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"See, Father." said Jesus, "how, pursued by evil, (the soul) is wandering far from thy spirit over the earth. She tries to flee from hateful chaos; she knows not how to emerge from it. To that end, Father, send me! I will descend, bearing the seals. I will pass through all the aeons; I will unveil every mystery; I will denounce the appearances of the gods and, under the name of Gnosis, I will transmit the secrets of the holy way." ("Hymn of the Soul," Naasenes Gnostics, *Philosophumena*, V, 10.2)

**Jesus Christ** - Jesus spoke Aramaic. According to *The Gospel of Phillip*, Christ in Syriac means Messiah. It also means "the measured." Jesus in Hebrew is "the redemption." Nazara is "the truth." Jesus Christ of Nazareth might therefore means "redemption - the measured truth." In Syriac, Jesus was called "Pharisatha," which is "the one who is spread out." According to this Gospel, the word Christ derives from "Chrism," an oil used in religious ritual for anointing.

In one Gnostic account of the crucifixion of Jesus, the world stood still for an entire day. The higher planets continued to revolve, but the lower ones stopped. The sun traveled backwards as the moon occulted it.

Jesus, as Savior, has little bearing on the structure of Gnostic philosophy, but his life and crucifixion invigorated the system. Many Gnostics adapted Jesus into their system expressly to advance it. As Gnosticism spread throughout the Mediterranean world, it became the unintentional medium for the message of Jesus, spreading the news of his life, his teachings, and his crucifixion.

Gnostic manuscripts contain information regarding Jesus not found in ecclesiastical records. The Gnostic interpretation of the meaning of the life of Jesus varies from that of the Bible. Jesus is a divinized human who underwent Christification when his body was put on by the Cosmic Christ force, an Aeon that had put on other bodies as well. In one account, Jesus only looked human but was spirit. In another, Jesus is an aeon who magically implanted the seed of himself in the body of Mary. In another text, his body was spiritual because already the Holy Spirit had descended on Mary. In another manuscript, the body of Jesus is said to be psychic (a body may be material, psychic or

spiritual) and was awakened by the Holy Spirit who descended in the form of a dove. In another account, when Jesus was 12 years old the angel Baruch mysteriously merged with him. Some Gnostics believed that Jesus came to Earth at the age of seven with his senses already organized, that he materialized like Melchizedek.

Jesus made Adam to stand upright and to taste of the Tree of Life. He caused Enoch in Paradise to write the Books of Jeou because, he said, one must gain knowledge of them in order to be saved from the abyss and its punishments. Jesus preached in favor of celibacy. Jesus said, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship." Jesus made the river Jordan flow backwards.

Jesus is sent down into the world to save humanity by reminding people of their heavenly origin. The powers of error have imprisoned man in a body and created woman and sexual desire to spread the particles of light and make it more difficult for the Divine Sparks of the supreme divinity to escape. Error grew angry at Jesus and his salvific work and had him nailed to the tree because he enlightened people and showed them truth. At his crucifixion, Jesus changed his own appearance and metamorphosed Simon of Cyrene to look like him to fool the Romans, who crucified Simon by mistake.

"For I was altering my shapes, changing from form to form. And therefore, when I was at their gates I assumed their likenesses." (*The Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, Gnostic papyri)

In *The First Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ*, a manuscript said to be Gnostic, Jesus begins his work as Savior by exorcising demons and counteracting the deeds of sorcerers. A young man had been turned into a mule. Jesus reversed the spell. A bridegroom, because of sorcerers, cannot enjoy his new wife. Jesus put the marriage right. He cured a female leper. The man who had been turned into a mule and then back again marries her.

Jesus and his family sojourned in Egypt for three years and saw the pharaoh. Jesus met two of his disciples, Bartholomew and Judas, as children. Judas was possessed by Satan and tried to bite Jesus. He struck him on the same side which "the Jews" pierced with a spear at his crucifixion. Jesus brought clay animals to life. He was falsely accused of causing a young boy to die. Jesus resurrected him so that the child could testify that it was not Jesus who caused his death. A young boy bumped into him, so Jesus, in a temper, caused the boy to die.

Gnostics said they got their teachings from the resurrected Jesus and that he is superior to the God of the Old Testament. Jesus entrusted his most precious teachings to be written down by his disciples Philip, Matthias, and Thomas his twin, the Twin of Christ. Jesus said heaven and earth were produced for the sake of the Apostle James the Just.

"And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." (Mark IV; 11-12)

In *Pistis-Sophia* Jesus returns to earth eleven years after his resurrection to continue to teach the disciples about the Treasury of the Light. He said the true cross, the cross of light was in heaven. At the Mount of Olives, a light descended to him, enveloped him and took him away to a fantastic heaven. He came down again robed in brilliant light and told the disciples he had overthrown the unrighteous rulers of the spheres, abolished the course of Fate, and changed the rotation of the spheres into an alternating movement so that they can no longer exert their powers over humanity and so that the astrologers' forecasts have lost all meaning. Jesus transports himself and his disciples into the heavens that open as he pronounces a prayer. There they see ships of the sun and moon manned by fantastic beings. One manuscript relates that Jesus is seated at the right hand of the unknowing Ialdabaoth where he helps the souls escape from the unrighteous creator's domain. The Mandaean Gnostics said Jesus a prophet of falsehood.

In *Book of the Treatise according to the Mystery*, Jesus and the disciples participate in a ceremonial ritual that might be patterned on Egyptian magic ceremonies. Jesus inducts the disciples as initiates, by baptism of water, fire, and spirit, into the secrets of the Treasury of the Light. An altar is prepared with vessels of wine, plants, branches, and aromatics, each especially positioned in certain places. The disciples hold appropriate plants in their hands, which are marked with magic numbers. Jesus says a magical prayer in which he invokes the powers to come and baptize the disciples into the kingdom of Melchizedek. When he asks for a sign from the powers, the wine changes into water and Jesus baptizes them with it, a baptism of Fire and of the Holy Spirit. Then he teaches them the passwords and signs for their use when they are ascending the spheres. There is also an account of Jesus and his disciples dancing to a hymn.

In Gnostic manuscripts, Jesus tells of the Place of Life that was before heaven and earth, and where there is no darkness. He says the Earth does not move: if it did it would fall. He says the Kingdom of Heaven is "within man," as an interior kingdom. He teaches that image does not die and does not show itself. He tells the disciples that the feminine must become male before it can enter the kingdom. Jesus says let there be a union of the opposites and a complete reversal of everything, of all values, cosmic and human. Jesus will one day abolish Fatality by reversing the rotation of the spheres (planets), counteracting their effects.

In *Nicodemus*, written sometime before 400 CE by an orthodox Christian writer (not Nicodemus), Jesus descends into hell. The devils there, who are preparing for this moment foretold, are horrified and afraid. Every person who ever lived is there, with the three

exceptions of Enoch, Elijah, and Dimas, the thief crucified on the cross to the right of Jesus. When Jesus descends to hell, enlightening the whole place by his luminous presence, he releases the dead from their bondage. Beelzebub, subordinate of Satan and prince of hell, rebukes Satan, ruler of hell, for causing Jesus, an innocent and pure man, to be wrongfully crucified. Because of Satan, Jesus has come down to them to release all their inmates. Jesus rewards Beelzebub by raising him above Satan, just as Sabaoth was raised above Ialdabaoth. Jesus takes all the truly worthy up to Paradise. Those whom he leaves behind cause the devils much aggravation because no longer do they wail and gnash their teeth, but instead are merry. In 600 CE, the words, "He descended into hell..." were added to the Apostle's Creed.

The Gnostic believed the Cosmic Christ force, which they called an Aeon, is empowered to upend and reverse everything, especially the rotation of the spheres, so that death is escapable. The Cosmic Christ force sacrifices itself through incarnations and the involution of physical death (a descent into hell), so that evolution of human souls can continue.

"After we went forth from our home, and came down to this world in bodies, we were hated and persecuted." (*The Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, Gnostic papyri)

**John the Baptist** - In a Gnostic manuscript, Jesus says there was none greater than John the Baptist. As a child, John's name was Yohanna and he was taught by Anosh-Uthra on the Mountain of Lights. In another account of him. Sophia contriving, without Ialdabaoth's assent, to bring about the births of John the Baptist and Jesus.

**Judaism** - Infused with religious beliefs from various civilizations, Judaism incorporated into its theology many foreign elements. From Persia came ideas regarding salvation, resurrection, apocalypse, archangels, angels, and demons, and the belief in the enmity between the Light and the Darkness. From Greece and Pythagoras came the mystical meanings of numbers that the Jews entitled Gematria. The Jews believed, like the Gnostics and the Persians before them, that perfect teachers were caught up into heaven. The early Common Era mystics were the Gnostics, but Judaism has mystics as well, known as Kabbalists.

The medieval literature of the Jews is heavy with Gnostic elements. The Zohar of Kabbalistic Gnosticism elucidates a dualistic Tree of Life composed of 10 spheres called Sephiroth, abstract powers which are emanations of the hidden and infinite God. The *Book of Formation* and the *Zohar* combined constitute the Kabala, a body of mystic and occult thought. A diagram referred to as the Kabala Tree of Life is a diagram of 10 spheres and 22 paths, which are the 32 avenues to wisdom. In the *Sepher Yetsira*, Teli the Dragon turns these spheres. The Judaic Kabala Tree of Life is pre-dated by nearly 1000 years by

the Tree of Life found described almost exactly as above in the Gnostic text entitled Diagram. The Kabala Tree of Life probably owes its origin to this Tree of Life diagram found in the Gnostic text Diagram.

Joseph Gikatila and Moses de Leon wrote material reminiscent of the Gnostic Ophites and Naassenes, which they could not have known. Hebrew mystics believed Good and Evil were at one time linked together on the Tree of Life until disturbed by Eve, the Old Testament equivalent of the Greek Pandora. The mystics wrote of Adam Qadmon, the Primordial Adam. They described the Tree of Life as representing Archetypal Man, an Aeon. The favorite image of Jewish mysticism is the Merkaba, the chariot-throne.

There is a strong Egyptian influence on Judaism, and evidence of their having stolen each other's manuscripts back and forth, especially the Hermetic texts. Although the Egyptians and the Jews had two different sciences and two different wisdoms, they were competitive with each other and interested in each other.

According to the Bible, Moses of the Exodus was versed in the knowledge of the Egyptians. The Greek historian, Manetho, states that Moses was a priest of Osiris in Egypt. It has been suggested that Moses broke away from the Egyptian community because they would not adopt his own personal ideas regarding God. Then, with the magic he had learned from the Egyptians, he successfully challenged the Egyptian magicians, Jannes and Jambres, and liberated the Israelites so he could found a civilization that would believe in his theology.

King Solomon, reputed to be a powerful magician, is said to have captured seven demons, placed them in bronze vases, and sent them from Jerusalem to Egypt for safe keeping. He entrusted the care of the demons to the Egyptian priests who used a book against them called *The Seven Heavens*, supposedly written by Solomon.

There are *Ptolemaic Books* written in Greek which combine the Egyptian theology with the Hebrew. According to legend, in 250 BCE, King Ptolemy Philadelphus employed 72 Jewish scholars to translate the Old Testament into Greek, so that the Old Testament came to be known as the *Septuagint*, the Seventy. In an historical account of this event, the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek by the Jewish scholars because the Diaspora Jews had forgotten how to speak Hebrew.

The *Letter of Aristeas* describes in detail the events leading up to the creation of the Septuagint. Ptolemy Philadelphus, dedicated to creating in Alexandria the greatest library ever known (which the Christians later torched), learned from his librarian the need to acquire an accurate copy of the Old Testament. He released 100,000 Jewish slaves and lavished exorbitant gifts upon the Jewish community in Jerusalem. In return, he asked Eleazar to send to Egypt the best scholars available for the great translation. When the

scholars arrived, Philadelphus entertained them lavishly and set out to learn as much wisdom from them as he could. He plied them with questions as they dined.

"The king asked the next, how he could be free from disturbing thoughts in his sleep? And he replied, "You have asked me a question which is very difficult to answer, for we cannot bring our true selves into play during the hours for sleep, but are held fast in these by imaginations that cannot be controlled by reason. For our souls possess the feeling that they actually see the things that enter into our consciousness during sleep...We suppose that we are actually sailing on the sea in boats or flying through the air or traveling to other regions or anything else of the kind...He who has all his thoughts and actions set towards the noblest ends establishes himself in righteousness both when he is awake and when he is asleep."

As these examples show, the ancient ties of the Jews and the Egyptians are strong. Infused in all of Judaic mystic beliefs are the mystic beliefs of all the major civilizations of the ancient worlds of the Mediterranean and Near East, due in large part to the Diaspora Jews, who were exiled from civilization to civilization and who arrived in one part of the world carrying with them the wisdom and spiritual beliefs of the part of the world from which they just were banished. The result of this was that Judaism became a melting pot of beliefs from various non-Judaic civilizations. The Jews themselves were people strongly versed in their own beliefs and so also they spread these around as well. Were it not for the Jews, the Gnostics would not have known of the Messiah concept and the Christians would never have had a Messiah by the name of Jesus, a Jew and fellow believer in Gnostic thought.

**Jung Codex** - Part of the Chenoboskion Manuscripts presented to C.G. Jung as a gift. Jung had an intense and lifelong interest in Gnosticism and Hermetic literature and sometimes wrote under the name "Basilides." Jung bequeathed Gnostic thought to the modern world when he founded 20th century psychology. Under the name Basilides, Jung wrote "The Seven Sermons to the Dead." Later, while under attack from Martin Buber for having breached professional ethic by overstepping psychology into religion, Jung apologized for this poem.

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