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Cain - The biblical Cain, son of Adam and Eve, killed his younger brother Abel. Cain is said to have been conceived by Eve after she ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, so that Satan is Cain's father. In Gnostic thought, Cain, Abel and Seth are symbolic representations of the Three Principles; Darkness (Cain), Light (Seth), and intermediate (Abel). Gnostics foretold the rise of three human races - material, psychic, and spiritual which are symbolically pre-figured by Cain, Abel, and Seth. Cain also means the Sun. Cain is said to have the face of a cat. In superstitious lore, the black cat has come to signify evil.

Cainites - Like all Gnostics, the Cainites were seekers of salvation. But this extremist Gnostic sect gave little credence to the idea that salvation comes through gnosis. The Cainites believed so strongly that Yahweh of the Old Testament is the unrighteous creator, and that the creation is utterly corrupt, that they venerated the accursed of the Bible- the Serpent, Cain, Judas, and the Sodomites. For the Cainites, practices deemed wicked and forbidden were a means to salvation. The Cainites believed that those who polarized on the side of Right would soon find themselves, in another lifetime, swung like a pendulum to the side of wrong, from whence they required, and would receive, salvation. They preempted this cycle by polarizing to wrong so they could be saved sooner. Their prophets were Cain, Esau, Korah, and the Sodomites. They used a Gospel of Judas and supposedly had a book entitled Against the Hystera (womb). They called the unrighteous creator of the lower world Hystera.

Carpocrates - A Gnostic leader, and eclectic religious philosopher, who lived in Alexandria, Egypt, (ca. 130 CE), and who believed in reincarnation. His son, Epiphanius, added to his teachings but died at the age of 17. The Carpocratians and the disciples of the son built a temple to Epiphanius on the isle of Samos. These followers also built icons of Christ, Pythagoras, and Plato. When Marcellina, a follower of Carpocrates, moved to Rome, she took with her icons of Christ, St. Paul, Homer, and Pythagoras, to whom she burnt incense.

Cathars - A Gnostic sect surviving into the 14th century. The Cathars were burned at the stake by the Roman Catholic church, supposedly for their heretical teachings regarding

each individual's responsibility for the development, quality, and care of the soul. More likely, they were burned because of the great number of converts from Christianity to Catharism. The Cathars believed that a woman must first become a man before being admitted into heaven. It was widely believed that women, the embodiment of Eve and the weaker sex, were more submissive to the cosmic powers that ruled the Earth, and that only men were strong enough to stand up to these powers and defeat them. They thought, however, that androgyny is synonymous with perfection.

The Cathars preserved the Gnostic belief that all things existed first in the form of a metaphysical template or idea before becoming physically manifest.

"Jesus said 'Blessed is he who came into being before he came into being.'" (*The Gospel of Thomas*, Gnostic papyri)

Like most Gnostics, the Cathars believed that the physical body is a corpse and a prison. Some Gnostics even refused to have children because procreation traps another spirit in the prison of the physical body and the physical world.

"This world is a corpse-eater. All the things eaten in it themselves die also... The world came about through a mistake." (*The Gospel of Philip*, Gnostic papyri)

Celsus - A 2nd century opponent of Christianity and Gnosticism (especially the Gnostic Ophites), who said that Christians derived their Gospels from Plato, Heraclitus, the Stoics, the Jews, Egyptians, Persians, and the Cabiri. This is the same attack the Christians leveled against the Gnostics. Both Celsus and the canonical Gospels and Epistles warned against following prophets who usually claim to be god or the son of god or the divine spirit, who talk of the end of the world, and who prophesy that the sinful will die when the world ends. These prophets say that all who follow them will be saved, will rise again, and be preserved forever, while all non-believers will be destroyed.

Celsus knew of the existence of the now lost Ophite manuscript, Diagram. The alchemist, Paracelsus, famous for his outrageous lectures and beliefs, (but considered by some to be the father of Pharmacology) may have taken his name from this Celsus.

Chaos - According to some Gnostic sects, the universe began with Chaos, from which are taken the patterns of the universe-. Darkness and Obscurity are said to have emerged from Chaos. Other Gnostic sects believed Chaos to be the material world which takes as its patterns those of the macrouniverse. In these accounts, Chaos emerged from Darkness. Chaos is conceived of as a power and as having gods with their powers, as well as demons, some of which are Leviathan and the Hydra of Eden. These demons are often described as having seven heads, a symbolism carried over into Cabalistic Gnosticism as

the Qliphoth. Turmoil (chaos) is a naturally occurring and predictable force.

"But it was by the will of the father of the entirety that they all came into being - after the pattern of all the things above - so that the sun of chaos might be attained." (*The Hypostasis of the Archons*, Gnostic papyrus)

Chenoboskion - Also, Nag Hammadi Library, written in the first centuries of our era and buried in an earthenware jar about 400 CE. Comprised of 12 books, plus 8 leaves removed from a 13th book and tucked inside the front cover of the 6th. The books contain 52 tractates written on papyrus and bound in the form of a codex, a modern type book, rather than scroll. The codices are bound in leather and, with the exception of two books, each codex has a flap extending from the fore edge of the front cover and a thong used to hold the codex closed. The tractates are written in Coptic, the Egyptian language written with the Greek alphabet. Most are written in Sahidic, the Coptic dialect of Upper Egypt. The manuscripts were transcribed from Greek into Coptic by Copts, the only true descendants of the ancient Egyptians. These Copts were Sethian Gnostics.

The codices were found buried at the foot of the cliff-tombs of Gebel el-Tarif in Egypt, a place once called Shenest-Chenoboskion, Shenest meaning "the acacias of Seth." They bring forward from ancient times some of the major religious beliefs of the Egyptians, Greeks, Hebrews, Chaldeans, Persians, Babylonians, and Sumerians. Serving an essential historical link in the understanding of ancient thought, and providing insight into the origins of astrology and Hermeticism, the manuscripts supply precious information regarding the formation and elucidation of Dualism, the oldest religious philosophy on Earth. The Egyptian Gnostics, always under siege by the uninitiated ecclesiastics of the heresy-seeking early Christian church, were threatened with banishment and/or death, should they be found in possession of their blasphemous literature. To preserve their books from destruction, the Sethians buried them.

Christianity - The Gnostic writers did not borrow from the canonical Gospels, as it is known that the canonical Gospels were not in general circulation when early Common Era Gnosticism came into being. Their apocrypha are attributed to James, the brother of Jesus, who received secret teachings from him, and Thomas, Philip, Matthias, John and Peter. The Gnostic books do not attempt to disown the canonical Gospels, but attempt to impart revelations of a higher order.

The Gnostic concept of time differs from the Christian and Hellenistic concepts. Hellenism conceived of time as being circular, cyclic, and under the influence of astrological movements which decide and regulate its course. The Christian concept describes time as being rectilinear, like a scroll unrolling from the beginning of time to the end of time. The Gnostics conceived of time as a duality, existing as timelessness at the spiritual level and as temporal at the physical level, with physical beings subject to the

fatality inherent in cyclic time. Between the world of time and the world of timelessness is a limit, Horos, which is a frontier absolute and impassable. Salvation occurs when the timeless intervenes into the temporal, when the Saviors, who remain strangers in the world of time, bring the gnosis, the revelation of the higher world that awakens the neophyte to recollection of the original spiritual nature. Gnosis places one beyond the danger of the spheres and their powers.

Cosmogony of the Gnostics - Above the Earth are the heavenly spheres, one enveloping the other, higher and higher, and vaster. In succession are the Hebdomad, the Planets (the Rulers of Destiny), the twelve Aeons (the Zodiac), and then the Place of the Midst with the holy baptism and the seals. Above that is the Ogdoad, the Places of the Right, and the Treasure of the Light with twelve Saviors and emanations of the seven voices, the five trees, and the amens. Above that is the Ennead and the place of those who have received the Gnosis. Finally, above all else is the Pleroma.

The geography of hell also predominates. Amente, an Egyptian word meaning hell, is used in Gnostic and Hermetic books to describe a kingdom landscaped with abysses, populated by demons and ruled by the great demon, Sacla. Abaddon is one of the angels of the abyss. In this layered architecture of hell are abysses of various depths, the deepest being the most terrible place of punishment and adjustment.

Each person is said to have two spirits; the spirit of truth and the spirit of perversity. Truth comes from the Source of Light, and perversity comes from the Abyss of Darkness. Those who walk in the light and practice righteousness are under the dominion of the Prince of Light. Those who walk in the way of Darkness are ruled by the Angel of Darkness. Within a person these forces wage war for the human soul.

The counterfeiting spirit is the third part of the make-up of the soul, with spirit and matter the other two. The counterfeiting spirit grows in the child by carnal nourishment. After death, it bears witness against the soul for all the sins it has made it commit. The counterfeiting spirit is also called the Additional Soul, who weighs one down and drags one into sin. The counterfeiting spirit is subject to the influence of the Archons of Fatality, who originally placed it there when the spirit descended the spheres to human birth. This negative attribute combats the action of the Light and fights against the Divine Spark which is also in a person. As the Divine Spark works to uplift the person to truth, knowledge and wisdom, the counterfeiting spirit tries to drag the person into sin and degradation. This concept is of Persian origin and is part of the microcosm/macrocosm doctrine.

The concept of the counterfeiting spirit is found in *The Second Book of Hermas, called his Commands*, composed before 210 CE, by Hermas, brother to Pius, bishop of Rome. This book was considered righteous by the heresiologists Ireneus, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome,

and Athanasius, and was read aloud in churches. The book describes the duel of the angel of righteousness with the angel of iniquity.

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