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Nassenes - A Gnostic sect which takes its name from Naas, meaning Serpent in Hebrew. The Naassenes were against carnal intercourse but believed it necessary to become initiated first into the "lesser Mysteries - those of the "carnal generation" -and then into the "greater mysteries," the heavenly mysteries. They believed the Exodus to be symbolic, rather than actual, that the Israelites symbolized humanity's attempt to extricate itself from involvement in matter (Egypt). They believed that Jesus made the river Jordan flow backwards.

The Naassenes professed a strong belief that the Kingdom of God is always present, though invisible, and that it is both inside and outside of a person. As an extension of this idea, they thought every part of the human body had its correspondence on earth somewhere, that the physical body of a person is patterned on a larger reality. They taught that the brain corresponds to Eden; the membranes of the brain to the heavens; the head to Paradise; the river Phison is the eye; the river Geon is the ear; Tigris is the nostrils. The Naassenes practiced the ritual of Baptism and boasted of possessing the doctrine Jesus revealed to James, passed on by him to Mariamne. The Naassenes believed Adam was originally lifeless and inert, like a statue. They wrote "Hermes is the Word who has expressed and fashioned the things that have been, that are and that will be." They made use of the Odyssey as their allegorical literature.

Nicolaitans - A Gnostic sect established by the deacon Nicolas, who is considered to be a founder of Gnosticism. The Nicolaitans taught that in the beginning there was Darkness and the abyss and the waters. The unbegotten, primordial Spirit cast out the Darkness, the abyss and the waters by showing its face. In anger, the Darkness rose up to attack the Spirit, creating a womb out of which was born four aeons, which in turn engendered fourteen others. This was followed by the formation of the "right" and the "left," the light and the dark. The Spirit then emanated Barbelo, the Celestial Mother who gave birth to Ialdabaoth by emanation. She repented this act of birth and this brought about the first salvation of the lower world. Barbelo seduced the Archons, powers of the lower heavens, and robbed them of their light. The Nicolaitans believed in the three primordial principles: Light, Darkness, and Intermediate Spirit.

Noah - Also called Deucalion, Noah built the Ark on the mystic Mountain of Seir (Shyr). In one account of the deluge, it was Sophia who saved Noah, his wife Norea, and their

family. Another text relates that Noah and his family did not withdraw but were taken up into a cloud of light. Noah took into the Ark the books handed down to him from Adam through Seth. Noah received from the angels secrets which he gave to his son, Shem.

Norea- Also Horea. The mystical sister of Seth, and daughter of Adam and Eve, who became the wife of Noah. Norea means "fiery." Ialdabaoth had set about to destroy the superior generation of Seth and Norea. When Noah was building the Ark, Ialdabaoth became determined that Norea would not survive the flood, so he caused her to set fire to the Ark three times. She burned it by blowing on the hull while the Ark under construction.

In some accounts, Norea is the wife of Seth or of Shem (Seth). -The Mandaeans called her Nuraitha or Nhuraita, wife of Noah and mother of Shem. There is an account of the creation of Time involving Norea. She is said to have quarreled with the Archons, causing the descent of the great angel Heleleth, who is the color of pure gold and whose robes are as white as snow. He created Time so that the Archons would be subjected to it and thus be subdued.

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