



The Secret Book of John: The Gnostic Gospel—Annotated & Explained (SkyLight Illuminations)

By Stevan Davies

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This ancient Gnostic text can be a companion for your own spiritual quest. The Secret Book of John is the most significant and influential text of the ancient Gnostic religion. Part of the library of books found in Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945, this central myth of Gnosticism tells the story of how God fell from perfect Oneness to imprisonment in the material world, and how by knowing our divine nature and our divine origins—that we are one with God—we reverse God's descent and find our salvation.

The Secret Book of John: The Gnostic Gospel—Annotated & Explained decodes the principal themes, historical foundation, and spiritual contexts of this challenging yet fundamental Gnostic teaching. Drawing connections to Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, kabbalistic Judaism, and Sufism, Davies focuses on the mythology and psychology of the Gnostic religious quest. He illuminates the Gnostics' ardent call for self-awareness and introspection, and the empowering message that divine wholeness will be restored not by worshiping false gods in an illusory material world but by our recognition of the inherent divinity within ourselves.

Now you can experience and understand this foundational teaching even if you have no previous knowledge of Gnosticism. This SkyLight Illuminations edition presents the most important and valued book in Gnostic religion with insightful yet unobtrusive commentary. It provides deeper insight into the understanding that in Gnosticism the distinction between savior and saved ceases to exist—you must save yourself and in doing so save God.

Stevan Davies is professor of religious studies at Misericordia University and has studied the non-canonical gospels and acts for over thirty years. Among his books are *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, *The Secret Book of John: The Gnostic Gospel—Annotated and Explained* (both SkyLight Paths) and *The Revolt of the Widows: The Social World of the Apocryphal Acts*. He has also published books about the canonical Christian scriptures including *New Testament Fundamentals* and *Jesus the Healer: Possession, Trance and the Origins of Christianity*. His website (www.misericordia.edu/users/davies/thomas/thomas.htm) is a leading Internet resource on the Gospel of Thomas.

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