

Sophia, the Gnostic Syzygy of Christ The Kiev Sophia Icon



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The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies—Part Two

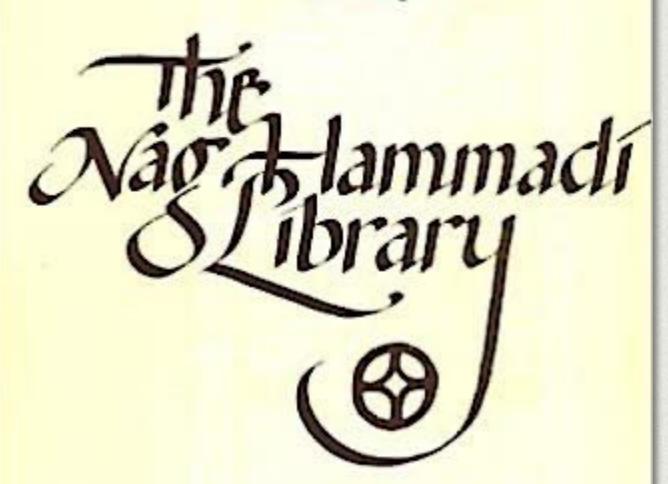
THE entire history of Christian and pagan Gnosticism is shrouded in the deepest mystery and obscurity; for, while the Gnostics were undoubtedly prolific writers, little of their literature has survived. They brought down upon themselves the animosity of the early Christian Church, and when this institution reached its position of world power it destroyed all available records of the Gnostic *cultus*. The name *Gnostic* means *wisdom*, or *knowledge*, and is derived from the Greek *Gnosis*. The members of the order claimed to be familiar with the secret doctrines of early Christianity. They interpreted the Christian Mysteries according to pagan symbolism. Their secret information and philosophic tenets they concealed from the profane and taught to a small group only of especially initiated persons.

Simon Magus, the magician of New Testament fame, is often supposed to have been the founder of Gnosticism. If this be true, the sect was formed during the century after Christ and is probably the first of the many branches which have sprung from the main trunk of Christianity. Everything with which the enthusiasts of the early Christian Church might not agree they declared to be inspired by the Devil. That Simon Magus had mysterious and supernatural powers is conceded even by his enemies, but they maintained that these powers were lent to him by the infernal spirits and furies which they asserted were his ever present companions. Undoubtedly the most interesting legend concerning Simon is that which tells of his theosophic contests with the Apostle Peter while the two were promulgating their differing doctrines in Rome. According to the story that the Church Fathers have preserved, Simon was to prove his spiritual superiority by ascending to heaven in a chariot of fire. He was actually picked up and carried many feet into the air by invisible powers. When St. Peter saw this, he cried out in a loud voice, ordering the demons (spirits of the air) to release their hold upon the magician. The evil spirits, when so ordered by the great saint, were forced to obey. Simon fell a great distance and was killed, which decisively proved the superiority of the Christian powers. This story is undoubtedly manufactured out of whole cloth, as it is only one out of many accounts concerning his death, few of which agree. As more and more evidence is being amassed to the effect that St, Peter was never in Rome, its last possible vestige of authenticity is rapidly being dissipated.

That Simon was a philosopher there is no doubt, for wherever his exact words are preserved his synthetic and transcending thoughts are beautifully expressed. The principles of Gnosticism are well described in the following verbatim statement by him, supposed to have been preserved by Hippolytus: "To you, therefore, I say what I say, and write what I write. And the writing is this. Of the universal Æons [periods, planes, or cycles of creative and created life in substance and space, celestial creatures] there are two shoots, without beginning or end, springing from one Root, which is the power invisible, inapprehensible silence [Bythos]. Of these shoots one is manifested from above, which is the Great Power, the Universal Mind ordering all things, male, and the other, [is manifested] from below, the Great Thought, female, producing all things. Hence pairing with each other, they unite and manifest the Middle Distance, incomprehensible Air, without beginning or end. In this is the Father Who sustains all things, and nourishes those things which have a beginning and end." (See Simon Magus, by G. R. S. Mead.) By this we are to understand that manifestation is the result of a positive and a negative principle, one acting upon the other, and it takes place in the middle plane, or point of equilibrium, called the *pleroma*. This *pleroma* is a peculiar substance produced out of the blending of the spiritual and material æons. Out of the *pleroma* was individualized the *Demiurgus*, the immortal mortal, to whom we are responsible for our physical existence and the suffering we must go through in connection with it. In the Gnostic system, three pairs of opposites, called Syzygies, emanated from the Eternal One. These, with Himself, make the total of seven. The six (three pairs) Æons (living, divine principles) were described by Simon in the *Philosophumena* in the following manner: The first two were *Mind* (Nous) and *Thought* (Epinoia). Then came *Voice* (Phone) and its opposite, *Name* (Onoma), and lastly, Reason (Logismos) and Reflection (Enthumesis). From these primordial six, united with the Eternal Flame, came forth the Æons (Angels) who formed the lower worlds through the direction of the Demiurgus. (See the works of H. P. Blavatsky.) How this first Gnosticism of Simon Magus and Menander, his disciple, was amplified, and frequently distorted, by later adherents to the cult must now be considered. –STOAA:25

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"An absolute gold mine of the literature of Gnosticism." -The Los Angeles Times



REVISED EDITION

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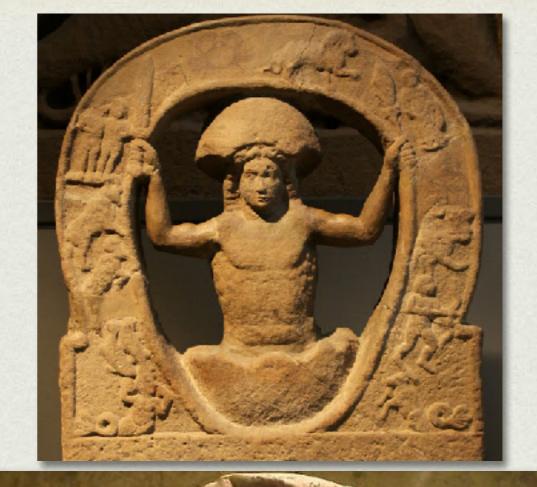
James M. Robinson General Editor

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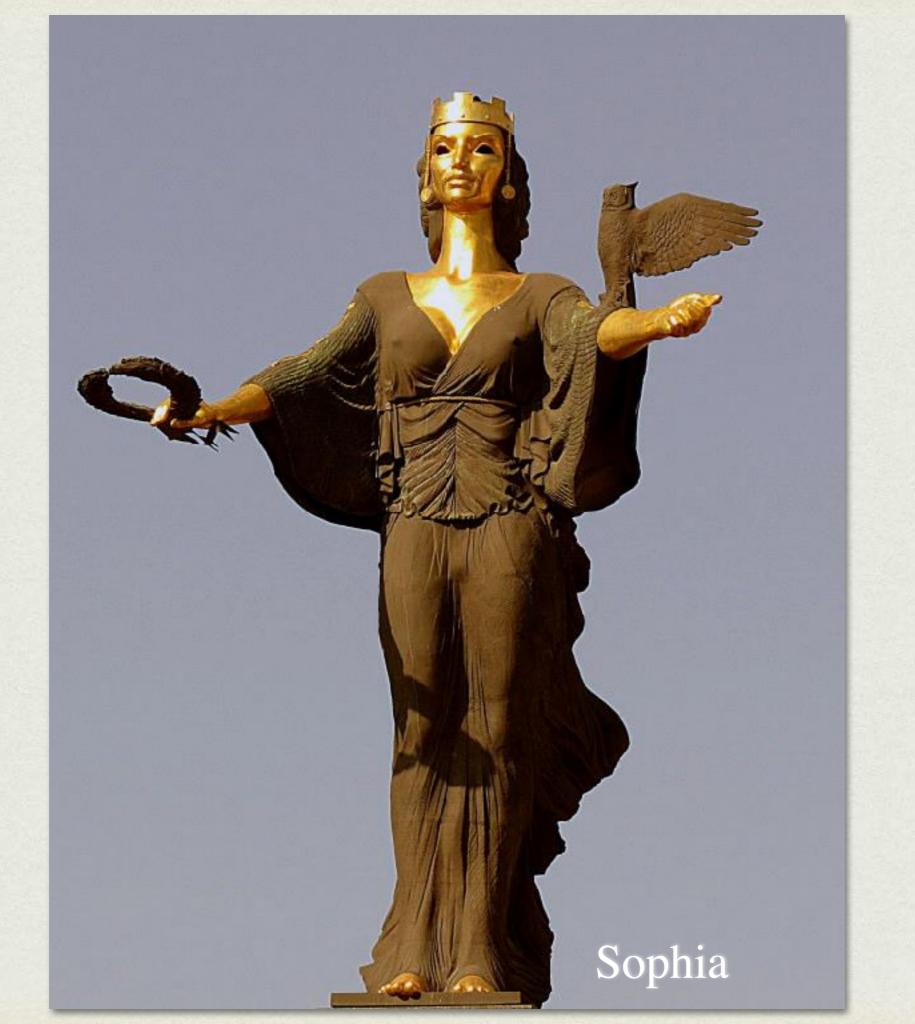


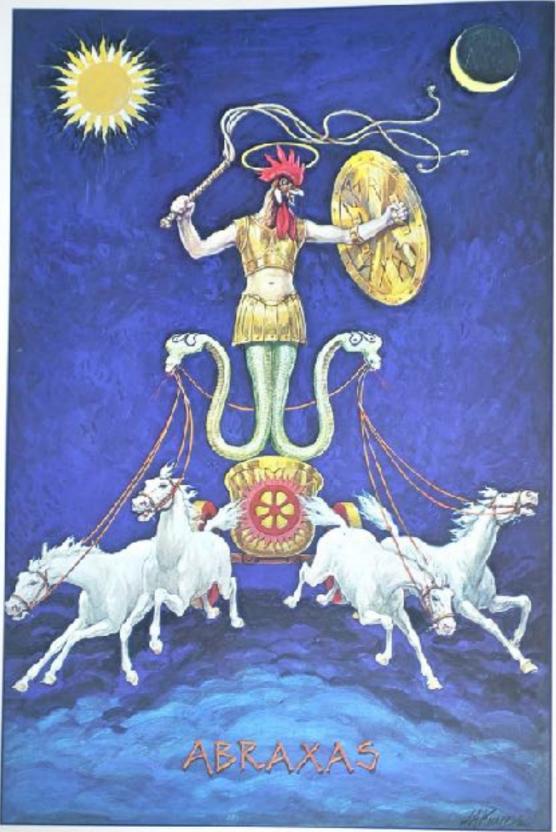




""Pistis Sophia is an extremely important document, a genuine Evangel of the Gnostics, ascribed at random to Valentinus, but much more probably a pre-Christian work in its original" –SD2:566







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The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies



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The School of Gnosticism was divided into two major parts, commonly called the Syrian Cult and the Alexandrian Cult. These schools agreed in essentials, but the latter division was more inclired to be pantheistic, while the former was dualistic. While the Syran cult was largely Simonian, the Alexandrian School was the outpowth of the philosophical dedictions of a clever Egyptian Chestian, Basilides by name, who claimed to have received his instructions from the Apostle Mxthey. Like Simon Magus, he was an omanationist, with Neo-Platone inclinations. In fact, the en-tireGnostic Mystery is based upon the hypothesis of emanations us being the logical connection betwen the irreconcilable opposites Absolute Spirit and Absolute Suzstates, which the Georgies beliesed to have been coexistent in Etenity. Some assert that Basi'idesivas the true founder of Gresticim, but there is much evidence to the effect that Simon Magas lait down its fundamental prin-

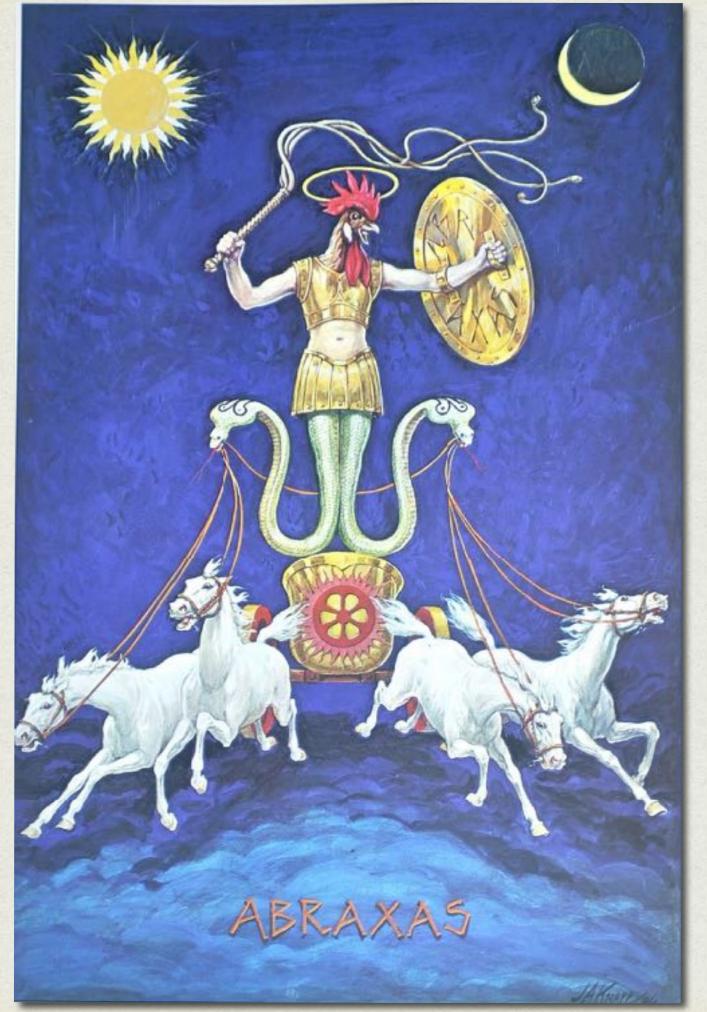
The Alexandrian Basilides inculated Egyptian Hermeticism, Orental occulrism, Chaldran 25troogy, and Persian philosophyin his followers, and in his doctrires sought to unite the schools of early Christianity with the ancient pagas Mysteries. To him is attrib-

Abraxa: when added together resul in the sum of 365. The same author also notes that the name Mitiras when treated in a similar

manner has the same numerical value. Basilides taught that the

cipies in the preceding century. From the Novemberg Circuicle THE DEATH OF SIMON THE MAGICIAN. Since Mapor, having called upon the Spirits of the Air, is her shown being picked up by the demon. So Pater dominate that the end great release their hild upon the magician. The demons are front to employ and Since Nelson is they be the fail. uted the formulation of that peculiar concept of the Deity which carries the name of Abraxas. In discussing the original meaning of this word, Godfrey Higgins, in his Glite Druids, has demonstrated that the numerological powers of he letters forming the word

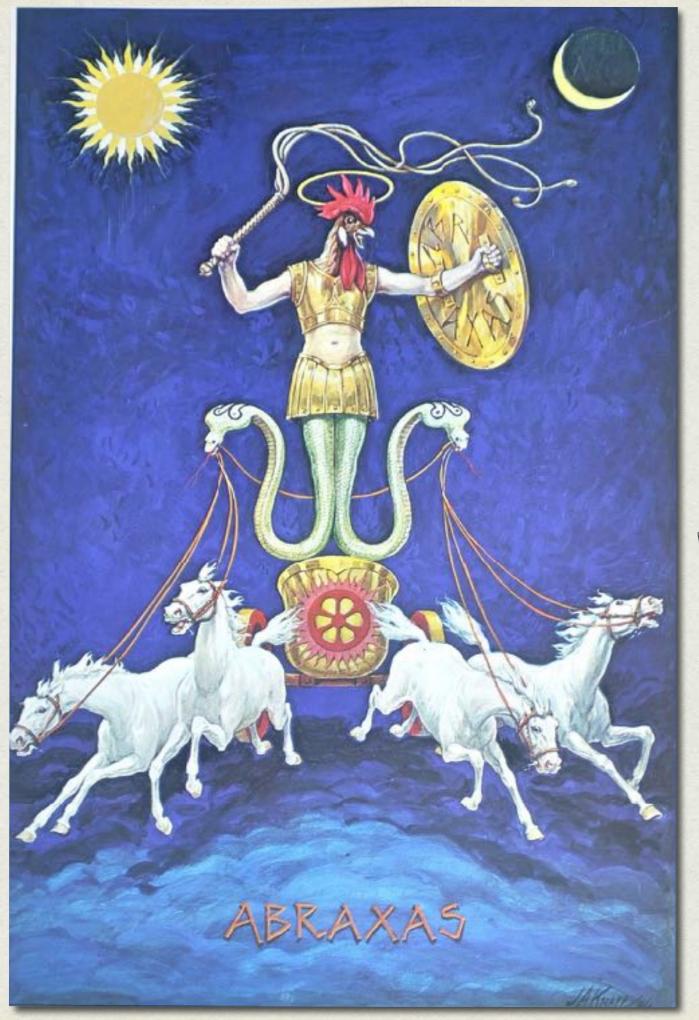




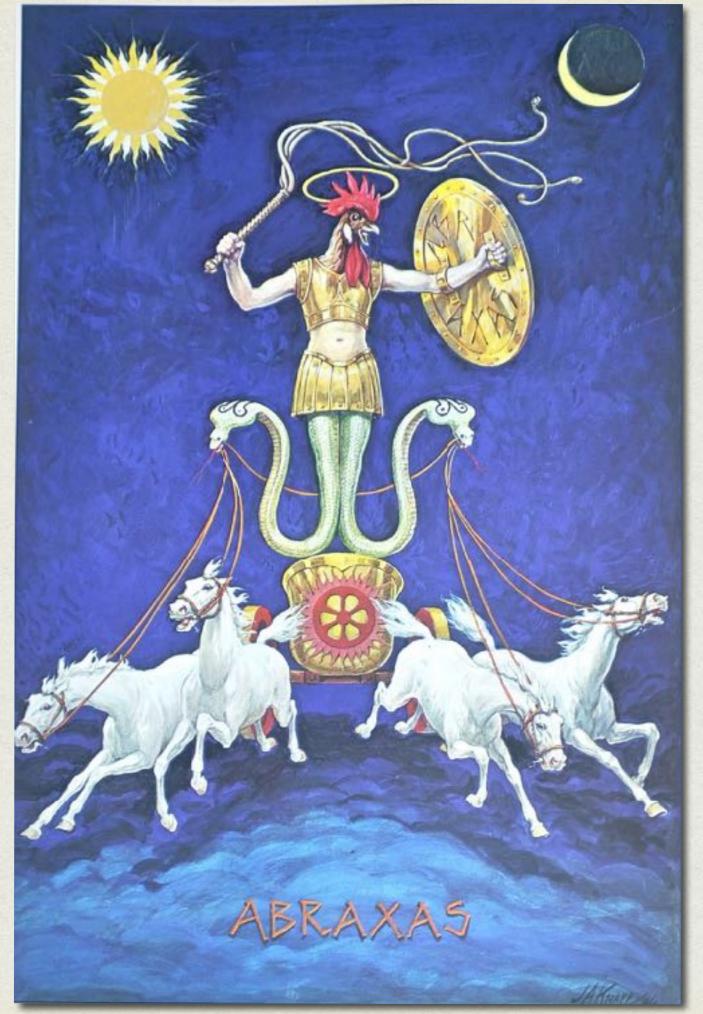
ABRAXAS, A GNOSTIC PANTHEOS

The name ABRAXAS, coined by Basilides, the Egyptian Gnostic, is a word symbol consisting of seven letters which signify the seven creative powers or planetary angels recognized by the ancients. Sampson Arnold Mackey advances the theory that the name is compounded from two ancient words, ABIR, which means a bull, and AXIS, which means the pole. To substantiate his belief, he brings forward the fact that a motion of the earth, commonly called the alternation of the poles, resulted in the vernal equinox taking place at one time in Taurus, the Celestial Bull, over the North Pole. The four white horses drawing the chariot of ABRAXAS symbolize the four ethers by means of which the solar power, ABRAXAS, is circulated through all parts of the universe.

The seven-lettered name of ABRAXAS is symbolically significant of his seven-rayed power. That the modern world has any knowledge whatever of ancient Gnostic symbolism is largely due to the cupidity of those individuals who set themselves the task of destroying every intelligible record of Gnostic philosophy; for, wishing to keep rather than destroy articles of commercial value, these fanatics preserved gems upon which Gnostic symbols were engraved. The above plate is the enlargement and amplification of a Gnostic jewel, the original stone being only a trifle over an inch in height. Rings and other articles of jewelry set with Gnostic gems were undoubtedly used by members of the cult as means of identification. As the order was a secret society, the designs were small and inconspicuous. –STOAA: facing p. 24







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Just as the **IAO** of the mysteries was distinct from Jehovah, so was the later Iao and Abraxas of some Gnostic sects identical with the god of the Hebrews, who was the same with the Egyptian Horus. This is undeniably proven on "heathen" as on the Gnostic "Christian" gems. In Matter's collection of such gems there is a "Horus" seated on the lotus, inscribed *ABRASAXIAW* (Abraxas Iao) — an address exactly parallel to the so frequent *EIS ZETS SARAPI* (*Eis zets sarapi*) on the contemporary Heathen gems; and therefore only to be translated by "Abraxas is the One Jehovah" (King's *Gnostics*, p. 327). But who was Abraxas? As the same author shows — "the numerical or Kabalistic value of the name Abraxas directly refer to the Persian title of the god 'Mithra,' Ruler of the year, worshipped from the earliest times under the appellation of Iao." Thus, the Sun, in one aspect, the moon or the Lunar genius, in another, that generative deity whom the Gnostics saluted as "Thou that presidest over the Mysteries of the Father and the Son, who shinest in the night-time, holding *the second rank*, the first Lord of Death." –SD1:474

Agathodæmon, the Gnostic Saviour, and even Abraxas, is no longer the glyph for *abstract creative* Power, but symbolizes the four Adams, or Races, the fifth being represented by the *five* branches cut off from the Tree of Life on which the old man stands in the Gnostic gems. The number of the Root-Races was recorded in the ancient Greek temples by the seven vowels, of which *five* were framed in a panel in the Initiation halls of the Adyta. –SD1:458

Ain-Soph also is said to manifest through the Seven Letters of Jehovah's name who, having usurped the place of the Unknown Limitless, was given by his devotees his Seven Angels of the Presence — his Seven Principles. –SD1:335

Valentinus expatiates upon the power of the great Seven, who were called to bring forth this universe after Ar(r)hetos, or the Ineffable, whose name is composed of seven letters, had represented the first hebdomad. This name (Ar(r)hetos) is one to indicate the Sevenfold nature of the One (the logos). "The goddess Rhea," says Proclus in Timaeus (p. 121), "is a Monad, Duad, and Heptad," comprehending in herself all the Titanidae, "who are seven." –SD1:439



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THE

MYTHOLOGICAL

ASTRONOMY,

IN THREE PARTS.

BY S. A. MACKEY,

NORWICH.

London,

PUBLISHED BY HUNT AND CLARKE, 10, TAVISTOCK-STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

AND MAY BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1827.

MACKEY'S SPHINKIAD.



Norwich Published by SA.Mackey. May 1. 1822.



THE LABYRINTH

Has been described by various authors, who agree in stating, that it was a building full of intricate windings and turnings, containing between three and four thousand little chambers. They likewise agree in stating that the chambers were in rows, facing inwards to *winding alleys*, which went round the building ascending and winding from the surface of the Earth; forming a spiral line from the middle upwards; and descending and winding, forming a spiral line from the middle downwards. Which is precisely the figure described by the North and South Pole of the Earth, in passing from the Ecliptic, till they coincide with the North and South Pole of the Heavens—describing at once, the precession of the Equinoxes, and the diminution of the angle of the Poles.

Who can here mistake the design of this hitherto mysterious building? Other nations have registered the rounds made by the Equinoctial points, and have given us the same number, each in a way peculiar to itself; but none have imitated nature with so much simplicity as the people of Egypt. But the Historians inform us that there were three spiral alleys, and three tier of little chambers; which shew that the Pole had repeated its ascent and descent three times: and we find the Symbol of the Sun (i. e. the Hawk) is placed three times upon the top of Cleopatra's Needle. And we find the Bull there as often: as if the Bull had been as often at the Pole. The Gems called Abraxes, prove that the Bull had been at the Pole: for its name means the Bull at the Pole; it is a compound of ABIR the Bull and Axis the Pole. –Mythological Astronomy:32













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Their play upon the number 5	65 is no bad example.	The name Meithra	stands
for 365.**			
	M 40		
	E 5		
	I 10		-
	Θ 9		
	P 100		
	A 1		
•	Σ 200		
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Again-Abraxas or Abrasax,†	365		
ngain—noranas or morasan,	A 1		
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	A 1		•
	Σ 200		
	A 1	•	
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Their play upon the number 3 for 365.*	365 is no bad	d examp	ole. The name	Meithra	stands		
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XXV

The Ancient Mysteries and Secret Societies

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The School of Gnosticism was divided into two major parts, commonly called the Syrian Cult. and the Alexandrian Cult. These schools agreed in essentials, but the latter division was more inclined to be pantheistic, while the former was dualistic. While the Syrian cult was largely Simonian, the Alexandrian School was the outgrowth of the philosophical deductions of a clever Egyptian Christian, Basilides by name, who claimed to have received his instructions from the Aprez le Matthew. Like Simon Magus, he was an emanationist, with Neo-Platonic inclinations. In fact, the entire Gnostic Mystery is based upon the hypothesis of emanations as being the logical connection between the irreconcilable opposites Absolute Spirit and Absolute Substarce, which the Gnostics believed to have been coexistent in Eternity. Some assert that Basilides was the true founder of Gnosticism, but there is much evidence to the effect that Simon Magus laid down its fundamental principles in the preceding century.

The Alexandrian Basilides inculcated Egyptian Hermicticism, Oriental occultism, Chaldean astrology, and Persian philosophy in his lollowers, and in his doctrines sought to unite the schools of early Christianity with the asscient pagan Mysteries. To him is attrib-

uted the formulation of that peculiar concept of the Deity which carries the name of Abraxus. In discussing the original meaning of this word, Godfrey Higgins, in his Celsic Druids, has demonstrated that the numerological powers of the letters forming the word Abraxus when added together result in the sum of 365. The same author also notes that the name Mitirus when treated in a similar manner has the same numerical value. Basilides taught that the



From the Novemberg Commits.

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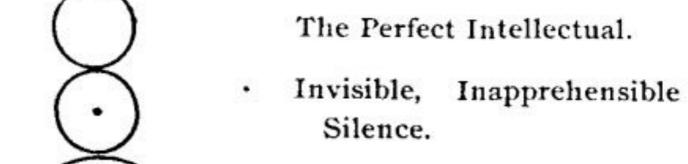
The Universal Principle.

The Boundless Power. The Universal Root.

He who has stood, stands, and will stand.

The Middle Distance,
Incomprehensible Air,
Without beginning or end,
Generated by
The Spirit (The Seventh
Power) moving on the
Waters.

The Lower Regionsor World made by the Angels and



- A. Incorruptible Form.
- B. Universal Mind.
- c. Great Thought.
 - a. Mind (Heaven).
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Powers, who were generated by Thought.1

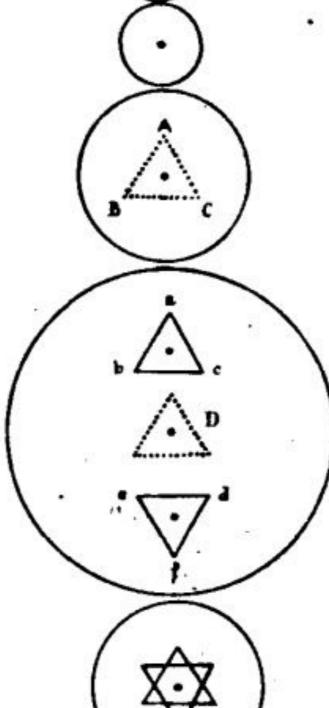


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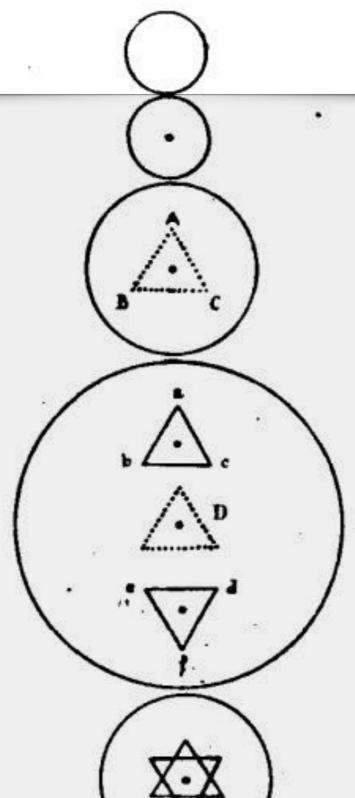
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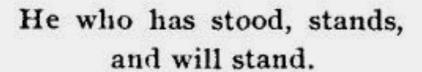
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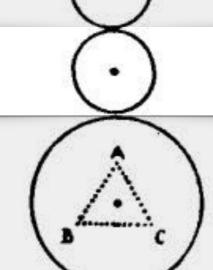
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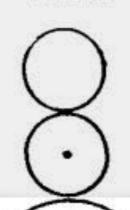
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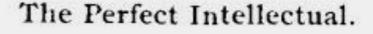
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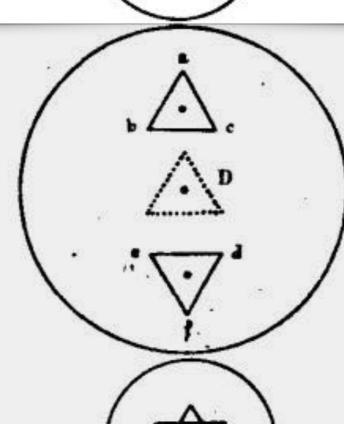
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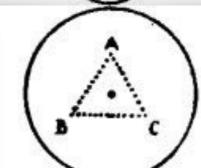
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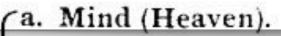
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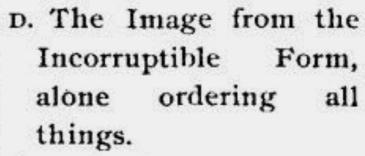


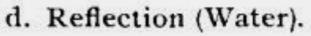
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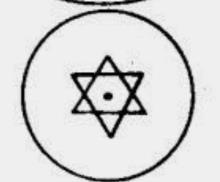
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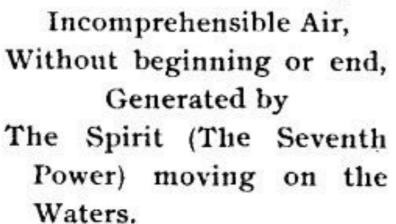
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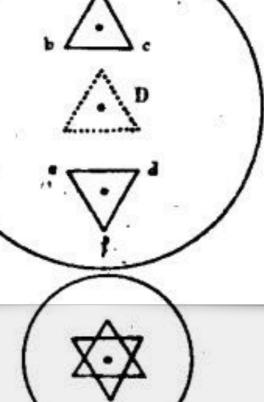
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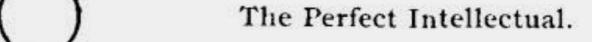
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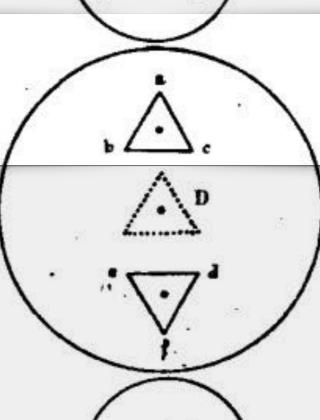
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FIRE

<u>Masculine</u> <u>Feminine</u>

Mind (Heaven) Nous

Thought (Water) Epinoia

Voice (Sun) Phone

Name (Moon) Onoma

Reason (Air)

Logismos

Reflection (Earth)

Enthumesi

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Stanza IV

- 1.... Listen, ye Sons of the Earth, to your instructors—the Sons of the Fire. Learn, there is neither first nor last, for all is one number issued from no number.
- 2. Learn what we who descend from **the Primordial Seven**, we who are born from the Primordial Flame, have learnt from our fathers. . . .
- 3. From the effulgency of light—the ray of the ever-darkness sprung in space the re-awakened energies; the one from the egg, the six, and the five. Then the three, the one, the four, the one, the five—the twice seven the sum total. And these are the essences, the flames, the elements, the builders, the numbers, the arupa, the rupa, and the force of Divine Man—the sum total. And from the Divine Man emanated the forms, the sparks, the sacred animals, and the messengers of the sacred fathers within the holy four.
- 4. This was the army of the voice—the divine mother of the seven. The sparks of the seven are subject to, and the servants of, the first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh of the seven. These "sparks" are called spheres, triangles, cubes, lines, and modellers; for thus stands the Eternal *Nidana*—the Oeaohoo, which is:
- 5. "Darkness" the boundless, or the no-number, Adi-Nidana Svâbhâvat:—
- I. The Adi-Sanat, the number, for he is one.
- II. The voice of the Lord Svâbhâvat, the numbers, for he is one and nine.
- III. The "formless square."

And these three enclosed within the O are the sacred four; and the ten are the arupa universe. Then come the "sons," the seven fighters, the one, the eighth left out, and his breath which is the light-maker.

6. Then the second seven, who are the *Lipika*, produced by the three. The rejected son is one. The "Son-suns" are countless.

-SD1:30-31

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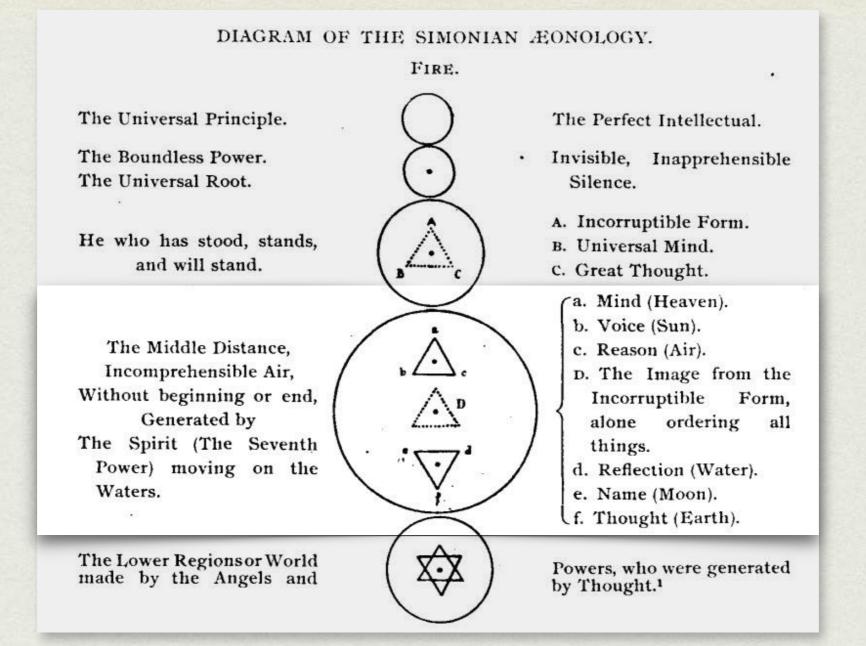


Fohat is closely related to the "ONE LIFE." From the Unknown One, the Infinite TOTALITY, the manifested ONE, or the periodical, Manvantaric Deity, emanates; and this is the Universal Mind, which, separated from its Fountain-Source, is the Demiurgos or the creative Logos of the Western Kabalists, and the four-faced Brahmâ of the Hindu religion. In its totality, viewed from the standpoint of manifested Divine Thought in the esoteric doctrine, it represents the Hosts of the higher creative Dhyan Chohans. –SD1:110

FOUNTAIN-SOURCE of OCCULTISM

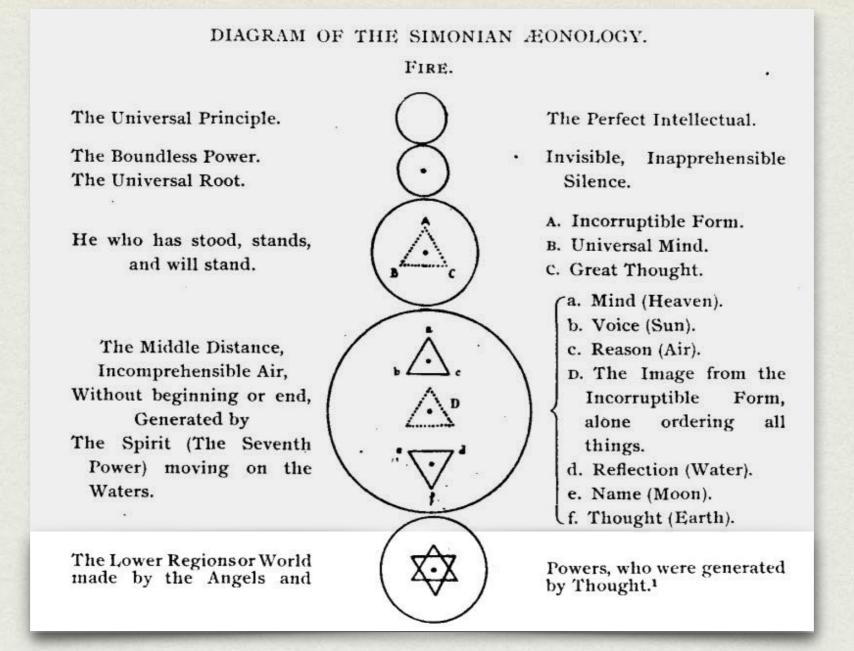
G. de Purucker

A modern presentation of the ancient universal wisdom based on THE SECRET DOCTRINE by H. P. Blavatsky Fohat is closely related to the "ONE LIFE." From the Unknown One, the Infinite TOTALITY, the manifested ONE, or the periodical, Manvantaric Deity, emanates; and this is the Universal Mind, which, separated from its **Fountain-Source**, is the Demiurgos or the creative Logos of the Western Kabalists, and the four-faced Brahmâ of the Hindu religion. In its totality, viewed from the standpoint of manifested Divine Thought in the esoteric doctrine, it represents the Hosts of the higher creative Dhyan Chohans. –SD1:110



Thus we find in the system of Simon Magus that the first six Aeons, synthesized by the seventh, the Parent Potency, passed into *Action*, and emanated, in their turn, six secondary Aeons, which were synthesized by their respective Parent...

Simon's Third World with its third series of six Aeons and the seventh, the Parent, is emanated in the same way. It is this same note which runs through every Gnostic system —gradual development downward into matter by similitude; and it is a law which is to be traced down to primordial Occultism, or Magic. With the Gnostics, as with us this seventh Potency, synthesizing all, is the Spirit brooding over the dark waters of undifferentiated Space, Narayana, or Vishnu, in India; the Holy Ghost in Christianity. But while in the latter the conception is conditioned and dwarfed by limitations necessitating faith and grace, Eastern Philosophy shows it pervading every atom, conscious or unconscious. –Fountain Source of Occultism:194



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$$3.1415 \text{ or Pi}$$
 $3+1+4+1+5=14$
 1065 $10+6+5$ =21

FIRE

<u>Masculine</u> <u>Feminine</u>

Mind (Heaven) Nous Thought (Water) Epinoia

Voice (Sun) *Phone* Name (Moon) *Onoma*

Reason (Air) Logismos Reflection (Earth) Enthumesis

Compare with these "pairs of opposites," in the *Anugîtâ*, the "pairs" of Æons, in the elaborate system of Valentinus, the most learned and profound master of Gnosis. As the "pairs of opposites," male and female, are all derived from *Akâsa* (undeveloped and developed, differentiated and undifferentiated, or SELF or Prajâpati), so are the Valentinian "pairs" of male and female Æons shown to emanate from Bythos, the pre-existing *eternal* Depth, and in their secondary emanation from *Ampsiu-Ouraan* (or sempiternal Depth and Silence), the second Logos. In the esoteric emanation there are seven chief "pairs of opposites"; and so also in the Valentinian system there were fourteen, or twice seven. Epiphanius, copying incorrectly, "copied one pair twice over," Mr. C. W. King thinks, "and thus adds one pair to the proper fifteen." ("The Gnostics," etc., pp. 263-4.) Here King falls into the opposite error: the pairs of Æons are not 15 (a blind) but 14, as the *first* Æon is *that* from which others emanate, Depth and Silence being the first and only emanation from Bythos. As Hippolytus shows: "The Æons of Valentinus are confessedly the *Six Radicals* of Simon (Magus)," with the *seventh*, Fire, at their head. And these are: Mind, Intelligence, Voice, Name, Reason and Thought subordinate to FIRE, the higher self, or precisely the "Seven Winds" or the "Seven Priests" of *Anugîtâ*.

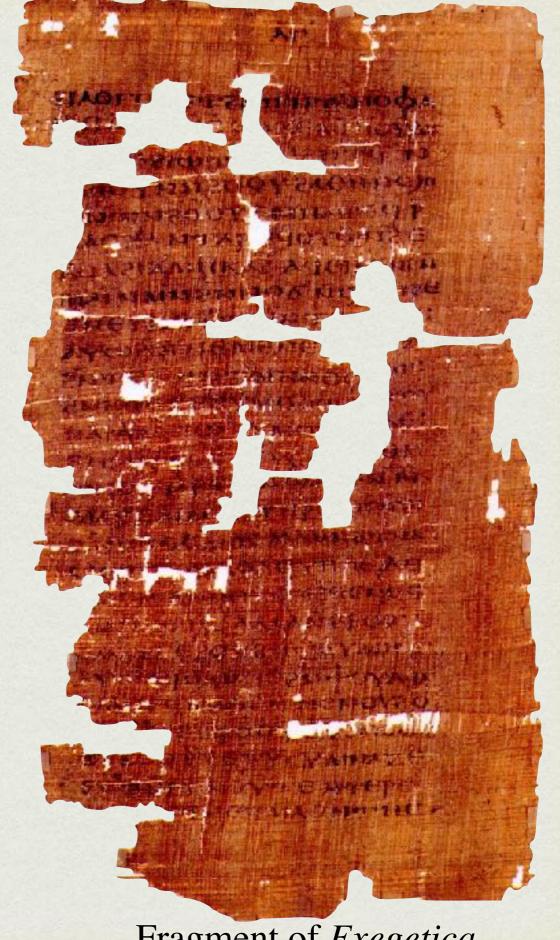
The School of Gnosticism was divided into two major parts, commonly called the Syrian Cult and the Alexandrian Cult. These schools agreed in essentials, but the latter division was more inclined to be pantheistic, while the former was dualistic. While the Syrian cult was largely Simonian, the Alexandrian School was the outgrowth of the philosophical deductions of a clever Egyptian Christian, Basilides by name, who claimed to have received his instructions from the Apostle Matthew. Like Simon Magus, he was an emanationist, with Neo-Platonic inclinations. In fact, the entire Gnostic Mystery is based upon the hypothesis of emanations as being the logical connection between the irreconcilable opposites Absolute Spirit and Absolute Substance, which the Gnostics believed to have been coexistent in Eternity. Some assert that Basilides was the true founder of Gnosticism, but there is much evidence to the effect that Simon Magus laid down its fundamental principles in the preceding century.

The Alexandrian Basilides inculcated Egyptian Hermeticism, Oriental occultism, Chaldean astrology, and Persian philosophy in his followers, and in his doctrines sought to unite the schools of early Christianity with the ancient pagan Mysteries. To him is attributed the formulation of that peculiar concept of the Deity which carries the name of Abraxas. In discussing the original meaning of this word, Godfrey Higgins, in his Celtic Druids, has demonstrated that the numerological powers of the letters forming the word Abraxas when added together result in the sum of 365. The same author also notes that the name Mithras when treated in a similar manner has the same numerical value. Basilides caught that the powers of the universe were divided into 365 Æons, or spiritual cycles, and that the sum of all these together was the Supreme Father, and to Him he gave the Qabbalistical appellation Abraxas, as being symbolical, numerologically, of His divine powers, attributes, and emanations. Abraxas is usually symbolized as a composite creature, with the body of a human being and the head of a rooster, and with each of his legs ending in a serpent. C. W. King, in his Gnostics and Their Remains, gives the following concise description of the Gnostic philosophy of Basilides, quoting from the writings of the early Christian bishop and martyr, St. Irenæus: "He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth Nous, or Mind; this the Logos, Word; this again Phronesis, Intelligence; from Phronesis sprung Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength."

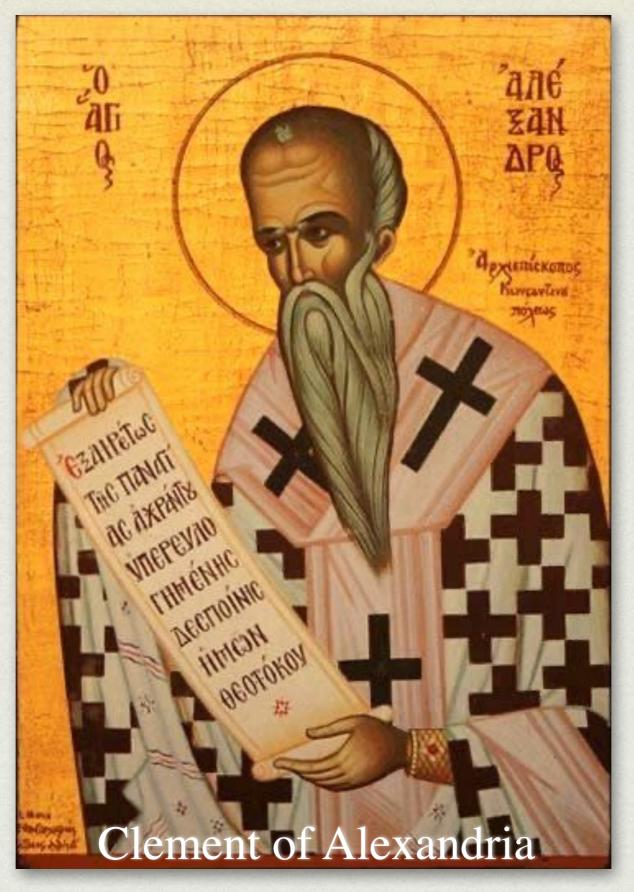
In describing Abraxas, C. W. King says: "Bellermann considers the composite image, inscribed with the actual name Abraxas, to be a Gnostic Pantheos, representing the Supreme Being, with the Five Emanations marked out by appropriate symbols. From the human body, the usual form assigned to the Deity, spring the two supporters, Nous and Logos, expressed in the serpents, symbols of the inner senses, and the quickening understanding; on which account the Greeks had made the serpent the attribute of Pallas. His head--that of a cock--represents Phronesis, that bird being the emblem of foresight and of vigilance. His two arms hold the symbols of Sophia and Dynamis: the shield of Wisdom and the whip of Power."

The Gnostics were divided in their opinions concerning the Demiurgus, or creator of the lower worlds. He established the terrestrial universe with the aid of six sons, or emanations (possibly the planetary Angels) which He formed out of, and yet within, Himself. As stated before, the Demiurgus was individualized as the lowest creation out of the substance called pleroma. One group of the Gnostics was of the opinion that the Demiurgus was the cause of all misery and was an evil creature, who by building this lower world had separated the souls of men from truth by encasing them in mortal vehicles. The other sect viewed the Demiurgus as being divinely inspired and merely fulfilling the dictates of the invisible Lord. Some Gnostics were of the opinion that the Jewish God, Jehovah, was the Demiurgus. This concept, under a slightly different name, apparently influenced mediæval Rosicrucianism, which viewed Jehovah as the Lord of the material universe rather than as the Supreme Deity. Mythology abounds with the stories of gods who partook of both celestial and terrestrial natures. Odin, of Scandinavia, is a good example of a deity subject to mortality, bowing before the laws of Nature and yet being, in certain senses at least, a Supreme Deity. –STOAA:25-6

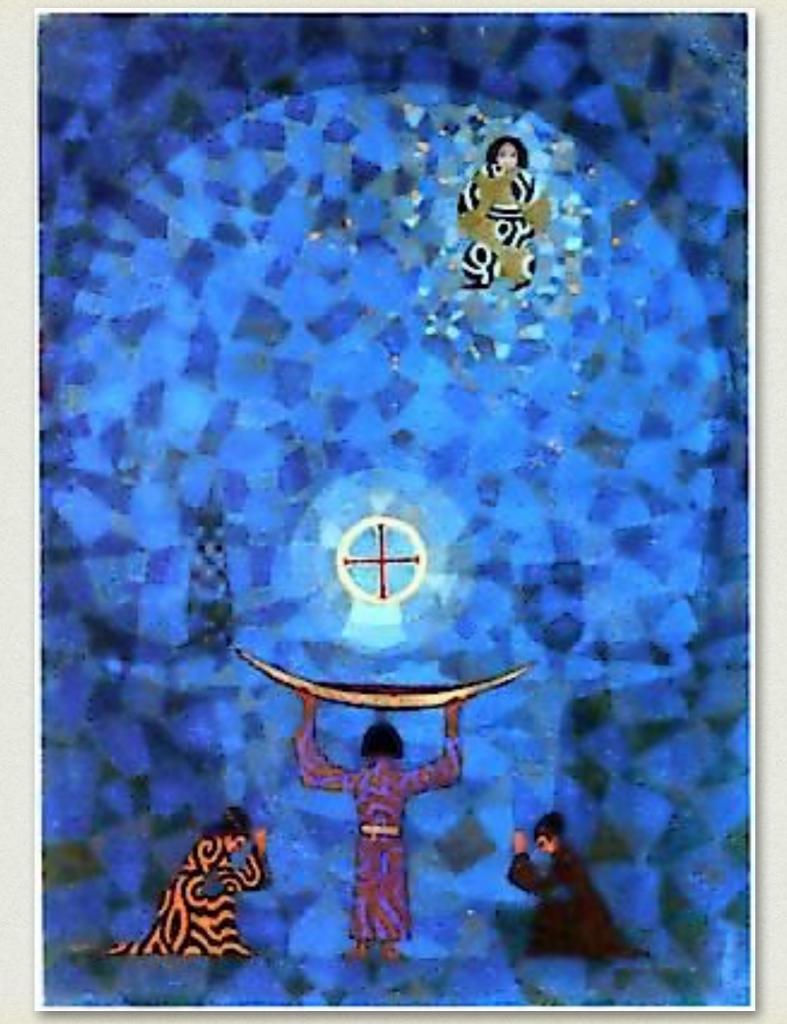




Fragment of Exegetica



We assume that one part of the so-called Will of God is to love all; a second is to desire nothing; and a third is to hate nothing. –Miscellanies 4.86.1, by Clement of Alexandria (quoting Basilides)



Jung's painting, completed around 1918 while working on Liber Novus, entitled, "Septem Sermones ad Mortuous" (the name of a treatise by Basilides)

Seven Sermons to the Dead

C.G. Jung, 1916

Seven exhortations to the dead, written by Basilides of Alexandria,

The First Sermon

The dead came back from Jerusalem, where they did not find what they were seeking. They asked admittance to me and demanded to be taught by me, and thus I taught them:

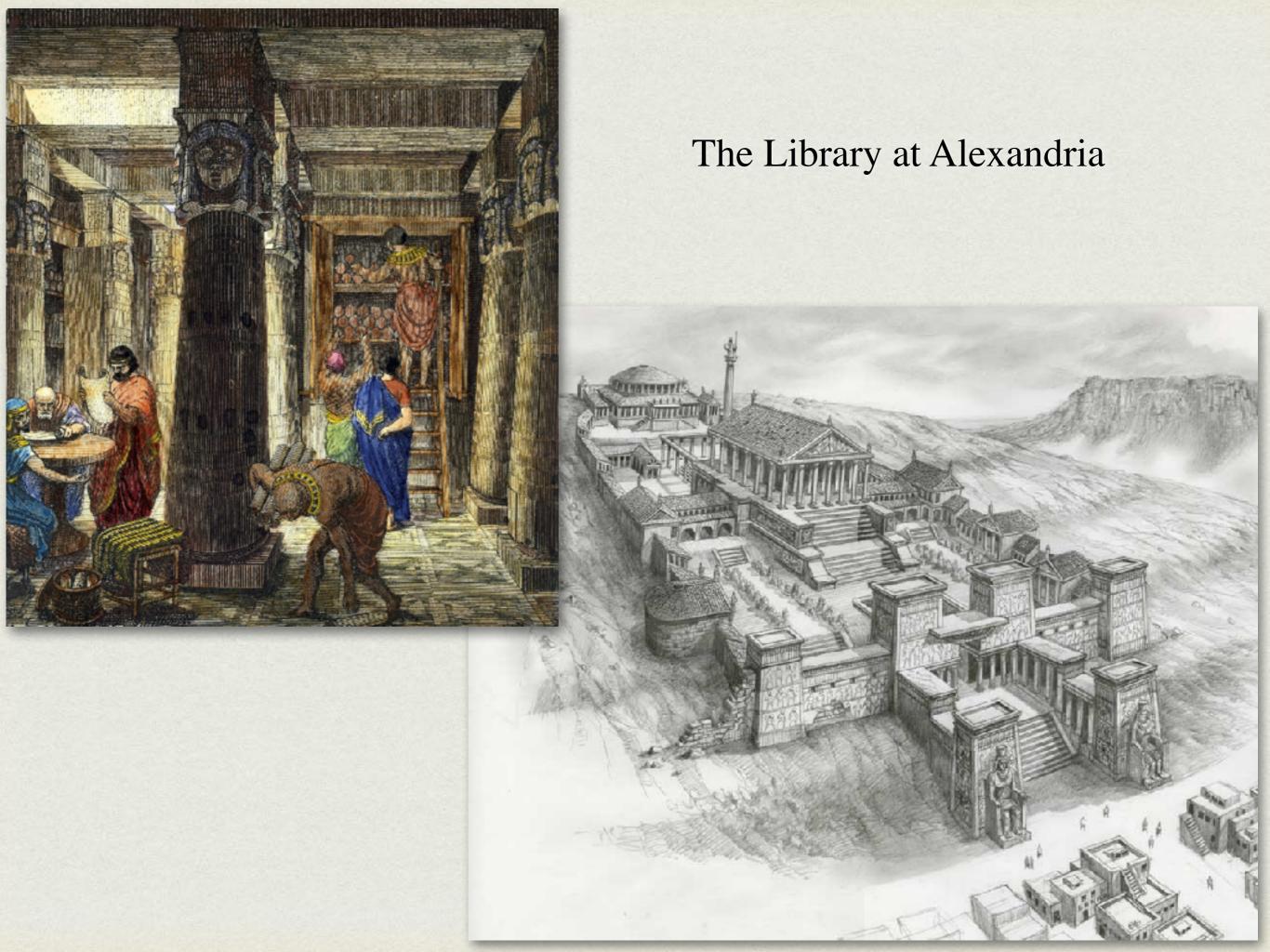
Hear Ye: I begin with nothing. Nothing is the same as fullness. In the endless state fullness is the same as emptiness. The Nothing is both empty and full. One may just as well state some other thing about the Nothing, namely that it is white or that it is black or that it exists or that it exists not. That which is endless and eternal has no qualities, because it has all qualities.

The Nothing, or fullness, is called by us the PLEROMA. In it thinking and being cease, because the eternal is without qualities. In it there is no one, for if anyone were, he would be differentiated from the Pleroma and would possess qualities which would distinguish him from the Pleroma.

In the Pleroma there is nothing and everything: it is not profitable to think about the Pleroma, for to do that would mean one's dissolution.

The CREATED WORLD is not in the Pleroma, but in itself. The Pleroma is the beginning and end of the created world. The Pleroma penetrates the created world as the sunlight penetrates the air everywhere. Although the Pleroma penetrates it completely, the created world has no part of it, just as an utterly transparent body does not become either dark or light in color as the result of the passage of light through it. We ourselves, however, are the Pleroma, so it is that the Pleroma is present within us. Even in the smallest point the Pleroma is present without any bounds, eternally and completely, for small and great are the qualities which are alien to the Pleroma. The Pleroma is the nothingness which is everywhere complete and without end. It is because of this that I speak of the created world as a portion of the Pleroma, but only in an allegorical sense; for the Pleroma is not divided into portions, for it is nothingness. We, also, are the total Pleroma; for figuratively the Pleroma is an exceedingly small, hypothetical, even non-existent point within us, and also it is the limitless firmament of the cosmos about us. Why, however, do we discourse about the Pleroma, if it is the all, and also nothing?

I speak of it in order to begin somewhere, and also to remove from you the delusion that somewhere within or without there is something absolutely firm and definite. All things which are called definite and solid are but relative, for only that which is subject to change appears definite and solid.



The School of Gnosticism was divided into two major parts, commonly called the Syrian Cult and the Alexandrian Cult. These schools agreed in essentials, but the latter division was more inclined to be pantheistic, while the former was dualistic. While the Syrian cult was largely Simonian, the Alexandrian School was the outgrowth of the philosophical deductions of a clever Egyptian Christian, Basilides by name, who claimed to have received his instructions from the Apostle Matthew. Like Simon Magus, he was an emanationist, with Neo-Platonic inclinations. In fact, the entire Gnostic Mystery is based upon the hypothesis of emanations as being the logical connection between the irreconcilable opposites Absolute Spirit and Absolute Substance, which the Gnostics believed to have been coexistent in Eternity. Some assert that Basilides was the true founder of Gnosticism, but there is much evidence to the effect that Simon Magus laid down its fundamental principles in the preceding century.

The Alexandrian Basilides inculcated Egyptian Hermeticism, Oriental occultism, Chaldean astrology, and Persian philosophy in his followers, and in his doctrines sought to unite the schools of early Christianity with the ancient pagan Mysteries. To him is attributed the formulation of that peculiar concept of the Deity which carries the name of Abraxas. In discussing the original meaning of this word, Godfrey Higgins, in his Celtic Druids, has demonstrated that the numerological powers of the letters forming the word Abraxas when added together result in the sum of 365. The same author also notes that the name Mithras when treated in a similar manner has the same numerical value. Basilides caught that the powers of the universe were divided into 365 Æons, or spiritual cycles, and that the sum of all these together was the Supreme Father, and to Him he gave the Qabbalistical appellation Abraxas, as being symbolical, numerologically, of His divine powers, attributes, and emanations. Abraxas is usually symbolized as a composite creature, with the body of a human being and the head of a rooster, and with each of his legs ending in a serpent. C. W. King, in his Gnostics and Their Remains, gives the following concise description of the Gnostic philosophy of Basilides, quoting from the writings of the early Christian bishop and martyr, St. Irenæus: "He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth Nous, or Mind; this the Logos, Word; this again Phronesis, Intelligence; from Phronesis sprung Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength."

In describing Abraxas, C. W. King says: "Bellermann considers the composite image, inscribed with the actual name Abraxas, to be a Gnostic Pantheos, representing the Supreme Being, with the Five Emanations marked out by appropriate symbols. From the human body, the usual form assigned to the Deity, spring the two supporters, Nous and Logos, expressed in the serpents, symbols of the inner senses, and the quickening understanding; on which account the Greeks had made the serpent the attribute of Pallas. His head--that of a cock--represents Phronesis, that bird being the emblem of foresight and of vigilance. His two arms hold the symbols of Sophia and Dynamis: the shield of Wisdom and the whip of Power."

The Gnostics were divided in their opinions concerning the Demiurgus, or creator of the lower worlds. He established the terrestrial universe with the aid of six sons, or emanations (possibly the planetary Angels) which He formed out of, and yet within, Himself. As stated before, the Demiurgus was individualized as the lowest creation out of the substance called pleroma. One group of the Gnostics was of the opinion that the Demiurgus was the cause of all misery and was an evil creature, who by building this lower world had separated the souls of men from truth by encasing them in mortal vehicles. The other sect viewed the Demiurgus as being divinely inspired and merely fulfilling the dictates of the invisible Lord. Some Gnostics were of the opinion that the Jewish God, Jehovah, was the Demiurgus. This concept, under a slightly different name, apparently influenced mediæval Rosicrucianism, which viewed Jehovah as the Lord of the material universe rather than as the Supreme Deity. Mythology abounds with the stories of gods who partook of both celestial and terrestrial natures. Odin, of Scandinavia, is a good example of a deity subject to mortality, bowing before the laws of Nature and yet being, in certain senses at least, a Supreme Deity. —STOAA:25-6

Their play upon the number 3 for 365.*	365 is no bad	d examp	ole. The name	Meithra	stands		
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	9						
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The word Neilog the same-		500					
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Νείλος is the Greek	E	5					
Name for the Egyptian	I	10					
	Λ	· 30	•		- :		
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A A l A l A		365					
Again—Abraxas or Abrasax,†	A	1	Chaldean.	D	_	0 P	
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ABRAXAS
    Mind (Nous)
    Word (Logos)
Intelligence (Phronesis)
  Wisdom (Sophia)
 Strength (Dynamis)
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St. Irenæus: "He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth Nous, or Mind; this the Logos, Word; this again Phronesis, Intelligence; from Phronesis sprung Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength." -STOAA:25





Abraxas, Abrasax (Gnostic) Mystical term used by the Gnostics to indicate the supreme entity of our cosmic hierarchy or its manifestation in the human being which they called the Christos. Abraxas has the value of 365, based on numerical equivalents of the Greek alphabet. Because 365 represents the cycle of one revolution of our planet around the sun, they held that in Abraxas were mystically contained the full number of families of entities composing a hierarchy. These entities received from their supreme illuminator, Abraxas, the streams of life and inspiration governing their existence. Thus in a sense Abraxas is the cosmic Oversoul, the creative or Third Logos, Brahma. The Basilidean Gnostics taught that from this supreme God was created nous (mind). Abraxas also was identified with the Hebrew Adonai, the Egyptian Horus, and the Hindu Prajapati.

Gnostic amulets known as Abraxas gems depicted the god as a pantheos (allgod), with the head of a cock, herald of the sun, representing foresight and vigilance; a human body clothed in armor, suggestive of guardian power; legs in the form of sacred asps. In his right hand is a scourge, emblem of authority; on his left arm a shield emblazoned with a word of power. This pantheos is invariably inscribed with his proper name IAO and his epithets Abraxas and Sabaoth, and often accompanied with invocations such as SEMES EILAM, the eternal sun (Gnostics and Their Remains 246), which Blavatsky equates with "the central spiritual sun" of the Qabbalists (SD 2:214). Though written in Greek characters, the words SEMES EILAM ABRASAX are probably Semitic in origin: *shemesh*, sun; *olam*, secret, occult, hid, eternity, world; *Abrasax*, Abraxas. Hence in combination the phrase may be rendered "the eternal sun Abrasax." –OTG