Clarion Review

General

The Judas Gene
Robert Pitel
AuthorHouse
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★★★★☆

What would Christians today think about Judas Iscariot if they met him? Of course, Judas is known as the one who betrayed Jesus, but did the other apostles suspect a traitor in their midst? To be sure, the Bible leaves a great many open questions about the relationship between Judas and the others. Most compellingly, what would be the consequences today if Judas had kept a journal and it was discovered in the hands of his descendants?

In *The Judas Gene*, Robert Pitel offers readers the opportunity to find out what might happen. In his version, five people from different parts of the world discover ancient documents that have been handed down through the ages and all find their lives devastated by the knowledge of their ancestry.

Dr. Richard "Rip" Peters discovers a letter from his father about his family's ancestral secrets. "It was shortly after Jesus' Ascension into Heaven that a new understanding of their [the Apostles] purpose on earth was given to them…the spirit of their purpose could live forever in their descendants…They also reasoned that to preserve Jesus' exact words they would need the journals that several of the Apostles kept during our Lord's mission on earth, but most of all they wanted Jesus' diary. Unfortunately, Peter discovered that Judas had taken all of Christ's personal scrolls…"

The story travels to Argentina, England, Italy, Israel, and the United States as each of the five characters search for answers. The Vatican wants the documents and is willing to pay. Monsignor Philippi, appointed by the Pope to head a special task force, is commissioned to find them.

All of the descendants find their lives transformed by their new knowledge. They are thrown into a world of political intrigue and must learn to navigate through the dangerous waters

of greed, fear, and betrayal. Moral dilemmas face each of them.

Pitel first conceived the story back in the 1980s. Now, more than twenty years later, he has birthed a book that makes readers ponder ancient events and their twenty-first century consequences. Confronted with characters who are intelligent and successful, readers will wonder how they themselves would react to such a momentous discovery in their own lives.

Pitel gives readers a fascinating story with plenty of twists and turns, as well as a page turner that employs juxtaposition from ancient times to the present. Although a few typographical errors mar the text, the book provides a fun and suspenseful read.

Pat McGrath Avery