

SAYINGS GOSPEL Q

And the Reign of God

History of Mark, Matthew and Luke

Q 6:20-21, Robinson—And raising his eyes to his disciples he said: Blessed are you poor, for God's reign is for you. Blessed are you who hunger, for you will eat your fill. Blessed are you who mourn, for you will be consoled.

Luke 6:20-21—Looking at his disciples, he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

Matthew 5:1-4—Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. He said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted"

Gospel of Thomas 54—Jesus says: "Blessed are the poor. For the kingdom of heaven belongs to you."

Gospel of Thomas 69.2—"Blessed are the hungry, for the belly of him who desires will be filled."

Luke 7.22—So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

Luke 4.18-19—"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Numerous versions of this story are found in the ancient world.

"In order to understand the parable in detail and as a whole, it is essential to recognize the first part derives from a well-known folk-material . . . This is the Egyptian folk-tale of the journey of Osiris to the under-world . . .

Luke 16.14—The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and scoffed at him.

Alexandrian Jews brought this story to Palestine, where it became very popular as the story of the poor scholar and the rich publican Bar Ma'Jan." - J. Jeremias, Parables p. 183

Luke 19.8—But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

"That the world may be healed." — John 3.17

All Texts Quoted from the NIV Unless Otherwise Noted

Providence through People and the Reign of God (The Kingdom)

[Jesus'] basic issue, still basic today, is that most people have solved the human dilemma for themselves at the expense of everyone else, putting them down so as to stay afloat themselves. This vicious, antisocial way of coping with the necessities of life only escalates the dilemma for the rest of society.

- James M. Robinson, *The Gospel of Jesus*

I am hungry because you hoard food. You are cold because I hoard clothing. Our dilemma is that we all hoard supplies in our backpacks and put our trust in our wallets! Such "security" should be replaced by God reigning, which means both what I trust God to do (to activate you to share food with me) and what I hear God telling me to do (to share clothes with you). We should not carry money while bypassing the poor or wear a backpack with extra clothes and food while ignoring the cold and hungry lying in the gutter. This is why the beggars, the hungry, the depressed are fortunate: God, that is, those in whom God rules, those who hearken to God, will care for them. The needy are called upon to trust that God's reigning is there for them ("Theirs is the kingdom of God").

- James M. Robinson, *The Gospel of Jesus*

Jesus' message was simple, for he wanted to cut straight through to the point: trust God to look out for you by providing people who will care for you, and listen to him when he calls on you to provide for them.

- James M. Robinson, *The Gospel of Jesus*

Mark 14.7—The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.

Matthew 26.11—The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me.

Deuteronomy 15.4, REB—There will **never be any poor among you** if only you obey the Lord your God by carefully keeping these commandments which I lay upon you this day; for the Lord your God will bless you with great prosperity in the land which he is giving you to occupy as your holding.

Acts 4.33—With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were **no needy persons among them**. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales