



The Gnostic Gospels as found at Nag Hamadi (Wilson Ian)

The Five Trees of Paradise: Oracles of Yeshua the Messiah of Israel

9.1 Becoming the Gnostic Twin

The Gospel of Thomas, a nominally gnostic work, the first to be discovered among the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, became at one stage the earliest documentary evidence for Jesus' existence. It now exists in a more complete form among the Nag Hamadi texts. Of these "in one booklet was a text with a distinctly different and arguably more credible ring than most of the rest. Even the opening words were intriguing: 'These are the secret sayings which the living Jesus spoke'" (Wilson I 23) - a body of sayings attributed to Jesus set out in the original archaic form, which it has been suggested was the form of works such as the Testimony Book of Jesus' oracles (c 50 AD) that formed the basis for the synoptics (Schonfield 234). The work contains statements which parallel those in the synoptics including Mark and the synoptic sayings source "Q" and John as well as other sayings with a gnostic slant. A first century date has been suggested for its original form (Robinson 125). There is debate as to whether it predates or follows the synoptics (Gärtner 54, Pagels 1995 69) but it has been suggested that it goes all the way back to the Jewish-Christian Aramaic tradition. Consistent with this, saying 12 defers to James the Just Jesus' brother and head of the Nazorean church of Jerusalem, rather than Peter and saying 27 upholds fasting and the sabbath. Crossan (427) places the core of Thomas sayings common to synoptic sources in the first stratum of (30-60 CE) and earlier than Q or Mark, preceded only by the earliest Pauline epistles (1 Thess, Gal, 1 Cor, Rom) as does Helmut Koestler (Robinson 124).

Jesus is described as being recognised as Messiah, strangely enough, at Pilates capital. Mark 8:27 "And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, 'Whom do men say that I am?' And they answered, 'John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.' And he saith unto them, 'But whom say ye that I am?' And Peter answereth and saith unto him, 'Thou art the Christ.' And he charged them that they should tell no man of him. And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

Thomas 13 tells the story of Jesus' naming by Peter very differently: Jesus said to his disciples, "Compare me to someone and tell me whom I am like." Simon Peter said to him, "You are like a righteous messenger." Matthew said to him, "You are like a wise philosopher." Thomas said to him, "Master, my mouth is wholly incapable of saying

whom you are like." Jesus said, "I am not your master. Because you have drunk, you have become intoxicated from the bubbling spring which I have measured out." And he took him and withdrew and told him three things. When Thomas returned to his companions, they asked him, "What did Jesus say to you?" Thomas said to them, "If I tell you one of the things I which he told me, you will pick up stones and throw them at me; a fire will come out of the stones and burn you up."

Elaine Pagels (1995 71) notes: "The author here interprets for Greek-speaking readers, Matthew's claim that Jesus was a rabbinic teacher ('wise-philosopher'), and Peter's conviction that Jesus was the Messiah ('righteous messenger'). ... Thomas, who recognizes that he himself cannot assign a specific role to Jesus, transcends at that moment the relation of disciple to master. Jesus declares that Thomas has become like himself".

She goes on to describe the particular relation that Thomas the Twin of Jesus offers the reader, noting that the Gospel of Thomas begins "These are the secret words which the living Jesus spoke, and which the twin, Judas Thomas wrote down". She suggests that the meaning of this double relation is that in fathoming the inner gnosis of these sayings, that the reader also becomes "not a Christian, but a Christ" as the later Gospel of Philip says. "In effect, you the reader are the twin brother of Christ" (Pagels 1995 73). It is thus with the intention of at last bringing Jesus down from the Cross in his final exhalation in one and all of us achieving the true life promised that I include these sayings from the 'twin mirror' with Jesus synoptic sayings so that they can at last find their rightful place at the source. A central part of this source is the understanding that the Kingdom is not a cataclysm in which the stars will fall out of the quaint Hebrew dome of the sky, but a state of transformed consciousness achieved through gnosis or 'knowing'.

Thomas 108 Jesus said, "He who will drink from my mouth will become like me. I myself shall become he, and the things that are hidden will be revealed to him."

9.2 Realizing the Kingdom

Thomas 1 And he said, "Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not experience death." (cf John 6:63, 8:51)

Thomas 2 Jesus said, "Let him who seeks continue seeking until he finds. When he finds, he will become troubled. When he becomes troubled, he will be astonished, and he will rule over the all."

Thomas 3 Jesus said, "If those who lead you say to you, 'See, the kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize that it is you who are the sons of the living father. But if you will not know yourselves, you dwell in poverty and it is you who are that poverty."

Luke 17:20 closely echoes this gnostic interpretation: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

Thomas 5 Jesus said, "Recognize what is in your sight, and that which is hidden from you will become plain to you. For there is nothing hidden which will not become manifest."

Thomas 51 "His disciples said to him, 'When will the repose of the dead come about,

and when will the new world come?' He said to them, 'What you look forward to has already come, but you do not recognize it.'

Thomas 113 "His disciples said to him, 'When will the kingdom come?' Jesus said, 'It will not come by waiting for it. It will not be a matter of saying 'here it is' or 'there it is'. Rather, the kingdom of the father is spread out upon the earth, and men do not see it.'

Thomas 4 Jesus said, "The man old in days will not hesitate to ask a small child seven days old about the place of life, and he will live. For many who are first will become last, and they will become one and the same." (cf Mark 10:31 But many that are first shall be last; and the last first)

The synoptic view of the Kingdom sometimes also reflects the Eden like innocence of the child, but, by contrast, it has overtones of conversion and has a hideous moral counterweight attached, which can only be compared with criminal vengeance: Matt 18:2 "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." To give anyone who offends a Christian the concrete bathtub is no spiritual path at all.

For Jesus the kingdom was urgently at hand: Matt 8:22 "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."

9.3 Merging Human Love

To really become one human family, it is essential that we can merge our good will so that it becomes, spontaneously and voluntarily, without being forced upon us by the law, the natural Way of survival. The compulsion of the law always gives rise to criminality just as chaos disrupts imposed order. The cure is for us to understand how our genetic endowment links us all as mortal individuals into the web of life. At stake is the issue of who is our neighbour, for there is always honour among thieves.

When Jesus was challenged to cite the key to immortality in Luke, he cited the fundamentals of Old Testament law: Luke 10:25 "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' He said unto him, 'What is written in the law? how readest thou?' And he answering said, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.' And he said unto him, 'Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.' But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' To which Jesus preached the parable of the good Samaritan to show one's neighbour is not merely one's kin group or its associated mutualities, because those most distant from us if they have true mercy will bring the greatest love and healing:

Luke 10:31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

It has been said that Jesus' only original statement was "love your enemy". Loving one's enemy is the key to merging our genetic kin altruism, because, as long as we only identify our kin, or those who serve us well as our 'neighbour' whom we should love as ourselves, our kin altruism remains fragmented and the world remains corrupt and divided. The healing of original sin consists in aligning our genetic heritage of altruistic feeling, merging it with the human family in the closing circle of life on this fragile paradise of Earth: Matt 5:43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Turning the other cheek does not mean sacrificing or injuring one's self to the evil of others, but accepting that if we all learn to turn our cheeks, we will have in one diplomatic motion conquered human violence. Much of human violence is itself a genetic endowment. Males have depended on violence in evolutionary terms to succeed in their reproductive quest. By understanding our heritage, in an era where we do not need violence and domination to reproduce successfully, we can all come to share the immortal benefits of the greater love no man hath than this: Matt 5:38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

This does not mean debasing the Way however to the forces of confusion and violence: Matt 7:6 "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

It is said that Rabbi Hillel the liberal Jewish philosopher was asked by a gentile student to recite the Mosaic law standing on one leg (Pagels 1995 84-5, Wilson I 145). Hillel said "Whatever is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow man. This is the whole law [Torah]", reflecting Tobit 4:15 "Do to no-one what you would not want done to you." Just as Jesus frequently extended the sayings of John further, such as giving your friend two coats, so here he inverts this negative to a positive ethic of human merging: Matt 7:12 "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

Just as Jesus claimed to have come to forgive sins, so he exhorted all to forgive: Matt 18:21 "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven."

Thomas 48 Jesus said, "If two make peace with each other in this one house, they will say to the mountain, 'Move away,' and it will move away." (cf Mark 11:23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.)

Matt 7:1 Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

9.4 Emotional Suffering and Blessing

To Jesus evil began not just with bad action but bad thoughts, extending the commandments to the emotions. Of course it is true that bad thoughts will bring suffering

as any Buddhist will tell you: Matt 5:22 "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca (abuse), shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

It is endearing that it was the ultimate sin to call another a fool, but a little concerning that merely to appreciate the opposite sex is already adultery. It is also somewhat alarming the degree of self-mutilation that is suggested as a response: Matt 5:29 "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." This obsession with the punishment of hell was not Jesus' invention but nevertheless it remains the downfall of the whole approach. Hell-fire comes more slowly to us, through ignorant damage to the biosphere and through the holocaust of war.

Selected beatitudes: Matt 5:4-10, Thomas 58, 69

- Blessed are they who have suffered and found life.
- Blessed are the hungry, for the belly of him who desires will be filled.
- Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
- Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
- Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
- Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Unselected beatitudes. Self-destruction is no shortcut to the Kingdom (Matt 5:10,11; 10:39):

- Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake:
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you,
and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
- He that findeth his life shall lose it:
and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

9.5 Social Equanimity and Spiritual Grace

When the disciples sat at the Last Supper, Luke 22:24 reports "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.", probably to do with the Essene idea of order of precedence at the sacred repast. Jesus' reply is to reverse the order of the social hierarchy, so that those in power shall serve the lowly: "he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth."

Jesus proposed that it is the one who manifests the fulfillment of abundance who should lead, not he who wields the power: Thomas 81 Jesus said, "Let him who has grown rich be king, and let him who possesses power renounce it."

When Peter says he has sacrificed all to go with Jesus, he is told he will have an even greater reward. Those who try to hold on and resist an act of altruism compromise the very act of giving their best: Mark 10:31 "But many that are first shall be last; and the last first." In Matthew 19:30 he goes on to tell the parable of the master who hired all his workers for a penny a day. Some worked longer hours and some got an easy deal, but all had agreed to the principle. It is better to base our actions on ethics than to compete over the small change.

The situation of the first being last is thus paradoxically reversed with spiritual grace, for the more you have, the more you will receive. Pagels (1995 68) likens this to a koan:

- Thomas 70 "That which you have will save you if you bring it forth from yourselves. That which you do not have within you [will] destroy you if you do not have it within you."

- Mark 4:25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

9.6 The Difficulty of Sharing Wealth

Attachment to one's possessions can also be the greatest barrier to unity with the living world. When a rich young man who has observed all the worldly commandments (not to commit adultery, kill, steal, bear false witness, defraud, and to honour one's father and mother) asks how to enter the kingdom, Mark 10:21 "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, 'One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" but when he is aggrieved for his possessions Jesus says "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

It is important to realize that both the the early Christians and before them the Essenes, despite their spiritual hierarchy, practised egalitarian sharing of property for the common good, a communism which many people today would find a 'hard saying.' Yet without this sense of collective good, the world becomes a place of poverty, for it is the failure of world resources to distribute according to need which causes hunger and poverty to continue in the world today. Redistribution of wealth is a key means to avoid damaging the world unnecessarily through overproduction and wastage, followed by attrition of arable land resources. Acts 2:44 says "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people."

Thomas 72 "[A man said] to him, 'Tell my brothers to divide my father's possessions with me.' He said to him, 'O man, who has made me a divider?' He turned to his disciples and said to them, 'I am not a divider, am I?'"

Thomas 95 "If you have money, do not lend it at interest, but give [it] to one from whom you will not get it back." There is a reason for this. Laying up personal treasure beyond reasonable need does not serve the immortal living purpose: Thomas 63 Jesus

said, " There was a rich man who had much money. He said, 'I shall put my money to use so that I may sow, reap, plant, and fill my storehouse with produce, with the result that I shall lack nothing. Such were his intentions, but that same night he died. Let him who has ears hear." The strange thing about this is that the real treasure was not of this world and the man missed it: Thomas 109 Jesus said, "The kingdom is like a man who had a [hidden] treasure in his field without knowing it. And [after] he died, he left it to his [son]. The son [did] not know (about the treasure). He inherited the field and sold [it]. And the one who bought it ' went plowing and [found] the treasure. He began to lend money at interest to whomever he wished."

This sharing is again noted in Acts 4:34 "Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." However one should not go down the road of Peter, who in Acts 5:3 so terrified poor Ananias "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" who had kept some money back from the sale of land, despite making a donation that "Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost" and when poor Sapphira came in to make her donation and found what had happened "Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost". Peter had done a very wicked thing, which is the curse of all such spiritual communities, for Jesus said Thomas 44 "Whoever blasphemeth against the father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemeth against the son will be forgiven, but whoever blasphemeth against the holy spirit will not be forgiven either on earth or in heaven." (cf Mark 3:29) For Peter to use such language was more than Raca. It was spiritual terrorism.

9.7 The Seed, the Tree of Life and the Harvest

Jesus used many parables of the seed and the harvest, with diverse meanings. The growth of the mustard seed, the seed which fell on fallow ground, the sacrificial harvest which strongly hints of Tammuz, the tares of evil taken in the harvest of the Day of Judgement, by their fruit ye shall know them and the great harvest.

Thomas 20 "The disciples said to Jesus, 'Tell us what the kingdom of heaven is like.' He said to them, 'It is like a mustard seed. It is the smallest of all seeds. But when it falls on tilled soil, it produces a great plant and becomes a shelter for birds of the sky.'" (cf Mark 4:31). Matthew (13:32) has the birds nest in the tree, which becomes a veritable tree of life.

Thomas 9 "Now the sower went out, took a handful (of seeds), and scattered them. Some fell on the road; the birds came and gathered them up. Others fell on rock, did not take root in the soil, and did not produce ears. And others fell on thorns; they choked the seed(s) and worms ate them. And others fell on the good soil and it produced good fruit: it bore sixty per measure and a hundred and twenty per measure." (cf Mark 4:2)

Mark 4:26 "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

Thomas 57 Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like a man who had good seed. His enemy came by night and sowed weeds among the [good] seed. The man did not

allow them to pull up the weeds; he said to them, 'I am afraid that you will go intending to pull up the weeds and pull up the wheat along with them. For on the day of the harvest the weeds will be plainly visible, and they will be pulled up and burned.' (cf Matt 13:24)

Thomas 45 "Grapes are not harvested from thorns, nor are figs gathered from thistles, for they do not produce fruit. A good man brings forth good from his storehouse; an evil man brings forth evil things from his evil storehouse, which is in his heart, and says evil things. For out of the abundance of the heart he brings forth evil things." Matt 7:15 adds "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. ... Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

Thomas 73 Jesus said, "The harvest is great but the laborers are few. Beseech the lord, therefore, to send out laborers to the harvest." (cf Matt 9:37)

John 4:35 "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

9.8 The Nature Shaman

Thomas 17 Jesus said, "I shall give you what no eye has seen and what no ear has heard and what no hand has touched and what has never occurred to the human mind."

Thomas 77 Jesus said, "It is I who am the light which is above them all. It is I who am the all. From me did the all come forth, and unto me did the all extend. Split a piece of wood, and I am there. Lift up the stone, and you will I find me there."

Thomas 91 They said to him, "Tell us who you are so that we may believe in you." He said to them, "You read the face of the sky and of the earth, but you have not recognized the one who is before you, and you do not know how to read this moment."

Thomas 106 Jesus said, "When you make the two one, you will become the sons of man, and when you say, 'Mountain, move away,' it will move away." Mark 11:23 reduces this knowing to belief: "For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea'; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith."

Luke 17:6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

Thomas 19 "Blessed is he who came into being before he came into being. If you become my disciples and listen to my words, these stones will minister to you. For there are five trees for you in Paradise which remain undisturbed summer and winter and whose leaves do not fall. Whoever becomes acquainted with them will not experience death."

Matt 6:25 Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they card

not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Thomas 59 "Take heed of the living one while you are alive, lest you die and seek to see him and be unable to do so."

Thomas 111 "The heavens and the earth will be rolled up in your presence. And the one who lives from the living one will not see death. Does not Jesus say, 'Whoever finds himself is superior to the world?'"

Jesus really didn't mind about blaspheming himself or the father, it was only the shamanic ghost of gnosis that was truly essential: Thomas 44 Jesus said, "Whoever blasphemes against the father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemes against the son will be forgiven, but whoever blasphemes against the holy spirit will not be forgiven either on earth or in heaven." (cf Matt 12:31)

9.9 Choosing the Pearl

Thomas 32 "A city being built on a high mountain and fortified cannot fall, nor can it be hidden." (cf Matt 5:14, 7:24)

Thomas 8 And he said, "The man is like a wise fisherman who cast his net into the sea and drew it up from the sea full of small fish. Among them the wise fisherman found a fine large fish. He threw all the small fish back into the sea and chose the large fish without difficulty. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear." (cf Matt 13:47)

Thomas 76 "The kingdom of the father is like a merchant who had a consignment of merchandise and who discovered a pearl. That merchant was shrewd. He sold the merchandise and bought the pearl alone for himself. You too, seek his unfailing and enduring treasure where no moth comes near to devour and no worm destroys." (cf Matt 13:45)

Thomas 47 Jesus said, "It is impossible for a man to mount two horses or to stretch two bows. And it is impossible for a servant to serve two masters; otherwise, he will honor the one and treat the other contemptuously. No man drinks old wine and immediately desires to drink new wine. And new wine is not put into old wineskins, they burst; nor is old wine put into a new wineskin, lest it spoil it. An old patch is not sewn into a new garment, because a tear would result." Matt 6:24 adds "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Thomas 107 Jesus said, "The kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. One of them, the largest, went astray. He left the ninety-nine and looked for that one until he found it. When he had gone to such trouble, he said to the sheep, 'I care for you more than the ninety-nine.'" (Cf Matt 18:11).

In the parable of the prodigal son Luke 15:30 Jesus emphasizes how important the lost sheep is. When the virtuous son is agrieved "But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf." the father replies "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

Thomas 96 Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like [a certain] woman. She took a little leaven, [concealed] it in some dough, and made it into large loaves. Let him who has ears hear." (cf Matt 13:33)

Thomas 97 Jesus said, "The kingdom of the [father] is like a certain woman who was

carrying a [jar] full of meal. While she was walking [on the] road, still some distance from home, the handle of the jar broke and the meal emptied out behind her [on] the road. She did not realize it; she had noticed no accident. When she reached her house, she set the jar down and found it empty."

Matt 13:44 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

9.10 Illuminati

Matt 6:22 "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

Thomas 25 "Love your brother like your soul, guard him like the pupil of your eye."

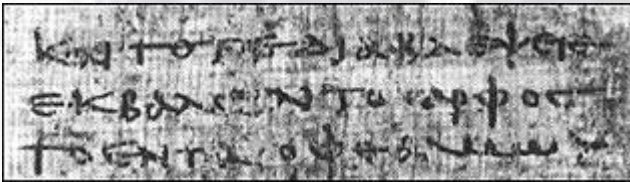


Fig 9.1: Second line right: karfos - karphos or 'mote' was the first word found by Arthur Hunt among the Oxyrhynchus papyri. In 1883 Flinders Petrie had seen Greek writing among disintegrating artefacts. In 1895 the Egypt Exploration Fund sponsored Bernard Greenfell and Arthur Hunt on an expedition to search for such material. This section of the Gospel of Thomas 26 became at the time the earliest documentary evidence for the existence of Jesus (Wilson I 21).

Thomas 26 "When you cast the beam out of your own eye, then you will see clearly to cast the mote from your brother's eye." Anticipating Matt 7:3 and Luke 6:41: And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

Thomas 34 "If a blind man leads a blind man, they will both fall into a pit." (cf Matt 15:14).

Thomas 24 "His disciples said to him, 'Show us the place where you are, since it is necessary for us to seek it.' He said to them, 'Whoever has ears, let him hear. There is light within a man of light, and he lights up the whole world. If he does not shine, he is darkness'."

Thomas 50 Jesus said, "If they say to you, 'Where did you come from?', say to them, 'We came from the light, the place where the light came into being on its own accord and established [itself] and became manifest through their image.' If they say to you, 'Is it you?', say, 'We are its children, and we are the elect of the living father.' If they ask you, 'What is the sign of your father in you?', say to them, 'it is movement and repose'."

9.11 The Repose of the Elect and the Open Way

Thomas 42 Jesus said, "Become passersby."

Thomas 49 Jesus said, "Blessed are the solitary and elect, for you will find the kingdom. For you are from it and to it you will return."

Thomas 33 Jesus said, "Preach from your housetops that which you will hear in your ear. For no one lights a lamp and puts it under a bushel, nor does he put it in a hidden place, but rather he sets it on a lampstand so that everyone who enters and leaves will see its light." (cf Matt 10:26, 5:15) "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed."

Matt 7:7 "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Thomas 80 Jesus said, "He who has recognized the world has found the body, but he who has found the body is superior to the world."

Thomas 83 Jesus said, "The images are manifest to man, but the light in them remains concealed in the image of the light of the father. He will become manifest, but his image will remain concealed by his light."

Thomas 84 Jesus said, "When you see your likeness, you rejoice. But when you see your images which came into being before you, and which neither die nor become manifest, how much you will have to bear! "

Thomas 67 Jesus said, "If one who knows the all still feels a personal deficiency, he is completely deficient."

Thomas 110 Jesus said, "Whoever finds the world and becomes rich, let him renounce the world."

Thomas 112 Jesus said, "Woe to the flesh that depends on the soul; woe to the soul that depends on the flesh."

Thomas 11 Jesus said, "This heaven will pass away, and the one above it will pass away. The dead are not alive, and the living will not die. In the days when you consumed what is dead, you made it what is alive. When you come to dwell in the light, what will you do? On the day when you were one you became two. But when you become two, what will you do?"

9.12 The Scribes, the Pharisees and the Nazorean

Evidence of the origin of the Gospel of Thomas in the Jewish branch of Christianity comes from its support of James rather than Peter: 12 The disciples said to Jesus, "We know that you will depart from us. Who is to be our leader?" Jesus said to them, "Wherever you are, you are to go to James the righteous, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being."

Jesus is portrayed as very critical of the scribes and Pharisees because they paid fastidious attention to the outer forms without caring for the spiritual essence, but the Pharisees, unlike the temple priests were concerned for the welfare of the people and worked diligently among all the people. It is their heritage to which we owe the existence of Judaism today.

Thomas 43 His disciples said to him, "Who are you, that you should say these things

to us?" Jesus said to them, "You do not realize who I am from what I say to you, but you have become like the Jews, for they (either) love the tree and hate its fruit (or) love the fruit and hate the tree." Matt 21:28 "A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, 'Son, go work to day in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not': but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir': and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father?"

Thomas 89 Jesus said, "Why do you wash the outside of the cup? Do you not realize that he who made the inside is the same one who made the outside?" (cf Matt 23:25, Luke 11:39)

Thomas 102 Jesus said, "Woe to the pharisees, for ' they are like a dog sleeping in the manger of oxen, for neither does he eat nor does he [let] the oxen eat." (cf Matt)

Thomas 39 Jesus said, "The pharisees and the scribes have taken the keys of knowing (gnosis) and hidden them. They themselves have not entered, nor have they allowed to enter those who wish to. [Matt 10:16 "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves"] You, however, be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves."

Matt 6:6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Matt 6:7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

In Thomas 6 his almsgiving and dietary laws are simple and personal: "His disciples said 'Do you want us to fast? How shall we pray? Shall we give alms? What diet shall we observe?' Jesus said, 'Do not tell lies, and do not do what you hate, for all things are plain in the sight of heaven. For nothing hidden will not become manifest, and nothing covered will remain without being uncovered.'" This theme becomes a paradoxical koan in 14 containing a rebuke against Pharisaic outward displays of piety: "If you fast, you will give rise to sin for yourselves; and if you pray, you will be condemned; and if you give alms, you will do harm to your spirits. When you go into any land and walk about in the districts, if they receive you, eat what they will set before you, and heal the sick among them. For what goes into your mouth will not defile you, but that which issues from your mouth - it is that which will defile you."

Regarding the wife who outlived each of seven brothers, who under Leirate law were obliged to be her husband, the Sadducees asked which she would be with when the dead were raised. Jesus' reply was that heaven was full of sexless angels, but he did add a key point: Mark 12:27 "He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err."

Matt 5:32 "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

9.13 On Himself

Thomas 31 Jesus said, "No prophet is accepted in his own village; no physician heals those who know him." (cf Mark 6:4, Luke 4:23).

Thomas 90 Jesus said, "Come unto me, for my yoke is easy and my lordship is mild, and you will find repose for yourselves."

Thomas 92 Jesus said, "Seek and you will find. Yet, what you asked me about in former times and which I did not tell you then, now I do desire to tell, but you do not inquire after it." (cf John)

Thomas 98 Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like a certain man who wanted to kill a powerful man. In his own house he drew his sword and stuck it into the wall in order to find out whether his hand could carry through. Then he slew the powerful man."

Thomas 38 [Jn] Jesus said, "Many times have you desired to hear these words which I am saying to you, and you have no one else to hear them from. There will be days when you will look for me and will not find me."

Thomas 40 Jesus said, "A grapevine has been planted outside of the father, but being unsound, it will be pulled up by its roots and destroyed."

Thomas 52 His disciples said to him, "Twenty-four prophets spoke in Israel and all of them spoke in you." He said to them, "You have omitted the one living in your presence and have spoken (only) of the dead."

Thomas 55 Jesus said, "Whoever does not hate his father and his mother cannot become a disciple to me. ' And whoever does not hate his brothers and sisters and take up his cross in my way will not be worthy of me. Matt 10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

Thomas 101 Jesus said, "Whoever does not hate his [father] and his mother as I do cannot become a [disciple] to me. And whoever does [not] love his [father and] his mother as I do cannot become a [disciple to] I me. For my mother ... but [my] true [mother] gave me life."

Thomas 66 Jesus said, "Show me the stone which the builders have rejected. That one is the cornerstone." (cf Mark 12:10, Psalm 118:22)

9.14 Disarming Evil

Thomas 35 Jesus said, "It is not possible for anyone to enter the house of a strong man and take it by force unless he binds his hands; then he will (be able to) ransack his house."

Thomas 103 Jesus said, "Fortunate is the man who knows where the brigands will enter, so that [he] may get up, muster his domain, and arm himself before they invade."

Matt 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Thomas 21 Mary said to Jesus, "Whom are your disciples " like?" He said, "They are like children who have settled in a field which is not theirs. When the owners of the field come, ' they will say, 'Let us have back our field.' They undress in their presence ' in order to let them have back their field and to give it back to them. Therefore I say, if the owner of a house knows that the thief is coming, he will begin his vigil before he comes and will not let him dig through into his house of his domain to carry away his goods. You then, be on your guard against the world. Arm yourselves with great strength lest the robbers find a way to come to you, for the difficulty which you expect will materialize. Let there be among you a man of understanding. When the grain rip-

ened, he came quickly with his sickle in his hand and reaped it. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear. "

9.15 The True Church

Thomas 74 He said, "O lord, there are many around the drinking trough, but there is nothing in the cistern."

The following parable and its variants has been regarded as indirect evidence for the writing of the gospels after the fall of Jerusalem (Wilson 146). The forms in Luke and Matthew are severe and in the case of Luke's version was the very passage used by Augustine to justify the use of force which became institutionalized in the Inquisition. In Matthew's version it is clearly portrayed as a king's wedding feast for his son:

•Thomas 64 Jesus said, "A man had received visitors. And when he had prepared the dinner, he sent his servant to invite the guests. He went to the first one and said to him, 'My master invites you.' He said, 'I have claims against some merchants. They are coming to me this evening. I must go and give them my orders. I ask to be excused from the dinner.' He went to another and said to him, 'My master has invited you.' He said to him, 'I have just bought a house and I am required for the day. I shall not have any spare time.' He went to another and said to him, 'My master invites you.' He said to him, 'My friend is going to get married, and I am to prepare the banquet. I shall not be able to come. I ask to be excused from the dinner'" He went to another and said to him, 'My master invites you.' He said to him, 'I have just bought a farm, and I am on my way to collect the rent. I shall not be able to come. I ask to be excused.' The servant returned and said to his master, 'Those whom you invited to the dinner have asked to be excused.' The master said to his servant, 'Go outside to the streets and bring back those whom you happen to meet, so that they may dine. Businessmen and merchants [will] not enter the places of my father."

•Luke 14:23 "And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."

•Matt 22:10 "So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, 'Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

Thomas 30 Jesus said, "Where there are three gods, they are gods. Where there are two or one, I am with him."

Thomas 36 [*scrip] Jesus said, "Do not be concerned from morning until evening and from evening until morning about what you will wear."

Thomas 60 They saw a Samaritan carrying a lamb on his way to Judea. He said to his disciples, "That man is round about the lamb." They said to him, "So that he may kill it and eat it." He said to them, "While ' it is alive, he will not eat it, but only when he has killed it and it has become a corpse." They said to him, "He cannot do so otherwise." He said to them, "You too, look for a place for yourselves within repose, lest you become a corpse and be eaten."

Thomas 79 A woman from the crowd said to him, "Blessed are the womb which bore

you and the breasts which nourished you." He said to [her], "Blessed are those who have heard the word of the father and have truly kept it. For there will be days when you will say, 'Blessed are the womb which has not conceived and the breasts which have not given milk.' " (cf Luke 11:27, 23:29)

Thomas 28 Jesus said, "I took my place in the midst of the world, and I appeared to them in flesh. I found all of them intoxicated; found none of them thirsty. And my soul became afflicted for the sons of men, because they are blind in their hearts and do not have sight; for empty they came into the world, and empty too they seek to leave the world. But for the moment they are intoxicated. When they shake off their wine, then they will repent."

*Unless ye eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood ye have no life in you
I have not come to destroy the law and the prophets but to fulfil them.*

Before Abraham was I am.

John