes clear throughout the Gospel that the events of the narrative are dependent on God’s will. By implication, Judas always operates within this framework and his actions serve to fulfil God’s plan. Yet it is not thereby said that Judas’ actions in Gethsemane are excused by the implied author, as will be made clear later.

It is only in the second and third passion predictions, however, that Judas is brought to mind. Here παραδίδωμι (which is also used in Judas’ epithet) is tied together with Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection. The use of the verb illustrates the tension in which Judas’ character exists: “to hand over” was also used in the missionary discourse in 10:17, 19, and 21, in a context that warned the apostles about the trying consequences they must face when following Jesus. Thus the word has been used before, about threats that, Judas, as an apostle, must potentially face. But while Judas was previously one of the potential objects of “being handed over”, the passion predictions remind the reader that Judas will also be an agent of this action. The word thus subtly places Judas on the side of those opposing Jesus and his apostles and foreshadows the role he will play together with the chief priests’ and elders. These are also mentioned as agents of “handing over”, implicitly in 17:22-23 and

<sup>90</sup> Cf. e.g. 10:22.

<sup>91</sup> Richard Paul Carlson, "From Villain to Tragic Figure: The Characterization of Judas in Matthew," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 37, no. 6 (2010), p. 473.

<sup>92</sup> The passion predictions are not the only foreshadowings of Jesus’ death in Matthew, cf. e.g. 12:39-40, but the circumstances surrounding Jesus’ passion are made more explicit in the passion predictions.

<sup>93</sup> “δεῖ” in John R. Kohlenberger, Edward W. Goodrick, and James A. Swanson, *The Exhaustive Concordance to the Greek New Testament*, Zondervan Greek Reference Series (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1995), p. 1254.

explicitly in 20:18-19, where they are prophesied to hand Jesus over to his crucifixion. Thus, when Jesus' passion begins, Judas is already implicated in it together with the chief priests and elders.

The tension between Judas as an apostle and Judas as the one who hands Jesus over also comes to the fore in 19:28. Here, Jesus promises his apostles that they will sit on twelve eschatological thrones together with the Son of Man.<sup>94</sup> It seems obvious that Judas must be one of the Twelve included in the promise, but there is a gap between Jesus' words and Judas' role in the conspiracy against Jesus that Matthew does not solve. Instead, the characterization of Judas becomes more negative. To this we shall now turn.

### 3.2 The Matthean Passion Narrative (26-28)

The narrator reintroduces Judas to the plot in 26:14-16. The word "then" (τότε) creates a link to the foregoing scene where Jesus was anointed at Bethany (26:6-13), and Judas' approach of the chief priests thus presents a "strong contrast to the previous meal fellowship established at Bethany between Jesus and his disciples and other followers..."<sup>95</sup> In contrast to Mark, the narrator has moved "one of the Twelve" to the head of the sentence. This creates an emphasis on Judas' belonging to the group of apostles,<sup>96</sup> and makes what is he doing appear all the more tragic.

Judas' character is further revealed by his question to the chief priests: "What do you want to give me if I hand him over to you?" (26:15). The words underline Judas' initiative and hints at his greed. This presents the only potential motif behind Judas' act that can be found in Matthew.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, Judas' question serves as a contrast to the disciples' question in 26:17, where they ask where Jesus *wants* to celebrate the Passover meal; while they obediently ask for Jesus' will, Judas asks for the will of his opponents, both by using the verb θέλω ("wish, desire").<sup>98</sup>

The payment places Judas firmly in the pockets of the chief priests. His search for the opportune moment to betray Jesus is introduced by the words "ἀπὸ τότε" ("from then on"), which recall 4:17 and 16:21, where they are used to introduce the second and third main sections of the gospel.<sup>99</sup> Although the phrase is used somewhat differently here, it nevertheless signals a major turning point

<sup>94</sup> I owe this observation to Arie W. Zwiep, *Judas and the Choice of Matthias*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), pp. 49-52.

<sup>95</sup> John Paul Heil, *The Death and Resurrection of Jesus: A Narrative-Critical Reading of Matthew 26-28* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), p. 28.

<sup>96</sup> Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1993), p. 760.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 761.

<sup>98</sup> Heil, *The Death and Resurrection of Jesus*, p. 30.

<sup>99</sup> For scholars in favour of this structure, see e.g. Bauer, *Structure*. and Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*. It is Bauer's work (*The Structure of Matthew's Gospel*, 85) that has alerted me to the similarity presented by the words "from then on" in 4:17; 16:21 and 26:16.

in the story.<sup>100</sup> Judas' deed is of major significance to the plot as it allows the conspiracy of the chief priests and elders to come to fulfillment.<sup>101</sup> While he is waiting for the right time to hand Jesus over, he returns to the midst of the disciples in time for the Easter meal.

### 3.2.1 The Last Supper (26:20-29)

In Matthew, the structure of the Last Supper scene bears much resemblance to Mark's: Jesus' foretelling that he will be handed over by one of his own (v. 21) is followed by the grieved disciples' question: "It is not me, Lord?" (v. 22). Jesus, however, reaffirms what he has just said (v. 23), and continues with a Son of Man saying where he pronounces woe over the one to hand him over (v. 24). The main difference between Mark and Matthew lies in the fact that whereas Judas' presence was only implicit in Mark, it is brought to the fore in Matthew. Here he is mentioned by name when he responds to the predictions and woe cry in v. 25: "It is not me, Rabbi?" Matthew's account of the Last Supper thus brings out the conflict between Jesus and Judas more clearly, as we shall see in the following.

The first issue a scholar is faced with when investigating how Judas is portrayed at the Last Supper, is a grammatical one. The difficulty concerns Jesus' use of the word "to dip" in v. 23: "The one *having dipped* his hand with me in the bowl, he is the one who will hand me over" (my italics). This question has implications for how the relation between Jesus' foreknowledge and Judas' betrayal should be considered. "To dip" appears in an aorist participle, which might indicate that Jesus' words point more directly to a specific person than the present participle in Mark allows him to do (Mark 14:20). This reading is supported by e.g. Ulrich Luz.<sup>102</sup> It is, however, contended by Donald A. Hagner who states that the verb only suggests that "the betrayer had already dipped his bread into the bowl at the same time that Jesus had (not just at that moment, *pace* Fensham)."<sup>103</sup> I join Hagner in this reading: even though the aorist participle may refer to a specific moment of dipping, it could also be a complexive aorist and thus refer to all the dipping throughout the meal.<sup>104</sup> In conclusion, whether Jesus' words are meant to specifically single Judas out, or are more open as to whom of the disciples is intended, is not certain. The reader, however, is already aware of Judas' intentions, and for her or him, Jesus' words increase the tension of the story regardless: will Judas' betrayal be disclosed? What will happen if it does?

<sup>100</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, p. 761.

<sup>101</sup> His deed also allows for the passion predictions, and consequently God's plan, to be fulfilled. I will return to this point later.

<sup>102</sup> Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus (Mt 26-28)*, 4 vols., vol. 3, Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (Zürich: Benziger, 2002), p. 88.

<sup>103</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, p. 767.

<sup>104</sup> I am grateful to my old Greek teacher, Glenn Wehus, for pointing this out to me.

This tension is forced to its crisis in vv. 24-25. In v. 24, Jesus utters a cry of woe over the one to hand him over, thus condemning Judas' action.<sup>105</sup> Anthony Cane points to a problem presented by these words: "The difficulty inherent in the saying is its paradoxicality – if Judas had not been born, the Son of Man would apparently no longer go 'as it is written of him'."<sup>106</sup> This question raises the problem of the human will versus the divine will: was Judas' act necessary for Jesus' fate to be fulfilled? In this regard, some interesting observations can be made by turning to an allusion that is echoed throughout Jesus' passion, and especially the Last Supper.<sup>107</sup>

The allusion in question is an allusion to Isaiah 53 in the Septuagint. The motif of suffering and death, Jesus' interpretation of his blood as given for the forgiveness of sins, and the repeated use of παραδίδωμι, open up for a reading of the Last Supper and Judas' role in light of Isaiah 53:12. Other scholars make a note of this allusion to Isaiah solely on the basis of the outpouring of Jesus blood,<sup>108</sup> but I believe the case can be made more strongly by taking into account all the elements just mentioned because Isaiah 53 speaks of the suffering and death of God's righteous servant, who will bear the sins of many (Is 53:11). It is, moreover, worth noting that when Jesus later interprets his arrest in Gethsemane, he says that "All this has happened so that the Scriptures of the prophets would be fulfilled" (26:56). As we will see in the next chapter, this is probably an allusion to Zechariah 13:7, but both *prophets* and *scriptures* are in the plural, thereby indicating that what has come to pass is the fulfilment of the words of more than one prophet. It is therefore not unlikely that Jesus is also referring to Isaiah 53:12.

In Isaiah 53, the servant is said to have been "handed over on account of their sins" (Is 53:12). "To hand over" is used twice in this verse, once about the Suffering Servant's act of handing himself over to death, and once about the reason he was handed over, i.e. because of others' sins. At this point in the narrative, Judas has been repeatedly connected with παραδίδωμι, and he will continue to be so beyond the Last Supper.<sup>109</sup> So what does the echo of the Song of the Suffering Servant add to his portrayal? The answer should, I believe, be sought in the use of παραδίδωμι. In Isaiah 53:12, at least

<sup>105</sup> See ch. 2.2.2 in the section on the Gospel of Mark for an interpretation of the kiss.

<sup>106</sup> Cane, *Judas Iscariot in Christology*, p. 33.

<sup>107</sup> The question of whether an implied reader is able to understand an allusion is difficult: an *actual* reader could certainly (or hopefully) be able to comprehend it, but the implied reader is a construct that functions within the parameters of the text. Thus, comprehending something on the basis of what exists *outside* of the text may not be possible for an implied reader, and I only suggest that it may be feasible here because the implied author has so clearly made "Scripture" an interpretative frame for Jesus' life.

<sup>108</sup> See e.g. Harrington, *Matthew*, p. 368.

<sup>109</sup> This connection is made either directly or indirectly in 10:4; 17:22; 20:18; 26:2; 26:15-16; 26:21, 23-25; 26:45, 46, 48, 27:2-4.

the second appearance of this verb is written in the divine passive,<sup>110</sup> which means that the servant (or in Matthew, Jesus) is handed over according to God's will. Given that this interpretation is correct, the allusion suggests that Judas' action of handing Jesus over is aligned to the divine will.<sup>111</sup>

The above does nevertheless not remove the affront at Judas' action, as expressed in the woe cry in v. 24b. It therefore comes as a surprise when Judas speaks: "It is not I, Rabbi?" (v. 25). When asking his question, the narrator refers to him as "Judas, who handed him over". Thus Judas is given a negative introduction that heavily contrasts with the mock innocence of his question. His hypocrisy and falseness, which are only implicit in Mark, are thus made explicit in Matthew.

Judas' question is here asked separately from the other eleven, and echoes theirs, with the exception of one small word: "Rabbi". In chapter 23, Jesus criticized the scribes and Pharisees for doing works for show, and taking delight in being called "rabbi" – a word which he also encourages his disciples not to accept for themselves (23:8).<sup>112</sup> "Rabbi" thus carries with it negative connotations, which are reawakened by Judas' use by the word. Moreover, the slight change in the question sets Judas apart from the other apostles, who all addressed Jesus as κύριε (lord, v. 22). The fact that Judas is singled out in dialogue thus focuses the conflict between him and Jesus, not between Jesus and the rest of the group of disciples. This was less apparent in Mark, where Judas' presence was only implicit, and the general conflict between Jesus and his disciples sharper than in Matthew.

Jesus' reply, "You said (it)" (v. 25) is somewhat ambiguous. It neither accuses Judas directly, nor does it indicate that Jesus does not know that he is the perpetrator. The following apt observation has been made by Daniel J. Harrington, who puts Jesus' answer into a literary context:

Jesus uses the same expression in response to the high priest (Matt 26:64) and to Pilate (27:11), in both cases to confirm the truth spoken by the questioner. Whereas Judas' question expects a negative answer, it gets a positive one.<sup>113</sup>

This quotation offers an interpretative frame for understanding Jesus' and Judas' dialogue: Jesus' response unmasks Judas' guilt. How Judas understands the answer is not revealed, but Jesus' reply increases the tension between the disciple's betrayal and Jesus' knowledge that he will be betrayed; between Judas' guilt and Jesus' foreknowledge. Jesus' reply, moreover, centres the conflict between

<sup>110</sup> Cf. footnote 61. It is, for instance, understood as divine passive in Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, *The Suffering Servant* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), p. 248, footnote 79.

<sup>111</sup> For the real reader, this may remove some of the apparent issues with the fact that Judas was chosen as an apostle in the first place, because this choice is now seen to serve a higher purpose.

<sup>112</sup> Harrington, *Matthew*, p. 367.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 367.

Jesus and Judas, rather than between Jesus and the group of disciples who harbours a traitor in their midst, as was the case in Mark. Consequently, Matthew uses the exchange of words between Judas and Jesus in v. 25 to highlight Judas' own guilt and separation from both the disciples and Jesus.<sup>114</sup>

The emphasis shifts from Judas' action in vv. 21-25 to Jesus' forthcoming passion in vv. 26-29. These verses are indirectly connected by cause and effect: the deed that was foretold in vv. 21-25 is the cause of the suffering and death that Jesus points to in the subsequent breaking of bread and sharing of wine in vv. 26-29. In addition to Jesus' fate, the focus of these last verses is on fellowship and Jesus' constitution of a covenant with his disciples (v. 28). The question that the current investigation must ask, is whether the implied author has by now set Judas so firmly outside of Jesus' fellowship with his disciples that it is impossible for him to be included among the many<sup>115</sup> for whom Jesus blood is "being poured out for forgiveness of sins" (v. 28). Admittedly, this is query based more on theological concerns than on the concerns of the text. Yet it nevertheless bears witness to the tension we have already seen in Matthew, where Judas' character is to be found in the balance between Jesus' promises to his disciples and his role in the plot against Jesus. As we shall see, this tension remains in evidence in the words that pass between Jesus and Judas in Gethsemane, and will not receive any resolution before Judas' death in 27:3-5.

In sum, the Last Supper foreshadows Judas' betrayal, and focuses on the sharp division created between Jesus and Judas, and Judas' contrast to and separation from the other disciples in his use of the term "Rabbi." His conflict with Jesus reaches its climax in his hypocritical question about his own innocence, which darkens the impression of his character.

### 3.2.2 Gethsemane (26:47-56)

Matt 26:45-46 provides a bridge between the two events that take place in Gethsemane: Jesus' prayer and Jesus' arrest. In these verses, Jesus announces the arrival of the hour when he will be handed over into the hands of sinners (v. 45), and the approach of the one who will hand him over (v. 46). In both verses παραδίδομι is used, but Judas' proper name is missing. Thus his action rather than his person is the centre of attention. Moreover, by placing these words in Jesus' mouth, the implied

---

<sup>114</sup> This stands to reason as the conflict between Jesus and his disciples in Matthew in general is not as pointed as it is in Mark. In Matthew, the disciples are a "round" character, but are presented with more positive traits than they are in Mark. For instance, the unity between Jesus and his disciples is greatly emphasized, e.g. in the missionary discourse, and "the final word on the disciples is that Jesus reconciles them to himself." Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, p. 17. See pp. 13-17 of Kingsbury's book for an in-depth characterization of the disciples in Matthew. Mark's ending is more ambiguous with regards to Jesus' final reconciliation with the disciples: Mark does hold the possibility open, and depending on what one defines as the ending of this Gospel, the disciples receive and follow Jesus' commission, but only after having been rebuked by Jesus in 16:14.

<sup>115</sup> Just like in the Gospel of Mark, "many" is probably to be understood in an inclusive sense, thereby referring to *all*. Cf. Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, p. 396.

author reveals Jesus' control of the unfolding events: he knows what is about to happen. The arrival of Judas even as Jesus is speaking (v. 47) seems to underline that everything is unfolding the way it has been foreseen to, and consequently with necessity. This is further emphasized by the scene's focus on fulfilment in vv. 54, 56.

Because the reader was never told that Judas left the other disciples, Judas' appearance is both dramatic and sudden. It is also potentially violent, as the crowd in whose company he arrives is armed. Their coming provides a strong contrast to Jesus' peaceful prayer and the disciples' earlier sleep in the garden. As the only one of Jesus' opponents to be mentioned by name (v. 47), and the only one of them to give orders and speak (vv. 48-49), Judas is presented by the narrator as the man in charge.<sup>116</sup>

The greatest difference between Mark and Matthew lies in Matthew's focus on the words that pass between Judas and Jesus:

This helps not only to enliven the narrative, but sharpens the conflict between the two *dramatis personae*. Judas is not a passive bystander or an innocent victim, but he takes an active role in the dramatic events and increases his culpability with every word he says.<sup>117</sup>

While the main focus is on Judas' kiss in Mark, Matthew's account focuses just as much on Judas' and Jesus' exchange of words in vv. 49-50. In v. 49, Judas approaches Jesus with the greeting, "Hail, Rabbi" and then kisses his master. His words recall the Last Supper, where Judas asked Jesus "It is not me, Rabbi?" (v. 25). This question attempted to mask his intentions at the meal, and his present greeting also appears to be an attempt to conceal his deceit. Jesus, however, is fully aware of what is happening and Judas' role in it; his ambiguous answer in v. 25, and his announcement of the approaching hour in vv. 45-46 has left the reader in no doubt about Jesus' foreknowledge. Thus even as Judas betrays Jesus by surrendering him to his opponents, Jesus remains superior.

Judas' kiss, a deceitful sign of apparent friendship, is met with a response from Jesus: "ἑταῖρε, ἐφ' ὃ πᾶρχει" (v. 50). While ἑταῖρε means comrade or friend, commentators remain puzzled about the exact meaning and translation of the rest of the phrase: "Literally they mean 'for what you are come'".<sup>118</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> Again, much here bears resemblance to Mark. For more in-depth observations about Judas' general characterization in Matt 26:47-49, see chapter 2.2.2, especially paragraphs 2-4. There are minor differences in Matthew when it comes to who Judas represents (Matt: chief priests and elders; Mark: chief priests, scribes, and elders), and what he says when he arranges the sign with them (Mark also has: "...and lead him away safely", 14:44). These things do not have much bearing on Judas' portrayal, however, unless perhaps the additional words in Mark 14:44 emphasize Judas' role as the one giving orders slightly more than what is done in Matthew.

<sup>117</sup> Zwiep, *Judas and the Choice of Matthias*, p. 40.

<sup>118</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, p. 789.

But do they imply a question, an elliptic statement, or a command?<sup>119</sup> A question along the lines of “Why are you come?” would negate what the narrator has previously indicated about Jesus’ foreknowledge of the situation. A command to Judas to do what he had come to do would be little better, however, because “Judas has already performed his act of betrayal in the kiss when Jesus speaks these words”.<sup>120</sup> Nevertheless, this second solution does maintain Jesus’ knowledge of and control of events, and should not be completely discarded. A final suggestion is to see Jesus’ words as a (disappointed) statement about Judas action, “for *this* you come!”.<sup>121</sup> This interpretation does not negate Jesus foreknowledge, and makes sense in light of what Judas is doing. If preferred, as I am inclined to do because of its narrative plausibility, this interpretation offers an indirect judgment of Judas’ action from the point of view of the reliable protagonist. Unfortunately, however, no certainty can be gained about the phrase, and so I will leave open its possible consequences for the depiction of Judas.

In spite of the difficulties of interpreting “for what you are come”, there is something to be said about Jesus’ address of Judas as *friend*. Judas’ kiss (the word “kiss” itself a part of friendship terminology) is met with another term of friendship, “ἑταῖρε”. Thus Jesus’ words function as a foil against which Judas’ action can be tried: Jesus addresses him in a manner congruent with his calling of him as an apostle, but Judas’ action is the exact opposite of the following that discipleship entails. Rather than following Jesus, he is handing him over. The few words that Judas and Jesus exchange thus serve to illustrate the conflict between them: between Judas’ role as a disciple and friend, the latter term by which he is still addressed by Jesus, and Judas’ own words, “Hail, Rabbi”, which conceal the opposite of friendship. These are the final utterances that pass between them. When Jesus has greeted Judas, the crowd seizes him, and Judas is not mentioned again.

Twice in this pericope Jesus underlines that what has occurred has come to pass in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. No direct quote is given, but as his reference to Scripture in v. 56 is directly followed by his abandonment by all his disciples, it is likely that he is referring to Zech 13:7 in accordance with his prediction in 26:31. As I suggested in the previous chapter, it is also likely that Jesus here alludes to Isaiah 53:12. Judas’ actions are thus closely enshrined by divine proceedings; they are necessary for the fulfilment of Jesus’ fate. Judas’ role as “the one to hand over” Jesus is therefore completed in this scene. The narrator has more to say about Judas, however, and to this we shall now turn.

---

<sup>119</sup> Cf. e.g. Luz, *Mt 26-28*, 3, pp. 164-165.

<sup>120</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, p. 789.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 789.



### 3.2.3 Judas' Suicide (27:3-5)

Matt 27:3-5 tells about Judas' change of heart and suicide. This text, however, is fraught with challenges in terms of understanding what additions it brings to the perspective on Judas: How is the implied reader invited to understand Judas' regret and suicide?<sup>122</sup>

In contrast to earlier presentations, Judas is no longer introduced as "one of the Twelve", but merely as "the one who handed him over" (27:3).<sup>123</sup> This action now completely defines him. His regret is described with the word "μεταμέλομαι" (27:3), and the following verses (3-5) can be seen as the narrator's expansion of what his regret entails as Judas' words and actions are recounted ("shown") to the reader.

Judas' change of heart is presented as the result of the council's decision to execute Jesus (27:3, cf. 27:1). He attempts to return the money given to him by the chief priests, saying: "I sinned in handing over innocent blood" (v. 4). Judas' own words condemn him: he knows what the reader has known all along, that Jesus is innocent. His words recall Jesus' prophetic warning against the scribes and Pharisees in 23:35-36, where they are blamed for the righteous blood that will be shed.<sup>124</sup> The effect of this is twofold: while Judas' words do not absolve him from his guilt, they emphasize the chief priests as the ones who are chiefly to blame for Jesus' death and thereby place Judas' blame in the shadow of their conspiracy. Their response serves to further implicate and focus the blame around the religious leaders, as their failure to deny that Judas has spoken the truth is an inadvertent admittance that they have Jesus' innocent blood on their hands.<sup>125</sup>

Judas' attempt to return the money to the chief priests and elders reverses the motif of greed from 26:15, where Judas first asked what he would get if he handed Jesus over. Thus his action makes his regret appear genuine.<sup>126</sup> There is, however, no indication in the text that Judas, by seeking out the chief priests, is also seeking their forgiveness:<sup>127</sup> both the timing (right after the decision to execute

<sup>122</sup> I have chosen to focus on 27:3-5 and let the Scriptural citation(s) in vv. 9-10 be, as they do not add much to Judas' portrayal and are fraught with textual difficulties. What little may be gleaned from vv. 9-10 has already been excellently summed up by Margaret Davies: "The text is no more than an allusion to the Jeremiah passages, with details from Zechariah, but it creates the impression that God's purpose encompassed even the repercussions of betrayal." Margaret Davies, *Matthew*, 2nd ed., Readings (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2009), p. 221.

<sup>123</sup> Carlson, "From Villain to Tragic Figure", p. 476.

<sup>124</sup> Heil, *The Death and Resurrection of Jesus*. 68. While Judas speaks about *innocent* blood, Matt 23:35 refers to *righteous* blood. Some textual witnesses do in fact have "righteous" instead of "innocent" blood in ch. 27, making the link between ch. 23 and ch. 27 more explicit. In either case, the implication seems to be that neither innocent nor righteous blood deserves death. However, I use the translation "innocent" blood because it is better attested, and represents the more difficult reading.

<sup>125</sup> John A. Upton, "The Potter's Field and the Death of Judas," *Concordia Journal* 8, no. 6 (1982), p. 218.

<sup>126</sup> Luz, *Mt 26-28*, 3, p. 234.

<sup>127</sup> Pace Carlson, "From Villain to Tragic Figure", p. 478.

Jesus) and Judas' words make it more plausible to see him as standing up as a witness to Jesus' innocence. The chief priests' refusal to accept that Jesus' innocence is any of their concern ("What [is that] to us?" 27:4) nevertheless makes Judas' regret futile. More importantly, the contrast between their and Judas' attitude separates them from each other: at the end of the day, Judas is no longer "on their side". Instead, he is all alone, neither a disciple nor a conspirator, and he completely severs his bonds to the chief priests by returning the money to the temple.

Following his departure from the temple, Judas hangs himself, and his role in the story thus comes to an end. But how should the implied reader interpret Judas' suicide?<sup>128</sup> The question is complex because a suicide, unlike "common" death, does not simply mean the end of a person's life. Instead, a suicide is an active choice, brought about by one or several reasons and/or motives. A suicide therefore nearly always evokes the question "why?" The reason for Judas' suicide becomes especially difficult in Matthew, because Judas' manner of dying may also be linked to different cultural or religious connotations which *could* be intended to be realized by the implied reader.<sup>129</sup>

The only motive behind Judas' suicide that can be gleaned from the text is his realization that he has betrayed a man who is innocent, and the chief priests and elders' refusal to respond to his witness. As such, Judas' death can be seen as a statement about his regret, much like Peter's tears in 26:45. Whether Ulrich Luz is correct that Judas' motive should be interpreted as Judas' voluntary realization of a punishment ordained by God for a deadly crime in accordance with Deut 21:22f,<sup>130</sup> however, is more difficult to say. Judas does hang himself, and his suicide does appear as the implied author's judgment that his betrayal deserved death. Nevertheless, Deut 21:22f speaks of a man who is executed, not one who takes his own life, and if Judas' death should be seen as an allusion to these verses, we might have expected a reference to his hanging himself *from* a *tree*. If Judas' motive was to take his own life in accordance with Scripture, no such motive is mentioned in the text – but it is not excluded by it either.

The implied author, does, however, open up for a reading of Judas' death that places it within the context of God's judgment. There are especially two elements that support this: First, his suicide could be seen as a response to the warning of the woe cry in 26:24; for Judas, it truly would have been better never to have been born.<sup>131</sup> Secondly, the pericope's focus on innocent blood and the

---

<sup>128</sup> Judas resembles Ahithophel in the Old Testament in that "After the completion of their wicked mission, they both ended their lives by suicide", Zwiep, *Judas and the Choice of Matthias*, p. 41. Yet while both are traitors who died by hanging themselves, there is little else that suggests that Judas' death should be understood as an echo of Ahithophel's.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Luz, *Mt 26-28*, 3, pp. 236-238 for suggestions of what Judas's suicide might imply.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, p. 768.

silver money is so strong that it could be an allusion to Deut 27:25: "Cursed be he who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person."<sup>132</sup> The curse is the eleventh in a series of twelve curses uttered from Mount Gerizim on the day Israel has been affirmed as the people of God, and says, like the rest of them, something about the ethical conduct expected of an Israelite. In light of the implied author's continuous focus on Scriptural fulfilment throughout Matthew, the Old Testament has already been placed within the bounds of the text's interpretative framework. In order for the implied reader to realize the full potential of the text, he or she would therefore understand what this allusion refers to, and consequently see Judas as accursed.

Willem C. van Unnik argues that a curse "can only be removed if the object of it is taken away".<sup>133</sup> If this is the case, Judas' suicide could be seen as an attempt to remove this curse. The text, however, does not explicitly suggest this, and it may therefore be more accurate to view Deut 27:25 as a condemnation of Judas' betrayal than as a motive behind his suicide.

In sum, Matt 27:3-5 adds depth to Judas' portrayal by revealing his regret and severing him from the people with whom he conspired. His words to the chief priests and elders reveal his own judgment about his own actions: he has betrayed innocent blood. If it is correct that Deut 27:25 underlies this text, then these words link Judas' thoughts to God's evaluative point of view and further condemn him. Judas' response to this condemnation is suicide, but the "why" behind it is difficult to discern.

### 3.4 Concluding Observations

The portrayal of Judas in Matthew exists in a tension between his two roles: he is both a disciple specifically chosen by Jesus, and the one to hand him over. As a disciple, he is called to follow Jesus in suffering and death (ch. 10), and given the promise of one of the twelve eschatological thrones (19:28). Nevertheless, Judas chooses to hand Jesus over into the hands of sinners (26:45) in return for a sum of money, thus bringing about the hour which signals the execution of the chief priests' and elders' conspiracy and simultaneously brings God's plan towards fulfilment.

Judas' act separates him from the other apostles, and he is not called "one of the Twelve" after he has handed Jesus over. Nevertheless, Judas' character is neither "flat" nor a "type", and the tension that defines his characterization is fully shown in Judas' change of mind (27:3), when he witnesses to his own sin and Jesus' innocence in front of the chief priests and elders (27:4). Judas' regret makes him a more full-fledged or complex character, who develops, and whose actions are able to surprise the reader. His sin nevertheless makes him accursed, and Judas' following suicide marks the end of

---

<sup>132</sup> Harrington, *Matthew*, p. 385.

<sup>133</sup> Willem Cornelis van Unnik, "The Death of Judas in Saint Matthew's Gospel," *Anglican Theological Review* 3(1974), p. 56.

his life and his exit from the story. In this way, the narrative finally proclaims that none of Jesus' disciples could remain unconvinced of Jesus' innocence, at the same time as it judges Judas severely for his actions.

## **4.0 Judas in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles**

The following chapter will investigate the portrayal of Judas in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. The scope of this dissertation does not allow for time and space to be dedicated equally to both; accordingly, a greater emphasis will be placed on the Gospel of Luke and the image of Judas that emerges from this narrative. The structure will be much the same as in previous chapters: After having related Judas to the plot in the Gospel, I will take a look at how he is presented in the Lukan passion narrative. As before, the emphasis will be on the Last Supper and Jesus' arrest on the Mount of Olives.<sup>134</sup> Unlike the previous Gospels, however, Luke's version of the Last Supper contains a long farewell address by Jesus. Here the way both Judas and the other apostles are mentioned in connection with Satan makes a comparison between their characters natural, and will hopefully bring Judas' character into sharper relief.

What can be gleaned about Judas' character in the Acts of the Apostles will then be treated in its own sub-chapter. Here I will not suggest any plot definitions, but will focus on what light Peter's speech and the subsequent choice of a new apostle (Acts 1:15-26) may shed on the portrayal of Judas presented in the Gospel of Luke. Does the account of Judas' deeds and death in Acts compare or contrast with his presentation in Luke? Does Acts solve any of the tensions inherent in Luke's portrayal of Judas?<sup>135</sup> While the unity of Luke-Acts unfortunately cannot be debated at length here, a note should be made of the fact that I, in spite of being a proponent of Luke and Acts' narrative unity, do not from the outset wish to make a claim that Judas is presented similarly in both works. Whether, and if so, how, the portrayals of Judas in Luke and Acts relate to each other, will be suggested in the following.

### **4.1 Judas and the Plot in the Gospel of Luke**

The plot in the Gospel of Luke may be defined as follows:

The Gospel of Luke tells the story of how Jesus Christ, the son of God, through words and deeds brings good news about the kingdom of God to Israel and the poor, sick, possessed, and oppressed. In this endeavour, Jesus faces the resistance of his disciples and non-human

---

<sup>134</sup> Luke's setting is, unlike Mark's and Matthew's, not specified to Gethsemane.

<sup>135</sup> These questions are grounded in a view of Luke-Acts as a narrative unity, of which more was said in ch. 1.2. See also footnote 13 for references to works arguing in favour of the narrative unity of Luke and Acts.

forces, and an opposition from the religious leaders that ultimately results in his execution. Jesus' death, however, is followed by his subsequent resurrection, whereupon he commissions his disciples to preach the good news to the whole world.<sup>136</sup>

Judas is first introduced to the plot in Luke 6:12-16, where he is listed last of the twelve apostles Jesus selects. From now on, Judas is reckoned among the Twelve, and shares their role and function in the story.<sup>137</sup> However, the narrator also reveals that Judas "became a traitor" (6:16), and is thus the first of the gospel narrators to explicitly offer this designation of Judas' role in the conspiracy against Jesus. "Became" is here the English rendering of the Greek γίνομαι. While this is a word that can be translated in many ways, the present context appears to suggest that Judas *became*, that is, was not always, a traitor. While this does not completely remove the difficulty in Jesus' choice of him as an apostle, it does shift the focus slightly from the question "Why did Jesus choose a traitor?" to "Why did Judas become a traitor?" At this point in the story, however, it is unclear whom or what Judas is going to betray. From the present context, all that can be gleaned is that the treachery will somehow affect Jesus or the group Judas is made part of in 6:13-16, and "predisposes us to respond to Judas negatively."<sup>138</sup>

Jesus selects the apostles from among his disciples after a night spent in prayer: "Preambling the account of Jesus' selection of the Twelve on the day with a reference to his prayer the night before, Luke invests this very act with divine sanction."<sup>139</sup> The mountain setting, with its connotations of divine revelation, underlines this.<sup>140</sup> As a result, Jesus' choice of a traitor appears to be placed within the realm of divine approval. How Judas' character ties in with God's plans, however, is an irony yet to be understood.

The choice of Judas may also be read as an indirect comment on 6:6-11, the section preceding Jesus' choice of apostles: After Jesus has healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, the scribes

---

<sup>136</sup> The definition is my own, but it is influenced by the commentaries referred to in my treatment of Luke-Acts. I stand on the shoulders of Robert C. Tannehill in particular. See Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke, and Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, 2 vols., vol. 2 The Acts of the Apostles (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).

<sup>137</sup> Luke differentiates more clearly between the apostles and the rest of the disciples than Mark and Matthew do, cf. François Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas: Lk 1,1-9,50*, 4 vols., vol. 1, Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (Zürich: Benziger/Neukirchener Verlag, 1989), p. 281. Luke does not always make this distinction, however, and there are some places where he uses "disciples" about the "apostles" (cf. e.g. Luke 9:10, 16). The apostles have the same traits as the disciples, although the opposite cannot be claimed. In this chapter, I will be using the words "disciple" and "apostle" interchangeably about Judas, and I do not mean for the use of these words to imply any distinction between his role as a disciple and as an apostle.

<sup>138</sup> Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), p. 260.

<sup>139</sup> Holmås, *Prayer and Vindication*, pp. 91-92.

<sup>140</sup> Green, *Luke*, p. 258.

and Pharisees furiously discuss what to do with Jesus (6:11). The reader is not told about whether they come up with any plans, but the mention of Judas as a traitor shortly afterwards in 6:16 is concomitant with the general picture that is being painted of increasing opposition against Jesus, and casts a shadow over his introduction.<sup>141</sup>

Judas' initial presentation is thus somewhat ominous, but there is little beyond this early hint that his character will somehow be connected to a later conflict in the plot that singles his character out before the beginning of the Lukan passion narrative. Judas must be assumed to act together with the apostles, and to follow Jesus and be taught by him in the chapters (7 and 8) succeeding his choice of the Twelve. In the same way, it must be supposed that Judas is commissioned together with the apostles in 9:1-5. Here, they are given power and authority to cast out demons and heal diseases (9:1), and sent out to proclaim the kingdom of God and heal (9:2). In these things the apostles, and Judas with them, resemble Jesus,<sup>142</sup> and represent an extension of his mission.<sup>143</sup>

The passion predictions which in Mark and Matthew foreshadowed Judas' role through their use of *παράδιδωμι*, do not have the same function in Luke as this Gospel does not connect Judas' name with "handing over" from the outset. Nevertheless, the Lukan passion predictions (9:22; 9:44b; 18:31-33) should not be completely ignored: as prolepses of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection,<sup>144</sup> they reiterate what is to come and thereby function to demonstrate its necessity. At the same time, the passion predictions provide signposts that make it possible to understand these events as the climax of the Lukan plot. In his article about divine providence in Luke-Acts, Charles H. Cosgrove asserts that there are "eleven references to the necessity of Jesus' passion in Luke-Acts."<sup>145</sup> One of these can be found in the first passion prediction in Luke 9:22, expressed through the word *δεῖ* ("it is necessary"), and can therefore be seen as an expression of the Lukan rhetoric of the necessity of God's plan. I mention this here for two reasons: First, because Cosgrove's observation about the necessity of Jesus' passion, both in the passion predictions and elsewhere,<sup>146</sup> makes it clear that Judas acts as a traitor within this divine framework. Second, because Acts explicitly makes sense of Judas' role in light of Scriptural fulfilment (Acts 1:20). I will return to this second observation later. For now, it must

<sup>141</sup> Cf. Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke. 206, where Tannehill observes that both these episodes "end with indications of danger to Jesus."

<sup>142</sup> Power and authority are also said to belong to Jesus in e.g. Luke 4:36; Jesus is said to heal, preach, and cast out demons in e.g. 4:38-39; 5:12-13; 5:17-26; 6:18-19; 7:1-10, 11-15.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke, p. 215.

<sup>144</sup> The second prediction (9:44b) only refers to Jesus being handed over, not to his suffering, death, and resurrection.

<sup>145</sup> Charles H. Cosgrove, "The Divine Dei in Luke-Acts: Investigations into the Lukan Understanding of God's Providence," *Novum Testamentum* 26, no. 2 (1984), p. 174.

<sup>146</sup> The other times this necessity is expressed in Luke are, according to Cosgrove, Luke 9:31; 9:44; 13:33; 17:25; 22:37; 24:7; 24:26; 24:44 (cf. 24:46). Cf. *ibid.*, p. 174, footnote 19.

suffice to note that by the time the passion narrative begins to unfold, the act that Judas is about to perform is firmly grounded in God's plan.

## 4.2 The Lukan Passion Narrative (22-24)

Luke's account of Jesus' passion begins with the chief priests and scribes' discussion of how to get rid of Jesus. This plan must include a way of getting around the obstacle presented by the people, whom the religious leaders are said to fear (22:2). The background for this fear is probably that the people have, until now, frequently been favourably disposed towards Jesus<sup>147</sup> – arresting him while he is among them could therefore cause unwanted disturbances. A solution to the chief priests' and scribes' problem is provided through Satan's agency. After Satan's temptation of Jesus in the desert, the narrator described him to be biding his time (4:13), waiting for the opportune moment (καίρως). His appearance in 22:3 indicates that this moment has now come.<sup>148</sup> This seems to be undergirded later when Jesus in 22:53 links the initiation of his passion to the hour of the power of darkness: "This is your hour and the power of darkness". While Jesus' fate on one level is connected to the rivalry between the religious leaders and Jesus and his followers, Satan's presence makes it clear that the dispute is also being acted out between Satan and God.<sup>149</sup> Consequently, Judas becomes an instrument in both the human and divine aspects of the conflict. Yet even in this capacity, Judas is still portrayed as accountable for his deeds. Jesus' own resistance of the devils' temptation in ch. 4, his prayer that Peter's faith will not fail in 22:32, and his exhortation to his disciples not to enter into temptation in 22:46 indicate that satanic influence can be countered through obedience to God and prayer. Accordingly, Satan's power over Judas is used to indicate the weakness of Judas' character.

Under Satan's influence, Judas approaches the chief priests and officers of the temple guard and discusses how to hand Jesus over to them (22:4). In return, Judas is offered and consents to a gift of money (22:5-6). In accepting the money, he is no longer practicing the renunciation that Jesus asked of his apostles when he instructed them on what to bring on their journeys in 9:3-5, and specifically told them not to bring any money (9:3). In this way, the money also comes to symbolize Judas' change in allegiance, and by the time Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with his apostles, Judas has agreed to seek the right moment to surrender Jesus without the presence of the crowd (22:6).<sup>150</sup>

<sup>147</sup> The general picture of the crowd/people in Luke, however, is more nuanced than this. For a more extensive treatment, see Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke, p. 143-166.

<sup>148</sup> Green, *Luke*, p. 753.

<sup>149</sup> François Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas: Lk 19,28-24,53*, 4 vols., vol. 4, Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 2009), p. 215.

<sup>150</sup> To the question of "what did Judas betray", one of the answers that can be found in Luke is that Judas betrayed Jesus by betraying his whereabouts at a time when no crowd was present.

#### 4.2.1 The Last Supper (22:14-38)

Luke's account of the Last Supper weaves together the tension between Jesus' passion and the coming kingdom of God, and the promises to and failures of the apostles. The first part of the scene is focused around Jesus' breaking of bread and pouring of wine, and his institution of a new covenant with his apostles. Unlike Mark and Matthew, this happens before Jesus speaks (explicitly) of his forthcoming suffering and being handed over.<sup>151</sup> In this way, fellowship becomes an even stronger focal point and / or point of contrast against which the discourse and discussions that follow between Jesus and the disciples may be read.

Having initiated the new covenant with his disciples in v. 20, Jesus shifts his attention to the person who is going to hand him over and his presence at the table. Judas is not explicitly mentioned, but is clearly the object of Jesus' words in vv. 21-22. Although Jesus does not specify who "the hand of the one handing me over" (v. 21) belongs to, the reader will be able to notice that his use of παραδίδωμι echoes the way Judas' part in the conspiracy against Jesus was described in 22:3-6.<sup>152</sup> Moreover, if "hand" is understood as a metonymy for a person's active will,<sup>153</sup> Judas' active resolve against Jesus is indicated. Following this announcement, Jesus speaks a cry of woe over the perpetrator (v. 22b). As seen in ch. 2.2.1, the woe cry was used in prophetic judgment oracles, and throughout Luke, it is used as "an expletive for disfavor or calamity either described or desired".<sup>154</sup> Judas is thus rhetorically grouped together with those over whom Jesus has previously pronounced woe,<sup>155</sup> which in turn confirms his place among those who oppose Jesus.

The woe cry is also connected to Jesus' Son of Man saying in 22:22a: Here the Son of Man's death (for which "goes away" is an understatement) is said to happen according to "what has been determined", i.e. by God.<sup>156</sup> Accordingly, while Jesus' death is linked to God's determination, this determination does not include good favour towards the one who hands Jesus over to death. The woe cry makes this tension between the divine plan and human agency clear. In the mouth of Jesus, the protagonist, who is aligned to both God and the narrator's point of view, the woe cry's judgment

<sup>151</sup> The breaking of the bread and pouring of wine allude to Jesus' passion. See chs. 2.2.1 and 3.2.1 for further comments on this part of the meal; in the present context, the most important contribution of the meal and covenant is the setting and build-up it provides for Jesus' Son of Man saying and woe cry.

<sup>152</sup> I.e. Judas' role as the one who would hand Jesus over, both in 22:4 and 22:6.

<sup>153</sup> Bovon, *Lk 19,28-24-53*, 4, p. 263.

<sup>154</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1991), p. 108.

<sup>155</sup> Luke 6:24-26; 10:13; 11:42-52; 17:1. In 21:23, οὐαὶ is also used, but there it is to emphasize the misfortune of those who are pregnant or have only just become mothers in the days of the end time.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*, 2 vols., vol. 2, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1985), p. 1410.



of Judas carries great weight. In fact, “By making the foretelling of the betrayal of Jesus part of the last discourse, Luke has intensified the nature of the offense.”<sup>157</sup>

The reader knows who the woe cry is directed at, but because Judas’ name is not mentioned, this knowledge is not readily available to the disciples, who begin to argue amongst themselves about whom the perpetrator will be. This argument is somewhat disturbing in light of the fellowship that Jesus so clearly established and confirmed with them when he gave them bread and wine in vv. 14-20.<sup>158</sup> The apostles’ reaction shows that Jesus’ words potentially implicate them all, as they appear to believe that either one of them could be the betrayer.<sup>159</sup> The result is a division between Jesus and his disciples, which only continues in their next debate about who of them is the greatest (vv. 24-27). As Jesus has made clear throughout Luke, and like his response in vv. 25-27 indicates, being greatest is not what the disciples should strive for:<sup>160</sup> “It is those who do not understand Jesus’ degrading role of servant, most strikingly revealed in his suffering, who would engage in disputes about greatness.”<sup>161</sup> The apostles have completely missed the point.

Nevertheless, Jesus restores the apostles somewhat in vv. 28-30: He affirms that they have been with him throughout his trials, and therefore assigns the kingdom to them. Eventually they shall even sit as judges over the twelve tribes of Israel. These promises do not seem proportionate to the way the apostles have behaved throughout the meal, but match Jesus’ continued effort to correct and teach the disciples throughout Luke.<sup>162</sup> It is, however, unlikely that the promises can be united with Jesus’ woe cry over Judas, which seems to be used by the implied author to place Judas outside of the fellowship between Jesus and the other disciples. The other apostles are collectively guilty and collectively restored; Judas, however, is individually condemned, but not individually restored. This creates a tension between Jesus’ promise to his twelve apostles that they shall rule over the twelve tribes of Israel (22:30), and the disfavour shown towards Judas’ character.<sup>163</sup> The tension is, as we shall see later, not resolved until the Acts of the Apostles.

Luke’s account of the Last Supper also lends itself to other comparisons between Judas and the other disciples. I will focus my attention on the most obvious of these examples, found in vv. 31-34.<sup>164</sup> In

---

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1409.

<sup>158</sup> See chapters 2.2.1 and 3.2.1.

<sup>159</sup> Green, *Luke*, p. 764.

<sup>160</sup> See also the dispute about greatness in Luke 9:46-48.

<sup>161</sup> Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke, pp. 227-228.

<sup>162</sup> See e.g. 8:9-15; 9:18-22, 46-48; 51-56; 18:15-17.

<sup>163</sup> Zwiep, *Judas and the Choice of Matthias*, pp. 49-52.

<sup>164</sup> A few words should also be said about Jesus’ quotation of Isaiah 53:12 in v. 37, “and he was reckoned with [the] lawless”. The quote brings the Servant Song in as a possible interpretative horizon for the Last Supper. If this observation is correct, it is possible to see it in conjunction with what has already been said about the

these verses, Jesus addresses Peter, declaring that “Satan has demanded you, in order to sift [you] like wheat” (v. 31). To be sifted like wheat most likely implies separating the wheat from the chaff,<sup>165</sup> which means that Jesus suggests that the disciples’ worth will be put to the test by the devil.<sup>166</sup> Joel B. Green observes that Satan here has the same role as in Job 1-2, where he is “a heavenly official whose aim is to distinguish genuine from fraudulent integrity”.<sup>167</sup> Sifting is also a judgment motif in e.g. Amos 9:9, where God is the agent of the sifting. Accordingly, Jesus’ words in Luke 22:31 make it clear that Satan has laid a claim on *all* the apostles (*you* is in the plural), not only on Judas, and seeks to test them. But whereas Judas has already failed this testing by succumbing to Satan in 22:3, Jesus offers an intercessory prayer on Peter’s behalf so that his faith will not fail (22:32).<sup>168</sup> Moreover, Jesus’ words indicate that Peter will turn back and, if he does what Jesus exhorts him to do, is going to strengthen his brothers. Jesus reacts differently towards Judas and Peter: He knows of Judas’ betrayal and condemns it, but foresees Peter’s failure and offers a prayer and words of encouragement on his behalf. The way Jesus acts (or does not act) in relation to these two disciples is therefore indicative of how they are evaluated by the implied author: ahead of Judas lies woe, ahead of Peter lies hope. The contrast only puts Judas’ character in a more negative light.

#### 4.2.2 On the Mount of Olives (22:47-53)

Judas arrives on the Mount of Olives (v. 47) while Jesus is exhorting his disciples to pray that they not enter into *temptation* (πειρασμός, v. 46). This creates a dramatic effect as Judas is, in fact, already said to be possessed by Satan, whom Luke has previously introduced as the one Jesus was *being tempted* (πειραζόμενος, 4:2) by in the wilderness in 4:1-13.<sup>169</sup> Tannehill suggests that because the disciples fall asleep after Jesus has exhorted them to pray that they not fall into temptation, they “fall

---

servant song and Judas’ role in Matthew (see ch. 3.2.1). Accordingly, if Is 53 *does* have something to offer to the understanding of Judas, it would be the same as my observation of Is 53 in relation to Matthew’s passion account, namely that Judas’ actions are, ironically, aligned to the divine will. If so, this confirms my previous observations made in regard to Luke’s treatment of Judas, but it does not add anything new to his portrayal. However, there are some significant differences between the two Gospels in terms of possible points of contact with Judas: Unlike Matt, Luke has not connected παραδίδωμι to Judas from the beginning. Moreover, in Luke, Is 53:12 is mainly concerned with Jesus being counted as a lawless (although this interpretation of the phrase is also disputed, see Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke, pp. 267-268.). But whether being lawless refers to how Jesus is perceived by those who arrest him, whose side Jesus has taken throughout the narrative, or is somehow connected to his exhortation that the disciples must now carry swords (v. 36) is less clear. It follows from this that the relevance for Is 53:12 in shedding additional light on Judas’ character in this scene is somewhat vague, and if a link can be spotted, it has not been found in Ulrike Mittmann-Richert’s extensive treatment of Isaiah 53 in Luke, cf. Ulrike Mittmann-Richert, *Der Sühnetod des Gottesknechts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

<sup>165</sup> This is, in fact, prophesied by John to be Jesus’ role in 3:17.

<sup>166</sup> See ch. 4.2.2 for more about the devil’s testing.

<sup>167</sup> Green, *Luke*, p. 772.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. *Ibid*, p. 773.

<sup>169</sup> Note that Luke uses the word “devil” in chapter 4, but Satan in chapter 22. The referent of both is the same, however.

asleep and lose their chance. They are trapped by Satan's temptation, as their behavior shows."<sup>170</sup> I acknowledge that 22:39-46 lends itself to this reading if it is read on its own, as a separate pericope where Jesus' warning is illustrated by the disciples' failure to heed it. However, I would suggest that if these verses are viewed in the context of the gospel narrative as a whole, their sleep may reveal the disciples' weakness, but it does not necessarily indicate that they have fallen prey to Satan. Jesus' repetition of his encouragement that they pray so they do not enter into temptation in verse 22:46 points, to my mind, to trials that lie ahead of them – just as Jesus prayer in the foregoing verses (42-45) concerns what lies ahead of him. In this way, the scene actually reveals a contrast between the disciples, who have not yet fallen into temptation, and Judas, who has. Judas is, even now, described as "one of the twelve" (v. 47). His coming thus offers a ready example of what will happen if a disciple succumbs to temptation, and sustains Judas' negative portrayal.

The narrator makes clear Judas' leading role by describing him as walking in front of the arriving crowd.<sup>171</sup> He immediately approaches Jesus in order to kiss him (v. 47). At this point, however, Luke diverges from Mark and Matthew: Only Judas' *intention* to kiss Jesus is made clear, not the actual kiss. This slows down the "felt" time of Judas' approach, because it increases the suspense of what will happen when he finally reaches Jesus. Joel B. Green rightly observes that "Here, as in vv 21-22, Judas' treachery is thus portrayed as a betrayal of intimacy (21:16)."<sup>172</sup>

Before Judas is able to kiss him, Jesus speaks: "Judas, are you handing over the Son of Man with a kiss?" (v. 48). Through Jesus' words, the narrator subtly shows that Judas, who in v. 47 appeared as the leader of the situation, is not; true control lies with Jesus. Jesus' question reveals his awareness of what is happening, but it is not answered by Judas. In fact, Jesus' words are the last to or about Judas in the Gospel of Luke – in finding the right time and place to betray Jesus, he has outplayed his role, and is not mentioned again.

At this point, Jesus' other disciples take over. Having asked Jesus whether they should respond violently to the unfolding events (v. 49), they do not wait for Jesus' reply before one of them strikes at the servant of the high priest's ear (v. 50). However, Jesus' subsequent words and healing of the servant's ear make it clear that this response is inappropriate.<sup>173</sup> Judas, then, is not the only disciple to fail Jesus during his arrest. But whereas Judas hands Jesus over to his opponents, Jesus' disciples

<sup>170</sup> Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke, p. 264.

<sup>171</sup> Note the irony: Judas sought to find an opportune moment in the absence of the crowd (22:6), but now appears in the presence of a crowd. Cf. Green, *Luke*, pp. 784-785.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 783.

<sup>173</sup> More importantly, what happens here is an indication that Jesus' disciples have misunderstood his words in v. 36, and taken literally what the literary context now seems to suggest should have been taken metaphorically. Cf. Bovon, *Lk 19,28-24-53*, 4, pp. 280-281.

attempt to hinder this. The irony is twofold: Judas' action, which Luke understands as a betrayal (cf. 6:16), furthers God's plan for Jesus' passion. Jesus' disciples, however, who eagerly attempt to do what they (mistakenly) believe to be Jesus' will, stand in the way of divine providence.

Unlike Mark and Matthew, Luke does not explicitly state that Jesus' arrest fulfils Scripture. It may be, however, that Jesus' suggestion that his opponents have come to seize him as they would seize a *robber* (v. 52) reach back to v. 37.<sup>174</sup> There Jesus announced that his forthcoming passion would unfold so that the words from Scripture that "he was reckoned among (the) lawless" (v. 37b) would be fulfilled.<sup>175</sup> The words used for lawless (ἄνομος) and robber (ληστής) are different, however, so it is difficult to ascertain for certain whether Jesus words in v. 52 imply Scriptural fulfilment. In any case, we have already seen in ch. 4.1 that Judas' actions are grounded in a framework of divine necessity, and that he is ironically performing God's will even as he betrays Jesus. Judas' character is thus an excellent example that, "In a series of clashes between divine and human power, God appears not merely as ruler but as the *overruler* of human authority and purpose."<sup>176</sup>

The above is an illustration of how the narrative makes it possible to interpret Judas' character in light of the reversal-motif in Luke. The use of this motif in the Gospel of Luke is explored in detail in John O. York's *The Last Shall Be First*, and I cannot go into it in detail here. It must suffice to note reversals occur frequently in Luke: they are introduced as early as in the Magnificat in 1:52-53, where the powerful and rich are brought down while the lowly and hungry are exalted,<sup>177</sup> they are a topic of Jesus' words in 14:11 and 18:14, 9:24 and 17:33,<sup>178</sup> and as Tannehill notes, are part of the social reversals that Jesus initiates throughout his ministry<sup>179</sup> – just to mention a few examples. As for Judas, his betrayal can be read in light of the motif of reversal because "The God of Luke-Acts is a God who works by irony, using human rejection to realize a saving purpose to which humans are blind. God's hand appears in the ironic reversal of human intentions and expectations as people attempt to resist God and God's Messiah."<sup>180</sup> Judas and the religious leaders may reject Jesus, but their intentions are reversed: Jesus' defeat becomes his victory. Judas' betrayal can be used for good by God.

<sup>174</sup> This, at least, is the view of Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*, 2, p. 1449.

<sup>175</sup> It is possible that verse 37b could also be a reference to Jesus' crucifixion next to two criminals in 23:32.

<sup>176</sup> Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke, p. 30.

<sup>177</sup> John O. York, *The Last Shall Be First: The Rhetoric of Reversal in Luke*, vol. 46 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), p. 51.

<sup>178</sup> E.g. *ibid.*, pp. 118-126.

<sup>179</sup> Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 1*, 1 The Gospel According to Luke, p. 29.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

Judas' action and Jesus' arrest are ultimately interpreted by Jesus' last words on the Mount of Olives: "But this is your hour and the power of darkness" (v. 53). In the Gospel of Luke, the word "darkness" has previously appeared in both 1:79 and 11:33-36. In the first of these verses, darkness is opposed to God's life-giving power, while it in 11:34 is directly connected to evil. In the present context (22:53), Jesus' saying thus grounds the unfolding events in the will of Satan<sup>181</sup> and the dark motives and responsibility of Jesus' opponents, among whom Judas is now numbered.

### 4.3 Death, Replacement and Fulfilment in Acts (1:15-26)

In the narrative world of Acts, Judas plays the role of an absentee antagonist who tries to determine the plot even if he is not on stage. He is in fact the first person in the plot of Acts to suffer divine punishment...<sup>182</sup>

Sometime between Jesus' ascension and the outpouring of the Spirit, Peter steps forth to speak to the hundred and twenty people who have gathered (Acts 1:15). In the Gospel of Luke, "The Twelve" (οἱ δώδεκα) is almost a technical term synonymous with Jesus' chosen apostles,<sup>183</sup> but the apostle list in Acts 1:13 has alerted the attentive reader to the fact that only eleven apostles are now present.<sup>184</sup> It therefore comes as no surprise that the topic of his speech is the election of a new apostle in Judas' place. Here the omniscient narrator gives way to Peter as a character narrator,<sup>185</sup> who speaks of Judas' full share in the apostolic role, at the same time as he judges his disloyalty to Jesus and situates his death in a framework of divine fulfilment.

The apostles have received a mandate from Jesus in 1:8. This, and their obedient performance of this mandate in the remainder of the book, suggests that the tensions that were visible between Jesus and his apostles in Luke 22 have been resolved and are giving way to a more favourable impression of the apostles in Acts. Accordingly, when Peter speaks, he speaks with authority. This authority was foreshadowed, but not yet realized, in the Gospel of Luke (22:32). Peter's role in the story that follows,<sup>186</sup> reveals that his point of view has now been aligned to God's, and what he says should

---

<sup>181</sup> Cf. 22:3.

<sup>182</sup> Zwiep, *Judas and the Choice of Matthias*, p. 176.

<sup>183</sup> "The Twelve" is used seven times about the apostles in the Gospel of Luke: 6:13; 8:1; 9:1, 12; 18:31; 22:3, 47.

<sup>184</sup> Cf. Luke 24:33.

<sup>185</sup> William S. Kurz has observed that Acts makes use of four kinds of narrators: the *histor* "I" of the prologue, the (principal) omniscient narrator, a "we" narrator who appears in some sections after 16:10, and different character narrators. Cf. William S. Kurz, *Reading Luke-Acts: Dynamics of Biblical Narrative* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), pp. 42-43.

<sup>186</sup> This is illustrated by e.g. Peter's interpretation of the present times and Jesus life, death, and resurrection in light of Scripture in 2:14-41, his healing and preaching in 3:1-26, his being sent to prison for the sake of the Gospel and being filled by the Holy Spirit in 4:1-22, his divine vision in 10:9-16, etc.

therefore be counted as authoritative: “Peter is now an interpreter of Scripture and of God’s purpose for the church.”<sup>187</sup> That Peter speaks with new authority is also revealed through his speech, which he opens by stating that what happened to Judas was a necessity according to Scripture, as spoken by the Spirit through David (Acts 1:16). Because both the Scripture and David are divine authorities that express the will of God, they lend weight to Peter’s loaded words about Judas. Moreover, the comparison between Peter and Judas in the Gospel of Luke makes it possible to see Peter’s restoration as a major contrast to Judas: Peter now speaks on behalf of the apostles with authority from God, while Judas, it is revealed, is no longer counted among the apostles (v. 25).

Peter introduces Judas as he who “became a guide for those who seized Jesus” (v. 16). These words stand as a heading for who Judas is perceived as in Acts. Nevertheless, Peter goes on to state that Judas was also considered among the apostles, and had a portion in the same ministry as the other eleven (v. 17). This coincides with what was related in the Gospel of Luke, where the apostle list in 6:16 stated that Judas *became* a traitor: this was not always his role. In this way, Acts does not ignore the difficulties presented by Jesus’ choice of a betrayer-to-be as an apostle, but tackles them head on.

What Judas did is described by Peter as “ἀδικία” (v. 18), which means injustice or wickedness. The word expresses a judgment of Judas’ act, as does the account that follows. Apparently, Peter knows about the money Judas received, for he relates what Judas did with his reward: he bought a field (v. 20). Judas dies in this field, which comes to be called “The Field of Blood” (v. 19) – a name which creates associations both back to the blood Jesus shed because of Judas’ betrayal, and Judas’ own grotesque manner of dying. It is also possible that “the corrupting appeal of money and property play a certain role in the story.”<sup>188</sup> While I believe that the emphasis is on the causality between Judas’ betrayal and his death, rather than on the causality between his purchase of property and his death, there is something to be said about the contrast between Judas’ personal purchase done with money ill-earned, and Acts’ own focus on sharing money and property.<sup>189</sup> In any case, Judas’ acquisition sustains the unfavourable portrayal of Judas.

Judas’ death is described in detail: upon falling on his face, his stomach bursts and all his intestines fall out. His horrible death corresponds to his horrible deed,<sup>190</sup> and he is accordingly, as the quote

---

<sup>187</sup> Tannehill, *Narrative Unity 2*, 2 The Acts of the Apostles, p. 20.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>189</sup> E.g. Acts 2:44-45; 4:32; 5:1-11.

<sup>190</sup> In the introduction to this dissertation, I cited one of the fragments of Papias. This fragment contains another version of Judas’ death, in which Judas’ physical features are described at length. It is done so in a manner that seems to find a correspondence between his physical features and his true (apparently evil), character. In the centuries before and after Jesus, a quasi-science called physiognomics claimed the reality of

cited at the beginning of this chapter states, the first in Acts to suffer God's punishment. In Acts 12:23, King Herod is struck by an angel of God and eaten by worms; in Acts 5:1-10, Ananias and Sapphira lie about putting aside money for themselves, and both die when Peter confronts them with their falsehood.<sup>191</sup> Together, all these deaths point to the logic that "a wicked man deserves to die a wicked death, or even: a wicked man will die a wicked death."<sup>192</sup> Judas' manner of dying is therefore in itself a severe judgment of his character.

That Judas' death is not merely accidental is expressed in the use of Psalms 69:26 and 109:8, which place his death within the framework of divine fulfilment:

The two Scriptures [...] which Luke assembles in verse 20 function as *ex eventu* proof and *ante eventum* divine imperative, respectively. The church then proceeds to fulfill (obey) the divine directive of the latter. This is the context of the  $\delta\epsilon\iota$  in verse 21 relative to the appointment of a successor for Judas.<sup>193</sup>

In Acts, the owner of the field in Psalm 69 has been changed from the plural to the singular to refer specifically to Judas,<sup>194</sup> whose death now becomes a proof of his place and punishment within God's plan.<sup>195</sup> He must face the consequences of handing over Jesus. In this way, Acts solves the "problem" presented by the Gospel of Luke, of what would happen to one who had sided with Satan and betrayed Jesus. But, and more importantly to the plot in Acts, a second tension found in Luke is resolved here, namely the question of how the, originally twelve, apostles can judge Israel's twelve tribes if they are no longer twelve in number.<sup>196</sup> As the quote above illustrates, the answer to this problem is also given by divine necessity. Once Judas has died, as the story shows that he must, it is necessary ( $\delta\epsilon\iota$ , v. 22) to find another apostle.  $\Delta\epsilon\iota$  is connected the fulfilment of Psalm 109:8b, which here expresses the will of God. It follows from this that Judas' death allows the divine imperative of the psalm to be followed, and the number of apostles to be restored. In this way, "Acts 1.15-26 also

---

this connection between a person's physical features and personal qualities, and some ancient authors used physical descriptions to bring their characters' true nature to light (cf. ch. 1.1). This is probably what is at stake in Papias' version of Judas' death. While it falls outside the scope of this dissertation to consider whether the description of Judas' bursting belly was written with physiognomic concerns in mind, it is nevertheless interesting to note that the manner of Judas' death in Acts appears as a negative judgment of his character.

<sup>191</sup> It is worth noting that Peter tells Ananias that Satan has filled his heart (5:3), just like Satan was said to possess Judas in Luke 22:3. In both cases, Satan's influence is used to judge, rather than excuse, their misdeeds.

<sup>192</sup> Zwiep, *Judas and the Choice of Matthias*, p. 71.

<sup>193</sup> Cosgrove, "The Divine Dei", p. 174.

<sup>194</sup> Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1998), p. 225.

<sup>195</sup> A close to contemporary (to the writer of Luke-Acts) example of a gruesome death where someone's intestines fall out, which is explicitly interpreted as divine punishment of the wicked can be found in Josephus' seventh book of *The Jewish War*: Flavius Josephus, *Den jødiske krig*, trans. Erling Harsberg (København Universitet: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 1997), p. 430.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. ch. 4.2.1 and Luke 22:29-30.

fulfils the broader function of reaffirming the Twelve as a group at the very juncture where they are about to take up their appointed roles as resurrection witnesses and leaders of the restored Israel."<sup>197</sup>

Judas' portrayal in Acts is accordingly intimately connected to both his betrayal and his former role as an apostle. While the Gospel of Luke shows, but never explicitly states, Judas' departure from the path of discipleship, Acts plainly states that Judas turned aside from his apostleship "to go to his own place" (v. 25). "His own place" can be interpreted concretely as Judas' newly purchased field, symbolically about his departure from the circle of the twelve, or as his "place of final destiny",<sup>198</sup> which in this case must be seen in relation to Judas' death as divine punishment. In all three cases, the verse underlines Judas' complete separation from the other apostles: he is no longer one of them. Indeed, he is no longer among the living, and his place will be taken by someone worthy of it.

#### 4.4 Concluding Observations

The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles both underline Judas' full share in the apostolic ministry, and condemn him as a traitor. Neither story appears to view him as a traitor from the beginning, but sees a development toward this role. The Gospel of Luke does this by stating that Judas *became* a traitor (Luke 6:16), while Peter in his speech to the apostles makes clear that Judas was originally numbered among the apostles and had a share in their ministry (Acts 1:17). In this way, both works hint at the complexity of Judas' character. Beyond these hints, the narratives offer no insight into the background for Judas' sudden change of allegiance and appear to be uniformly negative in their portrayal of his character. The Gospel of Luke does, however, employ Satan as an agent for turning around Judas. Consequently, Judas also comes to represent a cosmic dimension in the conflict against Jesus.

Both the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles situate Judas' action within the framework of divine fulfilment. The Gospel of Luke does this somewhat indirectly, by stating the necessity of Jesus' passion: By handing Jesus over, Judas becomes an agent not only of Satan's and the religious leaders' plans, but also of God's purpose. In this way, Judas' character becomes one of the ultimate examples of how Luke's God is a God of reversals, who can make good result from evil.

In Acts, Judas' place in the framework of fulfilment is somewhat different. Here it is not his betrayal of Jesus that is linked to divine necessity, but rather his death that is said to fulfil Scripture. This solves one of the unresolved tensions in the Gospel of Luke, where the (twelve) apostles were

---

<sup>197</sup> Holmås, *Prayer and Vindication*, p. 174.

<sup>198</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1992), p. 37.



promised to rule over Israel's twelve tribes. Judas' death makes this promise possible once more, at the same time as it, by appearing to be the consequence of divine punishment, condemns Judas once and for all.

## 5.0 Judas in the Gospel of John

This chapter will survey the portrayal of Judas in the Gospel of John. This Gospel's unique style and theological profile form a framework that distinguishes the characterization of Judas from the Synoptics in several ways. In the following, I will first locate Judas' character in relation to the plot in John, and say something about how he is initially introduced (John 6:60-71). After this, I will take a more in-depth look at the scenes in which Judas is present and speaks or acts, the first of which is the anointing at Bethany (12:1-8). Following this, I will consider how Judas figures in "The Book of Glory" (chs. 13-20), most notably at the meal and footwashing (13:1-32) and in the garden where Jesus is arrested (18:1-11).

### 5.1 Plot Relation and Introduction

The plot of the Gospel of John may be defined accordingly:

The Gospel of John tells the story of Jesus Christ, God's divine logos incarnated, who is sent to the world to take away the world's sin, make God known, and give those who believe in him eternal life and power to become children of God the Father. Jesus undertakes this task through signs and teaching, but is faced with conflict and opposition by the devil and the Jews,<sup>199</sup> who eventually make plans to execute him. Jesus' opponents seize him, but in putting him to death, they unwittingly serve God's plan to glorify Jesus on the cross and through his resurrection. In the end, this allows Jesus' disciples to recognize him for who he is.<sup>200</sup>

---

<sup>199</sup> In the aftermath of anti-Semitism, the awareness has emerged that "the Jews" in John's Gospel is a designation that should be treated carefully. The fact is that the referents of "the Jews" in John vary, and is rarely (albeit sometimes) used about the Jews as an ethnic group. In "The Johannine Jews: A Critical Survey", Urban C. von Wahlde distinguishes between a predominantly "neutral" and a so-called "Johannine" use. The latter usage, he argues, refers (with the exception of John 6:41, 52) to the Jewish authorities, who are characterized either by their hostility, unbelief, or scepticism. These are "the Jews" referred to in my plot definition as the ones opposing Jesus and seeking his death. See Urban C. Von Wahlde, "The Johannine "Jews": A Critical Survey," *New Testament Studies* 28, no. 1 (1982), pp. 47-54. It should be noted, however, that the narrator does not make this distinction between referents, with the result that "the Jews" in John become a literary designation used to frame Jesus' character in different ways. However, as mentioned, "the Jews" referred to in this chapter will almost exclusively be to the religious authorities, unless a distinction is called for.

<sup>200</sup> The plot definition is my own, but it draws heavily on the insights of R. Alan Culpepper, Mark W.B. Stibbe, and James L. Resseguie: Culpepper, *Anatomy*, pp. 86-89; Stibbe, *John's Gospel*, pp. 35-46; James L. Resseguie,

This plot definition is only a point of departure for understanding some of the dynamics that are at play in John's Gospel and which will be of help in locating Judas' character within the narrative. In fact, according to Judith L. Kovacs, John's Gospel may be read as a "cosmic battle" around which the main conflict in John revolves.<sup>201</sup> In this "battle" God, with Jesus as his representative, and Satan face each other as the main opponents. The world is at stake: Jesus was sent to the world by the Father so that those who believe in him would not be lost.<sup>202</sup> Without interference, occasioned either by God or Jesus, there can be no salvation.<sup>203</sup> Yet this saving work is opposed by the devil. In addition to being called the devil (8:44; 13:2), he is also called Satan (13:27), "the evil one" (17:15)<sup>204</sup> and "the ruler of this world" (12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The last designation reveals his power over the world, and shows the diametrical choice people are faced with: either they will walk in the darkness and do evil (3:19), and have the devil as father (8:44), or they will walk in the light and become children of God (1:12).

The cosmic conflict comes to expression in symbolic language throughout John, in word pairs such as light and darkness, above and below, truth and falsehood.<sup>205</sup> In each of these word pairs, Jesus represents the first word: he is the light of the world (8:12; 9:5), comes from above (8:23), and is and speaks the truth (14:6; 8:44). His opponents, on the other hand, love the darkness (3:19), come from below (8:23), and are deceitful (8:44).<sup>206</sup> In John, Judas is caught up and woven into the cosmic conflict, both through the way it is expressed symbolically,<sup>207</sup> and in the way his character concretely relates to Jesus. This will become clearer as we turn to the initial presentation of Judas in John 6.

Judas is presented to the reader before he himself appears "on stage" in the Gospel narrative. In a section that follows causally from the "Bread of Life Discourse" (6:25-59), Jesus and his disciples speak about matters in which "questions of belief and disbelief (w. 60-61, 64, 68) and of staying or leaving the fellowship of Jesus' disciples (w. 60, 66, 67, 68, 70-71)"<sup>208</sup> are central. Judas is here

---

*The Strange Gospel: Narrative Design and Point of View in John*, ed. R. Alan Culpepper and Rolf Rendtorff, Biblical Interpretation Series (Boston, Köln, Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 169-196.

<sup>201</sup> See Judith L. Kovacs, "'Now Shall the Ruler of This World Be Driven Out': Jesus' Death as Cosmic Battle in John 12:20-36," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114, no. 2 (1995).

<sup>202</sup> John 3:16.

<sup>203</sup> Cf. e.g. 3:15-16; 4:14; 6:40, 44, 65; 10:25-30; 17, etc. The Paraclete should not be completely ignored either, but it figures in John more as a promise for the future (14:26, 15:26) than independently. Even when it has been given to the disciples in 20:23, the focus remains on Jesus for the remaining part of the Gospel.

<sup>204</sup> This presupposes that evil is here supposed to be understood as personified.

<sup>205</sup> Kovacs, "'Now Shall the Ruler of This World...'", p. 233. I do not take this list of contrasting words to be exhaustive.

<sup>206</sup> See also Karl Olav Sandnes, "Whence and Whither: A Narrative Perspective on the Birth Anōthen (John 3,3-8)," *Biblica* 86, no. 2 (2005), p. 166-167.

<sup>207</sup> See especially ch. 5.3.1.

<sup>208</sup> William M. I. V. Wright, "Greco-Roman Character Typing and the Presentation of Judas in the Fourth Gospel," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (2009) p. 551.

introduced for the first time through comments made by Jesus and the narrator. Jesus has just told his disciples that he is aware of the fact that some of them are without faith (6:64a), when the narrator hurries to add: "For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who didn't believe, and who it was that would hand him over" (6:64b). Although Judas is not mentioned by name, it becomes clear in vv. 70-71 that he is the intended subject of the second half of this sentence. The fact that he is unnamed and only referred to as the agent of handing Jesus over, suggests the great extent to which this foreshadowed action defines his role in the Gospel. In the present context of 6:64, the action of handing Jesus over places Judas in the same group as unbelievers. Seeing as the plot is centred on Jesus' mission to help people believe, this grouping creates a negative impression of Judas and situates him in the plot together with those who are opposed to Jesus' message.

The grouping with the unbelievers does, moreover, negatively condition the use of "παράδιδωμι" (v. 64). This act, though unspecified, thus becomes a prolepsis of something bad yet to happen. The narrator's comment (6:64b), however, makes clear that what Judas is going to do is grounded in Jesus' foreknowledge. This is a recurring motif in the chapters that follow, and Jesus' knowledge subverts the power Judas might otherwise have appeared to have over him by plotting against Jesus in his presence.<sup>209</sup>

Jesus' knowledge about Judas links Judas' disposition to God's will when Jesus explains to his disciples that there are unbelievers among them because "no one can come to me lest it were given to him by the Father" (v. 65). While this explanation follows directly from Jesus' words about the unbelievers in 64a, where Judas is not mentioned, the narrator's intrusion in 64b suggests that the implied author has arranged the material so that Jesus' explanation should thematically be understood to concern Judas as well. He is, accordingly, not among those God has chosen to "come to" Jesus, which further cements the image of Judas as opposed to Jesus.

In spite of this, however, Judas has been chosen by Jesus to be with him as one of "the twelve" (v. 70). This group, which is mentioned for the first time in John in 6:64, appears to consist of the only disciples to remain with Jesus in Capernaum<sup>210</sup> after the others have left him because of his hard words.<sup>211</sup> Unlike the Synoptics, John's Gospel never mentions "the apostles," nor contains any account of the twelve's commissioning. Yet "the twelve" appear to have been chosen by Jesus, even though Jesus states that "one among you is a devil" (v. 70). A comment made by the narrator reveals

<sup>209</sup> Jesus' "control" is further explored in Tom Thatcher, "Jesus, Judas, and Peter: Character by Contrast in the Fourth Gospel," *Bibliotheca sacra* 153, no. 612 (1996), which has inspired this observation.

<sup>210</sup> This does not exclude the possibility that later references to the disciples in John might also include others beyond the twelve.

<sup>211</sup> Cf. 6:60.

that Jesus is referring to “Judas, Son of Simon Iscariot, for he would hand him over, one of the Twelve” (v. 71). This is the first time Judas is mentioned by name, and the Gospel of John is the only New Testament narrative to mention and connect “Iscariot” to his father’s name.<sup>212</sup> Judas’ evil nature is unmasked in the description of him as “a devil” (διάβολός) (v. 70), and the concrete expression of this evil is to be found in the act of handing Jesus over (v. 71).

Unlike in the Synoptics, where being “one of the twelve” added a positive function to Judas’ character, because he as such represented an extension of Jesus’ own mission, Judas’ presence among the twelve in John indicts him. As “a devil” who is grouped together with unbelievers, his character presents a stark contrast to the other disciples whom Peter speaks for when he confesses his belief in Jesus and explains his reasons for remaining with him (vv. 68-69).<sup>213</sup> In fact, his character may be seen as “the epitome of the general rejection that had just occurred.”<sup>214</sup> Judas is set apart from the confessing disciples, and yet in choosing to remain with Jesus in spite of being grouped with unbelievers, he appears deceitful. Nevertheless, as one of the twelve, Judas has also been chosen, although it is for a different purpose than the others. The full extent of this purpose is revealed as the story unfolds.

## 5.2 Judas the Thief (12:1-8)

Six days before Passover, Jesus arrives in Bethany and dines in Lazarus’ home (12:1-8). While Lazarus’ sister Martha is serving, his other sister Mary anoints Jesus’ feet with a costly ointment and dries them with her hair. At this point Judas speaks for the first time in John: “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to [the] poor?” (v. 5). This question, the contrasts it evokes and response it receives, embellish Judas’ portrayal in John, and add to the narrated time devoted to his character and significance in John. In the present scene, the narrator’s description of Judas, the way his character is indirectly contrasted to Mary’s, and Jesus’ reply also frame his character.

Prior to Judas’ question, the narrator introduces him as “Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, who was going to hand him over” (v. 4). All three components of this introduction – Judas’ name, being numbered among the disciples, handing over Jesus – recall the way Judas was first described in 6:64, 70, 71. Perhaps there is here also a subtle irony in the fact that Judas is both a disciple and the one to hand Jesus over,<sup>215</sup> a matter which we will return to at the end of ch. 5.3.2. Although his introduction in ch. 6 was more negatively loaded than the one in ch. 12, the former influences the reading of the

<sup>212</sup> This is interesting, but not of much significance to Judas’ portrayal. Some textual witnesses, most notable of which is Sinaiticus, here has “from Kerioth” instead of Iscariot, thus lending some weight to the theory that “Iscariot” could mean “Man from Kerioth”.

<sup>213</sup> It is clear that Peter purports to speak for the twelve, for he speaks in the first person plural.

<sup>214</sup> Thatcher, “Jesus, Judas, and Peter: Character by Contrast in the Fourth Gospel”, p. 441.

<sup>215</sup> Cf. Paul D. Duke, *Irony in the Fourth Gospel* (Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox Press, 1985), p. 99.

latter and creates a negative expectation for Judas' question in 12:4. This expectation is disappointed by what, on the surface, appears to be an innocent question with a respectable motive, i.e. helping the poor. Yet what is "shown" about Judas through his question is contrasted by what is "told" by the narrator: Judas asks his question only because he is a thief (κλέπτης), who sometimes stole from the money bag he was in charge of (v. 6). Thus Judas emerges both as a liar and one who has previously broken the trust placed in him by Jesus and the other disciples. William Wright aptly observes that, as a liar, Judas is linked to the devil, who in 8:44 was called "a liar and the father of lies".<sup>216</sup> Thus, although Judas is not directly characterized diabolically in this scene, there is still an indirect link between him and the devil. Furthermore, Wright observes that previously, "Jesus contrasted himself as the Good Shepherd and the Door for the Sheep with others whom he calls 'thieves.'"<sup>217</sup> The fact that Judas is now described as a thief therefore maintains the cleft between him and Jesus.

Judas also fails by being unable to see what the structure of 12:1-8 makes clear: It is *Jesus* who is said to arrive at Bethany, *Jesus* who raised Lazarus from the dead (v. 1); the meal is made for *Jesus* (v. 2); *Jesus* is the object of Mary's devotion (v. 3), and *Jesus*' words conclude the scene (vv. 7-8). In short, it is *Jesus*, not the poor, who is the midpoint of this meal. Judas' words reveal that he is unable to see that Jesus is and should be at the centre. His misplaced focus places his character in contrast to Mary's, whose devotion is shown not only in her anointment of Jesus' feet with a costly ointment, but through the affectionate use of her own hair to dry his feet. By taking on a role normally assumed by a servant, she humbly submits to Jesus and shows him great respect.<sup>218</sup> Because Judas' thoughts revolve around the money, he fails to show the same devotion. His apparent concern for the poor is uncalled for, not only because it is false, but because it removes the focus from Jesus.

The above observation is further substantiated by Jesus' response to Judas. He tells him to leave Mary alone (v. 7), which signals that Judas' question has missed the mark. But Jesus' response also reveals that Judas should let her be because he fails to see the symbolic function of her act: the anointing anticipates his burial (v. 7).<sup>219</sup> While the poor are worthy of concern, Jesus states that they are always there, "but me you do not always have" (v. 8). In this way, Jesus and his approaching death are revealed by Jesus himself to be at the true heart of the scene. Mary's devotion forms the appropriate response, while Judas' deceptive and inappropriate question increases the perceived distance between him and Jesus, and deepens his negative portrayal.

---

<sup>216</sup> Wright, "Greco-Roman Character Typing", p. 555.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 554.

<sup>218</sup> Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003), p. 863.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 865.

## 5.3 Judas on Jesus' Path to Glorification

### 5.3.1 The Meal and Footwashing (13:1-32)

This chapter deals with the part of Jesus' last meal with his disciples where Judas is present (13:2-30). As both 13:1 and 13:31-32 are significant for understanding Judas' role, however, these are also included in the following treatment. The first two verses of chapter 13 signal the setting in which the meal and footwashing take place, and the conflict at play in the following verses. Easter is around the corner, and Jesus' "hour" has finally come (13:1). This "hour", which throughout the Gospel has been suggested as the climax of the story,<sup>220</sup> is here described as the hour in which Jesus "would depart out of this world to the Father" (v. 1). This verse, moreover, connects Jesus' death to Jesus' love for "his own", his disciples, whom the narrator in a double entendre<sup>221</sup> explains that Jesus has loved completely/till the end (εἰς τέλος).<sup>222</sup>

The themes of love and death are not alone in setting the tone for the scene, however. The introduction of the devil in v. 2 makes it clear that more is at stake, and reveals Kovacs' observation that Jesus' death is the decisive moment in the "cosmic battle" that "brings about the judgment of and victory over Satan, the 'ruler of this world'"<sup>223</sup> to be of utmost significance. Kovacs' main point of departure is John 12:20-36, which she notes is seen by many scholars as an introduction to the passion narrative.<sup>224</sup> This text, together with 14:30-31, and 16:8-11, "suggest that the Fourth Evangelist sees the death, resurrection, and ascent of Jesus as the turning point in the conflict between God and the forces of evil."<sup>225</sup> In 12:31, Jesus prophesied that the devil is to be judged and cast out of the world in the same hour that the Son of Man is glorified (cf. 12:25). In this way, Jesus' victory has already been prefigured before chapter 13. It has, furthermore, been made clear that even the devil's actions further God's own plan. There is therefore never any real doubt about who will be the true victor.<sup>226</sup> The footwashing and meal thus take place with the turning point of the cosmic battle at hand, and are woven into an account where Jesus' love and death are at the centre. It is against this backdrop that Judas' portrayal in the following may be understood.

<sup>220</sup> 2:4; 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27.

<sup>221</sup> "Double entendres are words that have twofold meanings and both meanings are intended. [...] The two meanings mutually illuminate each other making strange common, everyday assumptions, or the one adds an additional dimension to the other that is not immediately apparent." Resseguie, *The Strange Gospel*, p. 51.

<sup>222</sup> Keener, *John 2*, 2, p. 899.

<sup>223</sup> Kovacs, "'Now Shall the Ruler of This World...'", p. 228.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>226</sup> This is further developed in 14:30-31, where Jesus' death is connected to the approach of "the ruler of this world", and 16:8-11, where the judgment of the devil is connected to Jesus' departure to his Father.

Jesus and his disciples dine together (13:2). However, the narrator reveals that the meal fellowship has been compromised: The devil is at work, “having already put into the heart that Judas, Simon Iscariot’s son, would deliver him up” (13:2).<sup>227</sup> The awkward translation of the Greek bears witness to the problem inherent in the sentence: Has the devil planted the thought in Judas’ heart, or do we hear an echo of the devil’s own thoughts? Different textual witnesses support different readings,<sup>228</sup> and Francis J. Moloney believes the sentence should be read as “‘to make up one’s mind’ and applied to Satan, not Judas.”<sup>229</sup> Yet the texts he uses in support of this observation are 1 Sam 29:10 and Job 22:22, both places where the person “the heart” belongs to is clearly identified. This is not the case in John 13:2. Seeing as the Greek a) does not exclude Judas as the owner of the heart, and b) there are no literary reasons why he cannot be understood as such,<sup>230</sup> and c) the devil’s plot against Jesus is clear no matter whose heart it is, I find it reasonable to suggest that Judas is already thinking about acting against Jesus by the time of the meal.

Accordingly, 13:2 expands Judas’ association with evil. His diabolic disposition, first revealed in 6:70 when Judas was called a devil, and maintained (indirectly) in the relation of his deceitful nature to the “father of lies” in 12:5-6,<sup>231</sup> is now further developed as he becomes the devil’s instrument. His association with the devil once more confirms Judas’ place together with Jesus’ opponents, and those who in 11:53 have made plans to kill Jesus. Jesus’ love (13:1) is met with malicious intent, yet this building opposition between good and evil seems necessary in light of the rest of the plot: in 7:30 and 8:30 attempts were made to seize Jesus, but these failed because his hour had not yet come. Now that the hour is on the doorstep, the conflict is moving towards its climax through Judas in the realization of Satan’s agency.

Not only Satan’s powers are at work, however. Throughout John, Jesus’ awareness of the hour is intimately connected to the Father’s will.<sup>232</sup> Jesus is, as 13:3 reveals, conscious of his identity with the Father and knows “that the Father had given everything into his hands”. This verse offers a counterweight to the foregoing verse and the devil’s plot,<sup>233</sup> by revealing that true control lies with

<sup>227</sup> It is unclear whether “Iscariot” qualifies Judas’ or Simon’s name. Either option is possible.

<sup>228</sup> That the heart belongs to Judas is made explicit in several textual witnesses, most notably codices Alexandrinus and Bezae, but this is probably a clarification of the more difficult reading presented by other, and older, textual witnesses (i.e. p<sup>66</sup>, Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, etc). See Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 2 vols., vol. 2, The Anchor Bible (London: Chapman, 1971), p. 550.

<sup>229</sup> Francis J. Moloney and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of John*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1998), p. 378.

<sup>230</sup> By literary reasons I mean that it does not conflict with the previous characterization of Judas and/or the devil in the Gospel.

<sup>231</sup> See ch. 5.2.

<sup>232</sup> Cf. especially 12:27-28.

<sup>233</sup> Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium: Kommentar zu Kap. 13-21*, 4 vols., vol. 3 (Freiburg: Herder, 1975/1976), p. 18.

Jesus. Yet in spite of Jesus' awareness of his destiny and Judas' evil,<sup>234</sup> Jesus challenges neither him nor the hour: instead, he washes his disciples' feet.

The footwashing (13:4-17) carries with it an invitation to fellowship with Jesus (v. 8) and sets an example of service for the disciples to follow (vv. 15-17). On an even deeper level, it is a sign that anticipates Jesus' death, and "defines his passion as an act of loving service."<sup>235</sup> In this action of "self-sacrificing humility"<sup>236</sup> Jesus humbles himself by taking on the role of a servant,<sup>237</sup> and thereby shows his love for the disciples. Judas, though unnamed in this scene, is the exception Jesus refers to when he declares that the disciples are clean, "but not all" (v. 10). It is the narrator who reveals that Judas is the intended exception (v. 11), but he does not call him by name: he is "the one who was handing him over". This designation consequently indirectly explains why Judas is not considered clean. But if he is not clean (καθαρός), it seems clear that he must be considered unclean (ἀκάθαρτος). Therefore Jesus' words most likely imply a judgment of Judas' character, because uncleanness indicates a "moral impurity which excludes a man from fellowship with God".<sup>238</sup> To remain unclean even after the footwashing also means that it has had no effect on Judas;<sup>239</sup> he has no part in Jesus. In every way, then, Judas stands outside of the fellowship with God, and the fellowship between Jesus and his disciples.

Jesus exhorts his disciples to follow the example he has given through the footwashing (v. 15), but declares that his speech in vv. 12-17 is not intended for all the disciples (v. 18). Just as in 6:70, Jesus speaks of his awareness of whom he has chosen<sup>240</sup> and his knowledge of the true nature of one of them. Judas is once more the intended, but unnamed, referent. This time he is linked to the fulfilment of Scripture (v. 18): "The one eating bread with me has lifted up his heel against me" (Ps 41:10). To show one's heel was considered a sign of contempt,<sup>241</sup> and to do so after having shared a meal of fellowship would only increase the offense.<sup>242</sup> There is, moreover, a certain irony in the fact that while Jesus washed the disciples' feet is an act of loving kindness, the Psalm speaks of the heel (of the foot) as turned against Jesus in a gesture that signals of the opposite of love. In quoting the Psalm and thereby telling the disciples about Judas' act before he performs it, Jesus means to

<sup>234</sup> Cf. John 6:64, 70-71.

<sup>235</sup> Keener, *John 2*, 2, p. 899.

<sup>236</sup> Brown, *John XIII-XXI*, 2, p. 558.

<sup>237</sup> Keener, *John 2*, 2, p. 905.

<sup>238</sup> "ἀκάθαρτος" in Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965). 428. Being "unclean"/"impure" is used in this manner in both the OT and the NT, and seems to offer a plausible explanation for what Jesus means in light of what has previously been said about Judas in John.

<sup>239</sup> Brown, *John XIII-XXI*, 2, p. 568.

<sup>240</sup> "ἐξελέξαμην" is used both places.

<sup>241</sup> Brown, *John XIII-XXI*, 2, p. 554.

<sup>242</sup> Keener, *John 2*, 2, p. 913.



strengthen the disciples' faith in his identity. Rather than letting the betrayal become a stumbling block that makes it impossible to believe (v. 19),<sup>243</sup> it serves Jesus' glorification. This becomes apparent in Jesus' use of "ἐγώ εἰμι" ("I am"),<sup>244</sup> an allusion to the divine name that signifies his close relation to God. The use of Psalm 41:10 thus interprets Judas' act as something disgraceful, at the same time as it frames Judas' action in fulfilment and divine necessity. Thereby, his agenda is located not only in Satan's, but God's plan.

Throughout the narrative, the reader has been prepared by the narrator to understand that the Scriptural quote of Ps 41:10 in v. 18 refers to Judas' act of handing Jesus over. That Jesus will be handed over, however, is not revealed to the disciples before v. 21. There Jesus, who is said to be troubled in spirit, tells his disciples that "one of you will hand me over" (v. 21). The fact that Jesus is troubled elicits a sympathetic response towards Jesus, and encourages the opposite attitude towards Judas. But because Judas' name is omitted, none of the disciples understand who Jesus is referring to. Unlike the Synoptics, the disciples' confusion does not indict them, but indicates a failure to comprehend Jesus' words.<sup>245</sup> In response to Simon Peter's question about whom he means, Jesus says that the disciple whom he hands a piece of bread is the perpetrator. He then dips a piece of bread and hands it to Judas (v. 26), thereby singling Judas out and making it clear who he is referring to. It has been observed that the "gesture of giving someone food is commonly understood to show kindness".<sup>246</sup> If Jesus' gesture is read in this way, Jesus, in addition to showing his love for his disciples when washing their feet, also shows kindness towards Judas in handing him the bread. Thereby the contrast between Jesus and Judas is once more underlined.

Immediately after Judas has received the morsel, Satan<sup>247</sup> enters into him (v. 27).<sup>248</sup> Judas' gradual identification with the devil thus reaches its climax as they become one unity with a single will. Judas is now fully an agent in the cosmic drama where God's son is sent to the world to save it, but is opposed by those who are evil and live in the darkness.<sup>249</sup> By becoming one with Satan, Judas becomes an enemy that must be overcome: as the one who acts on behalf of "the ruler of this world", he is one with the evil forces that Jesus casts out through the death on the cross when he is enthroned as the true king.<sup>250</sup> Judas' possession by the devil follows so directly from the moment he

---

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., p. 914.

<sup>244</sup> Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium: Kap. 13-21*, 3. 31

<sup>245</sup> Matthew may be the exception. The reason behind this is that the disciples are not as negatively portrayed in John as they are in the passion narratives in Mark and Luke.

<sup>246</sup> Craig Koester, "The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of John," *Tidsskrift for Teologi og Kirke* 4 (2004), p. 266.

<sup>247</sup> Note that this is the only time that the designation "Satan" is used about the devil in John.

<sup>248</sup> Cf. 13:2.

<sup>249</sup> For a connection between evil and darkness, see 3:19-20.

<sup>250</sup> Cf. Koester, "The Death of Jesus", p. 119, cf. also John 12:31.

is given the bread that it is difficult not to see this as an indication of how *Jesus* is the main instigator that sets the events of his own passion in motion. This testifies, once more, to *Jesus*' power over events. This same power is evident in *Jesus*' order to Judas: "What you do, do quickly" (13:27).<sup>251</sup> By portraying *Jesus* as the one who gives the orders, the narrator makes *Jesus* appear active while Judas seems passive.<sup>252</sup> Judas only does what he is directed to do, whether it is thinking the thoughts put in his heart by the devil (v. 2) or leaving *Jesus* only when he is told to (v. 30). This passivity appears to underline that Judas is merely an instrument of Satan and an agent of the plot.

In spite of having singled Judas out, none of the disciples seem to understand the meaning of *Jesus*' words or gesture (v. 28). Their confusion finds a solution in Judas' role as "treasurer", when they interpret *Jesus*' order as a direction to buy something or give to the poor. This serves as a reminder to the reader of how little Judas is actually concerned for the poor (cf. 12:6), and makes the disciples' interpretation wryly amusing at the same time as it suggests that Judas' presence among them has been based on deceit.

Upon receiving the piece of bread, Judas immediately (εὐθύς) departs (v. 30). The immediacy of his departure suggests that in leaving, he is ironically following *Jesus*' orders.<sup>253</sup> The hour of his departure is rich in symbolism: "It was night" (v. 30). In *John's Gospel*, the night and darkness have been an opposing force to the light (and God) ever since the prologue in 1:5. *Jesus* is the *light* of the world, come so that those who believe in him shall not remain in darkness (8:12; 12:46). Darkness is also, as we saw above, connected to evil (3:19-21). In addition to indicating the temporal setting of the meal, the fact that Judas walks out while it is *night* thus clearly underlines his alignment to all the dark forces that oppose *Jesus*, and his separation from the one who is himself the light. In light of this, Craig S. Koester's observation becomes particularly interesting: "Images of light and darkness are not explicitly conjoined in the remainder of the Gospel, and the motif never regains its former prominence."<sup>254</sup> I would suggest that the reason behind this is that with Judas' departure, the climax of the conflict between *Jesus* and his opponents is initiated, and rather than continuing to be expressed symbolically, it will from this point on manifest itself in the concrete encounters between *Jesus* and his opponents.

As soon as Judas departs, *Jesus* speaks to the remaining disciples: "Now the Son of Man was glorified, and God was glorified in him" (13:31). The intimate connection between Judas' departure and *Jesus*'

---

<sup>251</sup> Brown, *John XIII-XXI*, 2, p. 578.

<sup>252</sup> Resseguie, *The Strange Gospel*, p. 188.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>254</sup> Craig R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2003), p. 167.

and God's glorification (vv. 31-32) suggests that the former is necessary for the latter: the glorification must be understood in light of the passion. In this way, Judas is presented as the central instigator of the evolving plot that will result in Jesus' glorification. The darkness of the night is thus "coupled with 'glory'",<sup>255</sup> in a way that echoes the prologue in 1:9, 14:<sup>256</sup> The suffering that Judas brings upon Jesus will serve a higher and better purpose. Judas may be wholly evil, but in John's story, evil will serve the fulfilment of God's plan in the glorification of Jesus.

### 5.3.2 In the Garden (18:1-11)

After Jesus' long discourse in chs. 13-17, he and his remaining disciples walk to a garden. An ominous note is struck when the narrator reveals that this place is also known to Judas, because Jesus and his disciples frequently gathered there (v. 2). This foreboding is intensified by a reference to Judas, which includes not only his name, but refers to him as "the one handing him over" ("ὁ παραδιδούς αὐτόν", v. 2). The participle is here in the present tense, which in the current context seems to underline that Judas is in the process of handing over Jesus. This is, in fact, what is happening: Judas receives Jesus' adversaries, who include a cohort of soldiers,<sup>257</sup> and servants of the chief priests and Pharisees, into the garden (v. 3). Unlike the Synoptics, John has no account of Judas' previous plotting with the religious leaders. This makes it possible to see the devil, not the Jews, as Jesus' prime opponent: Judas is acting on Satan's behest, and it just so happens that the devil's intentions coincide with those of the religious leaders.

The lanterns, torches, and weapons Jesus' opponents arrive with emphasize the night in which they arrive<sup>258</sup> and consequently, the darkness of their intentions. Yet it is clear that it is not darkness, but Jesus, who is in control. The narrator reemphasizes Jesus' knowledge of what is about to happen to him in v. 4, and it is he who takes charge at the arrival of his opponents. Walking over to them, he asks: "Who do you seek?" (v. 4). Once more, the narrator mentions that Judas, still described as "the one handing him over" is with them. Thus it is clear that Judas is among those who fall to the ground when, having said that they are seeking Jesus, Jesus replies that it is he ("ἐγώ εἰμι", v. 5). Jesus' words, which on one level simply confirms that he is the one they are seeking, is also a declaration of his divine identity.<sup>259</sup> Lest the reader might fail to detect this, the reaction of Judas' and the other arresters speaks for itself: even they, even Judas, an agent of Satan, must fall back at the mention of the divine name.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>257</sup> Whether these are Jewish or Roman is disputed, see e.g. Keener, *John 2, 2.*, 1079 and Brown, *John XIII-XXI*, 2, pp. 807-808.

<sup>258</sup> Brown, *John XIII-XXI*, 2, p. 809.

<sup>259</sup> Keener, *John 2, 2*, p. 1082.

When the officers and representatives of the religious leaders have once more confirmed that they are seeking Jesus (v. 7), Jesus asks that they leave his disciples alone. Thus, the narrator explains, Jesus previous words that he would not lose any of them are fulfilled (v. 9). This verse puts Jesus own words on the same level as Scripture,<sup>260</sup> and refers back to his prayer to the Father in 17:12. In 17:12, however, unlike 18:9, Jesus mentions one exception to the disciples that are kept safe: “the son of perdition” (“ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας”). Because “perdition” is often used in the New Testament about damnation, Raymond Brown is not alone to suggest that the term “refers to one who belongs to the realm of damnation and is destined for final destruction.”<sup>261</sup> Given that this interpretation is correct, it seems likely that this designation refers to Judas. Although this part of 17:2 is not directly quoted in 18:9, nor Judas’ name mentioned, the role of the one who is lost is acted out in the garden: Judas is lost to Jesus when he hands him over to the religious authorities.

In the end, however, Judas only brings Jesus closer to his destiny. When Peter attempts to stop Jesus’ arresters through violence, Jesus stops him and asks: “Should I not drink the cup which was given to me by my Father?” The cup refers to the fate ordained for him by God.<sup>262</sup> Peter must not stop him, for Jesus goes willingly. While “Peter’s zeal proves a positive contrast to Judas’s betrayal,”<sup>263</sup> Judas’ actions, terrible as they are, bring Jesus further on the path to glory. This coincides well with Paul D. Duke’s observation in a chapter on ironic characterization, that “Judas, like everyone else who plots against Jesus, is only an instrument of the divine will.”<sup>264</sup> Judas’ actions are in one sense an example of dramatic irony: Judas is unaware of the true consequences of his actions. He intends evil, but does good, and as such, his action is double-layered, being an act of evil for good.<sup>265</sup>

## 5.4 Concluding Observations

The Gospel of John is unyielding in its negative portrayal of Judas. Even before his character appears, both Jesus and the narrator’s comments have prejudiced the reader against him: not only is he grouped with unbelievers (6:64), he is also called “a devil” (6:70). In Bethany (12:1-8), his deceptive nature and lack of recognition of Jesus only add more bleak colours to what is already a dark portrayal. It is thus clear from the outset that Judas is a *type*: he is “the evil one”, and does not change. He is associated with all of Jesus’ opponents; both the Jews and the devil, and is embedded into the deep symbolism of the narrative: He is deceitful and belongs to darkness, and is thus

<sup>260</sup> Brown, *John XIII-XXI*, 2, p. 811.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 760.

<sup>262</sup> Cf. e.g. John 3:14-15.

<sup>263</sup> Keener, *John 2*, 2, p. 1083.

<sup>264</sup> Duke, *Irony*, p. 99-100.

<sup>265</sup> Consequently Judas’ action contains all three elements listed by Duke as components of irony: irony is double-layered, contains opposition to the intended meaning, and includes an element of unawareness. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 14-18.

implicitly placed under the dominion of the ruler of the world and among those “below”, who are of the world and unable to come to Jesus and be saved.

The presentation of Judas’ diabolic nature prepares the way for the moment Satan gives him the idea that he should hand over Jesus. This action, which is foreshadowed as early as in 6:64, reveals that Judas’ primary role is as an *agent*: a character whose sole function it is to bring about a change in the plot. Even though he stands under satanic influence, Judas’ actions are ultimately the object of Jesus’ control and foreknowledge. His departure from Jesus’ company sets in motion the events that lead to Jesus’ glorification (13:32). As he stands with Jesus’ opponents in the garden, he must also fall back at the mention of the divine name. Once his role in delivering up Jesus is completed, he disappears from the plot, as the “son of perdition” (17:12) who was lost to Jesus.

## 6.0 The Four Portrayals of Judas

In this sixth and concluding chapter, I will bring together the discoveries of the previous chapters and review them together. I will do this by returning to the question pointed to in the title of this dissertation: How do the Gospels and Acts cope with Judas’ character? On the basis of the observations of the last four chapters, I will suggest some answers to this question, before I conclude and give an outlook on some of the challenges inherent in Judas’ character today.

### 6.1 The Problem and Its Solutions

In the Gospels and Acts, Judas has a twofold role: he is a specially chosen disciple of Jesus’ and the one who hands him over to the religious authorities. As the previous chapters have shown, each narrative gives this double role a different expression. In other words, Judas’ character is “coped with” in different ways. In the following, I submit that the Gospels and Acts handle the tensions inherent in Judas’ twofold role in mainly three ways: by making Judas regret his decision to hand Jesus over, by placing his actions in a framework of divine necessity and fulfilment where Jesus is aware of what is going to happen, and by characterizing his character more and more negatively.<sup>266</sup>

#### 6.1.1 Regret

The Gospel of Matthew is the only of the five narratives to say that Judas regretted his decision to hand Jesus over to his opponents (27:3-5). The fact that Judas returns the money (27:3, 5) and admits

---

<sup>266</sup> By saying that his character becomes “more and more evil”, I do, in the present context first and foremost mean that when compared, some of the narratives present a more evil picture of Judas than others. While it falls outside the scope of this dissertation, it is nevertheless interesting to speculate about whether this vilification of Judas increased throughout history, and could be used as an argument in favour of the early dating of Mark, the later datings of Matthew and Luke, and the latest dating of John. However, it should be noted that certain elements complicate this observation, see pp. 64-65.

his guilt (27:4) creates the most positive portrayal of Judas' character to be found in the New Testament. At the same time, this dissertation's treatment of Judas' death<sup>267</sup> has shown that Judas' suicide most likely does not exonerate him. Instead, his death is a "fulfilment" of Jesus' woe cry over him at the last supper, and the fitting death of an accursed man who has betrayed innocent blood. Therefore Judas' regret should probably be seen more as a statement of Jesus' innocence than as the restoration of Judas' character. By implication, it proved impossible even for Judas, the worst of Jesus' disciples, not to recognize that Jesus did not deserve death. Judas may have been a betrayer, but as a former disciple, he must inevitably regret his treason.

### 6.1.2 Necessity, Foreknowledge and Fulfilment

The Gospels and Acts place Judas' character within the realm of God's plan and agency. In this way, his becoming a traitor is conditioned by the fact that all he does is according to God's will. Nor does his betrayal surprise Jesus, who goes willingly to the cross.

In the Synoptic Gospels, we have seen that Jesus' knowledge of his own future is expressed in the passion predictions.<sup>268</sup> These passion predictions express a *necessity* connected to Jesus' fate, both through their repetition and through their use of the verb "δέει".<sup>269</sup> Some of these predictions<sup>270</sup> do, moreover, connect Jesus' passion to Judas' act through their use of "παράδιδωμι". This connection becomes explicit when Jesus at the Last Supper makes clear that he is aware that one of his own disciples is going to deliver him up.<sup>271</sup> On one level, the passion predictions rhetorically situate Judas' deed as part of the necessity of the unfolding events. On another level, when they are seen together with Jesus' explicit foreknowledge of who is to hand him over, they do, at the very least, indicate that Jesus was not taken by surprise by what Judas did.

The Synoptics' accounts of the Last Supper do, however, express a tension between Jesus' passion and Judas' place in it. This comes to the fore in the "Son of Man sayings", which are followed by cries of woe over Judas.<sup>272</sup> Jesus must die according to God's decision, but the fact that he is handed over to the religious authorities is still harshly assessed. This is also expressed in the scenes of Jesus' arrest. Jesus is, at least in Mark and Matthew, aware that the hour of his passion has come,<sup>273</sup> and his detainment is expressed as the fulfilment of Scripture.<sup>274</sup> The way Judas is characterized in his

---

<sup>267</sup> Ch. 3.2.3.

<sup>268</sup> Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; Matt 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19; Luke 9:22; 9:44; 18:31-33. Jesus' foreknowledge is also indicated in other places, but here I only make use of observations made earlier in this dissertation.

<sup>269</sup> In the passion predictions, δέει is used in Mark 8:31; Matt 16:21; Luke 9:22.

<sup>270</sup> Mark 9:31; 10:33; Matt 17:22; 20:18; Luke 9:44; 18:32.

<sup>271</sup> Mark 14:18-21; Matt 26:21-25; Luke 22:21-22.

<sup>272</sup> Mark 14:21; Matt 26:24; Luke 22:22.

<sup>273</sup> Mark 14:41; Matt 26:45b.

<sup>274</sup> Mark 14:49; Matt 26:54; 56.

encounter with Jesus, however, as one who attempts to or kisses Jesus, is as a deceptive friend and consequently a betrayer of discipleship. Judas' role is necessary, but because he is a former disciple of Jesus', it is terrible in its necessity.

Whereas the Synoptics do not expressly state Jesus' knowledge of Judas' intentions before he has made a deal with the religious authorities, in the Gospel of John this awareness defines Jesus' relationship with Judas from the beginning.<sup>275</sup> John does not speak of the apostles or a disciple commissioning but merely states that Jesus has chosen "the twelve".<sup>276</sup> If this is seen in light of Jesus' early foreknowledge of Judas' true nature and actions, his choice of Judas as one among twelve disciples indicates that Jesus has chosen Judas specifically to hand him over. In this way, Jesus' foreknowledge reveals his power of his own destiny and Judas' actions. This is confirmed in John's account of Jesus' last meal with the disciples, and particularly by the way Jesus directs Judas to do what he is going to do.<sup>277</sup> This power, if not the same foreknowledge, is also expressed when the mention of the divine name in the garden makes Judas fall to the ground together with Jesus' arresters.<sup>278</sup> Thus John uses Jesus' foreknowledge of his passion and Judas' role in it to assure the reader that Judas was not chosen to follow Jesus by accident, but rather, that all his actions are under his control.

While Mark and Matthew speak of the Scriptural necessity of Jesus' arrest in general, John makes clear that not only the arrest, but Judas' part in it, are scripturally mandated.<sup>279</sup> He therefore solves the tension in Mark and Matthew's presentation of Judas, where Jesus' passion is presented as necessary, but not Judas' role in it. This tension is to a large extent also solved in Luke-Acts, although this is done posterior to Jesus' passion. Here, the "solution" to Judas' twofold role is found in his death as divine punishment. In Acts, Peter says that what happened to Judas happened according to Scripture.<sup>280</sup> This suggests that Judas had to die a gruesome death, and by implication, that he was destined to die because of the role he played in bringing the religious leaders to Jesus. At the same time, Acts solves the difficulty inherent in the fact that Judas defected by scripturally grounding his replacement and restoring the apostles to the number twelve.<sup>281</sup> In this way, Jesus' promise that they

---

<sup>275</sup> John 6:64. See also John 13:11; 21; 18:4

<sup>276</sup> John 6:70.

<sup>277</sup> John 13:27.

<sup>278</sup> John 18:5-6.

<sup>279</sup> John 13:18.

<sup>280</sup> Acts 1:16.

<sup>281</sup> Acts 1:20-26.

rule over the twelve tribes of Israel can still be fulfilled;<sup>282</sup> a promise that remains unfulfilled in Matthew.<sup>283</sup>

Finally, Judas' role as a traitor is solved by aligning his actions to God's will. We have already seen that this is the indirect consequence of the necessity of the passion, because Judas in all the Gospels becomes the instrument not only of Jesus' opponents, but of God. In Luke, this may be understood as part of the motif of "reversal", because Judas' intentions are reversed through God's supremacy. In Matthew, this is expressed in the allusion to Isaiah 53:12. This allusion is evoked through the Last Supper and Jesus' passion and makes it possible to understand Jesus as the Suffering Servant and Judas as the one who hands him over. "To hand over" (παραδίδωμι) in Is 53:12 is the action of God, yet Matthew connects this verb to Judas. In this way, Judas is ironically understood as the one performing God's will.

### 6.1.3 A Darkening Image

The New Testament narratives also bear witness to the difficulties inherent in Judas' character through their increasingly darkening portrayals of him. The following is an attempt to show how these portrayals compare to each other in terms of their negative presentations of Judas.

In the Gospel of Mark, Judas' double role is mainly solved through the presentation of the disciples as flawed. Judas may fail Jesus, but so do they, on several occasions.<sup>284</sup> He is one of them, but his character moves beyond their failures in his active choice to betray the fellowship with Jesus and the other disciples when he takes the side of the religious leaders against them. Thus, even though the disciples all leave Jesus in Gethsemane, Judas is the only one to leave him permanently. In this way, Judas becomes the peak of the disciples' failures in Mark and an example of what it means to go too far. His character is completely defined by the action of handing Jesus over, yet Mark presents no motives behind this act. Judas is only one among many agents to force Jesus' passion to its climax,<sup>285</sup> and seems to almost mechanically fulfil this role in the plot.

The Gospel of Matthew bears witness to a greater struggle with Judas' character. The general portrayal of the disciples is not as negative as it is in Mark, which allows Judas' character to retain some positive potential as an apostle. This potential makes it narratively plausible for his character to regret his decision to hand Jesus over.<sup>286</sup> At the same time, Matthew characterizes Judas more negatively than Mark. Here, Judas' greed is shown when he asks the chief priests for money when he

---

<sup>282</sup> Cf. Luke 22:30.

<sup>283</sup> Matt 19:28.

<sup>284</sup> See ch. 2.2.3.

<sup>285</sup> Cf. Mark 15:1, 15. See ch. 2.3.

<sup>286</sup> Matt 27:3-5.



is to hand over Jesus.<sup>287</sup> This is the only motive this narrative suggests for why Judas delivered up Jesus, and makes Judas seem more actively engaged in his role as Jesus' opponent. When "παράδιδωμι" is used about Judas, it evokes negative associations from previous chapters, and is finally in 27:4 understood negatively by Judas as handing over innocent blood. As such, this action is in Matthew understood as a betrayal of Jesus by one of his own. In sum, Matthew's Judas is a complex character who exists in a tension between being a disciple who cannot escape Jesus' influence, at the same time as he is condemned by the story for the way he treated his master.

While Matthew makes a note of Judas' regret and thus adds a somewhat positive characteristic to Judas' character, the picture darkens in Luke-Acts. Here Judas is described as a traitor from the beginning,<sup>288</sup> instead of Mark and Matthew's vague, but foreboding connection between Judas and "παράδιδωμι". Luke only connects Judas to this verb later, which makes "traitor" this Gospel's interpretation of what Judas did when he showed the religious leaders where Jesus was and handed him over to them. In Luke, Judas' plans against Jesus are interpreted as the will of Satan, who possesses Judas and drives him to the chief priests and officers.<sup>289</sup> The association with Satan adds a cosmic dimension to Judas' role in the conflict with Jesus, but this is not elaborated much on in Luke. However, Satan's use of Judas puts his character in contrast to the other disciples, who will also be tested by Satan, but for whom Jesus prays.<sup>290</sup> Judas thus becomes wholly associated with Jesus' opponents, and their hour of darkness.<sup>291</sup> His betrayal is judged severely in Acts, and he dies according to God's punishment.<sup>292</sup> In this way, Luke-Acts condemns Judas' character more clearly than Mark and Matthew. The tension between being a disciple and traitor, which in Matthew is most clearly established through Judas' regret, is lost in Luke-Acts. While Luke and Acts both suggest that Judas was not always a traitor (and thus a more complex character), it is in practice his role as a traitor and thus an agent of the plot that defines him in these narratives.

In the Gospel of John, the presentation of Judas has become completely dark. Every mention of him and everything he does is connected to a negative evaluation of his character, made either by Jesus or the narrator. In John, Judas is present in the group of disciples, but it is made clear that he is a devil<sup>293</sup> and that his true belonging is with unbelievers.<sup>294</sup> As such, he belongs together with the Jews

---

<sup>287</sup> Matt 26:15.

<sup>288</sup> Luke 6:16.

<sup>289</sup> Luke 22:3-4.

<sup>290</sup> Luke 22:31-32.

<sup>291</sup> Luke 22:53.

<sup>292</sup> Acts 1:18-20. See ch. 4.3.

<sup>293</sup> John 6:70.

<sup>294</sup> John 6:64.

who reject Jesus, and with Satan. At Bethany, the narrator describes Judas as a lying thief,<sup>295</sup> which further augments Judas' negative portrayal. He is the one who stays with Jesus, but whose intentions are never what they appear to be on the surface. Moreover, Judas' connection to Satan is developed throughout the Gospel. This ultimately results in a unification of Satan and Judas in the former's possession of the latter<sup>296</sup> and in their common move against Jesus. In this way, Judas is fully identified with evil and darkness,<sup>297</sup> he is an instrument of the devil and used not only to aid the Jews in bringing about Jesus' execution, but is the human agent in whom the cosmic battle between God and Satan is played out.

In John, Judas is thus associated with all sides in the conflict against Jesus: both on a cosmic and a human level. As an unbeliever, he is "of the world"<sup>298</sup> and under Satan's dominion, opposed to and unable to be in a true relation with Jesus who comes from "above".<sup>299</sup> Jesus was sent by God to save the world, but Judas' full identification with the devil<sup>300</sup> makes him part of the evil that Jesus casts out through his crucifixion and glorification on the cross. Because Judas is evil, so is the fact that he surrenders Jesus to the religious authorities, even though this action ironically is used by God to bring about Jesus' glorification.<sup>301</sup> From this it becomes clear that John more or less only presents Judas as a type who has one role: he is not really a disciple, but an evil deceiver from the beginning until end.

## 6.2 Conclusion and Outlook

This survey into how the Gospels and Acts cope with Judas' character has revealed that they all accentuate different aspects of his discipleship and betrayal of Jesus. In Mark, Judas is the disciple who fails Jesus above and beyond all the others. In Matthew and Luke, the tensions inherent in his role as a disciple and the fact that he was also the one to hand Jesus over are more visible, but whereas Matthew focuses more on how he as an apostle could not fail to profess Jesus' innocence, in Luke-Acts he is the apostle who is doomed to die and be replaced. In John, however, Judas is no longer a real disciple, but a symbol of deception and evil. In all the narratives, his character is judged negatively. And in all of them, his betrayal is necessary in order to bring about Jesus' passion. In this sense, Judas fulfils Scripture and serves God's plan.

While this dissertation has stayed "in" the text, there is also something to be said about the concerns that these narratives seem to point to "behind" the text. The different ways in which the New

---

<sup>295</sup> John 12:5-6.

<sup>296</sup> John 13:27.

<sup>297</sup> John 13:30.

<sup>298</sup> John 8:23.

<sup>299</sup> John 8:23.

<sup>300</sup> John 13:27.

<sup>301</sup> John 13:31-32.

Testament narratives portray Judas all seem to point in the same direction: Judas' double role is a crux to be coped with. Together with Anthony Cane, I would suggest that Judas' character is a challenge because it points to a Christological question: How could Jesus have chosen someone to be with him, who would later join sides against him?<sup>302</sup> That this question is of the utmost significance is confirmed by the discoveries made in this dissertation about how Judas is portrayed – and portrayed differently – in the Gospels and Acts.

Judas is also the object of study in a long reception history concerned with his character. In *Judas: Images of the Lost Disciple*, Kim Paffenroth considers Mark's presentation of Judas as so lacking in details that, "when later storytellers looked at Judas, they saw the perfect cipher on which to practice their art, shaping him into the kind of man or monster that their individual stories needed."<sup>303</sup> Paffenroth further elaborates on how this was done in the remaining Gospels and Acts, and how these portrayals, in turn, led to new understandings of Judas. This summary is not meant to be exhaustive, but to put it simply: The story of Matthew's Judas allowed later readers to feel sympathy for him because of his regret and suicide. This sympathy has again led to admiration for his character in some circles.<sup>304</sup> After all, if Judas only fulfilled the will of God, did he not "get it right"?<sup>305</sup> The punishment in store for Judas in Acts, however, turned him into an object of horror<sup>306</sup> in later presentations of his character,<sup>307</sup> and John's Judas became a villain and an object of hatred and derision.<sup>308</sup> The most problematic consequence of the latter is found in the later identifications of Judas with the Jewish people that led to anti-Semitism.<sup>309</sup>

I mention Paffenroth's book here because his observations show the major impact of the potential that lies in the New Testament narratives' portrayal of Judas. Moreover, just as importantly, this reception history shows the limitations of a purely narrative critical reading that stays "in the text". When this dissertation has discussed how Judas is portrayed in the Gospels and Acts, it has shown how these narratives make sense of Judas within their story worlds. But theology also needs to move beyond the stories, and ask how Judas' character should be understood theologically. In this lies a responsibility to take the texts seriously as stories that try to make sense of historical events, and at

---

<sup>302</sup> Cane, *Judas Iscariot in Christology*. Cf. also the objection reportedly raised by Celsus in *Contra Celsum*, referred to in ch. 1.1: How can a good general be betrayed by one of his own?

<sup>303</sup> Paffenroth, *Judas*, p. 15.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59-110.

<sup>305</sup> This "redemptive" view of Judas is e.g. supported by Klassen, *Judas*. whom I have referred to in previous chapters.

<sup>306</sup> Cf. Paffenroth, *Judas*. and the title of the second chapter, p. 17.

<sup>307</sup> Including Papias, cf. ch. 1.1.

<sup>308</sup> Cf. *ibid.* and the title of his third chapter, p. 33.

<sup>309</sup> Paffenroth, *Judas*, pp. 37-48. Paffenroth does not suggest that the Gospel of John is anti-Semitic, only that it has later been interpreted in favour of anti-Semitism. See also Hyam Maccoby, *Judas Iscariot and the myth of Jewish evil* (London: P. Halban, 1992).

the same time be careful not to interpret them so far that they are used in the service of hatred and anti-Semitism. While the implied authors may condemn Judas for handing Jesus over, his character raises questions that are unsolved in their narratives: If Judas' betrayal was necessary to fulfil God's plan, did he have any free will? And if Jesus died for the sins of the world, is Judas, whose motives for betrayal are uncertain, included in God's forgiveness? It is clear that the story of Judas does not end with the New Testament.

## 7.0 Bibliography

### 7.1 Tools

Kittel, Gerhard. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley.

Vol. 3, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965.

Kohlenberger, John R., Edward W. Goodrick, and James A. Swanson. *The Exhaustive Concordance to the Greek New Testament*. Zondervan Greek Reference Series. Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Zondervan, 1995.

Leivestad, Ragnar, and Bjørn Helge Sandvei. *Nytestamentlig Gresk Grammatikk*. 3rd ed. Oslo:

Universitetsforlaget, 1996.

### 7.2 Sources

*The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenæus*. The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the

Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979.

*Bibelen*. Oslo: Bibelselskapet, 2011.

*The Gospel of Judas: From Codex Tchacos* Translated by Rodolphe Kasser, Marvin W. Meyer and Gregor Wurst. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2006.

*The Holy Bible*. New Revised Standard Version ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

*The Holy Bible*. New American Standard Bible ed. Nashville, Tennessee: Nelson Bibles, 1995.

Josephus, Flavius. *Den Jødiske Krig*. Translated by Erling Harsberg. Københavns Universitet: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 1997.

Nestle, Eberhard, Erwin Nestle, Kurt Aland, and Barbara Aland. *Novum Testamentum Graece*. 27th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001.

*Origen: Contra Celsum*. Translated by Henry Chadwick. edited by Henry Chadwick Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965.

*Polycarp, Martyrdom of Polycarp, Fragments of Papias*. Translated by William R. Schoedel. Patres Apostolici. Vol. 5, New York: T. Nelson, 1967.

*Septuaginta*. edited by Alfred Rahlfs. 8th ed. 2 vols. Vol. 2, Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1965.

### 7.3 Literature

Abrams, Meyer Howard. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 6th ed. Fort Worth, Tex.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993.

- Amit, Yairah. *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2001.
- The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenæus*. The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979.
- Bauer, David R. *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988.
- Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*. Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983.
- Bovon, François. *Das Evangelium Nach Lukas: Lk 1,1-9,50*. Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament. 4 vols. Vol. 1, Zürich: Benziger/Neukirchener Verlag, 1989.
- . *Das Evangelium Nach Lukas: Lk 19,28-24,53*. Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament. 4 vols. Vol. 4, Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 2009.
- Brown, Raymond E. *The Gospel According to John Xiii-Xxi*. The Anchor Bible. 2 vols. Vol. 2, London: Chapman, 1971.
- Cane, Anthony. *The Place of Judas Iscariot in Christology*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005.
- Carlson, Richard Paul. "From Villain to Tragic Figure: The Characterization of Judas in Matthew." *Currents in Theology and Mission* 37, no. 6 (2010): 472-78.
- Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1986.
- Conway, Moncure D. "Judas the Iscariot." *The North American Review* 146, no. 376 (1888): 266-72.
- Cosgrove, Charles H. "The Divine Dei in Luke-Acts: Investigations into the Lukan Understanding of God's Providence." *Novum Testamentum* 26, no. 2 (1984): 168-90.
- Culpepper, R. Alan. *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.
- Danove, Paul L. *The Rhetoric of Characterization of God, Jesus, and Jesus' Disciples in the Gospel of Mark*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 2005.
- Darr, John A. *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992.
- Davies, Margaret. *Matthew*. Readings. 2nd ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2009.
- Donahue, John R., and Daniel J. Harrington. *The Gospel of Mark*. Sacra Pagina Series. edited by Daniel J. Harrington Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 2002.
- Duke, Paul D. *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*. Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox Press, 1985.

- Ehling, Kay. "Warum Lieferte Judas Jesus Aus? ." *Biblische Notizen: Aktuelle Beiträge zur Exegese der Bibel und ihrer Welt* 139 (2008): 107-10.
- Ehrman, Albert. "Judas Iscariot and Abba Saqqara." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97, no. 4 (1978): 572-73.
- Evans, Craig A. *Mark 8:27-16:20*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 2001.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Acts of the Apostles*. The Anchor Bible. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1998.
- . *The Gospel According to Luke (X-Xxiv)*. The Anchor Bible. 2 vols. Vol. 2, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1985.
- Gnilka, Joachim. *Das Evangelium Nach Markus: Mk 8,27-16,20*. Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament. 2 vols. Vol. 2:2, Zürich: Benziger, 1979.
- Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997.
- Hagner, Donald A. *Matthew 14-28*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1993.
- Harrington, Daniel J. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Sacra Pagina Series. edited by Daniel J. Harrington. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1991.
- Heil, John Paul. *The Death and Resurrection of Jesus: A Narrative-Critical Reading of Matthew 26-28*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Holmås, Geir Otto. *Prayer and Vindication in Luke-Acts: The Theme of Prayer within the Context of the Legitimizing and Edifying Objective of the Lukan Narrative*. Library of New Testament Studies. London: T&T Clark, 2011.
- Janowski, Bernd, and Peter Stuhlmacher. *The Suffering Servant*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Sacra Pagina Series. edited by Daniel J. Harrington. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1992.
- . *The Gospel of Luke*. Sacra Pagina Series. edited by Daniel J. Harrington. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1991.
- Keener, Craig S. *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*. 2 vols. Vol. 2, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003.
- Kingsbury, Jack Dean. *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1989.
- . *Matthew as Story*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.
- Klassen, William. *Judas: Betrayer or Friend of Jesus?* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996.
- Koester, Craig. "The Death of Jesus in the Gospel of John." *Tidsskrift for Teologi og Kirke* 4 (2004): 255-74.

- Koester, Craig R. *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2003.
- Kovacs, Judith L. "'Now Shall the Ruler of This World Be Driven Out': Jesus' Death as Cosmic Battle in John 12:20-36." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114, no. 2 (1995): 227-47.
- Kurz, William S. *Reading Luke-Acts: Dynamics of Biblical Narrative*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.
- Luz, Ulrich. *Das Evangelium Nach Matthäus (Mt 26-28)*. Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament. 4 vols. Vol. 3, Zürich: Benziger, 2002.
- Maccoby, Hyam. *Judas Iscariot and the Myth of Jewish Evil*. London: P. Halban, 1992.
- Marguerat, Daniel, and Yvan Bourquin. *How to Read Bible Stories: An Introduction to Narrative Criticism*. London: SCM Press, 1999.
- Mittmann-Richert, Ulrike. *Der Sühnetod Des Gottesknechts*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.
- Moloney, Francis J., and Daniel J. Harrington. *The Gospel of John*. Sacra Pagina Series. edited by Daniel J. Harrington Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1998.
- Paffenroth, Kim. *Judas: Images of the Lost Disciple*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Parsons, Mikeal C., and Richard I. Pervo. *Rethinking the Unity of Luke and Acts*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.
- Pesch, Rudolph. *Das Markusevangelium: Einleitung Und Kommentar Zu Kap. 1,1 - 8,26*. Herders Theologischer Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament. Vol. 2:1, Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 1976.
- Powell, Mark Allan. "Narrative Criticism." In *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*, edited by Joel B. Green. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010.
- . *What Is Narrative Criticism?: A New Approach to the Bible*. London: SPCK, 1993.
- Resseguie, James L. *The Strange Gospel: Narrative Design and Point of View in John*. Biblical Interpretation Series. edited by R. Alan Culpepper and Rolf Rendtorff Boston, Köln, Leiden: Brill, 2001.
- Rhoads, David M., Donald Michie, and Joanna Dewey. *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*. 3rd ed. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2012.
- Ryken, Leland, and Tremper Longman. *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1993.
- Sandnes, Karl Olav. *Belly and Body in the Pauline Epistles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.



- . "Whence and Whither: A Narrative Perspective on the Birth Anōthen (John 3,3-8)." *Biblica* 86, no. 2 (2005): 153-73.
- Saxegaard, Kristin Moen. *Character Complexity in the Book of Ruth*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.
- Schnackenburg, Rudolf. *Das Johannesevangelium: Kommentar Zu Kap. 13-21*. 4 vols. Vol. 3, Freiburg: Herder, 1975/1976.
- Smith, Stephen H. *A Lion with Wings: A Narrative-Critical Approach to Mark's Gospel*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- Stewart, Eric Clark. *Gathered around Jesus: An Alternative Spatical Practice in the Gospel of Mark*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2009.
- Stibbe, Mark W. G. *John's Gospel*. New Testament Readings. edited by John Court London and New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Tannehill, Robert C. *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*. 2 vols. Vol. 2 The Acts of the Apostles, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.
- . *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*. 2 vols. Vol. 1 The Gospel According to Luke, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.
- Taylor, Joan E. "The Name 'Iskariot' (Iscaiot)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129, no. 2 (2010): 367-83.
- Telford, William. *Mark*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.
- Thatcher, Tom. "Jesus, Judas, and Peter: Character by Contrast in the Fourth Gospel." *Bibliotheca sacra* 153, no. 612 (1996): 435-48.
- Torrey, Charles Cutler. "The Name 'Iscaiot'." *Harvard Theological Review* 36, no. 1 (1943): 51-62.
- Unnik, Willem Cornelis van. "The Death of Judas in Saint Matthew's Gospel." *Anglican Theological Review* 3 (1974): 44-57.
- Upton, John A. "The Potter's Field and the Death of Judas." *Concordia Journal* 8, no. 6 (1982): 213-19.
- Von Wahlde, Urban C. "The Johannine 'Jews': A Critical Survey." *New Testament Studies* 28, no. 1 (1982): 33-60.
- Wehus, Glenn. "Judasevangeliet: En Presentasjon Av En Nylig Gjenfunnet Antikk Tekst." *Klassisk Forum* 2 (2009): 79-94.
- Wright, N. T. *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus: Have We Missed the Truth About Christianity?* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2006.
- Wright, William M. I. V. "Greco-Roman Character Typing and the Presentation of Judas in the Fourth Gospel." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (2009): 544-59.
- York, John O. *The Last Shall Be First: The Rhetoric of Reversal in Luke*. Vol. 46, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.

Zwier, Arie W. *Judas and the Choice of Matthias*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004.