



# My Name Was Judas

*C.K. Stead*

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Judas's name became synonymous with betrayer, but is that how Judas saw it? In this witty and teasingly controversial novel, set against a richly painted backdrop of ancient Palestine forty years after the death of Jesus, Judas tells his version of events.

## My Name Was Judas Details

Date : Published November 28th 2006 by Harvill Secker (first published 2006)

ISBN : 9781846550126

Author : C.K. Stead

Format : Hardcover 240 pages

Genre : Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Religion, Christianity

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## From Reader Review My Name Was Judas for online ebook

### Josephine (Jo) says

Well..... It was fairly well written I suppose except for the inclusion of several comments in the modern idiom i.e. 'Jesus was intellectually superior but socially on the back foot' and Judas says 'the wheels were falling off our collective enterprise' there are also modern expletives that I felt sure were not used in those days.

I had not heard of Stead and therefore had no preconceived ideas about his work but I found this to be someone who is simply having a go at Christian belief (ironic that his name is Christian). The author seems to be of the Monty Python school of thought that 'Jesus was not the Messiah but a very naughty boy!' He has made up an entire childhood about which we now very little, depicting Jesus as a precocious, arrogant and unkind person except when trying to charm the crowds that followed Him. Judas is depicted as not a bad chap at all and a voice of reason trying to make Jesus less antagonistic. Jesus is portrayed as power and fame hungry and eventually 'believing His own publicity' behaving like a madman. I was particularly annoyed at the portrayal of Mary the mother of Jesus as a harried mother of numerous children, she is called a prig and made to sound crazy with her constant gibbering like an idiot who when questioned just grins slyly. It is suggested that Jesus almost despised His mother and that she had abandoned Him. In this book Bartholomew is present at the Crucifixion of Jesus but there is no Biblical support for that, Bartholomew was a witness to the Ascension. Those present at the Crucifixion we are told are Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary Clopas, Mary Magdalene, John (who was actually the one beloved of Jesus, not Bartholomew). During His time on the cross Jesus shows He has love for His mother by entrusting her to the care of His favourite John. Conveniently the author says that Jesus mumbles words that were indistinct whilst dying on the cross. Also present were some of the disciples, members of the Sanhedrin and of course Roman Soldiers. The whole book seems to be written with the type of vitriol against Christians usually shown by someone who has an axe to grind, i.e. a disgruntled ex-Christian or a committed anti Christian atheist. Although I am disappointed that someone has this sort of opinion of my faith I am also well aware that it has all been said before and we are still here, we have broad shoulders and Jesus can stick up for Himself quite well be the example He left us in the Gospels.

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### Peter Walton-Jones says

Hard to know what to make of this story really. It is all well written but so much at odds to the Christian story that it is an uncomfortable read. Stead is of course just making all this up - there is no evidence for any of it. However, he writes a very plausible account. He makes Judas and Jesus as childhood friends from slightly different sides of the donkey path, as it were. This makes it possible for the gospel story to be demystified and we have a very earthly and earthy retelling of Jesus life. That is going to appeal to many and horrify others!

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### Diane Warrington says

A fascinating character study of one of the most maligned men in history. Very well written and thought provoking. An interesting study of how faith cannot really be reconciled with a lack of understanding. And how a viewpoint and the desire to believe without regarding reality can create legends and stories. I was prepared to be quite critical of the thesis of Judas surviving but found that his part, being one of the 12, was perhaps more than the chosen pawn to complete a destiny. Intriguing and beautifully written.

## **Kathleen Dixon says**

*My original review of this book was done in 2007 - really a very short review (see below) that said very little about the book. Nevertheless, on the basis of it I was invited by the BBC to submit a question for their World Book Club programme they were doing on C.K. Stead. I was most delighted when they used it! Here it is.*

This work of fiction tells an alternative story of Jesus and Judas, of a boyhood together followed by the path to Jerusalem and, for Judas, beyond to a life far away with a new name.

Knowing the Christian story, I found it hard to figure out if this novel would have been as good to someone who didn't know it. Stead has an excellent reputation, and is highly thought of among my kiwi friends who appreciate NZ writers, so I imagine that this novel has high literary merit. However, the only people I discussed it with were committed Christians. They maintained that they disliked the book because it had no literary merit, but I doubt that. I'm more inclined to think they disliked it because it was plausible.

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## **Ulfah says**

hmm. well i like the book in a sense that it's nicely written, fairly interesting and kept you going, but also i couldn't take it as a possible historical report (which is not). i tried to put myself into a Christian shoes and it must be pretty offensive to read this, although you do sympathize to Judas the supposedly 'betrayer', and the 'healing' that Jesus did make sense if it isn't being interpreted literally, but i guess i'm biased towards Jesus, and for me it was strange that everything that he did was being rationalized and him being dismissed as almost only as 'a mad man' although the writing was convincing (but i've always been easily convinced) and made you agree to it. at times, it felt like an atheist trying to argue through Judas's character. but it also reminded me with another 'rationalizing' book which i think left deeper 'moving' moments, the Secret Magdalene by Ki Longfellow. it has a more mystical feeling in it (which i personally prefer) and... female as a main character which was hidden away from 'history' due to patriarchy! hahaha.

well my next on the reading list is Gospel According Jesus Christ by Jose Saramago, and I can tell that this one would be totally filled with blasphemy. hahaha :D

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## **Adi says**

This was a surprising book for me. I've not read CK Stead and had formed a rather negative view of him (looks such a grumpy chap), and I didn't expect it to be so CLEVER! Well I was wrong. This has been a standout. The writing is extraordinarily clear and the concept cleverly executed. Judas didn't betray Jesus, he just got bad press and Christ was, well, a bit of a pain and the apostles weren't the brightest crayons in the box. Not recommended for fundamentalist Christians

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## **Ciel Dexter says**

## Beautiful novel

Thoughtful, profound and humane, a beautiful novel about the broken telephone that marks the difference between history and myth. It should make the reader question every story you have ever been told. If you haven't read Stead but you are an admirer of, say, Coetzee then this book is an excellent starting point.

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## SemneBune says

Încep cu o obiec?ie legat? de prezentarea c?r?ii. ?tiu c? orice editur? încearc? s?-?i vând? c?r?ile, dar de data aceasta, Editura Nemira a reu?it cumva s? m? îndep?rteze. Am cump?rat romanul lui C.K. Stead, Numele meu a fost Iuda. Apostol sau Diavol?, fiindc? era la reducere, costa 5 lei, ?i fiindc? sunt interesat de subiectele religioase, iar o carte care s? povesteasc? Evanghelia din perspectiva lui Iuda Iscarioteanul poate fi o lectur? antrenant?. Dar coperta, adaosul Apostol sau Diavol (care nu apare în titlul original, fiind o g?selni?? a traduc?torului Mihai Dan Pavelescu, un traduc?tor excelent de altfel, pe care îl respect, pentru a atrage cititorii), precum ?i coperta a patra mi-au dat de în?eles c? a? avea în fa?? un roman de duzin?, cu intrig?, conspira?ii, blasfemii, motiv pentru care cartea a z?cut vreo doi ani în bibliotec?, nefiind sigur dac? s? o citesc sau nu. ?i poate n-a? fi citit-o dac? nu o consideram o lectur? facil?, numai bun? pentru patru ore de mers cu autobuzul. Îns? dup? câteva pagini mi-am dat seama c? m-am în?elat ?i c? am în carte o cu totul alt? carte. Nu este vreo capodoper?, dar e bine scris? ?i ideea de a pune câte un poem la finalul fiec?rui capitol m-a atras, mai ales c? poemele sunt chiar bune, ar putea fi publicate separat într-o plachet? de sine st?t?toare.

de la surs?: C.K. Stead – Numele meu a fost Iuda – SemneBune <http://semnebune.ro/2013/c-k-stead-nu...>

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## Dupin says

I ova knjiga pokazuje da je interes za biblijske teme i njihovo tuma?enje neprolazan. Stead na mu ovoj knjizi donosi još jedno ( mogu?e ) vi?enje poznatih nam novozavjetnih doga?aja. Vrlo inteligentno i pitko napisano štivo koje je originalno i zabavno.

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## Elena says

The Last chapters were great

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## Rob Squires says

While certainly not one of the best novels that I've ever read, the author succeeds in what he sets out to do brilliantly. His goal of writing a skeptical view of the life and death of Jesus, from the point of view of Judas the betrayer, is crafty, believable and very well done. Before starting this novel, my expectations were not very high and it certainly was better than expected.

The main issue that I have with the novel is that it seems, at least in some ways, to uncritically buy into the

Christian view of Judaism--that the Jews were expecting a "Divine" Messiah who would be the "Son of God"--that is put forward in the New Testament. Anyway who has researched this topic should know that the authors of the gospels, who were obviously quite Hellenized, either misunderstood or misportrayed the Judaism of the first century CE. Thus in my view, this early critique of Christianity could have been a bit more pointed and ruthless. But regardless of this, C. K. Stead's novel does an excellent job of showing how a naturally skeptical Jew, helped along by Greek philosophy, might have viewed the mission and person of Jesus.

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### **Lidija says**

Sjajnost jedna!

Zašto bi bilo baš tako kako je netko jednom rekao? Je li uopće tako bilo? Je li uopće i bilo? I da - zašto imam um nego da njime razmišljam i preispitujem stvari? Pa i ovako delikatne, rekli bi neki (jer vidjela sam svakakve komentare na ovu knjigu) bogohulne? Ma, zašto ne - dapače, posebno takve treba proroštati svim vijugama i svakim osjećajem. Ne bez veze. Ne tek toliko "da budeš drukčiji". Nego zaista pametno, smisleno, duboko. Pa ispadne i dirljivo i drago.

Jako volim pametne ljude. Volim ovakva razmišljanja, razmatranja. U mojem svijetu ovo ne da nije bogohuljenje, nego je dobrodošla, zacjeljujuća umotvorina.

Ako ste preduboko (čovjek sâm zna što je to i je li tako) u naučenim kršćanskim pričama (i sad bi me neki rado razapeli, jer to, je li, nisu priče!), onda nemojte čitati. Ali ako želite malo razmišljati, pretumbati vlastita uvjerenja ili potvrditi ih, oh, svakako čitajte. Ovo je divno!

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### **Hannah says**

This is a book that has been very thoughtfully written. For myself - this version seems far more believable than the one in the bible. But like I say - that's just me.

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### **Petra says**

An interesting look at Jesus' life & ministry as seen through the eyes of Judas, his lifelong friend. Judas tells their story 40 years after the death of Jesus.

C.K. Stead managed to take all the elements of the Biblical story and tell it in a non-miraculous way....an earthly way. The writing is very good. It holds a reader's interest and reads smoothly.

I felt sorry for Judas. Wanting to believe his friend and wanting to fit in but being the sceptic, he finds himself on the outside of the group. His betrayal: not being able to fully believe.

An interesting spin on the Biblical story.

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### **Keith CARTER says**

This book is beautifully written and extremely clever. This is the story we all know from the Gospels but from the point of view of Judas himself. It is Judas reminiscing on their childhood and later relationships. Judas presents us with a much more radical view of Jesus, more subversive. Extremely enjoyable.

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