

Selected comparisons between the New Testament and the Gospel of Thomas

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Introduction

Of all the Nag Hammadi texts, none has received as much scholarly interest as *The Gospel of Thomas*, “by far the most studied and the most widely read of the tractates in the Nag Hammadi corpus” (Pearson 2007:261). Many of the 114 *logia* that make up this “sayings gospel” turned out to be more or less similar to canonical texts. “A large number of the sayings in *The Gospel of Thomas* have parallels in the gospels of the New Testament” (Helmut Koester in Robinson 1996:124). According to Birger A. Pearson (2007:262), the majority of the “core sayings” of the Gospel of Thomas have New Testament parallels, whereas the “added sayings” lack such parallels.

Yet even the Thomasine sayings that do have parallels in the canonical New Testament are often by no means identical. Also, recognizable texts may be given a different interpretation or application. This paper will examine some examples.

The only known near-complete Gospel of Thomas is the Coptic version, which is held to be translated from a Greek text only known from fragments (Robinson 1996:124). Since Greek is also the original language of the New Testament, and Coptic contains a vast number of Greek loan-words, there are sometimes *direct linguistic parallels* between a canonical Greek text and the Thomasine parallel – the very same words being used for the same thing in comparable texts. This, it must be granted, would not *necessarily* indicate that Thomas is translated from a Greek text similar to the canonical one. “It has been argued that the earliest of the sayings in the *Gospel of Thomas* were circulated ... probably at first in Aramaic” (Pearson 2007:263). If the words in question could be demonstrated to be well-established loan-words in Coptic, the translator might find it natural to use these words even if the ultimate source of Thomas is non-Greek material. Such direct linguistic parallels would still provide interesting points of contact between Thomas and the canonical gospels.

Two selected *logia*, 20 and 64, will here be cited in the original Coptic, translated, and compared in some detail to their counterparts in canonical texts. These detailed studies will be supplemented by further observations on certain other *logia* of interest.

Logion 20

πεδε̅ ἡμα̅θη̅της̅ ν̅ι̅ς̅ δε̅ χ̅ο̅ο̅ς̅ ε̅ρον̅ δε̅ τ̅μ̅η̅τε̅ρο̅ ν̅η̅π̅η̅γε̅ ε̅στ̅η̅των̅
ε̅ν̅ι̅μ̅

πε̅χα̅ϣ̅ να̅γ̅ δε̅ ε̅στ̅η̅των̅ α̅γ̅β̅λ̅β̅ι̅λε̅ ν̅ω̅λ̅τα̅μ̅ <C>σο̅β̅κ̅ πα̅ρα̅ ν̅ε̅ρο̅ς̅
τη̅ρο̅υ̅ ρ̅ο̅τα̅ν̅ δε̅ ε̅σω̅α̅(ν)̅ρε̅ ε̅χ̅μ̅ π̅κα̅ρ̅ ε̅το̅υ̅ρ̅ ρ̅ω̅β̅ ε̅ρο̅ϣ̅ ω̅α̅ϣ̅τε̅ϣ̅ο̅
ε̅βο̅λ̅ ἡ̅νο̅γ̅νο̅ς̅ ἡ̅τα̅ρ̅ ἡ̅ϣ̅ω̅πε̅ ἡ̅σ̅κε̅πη̅ ἡ̅ρα̅λα̅τε̅ ἡ̅τ̅π̅ε̅

Translation:

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. However, when it falls upon the soil that one tills [lit. "they till"], it [i.e., the soil] produces a huge plant and it becomes a shelter for birds of the sky."

An important philological detail with considerable impact on the interpretation is that the "it" (ϣ, masc.) producing the huge plant is not the *seed*, since the Coptic word (ⲃⲗⲃⲓⲗⲉ) is feminine. "It" instead refers to the soil or earth (ⲡⲕⲁⲗ), grammatically masculine.

The text commences with a request from the disciples ("tell us what the Kingdom of Heaven is like") that seems to have no parallel anywhere in the canonical gospels, though the canonical Jesus on his own initiative sets forth many parables that are said to reveal the nature of the Kingdom. One is indeed a "mustard seed" parable (Matthew 13:31-32 with parallels in Mark 4:30-32 and Luke 13:18-19).

The version in Thomas may most resemble the one in Mark, though the latter commences with Jesus himself musing rather than his disciples requesting more information: "And he said, With what are we to liken the Kingdom of God, and what parable are we to apply to it? [It is] like a mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, is the smallest of all the seeds that are on earth – and when it is sown, it comes up and becomes the greatest of the vegetables and produces great branches, so that under its shadow the birds of heaven are able to make nests."

The reference to the "shadow" of the tree, missing in the parallels in Matthew and Luke, furnishes a parallel to the "shelter" in Thomas. Except for Mark, the parallels only speak of how the birds of heaven can "make nests" (or more literally "lodge, dwell" – *κατασκηνοῦν*) in the "tree", though the whole phrase "becomes a shelter" may of course be an idiomatic Coptic rendering of a similar Greek wording.

The parallels in Matthew and Luke have the mustard seed growing into a "tree", whereas Mark and Thomas – truer to botanical fact – only lets it become a particularly great "vegetable" (shrub) or "plant."

Unique to Thomas (within the context of the mustard seed parable) is the emphasis on the soil in which the seed is sown. This has been cited as a possible example of "gnosticizing tendencies of the Thomas trajectory" (Patterson 1993:28). The seed is placed in soil that is *tilled*, and as noted, it is this high-quality soil rather than the seed itself that is credited with bringing forth the "huge plant." One might point out that in Luke, the mustard seed is planted by a man in his *garden* (κηπον, 13:19), again suggesting a cultivated location. This wording goes back to Q, according to the reconstruction of Robinson, Hoffmann and Kloppenborg (2000:400 – footnote #7 on the following page however indicates that the "field" of Matthew 13:31 is also a possible reconstruction). Yet we should rather look for canonical parallels in a quite different context: the Parable of the Sower.

This well-known parable emphasizes the different fates of the "seed" in different kinds of soil, and Jesus later explains that it actually refers to various kinds of people and their response when "the word" is preached (Mark 4:1-20 and parallels). The Thomasine tilled earth may well be thought of as corresponding to the "good earth" of the Parable of the Sower, later explained to symbolize the people that receive the word favorably and "bring forth fruit" (Mark 4:20). It should be noted that the emphasis is here on the *receptive people* (the symbolic "good earth") as the element bringing forth fruit. The "seed" as such, though obviously necessary, is ultimately simply instrumental.

This, then, is the same imagery that in Thomas turns up in a quite different place – in a version of the Parable of the Mustard Seed. The Gospel of Thomas indeed has its own version of the Sower parable, appearing already in Logion 9. In that Logion as well, the emphasis is on the good

soil as the “agent” bringing forth the fruit: “And others [i.e. other seeds] fell on the good earth, and it produced good fruit” (the translation of DeConick 2006:71, emphasis added). In the Greek text of Mark 4:8 and its parallels, it is not quite clear whether it is the seeds or “the good earth” that receives the immediate credit for giving fruit (since *ἄλλα* = “other [seeds]” is a neuter-gender term which would likewise take a singular verb). The following reference to the various “folds” of yield is so worded that it suggests that the seeds rather than the soil is meant (though Jesus' explanation in 4:20 does present the people symbolized by the *earth* as the fruit-bearing ones). In Thomas there is no ambiguity; Logion 9 unquestionably credits “the good earth”, just like the Thomasine Mustard Seed Parable puts the emphasis on soil that is tilled.

The decisive factor is thus the quality of the *audience* of the preaching: Is the symbolic soil “tilled” (or “good”), or is it less fit to receive the Seed?

Logion 64

πεχε ι̅c̅ χε ογρωμε νεγ̅νη̅τα̅q̅ ρ̅νη̅ω̅μ̅μο̅ α̅γω̅ η̅τα̅ρε̅q̅c̅o̅b̅t̅e̅
 μη̅π̅δ̅ι̅π̅n̅o̅n̅ α̅q̅χ̅o̅o̅y̅ μη̅πε̅q̅ρ̅μ̅z̅α̅λ̅ ω̅ι̅n̅α̅ ε̅q̅n̅α̅τ̅ω̅z̅m̅ η̅η̅ω̅μ̅m̅o̅e̅i̅
 α̅q̅β̅ω̅κ̅ μη̅π̅ω̅o̅r̅p̅i̅ πε̅χ̅α̅q̅ n̅α̅q̅ χε̅ πα̅χ̅o̅e̅i̅c̅ τ̅ω̅z̅m̅ μη̅m̅o̅k̅
 πε̅χ̅α̅q̅ χε̅ ο̅γ̅η̅τ̅α̅e̅i̅ ρ̅η̅z̅o̅m̅t̅ α̅ρ̅e̅n̅e̅m̅p̅o̅r̅o̅c̅ c̅e̅η̅n̅h̅y̅ ω̅α̅ρ̅o̅e̅i̅
 ε̅ρ̅o̅y̅z̅e̅ †n̅α̅β̅ω̅k̅ η̅τ̅α̅o̅y̅e̅z̅ c̅α̅z̅n̅e̅ n̅α̅y̅ †r̅p̅α̅ρ̅α̅i̅t̅e̅i̅ μη̅π̅δ̅ι̅π̅n̅o̅n̅
 α̅q̅β̅ω̅k̅ ω̅α̅ κ̅e̅o̅y̅α̅ πε̅χ̅α̅q̅ n̅α̅q̅ χε̅ α̅π̅α̅χ̅o̅e̅i̅c̅ τ̅ω̅z̅m̅ μη̅m̅o̅k̅
 πε̅χ̅α̅q̅ n̅α̅q̅ χε̅ δ̅e̅i̅t̅o̅o̅y̅ ο̅y̅h̅e̅i̅ α̅γ̅ω̅ c̅e̅r̅α̅i̅t̅e̅i̅ μη̅m̅o̅e̅i̅
 η̅o̅y̅z̅h̅m̅e̅r̅α̅ †n̅α̅c̅r̅q̅e̅ α̅(n̅).
 α̅q̅e̅i̅ ω̅α̅ κ̅e̅o̅y̅α̅ πε̅χ̅α̅q̅ n̅α̅q̅ χε̅ πα̅χ̅o̅e̅i̅c̅ τ̅ω̅z̅m̅ μη̅m̅o̅k̅
 πε̅χ̅α̅q̅ n̅α̅q̅ χε̅ πα̅ω̅β̅h̅r̅ n̅α̅r̅ω̅e̅l̅e̅e̅t̅ α̅γ̅ω̅ α̅n̅o̅k̅ ε̅t̅n̅α̅r̅
 δ̅ι̅π̅n̅o̅n̅ †n̅α̅ω̅i̅ α̅n̅ †r̅p̅α̅ρ̅α̅i̅t̅e̅i̅ μη̅π̅δ̅ι̅π̅n̅o̅n̅
 α̅q̅β̅ω̅k̅ ω̅α̅ κ̅e̅o̅y̅α̅ πε̅χ̅α̅q̅ n̅α̅q̅ χε̅ πα̅χ̅o̅e̅i̅c̅ τ̅ω̅z̅m̅ μη̅m̅o̅k̅
 πε̅χ̅α̅q̅ n̅α̅q̅ χε̅ δ̅e̅i̅t̅o̅o̅y̅ η̅o̅y̅k̅ω̅m̅h̅ ε̅e̅i̅β̅h̅k̅ α̅x̅i̅ η̅ω̅ω̅m̅ †n̅α̅ω̅i̅
 α̅n̅ †r̅p̅α̅ρ̅α̅i̅t̅e̅i̅
 α̅q̅e̅i̅ η̅β̅i̅ π̅ρ̅μ̅z̅α̅λ̅ α̅q̅χ̅o̅o̅c̅ α̅π̅e̅q̅χ̅o̅e̅i̅c̅ χε̅ n̅e̅n̅t̅α̅k̅t̅α̅z̅m̅o̅y̅
 α̅π̅δ̅ι̅π̅n̅o̅n̅ α̅y̅π̅α̅ρ̅α̅i̅t̅e̅i̅
 πε̅χ̅e̅ π̅χ̅o̅e̅i̅c̅ μη̅π̅e̅q̅ρ̅μ̅z̅α̅λ̅ χε̅ β̅ω̅k̅ ε̅π̅c̅α̅ n̅β̅o̅λ̅ α̅n̅z̅i̅o̅o̅y̅e̅
 n̅e̅t̅k̅n̅α̅z̅e̅ ε̅ρ̅o̅o̅y̅ ε̅n̅i̅o̅y̅ χε̅κ̅α̅α̅c̅ ε̅y̅n̅α̅r̅δ̅ι̅π̅n̅e̅i̅
 η̅p̅r̅e̅q̅t̅o̅o̅y̅ μη̅ n̅e̅ω̅o̅[τ̅e̅ c̅e̅n̅α̅β̅ω̅]k̅ α̅n̅ ε̅z̅o̅y̅n̅ ε̅n̅t̅o̅π̅o̅c̅ μη̅π̅α̅i̅ω̅t̅

Translation:

Said Jesus, “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 [or, lord] invites you.’ He said, ‘I have claims against some merchants. They are coming to me this evening. I must go that I may give instructions to them. Please excuse me from [coming to] the

dinner. He went to another and said to him, 'My master has invited you.' He said to him, 'I have bought a house and they need me [or, I am required for] a [whole] 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 celebrate marriage and I am to prepare the dinner. I won't be able to come. Please excuse me from [coming to] the dinner.' He went to [yet] another [and] said to him: 'My master invites you.' He said to him, 'I have bought an estate [or: a farm / villa]. I am going [there] to collect the rent. I shall not be able to come. Please excuse me from [coming to] the dinner.' The servant came [back] and said, 'The people whom you invited to dinner have asked to be excused.' The master said to his servant, 'Go out on the streets and bring back whomever you find to have dinner.'

Buyers and merchants will not enter the places of my Father."

The final remark must be ascribed to Jesus himself (not to any person within the parable), because of the reference to "my Father": The "moral" of the parable is that people engrossed in commercial life will not inherit heaven (they refuse the calling).

This may indeed be compared to canonical statements that it is exceedingly difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven (Luke 18:24), but it has been doubted whether this interpretative statement was originally part of the text in Thomas. DeConick (2006:213) perceives it as "an interpretative clause which accrued in order to fix meaning to the parable." At least one of the excuses listed does *not* suggest that the person concerned is busy with materialistic interests (the speaker with the marrying friend was simply already booked for the evening, and might even be seen as providing a selfless service to his friend, preparing the wedding dinner). The final "anti-commercial" remark which the compiler of Thomas has ascribed to Jesus may not necessarily reflect the original point of the parable, since it does not consistently match the parable itself.

No such final remark occurs in the canonical counterparts of this logion, as found in Matthew 22:1-10 and Luke 14:16-24. The two canonical versions also differ quite significantly from one another. The version in Thomas is plainly most similar to the one in Luke, insofar as the servant visits one invitee after the other and their excuses for not coming are quoted in direct speech. Yet the exact nature of the excuses is different.

In Luke they are as follows: 1) "I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it", 2) "I have bought five yoke of oxen" and 3) "I have married a woman". Thomas lists *four* visits to prospective dinner guests and their excuses: 1) One has claims against merchants who are to receive some kind of (ill-defined) instructions from him; 2) one has bought a house and is for whatever reason required for a full day, 3) one has a marrying friend and has already agreed to make the dinner for the occasion, 4) one has bought an estate and is going there to collect rent.

The Thomasine Excuse #4 is rather similar to the Lukan #1, and in both cases a Greek word is used of the property bought (an *ἀγρος* in Luke, a *κῶμη* in Thomas – the latter term suggests "village" in the canonical gospels*). Significantly, only Thomas includes the remark that the prospective guest has to turn down the invitation because he is going to collect the *rent* (his Lukan counterpart is apparently simply going to "inspect" his newly-acquired property). He is thus a "landlord", likely perceived as a less sympathetic figure than a farmer who intends to work the field himself (as is possibly the case with his counterpart in Luke). This potentially adds to the anti-commercial theme.

Some parallel also exists in the case of the Third Excuse as listed in Luke and Thomas, since both involve a marriage. However, in Luke it is the speaker himself who *has married* a woman rather than his friend who *is going to marry* a woman (at which occasion the speaker has already promised to prepare the dinner, an element quite missing in both canonical versions). In Luke the

* The Norwegian translation by Woje and Klepp (2000:83) indeed has the striking wording "jeg har kjøpt en landsby." DeConick (2006:210) mentions a theory to the effect that a certain Syriac word meaning both field and village underlies the tradition. She however dismisses this explanation as unnecessary since both of the Greek words concerned can mean *farm* or *country villa*.

story is plainly intended to present a series of lame and insufficient excuses made by self-centered people, in this case a person who refuses to sacrifice even a single evening of honeymoon bliss to attend his friend's dinner party. Remarkably, the Thomasine version may seem to betray this purpose, since the "excuse" sounds very much like a perfectly valid and quite unselfish reason for not going: The man was already bound by a prior arrangement. As noted, this particular "excuse" also fails to line up with the otherwise materialistic tendency of the excuses (which apparently made the compiler of Thomas conclude that the point of the parable is that "buyers and merchants" have no place in the Kingdom). Patterson (1993:142) remarks that this excuse is "less clearly problematic within the Thomas scheme" (though he argues that "the folly of a feast" is here condemned).

In any case, the Lukan and the Thomasine versions of the parable are still more similar to one another than is *either* to the version in Matthew 22:1-10. Whereas the master of the servant is simply described as "a man" (ἄνθρωπος, οὐρῶμε) in Luke (14:16) and Thomas, in Matthew he becomes a *king*. In Luke and Thomas, the upcoming "banquet" is simply a supper or evening meal (δειπνον, appearing in Coptic as ΔΙΠΝΟΝ), although Luke 14:16 does specify that a "great" supper is intended. In Matthew 22 the "king" is arranging "wedding festivities" (γαμους, v. 2) for his son, and he sends out not just one, but a plurality of servants to invite the various guests. No string of individual excuses for not coming is listed; instead it is simply noted that the invitees did not care and went off. The only trace of their *reasons* for not coming is the statement that "this one went to his own field, that one to his own business" (Matthew 22:5), and in this remark about "business" – εμπορία – we may after all discern a parallel to the "traders and merchants" who are excluded from the "places" of Jesus' father in the final interpretative statement in Thomas. In the Greek text of Thomas reconstructed by Robinson, Hoffmann and Kloppenberg (2000:400), εμποροι is the term used for "merchants."

In Matthew 22, the unresponsive invitees come to a grim end: Some mistreat and kill the king's messengers, provoking him to come against them with his army and burn their city (verses 6-7). The drama thus reaches a level of confrontation and violent conflict that is quite absent from either Luke or Thomas. All three versions draw together again towards the end, with the master of the servant(s) giving the order that random people from the streets are to be invited to the feast instead of the original invitees. Then the version of Matthew once again proves the most divergent of the three, verses 11-13 abruptly introducing a new theme that is without any parallel in Luke and Thomas: Among the random guests that have been assembled from the streets and crossroads, the King spots a man lacking proper wedding attire and has him dismissed from the wedding feast. As in Thomas, some kind of moral is finally cited (verse 14), but it is much more general than the anti-commercial remark in Thomas: "Many are called, but few are chosen."

As told in Matthew, the story is perhaps best taken as a parable of the Jews rejecting the gospel (the "king" and his "son" representing God and Jesus). The ungrateful original audience of the king's messengers would then symbolize Jews persecuting and killing Christian preachers who were in effect inviting them to the Messianic banquet in the World to Come. Their dismissive and violent response angers the "king" (God) who has their city destroyed (reflecting the destruction of Jerusalem in CE 70?) Instead the invitation (that is, the gospel) goes forth to the gentiles, but among them some will likewise prove unworthy in the end, just like the man lacking proper wedding attire was very efficiently dismissed from the wedding festivities of the King's son. The point would seem to be that the original Jewish audience for Christian missionary work was rejected because they had themselves rejected the gospel. Yet ultimately, "few are chosen" of any race, so some of the gentiles that subsequently got to hear the message and even seemed to heed it, will also fall through in the end. That final point is lacking in Luke, but as there presented, the parable still lends itself to the interpretation that the gentiles will take the place of the Jews at the Messianic banquet.*

In contrast, the (possibly tacked-on) interpretation in Thomas provides a quite different and

* Luke 13:28-29 (and its parallel in Matthew 8:11-12) could almost be a dislocated explanation of this parable: At the Messianic banquet, people from "north and south" (comparable to the guests brought in from the streets) will be feasting with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – but "the sons of the kingdom" (the natural Jews?) will be excluded. The near-identical wording towards the end of both passages (Matthew 8:12 ≈ 22:13) may be noted.

rather more narrow interpretation: The message is that greedy buyers and merchants will not inherit the Kingdom; they are too busy with worldly affairs to heed the invitation. Patterson (1993:141) makes reference to the negative “attitude toward wealth and its accumulation” that is evident in the Gospel of Thomas, comparing logia 54 and 95.

Further illustrations

These detailed studies of Logia 20 and 64 and their New Testament counterparts serve to illustrate some of the relationships between the Thomasine text and the canonical texts. Points of interest may be further illustrated by considering a few other logia as well.

As noted, Logion 64 is interpreted in a way that differs from the likely intention of its canonical parallels. Something similar may be observed in the case of Logion 21, the parable of the householder who would be ready to resist if he knew that a thief was coming to break into his house. So far, the text is close to Matthew 24:43 and Luke 12:39.

In Thomas, the “thief” is however shown to represent the *evil world*: “As for you, then, be on guard against the world. Arm yourselves with great strength ...” (translation by Meyer 2007:142). In the canonical texts, the “thief” on the other hand represents *Jesus* appearing unexpectedly at the Second Coming – a radically different interpretation (Matthew 24:44, Luke 12:40). The parabolic imagery of Jesus being likened to a *thief* is curiously unpleasant and at least raises the question of whether this was the symbolism originally intended. This comparison does repeatedly appear in New Testament literature, variously applied either to Jesus or to “the day of the Lord” (compare 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 2 Peter 3:10 and Revelation 3:3, 16:15), but Thomas lets us glimpse a different application of the “same” utterance. Notably, the Thomasine interpretation is *unconcerned with eschatology* – a major theme in the tradition represented by the canonical gospels, whereas the Gospel of Thomas “has less of an apocalyptic and more of a mystical emphasis” (Meyer 2007:137).

Logion 63 (about the rich man who made big plans, only to die the same night) may seem to read like a briefer version of Luke 12:16-21.* Closer reading reveals a subtle, yet significant difference: The rich man in Luke already has a great amounts of grain after his land “brought forth plentifully”, and his only problem is how to *store* his great harvest. He decides to build bigger barns, and then expects to settle into a leisurely life-style. In Thomas the rich man is merely *planning how to invest* his assets, and he only *expects* to have huge crops at some point in the future. In other words, Luke gives us a fortunate farmer with a luxury problem, whereas Thomas condemns an aspiring capitalist hoping to get even richer by making clever investments. For the disparagement of such an attitude, it is interesting to compare James 4:13-14 (a letter traditionally ascribed to the same “James the Just” that was to be the leader of the disciples after Jesus' passing, according to Logion 12). In Logion 63 as elsewhere, an anti-commercial (or in this case even “anti-capitalistic”) sentiment can be discerned in Thomas.

Conclusion

This brief sampling of the Gospel of Thomas shows how some of its logia have obvious New Testament parallels. In the Parable of the Marriage Feast, the Thomasine version is indeed closer in form to one canonical version – the one in Luke – than is the latter to its own *canonical* counterpart in Matthew.

In Thomas, certain texts are *interpreted* in ways quite different from the interpretations either hinted at or explicitly given on the pages of the New Testament. The differences may be seemingly subtle (is it the “seed” or the soil that receives it that should be credited with producing the crop?) or blatantly divergent (does the “thief” that comes unexpected, represent the dangers of

* Helmut Koester includes this logion (as well as #64) in his list of Thomasine texts that are shorter and *more original* than their canonical counterparts (Robinson 1996:125).

this evil world – or *Jesus* suddenly appearing at the Second Coming?)

Sometimes comparisons of Thomasine and canonical texts may alert one to the special agenda of either group of literature, as when Thomas is seemingly eager to present an “anti-rich” message (merchants will not inherit the Kingdom), or when the canonical gospels give an *eschatological* interpretation of the Parable of the Thief.

We seem to glimpse different traditions growing out of early attempts to make sense of the sayings Jesus was held to have uttered. In some instances (both in Thomas and the canonical gospels) the “interpretations” provided may well be secondary.

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New Testament words are cited from *The Greek New Testament* (third corrected edition, 1983), edited by Kurt Aland, Matthew Black et. al., Biblia-Druck GmbH Stuttgart. New Testament quotes in English are my own translations from the same edition.

Coptic texts are copied from DeConick 2006 (pp. 106-107, 210, 212), with emendation of one typo towards the end of logion 64 (“ⲙⲡⲉϥⲏⲙⲉⲗⲁ”, read: ⲙⲡⲉϥⲙⲉⲗⲁ).