

Essay

A Spiritual Science Interpretation of the Gospel of Thomas

Raul Valverde*

Concordia University, Canada

Abstract

Spiritual science tries to merge science and religion. The humankind is always evolving and what was called before religion becomes science in modern times. The Gospel of Thomas, written in the second century teaches that salvation is through the words of Jesus and not through his death and resurrection which are never mentioned. The gospel does not contain cross, suffering, healing, miracle stories or exorcisms. The gospel teaches that salvation comes from the perfection of the individual. The article gives an interpretation to the Gospel of Thomas from the Spiritual Science perspective that empowers the individual as capable of understanding his true nature and relationship with the creation. The gospel reconciliates Christianity with Buddhism as it teaches that reaching enlightenment is the only way to escape the material world.

Keywords: Gnosticism, Christian Science, Scientific GOD, Spiritual Science.

1. Introduction

Spiritual science tries to merge science and religion. As humanity becomes more evolved and is in the search of a paradigm that helps to reconcile science and religion, spiritual science has the potential to start to spread around the globe and become the new paradigm for the man of the future that does not longer need organized religions but only support and guidance to discover the GOD within. The discovery of GOD is a personal matter that requires more than a lifetime; however, it is the final goal of man to become unified with GOD. Spiritual science uses concepts from different fields including metaphysics, quantum physics, and parapsychology (Steiner 1999) into a unified system that describes the multi-dimensional nature of man and the universe (Valverde 2018 b). The humankind is always evolving and what was called before religion becomes science in modern times (Valverde 2019 b).

* Correspondence: Raul Valverde, Concordia University, Canada. E-mail: raul.valverde@concordia.ca

2. Gnosticism and the Gospel of Thomas

"Gnosticism" is the name given to a group of related religious ideas that were popular around the time when Christianity was getting its start. In general, Gnostics emphasized knowledge over faith. (The Greek word *gnosis* means "knowledge.") (King 2005). Some of the main ideas of Gnostic Christianity include that the GOD of the old Testament is different than the GOD of the New Testament, this is something that is found in the Gospel of Judas (Kasser, R., Meyer, M., Wurst, G., & Gaudard, F. 2008). The GOD of the old Testament is seen as an inferior GOD and GOD of Jesus as the source of the Universal creation. Gnostics also acknowledge Jesus as a teacher but not as GOD or part of trinity as the Catholic Church states (King 2005). Gnostics tend to see matter as inferior and spirit as good or superior. It views humans as of three different sorts: matter, soul and spirit, this is clearly explained in the Gnostic Gospel of Mary Magdalene (Valverde 2019 c).

For Gnosticism, salvation is freedom from this world of matter, rather than freedom from sin. Salvation (liberation from the material world) is typically by gaining knowledge from the mysteries of the Universe, rather than by faith. One needs to know how to escape from the prison of this world at death. Human beings are mixed creatures, containing the divine spiritual spark, but alas, mired in materiality of the body and their needs and desires (King 2005). Humans must seek knowledge of the spiritual world in order to liberate themselves from the material world. Salvation (Liberation from the material world) comes through knowledge, *gnosis* or enlightenment. This is quite similar to Buddhism that also proposes enlightenment for liberation of the material world (Flannery-Dailey, F., & Wagner, R. L. 2016).

One the most known Gnostic Gospels of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Thomas. The gospel of Thomas claims to be by "Didymos Judas Thomas", Didymos is Greek for twin and Thomas is Aramaic for twin. The gospel claims to be by Judas the Twin squared. In this gospel DJT is given the authority accorded Peter in the canonical gospels (Koester & Lambdin 1988). The gospel was originally written in Greek, as we know from a Greek fragment of several verses of Thomas, found in late 19th century. Portions of Greek versions of the Gospel of Thomas were found in Oxyrhynchus Egypt about one hundred years ago and these can be dated around 140 A.D. or somewhat before (Davies 2004). A complete version in Coptic (the native Egyptian language written in an alphabet derived from the Greek alphabet) was found in Nag Hammadi Egypt in 1945. That version can be dated to about 340 A.D. The Coptic version is a translation of the Greek version. Most of the Gospel of Thomas was written prior to 140 A. D (Davies 2004).

Steven Davies (2004) states that the basic belief of this document is that the Kingdom of GOD is spread out upon the earth now, if people can just come to see it; and that there is divine light

within all people, a light that can enable them to see the Kingdom of GOD upon the earth. Further, the perspective of Thomas is that the Image of GOD in the beginning still exists and people can assume that identity, an identity that is neither male nor female. The image of GOD is differentiated from the fallen Adam of Genesis. The Gospel of Thomas advocates that people should restore the image of GOD is differentiated from the fallen Adam of Genesis. The Gospel of Thomas advocates that people should restore their identities as the image of GOD now and see the Kingdom of GOD on earth now.

The Gospel of Thomas can be considered part of Gnostic movement as its main belief is that people have a divine capacity within themselves and that they can come to understand that the Kingdom of GOD is already upon the earth if they can come to perceive the world that way. However, it is different from other Gnostic beliefs that differentiates the GOD of this world (who is the Jewish GOD) from a higher more abstract GOD, a religion that regards this world as the creation of a series of evil archons/powers who wish to keep the human soul trapped in an evil physical body. These last beliefs were considered heretic (Logan 1996). In this sense, the teachings of the Gospel of Thomas cannot be considered heretic, but it shares some of the world views of the Gnosticism.

According to many scholars, the 114 quotations in the Gospel of Thomas are as valuable as Matthew, Mark, Luke and John for gaining understanding of the man Christians worship as the Messiah. However, the Gospel of Thomas did not fit the image of that was created by the early Catholic church and was dismissed for several reasons. The Gospel gives to Judas Thomas the authority that the Catholic church gave to Peter. The roman empire was more interested in showing an image of a man GOD that had appointed the Catholic church as the path for salvation from mortal death and not in a Gospel that taught that salvation is a personal matter. This Gospel teaches that salvation comes through knowledge of the GOD within. Salvation according to the Gospel means liberation from the material world when the man is able to reach a level of evolution that makes him realize that he or she doesn't have to die, death is only a consequence of not being able to understand the mysteries of the creation and life is about getting to know ourselves and discover our divinity and the GOD within. According to the Gospel, the true message of Jesus was the revelation to humanity that we have a connection to the creation because of our inner GOD and it is only by connecting to this divine inner essence that we will no longer taste death.

The Gospel of Thomas, written in the second century teaches that salvation is through the words of Jesus and not through his death and resurrection which are never mentioned. Jesus will live though those that repeat his wisdom. The gospel does not contain cross, suffering, healing, miracle stories or exorcisms. The gospel teaches that salvation comes from the perfection of the

individual. The gospel reconciliates Christianity with Buddhism as it teaches that reaching enlightenment is the only way to escape the material world.

3. Spiritual Science interpretation of the Gospel of Thomas

The gospel teaches:

1- And he said, "Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death."

In this line, Jesus states that death is only needed for those that do not achieve the Gnosis. Death is necessary for humans to learn and evolve but once we achieve a certain level of evolution, death is no longer needed. This statement implies reincarnation of the soul as humans die but the gospel reveals the knowledge required to stop the reincarnation process. According to Prophet & Prophet (1997), Gnosticism taught reincarnation.

With this statement, Jesus reveals that the secret to immortality is in the evolution of the soul that learns as part of its evolution process. The reincarnation for the evolution of the human soul has been an issue of discussion by many spiritual scientists (Goswami 2013). Death is a consequence of our lack of perfection, when we reach a high level of perfection, we will stop death (Valverde 2019 a).

2- Jesus said, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and will rule over all."

Spiritual knowledge is a personal quest, the mysteries of life are not written in one particular book, but they are embedded in different elements of life such as events, experiences, symbols, books, etc. However, these mysteries are waiting for us to discover, when we discover them, first we will be disturbed because they will break our present paradigm of thought but then we will be marvel because what once did not make sense to us, it will become clear when we reach the Gnosis. There is perfection in the Universe, but it is only when we discover it, that we will realize this truth of life.

3 -Jesus said, "If your leaders say to you, 'Look, the (Father's) imperial rule 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 (Father's) imperial rule is inside you and outside you. When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you live in poverty, and you are the poverty."

The gospel teaches us to search for the Divine within, a fraction of the father lives within us and it is this fraction of the divine that we need to find in order to discover our true divinity. The search of GOD starts within, by learning about ourselves we will be able to learn about GOD (Valverde 2018a). The goal of life is to learn about ourselves and our potential, it is only when we realize the wonderful we are that we will realize that we are one of the children of the Universal father. If we don't realize this very basic fact, our life will be a waste and we will not be able to fulfill our

mission of life that is to understand our purpose and potential.

5 Jesus said, "Know what is in front of your face, and what is hidden from you will be disclosed to you. For there is nothing hidden that won't be revealed."

This is a powerful teaching; life is full of signs that are there to reveal to us the mysteries of the Universe. Our consciousness is connected to the Universe and the Universe talks to us in the form of signs. The true teacher is life, it is only when you learn to interpret the symbols around us that we will understand the meaning of life. Jung (1997) thought that synchronicities are the way the universe talks to us, these are signals that get our attention for us to focus on certain things that are there to reveal to us important things to raise our level of consciousness.

7 Jesus said, "Lucky is the lion that the human will eat, so that the lion becomes human. And foul is the human that the lion will eat, and the lion still will become human."

The ego (Lion) that is of animal origin should be dominated in order to evolve and become a full human. Only those that can control their ego would be able to become full conscious humans. Our ego represents the animal part of us that needs to be dominated. The lion represents many of our emotions such as anger, envy and jealousy.

This relates to the quantum consciousness paradigm that explains that the brain and consciousness are two different elements (Valverde 2018b). The ego that is part of our brain represents the animal part of the human, it needs to be dominated by your higher consciousness for evolution purposes (Vancini., Vancini-Campanharo, Barbosa, & Arida 2016).

13 Jesus said to his disciples, "Compare me to something and tell me what I am like." Simon Peter said to him, "You are like a just angel". Matthew said to him, "You are like a wise philosopher." Thomas said to him, "Teacher, my mouth is utterly unable to say what you are like." Jesus said, "I am not your teacher. Because you have drunk, you have become intoxicated from the bubbling spring that I have tended." And he took him, and withdrew, and spoke three sayings to him. When Thomas came back to his friends, they asked him, "What did Jesus say to you?" Thomas said to them, "If I tell you one of the sayings he spoke to me, you will pick up rocks and stone me, and fire will come from the rocks and devour you."

Revealing the secrets of the Universe to others can be challenging, in particular those with religious dogmas and blinded by other paradigms such as scientific, political, cultural, etc. The first reaction of humans is to attack and ridicule anyone that tries to break these paradigms. Jesus teachings were about breaking established paradigms (Galvin 1994).

22 Jesus saw some babies nursing. He said to his disciples, "These nursing babies are like those who enter the (Father's) domain." They said to him, "Then shall we enter the (Father's) domain as babies?" Jesus said to them, "When you make the two into one, and when you make the inner like the outer and the outer like the inner, and the upper like the lower, and when you make male and female into a single one, so that the male will not be male nor the female be female, when you make eyes in place of an eye, a hand in place of a hand, a foot in place of a foot, an image in place of an image, then you will enter [the (Father's) domain]."

Another powerful teaching that talks about the unity. There is unity in the universe, only those that learn to be part of the unity will be able to evolve in the universe. The plan of evolution is only for those that learn to reconcile with the Universe (Valverde 2019). Unity means being able to see your fellow men, nature and mother earth as one. You should love all the creation like yourself and feel part of the creation. Only when you become one with the creation you will be able to raise to a higher plane of consciousness.

18 The disciples said to Jesus, "Tell us, how will our end come?" Jesus said, "Have you found the beginning, then, that you are looking for the end? You see, the end will be where the beginning is. Congratulations to the one who stands at the beginning: that one will know the end and will not taste death.

The beginning of every person is that person. To discover the meaning of life, one must start by learning about oneself. Discovering the true self is the meaning of life, a human must recognize his true nature that is beyond the material, recognizing one timeless and multi dimensional nature is part of the evolution process of every human. Spiritual development relies on the discovery of the self (Sherman & Webb 1994).

27 "If you do not fast from the world, you will not find the (Father's) domain. If you do not observe the sabbath day as a sabbath day, you will not see the Father."

In order to find GOD, we need to detach ourselves from the material world. Finding time to meditate about GOD and the meaning of life is the key to learn about GOD and the Universe (Goldsmith & Girvan-Brown 1956).

28 Jesus said, "I took my stand in the midst of the world, and in flesh I appeared to them. 2 I found them all drunk, and I did not find any of them thirsty. 3My soul ached for the children of humanity, because they are blind in their hearts and do not see, for they came into the world empty, and they also seek to depart from the world empty. 'But meanwhile they are drunk. When they shake off their wine, then they will change their ways."

Most people live with a slept consciousness or in the darkness, they don't question their existence neither want to search for their purpose of life. Most people only react in illness or misfortune that are a shake of consciousness in order to wake up people. The Universe shake those that have not been able to raise their level of consciousness. Edward Bach believed that illness was the result of a conflict between the purposes of the soul and the personality's actions and outlook. Our souls are coming here to learn and evolve and the physical decease is a result of disharmony between our real purpose that is spiritual and our actions in this world that might not lead to the evolution of the soul (Halberstein, DeSantis, Sirkin, Padron-Fajardo & Ojeda-Vaz 2007).

39 Jesus said, "The Pharisees and the scholars have taken the keys of knowledge and have hidden them. They have not entered, nor have they allowed those who want to enter to do so. As for you, be as sly as snakes and as simple as doves."

Jesus was referring with this teaching to the Pharisees and all religious leaders that lead people but are blind (Mullins 1991). People should realize that they already have all the guide they need as

they have a fraction of father within (Valverde 2018a). Letting yourself guide by a blind person, will make you fall.

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."

Those ones that follow the cosmic laws are closer to GOD than those that claim that believe in GOD and Jesus. The true meaning of the Gospel is not a blind belief in Jesus or GOD but that men recognize their divine consciousness that is the guide they need to follow in order to integrate with the Universe. Those that do not follow this guidance, will always fall and suffer as the universe would signal these errors of choices with illnesses and misfortunes.

48 Jesus said, "If two make peace with each other in a single house, they will say to the mountain, 'Move from here!' and it will move."

This talks about the unity. Collaboration and harmony among humanity is a strong force that can make the impossible real. The quantum consciousness model supports the unity with the universal mind and with all the consciousness of the universe (Valverde 2018 a)

62 Jesus said, "I disclose my mysteries to those [who are worthy] of [my] mysteries. Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing."

Only when your consciousness is ready, you will be able to understand the mysteries of this gospel. When you do, don't advertise this realization but instead do and practice what you learned. Those that they call themselves Christians, should preach with the example and not with words.

94 Jesus [said], "One who seeks will find, and for [one who knocks] it will be opened."

The mysteries of the world are waiting for you to discover, but only when you search for them you will be able to find them. The information will come to you when you are ready and will find you when you search for it.

111 Jesus said, "The heavens and the earth will roll up in your presence, and whoever is living from the living one will not see death." Does not Jesus say, "Those who have found themselves, of them the world is not worthy"?

The goal of life is to learn about your true nature, once you realize that you are the son or daughter of the living father, you will no longer have to die and the reincarnation process will stop and the human will evolve into a new level of existence.

4. Conclusions

The modern men are in need of a more humanistic and less dogmatic view of Christianity. Man is looking for a better understanding of his purpose and relationship with the creation. The Gospel of Thomas has the potential to shed light to the individual that is looking for answers to the mysteries of life such as death, suffering and illness. The Gospel empowers men by revealing their divine

nature that gives them the potential to find the answers to all their existential questions. The discovery of the GOD within is the secret to connect to the creation and reach immortality. Reaching immortality is part of the evolution process of men and only reachable through the perfection of the human soul.

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