

logion 2

Jesus said:

*"Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find.
When they find, they will be awestruck.
When they are awestruck, they will become amazed,
and will reign over the All."*

Commentary

Behind its innocuous appearance, interpretation of this logion, if we look into the matter carefully, is by no means trouble-free. It amounts to a call to search deeply into Christ, along lines parallel to those recommended by Saint Paul *Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth.*¹ But the search in question here is assuredly in keeping with the inner way proposed by Judas Thomas, that of the Son present in man, the one born from on high, the one who can and must be found. What is explained here is that the search must be conducted with unflagging perseverance, it must be like an unbroken flow; when this flux of energy is upheld and sustained by absolute truth and surrender, it is certain that the intuition of the eternal inner Being will emerge in the end, as the first step towards the meeting.

It is true that *Search, and you will find* is an affirmation that is to be found throughout the Gospel as a broad promise; and this includes the concrete case *ask, and it will be given to you.*² These all form the basis of a very open and generalized theory about the efficacy of prayer. Nevertheless, when one makes a close study of the passages that proclaim this belief, it becomes clearly apparent that the abundant response that is promised does not refer to earthly things, but to *the kingdom of the Father and his righteousness*. Other things, it is written, will not be given on their own, but *will be given as well.*³

¹ Col. 3:2

² Matt. 7:7 et seq.; Luke 11:9 et seq.

³ Matt.6:33

The true spiritual meaning of the search and the request, as well as of the finding and response promised in this logion, both in the short version of Judas Thomas and in the more extensive ones to be found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, is confirmed when the latter adds in conclusion to what has just been expounded *How much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.*⁴

Without question, the phrase with which the saying ends in Saint Luke's Gospel situates the search and the response now under discussion in the context of the inner revelation of the Son of Man, since he and nothing else is the means of both the searching and the finding. But it is the Holy Spirit, as Paraclete, interceding between man's consciousness and the Son and testifying on the Son's behalf, that must accord such a revelation.⁵

In the fourth Gospel references to the Paraclete are abundant at a particularly intense moment in the story. Jesus announces to his disciples that he will be with them only a little longer and they, faced with the loneliness that awaits them once the master has gone, ask more and more anxious questions: *Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way? Lord, [first] let us see the Father.*⁶

The long passage known as The Farewells opens with these questions. In it Jesus, before his imminent death, makes his last recommendations,⁷ the fundamental point on which all of these turn being the Holy Spirit as Paraclete, in other words, the intermediary transmitting to mankind the wisdom of the Son and the Father, through the outpouring of his charismas: knowledge, the gift of tongues, interpretation,⁸ etc. The Paraclete is described here as *the Spirit of Truth [who] will lead you to the complete truth*⁹ and it is he who gives substance to the *meeting* or, better, to the first signs heralding a firm, sure non-mortal encounter with the Son born from on high.

⁴ Luke 11:13

⁵ John 15:26

⁶ John 13:33, 14:5-8

⁷ John 13:33-36, 15:26-27

⁸ 1 Cor. 12:4-11

⁹ John 16:13

The Gospel scribe plays on the double meaning that involves referring at one and the same time to the Son, the Christ *manifest*, as the descendant of David through the line of the flesh, the historical figure of Jesus, the living universal Christ and the Son, the hidden, universal Christ whom David rightly called his Lord; and he who dwells in every man, in every temple of flesh, the Living Christ still not totally manifest. But no—was we have already made clear—in accordance with the meaning of the Gospel of Judas Thomas, we shall be concerning ourselves only with the hidden, universal aspect of Christ, which has historically been gravely undervalued, and not with Christ manifest, described profusely and in minute detail by Christian culture.

Seen in terms of the hidden aspect, the action of the Spirit as Paraclete is explained by John at the beginning of his Gospel: *The Spirit [pneuma = wind] blows wherever it pleases; you hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going.*¹⁰ In reality, it may be said of this blowing or inspiration of *pneuma*, which comes from the Spirit of Truth, transcending time, without any visible past or future, beyond our imagining, that *the world neither sees it nor knows it*. This ignorance is typical of those who do not possess intuition of Being, consciousness of the Son. But a man who has undergone purification by means of a perseverant and sometimes lengthy immersion of the psyche—metanoia or turning in on oneself—represented in the Gospel by the baptismal bath in water,¹¹ and has completed the preliminary necessary work, will have been transformed into one *clean of heart*, ready to begin *seeing and knowing* the truth which the Spirit blows to him. Nor is it surprising that this should happen, for the Spirit *is with you, he is in you.*¹²

Jesus says that the Paraclete *will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you*¹³ and that he will guide you into all the truth.¹⁴ Moreover, since he proceeds from the Father, he will

¹⁰ John 3:8

¹¹ Water meaning psyche is a recurrent feature of the NT revelation.

¹² John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 3:16

¹³ John 14:26

¹⁴ John 16:13

testify on behalf of the Son,¹⁵ and this means that the knowledge coming from him will lead man's consciousness from its present burial under the tendencies of *dead works* to the resplendent and immortal light of Christ which, shining on the pneumatic man converted into a Son of God, will enable him to say with Isaiah: *The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me.*¹⁶

Anointment with holy oil means, in relation to man's spiritual realization, the activation of the descent into consciousness of the wisdom of the Son, identical to the *tongues of fire* which, according to the Acts of the Apostles, descended upon the latter when they met to celebrate Pentecost.¹⁷

Jesus had asked them to keep the Promise of the Father, then he had said to them: *John baptized with water but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.*¹⁸ *And when Pentecost day came around... suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting. And something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages as the spirit gave them the gift of speech.*¹⁹

What is truly admirable in this account is not only the importance of what is told, but the talent shown by the writer in expressing conjointly the manifest meaning and the secret one. The double meaning which certain words in the New Testament can take on has been employed so as to express under a cloak of mystery and the miraculous that paramount event in the process of spiritual realization, namely the gradual descent of knowledge into the waiting, awakened consciousness, of the higher perception, duly prepared by purification of the psyche and baptism with water. Words like *heaven, wind, house, fire* or *tongues* prove here to be exceptionally equivocal and are to be taken only in their directly spiritual sense if one wishes to extract the true teaching from them.

¹⁵ John 15:26

¹⁶ Isai. 61:1; Luke 4:18

¹⁷ Acts 2:1

¹⁸ Acts 1:5

¹⁹ Acts 2:1-4

Heaven is to be understood as what is *high*; not, of course, in the physical sense relating to place, but as a reference to the purest and most elevated consciousness, that of the Son of Man. *Wind* also means *spirit* and *breath*, and it is in this last sense of spiritual breath or of the perception of wisdom that the inspiration or sudden apparition of a *powerful wind* [that] *filled the whole house* is to be understood. As for the *house*, this is like saying that beneath the roof, in the tabernacle, in the home, lies one's inner consciousness, as in the phrase of the centurion: *Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof.*²⁰ The word *fire* has, since Old Testament times, often been interchangeable with *wisdom*, or the *Holy Spirit*, especially in the case of the second baptism with which we are now dealing. Lastly, by the term *tongues* (Greek *glossai* in the text) many have wanted to understand—and Saint Luke's account lends itself to this ambiguity—a reference either to the *tongues of fire* or to the *tongues* or native languages of those to whom the Apostles spoke. The *tongues of fire* are to be interpreted as intuitions descending from divine wisdom. As set out in the text, they are certainly to be understood not as *of* fire, but *like* fire, since they do not refer fully and directly to the Son of Man, but point out and predict his complete reality. What it says is that each disciple of Jesus, inspired (by the fire, wisdom) began to speak *in his own tongue*, that is, in accordance with the language, ray or portion of wisdom to which he had individually had access and which, accordingly, *the Spirit that is with* [and is] *in you*²¹ moved him to express. That virtue usually coincide—and here lies the deep secret of spiritual mastery—with the *language* (of wisdom) that the interlocutor can understand and inwardly develop at every moment.

The Gospel expression of *the coming of the Holy Spirit* as Paraclete, thanks to whose rain of fire the searcher is filled with knowledge to the point of attaining the consciousness of *one born from on high*, describes the *finding*—the encounter—to which logion 2 of the Gospel of Thomas refers; and this is the great promise, as Saint Luke reminds us.²²

²⁰ Luke 7:6

²¹ John 14:17

²² Luke 24:49

The logion uses two different words to describe the two gradual states of consciousness through which it is supposed that one must pass in order to complete this process: *When they find [the one they seek] they will be troubled, awestruck. When they are awestruck, they will become amazed.*²³

It should be noted that the troubled state (Greek *exiótēmi*) usually entails a marked decrease in the functions of the intellect, sometimes accompanied by what seems to be their total annihilation, a description that coincides to a large extent with that of ecstasy, or *aporia*, the state of which some Christian mystics like Saint John of the Cross speak, saying “*Y quedeme no sabiendo, toda ciencia trascendiendo*”. (For I remained uncomprehending, all knowledge transcending.)²⁴

This alienation, or inner rapture of consciousness, is produced by a potent inner event that dominates attention so utterly that it grabs the senses and suspends them. Consciousness then remains *entranced*, an effect of the high encounter provoked by the rain of fire which floods the soul with light and knowledge, revealing a world hitherto unsuspected.

The logion adds that the seeker, once *awestruck*, *will become amazed*. These words are probably an attempt to describe the attainment of very close access to the Lord, as when an angel appeared to Moses in the flame of a burning bush. The *flame* (knowledge) is the tongue of fire and the angel, the vision or set of visions that arise from it. As Exodus puts it and Saint Luke recalls: *Moses was amazed (Greek ethaúmasen) by what he saw. As he went nearer to look at it the voice of the Lord was heard: I Am the God of your ancestors.*²⁵

Thus, he who finds, says the end of the logion, *will rule over all*. The author of Papyrus Oxyrhynchus, section 654 and Clement of

²³ In the text of Papyrus Oxyrhynchus (P.Oxyr), section 654, n° 1, as in the fragment of Clement of Alexandria Strom. V, only the state of being troubled is mentioned. Nevertheless, in his citation from the Gospel of the Hebrews, in Strom. II, 9:45, Clem. Alex. the only reference is to the state of amazement.

²⁴ St. John of the Cross: *Coplas hechas sobre un éxtasis de harta contemplación* (Nine Verses made upon an Ecstasy of high Contemplation)

²⁵ Acts 7:30-32; Ex. 3:15

Alexandria, who drink from the same source, add a further ending: *and having reigned will rest.*²⁶ Those who reign are, in Saint Paul's words, *those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness [and] exercise dominion in [eternal] life through the one man, Jesus Christ*²⁷ Those who have believed in the Christ within and have realized him in themselves, surrendering to him all their being, since they have attained the knowledge that *only He is*; those who have sought him incessantly and have met him in the end, those *who have believed, enter that rest.*²⁸

²⁶ Clem. Alex. Strom V.

²⁷ Rom 5:17

²⁸ Heb. 4:1-11