

VISIO



DIVINA

The Wisdom of the Contemplative Gaze

TROUBLE AND CONFUSION

The Gospel of Thomas Logion 2

Human beings live in a troubled world. There will be trouble. Yeshua knows this. He knows especially that when we begin to search, and even more, when we find it will cause us trouble. We imagine, of course, the opposite. Finding always implies satisfaction with having found that for which we were searching.

But one can always be dissatisfied with what one has found. Or it may be that once it is found, it is not what one expected, or that it challenges all that we imagined when we began our search. So searching and finding are just the beginning. Trouble somehow must follow and become a necessary step in what shall unfold.

In the pursuit of wisdom there are many unforeseen turns. Our experience is not always straightforward. It will be filled with the unexpected. It is true that we are disturbed by this. It takes us out of our comfort zones, which is precisely its purpose.

We would not mature (nor would we experience transformation), if we were never forced out of that zone. This is the Spirit's work. We do not have to create it. It will come, but we have to recognize it and be willing to pass through it when it does come.

Readiness for trouble is something that we fortify ourselves against. Jalaluddin Rumi in one of his poems says that we should welcome trouble like we would a beloved guest at our door. This is hard to imagine, and even harder to do, until we remember that we are in the Spirit's work and realm, and that the Master of Transformation is working with us.

That is primarily what the Gospel of Thomas is about. It contains the treasured sayings of Yeshua as he works through and with the alchemy of human transformation.

Humans are meant to transform. Like a caterpillar on its way to becoming a butterfly, or an acorn in the process of becoming a great and mighty oak, there will be significant trouble for each entity. They are both in transitional form, and it will cause them great trouble to undergo these kinds of changes necessary to arrive at the desired and ultimate form. The caterpillar must experience the trouble of being confined by the cocoon. The acorn must experience the trouble of having all the safe shell-coverings cracked away and dissolved by the elements around it. These are just some of the many images we could use for the kind of trouble Yeshua is talking about.

Reflections on Image and Text:

1. *When have you experienced spiritual trouble—the kind that moves you out of your normal comfort zone?*
2. *There are many elements in this image to illustrate the kind of troubling that may be involved. What do you see? How does this image impact you emotionally?*
3. *What is happening to the image of the person in the illumination?*
4. *What else might he or she be experiencing?*
5. *What does it take in ourselves to pass through such trouble?*
6. *How do you resist this experience, perhaps even block it?*
7. *What support do we need from one another to pass through this stage in our evolution?*

LECTIO DIVINA

The Contemplative Reading of a Sapiential Text

Yeshua says,

If you are searching,
you must not stop until you find.
When you find, however,
you will become troubled.
Your confusion will give way to wonder.
In wonder you will reign over all things.
Your sovereignty will be your rest.

—*Logion 2*

Contemplating
THE ILLUMINATION

