

Gospel of Truth (NHC I,3)

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for the use of participants in the 2022 BNTS meeting only

1. *Gospel* (16,31–17,4)

1 The Gospel of Truth is joy to those who have received grace from the Father of truth;
 2 that they may know him in the power of the Word, who came forth from the fullness in
 the thought and mind of the Father;
 3 who is called “Saviour”, referring to the work he must do for the redemption of those
 who did ^{17,1}not know the Father;
 4 while “gospel” refers to the revelation of hope, so that those who seek him may find.

2. *Error* (17,4–18,11)

1 When the whole sought after the one from whom they originated – though the whole
 was within him, the Incomprehensible and Inconceivable who is beyond all thought –
 ignorance ¹⁰of the Father brought fear and terror.
 2 And the fear became thick as fog so that no-one could see.
 3 Thus Error became powerful, vainly she shaped her matter, not knowing the Truth, and
 there came into being a creation prepared in power and ²⁰beauty, a substitute for the
 Truth.
 4 This was no humiliation for him, the Incomprehensible-Inconceivable, for they were as
 nothing, the fear and the forgetting and the false creation,
 5 whereas Truth firmly founded is unchanging and unshakeable and beyond beauty.
 6 So despise Error!
 7 For she had no ³⁰root, she was in a fog with regard to the Father, preparing works of
 forgetting and fear so as to seduce those of the mid-regions and take them captive.
 8 Error’s forgetting was not revelation, it was ^{18,1}not [light] from the Father.
 9 Forgetting did not come from the Father, although it did exist because of him.
 10 What comes to be in him is knowledge, which was revealed so as to dispel
 forgetfulness and make known the Father.
 11 Since forgetfulness existed because the Father was not known, ¹⁰it will cease as soon
 as the Father is known.

3. *Jesus Christ* (18,11–31)

1 This is the gospel of the one who was sought after, revealed to those who are perfect through the mercy of the Father.

2 Through the hidden mystery, Jesus Christ, he enlightened those who were in darkness in their forgetfulness.

3 He enlightened them, he showed them the way, and ²⁰the way is the truth that he taught them.

4 And so Error was angry with him and persecuted him; she was distressed by him and made powerless.

5 He was nailed to a tree and became the fruit of the knowledge of the Father.

6 But it did not bring destruction when it was eaten, for those who ate it he made joyful in finding him.

7 For ³⁰he found them in himself and they found him in themselves.

4. *The Way of Perfection* (18,31–19,10)

1 The Incomprehensible-Inconceivable, the Father, the Perfect One, the One who made the whole – the whole is within him and the whole has need of him.

2 Although he withheld their perfecting within himself, not granting it to the whole, the Father was not jealous – what jealousy could there be between ^{19,1}himself and his members?

3 For if the eternal ones had so received their perfecting, they could not have come [to] the Father, who withheld their perfecting within himself, bestowing it on them as a return to himself and a singular perfected knowledge.

4 He it is who ordered the whole, and the whole was within him, and the whole had need of him.

5. *The Teacher* (19,10–34)

1 ¹⁰It is like the case of a person whom some do not know.

2 He wants them to know him and so to love him – for what did the whole need but knowledge of the Father?

3 He became a guide, quiet and unhurried.

4 Places of instruction he entered and spoke ²⁰the word as a teacher.

5 There came those who were wise in their own hearts, testing him, but he rebuked them for their folly.

6 They hated him because they were not truly wise.

7 After all of them there came little children, those to whom belongs ³⁰the knowledge of the Father.

8 Becoming strong they learnt the forms of the face of the Father, they knew and were known, they received glory and gave glory.

6. *The Book* (19,34–21,8)

1 There was revealed in their heart the living Book of the living, inscribed in the thought and mind ^{20,1}of the Father.

2 And from before the foundation of the whole it existed within his incomprehensible nature, the Book that no-one could take since it was destined for one who would take it and be put to death.

3 No-one of those who believed in salvation could have been revealed if that Book had not appeared.

4 ¹⁰Therefore the merciful and faithful Jesus patiently endured suffering until he took up that Book; for he knows that his death is life for many.

5 As in a will, before it is opened, the property of the deceased master of the house lies hidden, so it is with the whole, hidden while the Father of the whole was ²⁰invisible, since it existed from him through whom every way comes forth.

6 Therefore Jesus appeared and clothed himself with that Book and was nailed to a tree.

7 He displayed the decree of the Father on the cross (Oh, such wonderful teaching!), he is drawn down into death although clothed ³⁰with eternal life.

8 Stripping himself of his worn-out rags, he put on imperishability which no-one can take from him.

9 Entering the empty ways of terrors, he passed through those stripped naked by forgetfulness, being knowledge and perfection, proclaiming the things of the heart ¹⁰^{21.1}... teach those who will receive teaching.

11 And those who will receive teaching are the living, inscribed in the Book of the Living.

12 They receive teaching about themselves, receiving it from the Father, turning to him once more.

7. *Receiving One's Own* (21,8–25)

- 1 Since the perfecting of the whole is in the Father, ¹⁰the whole must ascend to him.
 2 So whoever acquires knowledge receives what belongs to him and draws it to himself.
 3 For whoever does not know is lacking – and great is his lack, since he lacks what will perfect him.
 4 Since the perfecting of the whole is in the Father, and ²⁰the whole must ascend to him for each to receive what belongs to him, he inscribed them beforehand, preparing to bestow it on those who came forth from him.

8. *The Call* (21,25–22,20)

- 1 Those whose names he foreknew were called at the last, so that whoever possesses knowledge is one whose name the Father ³⁰has spoken.
 2 For one whose name has not been uttered is ignorant; indeed, how will anyone hear if his name is not called?
 3 For whoever is ignorant until the end is the creature of forgetfulness, and he will vanish along with it.
 4 Otherwise why do these miserable ones ^{22,1}have neither name nor call?
 5 So whoever possesses knowledge is from above.
 6 When he is called he hears, he answers, and he turns to the One who calls him and ascends to him.
 7 And he knows how he is called, and in knowing he does ¹⁰the will of the one who called him, he wills to please him, he attains rest; each one receives his name.
 8 Whoever gains such knowledge knows where he comes from and where he is going;.
 9 He knows in the manner of someone who was drunk but who turns from his drunkenness, and coming to himself he sets his affairs ²⁰in order.

9. *The Grounds of Error* (22,20–37)

- 1 He has restored many from Error.
 2 He has gone ahead of them to their own places, from which they strayed when they received Error on account of the depth of the one who encompasses every place, himself encompassed by no-one.
 3 It was a great wonder that they were in the Father without knowing him and were ³⁰able to come forth by themselves yet unable to receive or know the One in whom they existed.

4 For if his will had not come forth from him – but he revealed a knowledge in which all the offspring are united.

10. *Divine Writing* (22,38–23,18)

1 This is the knowledge of the living Book that he revealed ^{23,1}to the eternal ones at the end,

2 revealing that his writing does not consist in signs of vowels or consonants, as if one might read them and imagine some worthless entity, but letters of the truth spoken ¹⁰only by those who know them.

3 Every letter is a complete thought, like a complete book, since these are letters written by the One, the Father, who has written them for the eternal ones so that through his writing they might know the Father.

11. *The Word* (23,18–24,9)

1 His Wisdom contemplates ²⁰the Word, his teaching speaks it.

2 His knowledge reveals it, his patience is a crown upon it.

3 His joy is at one with it, his glory exalted it.

4 His image revealed it, his rest ³⁰received it.

5 His love made a body for it, his faithfulness embraced it.

6 This is how the Word of the Father goes forth among the whole.

7 He is the fruit ^{24,1}of his heart and the form of his will; upholding the whole, choosing them and also receiving the form of the whole; purifying them, restoring them to the Father, to the Mother: Jesus, who is infinite kindness.

12. *Filling the Void* (24,9–25,3)

1 The Father ¹⁰opens his heart, and his heart is the Holy Spirit.

2 He reveals his secret, and his secret is his Son,

3 so that through the compassion of the Father the eternal ones might know him and cease to labour in search of the Father, finding their rest in him, knowing ²⁰that this is indeed rest.

4 Filling the void he destroyed the form – the form is the world in which he served.

5 For where there is envy and conflict, that place is void, but where there is unity, that place is perfect.

6 Since the void existed because they did not ³⁰know the Father, as soon as they know the Father the void will disappear.

7 As with someone who is ignorant, when he gains knowledge his ignorance vanishes.

8 As darkness vanishes when light ^{25,1}appears; so too the void vanishes in the fulfilment.

13. *Unity* (25,3–25)

1 From then on the form will no longer be evident but will disappear in the concord of unity.

2 For at present their works lie scattered in time, but unity will fill ¹⁰all places.

3 Through unity each one will attain himself.

4 Through knowledge he will purify himself from multiplicity into unity, consuming matter within himself like fire, and darkness by light, death by life.

5 If these things are so, ²⁰each of us must above all ensure that the house is holy and quiet for the sake of unity.

14. *The Jars* (25,25– 26,27)

1 It is as when people vacate properties where there are jars in some places that are unsound.

2 ³⁰These would be broken up, and the landlord would suffer no loss but would be glad because instead of the bad jars there are full ones that are intact.

3 This is the judgement that has come ^{26,1}from above, which has passed judgement on all, a drawn double-edged sword, cutting on this side and that!

4 When the Word came into the midst, the one who is in the heart of those who speak it – it is not just a voice but it took a body – there was great confusion among ¹⁰the jars.

5 For some had been emptied, others had been filled; some had been supplied, others poured out; some had been cleaned, others were cracked.

6 All places were shaken and confused because there was no order or stability.

7 Error was distressed, not knowing ²⁰what to do.

8 She was grieved, she mourned, she lacerated herself, because she knew nothing – since Knowledge approached her, which means destruction for her and all her offspring.

9 Error is empty, there is nothing in her.

15. *Children of Truth* (26,27–28,15)

1 Truth came into the midst and all its offspring recognised it.

2 ³⁰They welcomed the Father in truth, with a perfect power that unites them to the Father.

3 For whoever loves the truth (the truth being the mouth of the Father, his tongue being the Holy Spirit), whoever is united ^{27,1}to the truth, is united to the mouth of the Father through his tongue, when he receives the Holy Spirit.

4 For this is the revelation of the Father, his appearance to his eternal ones.

5 He revealed what is hidden within him, he explained it.

6 For who is it that contains ¹⁰except the Father alone?

7 All the places are his offspring.

8 They know that they came forth from him like children from a grown man.

9 They know that those the Father begets had not yet received either form or name.

10 ²⁰Then, on receiving form through his knowledge, though truly within him they still do not know him.

11 The Father is perfect, knowing every place within him.

12 As he wills, he reveals whomever he wills, giving them both form and name,

³⁰bringing into being those who previously did not know the one who established them.

13 So I am not saying that they are nothing before they came to be, but rather that they are ^{28,1}within the one who will bring them into being whenever he wills, in the time to come.

14 Before anything appears he knows what he will bring forth, but before they appear his offspring know nothing and ¹⁰do nothing.

15 So every place within the Father is from the One who is, who established it from what is not.

16. *Nightmares* (28,16–30,26)

1 For whoever has no root also has no fruit.

2 Though he thinks to himself, ²⁰“I exist”, he will perish by himself.

3 So one who never existed at all will never come into existence.

4 What then does he will that he think of himself? That “I have existed like the shadows and phantoms of the night!”

5 When the light illuminates the fear ³⁰that person has experienced, he knows that it is nothing.

6 Similarly, they were once ignorant of the Father, ^{29,1}whom they did not see.

7 Since there was fear, confusion, uncertainty, doubt and division, these were the cause of many illusions and vain ignorance, as if they were fast asleep ¹⁰and found themselves in the midst of nightmares,

8 either of fleeing somewhere, or trying in vain to chase after others or giving or receiving blows or falling from high places or soaring up through the air without wings.

9 ²⁰Sometimes again it seems as if they were being murdered, even though there is no-one chasing them, or it is they who kill their neighbours and are covered with their blood.

10 But when those who experience all this awake, after being in the midst of such disturbances, ³⁰they see nothing, for they are nothing.

11 So it is with those who shake off their ignorance like sleep, viewing it as nothing and not regarding its ^{30,1}works as solid objects, but leaving them behind like a dream in the night.

12 The knowledge of the Father they regard as the light.

13 This is how each person acted while asleep, in the time of his ignorance, ¹⁰and this is how he comes to know, as he is awakened.

14 And it is well for the person who turns and awakes, and blessed is the one who opened the eyes of the blind!

15 And the Spirit ran to him: hastening to raise him, giving him his hand ²⁰as he lay flat on the ground, he set him on his feet, for he had not yet risen.

16 The knowledge of the Father and the revelation of his Son he enabled them to know.

17. *The Incarnate Voice* (30,26–31,35)

1 For when they saw him and heard him, he enabled them to taste and ³⁰smell and grasp the beloved Son.

2 When he appeared, telling them about the incomprehensible Father, when he had breathed into them what is in his mind, doing his will, when many had received the light, they turned ^{31,1}to him.

3 But the material people were strangers and did not see his likeness, nor did they know him.

4 For he came forth in the form of flesh, with nothing barring his way, for incorruptibility cannot be grasped; speaking ¹⁰in new ways, uttering what is in the heart of the Father, bringing forth the flawless word.

5 When the light and his life-bearing voice spoke through his mouth, he gave them thought, wisdom, mercy, salvation, and the Spirit of power from the boundlessness of ²⁰the Father and his kindness.

6 He brought punishments and tortures to an end – for these were causing some to stray from him, who needed mercy, who were in error and bonds – and with power he destroyed them and reproved them with knowledge.

7 He became a way for those who strayed, ³⁰knowledge for those who are ignorant, a find for those who were seeking, strength for those who trembled, purity for those who were defiled.

18. *The Good Shepherd* (31,35–32,30)

1 He is the Shepherd who left behind the ninety-^{32,1}nine sheep who did not stray.

2 He went in search of the one who was lost, and he rejoiced when he found it, for ninety-nine is a number in the left hand, which holds it.

3 When the one is found, the whole number moves to the right, as ¹⁰that which lacks the one;

4 that is, the entire right hand draws what was defective and takes it from the left side and moves it to the right, and so the number becomes a hundred.

5 This is the sign of the one who is in their voice, that is, the Father.

6 Even on the Sabbath, when he found the sheep fallen into the ²⁰pit, he worked on its behalf, he gave the sheep life, bringing it up from the pit,

7 so that you may know inwardly ^{<38-39>}(you are the children of inward knowledge) what this sabbath is when it is not right for salvation to be neglected;

8 so that you might speak as from the day above, where there is no night, and from the light ³⁰that never sets, because it is perfect.

19. *Living in the Light* (32,31–33,32)

1 Say, then, from the heart that you are the perfect day and there dwells in you the light that does not fail.

2 Speak truth with those who seek it, and knowledge with those who have sinned through their error.

3 ^{33,1}Steady the feet of those who have stumbled, and stretch out your hands to those who are sick.

4 Feed those who are hungry, and to those who are weary give rest.

5 Raise those who wish to rise and awaken those who sleep, for yours is a wisdom ready for action!

6 If ¹⁰what is strong acts like this it becomes stronger still.

7 Attend to yourselves, do not attend to other things that you have cast away from yourselves.

8 What you have spewed up, do not return to eat it.

9 Do not be moth-eaten, do not be worm-eaten, for you have already rejected all that.

10 Give no ²⁰room to the devil, for you have already disempowered him.

11 Do not strengthen those who hinder you, who are falling, as if to set them up.

12 For an unjust person wrongs himself rather than the just, for he shows himself unjust in his works while the righteous person does his ³⁰works for others.

13 So do the will of the Father, for you are from him.

20. *The Father's Fragrance* (33,33–34,34)

1 For the Father is kind and in his will is whatever is good.

2 He knew what is yours, so that you may find rest in it, for it is by the fruits that it becomes known what is yours.

3 The children of the Father ^{34,1}are his fragrance, for they are from the grace of his countenance.

4 Therefore the Father loves his fragrance and spreads it everywhere, and when it mingles with matter he imparts his fragrance to the light and silently makes it surpass every form, every voice.

5 For it is not the ears that ¹⁰smell the fragrance but the breath that possesses the sense of smell and draws it to itself and is immersed in the fragrance of the Father.

6 And he tends it and takes it up to the place from which it came, from the first fragrance that cooled, becoming soul, like ²⁰cold water poured out onto the earth, which absorbs it so that anyone looking would think it just earth.

7 But later it is released, for when drawn by a breath it again becomes warm.

8 For the fragrances that have grown cold are from the division.

9 This is why faith came, to do away with the division ³⁰and to bring the warm fullness of love, so that the cold would never return but the oneness of the perfect thought.

21. Fullness (34,35–36,35)

1 This is the message of the gospel, the finding of fullness for those who await ^{35,1}the salvation that descends from on high.

2 Their hope awaits those who wait for it, whose image is light without shadow.

3 Surely in its time the fullness is drawing near!

4 The void that is matter is not from ¹⁰the infinitude of the Father, who entered the time of the void – although no-one could have predicted that the Incorruptible would come in this way.

5 But the depth of the Father was immense, and with him there was no thought of error.

6 Whatever falls is easily set ²⁰up again when found by the one who came to it to restore it; for this restoration is what is meant by ‘repentance’.

7 This is why Incorruptibility breathed out and followed after the one who sinned, so that that person might find rest.

8 For forgiveness is the vestige of the light in the void, the word of the fullness.

9 ³⁰For a doctor hastens to the place where there is sickness, and does so of his own will.

10 The person in need does not hide the fact, for there is one who has what he needs.

11 In the same way the fullness lacking in nothing is ^{36,1}given to provide for the one who is in need, so that he might receive grace.

12 For while he was in need he was without grace, so that there was poverty in the place without grace.

13 But when the need was met, what a person lacked was ¹⁰revealed as fullness, in finding the light of truth that dawned upon him and never fades.

14 This is why Christ was proclaimed among them, so as to restore those who were troubled and to anoint them with the chrism; the chrism is the mercy of the Father, who will have mercy on them.

15 And those he anointed ²⁰have been made perfect, for it is full jars that are sealed.

16 But when a seal is broken the jar will empty, and the loss is caused by whatever removes the seal; for then the air has the power to make the contents evaporate.

17 But ³⁰from one who has no lack no seal has been removed and nothing has been lost, but what is lacking the perfect Father again fills.

22. *The Father's Will* (36,35–38,6)

- 1 He is good! He knows his plants, for it is he who planted them in his paradise; and his paradise is his place of rest.
- 2 This ^{37,1}is the fulfilment of the Father's thought, and they are the words of his meditation.
- 3 Each of his words is the work of his single will in the revelation of his Word.
- 4 When they existed in the depths of his mind, the Word who was first to come forth caused them ¹⁰to appear, together with the mind that utters the only Word in silent grace.
- 5 He was called "Thought", since they were within him before they appeared.
- 6 He was first to come forth, at the time pleasing to the will of him who willed it.
- 7 And in his will the Father ²⁰is at rest and well-pleased.
- 8 Nothing happens without him, and nothing happens apart from the Father's will, although his will is unsearchable.
- 9 His trace is his will, and no-one can know it or scrutinise it in order to comprehend it.
- 10 ³⁰But what he wishes takes place at the time he wishes.
- 11 Even if the sight is in no way pleasing to them before God, it is the will of the Father.
- 12 For he knows their entire beginning and end, for at their end he will seek them out.
- 13 And the end is to receive knowledge of the Hidden One, that is, the Father, ^{38,1}from whom the beginning came forth, to whom all will return who have come forth from him.
- 14 And they were revealed in order to glorify and rejoice in his name.

23. *The Name of the Father* (38,6–40,23)

- 1 The name of the Father is the Son.
- 2 He first named the one who came forth from him, while being the same as ¹⁰him, and he gave birth to him as a Son.
- 3 He gave him his own name, that of the Father, who possesses all that exists beside him.
- 4 His is the name and his is the Son, whom it is possible to see.
- 5 But his name remains invisible, for it alone is the mystery of the invisible ²⁰which comes to ears completely filled with it through him.
- 6 While the Father's name is not spoken, it is revealed by a Son.
7. Great then is the name! Who can assign a name to him, the great name, other than himself alone, to whom the name belongs, and the children of the name, in whom the name of the Father ³⁰rested and who themselves rested in his name?

8 Since the Father is without beginning, it is he alone who conceived a name for himself, before he created the eternal ones, so that the name of the Father might be supreme over them as Lord; that is, the true ^{39,1}name established by his command in perfect power.

9 For this name does not derive from ordinary words or name-giving, but it is invisible.

10 He alone names him, for he alone sees him, he alone has the ¹⁰power to name him.

11 One who does not exist has no name, for what name can be given to one who does not exist?

12 The One who exists exists along with his name, and he alone knows it and to him alone has a name been given: his name is the Father, ²⁰it is the Son.

13 He did not conceal it within, but it truly existed.

14 The Son alone gave a name, the name that belongs to the Father as the name of the Father is the Son, the Compassionate.

15 For where will he find a name outside the Father?

16 But someone may say ³⁰to his companion, ‘Who ever gave a name to someone who existed before him, as though children ^{40,1}did not receive a name from their parents?’

17 So it is right for us first to consider the question what kind of name this is.

18 It is the true name, it is not the name deriving from the Father, for it is the name that properly exists, a name that he did not receive ¹⁰on loan as others do, in whatever form each of them is brought into being.

19 But this is the proper name.

20 There is no-one else who gave it to him, for he is unnamable and unutterable until the time when the Perfect One himself spoke ²⁰of him.

21 And it is he who is able to speak his name and to behold him.

22 So when it pleased him for his beloved name to be his Son, as he gave his name to him who came forth from the depth, he spoke of his mysteries, knowing the Father to be without evil.

23 ³⁰This indeed is why he brought him forth, in order to speak of the place and the rest he came from ^{41,1}and to glorify the fullness and the majesty of the Father’s name and his kindness.

24. *The Father’s Embrace* (41,3–42,39)

1 Each person will speak of the place he came from, and about the share through which he has gained his restoration.

2 He will hasten to return to it again and to receive from the place where he ¹⁰was set on his feet, tasting there and being nourished and growing.

3 And his place of rest is his fullness.

4 Thus all the offspring of the Father are fullnesses, and the root of all his offspring is in the one who caused them all to grow within himself and who assigned them ²⁰their destinies.

5 Each person is manifest so that from their own thought <...>

6 For the place to which they direct their thought is their root, which lifts them up above all the heights to the Father.

7 They hold to his head, which is their rest, ³⁰and they are embraced as they approach him, as if to say that they share in his face through their kisses.

8 Yet they do not do ^{42,1}so openly, for they do not exalt themselves or detract from the glory of the Father.

9 And they do not think of him as small-minded or bitter or angry but as without evil, untroubled, kind, knowing every place before they exist, and ¹⁰having no need of instruction.

10 That is how it is with those who have received the immeasurable greatness from above, as they await the unique and perfect one, who is there for them.

11 And they do not go down to Hades, nor are they envious, nor is there ²⁰groaning or death among them, but they rest in the one who is at rest, not weary or distorting the truth.

12 But they are the truth, and the Father is in them and they are in the Father.

13 They are perfected, inseparable from ³⁰the one who is truly good, lacking nothing at all but at rest, refreshed in the Spirit, giving heed to their root, concerned with whatever enables them to find their root and not lose their soul.

14 This is the place of the blessed, this is their place!

25. *Closing Remarks* (42,39–43,24)

1 Let the others ⁴⁰know, wherever they may be, that it is not right for me ^{43,1}to say anything further, after I have entered the place of rest.

2 For it is here that I shall dwell, so as to devote myself at all times to the Father of the whole and the true brothers, on whom the love of the Father is poured out and among whom he is not absent.

3 It is they who are truly ¹⁰revealed, dwelling in true and eternal life and speaking of the perfect light that is filled with the seed of the Father and is in his heart and fullness.

4 His Spirit rejoices in it and glorifies the one in whom it came to be.

5 For he is good, and his children ²⁰are perfect and worthy of his name.

6 For he is the Father, and it is children of this kind that he loves.