

# "You will not taste death: Jesus and Epicureanism" (Gospel of Thomas Thread)

Post by "mlinssen" of February 5, 2026 at 10:05 AM

## ***Epicurus, and Thomas***

I am going to start a new post on this, in order to try and keep it manageable

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I will be going through Thomas up until 19, tasting death/mother, and try to summarise it in as few words as possible, including all logia in between parentheses.

I will Capitalise all Greek loanwords, as is customary for me in this context. When they're at the start of a sentence I will surround them with single quotes ('). The singular exception is Father, which is a native Coptic noun in Thomas

Thomas invites the reader to find the Interpretation, ἐρμηνεία (1): this is between the text and the reader, no gurus invited. No peers, no nothing. Death is not to be taken literally, as Thomas rejects any and all reincarnation and afterlife. Logion (2) describes an Awakening, and stresses that we may seek and even find, but that there is no relation between either. Personally I have found (pun) that only things having been in prior possession can be found - all else is pure discovery.

Thomas teaches us the typical *gnoti seauton* (3) and that those who go before / persuade us (3) variably invent where they can hang the proverbial carrot. I interpret heaven as the religious section, and Sea (θάλασσα) as typical schools of thought. The kingdom is on the inside, and Thomas will reject everything on the outside. Merely reject, of course: asceticism is a perfect example of misunderstanding how to value the inside and reject the outside, as it wastes an incredible amount of energy and time on that very outside

When we grow up, we die: spiritually. So Thomas expresses the stealth wish that growing up is ceased (4), because of the Place (τόπος) of life, so that the 7-day old child will live.

We die because we split (5): while we originally derive from the Father (who went into hiding when we split), we will become Ego ("he-who in the facade of your face" and "he-who covering") and Self (a diluted form of our Selves). Yet if we persevere, the Ego will be uncovered and the Father revealed.

Anti-Judaism is a great distraction in Thomas. It does serve to illuminate some of his points, but it borders on (if not exceeds) hate. Whatever the dumb disciples ruminate from their peers is ruthlessly rejected, so (6): fasting as well as praying and giving Alms (ἐλεημοσύνη, one of countless hapax legomena in the NT) equates to lying and doing what you hate, and they will be uncovered (!) in the presence of the singular heaven.

Thomas reserves the plural heavens for the real deal, and of the 10 'kingdom of' in his text 3 are of the plural heavens (identical to Matthew), and 7 of the (once in 65 'my') Father

How to find truth in life, what to pursue?!

The proverbial good great fish (8) is an illusion, and only good on discovery. You can choose it, but that will be Separate-from (χωρίς) toil. Toiling is quintessential in Thomas, and lack thereof indicative of worthlessness. My interpretation is that choosing the great (and no longer good!) fish equates to realising that this proverbial pot of gold simply doesn't exist - after all, the Sea was filled with only small fish alone (sic).

The sower is where the real deal starts: explicitly singular nouns point to repetitive processes in Thomas, and (9) is all about what we ought to do: reach deep inside, where the kingdom is, and ejaculate (cf. [the creation story of Atum](#)) our seeds in order to see where they land. Where they produce, they have found fertile soil - and locating that is the entire goal of it all, as we subsequently must work (20) that, and eventually will receive Fruit and the harvest itself.

The proverbial path leads to nothing, and merely to the proverbial birds of the singular heaven; note that the verb 'gather' is reserved for the context of collecting foods and wood: stockpiling, cattling and gating the sheeple.

The Rock points to Yahweh and is described as dry and shallow, whereas the Acacias nilotica (one of 10 possible choices for the word 'thorn!') points to the multi-deities of Egypt, and the singular worm to [Apophis](#) who indeed eats them every night when Ra travels through the sky with all other deities.

'he came to sixty per arrow+, and hundred twenty per arrow+' - [in the hexagesimal system one can count to 60 on one hand](#), and in this logion the 'sower' starts with empty hands, and ends with three full ones. Not bad hey?

Points of view regarding the things around us.

The World (10) must burn, and be utterly destroyed. It is a mere Decoration, an attempt to Order, and above all it resides on the outside.

We made the two ourselves (11) although we were coerced in the process. We sadly are indeed the children of the living father...

(12) points to the Jacob of Genesis and Jacob's ladder, and is very hyperbolic, and a distraction.

In (13), Thomas is told to write his own life story when his projection-free answer hits home.

The boiling Fount is a typical example of the ferocity of this text, translated correctly only once by H-M Schenke back in 1959, at the very beginning. C&C has rigidly taken over ever since!

(14) again repeats the anti-Judaism which also is not only a common example of the main religion of Thomas' context, but observe that all that gets rejected are outside manifestations: Thomas rejects all of religion BECAUSE it busies itself only with outside manifestations. Outside is worthless, useless, and it's where the proverbial paths are (64).

(14) also is filled with Platonic words such as χώρα, παραδέχομαι, as well as κατακρίνω and κακός. I have a special file that hyperlinks into all of Perseus' Plato for each of the 123 words in Thomas, when interested.

The Father is not a person, such is for sure (15) - but do pay very close attention to the fact that it is YOUR Father, it is something personal, and not some deity.

The number 5 is mentioned in (16) and we learn that the child is indeed two, (Ego and Self), and knowledge of the existence of the Father makes three. The masculine fire (the feminine is reserved for 82) goes hand in hand with the sword, and War is an interesting Greek loanword out of necessity: Egyptian doesn't have a word for that (and evidently also loans for Peace).

Eyes, ears, hands and heart/mind: we view and see through the myopic eye of the Ego, we hear through his ears, we are fed with the spiritual hands of Ego and Self, and all that ends up in our own heart/mind (the word indeed means both in Egyptian). How could we possibly experience anything real without the severest of distortions?

18 and 19 are brilliant, juxtaposing the Greek Beginning to the native Coptic beginning. We Begin when we split, we become someone(s!) else entirely - yet we don't know, and the disciples once again ruminate their Judaic mantra, oblivious of that what is REALLY important. Harsh as always is his critique when he posits to his disciples the possibility of them becoming such to him. Listening to words naturally will not achieve anything, only knowing and understanding does so. Sarcastically, he baits them with the proposition that stones (who are devoid of eyes, ears, hands as well as heart/mind) would actually Serve (διακονέω!) them. Here comes the last sentence:

#### Quote

you Indeed have inthere the five trees in Paradise; they move not, within summer, within winter, and not usually their leaves fall outward. he who will know them, will not take taste of mother+

This is really what the text says: it is the disciples that cherish this image. Five points IMO to the divisive number in logion 16, not to the five (Epicurean?) senses.

Think about it for 5 seconds and then answer the question straight away: **trees that don't move all year around, and never shed a single leaf - what specific type of tree are they?**

Know to recognise a fable, an illusion, and you indeed will not taste death - or rather, be corrupted by mother's education, as that is full of fables and old tales, ideas and illusions. For the epitome of that all, Logion 47 is the centerpiece of our psychological Becoming (as well as a direct link to Plato's charioteer of [Phaedrus 253d](#) and its white horse (τιμῆς ἐραστής, 'of-honour lover') versus [its black horse in 253e](#) (ὑβρεως, hubristic)

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I could go on indefinitely, and it's impossible for me to be more concise than this, I see. So I'll stop here.

Pros:

1. Rejection of religion
2. Rejection of the proverbial pot of gold
3. Indifference to gods
4. A stress on (autonomous!) movement and action

5. Rejection of everything outside, and sole focus on the inside
6. Rejection of reincarnation (e.g. 27, 89, 112)
7. Rejection of leaders, status

Cons:

- A. Not a single mention of pleasure, and only one mention of 'my soul gave **pain**' in (28)
- B. Thomas doesn't bother at all with any cosmogony of any kind, which fits with rejecting anything on the outside. I find the Epictetus idea of only caring for that which is in your control particularly strong in Thomas. Let's be honest, all ideas about any cosmogony are mere opinions.
- C. Desire is a twin pair: desire ϰ Noun masculine 99, Desire ϰ Verb 38, 47. I can't evaluate it in an Epicurean sense.
- D. Nowt about friendship. Thomas' Quest is a lonely, utterly solitary one where it is even strongly recommended to avoid everyone (64, 65).
- E. Knowledge comes from empiricism by oneself about oneself inside oneself. It's the only knowledge of use, and when devoid of it you are doomed, and dead

Da bomb:

1. [Nothing Can Be Created From Nothing.](#)
2. The Universe Is Infinite In Size And Eternal In Time And Has No Gods Over It.
3. The Nature of Gods Contains Nothing That Is Inconsistent With Incorruption And Blessedness.
4. [Death Is Nothing To Us.](#)
5. [There Is No Necessity To Live Under The Control Of Necessity.](#)
6. He Who Says "Nothing Can Be Known" Knows Nothing.
7. All Sensations Are "True."
8. [Virtue Is Not Absolute Or An End In Itself - All Good And Evil Consists In Sensation.](#)
9. [Pleasure is The Guide of Life.](#)
10. By "Pleasure" We Mean All Experience That Is Not Painful
11. [Life Is Desirable, But Unlimited Time Contains No Greater Pleasure Than Limited Time.](#)

The above are all left unaddressed by Thomas. I get the impression (and cherish the stealth desire LOL) that most of these are reactions by Epicurus. If I'm correct that the Sea represents all schools of thought, Thomas simply wipes the entire table clean. He is a radical revolutionary interested in nothing but his own empiricism about himself - and as such hardly can be compared to full Epicureanism, I reckon.

Still: there are parallels, and Thomas most definitely is no signboard for anything in particular

A last one: Thomas shows us how to become Son of Man, Child of the Human (106) - it is the closest to the father that we will ever come. Free of our 'garments', free from the yoke of Ego and Self, free from that hobble that limited our movement (23). Free from shame and fear. Free from our slaveowner the Ego. No rules, no plans, no paths. No worries, no virtues, no higher goals

**This is my first thread.** Feel free to use the red pen and I will happily comply! I've gone by most of the introductory material in all kinds of aspects, but you never know...

This is it. I'll eagerly await any reactions. So far I haven't been able to link Thomas to anything in particular